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# Pakistan asks Kabul not to let its soil be used for terrorism

**FO says India's unabated repression fails to break the will of Kashmiris**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has reaffirmed its commitment to engage with Afghanistan on all aspects of cooperation and concerns, including issues relating to terrorism.

After weekly news briefing here on Thursday, Foreign Office spokesman Amir Zuhra Baloch urged Afghan authorities to fulfil their promises that their soil will not be used for terrorism against Pakistan.

He said it was their responsibility to ensure that their land was not used against Pakistan, and Afghan authorities had accepted this responsibility on various occasions.

On the situation in India-Bhutan, Mr Baloch said that since August 1, 2019, over 700 Kashmiris had been martyred by occupation forces.

He said India's unabated repression over the last seven decades had failed to break the will of Kashmiris for the right to self-determination.

He said Pakistan would continue to support its Kashmiri brethren and sisters in their just struggle against Indian aggression till the realisation of their inalienable right to self-determination as enshrined in the UN Security Council resolution.

In reply to a question, the spokesman said the India Water Treaty was an important document that had served both Pakistan and India. He said

Pakistan was committed to its full implementation and hoped that India would remain committed to it.

He said the UN Human Rights Council recently adopted a historic resolution presented by Pakistan on behalf of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) which condemned any advocacy of religious hatred, including the recent acts of desecration of the Holy Quran and underscored the need for holding the perpetrators to account.

He said Pakistan shared the disappointment of OIC members that despite its balanced and apolitical stance, this important resolution was not put to vote on fallacious grounds, derailing the council's consensus.

The spokesman said Pakistan believed that the Human Rights Council must speak with one voice on the issue of Islamophobia which affects human rights, fundamental freedoms, dignity and identity of over two billion Muslims.

He said Pakistan would continue to take lead in raising global awareness about Islamophobia and xenophobia and fostering interfaith dialogues, harmony and peaceful coexistence.

The FO spokesman said that Azerbaijan's Minister for Digital Development and Transport would undertake a three-day visit to Pakistan from Monday.

He said the visiting minister would meet Pakistan counterparts in the ministries of Information Technology, Aviation, Communications, Railways and Maritime Affairs and explore bilateral cooperation in the fields of connectivity and information technology.—APP



US SECRETARY OF STATE Antony Blinken shows the way to China's senior-most Foreign Office official Wang Yi before their bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the Asian foreign ministers' meeting in Jakarta, on Thursday.—APP

# US takes up 'hacking' with China as issue threatens ties

**Secretary of State Blinken meets Wang Yi in Jakarta**

JAKARTA: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken warned Beijing's top diplomat on Thursday of consequences over hacking after already blaming on China again threatened to undermine a summit a day later.

The FO spokesman said that Azerbaijan's Minister for Digital Development and Transport would undertake a three-day visit to Pakistan from Monday.

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official said, in condition of any summit.

The official swapped shots of saying that Blinken directly accused China of involvement.

The State Department has publicly said only that it is investigating the hacking, which according to Blinken affected approximately 25 organisations.

State Department spokesman Matthew Miller called the Jakarta talks as "unusually high-level" and part of efforts to convey his "best wishes" to Qin, another US official said.

No progress on military talks

Blinken has repeatedly insisted efforts to repair US-China relations, with Blinken scrapping his first planned trip to Beijing in February after Washington said it detected a Chinese espionage hub near the US embassy.

Blinken eventually visited in mid-June, becoming the first US secretary of state in China in nearly five years, opening a flurry of diplomacy as well.

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen

went to the Chinese capital last week and climate envoy John Kerry is set to go in the coming days.

The US officials acknowledged that Blinken has not achieved a key goal of reuniting US dialogue with the Chinese military, seen as crucial to preventing disagreements from escalating into all-out conflict.

Blinken "understood to have a responsibility to keep our channels of communication open, including between our two militaries", the second US official said on Thursday.

"I think it's urgent that we do so. We haven't achieved that yet," he said.

China has demanded that the United States lift sanctions on its defence minister, Li Shengfu, which were imposed over weapons purchase from US adversary Russia.

Wang met separately on Thursday with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov.

Blinken is not scheduled to meet Lavrov but the two will both attend an 18-nation East Asia Summit meeting on Friday (today), their first time in a room together since a G20 meeting in New Delhi in March.

Blinken has refused most talks with Lavrov since Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, believing that Moscow is not serious about diplomacy, and has pressed China not to support the war.—APP

# EU parliament alarmed by violence in Manipur

STRASBOURG: The EU parliament on Thursday urged India to end violence and protect minorities in the country's northeastern Manipur.

MEPs expressed concern over clashes between Manipur's majority Khasi, who are mostly Hindu and live in and around the state capital Imphal, and the mainly Christian Kuki tribe in the surrounding hills.

The EU parliament said

that the violence has "killed at least 320 people, displaced 50,000 and over 1,500 houses and 200 churches destroyed".

MEPs called on "nationalistic rhetoric" and the parliament urged a resolution on Thursday urging Indian authorities to "promptly halt the ethnic and religious violence and to protect all religious minorities".—APP

subtle Paris, Modi stepped off his official plane on Monday ahead of two days of meetings.

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# Parents to have more control over kids' TikTok feeds

ISLAMABAD: TikTok has given more power to parents, allowing them to curate the content viewed by their children and filter out their deemed inappropriate videos.

The new content filtering feature is designed to "prevent content with mature or complex themes from reaching users between the ages of 13 and 17 years", the social media platform said in a statement. The tool will allow parents and caregivers to "curate a child's feed viewing experience" for their

children by filtering out specific words, hashtags and themes they deem inappropriate or sensitive.

TikTok said the feature has been beta tested following demands from parents to enhance the safety and wellbeing of teenagers on the platform.

The tool was initially launched last year when TikTok empowered viewers to automatically filter out videos with words or hashtags they don't want to see on their feeds.

Now, the platform has extended the scope of the tool and added it to Family Pairing, which allows parents to pair accounts with their children to manage

their interaction with the app by controlling screen time, limiting the appearance of inappropriate content on their feeds and restricting who can send them messages.

The new option has largely been welcomed by digital rights activists as it would help prevent cyber crimes including child pornography and luring or trapping of young users into illegal sex.

However, Digital Rights Foundation's Nigal said there was a need for parents to understand the digital rights of their children. She added that too much intervention, with the aim of protecting chil-

dren, could lead to the reduction of social media usage by teenagers, especially girls. "It is now becoming normal for girls to have social media accounts but over protection could reduce their place in the digital space," she said.

TikTok said it acknowledged the unique needs of every teenager and empowered caregivers to create a safer and more personalised environment for their teens with the app.

TikTok has said the new feature has been developed in collaboration with renowned experts, including the Family Online Safety Institute, while keeping in view the inclusive

safety framework.

The experts have emphasised the delicate balance between the caregivers' concern and respecting the teenagers' rights to engage and participate in the online world. TikTok has said.

This transparency not only fosters open conversations about online boundaries and safety but also encourages mutual understanding between teenagers and their parents.

Apart from the content filtering feature, TikTok has also introduced Youth Content to give "young users a safe and active greater than to shaping TikTok's policies and features".

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FOR MORE INFORMATION







# Pakistan sells historic building for \$7.1m in US

**By Wajid Ali Syed**  
WASHINGTON: A Pakistan-owned historic building in the heart of the city has been sold for \$7.1 million. The building had been vacated and ignored for decades, resulting in it being declared a blighted property over a month ago. Its tax-exempt status was withdrawn too, burdening the government of Pakistan with millions of dollars each year in taxes.

The famous R-street building, which used to be a chancery, was put up for auction late last year. In the first bidding attempt, the highest offer the building received was 6.8 million dollars, but the authorities cancelled the bid that was almost finalized. In the second round, the property was sold to Hafeez Khan, a Texas-based American-Pakistan businessman, who offered 7.1 million dollars.

The hand-over event took place here on Thursday that was attended by Pakistani Ambassador Masood Khan who announced that any speculations about selling off other Pakistani assets in the US should end. The new owner of the building thanked the PM and his cabinet for the approval of sale.

# India regularly updating Pakistan on water release into rivers: FO Says committee looking into question of Pakistan's participation in cricket matches in India

**By Mariana Baahor**  
ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office (FO) said here on Thursday India had been sharing with Islamabad regular updates on water discharge towards Pakistan since July 9, as expected under the Indus Waters Treaty.

Speaking at weekly briefing, the FO spokesperson said reports from Punjab speak about 40 villages of Jhang district where Chenab River water had caused flooding. "Indus Waters Treaty is a very important treaty that has served both Pakistan and India well. It is a gold standard of bilateral treaties on water sharing. Pakistan is fully committed to its full implementation. And, we hope that India will also remain committed to the Treaty," she said.

The spokesperson was replying to a query regarding the recent verdict from the Court of Arbitration, especially on Kishenganga and Ratte reservoirs, and the consequences if India rejected the verdict.

Regarding chances of Pakistan's cricket team visiting India, she responded, "Prime Minister has set up a committee to discuss the circumstances of participation of the Pakistani cricket team in the World Cup. The committee will deliberate on this question and once we have an outcome, we will make an announcement."

She said Pakistan expects Afghanistan to fulfil its promises of not allowing the Afghan soil to be used for terrorism against Pakistan. When questioned about recent statements from Kabul, the spokeswoman said, "On this, we have made our understanding very clear that the responsibility of ensuring that the soil of Afghanistan is not used for terrorism against Pakistan lies with the Afghan authorities. It is their responsibility and they have accepted this responsibility on various occasions, including in the trilateral statement, which was issued when the foreign minister of China and the acting foreign minister of

Continued on page 9

# WB approves \$100m for family planning in Punjab

**News Desk**  
ISLAMABAD: The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors Thursday approved \$100 million for the Punjab Family Planning Programme to increase the utilisation of family planning services in Punjab, which is home to more than half of the country's population. The programme will provide timely access to quality family planning services free of charge, a handout from the lending institution said. The bank said it would also institutionalise quality of care across the family planning services delivery system. The programme will also support public information and advocacy campaigns so that more families are made aware of the benefits of family planning. "This important programme aims to achieve universal access to reproductive healthcare and to raise the usage of family planning methods in Punjab to 60% by

# PAC wants ban on opening new petrol pumps lifted

**Also orders Ogra, PTA to submit audit records to AGP within three days**  
**By Asim Yasin**  
ISLAMABAD: Public Accounts Committee (PAC) Thursday expressed its resentment over non-submission of audit records to the Auditor General of Pakistan by the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority, Pakistan Telecommunication Authority and Frequency Allocation Board and directed them to furnish the same within three days. The committee also took notice of the ban on new petrol pumps and directed the Cabinet Division to lift the ban and submit a report to the committee within three days. The committee met under the chair of Noor Alam Khan

# 'LHC's no response to RTI requests deplorable'

**By Asif Mahmood Butt**  
LAHORE: The Punjab Information Commission has said the attitude of Lahore High Court (LHC) towards implementation of access to Information Law is deplorable. The commission said the LHC has not responded to the requests made in accordance with the Constitution and law to provide information, including salaries and benefits of judges, despite passage of five years. The Right to Information Act was made in 2013. The high court, however, has not yet formulated any SOPs regarding implementation of this Act. Through an RTI application filed in the Punjab Information Commission, Advocate Muhammad Husna Mughal has asked questions. The Information Commission said under Article 19-A of the Constitution, there is an exception to disclosure of information about judicial matters only. But the information about the administrative and financial affairs of the courts must be disclosed as public information, it added.

# LAST EPISODE

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# Amendment ready to make PECA more effective against propaganda

**By Muhammad Saleh Zaafir**  
ISLAMABAD: To counter dissemination of fake news and propaganda, the government has decided to amend the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act of 2016 (PECA) and the relevant laws are being studied for this. Last year, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had constituted a committee under Law and Justice Minister Senator Azam Nasser Tarar, the committee has now nearly completed its task with the assistance of the Ministry

# Will elections be held in Oct-Nov this year?

**By Ansar Abbasi**  
ISLAMABAD: The MQM, which is part of the ruling PDM coalition, has tasked its legal minds to advise whether next general elections could be held on the basis of past population census when the process for the fresh census has almost completed. Federal minister and MQM leader Syed Faisal Ali Subzwari when approached, told The News that Buttahidi's position has always been that elections should be held on the basis of correct latest counting of the population. He said that the MQM has approached its legal and constitutional experts to get their advice for the party leadership whether the elections could be held on the basis

# Doctors reattach boy's head after car accident thanks to amazing surgery

**News Report**  
TEL AVIV: Surgeons in Israel performed a miracle surgery and managed to reattach a boy's head after he was hit by a car while riding his bike, a Jerusalem hospital announced this week. Subman Hassan, a 12-year-old Palestinian from the West Bank, suffered what is known as an internal decapitation, with his skull detached from the top vertebrae of his spine — officially known as a bilateral ataxic occipital joint

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