

**UN Security Council adopts Pakistan–Denmark resolution to strengthen protection of peacekeepers** **Liaquat Ali**  
 Islamabad: The United Nations Security Council has unanimously adopted a resolution tabled by Pakistan and Denmark aimed at strengthening accountability for attacks against UN peacekeepers and improving justice mechanisms for crimes targeting personnel serving under UN mandates. The resolution was

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**Prince William celebrates birthday and Father's Day as royal family shares heartfelt tributes** **Celina Ali**

London: Britain's heir to the throne, Prince William, this week received warm tributes from his family as his 44th birthday coincided with Father's Day celebrations, with members of the royal family sharing affectionate messages and photographs to mark the occasion. A new photo

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# China backs Pakistan's mediation role as Islamabad MoU advances Iran-US peace process



associated with efforts to support a structured peace process between Tehran and Washington. He reaffirmed China's longstanding position that disputes should be resolved through dialogue in line with the principles of the United Nations Charter, and said Pakistan's diplomatic outreach had helped create space for negotiations between the two sides. Pakistani officials said China's support is being viewed as a significant endorsement of Islamabad's emerging role as a facilitator in complex international negotiations.

The conversation also reviewed developments following early rounds of Iran-US discussions conducted under a mediation framework involving Pakistan and Qatar, including the establishment of oversight mechanisms and technical working groups. According to the Foreign Office, Ishaq Dar informed his Chinese counterpart that a high-level committee has been formed to supervise implementation of the MoU framework and guide the next phase of talks. He also outlined the creation of specialized working groups

focusing on key issues such as nuclear-related concerns, sanctions, and dispute resolution mechanisms.

Three working groups have reportedly been tasked with working toward a broader settlement within a defined timeline, as part of efforts to reduce tensions and support a negotiated outcome.

Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to continued coordination and stressed the importance of diplomacy in promoting regional stability and long-term peace. The discussion also highlighted growing Pakistan-China cooperation in diplomatic initiatives beyond traditional economic and strategic ties, reflecting an expanding role in global peace facilitation efforts.



**Abida Shaheen**

Islamabad: China has expressed strong diplomatic support for Pakistan's mediation efforts in facilitating dialogue between Iran and the United States, as Islamabad's role in the ongoing peace process continues to gain international attention. The endorsement came during a telephone conversation between Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar this week. During the call, Wang Yi praised Pakistan's "untiring efforts" in promoting dialogue, mediation and diplomatic engagement, and congratulated Islamabad on what was described as progress linked to the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which has been



## Pakistan seeks Canadian support to boost canola production to cut \$5 billion edible oil import bill



**Celina Ali**

Islamabad: Pakistan this week sought expanded cooperation with Canada in canola cultivation and agricultural technology as part of efforts to reduce its multi-billion-dollar edible oil import bill and strengthen domestic food security. The initiative was discussed during a meeting in Islamabad between Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain and Canadian High Commissioner Tarik Ali Khan. According to an official statement, Pakistan currently spends around \$4-5 billion annually on edible oil imports and is seeking to increase domestic oilseed production to reduce dependency on foreign supply. The minister said Pakistan was keen to benefit from Canada's expertise in canola cultivation, seed development, mechanised farming and agricultural research, describing these as key areas that could help improve yields and reduce import reliance. Canada, one of the world's largest producers and exporters of canola, is widely recognised for its advanced agricultural research systems, seed technology, and farm mechanisation practices. Pakistani officials said this experience could support efforts to



modernise local farming and improve productivity.

During the meeting, both sides also discussed broader cooperation in agriculture, including livestock development, hybrid seed research, dairy and meat processing, feed formulation, and agricultural value chain improvement. Pakistan also highlighted its export potential in agricultural products such as rice, mangoes, citrus fruits, dates and halal meat, suggesting that stronger cooperation could improve market access and expand bilateral trade.

The Canadian envoy said Canada was engaging with provincial governments and private sector stakeholders to explore investment opportunities in Pakistan's agriculture and livestock sectors.

He also noted that Canada's Minister of Agriculture is expected to visit Pakistan next month, a trip that is likely to further deepen institutional cooperation and explore new areas of agribusiness collaboration.

Both sides additionally discussed technical cooperation in animal health systems and disease control measures aimed at helping Pakistan meet international standards and expand access to higher-value export markets.

## Natasha Daultana calls for long-term political, economic consensus



**Liaquat Ali**

Islamabad: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader Natasha Daultana has called for a national shift toward long-term political and economic planning, arguing that Pakistan's recurring policy disruptions can only be resolved through cross-party consensus and institutional continuity rather than short-term electoral thinking.

Speaking in an interview, Daultana said Pakistan urgently needs a unified approach to governance that extends beyond individual governments and political cycles, warning that frequent changes in direction were weakening economic stability and discouraging investment.

She proposed the formulation of national development frameworks spanning 10, 20 and even 50 years, supported by all major political parties to ensure continuity in key policy areas, particularly economic management and debt reduction.

"We need a joint committee of all political parties to endorse a long-term economic plan," she said, adding that reducing Pakistan's debt burden must be treated as a central national priority.

Daultana stressed that sustainable growth depends on political stability, arguing that investor confidence is closely linked to consistent policy direction and predictable governance. She said repeated shifts in economic strategy with each change of government were undermining progress, and called for a structured mechanism to maintain policy continuity across administrations.

At the political level, she emphasised PPP's commitment to democratic engagement and cooperation with other parties, noting that governance in Pakistan's parliamentary system requires dialogue and coalition-building rather than confrontation.

"We look at the bigger picture. Pakistan comes first," she said, adding that political differences should not block cooperation on issues of national importance.

Daultana also said political disputes should be resolved through negotiation, suggesting that internal stability strengthens both governance and public service delivery.

On party strategy, she said the PPP was working to expand its organisational presence across provinces, particularly in Punjab, while maintaining its strong bases in Sindh and Balochistan and

seeking greater outreach in other regions. She added that governance improves when political stakeholders work in alignment, ensuring smoother implementation of policies and more effective national decision-making. The PPP leader reiterated that leadership in Pakistan is ultimately determined through public mandate and parliamentary processes, and stressed the importance of respecting democratic outcomes while focusing on governance challenges.

# Pakistan welcomes BYD investment as EV push gains pace

**Gwadar Pro**

Islamabad: Pakistan's Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has welcomed Chinese electric vehicle maker BYD's expanding investment in Pakistan, as the government seeks to promote local EV manufacturing and reduce dependence on fuel imports. Aurangzeb made the remarks during a meeting in Islamabad this week with a delegation from BYD Group and Mega Motor Company, the finance ministry said. He said Pakistan was giving priority to technology-led investment that could support industrial growth, job creation and local manufacturing. He said the BYD-Mega Motor partnership could help Pakistan develop its EV sector through technology transfer, workforce training and localisation of production. Aurangzeb encouraged the company to accelerate local assembly and manufacturing plans, saying domestic production facilities could create opportunities for local suppliers, engineers and skilled workers. The meeting also focused on charging infrastructure,

which officials described as a key requirement for wider EV adoption in Pakistan. BYD Vice President and General Manager Liu Xueliang briefed the minister on the company's progress in introducing new-energy vehicles in Pakistan through its partnership with Mega Motor Company. He said construction of the company's local manufacturing facility was progressing according to schedule. Company representatives said the project would help develop Pakistan's EV ecosystem, expand the company's product portfolio and increase localisation of components and manufacturing over time. The two sides also discussed plans for charging solutions, technical training and cooperation with local partners to build capacity in Pakistan's automotive sector. The investment comes as Pakistan seeks to attract Chinese companies into advanced manufacturing and clean technology, extending economic cooperation beyond traditional infrastructure and energy projects.



# Chinese premier stresses endeavors to advance high-end equipment manufacturing

**China Economic Net**

Dalian: Chinese Premier Li Qiang this week emphasized efforts to develop high-end equipment manufacturing and accelerate the building of a modern industrial system to continuously inject new momentum into high-quality development. Li, also a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, made the remarks during an inspection tour in the city of Dalian,

northeast China's Liaoning Province. Li said efforts should be made to accelerate breakthroughs in key technologies, train a group of key technical personnel and skilled industrial workers, and continue to consolidate and expand the competitive edge of the shipbuilding and offshore engineering equipment industries. Dalian's shipbuilding industry has a long history and a sound foundation for developing high-end equipment manufacturing, Li noted, calling for efforts to build advanced manufacturing clusters



and a world-class shipbuilding base. Li also stressed speeding up the transformation of scientific and technological achievements, as well as promoting the safe application of new-generation nuclear power technology to better serve green and low-carbon development.

In building a modern industrial system, efforts should be made not only to cultivate and expand emerging and future industries, but also to upgrade traditional industries, he said. Li added that research, development and production of high-end petrochemical equipment play

an important role in improving the quality and efficiency of related industries. He called for empowering industries via digital and intelligent technologies, strengthening the resilience of industrial and supply chains, and continuously enhancing core competitiveness.

# Khyber Pakhtunkhwa allocates Rs 10 billion for China-made electric bus service in Hazara

**Gwadar Pro**

Peshawar: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provincial government has allocated Pakistani Rs10 billion in its provincial budget for the launch of a modern China-made electric bus service linking Haripur, Abbottabad and Mansehra, in a move expected to transform public transportation and

promote environmentally sustainable mobility across the Hazara region. Provincial Minister for Communications and Works Akbar Ayub Khan announced the development this week, describing the project as a landmark initiative that fulfilled a key commitment made to the people of Hazara Division and reflected the

government's determination to modernize transport infrastructure. The proposed electric bus network, featuring procured Chinese-manufactured vehicles, is expected to provide safe, affordable and environmentally friendly transportation facilities to thousands of daily commuters traveling between the three districts.



# Princess of Wales reflects on Italy visit Warns against 'increasingly digitalised world'

**Celina Ali**

London: Catherine, Princess of Wales this week shared reflections on her recent visit to northern Italy, expressing concern over what she described as an "increasingly digitalised world" and stressing the importance of "genuine human connection" in early childhood development. The essay, published by the Royal Foundation's Centre for Early Childhood, coincides with the release of new photographs from her two-day visit to Reggio Emilia last month, her first official overseas engagement since undergoing cancer treatment. During the visit, the Princess observed early years education initiatives and met children, families, and educators. In her writing, she highlighted the importance of emotional connection, describing love not as sentimentality but as "quiet and unconditional," built on patience and time. She also reflected on a conversation with a parent at her children's school who asked what one action could make the greatest difference. Her response, she wrote, was to "prioritise love." The Princess of Wales emphasised that modern life, increasingly shaped by screens and digital interaction, risks weakening human bonds. She argued that strengthening



**Her Excellency Marilina Armellini  
Ambassador of Italy to Pakistan**

early childhood experiences rooted in care, nature, and creativity is essential for long-term wellbeing. The Royal Foundation released images showing Catherine engaging with children and communities during her Italy visit, where she was seen interacting informally in school and community settings. According to the foundation, the trip marked an important step in her gradual return to public duties following treatment, with aides describing the visit as a significant moment in her recovery and public engagement. In her essay, the Princess praised children's natural curiosity and openness, saying their ability to connect and express themselves offers an example of humanity at its best. She wrote that the children she met in Reggio Emilia "radiated" these qualities, making her feel warmly welcomed.



Her team is now reportedly exploring further international visits to study early years education models in different countries, as part of her wider advocacy in this area.

Sources close to the Princess say the Italy trip marked a renewed phase in her public work, with a strong emphasis on supporting young families and promoting emotional wellbeing from the earliest stages of life.



The essay, titled Creating the conditions for love to flourish through nature and creativity, was published by the Centre for Early Childhood, an initiative under the Royal Foundation focused on early years development. Officials associated with the programme said the Princess is increasingly focused on placing early childhood issues at the centre of public policy discussions, comparing its importance to other major global challeng-



# Chinese supercomputer returns to the world's top spot, sending multiple signals

**Global Times**

On Tuesday, at the International Supercomputing Conference in Hamburg, Germany, the World's TOP500 supercomputers list was released, with China's entirely domestically developed and independently controlled LineShine supercomputer claiming the top spot. This marks the second time a Chinese supercomputer has topped the list since the Sunway TaihuLight in 2017. Turing Award winner and TOP500 co-founder Jack Dongarra commented that China's LineShine offers the world a glimmer of hope for the transition of supercomputing toward the new system architecture of AI4Science, according to the National Supercomputing Center in Shenzhen.

The LineShine supercomputer has two technical features. First, LineShine was researched and developed entirely domestically and independently. Faced with years of export controls on high-end GPUs and advanced chip equipment targeting China, Chinese research teams have established a complete closed-loop process - from

chip design to system integration - truly achieving self-reliance and control. That means LineShine took first place despite facing layer upon layer of restrictions. Second, while most of today's leading supercomputers rely heavily on GPUs, LineShine is the first supercomputer to achieve exascale performance using only CPUs, and it is approximately 20 percent faster than El Capitan, the US supercomputer that previously held the top spot. The even greater significance of LineShine reaching the top lies in the fact that it has validated the feasibility of a complete domestic technology stack, including domestically made chips, storage, interconnects, and cooling systems. Prior to this, no country had ever built the world's top supercomputer without relying entirely on products from AMD, Intel, or NVIDIA.

Many people may ask: it took nine years for China to reclaim the top spot; what happened in the meantime? As early as early 2015, the US Department of Commerce placed China's four major supercomputing centers associated with the Tianhe-2 on its so-called export

control list. Since then, the US has been frequently overstretching the concept of national security: in 2019, it targeted two of China's "three supercomputing giants" - Sugon and Sunway TaihuLight; in 2021, it added seven Chinese supercomputing entities to the blacklist. Yet these layers of restrictions did not stifle China's scientific research; instead, they compelled the industry to shed its external dependencies and focus intently on honing its independent R&D capabilities.

Now that LineShine has reclaimed the top spot, it has provided a concrete answer through tangible achievements: whether it be "small yard, high fences" or "decoupling and severing supply chains," all cannot halt China's progress.

Chinese supercomputer's return to the global top not only demonstrates the country's increasingly robust self-reliance and control in the high-tech sector, but also offers new options and greater opportunities for global industrial development. Today, fields such as atmospheric and oceanic sciences, engineering simulation, materials science, drug discovery, brain science, scientific AI, and large language model inference all rely on powerful supercomputing support.

For a long time, high-end computing resources have been highly concentrated in a few Western countries. Many developing nations lack the capacity to build their own supercomputing systems and can only passively accept a single source of technology and stringent access restrictions. The path China has taken in computing power provides a model for countries in the Global South - one that is free from external control and allows for autonomous innovation.

Countries should work together, learn from one another's strengths, support each other, and pursue healthy development. Using national security as an excuse to impose sanctions on other countries undermines global cooperation and ultimately harms one's own opportunities for development.

Faced with China's technological advances, some voices in the West have fallen into a contradictory mindset: they want access to the world's most advanced technolo-



gies and products, yet worry that "overreliance" could bring "national security risks." They want to use them but hesitate to do so; they talk about "decoupling" but are reluctant to bear the costs. This dilemma is itself one of the bitter consequences of the "small yard, high fences" approach.

Facts have repeatedly proven that unilateral restrictions and technological decoupling benefit no one. Only by pursuing cooperation and win-win outcome can we expand the global supply chain market and achieve shared technological progress. Global science and technology are a community where everyone prospers or suffers together. Artificially creating technological barriers will only delay humanity's pace in addressing global challenges.

China's pursuit of technological development has never been about engaging in geopolitical competition with any country. The aspirations of more than 1.4 billion people for a better life require technological support, while common global challenges, such as climate change and public health, demand technological solutions. These are the true driving forces behind China's sci-tech innovation.

This is true of supercomputing, as it is of 5G, artificial intelligence, space exploration, and new-energy technologies. If the US could set aside its fixation on "technological hegemony" and view China's progress

with greater objectivity, the potential for China-US cooperation in areas, such as AI governance, climate change, and global health, would be enormous.

In recent years, China's technological innovation has advanced rapidly, with many sectors accelerating the transition from quantitative growth to qualitative breakthroughs, from the low and mid-range to the mid- and high-end, and from being followers to leaders. China's ranking in the Global Innovation Index rose from 34th place in 2012 to 10th in 2025. China will not close the door to international cooperation because it has achieved technological leadership, nor will it abandon its commitment to independent innovation because of external restrictions.

The West should recognize the broader trend with clarity and realism: technological competition cannot be won through containment and suppression, and global scientific and technological progress cannot be achieved without the collaboration of multiple stakeholders. Setting aside narrow-minded geopolitical suspicions and engaging in dialogue and cooperation with an attitude of equality and openness is the right choice that aligns with the common interests of all humankind.

**Global Times**



# Translators' Voices: China's green transition shows ability to combine long-term vision with practical implementation

**Global Times**

The year 2026 marks the start of the 15th Five-Year Plan period (2026-30). The outline of the 15th Five-Year Plan dedicates a chapter to "accelerating the green transition across the board and building a Beautiful China."

From the guiding philosophy that "lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets," to the strategic guidance of China's "dual carbon" goals, and further to the systematic arrangements for comprehensive green transition, China has, under the guidance of Xi Jinping Thought on Ecological Civilization, accelerated its green and low-carbon transition and continued to improve the quality of its ecological environment.

The book series Xi Jinping: The Governance of China includes a number of President Xi's important ideas on ecological conservation. These ideas profoundly reflect the inheritance, enrichment and development of the theoretical framework for ecological civilization construction, as well as the continuity, elevation and focus of its goals and tasks.

Volume V of the book series includes "The Beautiful China Initiative" as a dedicated topic, systematically expounding the thinking and arrangements for building a Beautiful China.

In the 25th installment of the special series "Decoding the Book Xi Jinping: The Governance of China," the Global Times, along with the People's Daily Overseas Edition, continues to invite Chinese and foreign scholars, translators of Xi's works, practitioners with firsthand experience, and international readers to focus on the theme of "accelerating the green transition across the board and building a Beautiful China." Together, they explore the vivid practices through which China, under the guidance of Xi Jinping Thought on Ecological Civilization, applies the concept of green development throughout the process of economic and social development, and discuss its major practical significance and contemporary value.

In the 25th article of the "Translators' Voices" column, the Global Times (GT) reporters Wang Wenwen and Liu Xuandi interviewed José Medeiros da Silva (Medeiros da Silva), a Brazilian professor at Zhejiang International Studies University. Medeiros da Silva was a

member of the translation team of the Portuguese edition of Xi Jinping: The Governance of China.

GT: In the book series Xi Jinping: The Governance of China, President Xi put forward important thoughts on ecological civilization, among which the "two mountains" concept that "lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets" has become a guiding principle for China's ecological civilization development. How do you understand the profound meaning of this concept? What kind of path to modernization has China taken under its guidance?

Medeiros da Silva: The "two mountains" concept is one of the most representative expressions of Xi Jinping Thought on Ecological Civilization. At its core lies the recognition that economic prosperity, quality of life, and lasting social development ultimately depend on preserving the natural conditions that sustain life. More than an environmental policy, it represents a shift in perspective: Ecological protection is no longer viewed as a constraint on growth but as an essential condition for achieving higher-quality development.

This understanding has become one of the foundations of China's efforts to build an ecological civilization. On this basis, the country has been pursuing a path of modernization that seeks to move beyond the traditional divide between economic development and environmental protection, integrating high-quality growth, rural revitalization, green transition, technological innovation, and common prosperity. The goal is not simply to expand material wealth but to build a more balanced, sustainable, and harmonious society. In this sense, China's modernization seeks to demonstrate that economic development, social well-being, and ecological protection can advance together in ways that are mutually reinforcing.

I was able to observe this integration firsthand during a visit to Anji County in East China's Zhejiang Province. As I walked through its landscapes, I was reminded of traditional Chinese shanshui paintings, where mountains, rivers, and human beings exist in a state of harmony. In Anji, this aesthetic sensibility takes on a contemporary and tangible form. Common prosperity is not merely an ideal. It is visible in the villages' architecture, in the quality of life enjoyed by local residents, and in the way the local economy has been reorganized around natural resources. The experience allowed me to see how cultural heritage, ecological stewardship, and modernization can coexist and strengthen one another. It also showed that such achievements require not only goodwill, but also strategic vision, political commitment, and sustained investment over time.

For this reason, I believe that the "two mountains" concept transcends the Chinese context. At a time marked by climate change, accelerating biodiversity loss, and the challenges of sustainable development, it offers a valuable point of reference for countries seeking to reconcile economic growth with environmental protection - not as opposing goals, but as complementary dimensions of the same development project. Its most enduring contribution may be its demonstration that building

a sustainable future requires not only technological progress, but also a deeper transformation in the way we understand the relationship between humanity and nature. Ultimately, it calls for reflection on the broader path of human civilization in the 21st century.

GT: In Volume V of Xi Jinping: The Governance of China, President Xi stated that "green growth should be a defining feature of high-quality development, and new quality productive forces are intrinsically green." How do you understand the dialectical relationship between high-quality development and high-standard environmental protection reflected in this statement? What implications does it offer for other countries pursuing modernization and green transformation?

Medeiros da Silva: President Xi's statement suggests that environmental concerns are no longer a peripheral issue, but have become an integral part of the very logic of innovation, productivity, and value creation.

The dialectical relationship embedded in this statement operates on two complementary levels. First, it affirms that quality and sustainability are inseparable. A development model that degrades ecosystems, depletes natural resources, or transfers environmental costs to future generations can hardly be considered truly high-quality development. Second, it points to a transformation in the very foundations of production. New quality productive forces are driven by scientific innovation, artificial intelligence, digitalization, clean energy, and low-carbon technologies. These forces not only reduce environmental impacts, but also transform sustainability into a source of innovation, responsibility, advanced productive capacity, and long-term prosperity.

This helps explain why China treats green development as a core component of its modernization strategy. Investments in renewable energy, the circular economy, smart infrastructure, and advanced technologies are not viewed as concessions to environmentalism, but as key drivers of a more resilient, innovative, and future-oriented economy. In this sense, the green transition is not merely an environmental agenda. It is also a strategy for industrial upgrading, strengthening productive capabilities, and creating new sectors with higher added value.

For other countries, China's experience offers a valuable point of reference - not as a model to be mechanically replicated, but as an invitation to develop their own approaches, capable of combining innovation, ecological responsibility, and shared prosperity. In an increasingly interconnected world, this perspective broadens the possibilities for cooperation and mutual learning in addressing the common challenges facing humanity.

GT: 2026 marks the start of China's 15th Five-Year Plan period (2026-30). The outline of the plan lists "major new strides in advancing the Beautiful China initiative" as one of the major objectives for economic and social development during this period. How do you view China's integration of ecological civilization and green development goals into its long-term national development planning? How would you assess the importance of such policy continuity and implementation in achieving coordinated progress between economic growth and environmental protection?

Medeiros da Silva: The integration of ecological civilization and

green development goals into the 15th Five-Year Plan shows how mature these issues have become within China's modernization process. They have become structural components of the country's broader development strategy. I find it particularly significant that the construction of a Beautiful China has been placed among the central objectives of economic and social planning for the period from 2026 to 2030.

What impresses me most is China's ability to combine long-term vision with practical implementation. The country has demonstrated a remarkable capacity to translate broad strategic objectives into public policies, investments, institutional mechanisms, and progressively achievable goals. Five-year plans play a crucial role in this process because they translate long-term national aspirations into concrete priorities, policy frameworks, and measurable objectives.

From this perspective, the incorporation of the green transition and the Beautiful China Initiative into the 15th Five-Year Plan illustrates the interconnected nature of several key concepts shaping contemporary China, including ecological civilization, green development, common prosperity, and new quality productive forces. Rather than isolated ideas, these concepts form an integrated framework that seeks to guide the construction of a more innovative, balanced, and sustainable society.

Perhaps one of the most important contributions of China's experience is the demonstration that building an ecologically sustainable society depends not only on setting ambitious goals, but also on maintaining strategic direction and continuity of purpose over time. When it comes to the relationship between development and nature, decades matter more than political cycles.

GT: In Volume V, President Xi pointed out that "a sound ecosystem is essential for civilization to prosper. We must work together to promote harmonious coexistence between humanity and nature, build a community of all life on Earth, and create a clean and beautiful world for us all." In your view, what significance does Xi Jinping Thought on Ecological Civilization hold for addressing current global sustainable development challenges and advancing global ecological civilization?

Medeiros da Silva: As Xi often emphasizes, there is only one Earth in the universe. The idea of building a community with a shared future for humanity - a vision that emphasizes the interconnected destinies and responsibilities of all peoples - invites us to recognize an increasingly evident reality: The major



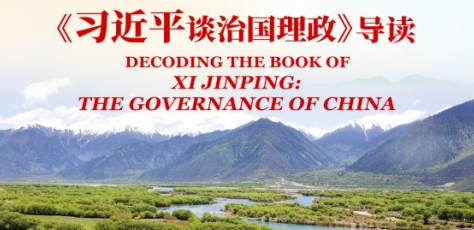
ecological challenges of our time transcend national borders and affect all of humanity, albeit in different ways.

Climate change, biodiversity loss, land degradation, water scarcity, and ocean pollution are not challenges that any single country or civilization can solve alone. They require new forms of cooperation, dialogue, and shared responsibility. In this context, the value of a national experience lies not only in its domestic achievements. It also lies in its capacity to contribute to a broader reservoir of ideas, reflections, and practical solutions available to humanity as a whole.

I see the aspiration to build a clean and beautiful world not merely as an environmental goal, but as a civilizational horizon. Its deeper significance lies in its potential to foster collaboration, mutual learning, and more harmonious coexistence among nations. In an increasingly interconnected world, a community of life on Earth should not be understood as the project of any single nation, but as a shared undertaking of humanity as a whole.

**Global Times**

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# UN Security Council adopts Pakistan-Denmark resolution to strengthen protection of peacekeepers

**Liaquat Ali**  
Islamabad: The United Nations Security Council has unanimously adopted a resolution tabled by Pakistan and Denmark aimed at strengthening accountability for attacks against UN peacekeepers and improving justice mechanisms for crimes targeting personnel serving under UN mandates. The resolution was supported by all 15 members

of the Security Council and co-sponsored by more than 150 UN member states, reflecting broad international backing for stronger protections for peacekeeping forces operating in conflict zones. The measure seeks to improve follow-up on investigations and prosecutions in cases involving the killing of or violence against UN peacekeepers. It also requests the UN Secretary-General to submit annual reports on the status of such cases and to provide recommendations within 120 days on strengthening accountability mechanisms. A key feature of the resolution is the proposal to designate a senior focal point within the UN Secretariat to improve coordination between the United Nations, host countries, and troop- and police-contributing nations, particularly in monitoring and pursuing accountability for attacks. Introducing the resolution, Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Asim Iftikhar Ahmad said attacks on peacekeepers were becoming increasingly frequent and sophisticated, while accountability in many cases remained limited. He said the international community



must move beyond expressions of condemnation and ensure practical justice for those serving under the UN flag. "Condolences are necessary, but they are not enough," he said, stressing that the Security Council must ensure sustained attention to cases where peacekeepers are killed or injured while carrying out UN mandates. Pakistan, which jointly sponsored the resolution with Denmark, highlighted its long-standing role as one of the largest contributors to UN peacekeeping operations. According to UN-related figures cited by Pakistan, hundreds of thousands of Pakistani personnel have served in missions worldwide, with 183 personnel losing their lives in the line of duty. Diplomats said the resolution sends a strong



message in support of peacekeepers and underscores the need for stronger international mechanisms to ensure accountability for attacks against them. The adoption is being viewed as a significant step toward reinforcing the safety, credibility, and operational effectiveness of UN peacekeeping missions globally.



Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, his colleagues at the UN mission, Ms. Samra Saleem and Ms. Abeer Hageel

# Serena Hotels CEO hosts farewell dinner for outgoing Italian and Bulgarian envoys in Islamabad

**Celina Ali**  
Islamabad: A farewell dinner was hosted in Islamabad this week by Global Chief Executive Officer of Serena Hotels, Aziz Boolani, in honour of the outgoing ambassadors of Italy and Bulgaria, bringing together diplomats, senior officials, and members of the business community in a gesture highlighting diplomatic goodwill and cultural engagement. The event was held to bid farewell to

Italy's ambassador Marilina Armellini and Bulgaria's ambassador Irena Gancheva, both of whom are concluding their diplomatic assignments in Pakistan. Speaking at the occasion, Aziz Boolani praised the contributions of both envoys, noting their role in strengthening bilateral relations, promoting cultural exchange, and expanding cooperation between Pakistan and their respective countries. He said diplomatic assignments were defined by

transitions and departures, but the relationships built during service often left lasting impressions. He added that both ambassadors would be remembered warmly for their engagement and friendship during their tenure in Islamabad. The farewell dinner was attended by a wide range of dignitaries, including Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, US Chargé d'Affaires Natalie A. Baker, along with ambassadors, high commissioners, and senior government officials. During the evening, Aziz Boolani and his wife presented souvenirs to the departing diplomats as a token of appreciation. Guests were also



served a curated selection of Pakistani and international cuisine, reflecting Serena Hotels' emphasis on hospitality and culinary excellence. The ambassadors expressed gratitude for the hospitality extended to them during their posting in Pakistan and said they would carry fond memories of their time in the country. The event was marked by warm exchanges and informal interaction among diplomatic and government circles, underscoring the role of such gatherings in strengthening interpersonal ties within the diplomatic community. The dinner also highlighted the continuing role of Serena Hotels as a venue for cultural diplomacy and international engagement in Islamabad, hosting events that bring together global representatives and Pakistani stakeholders in a shared social space.



# Senate chairman praises outgoing Italian envoy at farewell dinner in Islamabad

**Liaquat Ali**  
Islamabad: A farewell dinner was hosted this week in Islamabad in honour of the outgoing Italian ambassador, bringing together senior government officials, diplomats, and members of the business and diplomatic community in recognition of her services during her tenure in Pakistan. The event was organised by Chairman of Monal Group Luqman Ali Afzal and attended by a large number of dignitaries, including Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani, federal ministers, governors, advisers, and foreign diplomats. Among the prominent participants were

Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi, Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, and other senior cabinet members, alongside a large representation of ambassadors and high commissioners. Speaking on the occasion, the Senate chairman praised the outgoing Italian envoy for her efforts in strengthening bilateral relations between Pakistan and Italy. He said her tenure had contributed positively to enhancing cooperation and friendship between the two countries and extended best wishes for her future assignments. The outgoing ambassador, in remarks shared during the event, said she had deeply appreciated her time in Pakistan and valued the hospitality and warmth extended to her throughout her

posting. She expressed confidence that relations between Pakistan and Italy would continue to grow, particularly in trade, education, culture, and people-to-people exchanges. She also thanked the organisers for hosting the farewell reception, describing it as a memorable gesture of goodwill and friendship from the Pakistani side. The evening concluded with a dinner featuring a selection of traditional Pakistani and continental cuisine, reflecting the hospitality associated with the host organisation. Guests described the gathering as a warm and cordial occasion that highlighted the strength of diplomatic engagement and personal ties within Pakistan's foreign relations community.



# Makerfield by-election underscores voters' preference for locally rooted politicians: Ali Rehman Malik



in the traditionally Labour constituency and retained a majority of more than 9,000 votes, while Reform UK finished in second place despite efforts to challenge Labour's dominance in the seat. According to Malik, the significance of the result lies not in the margin of victory itself but in the contrast between how candidates were perceived by local voters. He noted that Makerfield, situated in former mining and industrial heartlands of Greater Manchester, remains a community where work, family, place and lived experience continue to shape political attitudes. Malik argued that Burnham campaigned as a politician with a proven record of governing a specific region and addressing the practical concerns of local communities. His long-standing association with Greater Manchester and his ability to communicate in a manner familiar to local residents helped reinforce his credibility among voters. By contrast, Malik suggested that contemporary political campaigns increasingly revolve around national narratives, media debates and broader ideological messaging. Such approaches, he argued, often fail to resonate with communities whose priorities remain rooted in everyday local realities.



The analysis further suggested that public frustration is growing with attempts by political elites and national commentators to define what ordinary citizens should think or care about. Malik argued that voters are becoming increasingly resistant to such top-down narratives and are instead placing greater value on politicians who demonstrate a direct understanding of local concerns. While describing Makerfield as only one electoral contest, Malik said the by-election reflected a wider trend in con-

temporary politics. He maintained that candidates who engage with communities at the level of streets, workplaces and everyday challenges may enjoy a significant advantage over those whose political identities are built primarily around national messaging and media visibility. The Makerfield result, he concluded, serves as a reminder that local credibility and genuine community connection remain powerful political assets, even in an era increasingly dominated by national narratives and digital campaigning.

**Abdullah Jan** Writing in an analysis following the June 18 by-election, Malik argued that the decisive victory of Andy Burnham reflected more than simple party loyalty, instead

Islamabad: The outcome of the Makerfield by-election in Greater Manchester has highlighted the growing electoral



advantage of politicians who maintain a strong connection with local communities, according to philanthropist and commentator Ali Rehman Malik.

demonstrating voters' preference for leaders perceived as genuinely connected to the places they represent. Burnham secured 54.8 percent of the vote



"The pattern is becoming familiar," Malik wrote, arguing that politicians whose public identities are primarily shaped by national visibility and media performance can appear detached from the communities they seek to represent. He contended that many voters continue to judge political leaders based on whether they appear to understand the realities of local life, including employment, family responsibilities and community concerns. When politicians seem disconnected from these experiences, public trust can erode regardless of their prominence on the national stage. Malik said this phenomenon is not confined to any particular political ideology but reflects a broader question of authenticity and belonging. He argued that voters increasingly distinguish between politicians who appear rooted in real communities and those perceived as speaking mainly from within a political and media establishment.



# Heatwave drives billions in losses for German economy amid record June temperatures

**Liaquat Ali**  
 Berlin: Germany's economy is facing significant pressure as an unprecedented heatwave pushes temperatures to record levels, raising concerns over productivity losses, rising energy costs, and long-term economic damage linked to climate change. June 2026 has been recorded as the hottest June in Germany since weather observations began, with temperatures in some regions approaching 40 degrees Celsius. The prolonged heat has disrupted working conditions across multiple sectors and added strain on both infrastructure and public health systems. Economists warn that extreme heat is no longer a temporary weather issue but a structural economic challenge. Productivity is reported to decline by around 3 percent for every degree above 30 degrees

Celsius, while energy costs rise due to increased demand for cooling. The impact is particularly severe for outdoor workers in construction, agriculture, and logistics, where exposure to extreme heat increases health risks and reduces working capacity. Authorities report that sick leave rises significantly during heatwaves, further affecting output. Cooling systems remain relatively limited in Germany compared to other countries, with only a small share of households equipped with air conditioning, although usage is more common in office buildings. A recent study cited in economic research estimates that Germany could lose around €120 billion in economic output between 2026 and 2030 due to heat-related disruptions. Overall GDP losses of up to 3 percent have been projected under sustained high-



temperature conditions. Experts say cities are particularly vulnerable due to the "urban heat island" effect, where dense construction and limited greenery can raise temperatures significantly above surrounding areas. The World Health Organization has warned that Europe is warming faster than any other continent, with heat-related deaths exceeding 200,000 across the region in recent years. Climate specialists are calling for long-term adaptation strategies, including redesigned buildings, improved urban planning, and stronger workplace protections to reduce the growing economic and health risks of extreme heat.

# Bulgaria approves €3.2 billion EU-backed loan to strengthen defence capabilities



**Abdullah Jan**

Sofia: Bulgaria's government has approved agreements for a €3.26 billion European Union-backed loan aimed at strengthening the country's defence capabilities under the Security Action for Europe (SAFE) instrument. The decision, announced following a cabinet meeting, includes both a loan agreement between Bulgaria and the European Union and an operational agreement with the European Commission. The financing package will support nine key defence projects outlined in Bulgaria's national military development plan. According to government officials, the loan will be provided on favourable terms, including a grace period of up to 10 years on principal repayments and a repayment period extending up to 45 years. The projects form part of Bulgaria's wider Defence Investment Programme running through 2032 and are intended to modernise military capabilities and strengthen readiness within both NATO and EU



defence frameworks. Officials said funding will be integrated into the national defence budget and used to support long-term capability development in line with collective security commitments. The government described the initiative as an important step in enhancing national security and ensuring Bulgaria meets its obligations under NATO's collective defence system and the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy. The agreements will now be submitted for ratification by Bulgaria's National Assembly before implementation begins.

# Portugal's smaller cities emerge as top retirement destinations for expatriates



**Portugal's Ambassador to Pakistan and Afghanistan  
H.E. Paulo Miguel Guedes Domingues**



to both cultural and recreational opportunities. Further south, Setúbal has gained recognition among retirees seeking an authentic coastal lifestyle. Unlike resort towns that cater primarily to tourists, Setúbal remains a thriving working port where fishing traditions continue to shape daily life. The city's waterfront, seafood markets, and nearby Arrábida Natural Park create an appealing environment for those who enjoy outdoor activities and maritime culture. Its location near Lisbon allows residents to access the capital while avoiding its higher living costs. Nearby Sesimbra offers a quieter alternative, attracting retirees who value tranquility and natural beauty. Nestled along a crescent-shaped bay, the town features sandy beaches, fresh seafood, and a relaxed pace of life. The surrounding landscapes of Arrábida Natural Park and the historic Sesimbra Castle provide opportunities for recreation and sightseeing throughout the year.



In northern Portugal, Braga has emerged as one of the country's most attractive urban retirement destinations. Often regarded as one of Portugal's oldest and most culturally vibrant cities, Braga combines modern healthcare services, affordable housing, and an active social scene. Residents enjoy a rich calendar of festivals, religious celebrations, and cultural events, while landmarks such as Bom Jesus do Monte contribute to the city's distinctive character. Aveiro, often referred to as the "Venice of Portugal" because of its network of canals, is another city increasingly favored by retirees. Its flat terrain and walkable layout make daily life convenient, particularly for older residents. The city's scenic waterways, colorful boats, historic architecture, and manageable size create a comfortable environment for those seeking a slower pace without sacrificing access to essential services.

and wine culture. Viseu, frequently cited among Portugal's safest and greenest cities, continues to attract retirees seeking affordability and quality of life. Known for its parks, cleanliness, and traditional atmosphere, the city offers comparatively affordable housing and dependable healthcare services. Its location provides easy access to larger urban centres while preserving a distinctly local character. Although generally more expensive than many other retirement destinations in Portugal, Porto remains a popular choice for those unwilling to compromise on urban amenities. Portugal's second-largest city offers world-class healthcare, cultural institutions, restaurants, and entertainment while retaining a more relaxed atmosphere than many European metropolitan centres. The city's historic riverside districts, famous port wine cellars, and vibrant arts scene continue to attract retirees seeking a dynamic urban lifestyle. Experts note that Portugal's enduring appeal lies not only in its climate and affordability but also in the strong sense of community found across the country. For many retirees, the attraction extends beyond scenic landscapes and historic architecture to the opportunity to build meaningful social connections and enjoy a slower, more fulfilling way of life. As international retirement migration continues to grow, Portugal's diverse cities and towns are increasingly positioning themselves as ideal destinations for those seeking comfort, security, cultural richness, and a welcoming place to call home.

**Celina Ali**  
Lisbon: Portugal's growing reputation as one of the world's most attractive retirement destinations continues to draw increasing numbers of expatriates, particularly Americans seeking a

Coimbra, a historic city situated between Lisbon and Porto. Home to one of Europe's oldest universities, Coimbra combines rich cultural traditions with a youthful atmosphere created by its large student population. Public lectures, concerts, riverside promenades, and a lower cost



high quality of life, affordable living costs, reliable healthcare, and welcoming communities. While Lisbon and Porto often dominate travel brochures, many retirees are choosing smaller cities and towns where life moves at a gentler pace and where a stronger sense of community helps newcomers quickly feel at home. From historic university towns and coastal fishing communities to island capitals and wine-country cities, Portugal offers a diverse range of retirement options catering to different lifestyles and budgets. Among the most sought-after destinations is

of living compared with Portugal's major cities have made it particularly attractive to retirees. The city's strong healthcare network, supported by its renowned university hospital, further enhances its appeal. Leiria, another increasingly popular retirement destination, offers a balance between modern amenities and small-city charm. The city boasts shopping centres, cultural venues, and quality healthcare facilities while maintaining a close-knit community atmosphere. Its proximity to the Atlantic coast and historic landmarks, including the UNESCO-listed monasteries of Alcobaça and Batalha, provides residents with easy access

For retirees looking for year-round mild weather, Funchal, the capital of Madeira, presents a compelling option. Located on the Atlantic island of Madeira, the city enjoys a subtropical climate, modern infrastructure, and a well-established expatriate community. Outdoor enthusiasts are particularly drawn to the island's famous levada walking trails, botanical gardens, and opportunities for whale and dolphin watching. History enthusiasts often gravitate toward Évora, a UNESCO World Heritage city in Portugal's Alentejo region. Surrounded by vineyards and olive groves, Évora offers a blend of Roman, medieval, and Renaissance heritage. Its compact size and strong sense of community enable newcomers to integrate easily into local life while enjoying the region's renowned cuisine



# Pakistan, US explore maritime cooperation to boost investment and blue economy

**Celina Ali**  
Islamabad: Pakistan and the United States this week agreed to deepen cooperation in the maritime sector, focusing on port development, investment opportunities, trade facilitation, and expansion of the blue economy, according to an official statement issued on Wednesday. The discussions took place during a meeting between Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry and US Chargé d'Affaires Natalie A. Baker in Islamabad. During the meeting, the maritime affairs minister highlighted the strategic importance of Pakistan's ports and coastal resources and invited US investors to explore opportunities in port infrastructure, shipping, logistics, and related services. Both sides reviewed areas of potential

collaboration including strengthening port infrastructure, improving logistics systems, and enhancing regional and international trade connectivity. Officials said the two countries have agreed in principle to establish a joint working group to coordinate future cooperation and investment initiatives in the maritime sector. The US diplomat expressed Washington's interest in expanding economic engagement with Pakistan, particularly in maritime development and sustainable use of ocean resources. She also acknowledged Pakistan's role in supporting regional peace and stability. The meeting concluded with both sides reaffirming their commitment to expanding bilateral cooperation in maritime affairs, trade, and investment, with a focus on identifying new avenues for long-term economic partnership and sustainable growth.



# Pakistan to launch digital B2B portal to connect IT firms with Japanese companies

**Abida Shaheen**  
Islamabad: Pakistan is set to launch a government-backed digital platform aimed at directly linking local IT companies with Japanese firms, marking a major step to expand technology exports and deepen economic ties with Japan. The initiative, known as the JICA-Pakistan B2B Portal, has been developed in collaboration with the Japan International Cooperation Agency and is designed to connect export-ready Pakistani IT companies with Japanese technology firms seeking outsourcing partners, software developers, and co-innovation opportunities.

Officials said the platform represents a structured effort to convert government-to-government cooperation into direct business-to-business engagement, enabling firms from both countries to interact without relying on intermediaries or prior business connections. The portal will use a profile-based matching system that evaluates companies based on technical expertise, sector specialization, and project requirements. It is intended to streamline early-stage business processes such as capability verification, due diligence, and initial commercial engagement. Six key sectors have been identified for targeted matchmaking, including enterprise software, healthcare IT, IT-enabled services, automotive soft-



ware, artificial intelligence, and data analytics. These areas align with both Japan's demand for technology services and Pakistan's growing export strengths in the IT sector. Officials said the platform will also support follow-up engagement after trade fairs, business forums, and investment promotion events, ensuring that initial contacts are converted into sustained commercial relationships.

Japan is considered one of the world's largest importers of IT services, and Pakistani authorities view it as a high-potential market for expanding exports. Pakistan's IT industry has recorded steady growth in recent years and has set an ambitious target of reaching \$15 billion in exports by 2030. The new platform is expected to reduce barriers such as language differ-

ences, limited market access, and reliance on individual contacts—challenges that have historically constrained Pakistani firms seeking entry into the Japanese market. Officials described the initiative as a key institutional step to strengthen Pakistan's digital economy and improve access to one of the world's most advanced and high-value technology markets.

# EU unveils new measures to cut red tape and boost business competitiveness



**Celina Ali**

Brussels: The European Commission this week unveiled two new legislative proposals aimed at simplifying regulations, reducing administrative burdens and strengthening the competitiveness of businesses across the European Union. The measures form part of the Commission's broader drive to streamline EU rules, encourage investment and support economic growth while maintaining high standards of consumer, environmental and social protection.



**Ambassador of the European Union to Pakistan H. E. Mr Raimundas Karoblis**

According to the Commission, simple and transparent regulations are essential for building a stronger European economy, enabling companies to expand operations, create jobs and compete more effectively in global markets while also reducing costs and saving time for consumers. The first proposal focuses on simplifying rules governing energy products and tyre labelling. The Commission said the initiative would make compliance requirements easier for suppliers and retailers while ensuring that consumers continue to receive clear and reliable information when making purchasing decisions. The second proposal seeks to simplify EU taxation rules by reducing reporting obligations and compliance requirements for businesses operating across multiple member states. Officials believe the changes will make it easier for companies to conduct cross-border operations and improve efficiency within the EU's single market. The proposals are part of the Commission's ongoing "omnibus" legislative approach, under which several related laws are amended simultaneously within the same policy area. EU officials say this method helps ensure consistency between

different pieces of legislation while accelerating the implementation of policy objectives. With the latest announcements, the Commission has now presented a total of 12 omnibus packages covering various sectors of the economy. Collectively, these measures are expected to generate approximately €18 billion in annual administrative savings for businesses across the bloc. The Commission noted that companies of all sizes have repeatedly identified excessive administrative requirements as a major obstacle to growth, investment and innovation. In response, Brussels has committed to simplifying regulatory frameworks without weakening existing protections for workers, consumers or the environment. European officials said the reforms are designed to allow businesses to spend less time on paperwork and compliance procedures and more time focusing on innovation, productivity and job creation.



Looking ahead, the Commission has set an ambitious target of reducing administrative burdens by at least 25 percent for all businesses by 2029. For small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which often face disproportionate compliance costs, the target has been set at a minimum reduction of 35 percent. If achieved, the Commission estimates that the broader simplification agenda could deliver savings of up to €37.5 billion, providing a significant boost to Europe's economic competitiveness and supporting efforts to strengthen growth across the European Union.

— of European competitiveness



# Prince William celebrates birthday and Father's Day as royal family shares heartfelt tributes



**Celina Ali** London: Britain's heir to the throne, Prince William, this week received warm tributes from his family as his 44th birthday coincided with Father's Day celebrations, with members of the royal family sharing affectionate messages and photographs to mark the occasion. A new photograph released by Kensington Palace showed the Prince of Wales in his Welsh Guards dress uniform alongside his daughter, Princess Charlotte, in the gardens of Kensington Palace. The image was taken following last weekend's Trooping the Colour celebrations.

The photograph carried a heartfelt message signed by the Prince's wife, Catherine, Princess of Wales, and their three children, praising William as "the best Papa in the World" and expressing their love and appreciation for him on both Father's Day and his birthday. Birthday wishes also came from William's father, King Charles III. The official Royal Family social media account shared a photograph of the King and the Prince of Wales smiling together during last year's Earthshot Prize ceremony in Brazil. Buckingham Palace further commemorated Father's Day by posting a nostalgic image of a young Charles standing beside his father, Prince Philip, who was dressed in Royal Air Force uniform. The accompanying message paid tribute to fathers everywhere while remembering those who could no longer be with their fathers on the special day. The celebrations came during a busy week for Prince William, who recently attended the prestigious Royal Ascot alongside Catherine. It marked the Princess of Wales's first appearance at the



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



High Commissioner of United Kingdom to Pakistan Jane Marriott

annual horse-racing event since 2023. Catherine had stepped back from public engagements after being diagnosed with cancer in early 2024 and subsequently undergoing successful chemotherapy

treatment. The family's public display of unity and affection comes ahead of an anticipated visit to Britain by William's brother, Prince Harry, and his wife, Meghan Mar-

kle. The Duke and Duchess of Sussex are expected to travel to the United Kingdom with their children, Prince Archie and Princess Lilibet.

Meghan also marked Father's Day by sharing a family photograph featuring Archie and Lilibet embracing their father. In an accompanying message, she praised Harry's role as a parent, writing that the children were fortunate to have him and expressing gratitude on behalf of the family.

According to reports, Harry and Meghan have been offered accommodation at a royal residence during their stay in Britain, a development viewed by royal observers as another indication of improving relations between the Sussexes and the monarchy after several years of public tensions.

The visit could potentially provide an opportunity for King Charles to reunite with his grandchildren. The monarch last saw Archie and Lilibet during celebrations marking the Platinum Jubilee of the late Queen Elizabeth II in 2022. However, it remains unclear whether a meeting between the King and the Sussex family will take place during the upcoming visit.

The exchange of birthday wishes, Father's Day tributes, and signs of renewed family contact have fuelled speculation that relations within the royal family may be gradually improving after years of strain.



“We turn to God for help when our foundations are shaking only to learn that it is God shaking them.”

Charles West

# COVERT

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“To live is the rarest thing in the world. Most people exist, that is all.”— Oscar Wilde

# Leonardo unveils AW249 “Fenice” in first public flight, entering Europe’s attack helicopter race



warfare systems. The AW249 features an open architecture design and advanced digital systems, including a large-area cockpit display, modern control interfaces, and an integrated battle management system. These upgrades are intended to reduce pilot workload and improve decision-making in complex operational environments. A key feature of the helicopter is its ability to operate in coordination with unmanned systems. The AW249 is designed for crewed-uncrewed teaming, allowing it to integrate drones and other airborne assets to extend surveillance, targeting, and operational reach while reducing risk to the crew. Leonardo also emphasises survivability enhancements, including defensive systems, armour protection, sensor fusion, and electronic warfare countermeasures, designed for operations in heavily contested airspace.



Leonardo's chairman H.E. Stefano Pontecorvo

## Liaquat Ali

Rome: Italy this week publicly showcased its next-generation attack helicopter, the AW249 “Fenice,” as aerospace company Leonardo S.p.A. made the aircraft’s first flying-display debut at the ILA Berlin Air Show, marking a major step in Europe’s evolving military aviation landscape.

Developed for the Italian Army in cooperation with the Italian Ministry of Defence, the AW249 is designed as the successor to the AW129 Mangusta and is being positioned as a modern European competitor to established attack helicopter platforms such as the Boeing AH-64 Apache and Airbus Tiger.

The helicopter’s public demonstration highlighted its agility and next-generation design, as Leonardo presented it as more than a traditional combat aircraft. The company describes the AW249 as a “networked battlefield platform,” capable of operating in environments shaped by drones, electronic warfare, advanced air defence systems, and rapidly shifting ground threats. Officials say the aircraft is intended not only for current operations but for long-term use over the next several decades, reflecting a broader shift in European defence planning toward digitally integrated and multi-domain



Technically, the aircraft has a maximum take-off weight of approximately 18,300 pounds and is powered by twin General Electric CT7-8E6 engines. It is capable of speeds up to around 155 knots and can be equipped with rockets, missiles, and a 20mm cannon for multi-role combat operations. The AW249 is expected to replace Italy’s ageing helicopter fleet and support a transition toward more digitally connected battlefield platforms. Italian procurement plans indicate a requirement for up to 48 units, with production already underway and initial deliveries

expected later in the decade. Defence officials say the programme reflects Europe’s effort to develop indigenous high-end military aviation capability as global competition intensifies in advanced rotorcraft technology. The Berlin debut marks a symbolic milestone for the programme, positioning the AW249 as Italy’s most ambitious step yet into next-generation attack helicopter development and Europe’s broader race to modernise its combat aviation fleet.

# EU approves €212 million French fuel aid plan for agriculture and aquaculture sectors



## Abida Shaheen

Brussels: The European Commission this week approved a €212 million support package proposed by France to help farmers and aquaculture operators cope with rising fuel costs that have significantly increased production expenses.

The aid scheme is aimed at the agriculture and aquaculture sectors, which have been heavily impacted by a sharp rise in non-road diesel fuel prices in recent months.

According to the Commission, fuel costs surged after global supply disruptions pushed up energy prices, placing additional pressure on food production and fisheries operations across France and other European countries.

The approved French plan will cover a four-month period from May to August and will provide direct financial compensation to affected businesses based on fuel consumption. Companies will receive €0.15 per litre of non-road diesel used during the eligible period.

The European Commission said the measure was authorised under its temporary state aid framework, which allows EU member states to support sectors facing exceptional cost pressures while ensuring fair competition within the single market.

Officials noted that similar support schemes have already been introduced or approved in other EU countries, including Spain, Ireland and the Netherlands, particularly for fisheries and related industries.

The Commission said the French programme meets the required conditions of necessity and proportionality and is designed to offset part of the cost increases without distorting competition within the bloc.

The support framework allows governments to compensate up to 70 percent of the increase in fuel costs experienced by eligible sectors. French authorities had argued that rising fuel prices were placing significant strain on agricultural and aquaculture production, increasing operational costs and threatening competitiveness in key rural and coastal industries.

The Commission’s approval clears the way for the French government to begin disbursing payments to eligible operators in the coming months.