



Islamabad POST

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Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 30

SA urges cooperation at G20 meeting amid tensions over Ukraine

Detailed News On Page-08

Pakistan oil output rises by 10,000 barrels

Detailed News On Page-08



17-year-old Mirra upsets Iga Swiatek

Detailed News On Page-06



Seniority row

5 judges urge SC to restrain acting IHC CJ from duties

Jurists pray to SC to bar acting chief justice from judicial work via 49-page petition

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: A group of five judges from the Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday filed a petition in the Supreme Court against the appointment of Sarfraz Dogar as the acting chief justice of the federal high court amid a seniority dispute raised by the jurists following his transfer from Lahore's superior court. The IHC judges, Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani, Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri, Justice Babar Sattar, Justice Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan and Justice SamanRiffat Imtiaz, submitted a 49-page petition via counsels Munir A Malik and Barrister Salahuddin under clause 3 of Article 184 of the Constitution. Justice Dogar had been notified as the IHC's acting chief justice by the law ministry last week following the elevation of his predecessor to the apex court. Three judges — from Sindh, Balochistan, and Lahore — were transferred to the IHC, drawing severe criticism from the legal fraternity, including five IHC judges who were contesting the seniority criteria. The jurists who opposed Dogar's appointment were of the view that the judges transferred from other high courts should take oath anew to reset their seniority. However, IHC CJ Aamer Farooq rejected a representation made by five judges of the IHC against the fresh changes in the seniority list, paving the way for Justice Dogar as the next CJ. After facing rejection from the IHC, the petition filed by the IHC judges in the top court stated that the president does not have unlimited powers to transfer jurists under clause 1 of Article 200 and without public interests, a jurist cannot be transferred from one high court to another. The petition also prayed to the top court to stop Justice Dogar from judicial work as the IHC acting chief justice. Subsequently, they also appealed to the SC that Justice Khalid Soomro and Justice Muhammad Asif should also be barred from performing duties. The petition made the president, federation,

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IHC orders release of more than 120 PTI workers

The court set bail at Rs20,000, requiring each individual to submit one surety

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court on Thursday ordered the immediate release of over 120 PTI workers who were arrested following the November 26 protest. A two-judge bench, comprising Acting Chief Justice Sarfraz Dogar and Justice Muhammad Asif, granted bail to the detainees. The court directed them to submit an affidavit at their respective police stations, pledging that they would not engage in similar actions in the future. The hearing saw legal representation from Ali Bukhari, Babar Awan, and Murtaza Tori, who argued for the detainees' release. The court set bail at Rs20,000, requiring each individual to submit one surety. The PTI workers were arrested in connection with protests held on November 26, 2024, which led to a government crackdown. Last month, mercy petitions submitted by 19 individuals convicted for their involvement in the May 9 protests were approved, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) announced in a statement. "Sequel to the promulgation of

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RUSSIAN DEFENDER OF FATHERLAND DAY



ISLAMABAD: Chief Guest Vice Admiral Abdul Samad, Commander of the Naval Strategic Forces Command (NSFC), of Pakistan Navy, Ambassador of the Russian Federation Albert P. Khorev, Defence Attache Colonel Vadim N. Fenchenko and others cutting cake to mark the Defender of the Fatherland Day of Russia. — DNA

India thump BD to make triumphant CT start

Gill scores an unbeaten 101 off 129 deliveries

SPORTS DESK

DUBAI: Mohammed Shami's five-wicket haul, followed by Shubman Gill's anchoring century, powered India to a comfortable six-wicket victory over Bangladesh in the second match of the ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025 here at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium on Thursday. Chasing a modest 229-run target, the former champions comfortably knocked the winning runs for the loss of four wickets and 21 balls to spare. India had a decent start to the pursuit as skipper Rohit Sharma and Gill laid solid foundation with a 69-run stand, which culminated

Continued on Page 06

BJP takes control of New Delhi after 27 years

The elections ousted AAP, whose leader had governed Delhi for much of the past decade

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: A member of India's ruling Hindu-nationalist party was sworn in on Thursday as chief minister of New Delhi after an election landslide handed it control of the capital for the first time in decades. Rekha Gupta, 50, from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is the fourth woman to serve as chief minister of the sprawling megacity of more than 30 million people.

Continued on Page 06

Pak to use AI for tax collection IMF mission to visit Pak next week for climate fund talks

Aurangzeb says IMF team will arrive in Pakistan on February 24 to hold discussions on climate fund

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance Muhammad Aurangzeb announced on Thursday that artificial intelligence will be utilised to increase tax collection while raising concerns over the disproportionate tax burden in Pakistan. Speaking at a conference on "Retail Reimagined: Innovate, Collaborate & Thrive", organised by The Pakistan Retail Business Council (PRBC), the minister said that the country's retail sector, which contributes a significant 19% to the country's GDP, is paying a mere 1% in taxes, sparking concerns over the sector's lack of contribution to the national exchequer. He stressed that the disproportionate burden of taxes on the manufacturing, services industry, and salaried class is unsustainable. "We need to bring other segments, including agriculture, real estate, retail, and wholesale, into the tax net." He lauded provincial government for taking measures towards this end by passing bills in their respective assemblies for imposing agricultural taxes.

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Power sector bleeds \$ 1 billion annually due to theft, line losses

Debt cripples power sector's ability to upgrade infrastructure, jeopardising its long-term viability

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's power distribution companies (Discos) are facing a financial crisis, haemorrhaging around \$1 billion annually due to rampant line losses, theft, and inefficiencies. A recent report from the Ministry of Finance, prepared to fulfill the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) requirements, highlighted the dire straits of Discos as they face a confluence of high-risk factors that contribute to operational inefficiency and an

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Hamas hands over bodies of 4 captives killed in Israeli strikes

"To the families of Bibas and Lifshitz: We would have preferred your sons to return to you alive, but your army and government leaders chose to kill them"

FOREIGN DESK

GAZA CITY: The Palestinian Hamas resistance movement hands over the bodies of four Israeli captives, killed in the regime's strikes on the besieged Gaza Strip to the International Committee of the Red Cross. The handover, part of the ceasefire agreement between Hamas and the Tel Aviv regime, was carried out in Khan Yunis on Thursday, with Hamas saying that the move reflects its commitment to consolidate the ceasefire for long-term peace in the war-ravaged Palestinian territory. According to the movement, all four captives,

a mother and her two children and an elderly journalist, were killed in the Israeli airstrikes during the 15-month genocide war that killed at least 48,284 Palestinians, mostly women and children, in the small coastal territory. "To the families of Bibas and Lifshitz: We would have preferred your sons to return to you alive, but your army and government leaders chose to kill them instead of bringing them back," Hamas said in a statement. "They killed with them: 17,881 Palestinian children, in their criminal bombardment of the Gaza Strip, and we know that you know who is truly responsible for their departure.

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Briefs

Security forces conduct op. in Kurram

Police, security forces conduct joint operation in Lower Kurram, arrest 18 terrorists

SHAMIM SHAHID

KOHAT: In a large-scale operation, police and security forces arrested 18 terrorists and two facilitators in Lower Kurram. Addressing a press conference, Kohat RPO stated that the operation targeted terrorists' hideouts in Bagan, Manduri, Ochit and surrounding areas. The raids are ongoing in Kurram, Hangu, and Kohat to apprehend terrorists with bounties on their heads. House-to-house searches are also being conducted. The RPO added that search operations continue in the mountainous border areas of Kurram and Hangu. The arrested terrorists have been moved to an undisclosed location.

Petroleum dealers threaten to shut pumps

Pakistan's petroleum dealers oppose deregulation policy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's petroleum dealers have strongly rejected the deregulation policy and indicated that they may shut down petrol pumps across the country. Abdul Sami Khan, Chairman of the All Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association, voiced his concerns in a video message, stating that deregulating fuel prices would lead to smuggling and the adulteration of petroleum products. He highlighted that the deregulation formula would allow petrol stations to set their own prices, which could result in inconsistencies and unfair pricing across the nation.

Tarar warns legal action

PTI not ready to accept COAS's visit to UK

Information minister alleges PTI follows a "foreign agenda" and has a history of supporting terrorism

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Information Minister Attaullah Tarar, has warned of legal action against those protesting and running social media campaigns against the Chief of Army Staff's (COAS) visit to the United Kingdom. Speaking to Express News on Thursday, Tarar said the army chief received a warm welcome in the UK, which enhanced Pakistan's international standing. "The world acknowledges the professional capabilities of Pakistan's armed forces," he stated. He accused the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) of being unable to accept the respect given to the army chief abroad. "A handful of miscreants launched a social media campaign and staged protests, but patriotic Pakistanis have rejected their actions," he added. The minister vowed action against those involved in the campaign. "Anyone who harms Pakistan's integrity and interests will face legal consequences," he warned. Tarar claimed that Pakistan's economy was improving, with a 32% increase in remittances. He criticised PTI, saying,

Continued on Page 06

Raja hints at countrywide movement

Says PTI is fighting for restoration of democracy in the country

DNA

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Secretary General Salman Akram Raja said on Thursday they would remain undeterred and launch a countrywide movement for restoration of supremacy of law. Speaking to media, he reiterated that the PTI was fighting for restoration of democracy in the country. He said he had come to Peshawar to meet notables and the PTI would continue activities in Ramazan. "We will continue to voice concern against wrongs and ensure supremacy of constitution.

Continued on Page 06

Pakistan-Türkiye exercise Ataturk-XIII concludes

Two weeks long Exercise commenced on 10 February 2025. 2x Combat Teams from Special Services Group, Pakistan Army and 36x all ranks from Special Forces, Republic of Türkiye participated in the Exercise



DNA

RAWALPINDI: Closing ceremony of Pak-Türkiye Joint Exercise Ataturk-XIII in Counter Terrorism domain was conducted between the Armies of Pakistan and Republic of Türkiye at Cherat, Pakistan. Two weeks long Exercise commenced on 10 February 2025. 2x Combat Teams from Special Services Group, Pakistan Army and 36x all ranks from Special Forces, Republic

of Türkiye participated in the Exercise. Commander 11 Corps, attended the Closing Ceremony as Chief Guest. Brigadier General Ahmet ASIK from Republic of Türkiye also witnessed the closing Ceremony. The troops displayed highest standards of professional excellence during the conduct. The exercise was aimed at refining professional skills through joint training besides harnessing the historic military to military relations among the friendly countries. Participating troops benefited immensely from joint training/ exercise.

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Jam for enhancing Pak-Turkiye collaboration

The visit further strengthened Pakistan's commitment to building a robust aerospace and technology ecosystem that can contribute to the country's economic and technological growth

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan has stressed for enhancing the Pakistan and Türkiye Collaboration in Aerospace. He expressed these words while visiting the Turkish Aerospace Pakistan office at the National Science and Technology Park (NSTP) and School of Interdisciplinary Engineering and Sciences (SINES) located inside the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), said a press release issued here. The Minister's visit aimed to highlight the growing collaboration between Pakistan and Türkiye, as well as to explore the innovative initiatives being undertaken within Pakistan's advanced research and development sectors. Irfan Neziroglu, the Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye, was also present to

receive the Minister, underscoring the strong bilateral relations and Türkiye's commitment to fostering technological and economic cooperation with Pakistan. Turkish Aerospace Industries (TAI) is a leading player in the aerospace and defense industry, known for its advanced technological capabilities and cutting-edge defense solutions. Turkish Aerospace Pakistan, with its offices in both NSTP and SINES, focuses on strengthening collaboration in the aerospace and defense sectors while providing opportunities for technology transfer, R&D, knowledge exchange, and innovation. The Federal Minister for Commerce also visited the National Center for Artificial Intelligence (NCAI), one of the leading AI research institutions in Pakistan. It is a part of the government's efforts to build capacity in emerg-

ing technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, and data science. = NCAI's mission is to drive AI adoption and innovation in key sectors, enhancing Pakistan's technological and scientific prowess. The Minister's visit to NCAI provided an opportunity to witness the groundbreaking work in AI research, which holds immense potential for various industries, including aerospace and defense. During the visit, the Minister expressed support for the ongoing efforts at Turkish Aerospace Pakistan and emphasized the importance of fostering partnerships between the government, academia, and the private sector. The visit further strengthened Pakistan's commitment to building a robust aerospace and technology ecosystem that can contribute to the country's economic and technological growth.



ISLAMABAD: Director NAB Mohammad Imran Butt and CEO Mr. Zafar Bakhtawari M/s De Watson Chemists shaking hands after signing of MoU in the presence of Acting Chairman NAB Mr. Sohail Nasir, NAB PGA Syed Ihtasham Qadir Shah and other NAB Senior Officers at NAB (HQ).

Snowfall continues in Mansehra's, restoration work underway

KAGHAN: Intermittent rain and snowfall have continued in the upper regions of Mansehra since last night, leading to a significant drop in temperatures. Popular tourist destinations, including Shogran, Kaghan, Naran, as well as the surrounding mountains in Kaghan Valley and Siran Valley, are experiencing ongoing snowfall. So far, Kaghan has recorded about 6 inches of snow, while Shogran has accumulated up to one foot of snow. Following special directives from Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur, Advisor for Tourism, Culture, and Archaeology Zahid Chan Zeb, and on the orders of Director General Kaghan Development Authority (KDA) Shabbir Khan, efforts are underway to clear snow from Shogran Road and other connecting routes. The Kaghan Development Authority (KDA) has activated its snow-clearing machinery to ensure smooth transportation for tourists and locals. Efforts to restore traffic flow on Shogran Road are being carried out swiftly. To facilitate tourists and locals, KDA has deployed staff along with machinery at various strategic points in Kaghan Valley, ensuring timely assistance in case of emergencies. Authorities have advised tourists and residents to take necessary precautions during the snowfall and to reach out to KDA staff for any assistance or information.—APP

Commissioner orders removal of encroachments from markets

MULTAN: Multan Divisional Commissioner Amir Kareem Khan has ordered for removal of encroachments from all markets and commercial centres in line with Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz's vision of an encroachment-free Punjab. Acting on his orders, illegal structures were demolished to widen pathways and enhance the city's overall aesthetics. The commissioner personally visited key markets, including Hussain Agahi, Gardezi Market, and Brand Road, where he met traders and citizens to discuss the ongoing anti-encroachment drive and gather their

feedback. To create a more uniform appearance for the markets, the commissioner mandated the installation of standardized signboards and the painting of selected shops. He said that pathways should remain unobstructed to facilitate the smooth movement of women and elderly citizens with dignity. The restoration of the historic Wali Muhammad Mosque has been entrusted to the Walled City Authority. Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali Bukhari confirmed that both Hussain Agahi and Gardezi Market have been cleared of encroach-

ments. Plans are also in place to establish designated parking spaces and waiting sheds for public convenience. The local administration is actively engaging the business community to encourage the voluntary removal of encroachments. Accompanying the commissioner on his inspection were Additional Deputy Commissioner General Muhammad Saif and Assistant Commissioner City Abdul Sami Sheikh. Citizens have expressed their support for the beautification plan and praised Commissioner Amir Kareem Khan's efforts in transforming Multan's commercial areas.—APP

Activities in Lahore of the Portuguese Author and Journalist Teresa Nicolau

DNA

LAHORE: Portuguese author and journalist, Teresa Nicolau, will be in Lahore from 21st to 24th February, engaging in several cultural and literary activities. On Friday, 21st, Ms. Teresa Nicolau will visit the University of South Asia, Lahore, with the Portuguese Ambassador Frederico Silva, holding an interactive session with students and professors, discussing arts, society, literature, journalism, and cross-cultural narratives. Later in the day, she will attend the Lahore Literary Festival (LLF) 2025 opening ceremony and she will be chairing the panel discussion, "The City as a Character", alongside



acclaimed authors David Wagner, Sofka Zinovieff, Mohsin Hamid, and Osama Siddique. On Saturday, 22nd, Teresa Nicolau will participate in the panel "Art, Rebellion and Subversion: Does Money Matter?", alongside other authors Clem-

ens Berger, Lucy Fricke, Omar Shahid Hamid, and Awais Khan. Finally, on Monday, 24th, Agha Khan Cultural Services, Lahore will be hosting in the Lahore Fort, an interactive session with the Portuguese Author and the Portuguese Ambassador Frederico Silva bringing together intellectuals, media, and cultural figures for discussions on heritage, culture, language, communication, society, and artistic expression. All those events and session are managed by the Embassy of Portugal in Islamabad in cooperation with Lahore entities with the support of Camões Instituto da Cooperação e da Língua, I. P., underscoring Portugal's commitment to cultural exchange and literary collaborations.

Workshop on textbook review process concludes

ISLAMABAD: The National Curriculum Council (NCC) Wing of the Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training successfully concluded a two-day workshop titled "Standardizing the Textbook Review Process" on February 20, 2025. The workshop focused on refining the textbook review process to enhance curriculum implementation and ensure quality educational materials. On the second day, participants engaged in sessions on text review and validation of forms, actively presenting their reflections and learning outcomes. They appreciated the hands-on approach, emphasizing that the workshop provided valuable insights. Professor Dr. Ajmal from AIOU highlighted the significance of such initiatives.—APP

SCCI, RCCI sign MoU to strengthen collaboration in multiple sectors

PESHAWAR, Feb 20 (APP): A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) to strengthen collaboration in multiple sectors and attract investment in potentials through joint ventures (JVs). SCCI president Fazal Moqem Khan and RCCI president Usman Shaikat signed the agreement during a visit of the Rawalpindi Chamber delegation at the chamber house here on Thursday. On the occasion, the chamber's senior vice president Abdul Jalil Jan, vice president Shehryar Khan, Businessman Forum leader, former president FPCCI Ghazanfar Bilour, former president Haji Muhammad Afzal, Malik Niaz Ahmad, Fuad Ishaq, member of the chamber executive committee Aftab Iqbal, Ashfaq Ahmad, Sabir Ahmad Bangash, Saifullah, Abbas Fuad Azeem, Junaid Altaf, Gul Zaman, and Ishtiaq Ahmad, Saddar Gul, Fazal e Wahid, Secretary General SCCI Muqtasid Ahsan, traders and industrialist were present. RCCI vice president Fahad Barlas, former presidents of the chamber Ch. A Arif, Saboor Malik, Saqib Rafiq, M.Nasir Mirza, M. Naveed Khan, Fayyaz Ahmad Qureshi, and Imran and Sadar Sadiq were amongst the RCCI delegation. Fazal Moqem while speaking on the occasion said vast avenues are available to make investment through joint ventures in marble, gemstone, honey, handmade carpet, furniture, industrial mineral, and mines and natural resources like oil, gas and hydropower generation and other important sectors of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He asked the RCCI members to take advantage of investment opportunities in the province. The SCCI chief informed the meeting that the incumbent provincial government is working on a special incentive package for industrialization in K.P. Moqem Khan welcomed the signing of agreement with RCCI, stating that the move would help to strengthen collaboration between the two chambers, especially flourishing economic activities through joint ventures and promote investment potentials of the both sides. Ghazanfar Bilour also addressed the meeting, stressing sustainable and long-term collaboration between SCCI and RCCI.—DNA

Foolproof security to be ensured for matches

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi district police had finalized arrangements to ensure foolproof security for Champions Trophy matches, said City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi Syed Khalid Hamdani here on Thursday. Chairing a meeting held at CPO office to review security arrangements, Syed Khalid Hamdani said that more than 5000 police personnel would perform duties for the security of the matches. Over 350 City Traffic Police (CTP) personnel would also perform duties to ensure traffic arrangements. A comprehensive plan has been prepared for the security of the route and Rawalpindi stadium.—APP

BISP aims to empower women of the country: Senator Rubina Khalid

Chairperson highlighted the new banking model of BISP, under which financial assistance will be directly transferred to the bank accounts of deserving women, ensuring transparency through a verification process conducted every three years

DNA

MUZAFFARABAD: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Program (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid has said that BISP was Pakistan's largest social safety net, which had empowered millions of deserving families, particularly women, across the country. She was speaking at BISP event here at President House on Thursday attended by acting president Ch Latif akbar as well besides BISP officials and beneficiaries. She emphasized

that this program was initiated by President Asif Ali Zardari to fulfill the dream of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto. She further asserted that the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) had always prioritized women's rights and their economic stability, and BISP remains a crucial continuation of this mission. Chairperson highlighted the new banking model of BISP, under which financial assistance will be directly transferred to the bank accounts of deserving women, ensuring transparency through a verification process con-



ducted every three years. She also announced the launch of the Benazir Hunarmand Program, which will provide vocational training to the children of deserving women, the Benazir Nashonuma Program, which will support maternal and child health, and the Benazir Education Scholarships, which will continue to offer educational stipends to children. She stressed that BISP recognizes women as the heads of households and has the capability to provide immediate assistance within 24 hours in case of any natural disaster or emergency situation. During her visit to Muzaffarabad, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, the BISP Chairperson held a special consultative session with BISP beneficiary women at the

Presidential House, where she attentively listened to their issues and reiterated BISP's commitment to empowering women through financial and social support. Later, she visited the BISP Central Zonal Office, where Zonal Director of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Dr Abdul Aziz Qureshi, provided a detailed review of BISP's ongoing initiatives, challenges, and future plans. On this occasion, the Chairperson emphasized the need to relocate the office to a more accessible and beneficiary-friendly location to enhance service delivery.

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

FEBRUARY

- Feb 04/Sri Lanka National Day
- Feb 06/N. Zealand National Day
- Feb 06/Uganda Army Day
- Feb 11//Iran Revolution day
- Feb 16/ DPR Korea National Day
- Feb 16/Lithuania National Day
- Feb 18/Gambia National Day
- Feb 19/Nepal Democracy Day
- Feb 23/Uzbekistan National Day
- Feb 23/Brunei National Day
- Feb 23/Guyana National Day
- Feb 23/Russia National Army Day
- Feb 23/Tajikistan Armed Forces Day
- Feb 25/Kuwait National Day



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Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

PIA reopening of Islamabad-Paris to enhance connectivity: Envoy

PIA officials expressed their enthusiasm about this development, highlighting its potential to boost tourism and trade



DNA
ISLAMABAD: Islamabad and Paris. This renewed air connection is expected to strengthen diplomatic, cultural, and economic ties between Pakistan and France, while also providing greater convenience for travelers. The event brought together key dignitaries, officials from PIA, and members of the diplomatic community. During the

reception, Ambassador Galey emphasized the importance of enhancing connectivity between the two nations and praised the efforts of both governments and PIA in making the resumption possible.

PIA officials expressed their enthusiasm about this development, highlighting its potential to boost tourism and trade. The officials were photographed alongside Ambassador Galey, symbolizing the mutual cooperation and shared

commitment to fostering closer relations. This reopening marks a significant milestone for both nations and reflects their ongoing efforts to expand international travel opportunities for their citizens.

Karot HPP launches report on China's role in Pak development

DNA
ISLAMABAD: China Three Gorges South Asia Investment Ltd. launched the Karot Hydropower Project Report 2025, detailing the successful operations of the Chinese power initiative under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The report was unveiled at the one-day International Conference on 'Regional Connectivity & Pakistan: Emerging Opportunities,' hosted by the Pakistan-China Institute in Islamabad. It emphasizes the significant benefits

of Foreign Direct Investment in Pakistan. The event drew global dignitaries, who commended the contributions of Chinese companies to Pakistan's development. According to Gwadar Pro, the report emphasizes that Chinese companies have brought over 8,900 megawatts of power capacity and the 660 KV HVDC Matiari-Lahore Transmission line to Pakistan, with an investment of approximately USD 16 billion. These achievements have not only effectively addressed energy shortages but have also spurred technological innovation, increased

employment, and boosted economic growth. It further notes that Chinese companies have actively engaged with local communities across Pakistan, fulfilling their corporate social responsibilities and supporting the country's sustainable economic and social development. Their efforts have significantly contributed to modernizing Pakistan's energy infrastructure, laying a robust foundation for the nation's progress. A key highlight of the report is the Karot Hydropower Project (HPP), which generates approximately 3,206 GWh of clean and re-

newable energy annually. The project plays a crucial role in reducing carbon dioxide emissions by around 35 million tons each year, successfully implementing the Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP). Additionally, the project has been instrumental in creating jobs, employing nearly 5,000 individuals during its construction phase and sustaining around 150 jobs during operations. This has not only helped reduce unemployment but has also promoted economic growth and skill development within local communities.

Rang-e-Pakistan 2025 to showcase rich heritage

ISLAMABAD: The highly anticipated "Rang-e-Pakistan 2025" cultural festival is set to take place in the federal capital with the joint efforts of Lok Virsa, Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) and other partner organizations from February 21-23. The three-day festival aims to celebrate Pakistan's diverse culture, art, and heritage through a series of vibrant performances and exhibitions. Organized in collaboration with various cultural and literary institutions, the event will feature musical performances, Qawwali, Mushaira, dance shows, and instrumental performances. The much-anticipated cultural festival Rang-e-Pakistan is set to bring an immersive experience of Pakistan's rich heritage, literature, and performing arts. A series of vibrant events will be showcased, including a Puppet Show by the PNCA, celebrating the art of storytelling through colorful characters. The show, scheduled from 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM at Lok Virsa, promises to be a delight for children and families. Literary enthusiasts will be treated to an evening of poetry with a grand Mushaira, where renowned poets will gather to share verses on February 23, starting at 5:00 PM at the Media Studio, Lok Virsa. Another literary attraction is the Dastan Goi session, featuring Badar Khan, reviving the ancient art of storytelling on February 22 and 23, from 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM at the Rooftop Theater. Music lovers can look forward to Open Mic and Pop/Rock Performances throughout the festival, showcasing young and emerging talents from 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM daily. The festival will culminate with a Soulful Qawali Night, featuring the mesmerizing Nadeem Jameel Khan, set to take place on February 23 at 8:00 PM at the Mela Ground Stage. The visitors can also enjoy screenings of cultural documentaries, historical paintings, book exhibitions, and calligraphy demonstrations. In addition to the artistic displays, the festival will host puppet shows for children, an exhibition of antiquities and replicas, and traditional folk stalls representing the rich culinary traditions from all provinces, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Azad Jammu and Kashmir. The festival is expected to attract a large audience, including culture enthusiasts, artists, and tourists, as it provides an opportunity to experience the essence of Pakistan's artistic and literary heritage. Adding to the artistic grandeur, the Colors of Heritage - Painting Exhibition will highlight Pakistan's cultural essence through visual arts, with stunning works on display at Lok Virsa from February 21 to 23. Book lovers will also have the opportunity to explore a diverse collection at the Book Stall, featuring literary works from Iqbal Academy, Quaid-e-Azam Academy, Lok Virsa, and the Pakistan Academy of Letters, open daily from 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM. The festival will also feature traditional dances, folk music, and cultural performances, celebrating Pakistan's diverse heritage while the attendees can enjoy performances ranging from Sufi whirls to Sindh Jhoomeer, along with instrumental renditions of Rabab and Santoor.—DNA

AIOU launches online bookstore

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has launched an online bookstore, allowing teachers, researchers, and students nationwide to purchase books from the comfort of their homes. The bookstore offers textbooks for programs ranging from matriculation to PhD. Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, officially inaugurated the store on Thursday in a ceremony attended by the University Principal Officers, Deans, and Professors. Addressing the event, the Vice-Chancellor directed that the book selection, purchasing process, and payment methods be made as simple as possible. Emphasizing the importance of customer service, the Vice-Chancellor instructed that search options be provided by book name, codes, and program categories. To ensure transparency in financial management, he mandated that records of book sales and incoming payments be maintained. Furthermore, he set a deadline of February 28 for relevant departments to implement these instructions, stock a sufficient number of books in the online store, and fully activate the book-selling process. It is noteworthy that AIOU currently delivers textbooks via post to students enrolled in matriculation, FA, and associate degree programs, while books for other programs are available online through the university's website. The online bookstore will benefit not only teachers and researchers but also all book enthusiasts. Additionally, a physical bookstore has been established on campus, allowing students to purchase books from either the physical or online store as per their convenience.—APP

Sb for bold climate financing reforms, EV Policy push

ISLAMABAD: Senate Standing Committee on Climate Change, Thursday emphasized the urgent need for innovative climate financing solutions to address Pakistan's growing environmental challenges. The meeting, that met here with Senator Sherry Rehman, in the chair focused on bridging the staggering \$340 billion funding gap required for climate resilience, advancing the Electric Vehicle (EV) Policy, and addressing bureaucratic hurdles in accessing climate funds. Senator Sherry Rehman, highlighted the critical disparity in financial capacity between Pakistan and regional counterparts like Bangladesh. "Climate finance is not just about pledges; it's about ensuring timely access to funds and building institutional capacity for climate resilience," she stated. Rehman stressed that Pakistan's current financing structures are inadequate, leaving the country lagging in climate adaptation and mitigation efforts.—APP

Capital on alert

ICT admin teams mobilize as rains lash city

As the rain continues, the authorities remain vigilant, ensuring that all necessary precautions are in place to handle the situation effectively. The focus is on maintaining normalcy and minimizing any inconvenience to the public

ISLAMABAD: Teams from the district administration, Capital Development Authority (CDA), and Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI) were actively monitoring the field to ensure smooth operations as the intermittent rainfall had been persisting in the federal capital since last night. In this regard, the district administration has directed special attention to low-lying areas to prevent any potential waterlogging. Teams were working round the clock to ensure proper drainage across various parts of the city, said the spokesman of ICT administration here. On the occasion, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon has instructed all Assistant Commissioners (ACs) to personally visit these vulnerable zones to assess the situation and take necessary measures. In addition to drainage efforts, traffic police had been put on high alert to manage the flow of vehicles and prevent any disruptions. The authorities are focused on maintaining normal traffic conditions despite the ongoing rain. The CDA and MCI teams are working in tandem with the district administration to address any issues that may arise due to the weather. Their presence in the field is crucial for timely interventions and to ensure the safety and convenience of the residents. The DC's directive to ACs to inspect low-lying areas underscores the importance of proactive measures in mitigating the impact of heavy rains. By keeping a close watch on these areas, the administration aims to prevent any adverse effects on the city's infrastructure and daily life. As the rain continues, the authorities remain vigilant, ensuring that all necessary precautions are in place to handle the situation effectively. The focus is on maintaining normalcy and minimizing any inconvenience to the public.—DNA



ISLAMABAD: Director NAB Mohammad Imran Butt and CEO Zubair Nasir M/s Qamar Jahan Diagnostics shaking hands after signing of MoU in the presence of Acting Chairman NAB Mr. Sohail Nasir, NAB PGA Syed Ihtasham Qadir Shah and other NAB Senior Officers at NAB (HQ).

IIUI launches plantation drive

ISLAMABAD: The International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI) has launched an extensive plantation drive aimed at enhancing greenery and promoting environmental sustainability. IIUI aims to plant 5000 saplings in this drive. In its initial phase, 350 saplings were planted across the university's new campus. The initiative was formally inaugurated by Rector IIUI, Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, who was joined by President IIUI, Prof. Dr. Ahmed Shuja Syed, and Vice President Prof. Dr. Abdul Rahman. The event was also attended by Deans, the In-charge of the Female Campus, Heads of Departments, the Director of Administration, students, and officials from the Horticulture Department. Faculty members and officers actively participated in planting saplings following the formal ceremony. Speaking at the occasion, Rector IIUI emphasized the collective responsibility of environmental conservation. He urged every individual to plant at least two saplings and proposed a mechanism ensuring that those who plant trees take responsibility for their care. He underscored the importance of prioritizing this campaign within the university's broader initiatives. Prof. Dr. Ahmed Shuja Syed lauded the efforts of the Horticulture Department, highlighting the crucial role of academic institutions in advocating climate-conscious policies and raising public awareness. "Universities are not only centers of learning but also key influencers in shaping policy forums and fostering a clean and green environment," he remarked. Dr. Inam-ul-Haq, in his briefing, revealed that the plantation campaign is being supported by Allied Bank, while discussions are underway with the sponsorship of the Canadian government for the establishment of a dedicated olive garden on campus. He further shared that the Environment Department has engaged multiple organizations to expand the initiative and strengthen climate-friendly efforts. It was also appraised that IIUI aims to expand its green initiatives with several key projects. An olive plantation project, in collaboration with the PK Oil Seed Board, is set to introduce sustainable olive cultivation on campus. Additionally, urban forestation efforts will be strengthened through partnerships with organizations like Helping Hand NGO to enhance green spaces and improve air quality. The university is also working towards establishing a botanical garden, actively seeking donors and partners to support its development. This initiative will serve as both an educational resource and an environmental conservation effort.—DNA

Briefs

Record number of Pakistani employed abroad in 2024

ISLAMABAD: In a significant milestone, the Bureau of Emigration & Overseas Employment (BE&OE), an attached Department of Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development has sent record number of skilled labourers to abroad for employment in 2024.

Death anniversary of actress Tamanna Begum observed

ISLAMABAD: The death anniversary of film and drama actress Tamanna Begum was observed on Thursday. Born in 1944, she started her career at Radio Pakistan.

Rain causes power outages to various feeders of IESCO

ISLAMABAD: Heavy rain on Thursday disrupted power supply across several areas in the IESCO region due to faults and tripping on 11 kV feeders.

Pakistan, Qatar agree to boost anti-narcotics cooperation

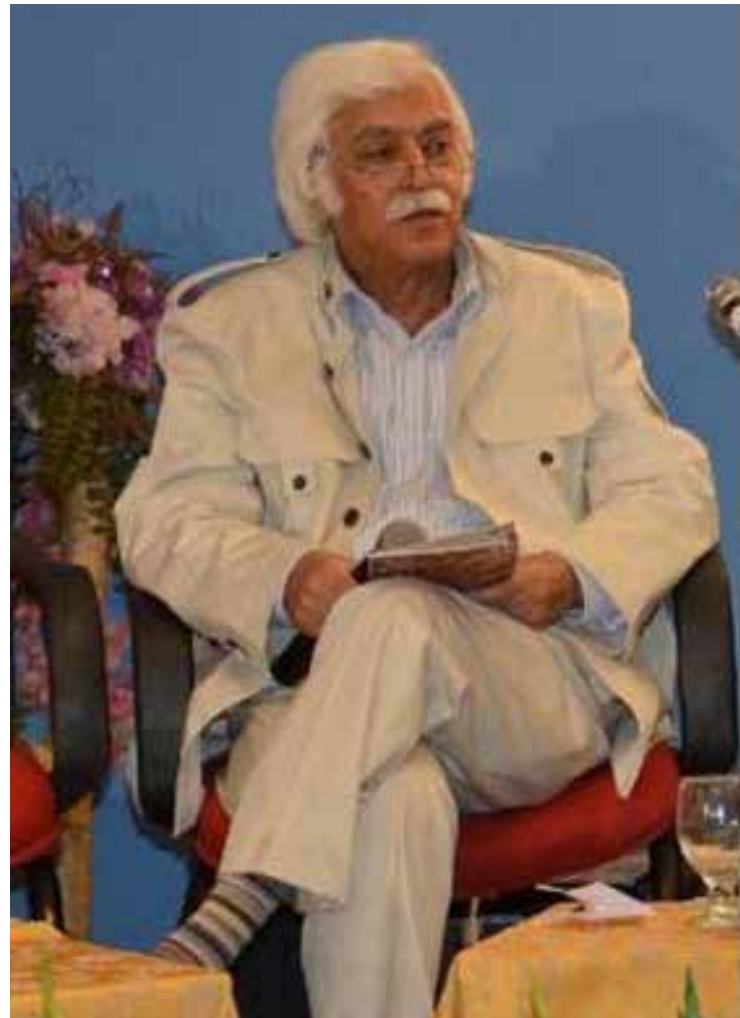
ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi met with Qatar's Ambassador Ali Mubarak Ali Essa Al-Khater. During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, bilateral relations, and enhancing cooperation in various fields were discussed in detail.

Zindagi Nay Mur Kar Shaitan Ke Qatil Ko Dekha Aur Muskurai

Mazharul Islam's latest novel on decline of values hits bookstores

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Noted Urdu story writer Mazharul Islam's latest work of fiction, a fantasy novel, "Zindagi Nay Mur Kar Shaitan Ke Qatil Ko Dekha Aur Muskurai" a combination of unique, abstract, surreal and allegorical themes has emerged on the literary horizon recently and is selling like hot cake and a subject of literary gossip today.

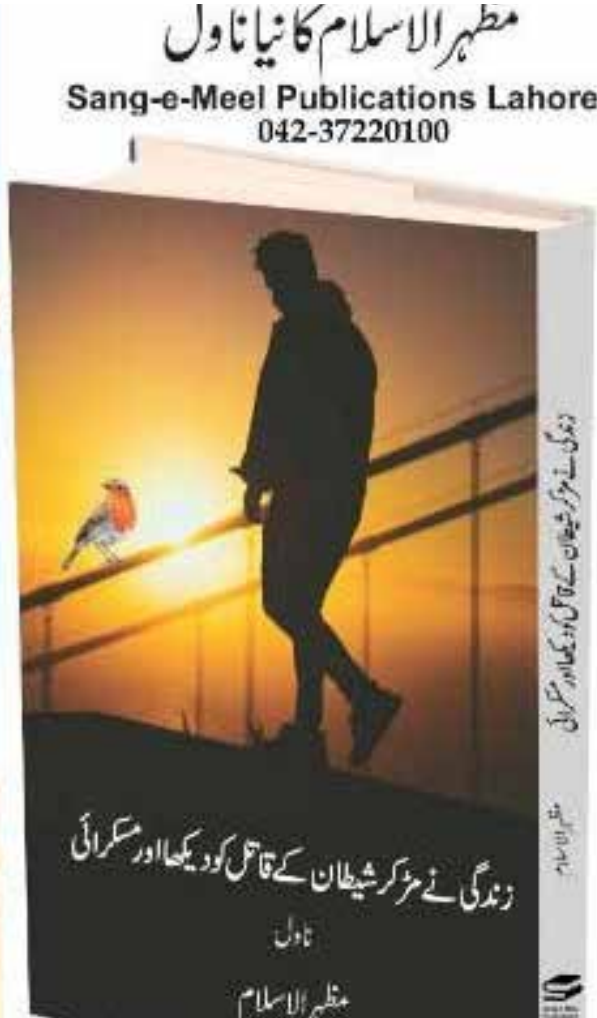


One comes across characters that are fast moving out of our life. Once they were considered a vital link such as postman, librarian, flower sellers, watchmakers, schoolteachers, mystics. Their very presence gives

the novel a vibrant appeal and makes the story all the more riveting. The writer takes the reader along from the childhood days of the protagonist Abdullah who has one fixation in life: To kill Devil and restore forgotten

values! Only then this society will be rescued from the Devilish Cycle and love, forgiveness, friendship and generosity will dawn. Abdullah is the last romantic man of this world. He is in romance with reading novels,

writing stories, following the footsteps of the Mystics. He is in romance with love-letters and finally this romance becomes his ideology of life. His mother once told him that the devil had killed his father and since that day he



has taken upon himself to kill the devil. In the end, the devil is killed though not with the sword but with the pen. Apart from the writer's perspective, the reader finds the canvas and scope of the story quite vast and breathes in different epochs.

Call for focusing on improving mental quality of PWDs' life

ISLAMABAD: Human Rights activist Ayub Malik has stressed the need to focus on improving the physical and mental quality of life for people living with disabilities. Talking to APP here Thursday, he said that people with disabilities (PWDs) faced a variety of structural and ideological challenges that had little to do with their actual limitations.

Ahsan urges swift, steady agility to achieve national uplift goals

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Thursday stressed the need for Pakistan to embrace agility at a faster yet steady pace to meet its national development objectives in an era defined by rapid innovation and reform.

PTI urged to shun chaotic politics

ISLAMABAD: Advisor to the Prime Minister Rana Sanaullah Thursday issued a stern warning to PTI, urging them to use legal and parliamentary means to resolve grievances instead of destabilizing actions, cautioning that the government will not tolerate harm to the country and will take swift action if necessary.

importance of constructive conversation and collaboration in advancing the country's democratic progress. He reiterated that the democratic right of opposition parties to peaceful protest and access to parliamentary forums must be respected, as these are essential components of a healthy democracy. Sanaullah has rejected PTI's claims that there is no deal or NRO for Imran Khan, instead suggesting that the government is open to dialogue to discuss economic issues.

publicly stated that PML-N seeks respect and dialogue to address the country's pressing issues. Responding to a query, Rana Sanaullah emphasized that anyone with reservations about the 26th Amendment can approach Parliament or explore other legal options. He slammed PTI for threatening the government with chaotic protests, warning that this time around, no one will be allowed to disrupt the peace. Rana Sanaullah noted that the inflation rate, which had soared to around 38 percent, has now decreased by 3-4 percent, indicating a positive trend in the country's economic stability.

Pakistan steps into new era of digital education : Mukhtar

ISLAMABAD: To harness technology for educational excellence, the Higher Education Commission (HEC) has launched Pakistan's inaugural state-of-the-art Data Centre at NED Universities, dedicated to safeguarding data from public and private educational institutions and promoting data-driven decision-making.

Advertisement for General Practice Hospital featuring a grid of service icons (OPD, Radiology, etc.) and a list of medical specialties. The text includes 'We Are OPEN' and contact information for the hospital located in Islamabad.

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Trump's new FP approach

WITH Donald Trump's return to the White House, European nations and NATO members face renewed uncertainties regarding their security and transatlantic relations. His previous tenure was marked by skepticism toward multilateral alliances, a transactional approach to foreign policy, and a preference for bilateral negotiations over collective security agreements. A second Trump presidency could further disrupt the global balance of power, particularly for Europe and NATO. One of the most pressing concerns for NATO is Trump's long-standing criticism of the alliance. During his first term, he repeatedly expressed dissatisfaction with members that failed to meet the 2% GDP defense spending target, even threatening to reduce US military support or withdraw entirely. A renewed Trump presidency may bring heightened demands for greater European financial contributions or even condition US military assistance on specific commitments from European allies. These developments could significantly alter NATO's deterrence posture. Increased pressure on member states to boost defense budgets might strain some European economies, while a diminished US commitment to Article 5 (the mutual defense clause) could weaken the alliance's cohesion. Furthermore, internal divisions may emerge, with some nations—such as Poland and the Baltic states—seeking bilateral security agreements with the US rather than relying on collective NATO mechanisms. Another major concern in Europe is Trump's ambiguous stance toward Russia and Vladimir Putin. While European nations have rallied behind Ukraine with strong financial and military aid, Trump has criticized the extent of US assistance and has suggested that he could “end the war within 24 hours”—potentially by pressuring Ukraine into territorial concessions. And as we can see, the deal between Russia and Ukraine is almost reachable. A reduction in US military and financial support for Ukraine could shift the burden onto Europe, forcing the EU to take a more active role in Kiev's defense. On the other hand, NATO's unity could be tested, as some European countries (like France and Germany) may advocate for diplomatic engagement with Russia, while others (like Poland and the Baltics) push for stronger deterrence measures. Trump's foreign policy is also deeply intertwined with economic nationalism. His previous administration imposed tariffs on European goods, including steel and aluminum, and threatened an all-out trade war with the EU, and in the 2nd term of his presidency, we have seen that Trump intensified the trade disputes with Europe, particularly in sectors like automotive manufacturing, agriculture, and technology. Economic friction between the U.S. and Europe could undermine cooperation on security issues. Europe may accelerate efforts to reduce its reliance on US defense industries and develop its own independent security mechanisms. A less predictable transatlantic relationship could encourage European countries to diversify their economic partnerships, including closer ties with China. Trump's return to power could also have ripple effects on European security due to his unpredictable approach toward the Middle East. If he reinstates his “maximum pressure” campaign against Iran, escalates tensions with China over Taiwan, or reduces US military presence in critical regions, Europe could face secondary security threats.



Sudan's deepening humanitarian crisis

AS Sudan's civil war drags on, the country faces an escalating refugee crisis that has become one of the most pressing humanitarian emergencies in the world. The conflict, which erupted in April 2023 between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), has plunged the nation into chaos, leaving millions displaced and severely impacting neighboring nations. The relentless violence has created an unparalleled human tragedy, with refugees facing hunger, disease and violence both within Sudan and in bordering countries. Without urgent international intervention, the crisis threatens to spiral further, exacerbating instability across the region. The scale of displacement caused by the war is staggering. Since the conflict began nearly two years ago, more than 6.1 million people have been internally displaced, while another 1.5 million have fled the country in search of safety. These numbers continue to rise as fighting intensifies. Witnesses report that humanitarian convoys have been attacked, intercepting food and medical aid and leaving refugees in an increasingly desperate situation. Many Sudanese fleeing the conflict find themselves trapped in a brutal cycle of displacement, as they are forced to move repeatedly due to shifting front lines and unpredictable violence. For the millions of Sudanese displaced by war, survival is a daily struggle. Internally displaced persons often live in makeshift shelters or overcrowded camps where access to basic necessities like food, clean water and medical care is severely limited. Many also suffer from malnutrition due to food shortages, while outbreaks of cholera and other diseases are common due to unsanitary conditions and a lack of medical supplies. The humanitarian situation is further exacerbated by reportedly deliberate efforts to block aid. This strategy of using starvation as a weapon of war has left millions teetering on the brink of death, with children among the most vulnerable victims. For those who manage to escape Sudan, the challenges do not end at the border. Refugees arriving in neighboring countries often find themselves in overcrowded camps where resources are stretched thin. Food rations are frequently insufficient, leaving many on the brink of starvation, while access to healthcare is minimal. Opportunities for education and employment are scarce, leaving refugees with little hope for a stable future. Chad, Sudan's western neighbor, has borne the brunt of the refugee crisis. It is now hosting more than 600,000 Sudanese. However, before the war broke out, Chad was already a fragile state facing its own economic and security challenges. The arrival of such a large number of refugees has put immense pressure on the country's limited resources, straining local infrastructure and leading to rising tensions between displaced Sudanese and host communities. In Ethiopia, political tensions and economic struggles have made it difficult to absorb large numbers of refugees. Across all host nations, the burden of the crisis is growing, threatening to destabilize already-fragile regions. Despite the growing severity of the Sudanese refugee crisis, international aid has been insufficient. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, alongside 33 international and national partners, has launched the 2025 Sudan Country Refugee Response Plan, appealing for \$633.7 million to assist nearly 900,000 refugees and asylum seekers.

Technology and climate change

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



The primary objective of this study is to outline the potential course of future armed conflicts based on forecasts from leading research centers and to emphasize the need for a fresh perspective on these issues, one that transcends the current global tensions. The focus of the research is on armed conflicts, particularly the ways in which they may be conducted in the future and the domains in which they will unfold. The authors posit that the causes and forms of future armed conflicts will evolve in response to dynamic changes in the geopolitical and economic landscape, accelerated technological progress...

THE development of technology, particularly digital technology, has become a driving force behind new trends in politics, economics, media and virtually every other aspect of human life. This technological revolution is reshaping the world as we know it, altering the way societies function, interact and compete. One of the most profound areas impacted by this transformation is the realm of warfare. The advent of advanced technologies has not only changed the tools and methods of combat but has also influenced the strategies, tactics and decision-making processes that define modern and future conflicts. As we observe today, there is a relentless arms race among global and regional powers, with non-state organizations, such as Hezbollah and Al-Qaeda, also playing significant roles. These groups, often characterized by their terrorist objectives, seek to gain advantages not only in technological capabilities but also in psychological operations, cyber activities and tactical innovation. Emerging technologies, such as directed energy weapons, hypersonic missiles, drones and autonomous vehicles equipped with precision weaponry, are revolutionizing the battlefield. These advancements are forcing military leaders to rethink traditional approaches to warfare and adapt to the rapidly evolving landscape of modern combat. Despite these technological advancements, the fundamental nature of war has remained remarkably consistent throughout history. From the ancient teachings of Sun Tzu and Thucydides to the strategic theories of Clausewitz and through the major conflicts of the 20th and 21st centuries, war has persisted as a tool for achieving political and economic objectives. It remains an extension of state policy, a means by which nations and groups seek to assert their influence, secure resources, or achieve ideological goals. However, the tools and methods of warfare have evolved dramatically and this evolution shows no signs of slowing down. As technology continues to advance, the ways in which wars are fought will become increasingly complex, with new domains of conflict emerging and traditional boundaries blurring. While technology is a critical factor shaping the future of warfare, it is not the only one. Environmental changes, particularly those driven by global warming, are poised to have a profound impact on the geopolitical landscape. The scarcity of essential resources such as food and water, exacerbated by climate change, is likely to trig-

ger economic instability, mass migrations and heightened tensions between nations. These environmental pressures could lead to significant disruptions in the global order, creating fertile ground for conflict. In addition to environmental challenges, the rise of ideological extremism presents another major threat. Terrorist organizations, driven by radical ideologies, will continue to seek ways to destabilize existing power structures and establish their own visions of order, such as the creation of an Islamic caliphate. These factors compel us to look ahead and consider how to mitigate future threats, particularly those of a military nature. As the nature of conflict evolves, so too must the strategies, structures and capabilities of military organizations. The role of armed forces in state policy is largely determined by their organizational structure and the resources they possess. These factors, in turn, are influenced by a nation's geopolitical conditions, the nature of potential adversaries and the alignment of strategic interests with other international actors. For nations with significant disparities in power, security often hinges on participation in political alliances or the creation of regional security frameworks. The development programs of armed forces are typically designed to address known threats to national security. In modern militaries, such as those of the United States and Great Britain, the process of transformation is guided not only by immediate threats but also by long-term strategic goals, anticipated theaters of operation and assessments of both friendly and enemy capabilities. Before delving deeper into the analysis, it is important to clarify the terminology used to describe armed conflict and war. While these terms are often used interchangeably, they carry distinct meanings. According to a ruling by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia on October 2, 1995, an armed conflict exists whenever there is a resort to armed force between states or prolonged armed violence between governmental authorities and organized armed groups, or between such groups within a single state. The concept of armed conflict is broader than that of war, encompassing all manifestations of armed struggle. In contrast, the term “war” typically refers to conflicts in which states or societies mobilize the majority of their resources and engage in highly intensified military activity. The primary objective of this study is to outline the potential course of future armed conflicts

based on forecasts from leading research centers and to emphasize the need for a fresh perspective on these issues, one that transcends the current global tensions. The focus of the research is on armed conflicts, particularly the ways in which they may be conducted in the future and the domains in which they will unfold. The authors posit that the causes and forms of future armed conflicts will evolve in response to dynamic changes in the geopolitical and economic landscape, accelerated technological progress and the effects of global climate change. The timing and location of conflicts, the technologies employed and the scale of their impact will influence these changes. Future conflicts are expected to span all domains, involving both peer competitors and asymmetrical engagements between major powers and smaller states or organizations. These conflicts may take the form of conventional international or internal wars, ranging in intensity from limited skirmishes to full-scale engagements. Additionally, proxy wars—conflicts fought indirectly through third parties—will continue to play a significant role, particularly in the “gray zone” of hybrid warfare. One of the defining characteristics of future conflicts will be the increasing importance of cyberspace and outer space as domains of warfare. The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into military operations will further transform the nature of combat, with AI systems supporting—and in some cases, making—critical decisions on the battlefield. The automation and autonomy of weapons systems will also play a pivotal role, enabling faster and more precise responses to emerging threats. As these technologies become more sophisticated, the line between human and machine decision-making will blur, raising ethical and strategic questions about the role of human judgment in warfare. The future of warfare will be shaped by a complex interplay of technological, environmental and ideological factors. As nations and organizations adapt to these changes, the strategies and structures of armed forces will need to evolve in tandem. By anticipating these developments and preparing for the challenges they present, the international community can work toward mitigating the risks of future conflicts and fostering a more stable and secure global order. The study of future wars is not merely an academic exercise; it is a vital endeavor that will inform the policies and decisions of nations for decades to come.

Will Europe look to China to replace the US?

Dr. Amal Mudallali

Economically, Europe and the US have enjoyed strong economic cooperation in all fields, especially in trade. While there are many voices in Europe calling on it to look after its own interests and allow economic ties with China a larger role in its trade relations, despite caution over technology transfer, the figures and facts paint a different picture. While the EU describes its approach to China as “multifaceted,” it also describes Beijing as simultaneously “a partner for cooperation, an economic competitor, and a systemic rival”

THE question of who will lead in Europe was asked openly at last weekend's Munich Security Conference in light of the rising tensions between the US and its transatlantic allies. Some called on Germany to lead, while others regretted that the UK had left the EU. But the bigger question on everybody's mind was: Will China replace the US as Europe's main partner and world leader? As transatlantic relations enter a new stage, with Europe questioning whether the historic partnership is still on the same page and whether Europe and the US still share the same values, especially those related to the global order, China looks to be positioning itself as not only the beneficiary but also the better and more stable partner, or “the anti-Trump.” As the US speaks of America First and withdraws from international institutions, China is presenting itself as the guardian of the international order—but not the unipolar world of yesterday, rather the new multipolar world that Beijing says must be fair and devoid of rivalry. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi told the Munich Security Conference that “a multipolar world is not only a historical inevitability, it is also becoming a reality.” The new American administration prides itself on the “disruption” it is causing to the international system, to fix what it says is a system that has gone astray. China, on the other hand, is presenting itself as a power that is working for an “equal and orderly multipolar world” and “a factor of certainty in this multipolar system,” as Wang said. China is presenting itself as the rational actor in a chaotic world, while “some countries believe that might makes right and have opened the Pandora's box marked the law of the jungle.” But this is not mere political talk, the Chinese claim. Wang pointed out that Beijing “contributed nearly 30 percent of the world's economic growth” and “served as an important engine for global economic growth.” While US Vice President J.D. Vance lectured and chided the Europeans on their supposed abandoning of democratic values, he also intervened in their domestic affairs, especially those of Germany. He met the leader

of the far-right Alternative for Germany party but not Chancellor Olaf Scholz. The Chinese were very direct in offering themselves as an alternative, with their officials expressing China's willingness to “deepen strategic communication and mutually beneficial cooperation” with Europe. Wang was very specific, saying China is “willing to synergize high-quality Belt and Road cooperation with the European Union's Global Gateway Strategy so as to empower each other and empower the entire world.” He added that China and Europe are partners, not rivals. And to contrast China's approach to that of the US regarding its participation in the negotiations over Ukraine, the Chinese foreign minister said Beijing backs Europe to play a significant role in the peace process. But can China really replace the US for Europe, which has enjoyed more than three-quarters of a century of close political, security, economic and strategic ties with Washington? As the US is going its own way on ending the war in Ukraine and as the threat of a trade war becomes serious, Europe is struggling to find a way to preserve its historic and indispensable relationship with the US, while at the same time asserting itself as an equal partner to Washington that cannot be bullied. China's close relationship with Russia is the main obstacle to a closer and deeper relationship with Beijing. The Europeans believe that China's critical support of Russia is giving it a lifeline, as it is buying its energy, which helps Moscow continue its war in Ukraine. The chair of the Munich Security Conference told Wang, “today, Russia has become ... China's gas station,” and asked him about the possibility of China cutting off the gas supply from Russia to pressure it to end the war. Wang repeated China's position that sanctions cannot solve the issue and that the negotiating table is the place to end any conflict. But this is not the answer that Europe needs if it is going to change strategic partners. Economically, Europe and the US have enjoyed strong economic cooperation in all fields, especially in trade. While there are many voices in Europe calling on it to look after its own interests and allow economic ties

with China a larger role in its trade relations, despite caution over technology transfer, the figures and facts paint a different picture. While the EU describes its approach to China as “multifaceted,” it also describes Beijing as simultaneously “a partner for cooperation, an economic competitor, and a systemic rival.” The US enjoys a different relationship. The EU and the US have “the world's largest bilateral trade and investment relationship and enjoy the most integrated economic relationship in the world,” according to Brussels. “EU-US trade in goods and services reached an impressive €1.6 trillion in 2023,” the official EU policy and trade site notes. Trade in goods alone was worth \$975.9 billion in 2024. China is the EU's second-largest trading partner for goods after the US, worth €739 billion (\$772 billion) in 2023, a decline of 14 percent from 2022. There is a sustained trade imbalance in favor of China. The EU-China trade and economic relationship is modest in comparison to the defense, security and strategic relationship enshrined in NATO and other security organizations that make the Europe-US relationship the most enduring and robust in the post-Second World War order. However, Europe has depended on the US for its defense for too long and, as Vance told the Europeans last week, today there is a “new sheriff in town” who wants different rules so has decided to stop playing by the old rules. It seems Vance's message has been received by Europe loud and clear. The result is multiple voices around the continent talking about scaling up its defense, making new defense commitments and pledging higher defense budget promises. This is hardly a continent that is replacing its old partner—it is one that is being forced to shape up and pay up. China can be “strong and untiring,” as in the Chinese proverb Wang cited in Munich, but it will find out that there is more that ties the US and Europe than the sum of their transatlantic alliance and the latter's shortcomings in defense.

— Dr. Amal Mudallali is an international affairs adviser for Think and a former Lebanese ambassador to the UN.

Briefs

PSX stays
bullish, gains
396 points

ISLAMABAD: The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Thursday, gaining 396.72 points, a positive change of 0.35 percent, closing at 113,739.16 points as compared to 113,342.44 points on the last trading day. A total of 787,438,742 shares were traded during the day as compared to 667,719,653 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs33,097 billion against Rs25,734 billion on the last trading day. As many as 453 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 223 of them recorded gains and 176 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 54 companies remained unchanged. The three top trading companies were Pak International Bulk with 91,476,864 shares at Rs.8.69 per share, Fauji Cement with 73,707,472 shares at Rs.43.41 per share and K-Electric Limited with 58,967,212 shares at Rs.4.71 per share. Hoechst Pakistan Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs.125.03 per share closing at Rs.2,968.05 whereas runner-up was Lucky Core Industries Limited with Rs.58.24 rise in its share price to close at Rs.1,248.04. Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs.272.51 per share price, closing at Rs.23,115.00, whereas the runner-up was Abbott Laboratories (Pakistan) Limited with Rs.124.62 decline in its per share price to Rs.1,121.61.—APP

Gold up by
Rs.1,000 per
tola

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat per tola gold increased by Rs.1,000 and was sold all time high at Rs 309,000 on Thursday against its sale at Rs 308,000 on previous trading day. All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewelers Association reported. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs 857 to Rs 264,917 from Rs 264,060 whereas that of 10 gram 22 karat went up by Rs.786 to Rs 242,849 from Rs 242,063. The prices of per tola silver increased by Rs.28 to Rs.3,468 whereas that of ten gram silver went up by Rs.24 to Rs.2,973.—APP

Yemeni
minister calls
for arrest of
Houthi officials
attending
Hezbollah
funeral

CAIRO: Yemeni Information Minister Moammar Al-Eryani called on Wednesday for the arrest of a group of leaders from Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis who he said will attend Lebanese Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah's funeral in Beirut. Nasrallah, who had served as Hezbollah's secretary general for more than 30 years, was killed on September 27 as Israel ramped up its attacks on southern Lebanon. His funeral is scheduled for February 23. Eryani demanded that the Lebanese government arrest the Houthi leaders and hand them over to the rival internationally recognized government in a post on X. He did not name the Houthi officials. Neither the Lebanese government nor Houthi leaders was immediately available for comment. The Houthis did not officially announce a delegation was attending the funeral, but the Houthi-run Al-Masrah TV reported a delegation from Yemen would participate. "We affirm that the movement of these terrorist leaders... in this timing is not a mere participation in the funeral, which is being used as a cover, to gather all the leaders of the Iranian axis and assess the situation after the blows they received," he added. The Yemeni minister was referring to the recent Israeli attacks against Iran-backed groups in the region including Hezbollah and the Houthis. Both groups launched parallel attacks against Israel during its war in Gaza to show support for Palestinians.—APP

ASEAN media delegation
visits PEMRA headquarters

Ms. Widia Librianti added, "Cultural exchange and media partnerships can serve as powerful tool to build bridges between our regions. This initiative provides an excellent platform for media professionals from both sides to connect and collaborate and exchange experience

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a significant step to strengthen regional co-operation, promote cross-cultural dialogue, and foster professional linkages in the media sector between Pakistan and ASEAN countries, an ASEAN media delegation visited Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) in Islamabad. The delegation, in collaboration with ASEAN Pakistan, met with PEMRA

Chairman Muhammad Saleem and discussed media landscape of Pakistan and ASEAN countries. The initiative aims to enhance mutual cooperation in the media sector, promote cultural exchange, and strengthen professional ties between Pakistan and ASEAN member states. The ASEAN delegation was represented by Mr. Noel Hidalgo Tan, Senior Officer of the Culture and Information Division at the ASEAN Secretariat, and Ms. Widia Librianti, Officer of the Culture and In-

formation Division at ASEAN. During the meeting, PEMRA Chairman Muhammad Saleem highlighted the importance of media in fostering cultural and social harmony between the two regions. He stated, "Media plays a crucial role in promoting understanding and cooperation. We are committed to building a strong partnership with ASEAN to further strengthen ties and explore new opportunities for collaboration". Mr. Muhammad Tahir, EDG (Operations-Broadcast

Media & PR) gave presentation of roles and functions of PEMRA and media landscape of Pakistan since 2002. Mr. Noel Hidalgo Tan emphasized the significance of the initiative, and said that collaboration between ASEAN and Pakistan in the media sector will not only deepen bilateral relations but also contribute to regional peace and development. Ms. Widia Librianti added, "Cultural exchange and media partnerships can serve as powerful tool to build bridges between our

regions. This initiative provides an excellent platform for media professionals from both sides to connect and collaborate and exchange experience. In this meeting Mr. Sikander R. Choudry, Executive Member, Mr. Wakeel Khan, EDG Licensing Broadcast Media, Mr. Muhammad Tahir, EDG Operations-Broadcast Media & PR, Mr. Tameel Hayder, DG & PSO to Chairman, Mr. Tahir Farooq Tarar, Head Legal and Ms. Sadia Widad Consultant (Media & PR) from PEMRA were also present.



ISLAMABAD: UN Women Delegation, Led by Country Representative Jamshed Kazi, met Federal Minister for Law & Justice and Human Rights Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar to strengthen efforts for gender equality and women's empowerment in Pakistan.

Lebanese
President
pledges
neutrality, calls
for Arab unity

BEIRUT: Lebanese President Joseph Aoun on Wednesday said that Lebanon would not become a launchpad for attacks against other countries, particularly Arab states. During his address to a delegation of Arab diplomats, he said: "Regional developments do not only impact the Palestinian people but extend to all Arab countries, including Lebanon." He emphasized that current challenges require a unified Arab response. Invoking historical ties, Aoun referenced Saudi Arabia's founder Abdulaziz bin Abdul Rahman's description of Lebanon as "the Arabs' balcony." Sources at the presidential palace indicate that Aoun's first foreign visit as president will most likely be to Saudi Arabia, pending the new government's confirmation by parliament next week. Addressing recent domestic tensions, Aoun said that recent events have affected all Lebanese citizens and emphasized state supremacy in protecting all religious communities. "The state protects all sects, not vice versa," he said. Regarding Hezbollah's protests on the airport road and the road blockages in protest against the banning of an Iranian plane from landing at Beirut International Airport last week against the backdrop of Israeli threats, Aoun said: "We support the peaceful exercise of freedom of expression. However, the events we witnessed a few days ago, including road blockages and attacks on the army and citizens, are unacceptable and must not be repeated. "The events in the south had a significant negative impact on all of Lebanon. We reject the claims of a siege on Lebanon's Shiite community, as these allegations are baseless. We are an integral part of one body and one environment. We have all paid the price of the war and now face challenges together. Ensuring trust among all Lebanese citizens is the foundation of our work," Aoun added. The president also previously met with a delegation from the Press Club, where he expressed his refusal of any party attempting to "exploit foreign influence for political gain." The day after the incomplete Israeli withdrawal from the south, there were reports of incidents that led to casualties. In one, an Israeli warplane struck a car in the border town of Aita al-Shaab, killing Youssef Mohammed Srour, the son of the town's mayor, and seriously injuring his wife. Additionally, Israeli forces in positions overlooking the area opened fire on a man on the banks of the Wazzani river. According to the Lebanese Ministry of Health, the man and another person were injured in the attack.—DNA

ICCI, TDAP host seminar on export
finance, trade development

Muzammal Khan, Head of Trade and Finance Operations at Exim Bank of Pakistan, elaborated on the bank's collaboration with the State Bank of Pakistan and international financial institutions to facilitate exporters. He also discussed the role of export credit insurance policies in achieving export growth objectives

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), in collaboration with the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) organized a high-profile seminar on 'Export Finance, Market Research, and TDAP's Annual Plan of Activities.' The event brought together key figures from the Ministry of Commerce, the State Bank of Pakistan, TDAP, and leading business executives to explore strategic opportunities for enhancing Pakistan's global trade presence, according to a press release issued here on Thursday. The seminar provided a vital platform for discussions on financial support, market insights, and proactive trade development strategies to unlock new export potentials and drive sustainable economic growth. L.D. Khan, Director at TDAP, emphasized the Authority's pivotal role as the government's marketing and facilitation arm, advocating for the business community. He highlighted TDAP's global presence, with Trade and Investment Officers (TIOs), leveraging this extensive network to create new opportunities for Pakistani businesses. Furthermore, he stressed the importance of TDAP's collaboration with ICCI and the private sector in driving export-led economic growth and strengthening Pakistan's position in global trade. ICCI President Nasir Mansoor Qureshi underscored Pakistan's vast potential to emerge as a dominant force in international trade. He asserted that with the right financial backing, strategic market research, and a proactive trade development approach, Pakistan can unlock new opportunities, increase exports, and foster sustainable economic growth. He called for a unified effort from all stakeholders to transform Pakistan into a compelling and reliable player in the global trade landscape. Arsalan Zahid Khan from the Ministry of Commerce stressed the need for using modern tools, including research and analysis, value addition, compliance with trade laws, and regulatory barriers. He also advocated for increased awareness sessions to help exporters overcome challenges in penetrating international markets. Mukhtar Kareem, Joint Director at the State Bank of Pakistan, provided insights into the State Bank's export financing initiatives through a comprehensive presentation. Additionally, Raheel Soomro, Joint Director of SME at the State Bank, emphasized the banking sector's crucial role in shaping Pakistan's economic future and highlighted key initiatives supporting small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Muzammal Khan, Head of Trade and Finance Operations at Exim Bank of Pakistan, elaborated on the bank's collaboration with the State Bank of Pakistan and international financial institutions to facilitate exporters. He also discussed the role of export credit insurance policies in achieving export growth objectives.—DNA

Pak urges plan to address
Libya's political deadlock

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan has urged UN's diplomatic officials in Libya to formulate a "well-defined" peacebuilding and reconciliation strategy aimed at overcoming the political impasse that would put the country back on the path to long-awaited presidential elections and unifying institutions. "We encourage all Libyan stakeholders to constructively address all outstanding issues through meaningful dialogue, paving the way for the unification of all institutions," Ambassador Munir Akram, permanent representative of Pakistan to the UN, told the United Nations Security Council on the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) on Wednesday. Fourteen years after the overthrow of Qaddafi regime, the North African country has remained split between two rival administrations for over a decade, with the internationally recognized Government of National Unity (GNU) based in the northwest while the Government of National Stability (GNS) is in the east. Landmark elections scheduled for December 2021 were cancelled, including due to disputes over the eligibility of candidates. At the outset of his remarks, Ambassador Akram welcomed the appointment of Hanna Tetteh, a Ghanaian barrister and diplomat, as the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) for Libya, and hoped that, given her rich experience, especially in the region, she will help to deliver concrete results for peace and stability in the strife-torn country. "A Libyan-led and Libyan-owned process is the only path towards sustainable peace and stability," the Pakistani envoy told delegates. "The political reconciliation process should offer peace dividends to all citizens and focus on securing an equitable distribution of national resources". In this regard, he highlighted the reported agreement between Eastern and Western security institutions to establish a joint centre for communication and information exchange. Noting that these are preliminary steps, he added: "Pak urges plan to address Libya's political deadlock.—Pak urges plan to address Libya's political deadlock

RCCI inaugurates plantation drive

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has launched its much-anticipated Tree Plantation Drive 2025, reaffirming its steadfast commitment to environmental sustainability. The event, titled "Green Earth is Clean Earth," was held at Gullistan Fatima Park in Islamabad, marking another milestone in RCCI's ongoing efforts to promote ecological responsibility. RCCI President Usman Shaukat, accompanied by Group Leader Sohail Altaf, Vice President Fahad Barlas, Chairman Climate Change Tallat Mehmood Awan, former RCCI presidents, and members of the RCCI Executive Committee, warmly welcomed distinguished guests to the inaugural ceremony. Coordinator to Prime Minister for Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam, praised RCCI's initiative, emphasizing the pivotal role that businesses and the broader commu-

nity play in shaping a sustainable future. "Business communities are not only vital for economic development, but they also hold a significant role in safeguarding

our environment," she noted. She further highlighted the need for collective efforts to tackle climate change, encouraging industries to adopt eco-friendly practices,

reduce carbon footprints, and integrate renewable energy into their operations. Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Mr. Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh, also graced

the occasion, underscoring the government's support for such green initiatives.

The event saw participation from a large number of the diplomatic corps, including: H.E. Mr. Albert P. Khorev (Russian Ambassador), H.E. Mr. Béla Fazekas (Ambassador of Hungary), Dr. Maen A.M. Khreasat (Ambassador of Jordan), Harelimana Fatou (High Commissioner of Rwanda), Ladislav Steinhübel (Czech Embassy Ambassador), among others.

Patron-in-Chief of Pakistan Sweet Homes, Zamurad Khan, alongside RCCI members, civil society representatives, and other distinguished guests, actively participated in the tree plantation ceremony. RCCI President Usman Shaukat expressed his gratitude to all participants, reaffirming the Chamber's dedication to fostering a greener Pakistan.—DNA

Europe needs
to 'wake up'
following US
policy shift:
Greek PM

ATHENS: Europe should wake up and build its own defense policy following a dramatic shift by the United States over Ukraine and geopolitical developments in recent months, Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis said late on Wednesday. US President Donald Trump upended US policy on the Ukraine war this week, denouncing Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky as a "dictator" and suggesting Kyiv started the three year war between Ukraine and Russia. Trump warned that Zelensky had to move quickly to secure peace or risk losing his country, deepening a feud between the two leaders that has alarmed European officials.

The US and Russia held peace talks in Saudi Arabia this week without Ukraine, stunning Kyiv and its European allies. Ukraine has said it will not accept a deal imposed on it without its consent, which European leaders have echoed, while Russia has ruled out conceding land it has won.

Addressing a business conference in the city of Thessaloniki late on Wednesday, Mitsotakis said that Europe needed to "wake up from the geopolitical and economic lethargy into which it has unfortunately fallen for some time." "Recent developments and this different view of things from the United States now oblige us not only to face the truth, but to move at a very high speed and implement decisions that we have been discussing for long," he said. Mitsotakis pointed to Europe setting up a defense policy which will allow it to develop its own deterrent power and reduce reliance on the United States.

His comments were made shortly after he joined virtually a second meeting that France convened with European leaders and Canada to discuss Ukraine. Europe has relied heavily on US might within NATO for security and Trump has consistently demanded Europe spend more on defense. Trump has now demanded that Europe provide more military muscle for any future Ukraine peace (Reporting by Angeliki Koutantou; Editing by Michael Perry)—APP

Macron says
France and
allies 'united'
on Ukraine

PARIS: President Emmanuel Macron said Wednesday that France and its allies agreed Ukraine's rights and European security concerns should be taken into account in any deal to end the war with Russia, before he heads to Washington next week. "The position of France and its allies is clear and united. We wish for peace in Ukraine that is lasting," Macron said on X after a meeting with the leaders of 19 mostly European countries, with most taking part by video link.

US President Donald Trump has stunned the European Union by saying he is ready to resume diplomacy with Vladimir Putin after three years of Russia's war against Ukraine, over the heads of both European countries and Kyiv. Macron held the meeting on Ukraine Wednesday afternoon in a bid to coordinate a European response to what he has called an "existential threat" from Russia after the shock US policy shift. "We stand by Ukraine and will carry out all our responsibilities to ensure peace and security in Europe," Macron said after the video conference. But he said participants, which included the leaders of EU nations as well as Iceland, Norway and Canada, stressed Ukraine should be included and "its rights respected" in the process. They said "robust and credible guarantees" were needed to ensure a lasting deal, and "European security concerns" must be taken into account. "We are convinced of the need to increase our defense and security spending and capacities for Europe and each of our countries," Macron added. Macron is set to meet Trump in Washington as early as Monday, Trump told reporters aboard his plane on Wednesday. A White House official previously told AFP the meeting would take place "early next week," on condition of anonymity.—APP

Briefs

ECP seeks details of all ongoing projects

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has sought details of all ongoing development projects across Punjab. According to sources, the provincial election commissioner has issued a letter to the Communication Department, requesting progress reports on civil works being carried out across the province. The letter directs officials to submit a report on civil development scheme, covering the period from Dec 2, 2024, to Jan 31, 2025. The move is seen as part of the ECP's efforts to ensure transparency and compliance with the election code of conducts ahead of the upcoming polls.

Ramaphosa tells G20 int'l law 'critical'

JOHANNESBURG: South African President Cyril Ramaphosa told G20 foreign ministers on Thursday that multilateralism and international law were key to solving world crises, amid rising tensions over various conflicts and trade disputes. "It is critical that the principles of the UN Charter, multilateralism and international law should remain at the center of all our endeavours. It should be the glue that keeps us together," he said at the opening of a meeting of G20 foreign ministers. - Agencies

PTI, Sherani agree to move forward

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (Sherani) have decided to move forward with mutual consensus. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Adviser on Information, Barrister Dr. Saif, met with JUI (Sherani) chief Maulana Muhammad Khan Sherani. Former federal minister Muhammad Ali Durrani and former senator Aslam Buledi were also present during the meeting. The discussion focused on promoting reconciliation, political cooperation, and collective progress in the country. Barrister Dr. Saif also offered condolences on the passing of Maulana Sherani's wife and recited Fatihah. During the meeting, Barrister Saif acknowledged Maulana Sherani as a senior parliamentarian, constitutional expert, and respected religious and political figure. He stated that PTI founder Imran Khan and the party highly regard Maulana Sherani's contributions and wish for his active role in fostering national reconciliation, mutual cooperation, and trust. On behalf of KP Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, Barrister Saif extended an invitation to Maulana Sherani to visit Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Pakistan, Azerbaijan reaffirm strong historical, cultural ties

Gilani meets Azerbaijani President, discusses bilateral ties



BAKU: Chairman Senate of Pakistan Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani called on President of the Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev in Baku. Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan Khazar Farhadov also attended the meeting. - DNA

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Senate Chairman Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani met with the President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, in Baku and discussed bilateral relations, regional dynamics, peace, development, and other key matters. Gilani is leading a Pakistani parliamentary delegation to participate in

the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA), which is being held in Baku. Expressing gratitude to the Azerbaijani leadership, Gilani said, "It has been a pleasure to visit Azerbaijan." He highlighted the opportunity to engage with leaders of various regional parliaments during the APA. He reaffirmed Pakistan's strong ties with Azerbaijan, emphasizing that both nations share deep-rooted religious, cultural, and historical bonds.

He also underscored the importance of political and parliamentary exchanges, reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to strengthening these fraternal relations. Gilani said that both countries had signed a MoU to enhance institutional cooperation at the parliamentary level and that friendship groups had already been established within both parliaments. He stressed that high-level exchanges would further promote peo-

ple-to-people connections. During the meeting, he briefed the President on Pakistan's Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), highlighting vast investment opportunities in agriculture, energy, mining, and other sectors. The Senate Chairman also lauded Azerbaijan's government and parliamentary leadership for successfully hosting the Asian Parliamentary Assembly, extending his congratulations on the achievement.

Pak, Qatar agree to enhance coop

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Qatar agreed to enhance cooperation against the drugs and narcotics control. It was decided in a meeting between Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Qatar's Ambassador Ali Mubarak Ali Isa Al-Khater on Thursday. Both the dignitaries discussed matters of mutual interest, bilateral relations, and the enhancement of cooperation in various sectors. The meeting also addressed the issue of the release of Pakistani nationals detained in Qatar. Both sides agreed to strengthen collaboration in the fight against drugs. On this occasion, the Qatari ambassador extended an invitation to Mohsin Naqvi to visit Qatar. The interior minister stated that Pakistan has very close ties with Qatar and he will visit Qatar soon. He further mentioned that a Gulf States conference on drug control will be held in Islamabad in April, where the head of Qatar's drug control department has been invited to participate. He emphasized Pakistan's desire for closer collaboration with friendly countries on drug control.

'Extraordinary OIC CFM moot in Jeddah on March 7 to discuss Gaza situation'

NEW YORK: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar on Thursday said that an extraordinary meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of OIC countries will convene in Jeddah on March 7, 2025, to discuss the Gaza situation, particularly in light of the proposals on relocation of the Palestinian people. The deputy prime minister, addressing a news conference on the culmination of his three-day visit to the US, apprised the media of his telephonic interactions with his counterparts from Iran, Egypt, Malaysia, UAE, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, following the proposals for the displacement of Gaza people to Egypt or Jordan and later by Israel to set up a Palestinian state in Saudi Arabia. He said during the interactions, all the foreign ministers called for an immediate extraordinary OIC Council of Foreign Ministers meeting in early March to discuss the situation and present OIC stance internationally. He said reportedly, Arab leaders were scheduled to meet on the situation on February 27 and Gulf leaders on March 5 which would follow the extraordinary CFM meeting on March 7 in Jeddah in which he would represent Pakistan.

DPM Dar, who was on a US visit to attend the UN Security Council's debate on multilateralism and global governance, told the media that before the said consultations, Pakistan had also issued a strong statement on the proposals on relocation as the people of Palestine had all the rights on their land. He recalled Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's address at last year's UN General Assembly session where he took a "bold and clear stance and also called a spade a spade" besides holding Israel responsible for the killing of around 50,000 Palestinian people and the destruction of infrastructure. He said despite limited resources, Pakistan sent several consignments of relief goods to Gaza, Lebanon and Syria and also hosted around 200 Palestinian medical students to allow them to complete their medical education in Pakistani medical colleges. Apprising the media of his interactions on the margins of the UN Security Council's debate, he mentioned the meeting with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and Saudi and Hungarian counterparts. During the interactions, he raised the Kashmir issue as well as the illegal and unilateral actions India took in the disputed territory.

New provinces imperative for better future

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A roundtable discussion was held at the Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) on the need for new provinces to improve governance and public service delivery on Wednesday. A gathering of politicians, public policy practitioners, academics, and media attended the moot. The roundtable was addressed by former governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan Owais Ahmad Ghani, Executive Director SOPREST Shakeel Durrani, former federal secretary Ishtiaq Ahmad Khan, former federal minister Daniyal Aziz, former ambassador Muhammad Hassan, and former federal minister Zubaida Jalal. Former special representative to Afghanistan Amb Asif Durrani, corporate and legal attorney Hafiz Ahsan Ahmad, eminent jurist Dr Shoaib Suddle, former caretaker minister Murtaza Solangi, and Dunya TV Managing Director Naveed Kashif also participated. The speakers urged the need for adopting an organic solution to the prevailing administrative and governance problems in the country, and were of the view that creating new provinces was sine qua non for public good and national security. It was opined that the province of Punjab was larger than 196 countries. That prompts either redrawing of boundaries and redistribution of resources, if present-day discord has to be addressed with the growing needs and necessities of a swelling population.

Shocking revelations in Mustafa murder case

Police have recovered an iron rod used in Mustafa's assault from Armaghan's DHA residence

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Police have made major breakthroughs in the Mustafa abduction and murder case, recovering the murder weapon and securing a chilling confession from key suspect, Armaghan. According to investigation officials, the prime suspect, who is currently with police in physical remand, has revealed harrowing details of how he brutally tortured and later burned Mustafa alive. During interrogation, Armaghan said that on January 6 he called the victim and Shiraz Bukhari - the other suspect alias Shavez - to his bungalow, where he launched a vicious assault on Mustafa, using an iron rod to beat him for two hours. Investigators confirmed that the rod was later recovered from the guard room of Armaghan's house in Defence's Khayaban-e-Momin. They said that Mustafa sustained severe injuries, with heavy bleeding from the head and knees. Following are the details of Armaghan's confession. The prime suspect admitted that he was intoxicated at the time of the assault. He revealed that Shiraz, his accomplice, attempted to stop him when Mustafa started bleeding excessively. However, after the brutal beating, both suspects loaded Mustafa into his own vehicle and drove towards Hub. Upon reaching Hub, Armaghan opened the car's boot and discovered that Mustafa was still alive. He then doused him and the car in petrol and mockingly challenged him to escape, knowing that his severe knee injuries had rendered him immobile. Despite Mustafa's feeble attempts to move, he was unable to flee. The suspect confessed that he then set Mustafa on fire. Armaghan also disclosed that immediately after igniting the flames, Shiraz urged him to flee the scene. The two suspects then made their way back to Karachi by hitchhiking in different vehicles. Following Armaghan's confession, Karachi police raided his bungalow and retrieved the iron rod used in the assault. The investigation continues as law enforcement officials prepare to present Armaghan before the trial court after completion of the physical remand, which ends tomorrow (Friday). As the probe is underway, the police and investigation authorities have said that Armaghan's monthly income couldn't be ascertained yet.

Pak, EU committed to fight terrorism in Brussels Talks

The Dialogue allowed for an exchange on regional and global challenges, including the security implications of the situation in Afghanistan

DNA

BRUSSELS: Pakistan and the European Union held their ninth Counter-Terrorism Dialogue in Brussels, on 20 February 2025. The two delegations discussed cooperation on counter-terrorism, as part of their wider engagement on Security matters in the framework of the 2019 Strategic Engagement Plan. The European Union and Pakistan condemned terrorism in all its forms and confirmed their steadfast commitment to fight it. The Dialogue allowed for an exchange on regional and global challenges, including the security implications of the situation in Afghanistan and in other areas, like the Middle East. Both parties confirmed the importance of a strong cooperation with international

partners in multilateral fora. This includes the work in the United Nations' framework and in the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum, which the EU has been co-chairing since 2022. The European Union and Pakistan also discussed areas for exchange of best practices and for concrete cooperation, with a focus on common actions on prevention and countering of violent extremism, recruitment and movement of foreign fighters, offline and online radicalization, combating terrorism financing and more topics that are relevant to address the growing challenges posed by terrorism. The respective delegations were led by Mr. Maciej Stadejek, Director for Security and Defence Policy at the European External Action Service and Mr. Abdul Hameed, DG for Counter Terrorism at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan.

Chief of Staff Bahrain National Guards meets General Sahir



DNA

RAWALPINDI: Lieutenant General Shaikh Abdulaziz Saud Mubarak Al-Khalifa, Chief of Staff Bahrain National Guard called on General Sahir

Shamshad Mirza, NI (M), Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee at Joint Staff Headquarters, Rawalpindi. During the meeting, both military leaders discussed evolving regional environment and related security issues. Furthermore, they emphasized

broadening the scope and depth of existing bilateral military engagements and cooperation between both countries. The visiting dignitary lauded the professionalism of Pakistan Armed Forces and acknowledged their sacrifices in fight against terrorism.

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