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24 August 2026 to 30 August 2026

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INTERNATIONAL

Dubai's solar-powered desalination plant goes live with 60m-gallon daily capacity

The AED3.377 billion project will reach 180 million imperial gallons per day capacity by 2027.



(International Desk) Dubai:

The Hassyan seawater reverse-osmosis project has entered operation in stages, with Block A already commissioned at 60 million imperial gallons per day (MIGD). According to DEWA's latest H1 2026 results, another 120 MIGD is expected to be added during 2026, taking the project's total capacity to 180 MIGD, equivalent to around 818 million litres of water per day. The full project is scheduled for completion in the first quarter of 2027.

Developed at a cost of AED3.377 billion, the Hassyan project uses reverse-osmosis technology with renewable energy supplied by DEWA. The initiative is part of Dubai's efforts to strengthen water security, reduce reliance on traditional desalination methods and improve sustainable water production. Technology provider Veolia says the plant's full capacity would be sufficient to supply drinking water to around two million people. The company has also described Hassyan as the world's largest solar-powered desalination plant.

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Dubai opens 102-metre forest bridge to keep cyclists away from traffic

The 102-metre bridge creates a safer continuous route by connecting two sections of the mountain-biking trail.

(International Desk) Dubai: Municipality has opened a 102-metre bridge at Mushrif National Park, creating a safer and more continuous route for mountain bikers and hikers through Dubai's largest forest. The new bridge connects two previously separated sections of the mountain-biking trail, allowing cyclists to continue their journey without stopping to cross a road used by vehicles. The facility has two dedicated lanes, separating mountain bikers from hikers to improve safety and movement across the park.



According to the Dubai Media Office, the complete biking journey across the new connection extends 182 metres. The bridge is now open to visitors, who can begin their cycling or hiking journey from Mushrif Hub. The project forms part of Dubai Municipality's wider efforts to expand outdoor recreation facilities and encourage active lifestyles. Urban development observers believe dedicated cycling and walking infrastructure can improve public safety while making recreational spaces more accessible to residents and visitors. They say the expansion of such facilities can also encourage healthier lifestyles and strengthen Dubai's network of outdoor leisure destinations.

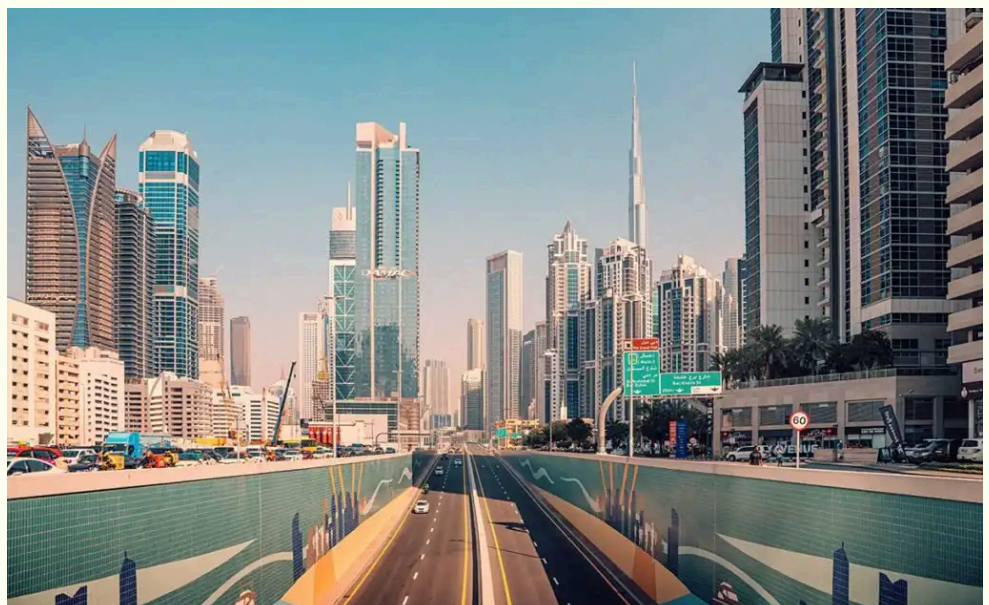
Dubai to introduce 12-month zero-interest rent payment plan

The proposed scheme could allow eligible tenants to spread annual rent across 12 monthly instalments at zero interest.

(International Desk) Dubai: Tenants in Dubai could soon have a new option for managing annual rental payments, with a proposed "Rent Now, Pay Later" service expected to launch in September 2026. Under the proposed model, eligible tenants would be able to spread their annual rent over up to 12 monthly instalments at zero interest. A participating local bank would pay the landlord the full annual rent upfront, while the tenant would repay the bank through smaller monthly payments.

The initiative is being developed in connection with the Dubai Land Department's broader push towards flexible rental payment arrangements. Dubai has already introduced its Flexi Rent programme, which allows tenants of participating real estate companies to choose payment schedules including monthly, quarterly and semi-annual options.

The proposed service could reduce the financial pressure associated with large upfront rental payments and make budgeting easier for households. Real estate observers believe greater flexibility in rental payments could make Dubai's housing market more accessible to tenants and further modernise the emirate's rental system. However, eligibility requirements, participating banks and final terms will need to be confirmed before the proposed service launches.



Dubai's Museum of the Future to close on Sept 1 ahead of next phase

Dubai landmark will shut from September 1 as new interactive exhibitions are prepared for a planned 2027 unveiling.

(International Desk) Dubai: One of Dubai's most recognisable landmarks, the Museum of the Future, will temporarily close from September 1, 2026, as work begins on what the museum describes as its "next generation of experiences." The closure date was announced through the museum's official social-media channels on August 25, with visitors encouraged to experience the current exhibitions before the temporary shutdown. The planned overhaul is expected to replace several of the museum's major existing experiences with new interactive and immersive exhibitions. The refreshed programme will explore themes linked to science, technology and social change, aiming to provide visitors with more engaging and forward-looking experiences. According to the museum, more than 1,000 ideas and suggestions from people around the world have been considered while developing the next phase.



The updated museum is planned to be unveiled in the first quarter of 2027, around the landmark's fifth anniversary. Tourism and cultural observers believe the upgrade could help maintain the museum's position as one of Dubai's major visitor attractions while introducing new reasons for repeat visits. The temporary closure represents a significant transition for the landmark as Dubai continues investing in attractions that combine technology, education and entertainment.

Riyadh launches Digital Innovation District in bid to join world's top 10 tech hubs

The initiative aims to position Riyadh among the world's top 10 technology hubs and attract global tech companies.

(International Desk) Saudi Arabia : has launched the Riyadh Digital Innovation District, a strategic initiative aimed at transforming the capital into a major global destination for technology companies, entrepreneurs and specialist talent. The Royal Commission for Riyadh City announced the initiative on August 27, 2026, with an ambition to position Riyadh among the world's top 10 technology hubs. The district will provide dedicated business spaces and an environment designed to support technology companies seeking to establish operations in the Saudi capital.

The initiative will focus on six high-growth fields: artificial intelligence and big data, cybersecurity, computing and cloud services, Internet of Things, blockchain, and robotics and unmanned systems. These sectors are expected to form the foundation of the district's technology-focused ecosystem.



The district is also intended to attract global and regional companies as well as startups looking to establish a presence in Riyadh and expand their operations across the Middle East and North Africa. Technology observers believe the initiative could strengthen Saudi Arabia's position in the regional digital economy, encourage innovation and create opportunities for highly skilled professionals. Its success will depend on attracting sustained private-sector investment, international companies and specialised talent.

Tarbela 5th Extension cost surges by Rs234bn to Rs316bn

The revised cost of the 1,530MW hydropower project has increased by around Rs234 billion from the original estimate.

Islamabad: (Staff Reporter) : The estimated cost of the Tarbela 5th Extension Hydropower Project has risen from roughly Rs82 billion to about Rs316 billion after the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council considered and approved its revised PC-I. The Express Tribune reported that ECNEC approved the revised cost at its August 22 meeting, representing an increase of around Rs234 billion from the original estimate. The project is being constructed on Tarbela Dam's Tunnel No. 5 and is designed to generate 1,530 megawatts of electricity through three generating units, each with a capacity of 510MW.

According to WAPDA, overall progress on the project had reached 56 percent in January 2026. The first generating unit was targeted to start producing electricity in April 2027, although the project has faced delays and concerns over implementation.

Earlier scrutiny by the Planning Commission raised questions regarding project delays, management, supervision and the significant increase in cost. Energy sector observers say completing the project efficiently will be important for adding reliable hydropower capacity and reducing pressure on Pakistan's electricity system. They believe stronger project monitoring and timely execution will be essential to prevent further cost escalation.



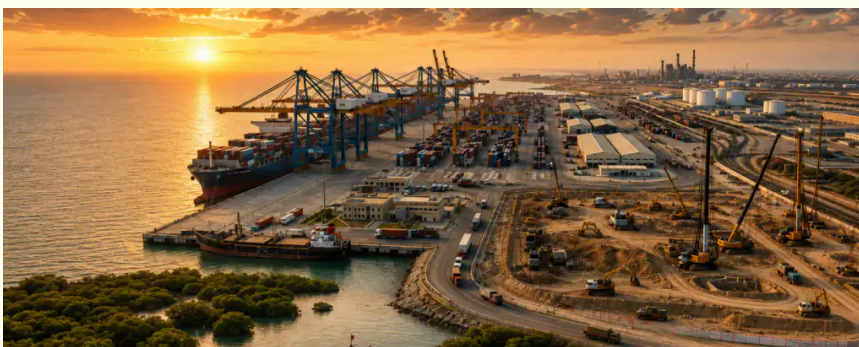
China's \$522m Ketī Bandar plan could open new trade gateway for Pakistan

The first phase is estimated at \$522.34 million and includes a 500-metre quay and multi-purpose terminal.

Islamabad: (Staff Reporter): China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC) has presented a conceptual master plan for the proposed Ketī Bunder Port in Sindh, with the preliminary engineering cost of its first phase estimated at approximately \$522.34 million.

Phase I of the proposed development includes a 500-metre quay and a multi-purpose terminal. The broader concept envisions multiple terminals, logistics facilities and supporting infrastructure aimed at establishing Ketī Bunder as an additional maritime gateway for Pakistan.

President Asif Ali Zardari said the project has the potential to strengthen Pakistan's maritime connectivity and support economic activity in Sindh. However, he stressed that reliable road connectivity, electricity, water supply and industrial infrastructure would be essential for the port to operate effectively.



The president also called for protection of the Indus Delta ecosystem and the interests of local fishing communities during the development process. Maritime observers believe Ketī Bunder could create new trade and logistics opportunities if successfully implemented, but environmental protection and community interests will remain important considerations.

Rs36bn Dadocha project could supply Rawalpindi with 35m gallons of water daily

The Dadocha Dam-linked project will add 35 million gallons of treated water daily to the city's supply network.



Rawalpindi: (Staff Reporter): The Punjab government has approved a Rs36 billion surface water treatment plant and water supply system linked to Dadocha Dam, aimed at strengthening Rawalpindi's long-term drinking-water supply. Once completed, the new system is planned to add 35 million gallons of treated water every day to the city's network, helping address growing demand and reduce pressure on existing water sources. The project has been targeted for completion by December 2029.

WASA Rawalpindi will develop the required water-supply infrastructure, including a transmission line and distribution network to transport treated water from Dadocha Dam into the city. Current reporting indicates that the transmission system will extend for about 28 kilometres. Water-sector observers say timely construction, effective distribution and regular maintenance will be essential to ensure that the additional water reaches the areas facing the greatest supply pressure.

Officials and urban planners believe the project can provide Rawalpindi with a more reliable and sustainable source of drinking water as the city's population and water requirements continue to increase. However, the Rs36 billion approval specifically covers the treatment and water-supply system and does not represent the original construction cost of Dadocha Dam itself.

South Air expands domestic network with new routes to Peshawar, Lahore, Quetta and Multan

New services will connect Peshawar with Quetta and Lahore, while an Islamabad-Multan route will provide additional domestic travel options.

Peshawar: (Staff Reporter): South Air has received approval to launch new domestic flight routes connecting Peshawar with Quetta and Lahore, while also announcing a new Islamabad-Multan service to expand air connectivity across Pakistan. The new routes are expected to provide passengers with additional travel options and offer residents of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa an alternative to long road journeys. The Peshawar-Lahore service is likely to benefit passengers travelling for business, education, tourism and other purposes.



The Peshawar-Quetta connection is also expected to strengthen direct links between Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, potentially making inter-provincial travel more convenient. Meanwhile, the Islamabad-Multan service will provide another connection between two important cities.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi welcomed the development and appreciated the Pakistan Aviation Authority and South Air for approving and introducing the new services. Aviation observers believe the expansion of domestic routes can improve passenger mobility, support business activity and strengthen tourism by reducing travel times between major cities.

Pakistan clears Rs1.2tr debt ahead of deadline in record early repayment

The latest repayment takes total domestic debt retired ahead of maturity to more than Rs5.92 trillion.

Islamabad: (Staff Reporter): Pakistan has made its largest-ever single early domestic debt repayment, retiring Rs1.2 trillion owed to the State Bank of Pakistan before its scheduled maturity, according to Adviser to the Finance Minister Khurram Schehzad. The latest payment has pushed the government's cumulative domestic debt retired ahead of maturity to more than Rs5.92 trillion. Government figures show that around Rs1.8 trillion was repaid early during FY2024-25, followed by Rs2.9 trillion in FY2025-26 and another Rs1.2 trillion so far in FY2026-27.



Officials said the early repayment strategy is aimed at reducing refinancing and rollover risks and easing future debt-servicing pressure. By retiring debt before maturity, the government seeks to manage its repayment obligations more effectively and reduce the concentration of large payments in future periods. Financial observers say early debt retirement can strengthen debt management when fiscal conditions allow, particularly by lowering near-term rollover requirements. However, they note that the broader impact depends on the government's overall borrowing strategy.

The latest repayment specifically relates to domestic debt owed to the SBP and should not be confused with repayment of an IMF, World Bank or foreign-government loan.



Punjab develops 485 villages as model communities under 'Sohna Punjab' programme

The Sohna Punjab programme is upgrading streets, parks, sewerage, lighting and drinking-water facilities across selected villages.

Lahore: (Staff Reporter): As many as 485 villages are being developed as model communities under the "Maryam Nawaz's Sohna Punjab" programme, with development schemes focused on improving essential civic facilities and rural living conditions. Local Government Minister Zeeshan Rafiq said 19 villages have so far achieved 100 percent completion, while 67 percent of development work has been completed in another 281 villages.

The committee also reviewed House business and procedural matters related to the conduct of parliamentary proceedings. Such meetings are important for setting priorities, managing legislative workload and ensuring that the session runs in an organized manner. Deputy Speaker Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah, Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar and several federal ministers and lawmakers attended the consultative meeting. Parliamentary observers believe the advisory committee plays an important role in maintaining coordination between the treasury and opposition benches. They say proper agenda planning can help improve the quality of debate, support legislative efficiency and ensure that key national issues receive attention in the House.



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GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Punjab imposes province-wide ban on digging up newly built roads

CM Maryam Nawaz directs departments to coordinate utility work and ensure proper drainage, markings and signage on new roads.

Lahore: (Staff Reporter): The Punjab government has ordered departments to stop digging up or damaging newly constructed roads, aiming to end the repeated excavation of fresh roads for sewerage, utility and other development works.

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz issued the directive during a meeting reviewing development schemes funded through Own Source Revenue (OSR) across the province. Departments have been instructed to coordinate their projects before road construction is completed so that newly developed routes do not have to be repeatedly excavated.

The chief minister also directed that every new road should include proper roadside drainage, lane markings and traffic signage. Manholes and sewerage covers must also remain level with the road surface to improve safety and road quality.



The meeting approved road, sewerage, beautification, solar-lighting and other development schemes across Lahore, Multan, Bahawalpur, Sahiwal, Rawalpindi and Faisalabad divisions. Urban development observers believe better coordination between departments can reduce unnecessary public spending and extend the life of newly constructed roads. They say proper planning before construction can also minimize traffic disruption and improve the overall quality of urban infrastructure.

Punjab allocates Rs115.55bn for 428 local development schemes in 2026-27

The 2026-27 development programme includes 406 ongoing schemes and 22 new projects across the province.

Lahore: (Staff Reporter): Punjab's Local Government and Community Development Department has included 428 schemes in its Annual Development Programme for 2026-27, with a total allocation of Rs115.55 billion for local infrastructure and development projects.

The department has directed officials to strengthen monitoring, increase field inspections and make third-party supervision more effective. Authorities stressed that projects should be completed within their approved timelines and budgets to avoid delays and cost escalation. Urban development observers believe the scale of the programme could support improvements in municipal infrastructure, heritage sites and tourism-related facilities across Punjab. They say stronger monitoring and transparent implementation will be essential to ensure that the allocated funds translate into visible improvements for residents and visitors.

According to a departmental briefing chaired by Local Government Secretary Zaid Bin Maqsood, the portfolio comprises 406 ongoing schemes and 22 new projects. Officials reviewed progress on the development programme and discussed measures to improve implementation and monitoring across different districts. A significant portion of the development allocation is directed towards major location-specific projects. More than Rs55 billion has been earmarked across 20 ongoing heritage-restoration projects in Lahore, while around Rs9 billion has been allocated for 88 schemes under the Murree Development Programme Phase-II.



Lahore advances Rs31.6bn canal water project as groundwater levels continue to fall

The initiative aims to reduce groundwater dependence by supplying treated canal water to the city.

Lahore: (Staff Reporter): Punjab is moving ahead with a Rs31.592 billion surface-water project aimed at reducing Lahore's heavy dependence on groundwater and developing a more sustainable source of drinking water for the city. Under the plan, a treatment plant near Bhaini Road will draw water from the BRBD Canal and initially treat 54 million gallons per day (MGD) for drinking-water supply. The project includes raw-water pipelines, pumping stations, sedimentation and filtration facilities, treated-water storage, chlorination, drainage infrastructure and a transmission main with related distribution works.



The Central Development Working Party has cleared the revised PC-I and referred it to the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council for final consideration. WASA officials say physical execution will begin after the required final approval. Water experts believe shifting part of Lahore's supply towards treated surface water could help reduce pressure on the city's aquifer, which has faced increasing demand from rapid urban growth. The project could also support long-term water security if treatment standards, distribution infrastructure and maintenance systems are properly managed.

Punjab moves to protect new roads by ending repeated excavation

CM Maryam Nawaz directs departments to coordinate utility works and ensure proper drainage, markings and road safety features.

Lahore: (Staff Reporter): Punjab has ordered government departments to stop repeatedly digging up newly constructed roads, targeting the long-standing practice of cutting fresh asphalt for sewerage, water, electricity and other utility works. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz directed relevant departments to coordinate their projects before roads are completed so that underground work does not damage newly developed infrastructure. The move is aimed at reducing repeated excavation, avoiding unnecessary repair costs and improving the lifespan of public roads.



Under the new instructions, manholes and sewer covers must remain level with road surfaces to improve safety for motorists and pedestrians. Authorities have also been directed to ensure that every new road includes proper roadside drainage, lane markings and necessary signage. The same meeting approved several development schemes funded through Own Source Revenue across Lahore, Multan, Bahawalpur, Sahiwal, Rawalpindi and Faisalabad divisions. The schemes cover road construction, sewerage, beautification and other civic infrastructure. Urban development experts believe better coordination between departments can reduce public inconvenience, prevent wastage of development funds and improve the quality of road infrastructure. They say completing underground utility work before final road surfacing should become a standard practice to avoid repeated excavation and prolong the service life of newly constructed roads.

REAL ESTATE

LDA offers commercial, residential plots in prime Lahore locations through transparent balloting

Investors and buyers can apply for plots in LDA City, Johar Town and LDA Avenue One through a computerized balloting system.



Lahore: (Staff Reporter): The Lahore Development Authority has announced an opportunity for investors and buyers to apply for commercial and residential plots in strategically located areas including LDA City, Johar Town and LDA Avenue One.

According to the available details, the initiative offers applicants access to plots in established and developing areas of Lahore with connectivity to major roads and developed infrastructure. The authority has highlighted a computerized transparent balloting system to ensure an organized allocation process.

Applications will remain open until September 2, 2026, while the balloting process is scheduled for September 9, 2026. The announcement is expected to attract interest from property investors, builders and individuals seeking opportunities in Lahore's expanding real estate market.

Real estate observers believe such offerings can support planned urban growth and provide investment options in regulated development areas. They say applicants should carefully review official terms, eligibility criteria, payment schedules and documentation requirements before submitting applications. Transparent procedures and timely development progress will remain important factors in maintaining investor confidence in public-sector housing and commercial schemes.





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BAHRIA TOWN LAHORE

CDA tightens plot allotment, housing scheme regulations in Islamabad

The revised regulatory approach aims to improve transparency, strengthen compliance and protect property buyers in Islamabad.

Islamabad: (Staff Reporter): The Capital Development Authority (CDA) is moving towards stricter regulations for plot allotments and private housing schemes in Islamabad as part of efforts to improve transparency and strengthen regulatory oversight. Under the revised approach, developers, investors and property buyers are expected to face tighter checks relating to approvals, plot allotment procedures and compliance with housing scheme regulations. The measures are aimed at bringing greater discipline to the capital's real estate sector and reducing irregularities in property development and transactions.

Authorities intend to improve monitoring mechanisms to ensure that private housing schemes and property-related activities follow the applicable planning and regulatory requirements. Stronger oversight could also help buyers make more informed decisions by improving the availability and verification of official property information.



Real estate observers believe tighter regulation can strengthen investor confidence and protect buyers from risks associated with non-compliant developments. However, they say the effectiveness of the reforms will depend on consistent enforcement, transparent approvals and timely processing of legitimate applications. Developers and investors will need to remain updated on the revised requirements as Islamabad's property market moves towards a more closely monitored regulatory environment.

Saif Glorious Mall emerges as new commercial hub on Peshawar's University Road

The 16-storey project combines commercial shops, residential apartments, penthouses, dining and entertainment facilities in Peshawar.

Peshawar: (Staff Reporter): Saif Glorious Mall has emerged on Main University Road, Tahkal Payan, Peshawar, as a mixed-use commercial and residential project by Saif Group, offering a combination of retail, office, residential and lifestyle facilities. According to Saif Group's official material, the project features a 16-storey structure with commercial shops extending from the lower ground to the 3rd floor, residential apartments from the 4th to the 13th floor and exclusive penthouses on the 14th floor.



The development also includes restaurants and cafés, a food court, high-speed elevators and three basement parking floors. The developer describes the mall as a modern destination bringing shops, offices, food and entertainment together under one roof. Saif Group states that the mall's grand opening was celebrated on June 19, 20 and 21, 2026, indicating that the project has moved beyond the planning and construction stages and is now being positioned as an active commercial destination on University Road.

Real estate observers believe the project's mixed-use model can attract both shoppers and residents while strengthening commercial activity along the University Road corridor. Its long-term success will depend on occupancy, accessibility, parking management and the quality of services provided to visitors and residents.

The project is expected to strengthen commercial activity along Peshawar's Main University Road. Its combination of retail, residential and lifestyle facilities could attract both businesses and families. With its central location and modern amenities, Saif Glorious Mall may become an important mixed-use destination in the city.

Grand City Faisalabad Phase II sees rapid development progress on Narwala Road

Earthwork, excavation and land preparation are underway on Narwala Road as the residential project moves ahead.

Faisalabad: (Staff Reporter): Development work at Grand City Faisalabad – Phase II on Narwala Road is progressing rapidly, with significant construction activity taking place across the project site. Current work includes earthwork, excavation, land levelling, subgrade preparation and compaction, laying the groundwork for future infrastructure. These activities are essential for preparing the site before the construction of roads and other planned facilities begins.

Real estate observers believe continued development activity can increase the appeal of emerging residential areas by improving accessibility and creating a more organized community environment. They say the pace and quality of infrastructure development will remain important factors for future residents and property buyers. If work continues according to the planned schedule, Grand City Faisalabad Phase II could contribute to the expansion of residential activity and support further development along the Narwala Road corridor.



The ongoing groundwork is preparing the site for upcoming roads and other infrastructure. Improved infrastructure can make the area more attractive for future residents and investors. The project is gradually taking shape as development activity continues across the site. Timely completion of planned works will be important for the project's long-term residential appeal.

Serene Tower emerges as premium high-rise residential project in DHA Multan

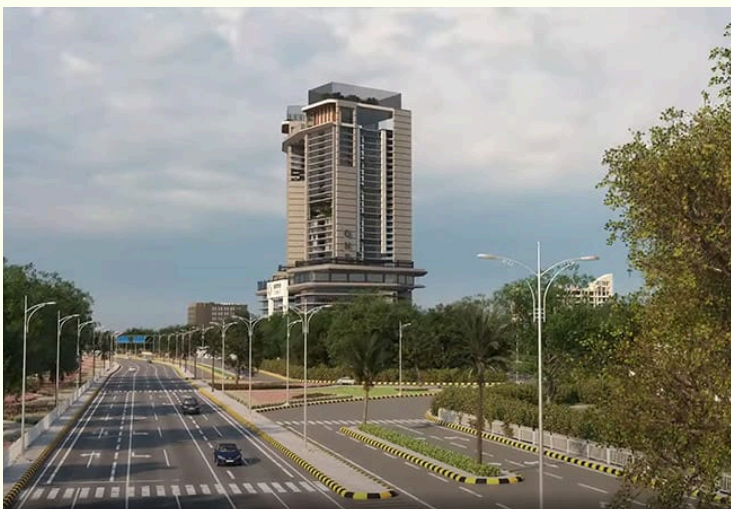
The residential project is being positioned as a modern living option for families and corporate professionals in Multan.

Multan: (Staff Reporter): Serene Tower is emerging as a high-rise residential development in DHA Multan, offering residential options aimed at families and corporate professionals seeking modern living facilities in an established area. The project is being positioned around premium residential living, with its location and housing units highlighting potential for rental demand and long-term property investment. The development reflects the growing trend towards vertical housing in Multan, particularly in areas where demand for modern apartments is increasing.

Serene Tower is expected to provide an alternative to conventional low-rise housing by offering residents a more compact and contemporary residential environment. Its location within DHA Multan may also provide access to established and developing commercial, residential and civic facilities in the surrounding area.

Real estate observers believe high-rise developments can help meet housing demand while making more efficient use of urban land. However, rental demand and capital appreciation should be considered potential outcomes rather than guaranteed returns. Investors are advised to verify the project's official approvals, developer credentials, payment plan, possession schedule and documentation before making any investment decision.

Vertical housing projects like Serene Tower can help meet the growing demand for modern apartments in DHA Multan. Its location and residential facilities may also support rental demand, while buyers should verify approvals and documentation before investing.



METRO POLITAN

Karachi's industrial zones get Rs9.28bn upgrade with December deadline

The project aims to improve roads, drainage and municipal facilities across major industrial estates by December 2026.



Karachi: (Staff Reporter): Development work across Karachi's major industrial zones is moving ahead under a Rs9.282 billion infrastructure package approved by the Sindh government to improve industrial connectivity and municipal facilities.

According to the official Chief Minister Sindh record, the funding has been allocated for urgent rehabilitation of roads and allied infrastructure across the city's industrial estates. The initiative covers improvements in roads, drainage, sewerage systems and other essential municipal services required for industrial operations.

Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab said funds had been transferred to industrial-zone accounts and targeted completion of the works by December 31, 2026. Industrial associations are also being given a direct role in project execution to ensure that development priorities are aligned with the needs of businesses operating in these areas.

Work has already started in several industrial zones. In Federal B Industrial Area alone, the mayor launched development schemes worth Rs860 million on August 22. Business observers believe improved infrastructure can reduce operational challenges for industries, enhance logistics efficiency and support economic activity. They say timely completion, quality monitoring and coordination with industrial stakeholders will be important for achieving the long-term benefits of the package.



Etihad Town Phase 3 New Deal Launched



M-10 motorway project advances, targets direct Karachi-Hyderabad link by 2028

The proposed motorway has been divided into five sections to facilitate financing, with completion targeted for 2028.

Lahore: (Staff Reporter): Karachi: The federal government has announced progress on the proposed M-10 motorway project, which aims to establish a direct road connection between Karachi and Hyderabad and strengthen the transport network between the two major cities.

According to available details, the feasibility study for the project has been completed, while the motorway has been divided into five sections of around 50 kilometres each to facilitate financing and implementation. Three sections have reportedly secured investment through different financing arrangements, including support from the Islamic Development Bank.

Efforts are continuing to attract investment for the remaining sections of the project, which is estimated to cost more than \$400 million. The government has planned completion of the motorway by 2028, subject to financing and construction progress. The proposed route is expected to improve connectivity between Karachi and Hyderabad, reduce pressure on existing roads and support smoother movement of passengers and freight. Infrastructure observers believe the project could also benefit industrial and commercial activity along the corridor by improving access to major markets and transport links.



Karachi restores Garden water pumping station after 21 years, improving supply for 300,000 residents

The rehabilitated facility is expected to improve water supply for around 300,000 residents across several central Karachi areas.

Karachi: (Staff Reporter): The Garden Water Pumping Station has been restored after remaining non-operational for more than two decades, marking a significant step towards improving Karachi's water supply infrastructure. The Karachi Water and Sewerage Corporation completed rehabilitation work at the facility, including repairs to its infrastructure, electric motors and control systems. The restoration is expected to strengthen the water distribution network and improve supply reliability in several densely populated areas of the city.

The restored station will supply water through 24-inch and 18-inch pipelines to Garden, Lyari, Soldier Bazaar, Nishtar Road, Ranchore Line, Ramswami and surrounding localities. Officials expect the project to benefit around 300,000 residents by improving access to water and strengthening basic civic services.



Urban development observers believe restoring long-neglected water infrastructure can provide significant benefits to communities, particularly in areas facing recurring supply shortages. They say regular maintenance, timely repairs and effective monitoring of pumping facilities will be essential to prevent similar infrastructure from becoming non-operational again. If properly maintained, the restored station can contribute to a more reliable and efficient water distribution system across central Karachi.

The restored station is expected to improve water availability in several densely populated areas of Karachi. Around 300,000 residents may benefit from a more reliable water supply. The project also strengthens essential civic infrastructure in Garden, Lyari and nearby localities. Regular maintenance will be important to prevent the facility from becoming non-operational again. The restoration could serve as a model for reviving other neglected water infrastructure in the city.

BYD opens one-stop NEV hub on Lahore's Pine Avenue

The facility combines vehicle sales, after-sales service and genuine spare parts as the company expands its Pakistan dealership network.

Lahore: (Staff Reporter): Chinese new-energy vehicle maker BYD, in partnership with Mega Motor Company, has opened a new 3S dealership on Pine Avenue Road, expanding its retail and after-sales presence in Lahore. The new facility brings vehicle sales, after-sales service and genuine spare parts under one roof, giving customers access to BYD's current New Energy Vehicle portfolio. The dealership is expected to provide customers with a more convenient option for purchasing vehicles and accessing authorized maintenance and support services.

Danish Khaliq, Vice President Sales & Strategy at BYD Pakistan-MMC, said Lahore has remained an important market for the company since its entry into Pakistan. He added that the Pine Avenue expansion forms part of a broader dealership-network strategy aimed at increasing the company's presence across the country. BYD plans to establish a presence in several more Pakistani cities by the end of 2026. Business observers believe the expansion of authorized EV dealerships can support the growth of Pakistan's new-energy vehicle market by improving access to vehicles, maintenance facilities and genuine parts. They say wider charging infrastructure and consumer awareness will also be important for accelerating EV adoption.



Murree's PIA Park gets family-friendly makeover with new attractions

The renovated recreational spot now features modern play areas, a fountain, selfie point and improved seating for visitors.

Murree: (Staff Reporter): PIA Park has received a fresh upgrade, with construction and renovation work at the popular recreational spot now completed on the directions of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif. According to PHA Lahore, the revamped park now includes modern children's swings, a dedicated playland, a selfie point, a fountain and improved seating areas. The upgrades are aimed at creating a more comfortable, attractive and family-friendly environment for residents and tourists visiting Murree.

The completion of the renovation was announced by PHA Lahore through its official social-media channels on August 25, 2026. The improved facilities are expected to provide visitors with better recreational options while adding to the appeal of the park as a family destination.

Tourism and urban development observers believe upgraded public parks can enhance the visitor experience and contribute to the overall attractiveness of tourist cities. They say regular maintenance, cleanliness and proper management will be essential to preserve the newly developed facilities and ensure that the park continues to provide a pleasant recreational space for families and tourists.



CDA advances Rs1.4bn Kashmir Chowk underpass to ease Islamabad-Rawalpindi traffic flow

The project near Islamabad Club aims to improve traffic flow between Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

Islamabad: (Staff Reporter): The Capital Development Authority has moved forward with plans to construct a major underpass at Kashmir Chowk, also known as Dhokri Chowk, on Murree Road near Islamabad Club. The project is estimated to cost around Rs1.4 billion and is aimed at improving traffic flow between Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The proposed underpass is expected to reduce congestion at the busy intersection and provide commuters with a smoother route between the two cities.

Technical bids have been submitted by Habib Construction Services and Kamran Khan (Kundi Group). However, the latter was initially declared non-responsive and has challenged the decision, meaning the procurement process has not yet reached its final stage. The CDA is expected to resolve the matter before proceeding with the financial bidding process. Once construction begins and the project is completed, the underpass is expected to improve traffic management and reduce delays for motorists using Murree Road.



Urban transport observers believe the project can provide relief at one of the important connecting points between Islamabad and Rawalpindi. They say timely procurement, quality construction and effective traffic planning will be essential for ensuring that the underpass delivers its intended benefits.

Children's Hospital Lahore completes Rs700m, 30-bed state-of-the-art burn unit

The 30-bed facility includes an eight-bed ICU and three operation theatres for specialised burn treatment and reconstructive surgery.

Lahore: (Staff Reporter): The Children's Hospital on Ferozepur Road has completed a modern 30-bed paediatric burn unit at a cost of Rs700 million, providing specialised treatment facilities for children suffering from burn injuries. The newly completed unit includes an eight-bed intensive care unit and three dedicated operation theatres equipped for plastic surgery and other specialised procedures. The facility has been designed to provide comprehensive burn care within a single dedicated centre.

According to Vice Chancellor University of Child Health Sciences Professor Dr Masood Sadiq, the state-of-the-art unit will enable affected children to receive treatment under one roof, including reconstructive surgery and other advanced procedures. This is expected to improve coordination between different stages of burn treatment and reduce delays in care.

The facility is also expected to reduce the need for referrals to other hospitals, allowing paediatric patients to access specialised burn services closer to home. Health observers believe dedicated burn-care infrastructure can significantly improve treatment outcomes when supported by trained medical staff, modern equipment and timely emergency care. They say the new unit can strengthen Lahore's capacity to provide specialised treatment for children with serious burn injuries.



WEATHER

Monsoon, westerly systems set to bring rains across Pakistan until Sept 5

Rain, thunderstorms and isolated heavy showers are expected in Islamabad, Punjab, KP and northern areas through early September.

Islamabad: (Staff Reporter): The Pakistan Meteorological Department has forecast another period of rain and thunderstorms as monsoon currents continue to move into the upper parts of the country, while a westerly weather system is expected to arrive from August 31 and remain active until around September 5. According to the forecast, rain, strong winds and thunderstorms, including isolated heavy rainfall, are expected in parts of Kashmir, Islamabad, Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Gilgit-Baltistan may also experience rain and thunderstorms between August 30 and September 6, with intermittent breaks.

Meanwhile, most parts of Sindh and Balochistan are expected to remain hot and humid during the period. Weather authorities have advised citizens in vulnerable areas to remain cautious during heavy rainfall and thunderstorms. The spell may also increase the risk of temporary urban flooding, water accumulation and traffic disruption in low-lying areas.



Islamabad and several areas of upper Punjab, including Rawalpindi, Murree, Lahore, Sialkot, Gujranwala and Gujrat, are expected to receive rainfall mainly from August 29 to September 5. Faisalabad, Sargodha, Sahiwal and surrounding areas may see rain from September 1 to 5.



Eighth monsoon spell hits Pakistan as Punjab, KP face flood risk

Heavy rain, thunderstorms, urban flooding and landslides are expected in several vulnerable districts.

Lahore: (Staff Reporter): Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are bracing for another spell of monsoon rain from August 29 to September 5, with authorities warning of heavy rainfall, thunderstorms, urban flooding and landslides in vulnerable areas.

Punjab's alert covers Lahore, Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, Gujrat, Sialkot, Murree and several other districts. Major cities may face temporary urban flooding during intense downpours, while Murree, Galiyat and other hilly areas remain vulnerable to landslides.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, rain and thunderstorms are forecast across Chitral, Dir, Swat, Buner, Malakand, Kohistan, Peshawar, Mardan, Swabi, Nowshera and other districts. Mardan and Swabi face an increased risk of urban flooding, while upper districts could experience landslides following heavy rainfall.

The Pakistan Meteorological Department's Flood Forecasting Division has separately reported that a monsoon trough is affecting the upper catchments, with rainfall expected to increase water flows in the Jhelum, Chenab and Ravi river systems.
