

# 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 per-

#### *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 Sarfaraz 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.

**Continued on Page 06** 

Tarar warns legal action

PTI not ready to accept

COAS 's visit to UK

Information minister alleges PTI follows a "foreign



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



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



February 24 to hold discussions on climate fund

#### MEHTAB PIRZADA

**Power sector** ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Fi- bleeds \$ 1 billion

**Continued on Page 06** 

#### **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 op eration, 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 boun ties on their heads. Houseto-house searches are also being conducted. The RPO added that search operations continue in the mountainous border areas of Kurram and Hungu. 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.

### agenda" and has a history of supporting terrorism ISLAMABAD: Information Minister Attaul-

lahTarar, 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 Pa- PESHAWAR: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf

KHAYAM ABBASI

**Continued on Page 06** 

**Raja hints at** countrywide movement

Says PTI is fighting for restoration of democracy in the country

#### DNA

kistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) of being unable Secretary General Salman Akram Raja to accept the respect given to the army chief said on Thursday they would remain abroad. "A handful of miscreants launched a undeterred and launch a countrywide social media campaign and staged protests, movement for restoration of supremabut patriotic Pakistanis have rejected their cy of law. Speaking to media, he reiteractions," he added. The minister vowed ac- ated that the PTI was fighting for restotion against those involved in the campaign. ration of democracy in the country. He "Anyone who harms Pakistan's integrity and said he had come to Peshawar to meet interests will face legal consequences," he notables and the PTI would continue warned. Tarar claimed that Pakistan's econ- activities in Ramazan. "We will conomy was improving, with a 32% increase tinue to voice concern against wrongs in remittances. He criticised PTI, saying, 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 Turkiye participated in the Exercise



#### DNA

RAWALPINDI: Closing ceremony of Pak-Turkiye Joint Exercise Ataturk-XIII in Counter Terrorism domain was conducted between the Armies of Pakistan and Republic of Turkiye 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 Turkiye participated in the Exercise. Commander 11 Corps, attended the Closing Ceremony as Chief Guest. Brigadier General Ahmet ASIK from Republic of Turkiye 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.

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

# **JAN/FEB 2025**

Pakistan's Premier News & Diplomatic Affairs Magazine

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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.

**Continued on Page 06** 

#### 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

**Continued on Page 06** 

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.

**Continued on Page 06** 



# NATIONAL

# 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

02

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 Scienc-es 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.

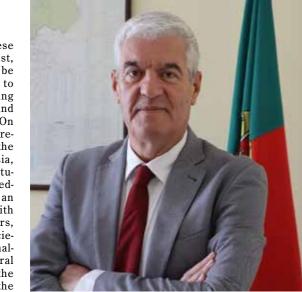
The Federal Minister for Commerce also visited the National Center for Artificial Intelligence (NCAI), one of the leading AI research institutions in Pakistan. It is a part of the government's efforts to build capacity in emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, and data 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.

# **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 Character", alongside



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 Islama-



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 contin-

ued 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 transpor-

Commissioner sional 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 cleared of encroach-

MULTAN: Multan Divifeedback.

To create a more uniform place to establish desigappearance for the marnated parking spaces and kets, the commissioner waiting sheds for public convenience. The local mandated the installation of standardized administration is activesignboards and the paintly engaging the business ing of selected shops. community to encourage He said that pathways the voluntary removal should remain unobof encroachments. Acstructed to facilitate companying the commisthe smooth movement sioner on his inspection of women and elderly were Additional Deputy citizens with dignity. Commissioner General Muhammad Saif and The restoration of the historic Wali Muham-Assistant Commissioner mad Mosque has been City Abdul Sami Sheikh. entrusted to the Walled City Authority. Deputy Commissioner

Commissioner orders removal

of encroachments from markets

Citizens have expressed their support for the Muhammad Ali Bukhari confirmed that both Hussain Agahi and Gardezi Market have been

### Maryam's one-year success sets benchmark: Azma

#### DNA

LAHORE:Punjab Information Minister Azma Bukhari has said that it is often said that governments cannot perform in their first year, but the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has raised the flag of success in both the centre

ful, exhibiting their double standards". Maryam Nawaz has launched more than 90 historic projects for the people of Punjab during the last one year. She added that if any province requires a performance report of Mar-February 26, Maryam yam Nawaz's 365 days in office, the provincial

beautification plan and praised Commissioner Amir Kareem Khan's efforts in transforming Multan's commercial areas.-APP performance of the Punjab government in the past year

"our rallies are unsuccessis a remarkable example of success and public service. February holds special significance in the country's history, she added. After the February 8 elections, the country was on the verge of default, but on

Islamabad **POST** 

Friday February 21, 2025

acclaimed authors David Wagner, Sofka Zinovieff, Mohsin Hamid, and Osama Siddique. On Saturday, 22nd, Tere-

sa Nicolau will participate in the panel "Art, Rebellion and Subversion: Does Money Matter?", along-

support of Camões Instituto da Cooperaço e da Língua, I. P, underscoring Portugal's commitment to cultural exchange and literary collaborations. side other authors Clem-

machinery at various stratebad in cooperation with gic points in Kaghan Valley, Lahore entities with the 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 information.-APP or

tation for tourists and locals.

Efforts to restore traffic flow

on Shogran Road are being

carried out swiftly. To facili-

tate tourists and locals, KDA

has deployed staff along with

#### 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 cricket stadium.-APP

and Punjab within a year. She said that the Punjab government has delivered results in its very first year, sending a message to all provinces to compete in the politics of service. When people have nothing to say, they only resort to abuses. She expressed these views during a press conference at DGPR, alongside Punjab Local Government Minister Zeeshan Rafiq. She said that under the leadership of Punjab Chief Minister

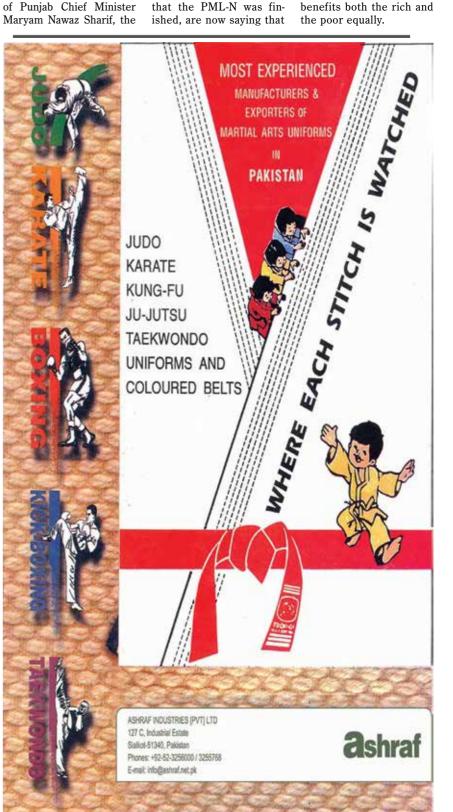
Nawaz took the oath as chief minister and brought stability to Punjab. Azma Bukhari further said that the love and success Maryam Nawaz has achieved in one year is unprece-dented. She added that the inauguration of road projects in Narowal turned into a public rally, reflecting the people's support for the PML-N and the Punjab chief minister. The same analysts and journalists, who once claimed

government is willing to send it as a gift.

ments. Plans are also in

The information minister further said that the PML-N's performance is their distinguishing mark and it will continue to be The upcoming year will be even better than the previous one. Their only priority is public service, added Azma.

Local Government Minister Zeeshan Rafiq said the 'Clean Punjab' initiative



#### 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 work-shop 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 handson 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 Mogeem Khan and RCCI president Usman Shaukat 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 Moqeem 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. Moqeem Khan welcomed the signing of agreement with RCCI, stating that the move would help to strengthen collaboration between the two chambers, especially flourish 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

# **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: Chair-Benazir Income person 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-



She also announced the launch of the Benazir Hunarmand Program, which will provide vocational training to the children of deserving women, the Benazir Nashonuma Pro-

gram, 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.



#### 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



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# **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 eco-

nomic 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

### 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 food 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 Sindhi Jhoomer, 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 teachresearchers, ers, 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

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



**ISLAMABAD:** China ies, who commended the Three Gorges South Asia contributions of Chinese Investment Ltd. launched companies to Pakistan's the Karot Hydropower development. According Project Report 2025, deto Gwadar Pro, the report tailing the successful opemphasizes that Chinese erations of the Chinese companies have brought power initiative under the over 8,900 megawatts of akistan 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 Investemployment, and boosted ment in Pakistan. The economic growth. It furevent drew global dignitarther 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 and efforts

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, : 00(

nations and reflects their ongoing efforts to expand international travel opportunities for their citizens.

Turkish Airlines.....8494949



#### Emergency

Rescue (Police).....15 Bomb Disposal.....15 Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....1122 & 16 Emergency Ambulance.1122 & Rescue Services.4451122 Motorway Police...9266044 Motorway Police.9270601-20 Women Police Stations Islamabad.....9222596 Rawalpindi......9270601-20



#### Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115 PIA Flight Info.....114 PIA Cargo.....9280979 Railway Inquiry.....117 Railway Exchange9270831-5 WASA Rawalpindi..5555489 ..9281092 CAA



#### Hospitals

-	
СМН	5611111
MH	561116
Cantt Hospital.	.9270907-11
DHQ	5556311-4
RGH	9290301-7
Holy Family	9290322-7
PIMS	9261170-79
Polyclinic	9218300-09
Shifa Internatio	nal 4603666



#### Departments

CDA	9221334-43
CDA	9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6
RDA	5555864
ТМА	5770886
Cantonment Bo	oard 9270151-3

Water Tank Islamabad.....0321-5744480

660 KV HVDC Matiari-Lacontributed to modernizing Pakistan's energy hore Transmission line to infrastructure, laying a Pakistan, with an investment of approximately robust foundation for the USD 16 billion. These nation's progress. A key highlight of the report achievements have not only effectively addressed is the Karot Hydropowenergy shortages but have er Project (HPP), which also spurred technologigenerates approximately cal innovation, increased 3,206 GWh of clean and re-

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.

## Capital on alert

canacity

# **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)

#### 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

# **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 apprised 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

# **TWIN CITIES**

# Briefs

04

### 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.

According to an official data,727381 skilled labourers have been sent to aborad for employment, highlighting the government's efforts to promote overseas employment opportunities and boost the country's economy. The majority of these labourers have been employed in countries such as Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Oman, with a significant number also working in European countries. The BE&OE attributed this success to its aggressive marketing strategies, improved facilitation, and strengthened ties with international employers. The move is expected to have a positive impact on Pakistan's economy, with increased remittances and a reduction in unemployment. –APP

#### 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. She debuted in films with Daaman in 1962 and won the Nigar Awards for Best Supporting Actress for her role in Bharosa in 1977. Over her career, she appeared in more than 263 films, often some comedic roles. After decades in film, she transitioned to television and worked in hundreds of TV drama serials, appearing in various character roles in Pakistani TV dramas.She died on February 20, 2012 due to kidney disease.-APP

# 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. Like his previous novel, 'Sarus Cranes Apnay Khawbon Mai Say Urr Kar Ja Chukay Hain' which is a time-travel novel, in this novel (Zindagi Nay Mur Kar Shaitan Ke Qatil Ko Dekha Aur Muskurai) too, Mazhar experiments and breaks the conventional shackles of time and space, theme and diction we usually find in a novel. But Mazhar is not a 'usual' novelist, he loves to go against the current and this is something that singles him out among his contemporaries.

Although 'Zindagi Nay Mur Kar...' has come after a gap of two years (Sarus Crane was published in 2023) yet according to the writer, it took him 15 years to complete it. "Even prior to that, I had a vague idea of this novel when I was 8 years old, a student of Grade-4 at Mission High School," the writer tells his interviewer. The story is a complete work of fantasy but at the same time it has shades of magical realism and surrealism. The element of fantasy is so strong it takes the shape of a story and characters are born out of it so that the writer can convey his

message to the readers.

One comes across characters the novel a vibrant appeal and values! Only then this society that are fast moving out of our makes the story all the more

riveting. The writer takes the

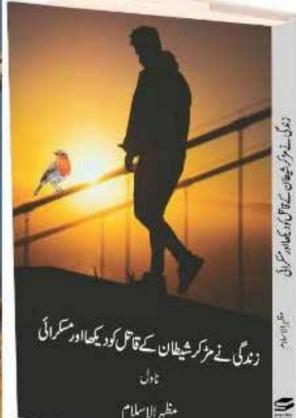
reader along from the childhood

days of the protagonist Abdullah

who has one fixation in life: To

kill Devil and restore forgotten

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writing stories, following the footsteps of the Mystics. He is

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. The subject of the novel is although a much-beaten and complex issue i.e. 'decline of values and romance' yet the writer has presented it in a fresh and lively way generating a healthy debate. We are living in an age of Devil. People are inspired by the successful achievements of Devil, says the writer in the preface that is written in the form of a dialogue. "The devil has kept us away from positive ways of life such as book-reading, letter-writing, presenting gifts, visiting friends/ relatives/patients and enjoying peace in life," the writer asserts. We are idealizing comedians and politicians and consider them successful men. They have become our role models. Unfortunately, we no longer respect a wise man and judge people on the basis of their financial income and worldly gains. This is all the work of Devil and unfortunately, we have sold our souls to the devil. This is an ongoing debate that runs across the novel from chapter-1 to chapter-37 in this 280-page novel. With more than ten books of fiction, novel and short stories (one on folklore) to his name Mazharul Islam's works have been translated into English, German, Chinese, Japanese, Italian, Turkish, Persian, Punjabi and Sindhi languages.

Islamabad **POST** 

Friday February 21 , 2025

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,

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

# Call for focusing on improving mental quality of PWDs' life

life. Once they were considered

a vital link such as postman,

librarian, flower sellers, watch-

makers, schoolteachers, mys-

tics. Their very presence gives

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. These societal stigmas are often at the root of poor mental health and mental illness among individuals with disabilities, rather than their disability itself, he said and added that this can be lessened by focusing on ways to promote good mental health and people with disabilities. Some encouraging steps have recently been taken in Pakistan, such as

#### 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

### 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. Chairman HEC Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad in his exclusive conversation with a private news channel, this cutting-edge facility will securely store and manage data from all public and private higher education institutions nationwide, paving the way for harnessing technology to achieve educational excellence. "I am delighted to announce the successful deployment of the state-of-the-art Tier-III Certified Astrolabe Data Center, a landmark achievement in our efforts to strengthen Pakistan's digital and academic infrastructure, he added. This cutting-edge facility, designed, built, and deployed by DWP Technologies, will serve as a robust digital backbone for our higher education sector, empowering institutions to drive innovation, research, and academic excellence, he said. He said the Data Centre is expected to enhance the country's education system by providing a centralized platform for data management, analysis, research and dissemination. This will enable policymakers, educators and researchers to make data-driven decisions, ultimately leading to improved academic outcomes and a more efficient education system, he mentioned. The launch of this cutting-edge Data Centre underscores HEC's unwavering dedication to elevating Pakistan's higher education landscape through technological advancements, propelling the nation to the forefront of the global IT arena, he added. This visionary Data Centre is the culmination of HEC's steadfast efforts to propel Pakistan's higher education sector into the digital age, earning the nation a coveted spot on the global IT landscape and empowering scholars, researchers, and innovators to push the boundaries of academic excellence, Chairman mentioned. He announced the establishment of two state-of-the-art Data Centres in Karachi and Lahore, marking a significant milestone in Pakistan's higher education journey and propelling the nation to the forefront of the global IT arena. I would also like to express my appreciation to the government of Pakistan for their unwavering support and vision for a digitally empowered Pakistan, he added. Their commitment to investing in education and technology has been instrumental in making this project a reality, he admired. We will continue to invest in initiatives that foster a culture of innovation, research, and collaboration, ultimately propelling Pakistan's higher education sector to new heights, he concluded.-DNA

#### 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. According to an IESCO spokesperson. the affected feeders include Service Road East, C Block, New Race Course, Shalimar Town, and Misriyal Road. Power has also been temporarily suspended in Al Noor Colony, Millatabad, Charing Cross, Kar Chowk, and Adiala Feeder. Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) teams are working to restore electricity in the affected areas. The spokesperson advised residents to stay away from electrical wires, poles, and transformers. For complaints or emergencies, customers can contact their local SDO office or call the IESCO helpline at 118.-APP

introduction of special ID cards for PWDs to enable them to access a range of concessions. It is also no longer legal to use derogatory terms such as 'disabled', 'physically handicapped' or 'mentally retarded' in official documents. Regarding mental health services. he added that Pakistan faces a considerable shortage. According to the WHO's Mental Health Atlas 2020, the country has only 11 large-scale psychiatric or mental hospitals and 578 community residential care facilities. Additionally, there are approximately 624 community-based psychiatric inpatient units, equating to about 1.926 beds per 100,000 population. This limited infrastructure underscores the pressing need for expanded mental health services to adequately support PWDs in Pakistan. Determining the exact number of people with disabilities (PWDs) in Pakistan is challenging due to varying estimates from

different sources. However, In 2017 national census reported that approximately 0.48 percent of the population, or about 1 million individuals, have disabilities. However, this figure has been widely criticized for underreporting. In contrast, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that about 15 percent of the world's population lives with some form of disability, which would suggest a significantly higher number for Pakistan. -APP

# PTI urged to shun chaotic politics

try's democratic progress.

discuss economic issues.

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. In a conversation with a

private news channel, Rana Sanaullah emphasized that peaceful protest and dialogue were the only way forward, as the country is progressing and cannot afford chaos. Rana Sanaullah emphasized that democracy can only move forward dialogue, not through deadlock, highlighting the importance of constructive publicly stated that PML-N conversation and collaboraseeks respect and dialogue to address the country's tion in advancing the counpressing issues.

He reiterated that the dem-Responding a query, Rana ocratic right of opposition Sanaullah emphasized that parties to peaceful protest anyone with reservations about the 26th Amendment and access to parliamentary forums must be respectcan approach Parliament or explore other legal options. ed, as these are essential He slammed PTI for threatcomponents of a healthy democracy. Sanaullah has ening the government with chaotic protests, warning rejected PTI's claims that there is no deal or NRO that this time around, no for Imran Khan, instead one will be allowed to dissuggesting that the governrupt the peace.

Rana Sanaullah noted that ment is open to dialogue to the inflation rate, which Sanaullah further revealed had soared to around that the Prime Minister 38 percent, has now dehimself had extended an ofcreased by 3-4 percent, fer of dialogue and recalled indicating a positive trend that when Mian Nawaz Shain the country's economic stability.APP rif returned to Pakistan, he

to meet its national devel opment objectives in an era defined by rapid innovation and reform. "This is the age of innovation and reform. As a small nation, we have the potential to be far more agile. Our capacity to adapt is far greater than that of India's 1.5 billion-strong population," he said while addressing the launch ceremony of the National Early Childhood Development Framework and the Pak SUN Youth Network.

He continued, "We must harness this advantage changing swiftly, but with purpose and direction so that by 2047, when both Pakistan and India celebrate 100 years of independence, we will have surpassed India in development." Ahsan Iqbal said it was the power of technology and

knowledge that has enabled a population of just 10 million to dominate Europe, noting that this population alone held more patents and innovations than 52 Muslim countries combined. Commenting on past set-

backs, the minister regretted that whenever the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government put the country on a consistent path of development and prosperity, the system was derailed, preventing the continuation of that agenda. He recalled the PML-N government's Vision 2010 and Vision 2025, which led world-leading rating agencies to predict that Pakistan would be among the top 20

economies by 2030. "Today, everyone is talking about Artificial Intelligence (AI), but we laid its foundation back in 2016 and 2017," he said, mentioning the establishment of the National Center for Excellence in Big Data and Cloud Computing, as well as National Centers for Artificial Intelligence, Cyber Security, Applied Mathematics, Satellite Technology, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). However, the planning minister expressed optimism that the PML-N govern-

ment would now achieve the set goals of national development under the recently launched fiveyear "Uraan Pakistan - 5Es National Economic Transformation Plan (2024-29)," a roadmap to a trillion-dollar economy by 2035.-APP



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### Pakistan, Qatar agree to boost anti-narcotics cooperation

#### SAIFULLAH ANSAR

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 Both sides also discussed the release of Pakistani citizens imprisoned in Qatar. Both sides also agreed to increase cooperation in combating narcotics. The Qatari Ambassador invited Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi to visit Qatar. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said that Pakistan has

very close relations with Qatar, adding that he will visit Qatar soon and meet his counterpart. He high-

of Gulf countries on Narcotics control is being held in Islamabad in April, and the

lighted that a conference head of Qatar's drug control department has been invited to participate in this conference.



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# 05

## Trump's new FP approach

ITH Donald Trump's return to the White House, European na-tions 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.

# Islamahad

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### Sudan's deepening humanitarian crisis

S Sudan's civil war drags on, the country faces an escalating refugee crisis that has become one of the most pressing humanitarian emergencies in ഹ 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...

HE 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 nonstate 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 based on forecasts from leading research centers 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

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"

HE 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 chid-

ed 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.

# 06

# WORLD / SPORTS

# Briefs

#### **5 judges** urge SC to restrain acting IHC...

FROM PAGE 01 the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP), registrars of the Supreme Court, and high courts of Sindh, Balochistan and Lahore parties in the case. It is noteworthy to mention here that CJ Farooq rejected a representation made by five judges of the IHC against the fresh changes in the seniority list last week after the JCP decided to elevate six high court judges, to the apex court. The chief justices of all high courts, except the Lahore High Court (LHC) were among the six judges nominated. These included Justice Muhammad Hashim Khan Kakar, Justice Muhammad Shafi Siddiqui, Justice Salahuddin Panhwar, Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim, Justice Shakeel Ahmad and Justice Farooq. Justice Dogar has become the senior-most judge among the IHC judges, as he took his oath as an LHC judge in 2015.

#### IMF mission to visit Pak next week...

FROM PAGE 01 He said the government has been engaging with the retail sector, requesting them to formalise their businesses and pay their due share of taxes. For national interest, "we cannot afford to have people taking a free ride anymore," adding documentation was key to achieving this goal. Later, while speaking to the media, he announced that artificial intelligence would be utilised to increase tax collection. The finance czar added that there is Rs9.4 trillion rupees in cash circulation, which needed to be brought into the formal economy, acknowledged that this could not be done overnight however the government was determined to move in the right direction. The economy, the minister added, has taken a significant turn for the better, with macroeconomic stability firmly in place as currency has stabilised. foreign exchange reserves have increased and inflation has receded with the policy rate decreasing significantly leading Kibor to recede from 23% to around 11%.

# **17-year-old Mirra upsets Iga** as Tauson continues fairytale

Mirra Andreeva stuns World No. 2 Iga Swiatek 6-3, 6-3 to advance to her first WTA 1000 semifinal at Dubai

#### SPORTS DESK

DUBAI: Upsets have been the theme at this year's WTA 1000 Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships, and Mirra Andreeva is the latest to be the spoiler. Andreeva defeated World No. 2 Iga Swiatek in straight sets (6-3, 6-3) to reach her first career WTA 1000 semifinal. The 17-year-old is no stranger to being involved in upsets. Last year at Roland Garros, she defeated Aryna Sabalenka. Andreeva is the current World No. 124 whose game was good before but is only getting better. She is among a select few WTA players with a female coach. Andreeva's coach is former Grand Slam champion Conchita Martinez. She also has become calmer and more mature during matches. The calm demeanor has helped her get through tough patches in matches though she did not experience any tough patches against Swiatek.

Andreeva and Swiatek exchanged service breaks to open the match, but Andreeva settled into her game quickly. She nailed a series of massive down-the-line forehand winners that left Swiatek shaking her head in disbelief and frustration. Mirra Andreeva is the first player into the semifinals. In addition to Andreeva, World No. 7 Elena Rybakina and World No. 17 Karolina Muchova are the only Top 20 players remain-

ing. In other quarterfinal action, Clara Tauson, who took out Aryna Sabalenka yesterday, is taking on Linda Noskova, who upset Jessica Pegula on Wednesday. Rybakina faces Sofia Kenin, and Muchova will play Sorana Cirstea who spent nearly 5 hours on the court on Wednesday winning two three-set matches over Americans Alycia Parks and Emma Navarro.

With the seeded players falling right and left, this could be an opportunity for an unexpected winner. Don't overlook Clara Tauson who is having a great start to the season, winning the ASB Classic in January.

further

world No 1, Aryna Sabalenka, on Wednesday, Clara Tauson continued her fairytale at the WTA-1000 tournament in Dubai on Thursday when she booked her ticket for the semifinals by winning 7-6, 6-4 over Czech contender Linda Nosova, which she also beat in the first round of the Australian Open earlier in the year. Clara Tauson is well on her way to securing the best result of her career at the WTA-1000 tournament in Dubai. On Thursday afternoon the Danish tennis player reached the semi-finals after a 7-6, 6-4 win over Linda

Noskova. The WTA-1000 tournament in Dubai ranks just below the four grand slam tournaments and the season finale. For Tauson it represents a golden opportunity to take a significant jump up the rankings. On Wednesday Tauson already caught the eye of the tennis world when she virtually humiliated world No 1, Aryna Sabalenka, with a scoreline of 6-3, 6-2 in the quarter-final. The five best-seeded players have all been eliminated in the tournament, and Tauson will now face the 14th-seeded Karolína Muchova or wild card

player Sorana Cirstea in the semifinal.

FROM PAGE 01 punishments to May 9 Tragedy convicts, they have exercised their right to appeal and have asked for mercy / remission in their punishments," the military's media wing stated. The ISPR further said that a total of 67 convicts had submitted mercy petitions, with 48 of these petitions processed to Courts of Appeal. It added that the petitions of 19 convicts had been accepted "purely on humanitarian grounds, in accordance with law." "They all shall be released after completion of procedural formalities,' the statement continued.

#### PTI not ready to accept...

FROM PAGE 01

"While overseas Pakistanis contribute positively, a group of instigators leaves no opportunity to harm the country's reputation." He accused PTI of inciting violence, stating, "They attacked Jinnah House and desecrated martyrs' memorials. They have no regard for Pakistan's security." The minister further alleged that PTI followed a "foreign agenda," facilitated militants, and had a history of supporting terrorism. He cited PTI's actions on May 9, claim-ing, "There is evidence of what PTI did that day. Their founder even wrote to the IMF, proving their hostility towards Pakistan.'

#### India thump BD to make triumphant..

#### FROM PAGE 01

with the former's dismissal on the penultimate delivery of the batting powerplay. Sharma scored 41 off 36 deliveries with the help of seven boundaries. Gill was then involved in a 43-run partnership for the second wicket with Virat Kohli. who managed to score 22 off 38 deliveries. India then lost two more wickets in quick succession and had consequently been reduced to 144/4 in 30.1 overs. After back-to-back blows, wicketkeeper batter KL Rahul joined Gill in the middle and anchored the run chase. The duo recorded an unbeaten 87-run partnership to steer over the line.

### Hashmatullah Shahidi says Afghanistan 'total ready' for Champions Trophy 'As a captain, I am very confident that we can make it to the next round,' says Shahidi

He also dismissed the no-

tion of being under pres-

#### WEB DESK

sure while facing South KARACHI: Afghanistan Africa, who boast a slight captain Hashmatullah Shaedge in the head-to-head hidi expressed confidence record. "A lot has changed in his side's ability to excel since 2019 and recently, we in their maiden appearance beat them 2-1 in Sharjah. at the ICC Men's Champi-So, we have that confidence ons Trophy. Shahidi, while with us and we are not unaddressing the press conder any pressure because ference on the eve of their right now, we are focusing campaign opener against on what we can do in this South Africa here on Fritournament," said Shahidi. day, highlighted his team's "I believe our team is ready success over the years and for this tournament and we claimed they are ready for are only focusing on our the eight-team tournament.

#### team so there is no pres-

LONDON: Manchester sure on us," he added The Afghanistan captain addressed his team's winless run in the Champions Trophy warmup matches, asserting that they were focused on giving

flew straight at Real keeper Thibaut Courtois, who was the players exposure in a probably grateful for the bid to acclimatize them with exercise. City were trailing the conditions. "Our aim 3-0, a scoreline that flatwas just to give everyone a tered them, so the hardy chance and make them preband of followers decided pared and ensure they get irony was the best medicine used to the conditions. We for the torture of watching were not looking after retheir once all-conquering sults," Shahidi said. Hashside, breaking out into matullah Shahidi further rapturous cheering and apshared that Afghanistan are plause. Moments later, with 'totally prepared' and are City achieving the rare feat of stringing several passes together, chants of "Ole" came from the travelling support. This summed up a pitiful, desperate night for manager Pep Guardiola, as they subsided in the most timid fashion, a sense of inevitability draped over the Bernabeu from the moment Kylian Mbappe scored the first goal of a brilliant hat-trick after only four minutes. - Agencies

Parchi doesn't work at this

level, says Wasim Akram

#### Man City's surrender in Madrid

City's shocking decline and fall was confirmed by their own travelling supporters suffering on the top tier of the Bernabeu as they were being ruthlessly put to the sword by Real Madrid. The giant clock inside this magnificent arena was on 80 minutes when Mateo Kovacic lined up a tame shot that

Imam replaces Fakhar Zaman in Pakistan's squad

> Fakhar also announced his departure from the tournament on social media

#### DNA

DUBAI: Pakistan's Champions Trophy 2025 campaign has suffered a significant setback as opener Fakhar Zaman has been ruled out of the tournament due to injury. In his place, Imam-ul-Haq has been drafted into the squad for the remainder of the matches. Fakhar sustained the injury while fielding during Pakistan's match against New Zealand in Karachi. The left-hander fell awkwardly in the opening over of the game and had to leave the field for medical evaluation. Although he made a brief return, he soon exited again, raising concerns about his fitness. Subsequent scans confirmed an oblique tear, leading to his withdrawal from the tournament just ahead of Pakistan's crucial encounter against India on February 23 in Dubai. The left-handed batter took to his social media handles to announce his departure from the rest of the tournament. The Event Technical Committee of the ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025 has approved Imamul-Haq as a replacement for Fakhar Zaman in Pakistan's herrna replacement require Event Technical Committee before being officially added to the squad. Imam was already part of the Pakistan Shaheens squad and recently impressed in a warm-up match against South Africa, scoring 98 runs, Meanwhile, in the tournament opener, defending champions Pakistan suffered a 60-run defeat against New Zealand. Chasing a daunting target of 321, the Men in Green were bowled out for 260, with Khushdil Shah top-scoring with 69 off 49 deliveries, while Babar Azam contributed 64 from 90 balls. For New Zealand, Will Young and Tom Latham struck centuries, while Glenn Phillips' quickfire 61 off 39 deliveries provided a crucial boost to their total. Pakistan will now face arch-rivals India in their next fixture, a mustwin encounter to keep their title defense hopes alive.

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and was forced to leave the field for medical evaluation.

The Event Technical Committee of the ICC Men's Cham-

pions Trophy 2025 has approved Imam-ul-Haq as Fakhar's

replacement in Pakistan's squad. All player replacements

require official approval from the committee before being

added to the squad. Imam, who was already part of the Pa-

kistan Shaheens squad, recently showcased his form with

an impressive 98-run knock in a warm-up match against

South Africa. In the tournament opener, defending cham-

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Latham struck centuries, while Glenn Phillips' explosive

61 off 39 deliveries provided a crucial boost to their total.



#### **IHC orders** release of more...

Islamabad **POST** 

Friday, February 21, 2025

#### Power sector bleeds...

FROM PAGE 01 entrenched circular debt problem. These distribution companies include Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO), Lahore Electric Company (Lesco), Supply Multan Electric Power Company (Mesco), Hyderabad Electric Supply Company (Hesco), Guiranwala Electric Power Company (Gesco), Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO), and Peshawar Electric Supply Company (Pesco). This debt is largely driven by the inability of Discos to recover sufficient revenue from consumers to cover the costs of electricity generation and distribution. Poor collection rates, high transmission and distribution losses, delayed government subsidies, and infrequent adjustments create tariff a cycle of financial strain.

#### Hamas hands over..

#### FROM PAGE 01

You were the victim of a leadership that does not care about its children." Hamas said the Israeli army killed the captives by bombing their detention centers, and that the regime of prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu bears full responsibility after repeatedly obstructing the exchange agreement. "The criminal Netanyahu is crying today over the bodies of his prisoners who returned to him in coffins, in a blatant attempt to evade responsibility for their killing in front of his audience." Hamas said it did everything in its power to protect the prisoners and preserve their lives, "but the barbaric and continuous bombing by the occupation prevented them from being able to save all the prisoners". On Saturday, Hamas said it would also release six more live captives in return for hundreds of Palestinian prisoners that include half of the women and children abducted by the occupying regime during the genocide.



#### Agha highlights areas of improvement 'We have to convert our 40s and 50s into big innings, 'says Agha

#### NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Pakistan vice-captain Salman Ali Agha highlighted the national team's shortcomings after their 60-run defeat in their opening match of the ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025 against New Zealand here at the National Bank Stadium on Wednesday. Agha, while addressing the post-match presentation, emphasised the need for the batters to convert good starts into big knocks and called for improvement in the rotation of the strike. "We have to convert our 40s and 50s into big innings otherwise we will not be able to win matches just like we couldn't win today," said Agha. "So I think, we have to rotate the strike more efficiently as it helps in building the innings." The all-rounder further called for consistency, terming it essential for the team to compete with the top sides in the world. "If we want to beat the top teams and even become a strong force, we have to adopt consistency. We can't play badly in one match and exceptionally well in the next. We have to play well consistently," Agha stated. Salman Ali Agha then went on to reveal that the home side were planning to restrict New Zealand below the 300-run mark and acknowledged that the dismal start with the bat, which saw Pakistan scoring just 22 runs in the batting powerplay, devoided them from achieving the desired momentum.

in contention to make it to the knockout stage. "We are totally prepared and I believe that we have a good side and these conditions are suitable for us so L as a captain and a leader, am very confident that we can make it to the next round," said Shahidi. "We can only work hard for that and I know that we are capable of being in the next round. So hopefully, we make it."

#### Raja hints at countrywide movement

FROM PAGE 01

We will unify people for rule of law," he averred. The PTI leader said he would meet Shahid Khaqan Abbasi and also visit Karachi to engage with parties of Sindh. He said the countrywide movement would be launched in Ramazan or maybe after the holy month. "We have to move forward and step up efforts for release of the PTI founder and all incarcerated people," he said. Raja said it's a wise decision to strip Ali Amin Gandapur of party responsibilities. Provincial president Junaid Akbar was performing well, he said, adding that the party had been energised.

#### **BJP** takes control of New Delhi...

FROM PAGE 01 The BJP is in government

nationally but has not controlled the local legislature in Delhi since 1998, so its sweeping victory in seizing more than two-thirds of seats in the February 5 polls was both symbolic and strategically important. Gupta, who has a law degree and began her career in student politics in the city, was selected for the post by party members late on Wednesday. "I will faithfully and impartially discharge the duties of the office," Gupta said while taking the oath of office in front of a crowd of cheering supporters. Modi, who was present at the ceremony, said in a post on X that Gupta had "risen from the grassroots" to become the chief minister. "I am confident she will work for Delhi's development with full vigour," he added. The elections ousted AamAadmi Party (AAP), whose leader Arvind Kejriwal had governed Delhi for much of the past decade and was a prominent critic of Modi.

# Kylian Mbappe now wants to 'make history'

Akram emphasised that the

current team comprises

the best available players

**DNA** 

LAHORE: Former legendary pacer Wasim Akram comes

out in support of Pakistan's squad, dismissing allegations

of favoritism in team selection following their loss to New

Zealand in the Champions Trophy opener at the National

Bank Stadium on Wednesday. Speaking on a show along-

side CheteshwarPujara and Nikhil Chopra, Akramempha-

sised that the current team comprises the best available

players and refuted claims of selection based on personal

references. "If you want me to be brutally honest, I can be.

In our culture, we say, 'These are our kids, don't criticize

them.' But I believe these are our best players. If there

was someone better, they would have been selected. Peo-

ple talk about 'parchi' (selection based on favoritism), but

at this level, parchi doesn't work," Akram asserted. Mean-

PARIS: Kylian Mbappe's message to the media was clear after his brilliant hat-trick destroyed Manchester City in the second leg of their 3-1 Champions League playoff win. The French striker's goal in the 3-2 first-leg victory at Etihad Stadium may have come from a scuffed finish, but there was nothing fortunate about any of his three in the return at Santiago Bernabeu on Wednesday that sealed a 6-3 aggregate success over the English champions.

Mbappe's talent was on full display - his blistering pace, sharp movement and ruthless finishing proving too much for Pep Guardiola's side to handle and sealing the holders' place in the last 16.

Not long ago, the France captain had come under heavy scrutiny from Real fans and pundits after scoring just three times in 11 appearances for Carlo Ancelotti's side. It followed the 26-year-old's acrimonious exit from Paris St-Germain to join the Spanish giants on a free transfer last June when his contract ended. But he has now scored 27 goals in all competitions so far this season after a 'slow start' to life in Madrid. It's safe to say he is no longer adapting, but thriving. "The adaptation period for me has ended and now I have to show my quality," said Mbappe. "I want to play well here, I want to make a mark on the season.

"We wanted to win. We wanted to qualify for the next round. For us it was only logical that Real reached the next round of the Champions League." Mbappe is now starting to look more like the feared frontman who scored 256 goals in 308 appearances during six years at PSG. And the Real faithful have clearly embraced him too as he received a standing ovation when he was taken off in the 78th minute after his treble.

"What an ovation it is for Mbappe," said BBC Radio 5 Live's chief football correspondent John Murray. "What a player. What a man. What an individual. Just listen to how they love him here in Madrid."

Mbappe struggled to adapt to the central striker role entrusted in him by Ancelotti, with Vinicius Jr preferred in his favourite leftwing role. "If you go back to the first Clasico of the season at Bernabeu, it was so big for him," European football expert James Horn-

castle told BBC Match of the Day. "Madrid lost 4-0, Mbappe didn't score and he was caught offside eight times. That was unthinkable for him." His poor form in Spain even cost him a place in the France squad as Didier Deschamps omitted the national team captain from four Nations League fixtures in October and November last year. But since the turn of the new year, he has scored seven goals in six La Liga matches while also keeping Real alive in Europe after a shaky start to their campaign. "I don't think anyone has ever doubted his talents, there was just going to be an adaptation period for him joining this club," said former England defender JoleonLescott on TNT Sports. Murray added: "There were one or two questions as to whether he would fit in here. That now seems preposterous." It is no wonder he is already drawing comparisons with another Real legend - one Cristiano Ronaldo. In fact, numbers suggest he is already emulating the Portugal superstar, who won four Champions League crowns and two La Liga titles during a trophy-laden stay Madrid.

Mbappe's seven goals in this season's Champions League has him level with Ronaldo (2009-10) and Spanish striker Justo Tejada (1961-62) for most goals scored by a Real player in Europe's premier club competition during their debut campaign.

"[Mbappe] has the quality to reach his numbers, but he has to work, because Cristiano set the bar very high, but he is so excited to play here, he can reach Cristiano's level," said Ancelotti. "Everyone was waiting for this hat-trick from him and it has finally arrived." "It is incredible what he has done in his career," team-mate Jude Bellingham told TNT Sports. "I know he had a slow start here and took time getting used to life here. Now he is flying and it's so good to see." With more performances like Wednesday, it will only be a matter of time before he cements his status as the face, and hero, of this Real side. "Tonight, he definitely announced himself with this club and the fans," added former Manchester City and England defender Lescott. "If they go on to win it, this will be the moment they recogniseMbappe is their guy and the main man." - Agencies

# 07

# **BUSINESS / WORLD**

## Briefs

# PSX stays bullish, gains 396 points

ISLAMABAD: The 100-In-dex 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 Associa-

# **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 cooperation, 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, (Operations-Broadcast EDG

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. Tamseel Hayder, DG & PSO to Chairman, Mr. Tahir Farooq Tarar, Head Legal and Ms. Sadia Widad Consultant (Media & PR) from PEMRA were also present.

Iran lawmakers move

to sack minister as

rial plunges

Islamic republic. Pezeshkian has vowed to seek a return to

the nuclear accord and the lifting of sanctions, but diplomatic

efforts have so far to make any headway.-APP

# Europe needs to 'wake up' following US policy shift: **Greek PM** ATHENS: Europe should

**IslamabadPOST** 

Friday February 21 , 2025

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 Kviv 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 de-velopments 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 emanded Europ provide more military muscle for any future Ukraine peace(Reporting by Angeliki Koutantou; Editing by Michael Perry)-APP



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.

### **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

BEIRUT: Lebanese President Joseph Aoun on Wednes-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

tion 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 22karat 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-Masirah TV reported a delegation from Yemen would "We affirm participate. 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 Iranbacked 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

day 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 descrip-tion 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

Lebanese

President

pledges

neutrality, calls

for Arab unity

# 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 Ghanian 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 Gulistan 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 reduce carbon footprints, and further highlighted the need for collective efforts to tackle climate change, encouraging industries to adopt eco-friendly practices,

integrate renewable energy into their operations. Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Mr. Qa-



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.

Pakistan Patron-in-Chief of 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

#### 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







Pak, Qatar

agree to

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FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and

#### **Briefs** ECP seeks details of all ongoing projects

# Pakistan, Azerbaijan reaffirm strong historical, cultural ties

Gilani meets Azerbaijani President, discusses bilateral ties

#### 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



BAKU: Chairman Senate of Pakistan Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani 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 people-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. 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 Turkive, following the proposals for the displacement of Gaza people to Egypt or Jordan and later by Israel to set up a Palestinian state in rahia. He said during the int 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 osted around 200 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 roundtahle 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 Danival 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.

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 Bule di were also present during the meeting. The discussion focused on promoting reconciliation, political cooperation, and collective progress in the country. Barrister Dr. Saif also of fered condolences on the passing of Maulana Sherani's wife and recited Fatiha. 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.

#### 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. DELIGHT IN OUR HEARTY CHICKEN, BEEF, OR SEAFOOD GRAVIES, SERVED WITH YOUR CHOICE OF RICE OR CHOW MEIN AND COMPLIMENTARY MINT MARGARITA AND FISH CRACKERS.

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