



# Islamabad POST

Saturday, March 01, 2025

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 30

**Hungarian President lauds Pakistan's non-aligned foreign policy**

Detailed News On Page-08

**Yusuf Gillani for enhancing Pak-Ireland coop**

Detailed News On Page-04

**Jannik Sinner stripped of Laureus awards**

Detailed News On Page-06



**Pak says it is act of Khwarij**

## Maulana Haq among many others killed in Madrassa blast

President, PM have strongly condemned the suicide explosion at the Jamia Mosque of Darul Uloom Haqqania, Akora Khattak

SHAMIM SHAHID

NEWSHERA: A top official of Darul Uloom Haqqania was among eight people killed, while at least 18 others sustained injuries in a suicide blast that targeted the historic seminary's mosque in Nowshera, officials confirmed on Friday. The bomb exploded in the front row soon after Friday prayers as worshippers were leaving the congregation at the Darul Uloom Haqqania mosque in Akora Khattak, located about 60 kilometres (35 miles) east of Peshawar. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Inspector General Police (IGP) Zulfiqar Hameed told Geo News that Maulana Hamid-ul-Haq Haqqani, the son of Maulana Sami-ul-Haq Haqqani, was the target of the attack. Maulana Hamid, the vice administrator of Darul Uloom Haqqania and emir of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Sami (JUIS), succumbed to his injuries as he was undergoing emergency medical treatment, the top cop said. Hameed added that police teams were present at the site of the explosion, and a search operation was also underway in the surroundings. Forensics and investigation teams had been dispatched to the incident site, and the district police officer was also present there, the IGP said. This was the last Friday congregation before Ramadan, drawing a large crowd of worshippers. The mosque is located inside the compound of the madrassa, whose students were set to go on leave, as it marked the final day of their academic year. The sprawling campus is home to roughly 4,000 students who are fed, clothed and educated for free. Security arrangements at the mosque include the presence of several policemen and a police mobile van, while seminary workers monitor visitors. The mosque is situated at the centre of Darul Uloom Haqqania, with Darul-Hadees adjacent. It is a large building

Continued on Page 06

## Security personnel among 10 injured in Quetta blast

Motorcycle strapped with explosive materials blows up near Jan Muhammad Road

DNA

QUETTA: A security personnel among 10 others sustained injuries when a motorcycle strapped with explosive materials blew up near Jan Muhammad Road in Balochistan's Quetta on Friday, the police said. Following the blast, police and rescue teams rushed to the scene and launched relief efforts, shifting the injured persons to a nearby hospital for medical treatment. Meanwhile, the authorities have cordoned off the area and are working to determine the nature and cause of the explosion. In a statement, the police said the explosive materials were strapped with a motorcycle. However, the investigation was underway, they added. Earlier in the day, a top official of Darul Uloom Haqqania among six people killed in a suicide blast that targeted the historic seminary's mosque in Nowshera. The bomb exploded in the front row soon after the Friday prayer as worshippers were leaving the weekly congregation at the Darul Uloom Haqqania mosque in Akora Khattak, located about 60 kilometres (35 miles) east of Peshawar.

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Russian First Deputy Minister for Energy H.E. Pavel Sorokin calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. - DNA

## Dar thanks Azerbaijan for warm hospitality



Pakistan, Azerbaijan agree to fast-tracking trade, investment deals

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar had a phone call with Azerbaijan's Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov. Ishaq Dar expressed gratitude for the warm hospitality received during the recent visit of the Prime Minister of Pakistan to Azerbaijan. The two leaders agreed to work closely to accelerate

Continued on Page 06

**Pak, China to promote space coop**

## Pakistan to send first astronaut to space station soon

The Prime Minister said we are taking forward Pakistan Manned Mission with the cooperation of China. He emphasised to make this programme a success but also explore new avenues and opportunities for Pakistani youth

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and China have reached an agreement to promote space cooperation and train first Pakistani astronaut on space flight to Chinese Space Station. An agreement to this effect was signed in Islamabad Friday, witnessed by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. Speaking on the occasion, he said this is a wonderful

Picture on Back Page

gesture from Chinese Government to further deepen our cooperation in field of space cooperation and other sectors over the last many decades. The Prime Minister said we are taking forward Pakistan Manned Mission with the cooperation of China. He emphasised to make this

Continued on Page 06

## Macro economic conditions improved due to govt efforts

PM said major portion of work was completed for digitalization of FBR

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Friday said that due to efforts of his economic team the macroeconomic conditions in the country had improved significantly,

Continued on Page 06

## Briefs

**Ramazan mood not sighted; first fast tomorrow**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee announced on Friday that the Ramazan moon was not sighted in Pakistan, and the first fast would fall on Sunday (March 2). The committee, headed by its chairman Maulana Abdul Khabeer Azad, met in Peshawar to sight the Ramadan moon. Addressing a press conference after the meeting, Maulana Azad said no testimony was received about the moon's sighting from across the country. The decision came after different zonal committee meetings held in their respective domains received no testimonies about the moon sighting.

**Dual nationals bared from SBP**

Move follows cabinet unanimously agreeing to eligibility; bill approval deferred

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has blocked a move to allow dual nationals to become governor, deputy governors, and members of the monetary policy committee of the central bank after a cabinet committee unanimously recommended making dual nationals eligible for these positions. The federal cabinet last week deferred the approval of the State Bank of Pakistan Amendment Bill 2024 for the second time at the behest of the prime minister himself, said government sources.

**JCP appoints 4 new judges to LHC**

## Constitutional bench has five more judges

The newly appointed judges include Justice Hashim Kakar, Justice Amir Farooq, Justice Shakil Ahmad, Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim, and Justice Salahuddin Panhwar

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: A session of the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) headed by Chief Justice Yahya Afridi concluded with key decision to elevate four district and sessions judges to the Lahore High Court as additional judges. In the session, LHC Registrar Abhar Gul Khan was elevated to the court as judge while Tariq Bajwa, Raja Ghazanfar and Tanveer Sheikh would be appointed as additional judges in the LJHC. Meanwhile, the names of eight sessions court judges came under discussion including Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan, Qaiser Nazeer Butt and Muhammad Akmal Khan. LHC CJ Aalia Neelum participated in the meeting along with the commission's member Ahsan Bhoon. Earlier, it was reported by Dunya News that the JCP session would be held today (Friday) at the Supreme Court which would be presided over by the Chief Justice.

Continued on Page 06

## CB asks PTI to submit more documents

A five-member constitutional bench heard arguments of Hamid Khan on petition filed by PTI founder

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The constitutional bench of the Supreme Court on Friday gave time to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to submit more documents on the issue of formation of a judicial commission to investigate the May 9 tragedy. Headed by Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan, a five-member constitutional bench heard the arguments of Hamid Khan

Continued on Page 06

## Pakistan confirms two new polio cases

Latest detections raise 2025 polio case count to five nationwide

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Authorities have confirmed two new polio cases in Pakistan, one each from Qambar district in Sindh and Mandi Bahauddin district in Punjab, bringing the total number of cases in 2025 to five. According to the Regional Reference Laboratory for Polio Eradication at the National Institute of Health (NIH), this marks the third polio case in Sindh and the first in Punjab this year. Last year, Pakistan reported a total of 74 polio cases.

Continued on Page 06

## Pak concerned over weapons left by US in Afghanistan: FO

Pakistan to continue to pursue various channels of communications with Kabul to address this matter, says FO

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Amid an alarming rise in incidents of cross-border terrorism, the Foreign Office (FO) said on Friday that Pakistan remained concerned over weapons left behind by the United States following its hasty withdrawal from Afghanistan. The US left behind \$7 billion worth of military equipment in Afghanistan, which was quickly seized by Taliban fighters as they swept the country during a lightning offensive, according to a report by the US Department of Defence in 2022. Addressing the weekly news briefing in Islamabad today, FO Spokesperson Shafiq Ali Khan said these 'sophisticated weapons' were being used by terrorists for attacks inside Pakistan. "We have impressed upon the international community and Afghan authorities to address this issue," he added. Shafiq further said that Pakistan desired a friendly and cooperative relationship with Afghanistan, but the stumbling block in the way of progress was the sanctuaries enjoyed by terrorists on Afghan territory. He said Pakistan would continue to pursue various channels of communications with the Afghan authorities to address this matter. Referring to the closure of Torkham border

Continued on Page 06

## Trump demands return of US military equipment

Trump's proposal to retrieve military equipment could lead to re-invading Afghanistan, experts say

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump has called for the recovery of billions of dollars' worth of US military equipment left behind in Afghanistan after the US withdrawal in 2021. During his first Cabinet meeting, Trump criticised the handling of the withdrawal, referring to it as a "disastrous exit." He specifically mentioned the abandonment of "billions, tens of billions of dollars' worth of equipment," including brand new trucks. Trump argued that the US should make efforts to retrieve the equipment, which he described as "top-of-the-line stuff" displayed by the Taliban on their roadways. Trump also called for the removal of military leaders involved in the withdrawal process.

Continued on Page 06

**MURREE SPARKLETT'S**  
Bottled Drinking Water

**WATER TASTES BEST IN GLASS!!**

CARBONATED WATER ALSO AVAILABLE IN GLASS BOTTLE

330ml  
750ml

For Sales & Supply Contact:

Adeel Butt 03334131756  
Kaiser Waheed 03325808422  
Riaz Muhammad 0335 5111043

## Türkiye consul general calls on Punjab LG minister

LAHORE: Consul General of the Republic of Türkiye Durmus Bastug called on Minister for Local Government Punjab Zeeshan Rafiq at his office, here on Friday. According to a press release, Secretary Local Government Shakeel Ahmed Mian was also present. During the meeting, bilateral relations and matters of mutual interest were discussed. The provincial minister mentioned the recent visit of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to Pakistan and said that the history of friendship between the two countries spans decades. "Türkiye has supported Pakistan in difficult times," he remarked. Zeeshan Rafiq told the Turkish consul general that the Punjab government, under the leadership of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, completed several public welfare projects in a short period of time. "All possible facilities are being provided to Turkish investors in Punjab," he added. The consul general thanked the provincial minister for the meeting and assured that the Turkish government would continue its cooperation with Pakistan, particularly the Punjab government.—APP

## SCCI stresses peaceful atmosphere to flourish economic activities

PESHAWAR: Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Fazal Moqem Khan emphasized that a peaceful and conducive atmosphere is crucial to flourish economic activities. The SCCI chief urged government, police and law enforcement agencies to take concrete steps for protection of law and property of people, especially traders community. Moqem was speaking to members during the visit of Chief Capital Police Officer Qasim Ali Khan and SSP Operation Peshawar Masood Bangash here at the chamber house. The meeting attended by SCCI SVP Abdul Jalil Jan, Vice president Shehryar Khan, Chairman of the SCCI Standing Committee for Law and Order Shaukat Ali Khan, former presidents Haji Muhammad Afzal, Zulfiqar Ali Khan, former SVPs Shahid Hussain, Imran Khan Mohmand, members of the chamber executive committee Saifullah Khan, Ashfaq Ahmad, Nadeem Rauf, Mujeeb Rehman, Haji Abdul Naseer, Abbas Fuad Azeem, Gul Zaman and Bakht Mir Jan Durrani, Ihsanullah, Shahid Khan Afridi, Hamoodur Rehman, Hasnain Sheraz, Ishtiaq Ahmad, Syed Ejaz Ali Shah, along with traders and industrialists. The chamber president apprised the meeting about the traders concerns over increasing crime, snatching incidents, extortion calls, growing traffic congestion/ mess, harassing, actions against traders under guise of removal of illegal structures, encroachment in the city, and delay in implementation of Safe City Project. Moqem stressed proactive steps for implementation of the Safe City Project in order to remove a sense of insecurity between the traders community and flourish trade and economic activities.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Palestine in Pakistan, Dr. Zuhair Zaidi describing about art work to Chairperson of the Peace and Culture Organisation, Ms. Mushaal Hussein Mullick during his visit to photo exhibition titled "Palestine was, and will remain" at PNCA.

# Maritime sector major contributor of economic growth: Qaiser

The minister also highlighted that Central Asian countries were rapidly expanding their trade opportunities, but since they lack their own seaports, they depend on Pakistan's ports

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmed Shaikh on Friday emphasized that Pakistan's maritime sector was playing a crucial and important role in the sustainable economic growth. Addressed the National Maritime Policy Workshop here, the minister stressed that promoting maritime trade was imperative for achieving sustainable economic development as highly skilled teams were operating at Karachi Port Trust (KPT), Port Qasim, and other ports, working towards strengthening the maritime economy. He expressed confidence that the maritime sector will play a significant role in country's economic progress in the future. Qaiser Shaikh pointed out that Pakistan's ports were currently operating at only 50 percent of their capacity, despite their immense potential. He projected that if the current import-export volume stands at \$90 billion, it could double within the next four years. The minister also highlighted that Central Asian countries were rapidly expanding their trade opportunities, but since they lack their own seaports, they depend

on Pakistan's ports. He noted that Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif was currently visiting Central Asian nations to explore further business prospects. He emphasized the need for expanding port capacities in the country, stating that instead of handling four containers, ports should be capable of accommodating ships carrying up to 20,000 containers. He further said that Pakistan was attracting significant interest from global maritime companies and investors. He pointed out that while some nations generate 40 percent of their GDP from the maritime sector, the global average contribution of the maritime industry to GDP is 7 percent. Pakistan, too, can achieve a 5 percent GDP contribution from this sector. Regarding fisheries exports, he noted that Pakistan currently earns \$400 million from seafood exports, whereas neighboring countries were far ahead in this industry. He revealed that global companies were showing keen interest in investing in country's fisheries sector. He added that efforts were underway to upgrade the Korangi Fish Harbor, and investment was being made in constructing new auction halls to improve facilities. The minister also announced that the present government had decided that 60 percent of all official imports and

exports will be routed through Gwadar Port. He emphasized that Gwadar Port must be upgraded with world-class facilities to establish it as a modern and fully operational deep-sea port. Qaiser concluded by stating that this workshop would play a vital role in advancing the maritime sector and fostering business growth. He reiterated that the government's committees and task forces were actively working on maritime policy development. In closing, he assured that Pakistan's maritime industry will prove to be a key milestone in strengthening the country's economy in the future. The Ministry of Maritime Affairs organized the National Maritime Policy Workshop 2025, and provided a significant platform for discussion, collaboration, and cooperation on marine pollution control, marine tourism, expansion of blue economy, maritime security, and international cooperation. The workshop facilitated and brought together government officials, industrialists, maritime experts, and international stakeholders to deliberate on the implementation of the recently launched National Maritime Policy (NMP) 2025 and its role in driving the country's maritime sector forward. The workshop focused on key environmental challenges and marine pollution control measures, emphasizing Pakistan's

commitment to MARPOL 73/78 and the Ballast Water Management Convention. Participants discussed the enforcement of industrial waste treatment regulations, stricter monitoring of offshore waste disposal, and digital pollution tracking systems at ports. The expansion of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) to 30 percent of Pakistan's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and strengthening the National Marine Disaster Contingency Plan (NMDCP) were also highlighted as critical measures to safeguard marine ecosystems. The workshop reemphasized the expansion of Pakistan's blue economy, with detailed discussions on shipbuilding, offshore renewable energy, deep-sea exploration, aquaculture, and marine biotechnology. Officials reaffirmed Pakistan's goal of increasing its merchant fleet share from 12 percent to 30 percent by 2047 and enhancing Gwadar Port's capacity as a regional trade hub under China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and global maritime networks. The development of shipyards at Gwadar and Port Qasim was recognized as a strategic initiative to strengthen Pakistan's shipbuilding and repair industry, contributing to national economic growth and job creation. The development of marine and coastal tourism was another key area of discussion. Experts outlined strategies

to secure Blue Flag certification for Pakistan's beaches, promote eco-tourism, and attract private sector investment in sustainable tourism infrastructure. The policy's focus on enhancing ferry services and improving connectivity between coastal cities was identified as a significant step toward making the country a competitive destination for maritime tourism. Pakistan's commitment to international maritime cooperation, stronger engagement with IMO and other global maritime organizations were deliberated at length through this workshop. Furthermore, it also highlighted in promoting regional maritime trade and security and aimed at enhancing economic collaboration among Pakistan and other countries. Officials also underscored Pakistan's role in regional ocean governance, maritime security, and climate adaptation efforts. The National Maritime Policy Workshop 2025 served as a pivotal forum for advancing maritime reforms and identifying actionable steps for policy implementation. The Ministry of Maritime Affairs, in collaboration with stakeholders, will continue working towards strengthening Pakistan's maritime sector, enhancing trade connectivity, protecting marine resources, and fostering sustainable economic growth.—APP

## KP makes substantial achievements in public service delivery last year

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government on Friday released statistics of its achievements and significant progress in public service delivery from March 2024 to February 2025. An official release issued here mentioned that under the Ikhtiyar APP, 16,375 citizens got registered, 9,013 complaints were received, and 6,901 were successfully resolved. Under the public agenda, 390 service indicators were assigned and completed, covering public facilities, price control, cleanliness, health, and youth initiatives. In hygiene and sanitation 667 out of 763 indicators were met, while 192 out of 271 targets for public welfare and service delivery were accomplished. To directly address public grievances, 717 Khuli Kacheris (open forums) were held, including 175 online sessions. Of these, 71 were specifically for people in remote areas, and 31 were dedicated to women's issues. Mass inspections were conducted to ensure compliance with regulations and improve service standards. A total of 569,475 shops and businesses were inspected, along with 61,235 public facilities, 19,680 schools and colleges, 17,774 healthcare centers, and 11,074 Patwar offices. Additionally, 23,385 industrial units were inspected, leading to 4,094 prosecutions, 3,306 case resolutions, and fines amounting to 6.492 million rupees. To curb corruption and recover public assets, the government reclaimed 2.9 billion rupees in recoveries.—APP

## Fake drinks prepared for Ramazan supply seized

LAHORE: The Punjab Food Authority (PFA) food safety teams conducted a grand operation in Mominpura and seized fake soft drinks, prepared for Ramazan supply. A total of 300 litres of the counterfeit mixture were discarded and a case was registered against the unit owner. During raid, motors, mixers, filling machines, bottle caps and crates were confiscated. The DG Food Authority said the unit was producing counterfeit beverages of various brands using an unapproved formula. Facility had poor hygiene conditions with raw materials stored directly on the floor.—APP

## KP CM orders spring afforestation drive to green urban areas

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur has issued special directives for a large-scale urban afforestation campaign this spring to boost urban greenery and combat environmental challenges. The initiative aims to enhance the aesthetic, environmental, and economic value of urban and suburban areas across the province. The Chief Minister's Secretariat has sent a detailed letter to the Forest and Environment Department and Municipalities, outlining specific guidelines for the campaign. The directives emphasize the selection of plants that are compatible with local climate conditions and require minimal maintenance. Priority will be given to trees that promote biodiversity, environmental stability, and energy conservation. To address water scarcity and environmental pollution in urban areas, the campaign will focus on planting larger trees instead of smaller plants. Fruit-bearing trees will also be planted alongside regular trees to maximize ecological and economic benefits. The afforestation drive will target roadsides, canals, public parks, gardens, and intersections. In densely populated areas, innovative methods such as Miyawaki plantations and vertical forests will be adopted to maximize green cover. The Forest Department and Municipalities have been instructed to work closely with other relevant departments to ensure the campaign's success and sustainability. The Municipal Department will ensure the use of all available government land and open spaces for afforestation. Additionally, afforestation conditions will be enforced in all new and ongoing development projects. A robust monitoring system will be established to track the progress of the campaign, with detailed reports on tree maintenance and other related activities to be submitted regularly. This initiative reflects the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government's commitment to sustainable development and environmental conservation. By increasing urban greenery, the province aims to reduce carbon impacts, lower urban temperatures, and prevent soil erosion, ensuring a healthier and more sustainable future for its residents. Meanwhile, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur on Friday constituted a high-level committee, led by Chief Secretary to monitor the availability and pricing of essential commodities during Ramazan. He directed the Chief Secretary to ensure a strict crackdown against hoarding and artificial shortages across the province. The CM also urged members of the provincial and National Assemblies to keep a close watch on their respective areas to prevent any malpractice. Furthermore, he stated that needy families have been provided with PKR 10,000 through provincial representatives as part of Ramazan relief efforts. He emphasized the importance of monitoring the movement of essential goods throughout the holy month to prevent disruptions in supply.—DNA

## ICCI hosts mega event on financial management for businesses success

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) organized a highly informative and interactive session titled "Importance of Financial Management for Successful Business Practices". The event witnessed the enthusiastic participation of ICCI executives, members, and leading entrepreneurs from Islamabad's business community. The keynote speaker for the event was Hassan Raza Syed, a distinguished businessman known for his strong commitment to social work and contributions to pioneering industrial projects in Pakistan. Sharing his vast expertise

in financial management he provided comprehensive insights into the core principles that drive financial stability and sustainable business growth. Hassan Raza Syed emphasized the critical role of financial management in ensuring long-term business success. He outlined several key factors, including Sustainable Growth Rate, Strategic Decision-Making, Risks of Financial Mismatch,

Challenges & The Way forward. He stressed that financial management should not be seen merely as an accounting function but as a strategic tool that influences business success. He remarked that "businesses that master financial planning and risk management are the ones that thrive in competitive markets." In his address the ICCI President Nasir Mansoor Qureshi emphasized

the crucial role of financial management in driving business success, stating that strong financial discipline and strategic planning are essential for sustainable growth. He also expressed his appreciation for Hassan Raza Syed's insights, acknowledging the importance of educating business leaders on financial best practices. He stated that ICCI remains committed to empowering businesses with knowledge, strategies, and resources to enhance financial literacy and economic resilience. The session concluded with an engaging Q&A segment, where participants actively discussed modern financial strategies, investment planning, risk mitigation, and the future of business

financial management in Pakistan. Adnan Mukhtar, Convener ICCI Standing Committee on Higher Education Commission served as moderator for the event, ensuring smooth and engaging discussions. Those prominent among the attendees also included Syed Ahmed Masood, President Sir Syed Memorial Society, Jamal Shah, prominent social activist and former federal Minister, Brigadier Salman Zafar Director NEUTECH, ICCI Vice President Nasir Mehmood Chaudhry, Executive Members Waseem Chaudhry, Ishaq Sial, Zulqurnain Abbasi, former, SVP Khalid Chaudhry, former VP Tauseef Zaman, ICCI President's Advisor Naem Siddiqui.



**MOST EXPERIENCED MANUFACTURERS & EXPORTERS OF MARTIAL ARTS UNIFORMS IN PAKISTAN**

**WHERE EACH STITCH IS WATCHED**

JUDO  
KARATE  
KUNG-FU  
JU-JITSU  
TAEKWONDO  
UNIFORMS AND  
COLOURED BELTS

**ASHRAF INDUSTRIES (PVT) LTD**  
127 C, Industrial Estate  
Sialkot-51340, Pakistan  
Phones: +92-52-3256000 / 3256768  
E-mail: info@ashraf.net.pk

## National Days and Armed Forces Days

### MARCH

- March 01/Bosnia National Day
- March 03/Bulgaria National Day
- March 06/ Ghana Independence Day
- March 12 /Mauritius National Day
- March 17/Ireland St. Patrick's Day
- March 20/Tunisia Independence Day
- March 21/Namibia National Day
- March 25/Greece National Day
- March 26/Bangladesh National Day
- March 27/Myanmar Armed Forces Day

### Hotels & Restaurants



Serena Hotel.....111 133 133  
Marriott.....051- 2826121  
Monal.....0334-5421812



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  
CAA.....9281092



### Hospitals

CMH.....5611111  
MH.....5611116  
Cantt Hospital...9270907-11  
DHQ.....5556311-4  
RGH.....9290301-7  
Holy Family.....9290322-7  
PIMS.....9261170-79  
Polyclinic.....9218300-09  
Shifa International 4603666



### Departments

CDA.....9221334-43  
CDA.....9208301-04  
Met Office.....9250360-6  
RDA.....5555864  
TMA.....5770886  
Cantonment Board 9270151-3

### Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

# Bosnia-Pakistan relations multifaceted; diverse: Envoy

Ambassador of Bosnia & Herzegovina Emin Cohodarevic says the far right, associated with fascist and populist tendencies, is on the rise, the aggression against Ukraine and the suffering of Gaza have thrown humanity into a deep crisis, with a lot of uncertainty and fear

MAHNOOR ANSAR/DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Bosnia & Herzegovina Emin Cohodarevic has said 'We Bosnians and Herzegovinians believe that Pakistan is a fascinating country in many regards, especially culturally and from the perspective of historical values. It is an extremely friendly country, with very competent and amicable people. People hold the key to sound state-to-state relations and friendship comes from exchanges between the people'.

The Ambassador made these remarks on the occasion of the Independence Day of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Rana Tanveer Husain Federal Minister for Industries was the chief guest, while Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaisar Ahmed Sheikh also attended the event along with other dignitaries. Ambassador Emin further said, the multifaceted relations between the two countries have witnessed a steady growth during last thirty years characterized by friendship, mutual respect and understanding. These relations further intensified in last year with the Second Round of Bilateral Consultation between Ministries of Foreign Affairs. 'We hope to further intensify these relations with the proposed two visits in this year. I am proud of all the work we have accomplished so far, and I look forward to continuing to strengthen the bonds between our countries at a critical time in history.'



Today, I am particularly proud of the work we have accomplished to increase our educational, cultural and people to people ties'. He said, Bosnia and Herzegovina is a meeting point of civilizations, a bridge the East and the West. Its unique multiethnic culture has been woven through one thousand years of tolerance and respect among its citizens, regardless of their ethnic and religious affiliation. 'Our commitment and destiny lie within the European Union. Bosnia and Herzegovina has made a significant step forward in the process of European integration in the past two years. On December 15th, 2022, Bosnia and Herzegovina was granted candidate status for European Union

membership. The decision of the European Council to open accession negotiations with Bosnia and Herzegovina on March 21st, 2024, provided a strong incentive to the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina to continue the implementation of key reforms. He said, the struggle for independence and sovereignty in the period from 1992 to 1995 was a general struggle of people who have no other homelands, people who only defend their own, and do not reach out for other people's homeland. That struggle was brought forward by the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, members of all its ethnic, religious or other identities. 'As we celebrate the 33rd anniversary of Bosnia



and Herzegovina's Independence Day, let us be reminded that throughout history, Bosnia and Herzegovina has been a country of unity, tolerance, and a safe haven for multi-ethnicity, and we are dedicated to upholding those principles today, and always'. 'Also, I would like to stress that Bosnia and Herzegovina is on a pathway to becoming a NATO member. My country has taken part in many collaborative efforts with NATO such as the Partnership for Peace Program, Membership Action Plan, and establishing a Commission for Cooperation', he added. The Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina have made a notable contribution

to global peace through participation in peacekeeping missions under the United Nations, placing Bosnia and Herzegovina among countries actively supporting global stability, he said. While concluding his speech the Ambassador said, the far right, associated with fascist and populist tendencies, is on the rise, the aggression against Ukraine and the suffering of Gaza have thrown humanity into a deep crisis, with a lot of uncertainty and fear. 'It is our moral imperative to find the ends to these wars. With the weight of these challenges upon us, let us use this day as a reminder of the power of unity and the importance of respecting one another's dignity', he concluded.

## Railways new reservation timing for Ramzan

LAHORE: The Pakistan Railways administration has announced revised working hours for reservation offices across the country during the holy month of Ramazan. According to a notification issued on Friday, the morning shift will operate from 7:30 AM to 12:30 PM, while the evening shift will function from 12:30 PM to 5:30 PM. Additionally, on Fridays, there will be a break for Juma prayers from 12:30 PM to 2:00 PM. However, reservation offices that operate on a single shift will continue with their existing working hours. The new timings will remain in effect until the 15th of Ramazan, after which all reservation offices will revert to their previous schedules. This adjustment aims to facilitate passengers and staff during the fasting month, ensuring smooth operations while accommodating Ramazan routines.—APP

## GoP, FAO takes steps to strengthen climate resilience

ISLAMABAD: In a significant move to bolster climate resilience, a high-level delegation visited key project sites under the Green Climate Fund (GCF)-funded initiative, Transforming the Indus Basin with Climate Resilient Agriculture and Water Management. A high level delegation led by Secretary of the Punjab Agriculture Department Iftikhar Ali Sahoo and accompanied by Florence Rolle, FAO Representative in Pakistan, the delegation assessed progress in strengthening climate resilience through modern meteorological infrastructure and climate-smart agriculture practices. The delegation reviewed the newly installed Automatic Weather Station (AWS) in Khanewal, part of a network of 15 AWS planned under the project. GoP, FAO takes steps to strengthen climate resilience. These stations provide real-time meteorological data to support informed decision-making for water management, crop planning, and climate adaptation. They also observed Eddy Covariance (EC) Flux Towers, which measure evapotranspiration and help optimize water use in agriculture, and piezometer sensors, which monitor groundwater quality and quantity.—DNA

## ISSI holds seminar on Pakistan- Iran ties

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East & Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), in collaboration with the Iranian Embassy in Islamabad held a Seminar titled "Pakistan- Iran Ties: Prospects for Trade and Connectivity". The Seminar was moderated by Ms. Amina Khan, Director CAMEA. Speakers included Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General ISSI; Ambassador Reza Amiri-Moghaddam, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Pakistan; Ambassador Mudassar Tipu, Ambassador of Pakistan in the Islamic Republic of Iran; Mr. Hamza Sarosh, Former Senior VP Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce (RCCI); Mr. Damanpak Jami, Senior Fellow, Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS), Iran, and Dr. Nazir Hussain, Member Board of Directors, Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (RCSS), Colombo-Sri Lanka. The keynote speaker on the occasion was Ambassador Riffat Masood, Pakistan's former Ambassador to Iran. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General ISSI, emphasized the deep historical, cultural, and economic ties between Pakistan and Iran, highlighted the need to leverage geographical proximity into building a durable economic partnership. He noted significant progress since 2021, including border market operationalization, energy cooperation through the Polan-Gabd transmission line, and the expansion of barter trade, alongside commitments made during President Raisi's 2024 visit, such as the \$10 billion trade target, expediting Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations, and economic free zones. He also stressed the importance of leveraging regional platforms like Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), Developing-8 (D-8), Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to enhance trade and infrastructure development, particularly through Gwadar-Chabahar port collaboration. While acknowledging challenges, including sanctions, informal trade, and logistical constraints, he called for enhancing border infrastructure, formalizing trade networks, and exploring alternative financial mechanisms. Reaffirming Pakistan's shift to a geo-economic approach, he emphasized that sustained dialogue and targeted policy initiatives can transform challenges into opportunities, fostering a more integrated, prosperous, and stable region. In her keynote speech, Ambassador Riffat Masood outlined key challenges, including trade imbalances, U.S. sanctions, and limited border crossings, while noting regional rivalries and India's expanding trade ties with Iran. Despite these hurdles, she highlighted positive developments such as 39 MoUs, the revival of the ITI train, and expanded energy cooperation. She urged enhancing border security, strengthening mutual trust, and advancing projects like Gwadar-Chabahar and the BRI to unlock full trade potential. Ms Amina Khan highlighted the \$10 billion trade target and key energy projects as significant steps in strengthening ties. While challenges remain, she stressed that structured engagement and mutual respect provide a strong foundation for a resilient and enduring partnership.—DNA

## NHA invites EoIs for consultancy services for widening N-45 section

ISLAMABAD: The National Highway Authority (NHA) is seeking Expressions of Interest (EOI) from local and national consulting firms for the improvement and widening of 46 Km Akhagaram-Dir section of Nowshehra-Chitral Highway (N-45). The project aims to improve the connectivity by widening and rehabilitating the existing road and enhance the effective use of the national highway, an official of NHA told APP on Friday. The project is being financed by a loan agreement between the Government of Pakistan and EXIM Bank Korea. The NHA invites consultants listed by EXIM Bank Korea to partner with local firms for this project. He further said that interested parties must submit their EOIs by 11:00 AM on March 18, 2025, at NHA Islamabad. EOIs will be opened at 11:30 AM the same day. To qualify, consultants must meet certain criteria, including relevant registrations with the Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) and tax authorities. Manual submissions will be rejected, and all firms must register with the Electronic Procurement and Assessment System (EPADS)—APP

## PBM to distribute 5m meals during Ramzan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM) is set to launch one of its largest relief campaigns during the holy month of Ramzan, aiming to distribute over five million Iftar meal boxes across the country under the Prime Minister's Special Initiative. The campaign will target the most deserving and underprivileged segments of society, offering relief to those struggling with poverty and hunger. In an exclusive interview with APP on Friday, Managing Director, PBM, Senator Captain (R) Shaheen Khalid Butt said the initiative would provide ready-to-eat meals through PBM's existing district-level infrastructure spread across the country. He highlighted that PBM will utilize mosques, orphan centers, women empowerment centers, schools, and other designated locations for meal distribution, while 33 mobile trucks will operate on different routes to reach the most remote areas.

"PBM already has an extensive infrastructure at the district level, and my team has formalized this entire campaign under my supervision to ensure timely and transparent delivery," he added. While Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal is widely known for its financial assistance programs, Senator Butt outlined a major shift in the institution's vision—transitioning from merely providing aid to empowering people through rehabilitation and self-sufficiency programs. "Our primary responsibility is to assist the poor and vulnerable without making people continuously dependent on aid. My vision is to empower people so they can stand on their own feet rather than waiting for help every month," he said. He announced that a pilot rehabilitation project is already underway with 15 applicants, focusing on skill development and small business support. After Ramzan, the program will be expanded nationwide to encourage self-reliance. "We are

offering rehabilitation projects where a deserving fruit vendor, whose cart broke down, won't receive just money — instead, we provide him with a motorized cart to continue his business. This way, we break the cycle of dependency and empower people to earn with dignity," he added. One of the flagship projects of PBM, he mentioned, is its Women Empowerment Centers (WECs), where thousands of women are trained in sewing, beautician services, and handicrafts. "Our women empowerment centers offer six-month vocational training courses. After completing their training, we provide women with sewing machines or other necessary equipment to help them start their own small businesses," he said. He further revealed that women with viable business ideas are given multiple machines or tools to set up small-scale production units. "This is not just about providing skills—it's about empowering women to become job creators in their communities," he added.—APP

## FDE announces Ramzan timings for educational institutions

ISLAMABAD: Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) has issued new operational timings for all educational institutions under its jurisdiction during the holy month of Ramazan. In a recent announcement, the FDE emphasized the necessity for schools and colleges to adhere to these adjusted hours to accommodate the observance of fasting. According to the official notification, single-shift institutions will operate from 8:00 AM to 12:30 PM from Monday to Thursday. On Fridays, these institutions will have slightly adjusted hours, opening from 8:00 AM until 12:00 PM. For educational institutions that follow a double-shift schedule, the timings are set from 8:00 AM to 12:30 PM (Monday to Friday) for the first shift. The second shift is scheduled from 12:30 PM to 4:30 PM from Monday to Thursday, concluding early on Fridays from 1:30 PM to 4:30 PM. Similarly, Ex-FG Colleges will operate from 8:00 AM to 12:30 PM from Monday to Thursday, while from 8:00 AM until 12:00 PM on Fridays. Islamabad Model Schools and colleges, including the F.G. Colleges for Boys and Girls, are directed to implement these changes promptly and communicate the timings to all involved stakeholders.—DNA

**ASIAN WOK**  
by MONAL

LUNCH & BGWLS, THE ASIAN WOK WAY!

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.

Starting at just Rs. 1195 +tax  
Available daily from 12 PM to 6 PM

Lower Ground Floor, Mosaic District, I-8 Markaz  
0300-5845530 | 051-8840526 | 051-8840527

## Briefs

## KS relief distributes 30,000 food packages

ISLAMABAD: King Salman Relief Center, in collaboration with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), has successfully completed the distribution of 30,000 food packages (cycle-1) in 28 districts across Pakistan to assist needy communities.

KSrelief distributes 30,000 food packages to vulnerable communities. This distribution aims to support thousands of individuals living below the poverty line. Each food package weighs 95 kilograms and includes 80 kilograms of flour, 5 liters of cooking oil, 5 kilograms of sugar, and 5 kilograms of chickpeas. The distribution process was carried out transparently under the supervision of the King Salman Relief Center, in coordination with the NDMA, PDMAs, district administration, Hayat Foundation and PADO. This initiative underscores King Salman Relief's commitment to reducing food insecurity in Pakistan and improving the welfare of deserving households.—APP

## Secretary Health examines facilities at PIMS

ISLAMABAD: Secretary, Ministry of National Health Services Regulations and Coordination, Nadeem Mahub on Friday carried out a surprise visit to the Outpatient Department (OPD) of Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) to review healthcare services and administrative arrangements. During his visit, the secretary inspected the attendance of doctors and medical staff. He emphasized that hospital administration must ensure the availability of doctors and paramedical staff at all times, stating that negligence and inefficiency would not be tolerated and reaffirmed zero tolerance policy over absenteeism matters. Nadeem Mahub urged the medical professionals to provide the best possible healthcare services to patients, acknowledging that PIMS hospital faces a significant patient load.

He highlighted that as per the Prime Minister's directives, full support is being given to the PIMS. The Federal Health Secretary also inspected the newly established patient assistance booths and visited the hospital rooftop to assess ongoing repair work. He directed the Executive Director of PIMS to ensure the swift completion of these repairs and renovation of washrooms. He expressed satisfaction with the hospital's cleanliness and maintenance. Reaffirming the commitment of the government, Nadeem Mahub said that providing quality healthcare services to every citizen remains a top priority. He emphasized that significant measures are being taken to upgrade healthcare facilities and improving hospital infrastructure.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi taking interest in different stalls during "Art Exhibition on Climate Change" in Federal Capital.

## Chairman Senate for enhanced Pakistan-Ireland cooperation

During a meeting with Mary O'Neill, Ambassador of Ireland, the Chairman Senate highlighted the crucial role of the business community in fostering partnerships and enhancing investment opportunities

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on Friday said that Pakistan seeks to further strengthen bilateral relations with Ireland and explore new avenues for trade, investment, and cooperation in key sectors such as technology, agriculture, renewable energy, and pharmaceuticals. During a meeting with Mary O'Neill, Ambassador of Ireland, the Chairman Senate highlighted the crucial role of the business community in fostering partnerships and enhancing investment opportunities. He underscored the importance of frequent high-level parliamentary exchanges to further deepen bilateral ties. He proposed greater parliamentary collaboration between the Senate of Pakistan and the Oire-

achtas, focusing on joint legislative exchanges, capacity-building initiatives, and technical cooperation on budgetary governance. Gilani advocated for the establishment of parliamentary friendship groups in both parliaments to strengthen people-to-people linkages and expand cooperation in legislative affairs. Recalling his recent visit to Ireland, the Chairman expressed appreciation for the opportunity to engage with the Irish Parliament and gain insights from its Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO). He noted with satisfaction that the meetings held during the visit were productive and laid the foundation for future collaboration. To build upon this momentum, he extended an invitation to the Irish Parliamentary Delegation to visit Pakistan, reinforcing a shared commitment to democratic reforms and par-

liamentary diplomacy. Chairman Senate highlighted Ireland's world-class education system and explored potential collaborations in higher education, including student exchanges, scholarships, and joint research initiatives. He also reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to climate action, proposing enhanced bilateral cooperation in green energy, climate adaptation strategies, and sustainable development projects. He called for expanding development cooperation in skills training, digital transformation, and knowledge-sharing initiatives. Commending Ireland's principled stance on international justice, Chairman Senate praised Ireland's unwavering support for the people of Palestine. He also raised the Kashmir issue, urging Ireland to support the Kashmiri people in their quest for self-determination in line with United

Nations resolutions. Noting the shared commitment of Pakistan and Ireland to global peace and security, he emphasized that both countries are among the largest contributors to UN peacekeeping missions. The Chairman Senate also acknowledged the contributions of the Pakistani diaspora in Ireland, recognizing their role in strengthening cultural and economic ties between the two nations. He informed the Ambassador about the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) and invited Irish businesses and investors to explore opportunities in Pakistan's diverse economic sectors. Stressing the importance of cultural and tourism exchanges, he proposed the establishment of a structured bilateral consultation mechanism to facilitate regular diplomatic, economic, and parliamentary engagement,

with a strong focus on legislative and institutional cooperation. The Ambassador of Ireland thanked Chairman Senate for his warm remarks and expressed her desire to deepen bilateral cooperation across diverse sectors. She highlighted the significance of people-to-people contacts in strengthening relations and welcomed further interactions in the future. The Ambassador also informed that Ireland's diplomatic mission has recently begun operations in Pakistan, a milestone that Chairman Senate welcomed as a significant step toward bolstering bilateral ties. The Chairman expressed his appreciation and extended his best wishes to the Ambassador for her tenure in Pakistan, hoping for a new era of strengthened diplomatic, economic, and parliamentary collaboration between the two nations

## IVY College delegation visits Parliament House

ISLAMABAD: A 70-member delegation from IVY College of Management Sciences, Rawalpindi Campus, comprising students and faculty members, visited Parliament House on Friday. Senior Senate officials welcomed the delegation and provided a comprehensive briefing on various parliamentary affairs. The delegation toured the Senate Museum, where they were given an in-depth overview of Pakistan's parliamentary history and evolution. They also watched a documentary highlighting the establishment of the Senate, its historic decisions, and parliamentary traditions. Later, the delegation visited the Senate Hall, where they received detailed insights into Pakistan's legislative process and the Senate's role in governance. During the session, students asked various questions regarding parliamentary proceedings, which were addressed in detail. Expressing their gratitude to the Senate officials for their warm reception and informative briefing, the delegation described the visit as a memorable and enriching experience.—APP

## HEC Women's handball inter-varsity championship concluded

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) Women's Handball Intersvarsity Championship concluded here yesterday, while the 'Chairman HEC Women's National Handball Championship' commenced at GCWUS. According to the HEC, at the Handball Championship, the University of the Punjab, Lahore, secured first position, while LCWU Lahore and GCWUS were first and second runner-up respectively. During the closing ceremony of the Intersvarsity Championship, Director Sports, HEC, Javed Memon, distributed sports scholarships and prize money cheques to the student athletes, recognising their achievements. The closing ceremony also marked the inauguration of the Chairman HEC National Handball Championship; with participation from ten teams, including HEC, Punjab, KP, AJK, WAPDA, and Army.—APP

## Increasing deficit in regional trade worrying

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President of Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, Chairman of FPC- CI Policy Advisory Board, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Friday that the increasing deficit in regional trade is worrying. He said that during the first seven months of the current fiscal year, Pakistan's trade deficit with the region's countries has increased by 40 percent, which is a challenge for policymakers that should be given special attention. Mian Zahid Hussain said that according to State Bank data, the main reason for the increase in trade deficit is the increase

in imports from China. Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that during the seven months, goods worth \$8.9 billion have been imported from China, which is 28 percent more than last year. In the same period, Pakistan's exports to China have decreased by 14 percent to just \$1.47 billion, which is regrettable. Mian Zahid Hussain said that according to official data, Pakistani exports to other regional countries like Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives have slightly increased compared to China. The business leader said that the main reasons for the trade deficit include the vast imports of yarn and other goods without customs duty and sales tax, which are caused by the misuse of the Export Facilitation Scheme (EFS).

The EFS is a revolutionary scheme for promoting exports, but it is essential to stop its misuse and punish those involved in fraud, he demanded. Mian Zahid Hussain said that Pakistan has great potential to increase its exports in regional trade, but electricity, gas prices, lack of value addition, and weak infrastructure are significant obstacles. He noted that steps are needed to balance trade, and it is necessary to focus on the export of value-added products instead of raw materials. He welcomed Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif's visit to Uzbekistan and the agreement to increase mutual trade to \$2 billion. The two countries have also signed memorandums of understanding and agreements to increase cooperation in various sectors.

## Masses always squeezed for luxuries of elite

ISLAMABAD: Business leader and former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt, said on Friday that the masses are always made to pay for the luxuries of the elite class. This trend will continue as long as important policies are made for the interests of the elite instead of the interests of the country, he said. Shahid Rasheed Butt said that every political party, after coming to power, wastes as much resources as they can. In a statement issued here, he said that by taking loans from the IMF more than a dozen times and hundreds of times from other international organizations, the rulers have proven that they are not capable of running the country's economic affairs properly.

General Practice HOSPITAL

We Are OPEN

General Practice Hospital is a state-of-the-art healthcare facility offering comprehensive medical services to the community. Our hospital is equipped with advanced diagnostic and treatment modalities, including specialized OPD clinics, an urgent care unit, a modern radiology unit, well-equipped IPD rooms, operation theatres, an on-site laboratory for precise diagnostics, dialysis services, and comfortable inpatient wards. We are dedicated to providing quality, easily accessible, and patient-centred healthcare in a welcoming and professional environment.



General Physician Services, Medicine, Gynaecology & Women's Health, Dermatology & Aesthetics, General Surgery, Lihology, Pediatrics & Child Health, Plastic Surgery, Ear, Nose & Throat, Cardiology, Neurology, Nutrition, Dietetics & Lifestyle, Nephrology, Orthopedics and Sports Medicine, Ophthalmology, Dental & Maxillofacial Surgery, Psychiatry, Gastroenterology, Physiotherapy & Rehabilitation, Psychology & Mental Health.

Empathic &amp; Caring for everyone

We know that seeking medical care can be overwhelming, but you're not alone. With empathy at the heart of our care, we listen, understand, and support you every step of the way. In our clean, premium environment, you'll feel safe, valued, and truly cared for. Book your appointment today and experience healthcare with compassion.

FOR APPOINTMENT +92 33 47 47 47 01

Pakland Tower 2, New Blue Area, Islamabad | www.generalpractice.com.pk | f@generalpracticeislamabad | +92 51 6160 474 | +92 51 6161 474

## Safe, efficient digital environment vital for development of women

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Experts at the Devcom-Pakistan conference titled "Digital Futures 2025: Bridging the Gender Divide for Women's Empowerment in Pakistan" have called for the urgent need to digitally empower women to address the gender divide and strengthen women's empowerment in Pakistan. The conference, which coincided with National Women's Day (February 12) and International Women's Day (March 8), brought together influential policymakers, activists, and experts to discuss the role of digital technology in advancing gender equality. The conference highlighted critical recommendations aimed at empowering women through digital tools and resources. Experts emphasized the importance of widespread digital literacy programs tailored for wom-

en, particularly in rural areas. These programs should focus on basic technology skills, online safety, and digital entrepreneurship, equipping women with the tools to thrive in an increasingly digital world. Access to affordable and reliable internet and digital devices is essential for women to participate in the digital economy. Stakeholders recommended that the government and private sector collaborate to improve connectivity in underserved areas, ensuring that women can engage in online education, e-commerce, and other digital platforms. Experts called for the development of policies that promote gender-inclusive digital spaces. This includes addressing online harassment and discrimination and creating safe environments for women to express themselves and participate in the digital economy. Women entrepreneurs need targeted support to thrive in the dig-

ital economy. The conference advocated for incubators, mentorship programs, and access to funding specifically designed for women-led tech startups and digital businesses. They said the potential of social media to promote gender equality and women's empowerment was also discussed. Experts recommended utilizing these platforms for advocacy, awareness campaigns, and community-building, as well as to challenge harmful stereotypes and elevate women's voices in tech-related fields. The experts and award winners included Sadaf Asim Abbasi, Riffat Ara Baig, SDPI Gender Expert Ms. Sadia Satti, Chairman Read Pakistan Farrukh Dall, CEO CPAIR & Centre for Climate Diplomacy Amna Munawar Malik, Dr. Farzana Bari, Gender and Parliament development expert, Dr. Ghazala Khan, UNDP Consultant Safe Digital Environment. The conference

was graced by notable dignitaries, including Syeda Amna Batool, Member of National Assembly (MNA) and focal person Prime Minister's Youth Programme, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh, Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, who delivered powerful keynote speeches emphasizing the government's commitment to bridging the gender divide in digital spaces. As the Focal Person of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme, Batool also discussed ongoing initiatives aimed at empowering youth, particularly young women, through digital training and skill development. She said The theme of this conference resonates deeply with the core values of the Prime Minister Youth Programme – a program that is committed to empowering the youth of Pakistan, especially young women, through access to education, digital platforms.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti  
Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 05 Issue: 364

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad

## Rejection of net zero

US President Donald Trump is stunning the world with zigzag policy changes. His dictum "Drill, baby, drill" shows the US government is focused on boosting energy and wealth and abandoning net zero commitments to phase out greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. By withdrawing from the Paris Agreement and removing environmental constraints on businesses that exploit energy resources, Trump is safeguarding the US as the global hegemonic oil and natural gas producer, ahead of Russia and Saudi Arabia. The development of fossil fuels in Alaska means that the US can export across the Pacific to Japan, South Korea and other Asian energy importers, competing directly with Middle Eastern oil and gas shipped via the Malacca Strait. The geopolitics of climate change is ultimately about which governance model will pay and manage the transition to net zero. Geoff Mann's and Joel Wainwright's groundbreaking book, *Climate Leviathan: A Political Theory of Our Planetary Future*, described four political models to deliver net zero. These are Climate Leviathan, Climate Mao, Climate Behemoth and Climate X. Climate Leviathan envisages the present capitalist system trying, unsuccessfully, to overcome the problem of working together to achieve net zero. Climate Mao has the same objective but uses an anti-capitalist order. Climate Behemoth describes a global arrangement animated by a chauvinistic capitalist and nationalist politics that denies – until it can only denounce – the threat climate change poses. Climate X is a bottom-up movement that is non-capitalist and pursues global climate justice as the solution. With Trump, we can relabel the Mann-Wainwright models as Climate Trump, Climate Crinks and Climate Europa, with Climate X understood as the rest of the world. Climate Trump is ruthlessly capitalist and business-friendly, ditching diversity, equity and inclusion or any moral misgivings. Climate Crinks is made up of countries the US has designated as foreign adversaries such as China, Russia, Iran, North Korea and Cuba. These countries do not necessarily have the same climate and environmental policies, but they often work together in the face of US sanctions and tariffs. Climate Europa is geographically the European Union and like-minded nations that prefer the rule of law, current net-zero policies and UN Sustainable Development Goals. Climate X is the rest of the world, which increasingly feels left on its own, with less and less international aid. The old mantra of "trade, not aid" has no meaning when trade is more protectionist and aid is no longer forthcoming. Neo-liberals and green activists lament the shift away from a global consensus on climate action. But Climate Trump is a wake-up call for all economies and communities to reckon with the effectiveness of top-down net-zero ambitions and perhaps use bottom-up self-help strategies. The former approach, exemplified by the Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero ostensibly aligning investments with projects pursuing net zero or environmental, social and governance (ESG) goals, was more stick than carrot. With Trump pushing for deregulation, it would not be surprising if more financial institutions and corporate captains retreat from ESG efforts. Net-zero emissions and social justice are ideals that can be contentious and sometimes divisive, as evidenced by the swing to the populist right in recent elections.



## Reciprocal tariffs

US President Donald Trump described his reciprocal tariffs as the "big one". Although he habitually exaggerates his claims, the world could hardly afford to take this one lightly. His tariff policy agenda, which calls for imposing the same tariffs on other countries that they impose on the US, undermines the fundamental principles of the World Trade Organization (WTO), thus posing an existential threat to the multilateral trading system. The WTO's most-favoured nation principle requires that its members treat others equally. WTO members are not supposed to discriminate between their trading partners. So when a WTO member lowers or raises a product's import duty for any member, it must do the same for all other members. Other than some exceptions, such as arrangements for free trade blocs, a WTO member should apply the same tariff rate for all members for the same product despite facing different rates from other members for its own goods. Given the different tariff rates WTO members apply, Trump's reciprocal tariff policy will inevitably result in various rates for different members. Consequently, some members will be discriminated against by paying a higher duty than others when exporting to the US. Trump's planned reciprocal tariffs could inadvertently turn other WTO members into accomplices in contravening the most-favoured nation rule. Under American pressure, some countries could lower their tariffs for the US without doing the same for other countries. A case in point is the European Union, which is reportedly considering cutting tariffs for US car imports only to avoid tariffs. WTO members set "bound rates" for imports, which are ceilings on their customs tariff rates. These rates were negotiated and agreed with all other WTO members. They are therefore legal commitments to the organisation as well as other members. Under WTO rules, no member is permitted to raise its bound rates unilaterally. Increasing rates requires negotiations and agreement among members. If enacted, Trump's tariffs would push the US' actual rates beyond its bound rates. The US has an average bound rate of 3.4 per cent. With Trump's reciprocal tariffs, US tariffs would probably on average be 10 to 15 percentage points higher, according to Gary Hufbauer, a non-resident senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics. Pushing ahead without renegotiating rates with trading partners goes against Washington's WTO obligations. Trump claims that due to the bias of WTO's rules, the US had long been taken advantage of, resulting in a huge and long-running trade deficit. However, most-favoured nation rules, written under US leadership, are designed to secure fair conditions of trade. And as many economists point out, the cause of the US' trade deficit is its own domestic macroeconomic policy, such as running a huge budget deficit. Trump's tariff plan also upends the consensus among the international community based on "special and differential treatment" for developing countries. These special rights allow developing countries to protect their infant industries. Developing countries can tax imports at higher rates than developed members. As a result, developing members have an average actual rate of around 10 per cent, compared with around 5 per cent for developed countries. The difference in tariffs between developing countries and developed ones is the result of decades-long negotiations that balanced the interests of the two groups. They reflect an overall balance between the rights and obligations of members through reciprocity in international agreements.

# Trump Abandons Europe, Embraces China and Russia

Qamar Bashir



European analysts, journalists, and thinkers are deeply concerned about the United States' strategic pivot away from Europe, instead forging closer ties with Russia and China. This shift marks a significant departure from traditional transatlantic alliances, prompting European leaders to push for increased defense spending and a more assertive foreign policy. Germany's newly elected chancellor, Friedrich Merz, has stressed the urgency of strengthening Europe's security independence, acknowledging the changing geopolitical landscape

AFTER Trump, Europe seemed like an abandoned child—lost without direction and stripped of the security it once enjoyed under U.S. protection. This perception stems from my ability to read and write French, which allows me to follow discussions among French journalists, thinkers, and analysts on LinkedIn. These discussions often center on how long-standing alliances, once thought unbreakable, have crumbled while new, unexpected partnerships are taking shape. Observing the transformation of the U.S. under Trump, both domestically and internationally has been fascinating. It was widely believed that while a U.S. president wielded influence over other nations, they had little power to challenge the entrenched bureaucracy and military establishment that truly governed the country. Likewise, it was considered unthinkable that the U.S. and Europe could diverge so significantly on both domestic and international fronts. Trump disproved both assumptions. In his second term, he successfully dismantled key elements of the civilian and military bureaucracy—institutions that had long exercised control over both the presidency and the nation's political landscape. Once dominant, these institutions are now struggling to maintain relevance, no longer wielding the president as a mere pawn. He also shattered the notion that U.S.-European relations were unshakable and that hostility toward China and Russia was as ingrained as the transatlantic partnership. In his first month, Trump alarmed Europe with threats to take over Greenland and proposed cutting aid that was fueling the Ukraine-Russia war. He accused Europe of exploiting U.S. taxpayers to sustain NATO, while failing to make its fair contribution. Simultaneously, he engaged diplomatically with President Putin in Russia, pursued economic cooperation with China, and fostered a more conciliatory approach towards President Xi. His softer stance on Taiwan signaled a significant departure from previous U.S. policies. Trump also blamed the Biden administration for igniting the Russia-Ukraine war, asserting that Europe's push to bring Ukraine under NATO was illogical and provoked Russian military intervention. While Europe framed the war as a fight for its survival, Trump viewed it as unnecessary and avoidable. He condemned the loss of young soldiers and civil-

ians on both sides as tragic and committed to ending the conflict through negotiations—bypassing Europe entirely by proposing Saudi Arabia as a mediator. Trump is known for his unpredictability and maverick nature, often shifting from one conviction to its complete opposite. However, his current stance—consistently advocating against Europe while favoring China and Russia—signals a geopolitical shift unlike anything seen in the past two centuries. He seems to have recognized that maintaining close ties with Europe, despite its wealth, has been costly for the U.S. He believes Europe has relied on American taxpayers while fueling unnecessary wars at America's expense. He also sees Europe losing its edge in scientific discovery, declining in global market influence, lacking control over rare earth metals—now crucial for modern industries—and experiencing economic stagnation for decades. In contrast, Trump views the future as belonging to China, Japan, Korea, India, Singapore, the Middle East, and other emerging economies that are steadily increasing their share in global trade, investment, and business. As of 2024, U.S. trade patterns highlight a shift toward Asia and North America, with Mexico (\$505B), China (\$438B), and Canada (\$412B) as its top exporters, while Germany (\$160B) is the only European nation in the top ten, underscoring Europe's diminishing role in U.S. imports. On the export side, the U.S.'s largest trade partners are Canada (\$349.4B), Mexico (\$334.0B), China (\$143.5B), Japan (\$79.7B), and Germany (\$75.6B), reinforcing North America's strong economic ties with the U.S. Despite trade tensions, China remains a key trade partner. Meanwhile, the largest holders of U.S. dollar reserves are China (\$3.2T), Japan (\$1.2T), Switzerland (\$953B), India (\$638B), and Russia (\$621B), reflecting the dollar's continued dominance in global finance, accounting for 59% of the world's. These trends align with Trump's push to reshape U.S.-Europe relations, criticizing Europe's economic dependence while pivoting toward Asia and North America as the dominant trade and investment partners. European analysts, journalists, and thinkers are deeply concerned about the United States' strategic pivot away from Europe, instead forging closer ties with Russia and China. This shift

marks a significant departure from traditional transatlantic alliances, prompting European leaders to push for increased defense spending and a more assertive foreign policy. Germany's newly elected chancellor, Friedrich Merz, has stressed the urgency of strengthening Europe's security independence, acknowledging the changing geopolitical landscape. Likewise, the European Union is actively enhancing its defense capabilities, recognizing the necessity of self-reliance as U.S. support becomes increasingly unpredictable. European leaders, including UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer and French President Emmanuel Macron, have taken diplomatic steps to ensure continued support for Ukraine, advocating for increased defense spending and even the potential deployment of peacekeeping troops. These initiatives reflect a decisive shift toward European self-reliance in defense, highlighting the continent's determination to address security challenges independently in an evolving geopolitical environment. The honeymoon period between the USA and Europe is over. Under Trump, besides blaming Europe to exploit the USA, he blamed European nations for straying from core principles of media and religious freedom while undermining democratic values—the very foundation of the U.S.-Europe alliance. In contrast, Trump's administration has embraced China as its preferred partner for trade, investment, business, and cultural ties while also aligning with Russia's position on the Russia-Ukraine conflict. China and Russia are relieved as Trump's "America First" philosophy begins to take shape. This policy can now be fully understood: alliances, no matter how old or strong, no longer define U.S. strategy. Instead, America's own interests take precedence. This shift signifies that the U.S. has detached itself from historical commitments and burdens, repositioning itself as a free agent on the global stage. In this recalibrated geopolitical posture, the U.S. sees its strategic interests better served through alliances with China, Russia, and other emerging powers—rather than Europe.

— Press Secretary to the President (Rtd)  
Former Press Minister at Embassy  
of Pakistan to France  
Former MD, SRBC

## A betrayal of Islamic values

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



If Islam is so explicit in condemning hoarding and price gouging, why does this practice persist in a country that claims to uphold Islamic principles? The failure to control artificial inflation during Ramadan is a collective moral and administrative failure. Administrative institutions responsible for price control either lack the enforcement capacity or are complicit in the problem

RAMADAN is approaching, and even before its arrival, the prices of essential food items have already begun to soar. This phenomenon has become an annual occurrence in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, where, instead of facilitating the people in this sacred month, market forces exploit the demand for profit. This stands in stark contrast to other Islamic countries, where governments and business communities work together to ensure that prices remain stable or even decrease in the spirit of Ramadan. Even Western nations, despite not being Muslim-majority, extend special discounts to accommodate their Muslim citizens, recognizing the importance of this Holy month. However, in Pakistan, the situation is completely reversed—rather than easing the financial burden, the cost of basic necessities doubles, making it increasingly difficult for ordinary people to afford the essentials required for Sehri and Iftar. One may question whether boycotting these overpriced goods would resolve the crisis. While temporary boycotts can create momentary price fluctuations, they are not a long-term solution. The real problem lies deeper—within a system plagued by unchecked profiteering, weak regulation, and a lack of accountability. Shopkeepers often justify the rising prices by blaming wholesalers, who, in turn, claim that they are simply responding to market trends and supplier rates. This chain of excuses exposes a fundamental question: Who exactly is responsible? Is there no authority to regulate these behind-the-scenes forces driving inflation during Ramadan? When will this recurring issue be permanently resolved? Islam provides a clear framework regarding fair trade and market ethics. The Holy Qur'an warns against deceit in business transactions: "Woe to those who give less [than due], who, when they take a measure from peo-

ple, take in full. But if they give by measure or by weight to them, they cause loss" (Surah Al-Mutaffin 83:1-3). The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) also emphasized just dealings in trade, saying, "The merchants will be raised on the Day of Judgment as wicked except those who fear Allah, are honest, and speak the truth" (Tirmidhi). These teachings highlight that those who manipulate prices for personal gain, particularly during Ramadan, are engaging in a deeply unethical and un-Islamic practice. Islam not only discourages unfair pricing but also encourages honesty and compassion in business dealings, especially during times of religious significance. If Islam is so explicit in condemning hoarding and price gouging, why does this practice persist in a country that claims to uphold Islamic principles? The failure to control artificial inflation during Ramadan is a collective moral and administrative failure. Administrative institutions responsible for price control either lack the enforcement capacity or are complicit in the problem. The business community, instead of embracing the spirit of generosity, sees the month as an opportunity for excessive profits. Consumers, though frustrated, often find themselves helpless, with no real alternatives. This helplessness stems from several factors. First, there is a lack of stringent administrative oversight. Regulatory bodies often issue price control lists, but they remain ineffective due to poor enforcement and the influence of powerful business cartels. Second, the absence of consumer awareness and collective action allows this exploitation to continue. In countries where consumer rights are protected, price hikes of this nature would trigger investigations and penalties. However, in Pakistan, the common citizen rarely has the platform or resources to challenge such exploitation effectively. Additionally, the lack of coordination between government agencies, local administration, and market regulators creates loop-

holes that profiteers exploit without consequence. The solution lies in a multi-pronged approach. The administration must strengthen price control mechanisms and impose strict penalties on those who artificially inflate prices. Strict action should be taken against hoarders who withhold goods to create scarcity and drive up prices. At the same time, society must demand accountability, using consumer pressure and boycotts selectively against those businesses that engage in unethical practices. The role of religious leaders is also crucial; they should actively educate traders about their moral obligations in light of Islamic teachings and emphasize that exploiting consumers in Ramadan is not just an economic crime but a grave sin. In addition, fostering a culture of corporate social responsibility is necessary. Businesses should be encouraged to adopt ethical pricing models and provide discounts during Ramadan rather than seeking excessive profits. The media can also play a pivotal role in exposing unjust market practices and pressuring policymakers to implement necessary reforms. Furthermore, Islamic banking and financial institutions can introduce interest-free micro-financing options to support small traders who struggle with high supplier costs, thereby reducing the need for excessive price hikes. If Islamic values were truly upheld, the arrival of Ramadan in Pakistan would bring relief to the people rather than financial distress. Until there is a sincere effort to align economic practices with the ethical teachings of Islam, the cycle of price hikes and helplessness will continue. The question remains: When will we, as a society, rise above individual greed and embrace the true essence of Ramadan—a month of mercy, generosity, and communal well-being? Only through collective responsibility, strong governance, and adherence to Islamic principles can we hope to break free from this cycle of exploitation and create a just and equitable society for all.

## Briefs

## Maulana Haq among many others killed..

FROM PAGE 01  
where senior students pursue their studies. Nearby, there are hostels and residential quarters. The administration and medical staff of Peshawar's Lady Reading Hospital (LRH) — which is around 45 minutes away from the blast site — were directed to remain prepared for receiving casualties. The hospital spokesperson said a high alert and emergency had been declared at the medical facility to deal with any situation. The latest reports suggest that the blast took place near the gate of the mosque from where Maulana Hamid was returning to his residence, which is a stone throw away from the mosque.

## Security personnel among 10...

FROM PAGE 01  
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Inspector General Police (IGP) Zulfiqar Hameed told Geo News that Maulana Hamid-ul-Haq Haqqani, the son of Maulana Sami-ul-Haq Haqqani, was the target of the attack. Maulana Hamid, the vice administrator of Darul Uloom Haqqania and emir of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Sami (JUIS), succumbed to his injuries as he was being given medical aid, the top cop said. The country witnessed a sharp increase in terror attacks in January 2025, surging by 42% compared to the previous month, according to data released by the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS), a think tank.

## Constitutional bench has five...

FROM PAGE 01  
According to reports, the meeting would consider the names of eight session judges for the appointment of additional judges to the LHC. Meanwhile, The Supreme Court of Pakistan has expanded its constitutional bench by adding five more judges, bringing the total number of judges on the bench to 13. This move follows the approval of the inclusion of five new judges, which increases the bench's capacity to handle complex constitutional matters, Express news reported.

## CB asks PTI to submit more...

FROM PAGE 01  
on the petition filed by PTI founder Imran Khan. Justice Khan inquired the counsel what his client requested in the petition. Advocate Khan submitted that the petitioner requested for the formation of a judicial commission, comprising the Chief Justice and two senior judges of the Supreme Court, to investigate the May 9 incident. He added that another request was for stopping trial of civilians in military courts. Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar remarked that the request regarding the trial of civilians in military courts had already become infructuous, as a separate case was already underway on the matter.

## Pakistan concerned...

FROM PAGE 01  
crossing, the spokesperson said operational constraints forced Pakistan to take this action. "The Afghan side is trying to construct a border post on our side unilaterally," he noted, adding that Islamabad had urged the authorities in Kabul to resolve such issues through bilateral mechanisms such as a Joint Coordination Committee meeting instead of resorting to unilateral actions.

## Pakistan confirms...

FROM PAGE 01  
Of these, 27 were from Balochistan, 23 from Sindh, 22 from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and one each from Punjab and Islamabad. Pakistan is one of the two polio-endemic countries in the world, along with Afghanistan.

## PSL X to start from 11 April, cricket to return to Peshawar

For HBL PSL X, Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium will host 11 matches, including Qualifier 1 on May 13. Karachi's National Bank Stadium and Multan Cricket Stadium will host five matches each

## SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: The HBL PSL X will return to entertain cricket crazy nation with a match defending champions Islamabad United (IU) and two times champions Lahore Qalandars (LQ) at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on April 11 (Friday). 34 matches will be played in the six team tourney between April 11 and May 18, with Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium set to host 13 matches, including two Eliminator and the final. Cricket will also return to Peshawar during the upcoming edition of the PSL X and an exhibition match will be played on April 8 in Peshawar. The teams of the match will be confirmed in due course. For HBL PSL X, Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium will host 11 matches, including Qualifier 1 on May 13. Karachi's National Bank Stadium and Multan Cricket Stadium will host five matches each. The marquee event will also feature three double-headers, with two matches on weekends (Saturday) and one on a national holiday (Labour Day). Karachi Kings — winners of the league's fifth edition, will begin their campaign on April 12 in their own backyard against runners up of the last edition, Multan Sultans. Multan Sultans' — the winners of the sixth edition, will face Lahore Qalandars on April 22 — the first HBL PSL X match hosted by Multan Cricket Stadium. The newly constructed Lahore's

Gaddafi Stadium will welcome the tenth edition of the HBL PSL on April 24 with home side Qalandars, winners of the seventh and eighth editions taking on Peshawar Zalmi. Peshawar Zalmi, champions of the HBL PSL 2017 will play their five matches at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium, while the winners of the fourth edition, Quetta Gladiators will play five matches at the Gaddafi Stadium. **HBL PSL Chief Executive Officer Salman Naseer:** "We are thrilled to officially announce the schedule for the historic 10th edition of the HBL Pakistan Super League. Over the past decade, the HBL PSL has grown into a globally recognized tournament, showcasing the best of Pakistan's cricketing talent. "The fans in this year's tournament will not only see high-profile international cricketers but will also witness 34 high-octane matches across four major cities—Karachi, Lahore, Multan, and Rawalpindi. "As part of our commitment to expanding the reach of the HBL PSL, we are delighted to host an exhibition match in Peshawar before the start of the tournament, which is a significant step in bringing top-tier cricket to Peshawar, a city with a deep-rooted love for the game. "We remain dedicated to enhancing the experience for players, fans, and stakeholders, who have witnessed some breathtaking

contests in the league over the years."

## HBL PSL X schedule

11 April — Islamabad United v Lahore Qalandars, Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium  
12 April — Peshawar Zalmi v Quetta Gladiators, Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium; Karachi Kings v Multan Sultans, National Bank Stadium, Karachi  
13 April — Quetta Gladiators v Lahore Qalandars, Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium  
14 April — Islamabad United v Peshawar Zalmi, Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium  
15 April — Karachi Kings v Lahore Qalandars, National Bank Stadium, Karachi  
16 April — Islamabad United v Multan Sultans, Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium  
18 April — Karachi Kings v Quetta Gladiators, National Bank Stadium, Karachi  
19 April — Peshawar Zalmi v Multan Sultans, Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium  
20 April — Karachi Kings v Islamabad United, National Bank Stadium, Karachi  
21 April — Karachi Kings v Peshawar Zalmi, National Bank Stadium, Karachi  
22 April — Multan Sultans v Lahore Qalandars, Multan Cricket Stadium  
23 April — Multan Sultans v Islamabad United, Multan Cricket Stadium  
24 April — Lahore Qalandars v Peshawar Zalmi, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore  
25 April — Quetta Gladiators v Karachi Kings, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore  
26 April — Lahore Qalandars v Multan Sultans, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore

27 April — Quetta Gladiators v Peshawar Zalmi, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore  
29 April — Quetta Gladiators v Multan Sultans, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore  
30 April — Lahore Qalandars v Islamabad United, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore  
1 May — Multan Sultans v Karachi Kings, Multan Cricket Stadium; Lahore Qalandars v Quetta Gladiators, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore  
2 May — Peshawar Zalmi v Islamabad United, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore  
3 May — Quetta Gladiators v Islamabad United, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore  
4 May — Lahore Qalandars v Karachi Kings, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore  
5 May — Multan Sultans v Peshawar Zalmi, Multan Cricket Stadium  
7 May — Islamabad United v Quetta Gladiators, Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium  
8 May — Peshawar Zalmi v Karachi Kings, Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium  
9 May — Peshawar Zalmi v Lahore Qalandars, Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium  
10 May — Multan Sultans v Quetta Gladiators, Multan Cricket Stadium; Islamabad United v Karachi Kings, Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium  
13 May — Qualifier 1, Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium  
14 May — Eliminator 1, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore  
16 May — Eliminator 2, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore  
18 May — Final, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore

## Australian reach semifinal of the Champions Trophy

## DNA

LAHORE: Australia secured their place in the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 semi-finals after their crucial clash against Afghanistan was washed out due to rain at the Gaddafi Stadium on Friday. Australia, who started their campaign with a stunning victory over arch-rivals England, finished with four points as their remaining two matches ended in no results. The two-time champions, as a result, became the first team to qualify for the Final Four from Group B, while Afghanistan are not all but out of the tournament even if England beat South Africa on Saturday as the Asian side are well behind the Proteas in terms of net run rate. Chasing Afghanistan's 273-run target, Australia started aggressively, with Head smashing a blistering fifty to give his side early momentum.

## Trump demands return...

## FROM PAGE 01

President Donald Trump has suggested that the United States should consider re-invading Afghanistan to reclaim military equipment left behind after the chaotic troop withdrawal in 2021. In remarks made during the first cabinet meeting of his second administration, Trump criticised the withdrawal and discussed the billions of dollars worth of equipment left behind by the US military. Trump, who negotiated the initial withdrawal terms with the Taliban during his presidency, was asked about holding military officers accountable for the flawed execution of the withdrawal under President Joe Biden.

## Pakistan to send first astronaut...

## FROM PAGE 01

programme a success but also explore new avenues and opportunities for the Pakistani youth. Briefing Pakistan's journey in space exploration, Chairman SUPARCO Mohammad Yousuf Khan said Pakistan has its three observation satellites in space, which are fully operational. He added that by the end of this year, four other observation satellites will be launched to meet the requirement of increased converge time. Since 2011, Pakistan has launched two communication satellites in the geostationary orbit. Pakistan-MMI satellite was launched in May last year, which is a milestone development towards realizing digital Pakistan.

## Macro economic conditions...

## FROM PAGE 01

however the government would have to work further to improve conditions at the microeconomic level so that the fruits of economic progress could reach people. He was speaking here during a meeting with a delegation of prominent industrialists and businessmen of the country. He said the government was working on priority basis for the promotion of industry and business. Business community and industrialists were backbone of the country's economy and it was our top priority to resolve issues facing them.

## Dar thanks Azerbaijan for warm...

## FROM PAGE 01

the implementation of the decisions made regarding trade and investment during that visit. During the visit, speaking at a joint news conference with Azerbaijan President, PM said that all political parties in Pakistan are united in their efforts to strengthen ties with Azerbaijan. He stressed that the cordial relationship between the two countries should be expanded to include economic cooperation.

## Lance Domm hails Pakistan's hosting of Champions Trophy

Lance Domm shared his thoughts on the tournament, the unifying power of cricket

## NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Lance Domm, the British Deputy High Commissioner in Karachi, expressed his disappointment over the early exits of both England and Pakistan from the ICC Champions Trophy but commended Pakistan's efforts in hosting a "fantastic tournament." In an exclusive interview with Geo News, Domm shared his thoughts on the tournament, the unifying power of cricket, and his plans to explore Karachi during his tenure. The ICC Champions Trophy, the first ICC event held in Pakistan in 29 years, has brought teams and fans from across the globe to the country. However, the tournament saw disappointing performances from both Pakistan and England, leading to their early eliminations. Despite their exit, England will play their final match against South Africa in Karachi. Domm ad-



mitted his disappointment over his favorite teams bowing out early. "I know, it's a great shame. I was hoping for a Pakistan-England final. But unfortunately, it's not going to happen," he said. Reflecting on England's performance, he added, "I think it's a question of confidence. I'm sure England and Pakistan will be back as winning teams again." He also shared his experience of watching the Pakistan-New Zealand match in Karachi. "I was at the Pakistan-New Zealand match.

And it was a brilliantly hosted event. The stadium was fantastic. The atmosphere was wonderful. Unfortunately, the result didn't go the way we were hoping," he said. Domm lauded Pakistan for organizing the tournament in a spectacular manner, emphasizing that, despite the on-field setbacks, the event has been a success. "Even though Pakistan and England haven't performed well, I want to congratulate Pakistan for organizing a fantastic

tournament," he said. Highlighting the role of sports in fostering unity, Domm remarked, "The culture of cricket is something special. Pakistan and England share a deep passion for the game. It's a wonderful way to bring people together." He noted the camaraderie among fans from different countries, particularly between Pakistan and England. "One of the best aspects of this tournament has been seeing fans from Pakistan and England mingling and enjoying their time together in Karachi and other cities," he added. Domm also reminisced about his childhood memories of watching Pakistan's legendary fast bowler Wasim Akram dominate England's batting lineup. "As a kid, I watched cricket on TV, and my first memory is of Wasim Akram dismantling England's batting. He was fantastic," he recalled with a smile. When discussing the current Pakistan cricket team, Domm acknowledged their recent struggles but remained optimistic.

## Sinner stripped of Laureus awards 'Jannik and his team have been informed,' says Fitzpatrick

ROME: Jannik Sinner had his nomination for the prestigious Laureus Sportsman of the Year award withdrawn on Thursday after he was banned for three months following two failed drug tests, an official said. The world number one from Italy, who is the reigning US Open and Australian Open champion, twice tested positive for traces of the banned anabolic steroid clostebol in March last year. "Following discussions by the Laureus Academy it has been decided that Jannik Sinner's nomination for this year's Laureus World Sportsman of the Year Award is to be withdrawn," said the awards body chairman Sean Fitzpatrick, the former New Zealand rugby union great. "We have followed this case, the decisions of the relevant global bodies and - whilst we note the extenuating circumstances involved - feel that the three-month ban renders the nomination ineligible. "Jannik and his team have been informed." — Agencies

## GIKI holds Squash Championship

ISLAMABAD: The Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering Sciences and Technology (GIKI) organized a Squash Championship at its state-of-the-art sports complex of the Institute. The sport event was graced by AdilKhat-tak, Member of the Board of Governors, GIK Institute, as the Chief Guest, said a press release. The squash championship of GIK witnessed a thrilling final match between teams comprising faculty members and students, delivering an intense showdown. The audience, including students, faculty, and staff, enthusiastically cheered up the teams who displayed remarkable dexterity skill, resilience, and sportsmanship throughout the contest. — DNA

## FIH Hockey Nations Cup in June

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: The third edition of the International Hockey Federation (FIH) Hockey Nations Cup (men) will take place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from June 15 to 21. The tournament will involve eight participating teams, with the winners qualifying for the 2025-26 FIH Hockey Pro League. The teams include Pakistan, France, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, South Africa and Wales, said a press release. Commenting on the announcement the Malaysian Hockey Confederation President, Subahan bin Kamal said, "The Malaysian Hockey Confederation is delighted and privileged to host the FIH Hockey Nations Cup 2024-25 in Kuala Lumpur." FIH President TayyabIkram said, "On behalf of FIH, I'd like to extend our sincerest gratitude to our Malaysian friends. I already wish everyone, and first and foremost the athletes, to make the most of this experience to grow, and reach the next level." The FIH Hockey Nations Cup was launched in 2021 with the aim of offering a top-level competition to the best-ranked teams not participating in the FIH Hockey Pro League and giving the winning team the option to be promoted to the FIH Hockey Pro League the next season, precisely. The first two editions were played in Potchefstroom, South Africa (2022) and Gniezno, Poland (2024). The inaugural Nations Cup (men) was won by South Africa, the following one by New Zealand.

## Senior players considering break from New Zealand tour

Pakistan is scheduled to play a white-ball series against New Zealand from March 16 to April 5

## SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

LAHORE: Following a disappointing campaign in the Champions Trophy 2025, where Pakistan became the first team to be knocked out of the tournament, several senior players are reportedly considering taking a break from international cricket. According to reports, some key players may withdraw from the upcoming New Zealand tour, where Pakistan is scheduled to play a white-ball series consisting of five T20Is and three ODIs from March 16 to April 5. Meanwhile, concerns over poor performances in the Champions Trophy have put several players at risk of being dropped from the squad. Senior Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) officials are reportedly disappointed with the team's performance, potentially leading to significant changes in the lineup. Reports suggest that some players are contemplating stepping back from the New Zealand tour to avoid being officially dropped from the squad. Among the names reportedly discussed in selection deliberations are Shaheen Afridi, Haris Rauf,



Naseem Shah and Babar Azam. Additionally, the future of Aqib Javed as Pakistan's interim head coach remains uncertain. With the team's underwhelming Champions Trophy campaign, the PCB is unlikely to extend his tenure and is actively exploring alternative coaching options ahead of the New Zealand series. The Men in Green endured a winless campaign after their final group-stage match against Bangladesh in Rawalpindi was washed out on Thursday. Rizwan-led Pakistan started their tournament on February 19 in Karachi against New Zealand. Batting first, the Blackcaps posted 320/5, courtesy of centuries from Will Young and Tom Latham. In reply, Pakistan's batting faltered, managing only 260 in 47.2 overs.

## Liverpool financial loss rose to £57m for 2023-24

That loss was partially offset by increased Premier League media revenue as a result of the Anfield outfit's stronger on-field performance in 2023-24 compared to 2022-23, when they finished fifth in the table and failed to win a major trophy

## WEB DESK

LIVERPOOL: Liverpool made an annual pre-tax loss of £57m up to 31 May 2024 — £48m more than they lost in the previous 12 months. However, the Premier League's club overall revenue rose by £20m to £614m in 2023-24, and its commercial income increased by £36m to £308m. It is the first time Liverpool have reported commercial revenue of more than £300m in their annual financial accounts and mainly due to growth in partnerships and retail. The 2023-24 period covered Jurgen Klopp's last season as manager, in which the Reds won the Carabao Cup, finished third in the Premier League and reached the quarter-finals of the FA Cup and Europa League. Liverpool added four new players to their senior men's squad, spending about £165m on transfer fees to sign Alexis Mac Allister, Dominik Szoboszlai, Wataru Endo and Ryan Gravenberch. That was the first season the club had not played in the Champions League since 2016-17,



resulting in media revenue dropping by £38m to £204m. That loss was partially offset by increased Premier League media revenue as a result of the Anfield outfit's stronger on-field performance in 2023-24 compared to 2022-23, when they finished fifth in the table and failed to win a major trophy. The new Anfield Road Stand opened during 2023-24 and a high-

er number of competitive games at the stadium contributed to a £22m increase in matchday revenue to £102m. Despite the increase in revenue, administrative costs rose by £38m to £600m, which was mainly related to salaries and overhead costs. The club said that, over the past eight years, matchday costs have risen by nearly 80%, while staff costs have increased by 86% to £386m since 2018. "Operating a financially sustainable club continues to be our priority and, with the continued increase in costs, it's essential to grow income streams year on year to maintain financial stability," said Jenny Beacham, the club's chief finance officer. Liverpool, now managed by Arne Slot and currently top of the Premier League with a 13-point lead over Arsenal, generated 1.5bn social media fan engagements and added a record 37m followers to its social channels. According to Brand Finance's 2024 report, external they have the strongest brand of any Premier League club. "The global appeal of this football club continues to be phenomenal and is the underlying strength and opportunity we have for continued growth," Beacham added.

## Briefs

## PSX loses 532 points

ISLAMABAD: The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) loses 532.64 points on Friday, a negative change of 0.47 per cent, closing at 113,251.67 points as compared to 113,784.31 points on the last trading day. A total of 472,078,779 shares were traded during the day as compared to 397,393,389 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs22.778 billion against Rs19.327 billion on the last trading day. As many as 444 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 119 of them recorded gains and 263 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 62 companies remained unchanged. The three top trading companies were Pak International Bulk with 52,248,016 shares at Rs.9.60 per share, WorldCall Telecom with 43,457,950 shares at Rs.1.41 per share and National Bank XD with 28,271,548 shares at Rs.80.01 per share. —APP

## Gold price decreases by Rs.2,500 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat per tola gold decreased by Rs.2,500 and was sold at Rs 300,500 on Thursday against its sale at Rs300,000 on previous trading day. All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewelers Association reported. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs.2,143 to Rs 257,639 from Rs. 259,773 whereas that of 10 gram 22 karat went down by Rs.1,964 to Rs 236,169 from Rs. 238,133. The prices of per tola silver declined by Rs.64 to Rs.3,250 whereas that of ten gram silver decreased by Rs.55 to Rs.2,786. The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$24 to \$2,863 from \$2,887 whereas the prices of silver in international market declined by \$0.65 to \$31.14, the Association reported.—APP

## Rupee gains 06 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Friday appreciated by 06 paise against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs279.66 against the previous day's closing of Rs279.72. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs280.10 and Rs281.60, respectively. The price of the Euro decreased by Rs2.06 to close at Rs290.86 against the last day's closing of Rs292.92, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen came down by 02 paise and closed at Rs1.85, whereas a decrease of Rs 2.26 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs352.17 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs354.43. The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal decreased by 01 paise each to close at Rs 76.15 and Rs74.57 respectively.—APP

## Envoy Hashmi, DG Guizhou discuss cooperation

BEIJING: Pakistan Ambassador to China, Khalil Hashmi held a meeting with Director General, Foreign Affairs Office of Guizhou Province of China, Tao Pingsheng here at Pakistan Embassy. During the meeting, the two sides discussed existing potential of cooperation between Pakistan and Guizhou. They also discussed ways to harness this into practical cooperation between the two sides. Today, I received Mr. Tao Pingsheng, Director General, Foreign Affairs Office of Guizhou province of China at @PakinChina. We discussed the existing potential of cooperation between Pakistan and Guizhou and discussed ways to harness this into practical cooperation between our two sides, the ambassador posted on social media platform X after the meeting.—APP

## PNS Yarmook participates in defence show in Abu Dhabi

During its stay, PNS YARMOOK remained open to visitors and welcomed numerous officials from the armed forces, business, and corporate sectors

DNA

ABU DHABI: PNS YARMOOK, along with its embarked helicopter, visited Abu Dhabi to participate in the International Defence Exhibition (IDEX) and Naval Defence Exhibition (NAVDEX) 2025. The event saw participation from 65 countries, including naval vessels from eight nations. Upon arrival, the ship was warmly received by the Ambassador of Pakistan to the UAE and the Head of the IDEX/NAVDEX Committee, UAE, amidst the melodious tunes of the UAE Navy Band. During the port visit, the Commanding Officer called on various dignitaries and discussed matters of mutual interest. During its stay, PNS YARMOOK remained open to visitors and welcomed numerous officials from the armed forces, business, and corporate sectors. Distinguished visitors included



the UAE's Minister of Tolerance and Coexistence, Romania's Minister of National Defence, Yemen's Defence Minister, the Chief of the Romanian Naval Forces, the Chief of Staff of the Egyptian Naval Forces, the Commander of the Royal Saudi Naval Forces, the Commander of the Royal Bahrain Navy, and the CEO of DAMEN Shipyards. Additionally, the ship hosted Pakistan's Secretary of Defence Production, the Ambassador of Pakistan to the UAE, the Deputy Chief of Naval Staff (Operations), representatives of the UAE Armed Forces, and other notable figures from the international and Pakistani communities. Pakistan's participation in NAVDEX 2025 highlights its strong defence ties with the UAE and its active role in global maritime security initiatives. Upon departure, PNS YARMOOK also conducted a passage exercise with the UAE Navy Ship AL EMARAT.

## How tiny Indian village became YouTube hub

NEW DELHI: Always drawn to the Indian film scene, Gyanendra Shukla left his banking job in 2014, dreaming of a future in motion pictures. Unfamiliar with the industry's ins and outs, he spent years experimenting — until one day, everything clicked, bringing the spotlight not only to him, but also his tiny village. It was a part of the 2003 Indian comedy drama "Munna Bhai M.B.B.S." that made Shukla study the technical aspects of filmmaking. "At the end of the movie, they were showing behind-the-scenes cuts and all that really impressed me," Shukla told Arab News. In 2018, he and his friend created a comedy channel "Being Chhattisgarhiya" — the first YouTube channel in Tulsia, a village of 15,000 in the central Indian state of Chhattisgarh. "The film got a good response and people appreciated it, and this was a big encouragement for us," Shukla said. "In 2018, YouTube was not a big thing ... Initially, me and my friend were not aware about editing and all. We would rehearse our part and record it and upload. Later on, we came to know the concept of editing and gradually through the Internet we learnt editing." Slowly, they would start to involve their neighbors and other villagers in the project. Seven years into the YouTube channel, Shukla now has a team of 200 people, and dozens of others in Tulsia who followed in his footsteps and became content creators. "There are around 40 YouTube channels in the village and many of them make a livelihood out of it) ... My channel has 127,000 subscribers. (Per month) we usually earn 35,000 rupees (\$410)." As production costs can be high, not all of Tulsia's content creators are able to support their families solely from the platform. While the business is booming in the village, the majority of them still take on side jobs. Shukla himself does wedding shots to earn extra income. "If you have 1,000 subscribers, your monetization process starts. I advise people to have a second source of income," he said. "But it feels nice that my village has got international attention. What we are telling through YouTube is our stories, showcasing our cultures and immense talent that the new generation of villagers has." The success of the village content creators caught the attention of local officials. In 2023, impressed by their achievements, the state government set up a digital studio in the village. Named Hummer Flix, it is equipped with gimbals, cameras, computer systems and other film-shooting equipment, including drones. "The studio is a recognition of the local talents. Hope more new talents will come out and they will make movies which go international and attract attention of the wider audience," Gulab Singh Yadav, former village head and member of the village committee, told Arab News. About 2.5 billion people use YouTube each month, with India being one of the platform's largest markets. Shukla's "Being Chhattisgarhiya" alone has cumulative viewership exceeding 250 million. "The village has got a new identity because of the YouTubers. The attention it receives is amazing," Yadav said. "It's not the village but the culture and local ways of life too that are getting worldwide attention due to these YouTubers." Rahul Verma, another Tulsia village content creator, has focused on short comedic stories in his "Fun Tapri" channel. It has so far reached 3,000 subscribers, but he plans to expand production and find his niche in longer films. "I am a commerce graduate. Filmmaking was not my area of study. But I got inspired by the success of YouTube channels from my village and started this venture," he said. "In Tulsia village, the whole atmosphere is creative. Not only the individuals who make films who are involved, but even the villagers too. This is unique and that makes this village different.—DNA

## CDA generates over Rs. 1.5b revenue through open auction

ISLAMABAD: The four-day successful Open Auction of Commercial Plots, organized by the Capital Development Authority (CDA) has concluded. During the four-day auction, 17 commercial plots of different categories and 15 shops of Blue Area Parking Plaza were sold for Rs. 23.404 billion. On the final day of the auction, 15 constructed shops in Blue Area Parking Plaza were sold for over Rs. 1.555 billion. Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa thanked the investors for their participation, stating that the participation of investors in large number reflects their confidence in CDA. He assured that the revenue generated from the auction would be utilized for providing facilities to the residents of Islamabad including the investors. He further emphasized that the participating investors are partners in the development of city and progress of the city. He added that improvements in the authority are being made in light of the suggestions of business community and investors. The auction was supervised by a committee headed by the CDA Member Finance, with the Director of Estate Management-II serving as the secretary. All arrangements for the auction were made by the Estate Management-II Directorate. The committee ensured transparency and a competitive environment for the auction. Chairman CDA commended the auction committee for successfully conducting a fair and transparent auction. During the four-day commercial plots auction various categories of commercial plots in developed sectors and Commercial Marakaz of Islamabad were offered for investment.—DNA

## Parents rush to vaccinate kids after measles outbreak hits Texas

LUBBOCK: Five-year-old Shado is one of dozens of children being rushed to a health center in the US state of Texas to get the measles vaccine, after the recent death in the area of a child who was not immunized against the highly contagious virus. "Look at you, you're so brave," the nurse administering the shot tells the young girl, who is sitting on her father's lap. The death came as immunization rates have declined nationwide, with the latest cases in the west Texas town of Lubbock concentrated in a Mennonite religious community that has historically shown vaccine hesitancy. Mark Medina brought his children, Shado and her brother Azazel, after they heard about that death. "It kind of sparked fear and we're like, 'Alright, it's time to go get vaccinated. Let's go,'" the 31-year-old father told AFP. Rachel Dolan, a Lubbock health official, said the initial outbreak spread rapidly through the community south of the town, potentially fueled by a lack of vaccination.—APP

## Italian Jews call for end to 'ethnic cleansing' in Palestinian territories

ROME: More than 200 Italian Jews have signed an appeal against "ethnic cleansing" in the Palestinian territories, provoking strong media reaction and dividing the country's Jewish community. Writers, academics, philosophers and journalists were among the 220 signatories of the text, which was published in daily newspapers La Repubblica and Il Manifesto. It claimed that US President Donald Trump "wants to expel Palestinians from Gaza. Meanwhile in the West Bank the violence of the Israeli government and settlers continues." "Italian Jews say no to ethnic cleansing. Italy must not be an accomplice," they added. The call aims to "bring out a clear and strong Jewish voice of disapproval," said the Jewish Antiracist Laboratory, a group of young Jewish-origin Italians which is behind the petition. The organization said it was "opposed to the annexation of Palestinian territories by Israel and all forms of anti-Semitism." The head of the Jewish community in Rome, Victor Fadlun, criticized what he said was a "dishonorable" initiative at a time when Israel was holding the funerals of three former hostages.—APP

## Ethiopia, Somalia reaffirm ties after diplomatic row

MOGADISHU: Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed visited Somalia on Thursday and met with its President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud to reinforce their fragile reconciliation after a row over ties to a separatist region. They discussed topics "including peace and security, economy, diplomacy and potential to build joint infrastructure," Ahmed said in a message on X afterwards. The Somali government said in a statement ahead of the meeting that they would also discuss "the fight against terrorism in the region." Residents reported mortar attacks in areas near Mogadishu airport shortly after the visiting delegation passed through it en route to the presidential palace. It was unclear whether the attacks were linked to Abiy's arrival. Security officials at the airport said Abiy's delegation safely left the airport without incident. Somalia's security situation is highly volatile, with the Islamist Al-Shabab group maintaining a presence in the country. "Two rounds of mortar shells landed in Bulubube neighborhood. An elderly woman was wounded after the shell exploded close to her house," local resident Abdiraham Hassan told AFP. A member of Ethiopia's delegation told AFP they had not been aware of any mortar attacks.—APP

## Ramzan Relief Package launched

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain on Friday launched the Ramzan Relief Package 2025 at a Utility Store in Sector G-9, Islamabad. Speaking at the occasion, the minister said that Ramzan is a month of blessings, and everyone should come forward to help those in need. The government is taking all possible steps to provide maximum relief to the public and ease the burden of inflation by ensuring the availability of essential commodities at affordable prices, said a news release. As per the special directives of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, a total of Rs 20 billion has been allocated for the Ramzan Relief Package, benefiting citizens across the country, including Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu & Kashmir. Under this package, the USC is offering discounts of up to 15% on more than 800 branded essential items. To further facilitate the public, store timings have been extended, and all stores nationwide will remain open from 9:00 AM to 10:00 PM. The minister directed the authorities to ensure the quality and quantity of subsidized items at all outlets. He emphasized strict monitoring to guarantee the availability of essential commodities at fair prices. He also announced that he would personally supervise the implementation of the relief package and conduct surprise visits to various Utility Stores throughout Ramzan to identify and address any inefficiencies. Tanveer reiterated the government's commitment to serving the people and called upon every citizen to play their role in making Ramzan truly meaningful through acts of generosity and kindness.—APP

## UN Police's engagement in improving peacekeeping operations urged

UNITED NATIONS: Describing United Nations Police as a cornerstone of global peacekeeping, Pakistan has called for the inclusion of their perspectives in U.N.'s flagship activity that helps countries in conflict transition to peace. "Their (UN Police) insights make a critical difference in improving peacekeeping operations," Ambassador Munir Akram, permanent representative of Pakistan to the UN, told UN Security Council which met to discuss UN support to conflict-affected countries. "It is crucial that perspectives of the UN Police be included in decision-making on peacekeeping missions, including mission planning and resourcing." Ambassador Akram also underscored the need for realistic mandates to ensure the success of peacekeeping operations. "In the situations, where a rapid deployment of Formed Police Units, instead of military, is necessary, the deployment should be based on clear and achievable mandates and supported by adequate resources," he said. The Pakistani envoy said that policing in peacekeeping operations needs to evolve in a way that is capable of addressing complex, non-traditional threats involving organized crime, human trafficking, terrorism and weaponization of technology. In this regard, he emphasized the need for employing technology to enable the UN police to fulfill its mandate. "The UN police must receive adequate training and capacity building and should integrate technology in its operations by using tools such as Generative Artificial Intelligence, virtual reality (VR) tools, drones, surveillance equipment, and data analytics." He said that there was also the imperative of prioritizing capacity building, institutional development and rebuilding local law enforcement structures of the host government, to ensure sustainable peace and stability, considering the crucial role of the UN Police in the post-conflict transitions. As a longstanding contributor, he said Pakistan has deployed 50 Formed Police Units (FPU) in UN peace operations across Haiti, Darfur, East Timor, and Ivory Coast. Demonstrating unwavering dedication to public service and international peace, 11 Pakistani police personnel have made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty, the Pakistani envoy said, adding that the current readiness of a Pakistani FPU on the Rapid Deployment Level (RDL) underscores the country's preparedness for international peacekeeping efforts. Ambassador Akram said that Pakistani police officers are recognized for their professionalism and commitment under the UN Police (UNPOL) banner. He said that Police Advisor Faisal Shahkar represented Pakistan at the highest levels, while Shahzadi Gulam became the first-ever recipient of the International Female Police Peacekeeper Award in 2011. Earlier, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, said that today's meeting offers the opportunity to discuss a critical question: "How can we position United Nations police to be prepared for the future and the challenges that, even as they evolve, retain many known aspects?" Such challenges, he noted, include lack of adherence to the rule of law, corruption, disregard for international law, transnational organized crime and human-rights violations. Further, he underlined the need to work collectively to ensure that United Nations police are properly prepared, equipped and resourced "to meet whatever tomorrow brings".—DNA

## Strengthening relations with Pak among priorities, says Kyrgyz envoy

Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan must protect common interests and increase business relations: Atif Ikram

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Awaz Baig Atakhanov, Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan, visited the Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry. President FPCCI Atif Ikram Sheikh, Vice President Tariq Jadoon, Chairman Capital Office Karim Aziz Malik, Advisor to President Afshan Malik, Advisor to President Sheikh Pervez, Convenor Diplomatic Committee Muhammad Ahmed, Chairman Coordination Malik Sohail and others welcomed the Kyrgyz Ambassador. Talking about the ceremony organized on this occasion, the Kyrgyz ambassador said that strengthening relations with Pakistan is among the priorities of Kyrgyzstan, the establishment



of a joint economic commission between the two countries is expected this year. Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan are brother countries, both countries are connected in culture and geographically, Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan are closer even the flight time from Islamabad to Bishkek is less than Karachi. FPCCI is playing a role in establishing relations with the international community. The Kyrgyz Ambassador said that Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan Business Council will play a role in providing facilities to the business community of both countries. Last year, trade between the two countries was 16 million dollars, which they want to increase. Eighteen thousand Pakistani students are studying in Kyrgyzstan. We have increased the trade with China to 22 billion dollars annually. CPEC project has excellent highways CPEC will be the cheapest route for Central Asian countries. Trucks between Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan have to pass through Afghanistan. In the last 40 years, there have been several revolutions, including independence from the Soviet Union. There are direct flights between Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan, work is going on with Pakistan on CASA 1000, we have tripled the GDP rate in the last few years, Kyrgyzstan is rich in hydropower. Surplus electricity can be given to Pakistan in

summer. President Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Atif Ikram Shaikh while addressing the event said that both Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan must protect common interests and increase business relations. Banking channels should be created to increase bilateral trade. There are important relations between the two countries. There is a need to increase economic ties for the prosperity of the people of both countries. President of Pak-Kyrgyz Business Council Mubarak Rahim Khan while addressing the event said that Kyrgyz ambassadors are interested in learning Pakistani languages. It is important for both countries to promote trade and economic relations, the Kyrgyz ambassador can play an important role in promoting bilateral relations.

Briefs

PM meets newly minted cabinet members

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday held a meeting with newly minted federal ministers, ministers of state, and advisors, including members of the federal cabinet. Prime Minister Sharif hosted a dinner in honour of the new cabinet members, and during the meeting, discussions were held on the country's political and economic situation. During his interaction with the new cabinet members, the PM asserted that their selection was based on their abilities and qualifications, and that all of them were answerable to Allah Almighty and the people. The Prime Minister further mentioned that there had been a significant reduction in inflation, an increase in foreign exchange reserves, and remittances within a year. He assured that efforts would continue to further improve economic indicators in the coming years. Mr. Sharif also said that he would personally monitor the regular and continuous review of the performance of all federal ministers and other cabinet members. He lauded the services of all public representatives, stating that their contributions were commendable. Meanwhile, the new members of the federal cabinet reaffirmed their commitment to playing an active role in the development of the country and the welfare of the people. The participants also congratulated the premier for the recent economic progress.

Dozens missing in Indian avalanche

NEW DELHI: At least 41 road workers have been trapped after a massive avalanche struck a remote border area in the northern Indian state of Uttarakhand, officials say. Police spokesperson IG Nitesh Anand-Bharne told ANI news agency that 16 workers had been rescued and moved to an army camp nearby. The avalanche hit a camp of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) in Mana in Uttarakhand which shares a border with Tibet, officials say. A senior district official, Sandeep Tiwari, told BBC Hindi that there was no information yet about whether there were fatalities. Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami confirmed on X that rescue work was being carried out by the Indo-Tibetan Border Police, the BRO and other teams. Ambulances and emergency teams have been dispatched, but treacherous conditions continue to pose challenges for rescuers. Colonel Ankur Mahajan, a commander with the BRO, told the Hindustan Times newspaper that those who have been rescued are receiving treatment "but the extent of their injuries is unclear". Gaurav Kunwar, a former village council member of Mana, told BBC News that details of the incident were sketchy. "No-one lives there permanently. It's a migratory area and only labourers working on border roads stay there in the winter. There's also some army presence there. We've heard that it has been raining in the area for two days. - Agencies

# Hungary's support for Pak UNSC election acknowledged

## Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan Ayaz Sadiq meets president of Hungary Tamás Sulyok

NEWS DESK

BUDAPEST: Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Friday reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to a principled, non-aligned foreign policy during his meeting with the President of Hungary, Mr. Tamás Sulyok, in Budapest. According to the message received from Budapest, Hungary, Ayaz Sadiq is leading a high-level parliamentary delegation on an official visit to Hungary to strengthen bilateral ties and celebrate 60 years of diplomatic relations between the two nations. NA Speaker was warmly received at Sandor Palace, the historic residence of the President of Hungary. In the meeting, he expressed gratitude for Hungary's support in Pakistan's successful election to the United Nations Security Council, acknowledging it as a recognition of Pakistan's impartial and balanced foreign policy. He highlighted that Hungary's vote was a testament to the strong bilateral relations between the two nations. Sardar Ayaz Sadiq termed Pakistan and Hungary as "naturally aligned partners" and appreciated Hungary's independent stance on global issues. He acknowledged the Hungarian leadership's wisdom in safeguarding national interests while praising President Tamás Sulyok's stance on non-alignment, which is crucial in preventing global conflicts and ensuring peace and stability. While reviewing the geopolitical situation, Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq drew attention to the long-standing Afghan crisis, highlighting that Pakistan continues to host 4.6



million Afghan refugees, bearing the consequences of prolonged regional instability. He also underscored the global parliamentary community's responsibility in facilitating a peaceful resolution for Kashmir and Palestine as per the aspirations of the people of Kashmir and Palestine. Both sides also discussed the situation in Europe following the Ukraine war and expressed hope for its peaceful resolution, bringing political and economic stability to the world. NA Speaker praised Hungary's initiative of offering 500 scholarships annually to Pakistani students. He noted that over 1,500 Pakistani students are currently pursuing higher education in Hunga-

ry, further strengthening bilateral ties and people-to-people contacts. He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to deepening its partnership with Hungary and expressed optimism for continued collaboration across multiple sectors to ensure mutual prosperity and regional stability. Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq commended Hungary's decision to join the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as the only European country to do so, emphasizing the importance of connectivity for global prosperity. Moreover, he highlighted Pakistan's strategic role in the initiative, particularly the significance of Gwadar Port as a key trade gateway linking Europe, China, and Cen-

tral Asia. He stressed that enhanced trade routes and infrastructure development were crucial for mutually beneficial economic growth. He also appreciated Hungary's recognition of Pakistan's democratic and economic progress and highlighted the potential for collaboration in agriculture, infrastructure, railways, and water security. In addition, he called for increased trade and investment partnerships between the two nations. President Tamás Sulyok commended Pakistan's principled stance on global issues, noting that it upholds moral values without aligning with or against any particular side. He emphasized that non-alignment is crucial in preventing the world from further descending into war and conflict. The President also highlighted the significant potential for expanding bilateral cooperation in key sectors such as agriculture, infrastructure development, railway enhancement, and water security. Additionally, President Tamás Sulyok expressed satisfaction with Pakistan's recent progress in strengthening its democratic institutions and economic stability, reaffirming Budapest's positive outlook on the country's ongoing developments. This visit marks the 60th anniversary of Pakistan-Hungary diplomatic relations. Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq is accompanied by a distinguished 7-member parliamentary delegation, including MNAs former Prime Minister & former NA Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf, Ms. Shazia Marri, Mr. Rafique Ahmad, Mr. Nadeem Abbas, Ms. Munaza Hassan, Mr. Saleem Rehman, and Mr. Arshad Abdullah Vohra.

### CB judge questions ATC ruling

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar observed that the wording in the verdicts of Anti-Terrorism Courts (ATCs) in Lahore and Islamabad regarding the transfer of May 9 accused to military custody was identical. This prompted Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhel to remark that it seems ATC judges were weak in English. A seven-member Constitutional Bench led by Justice Amin ul-Din Khan heard intra-court appeals challenging the trial of civilians in military court. At the outset of the hearing, Civil Society lawyer Faisal Siddiqui argued that commanding officers had submitted requests to transfer the May 9 accused for military trial. He noted that the request began with a sentence that it was an official secret case as per initial investigation, said Faisal Siddiqui. "This is an admission by the commanding officer that the investigation was incomplete," Siddiqui asserted. He further argued that the ATC's reasoning for transferring the accused to military custody fare absurd. He said the ATC administrative judge issued order for handing over of accused's custody for military trials. The ATC declared the accused guilty before completion of the investigation.

## Talks resume in Cairo on 2nd phase of Gaza ceasefire

### Israeli, Qatari and US delegations already in Cairo for 'intensive' talks on next stage of the ceasefire

CAIRO: Talks resume in Cairo Friday on a second phase of an Israel-Hamas ceasefire that mediators hope will bring a lasting end to the Gaza conflict, a day after Israel's military acknowledged its "complete failure" to prevent the 2023 Hamas attack that sparked the war. Mediator Egypt said Thursday that Israeli, Qatari and US delegations were already in Cairo for "intensive" talks on the next stage of the ceasefire, after a first phase only reached following months of gruelling negotiations. "The relevant parties have begun intensive talks to discuss the next phases of the truce agreement, amid ongoing efforts to ensure the implementation of the previously agreed understandings," said Egypt's State Information Service. The ceasefire, whose first phase is set to expire on Saturday, has largely halted the fighting that began when Hamas militants broke through Gaza's security barrier on October 7, 2023, in an attack that resulted in the deaths of 1,218 people in Israel, mostly civilians, according to an AFP tally of official figures. Israel's retaliation has killed more than 48,000 people in Gaza, according to the health ministry in the Hamas-run territory, figures the UN has deemed reliable. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu sent negotiators to Cairo on Thursday, after Hamas handed over the remains of four hostages in exchange for hundreds of Palestinian prisoners under the truce. An internal Israeli army probe into the October 7 attack, released on Thursday, acknowledged the military's "complete failure" to prevent it, according to a military official who briefed reporters about the report's contents on condition of anonymity. - Agencies

## Fawad Chaudhry declared guilty

DNA

LAHORE: The Police on Friday declared former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry guilty in five cases related to May 9. The Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) Lahore Judge Manzoor Ali Gill, heard the interim bail petitions of Chaudhry. During the hearing, the police submitted their investigative report to the court, in which they declared former minister guilty in five cases related to May 9. At this point, Chaudhry requested the court to adjourn the hearing due to the absence of his senior lawyer. The court accepted Chaudhry's request and summoned the lawyers for arguments at the next hearing. It is noteworthy that Fawad Chaudhry has secured interim bail in cases related to the arson at Rahat Bakery, the burning of Sher Pilau, and other incidents. Speaking to the media outside the ATC, Chaudhry said that instead of bringing ease in Ramadan, fifty ministers have been appointed. "The US government is reducing, but we are increasing. The government is not functioning, it's dragging along. The government has lost the election, and rigging is the chains on their feet.

## 16th NA first year sees drop in working hours

### NA worked 212 hours in first year, down 28.6% from previous assembly

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The 16th National Assembly convened for fewer working days and recorded fewer working hours in its first year compared to its predecessor. Despite this decline, the report noted a surge in legislative activity, with many key bills passed without thorough scrutiny and deliberation by Members of the National Assembly (MNAs). The 16th National Assembly was convened for its inaugural session on February 29, 2024, with its first parliamentary year ending on February 28, 2025. Compared to its predecessor, according to Pildat analysis of the first-year performance of the 16th National Assembly, the 16th National Assembly was convened for fewer sittings (93) and worked for significantly fewer hours (212) than the 15th National Assembly's first-year record of 96 sittings and 297 hours. It should be mentioned that the cost of a working hour in the first year of the 16th National Assembly comes to about Rs60.08 million per hour while the average budget per sitting of the 16th National Assembly in its first year stood at Rs136.96 million. However, the legislative output of the 16th National Assembly was significantly higher, with 47 bills passed in its first year - a staggering 370% increase compared to the 10 bills passed during the first year of the 15th National Assembly. This heightened legislative activity includes critical laws and the 26th constitutional amendment, most of which were rushed through without adequate time and scrutiny by the Assembly. In addition, several laws including 9 crucially important ones, were hurried for passage without review by MNAs and without being referred to relevant Standing Committees.

## China to face added 10% tariff starting in March: Trump

### Earlier this month, Trump imposed a sweeping 10 percent tariff hike on imports from China, prompting Beijing to retaliate

FOREIGN DESK

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump said Thursday he would impose an additional 10 percent tariff on Chinese imports while moving ahead with levies on Canada and Mexico next week, citing "unacceptable" drug smuggling. Markets opening in Asia on Friday tracked losses across the world from the previous day, as the Republican's latest comments fanned fears of a global trade war. Trump had announced - then halted - sweeping 25 percent levies on Canadian and Mexican imports this month over illegal immigration and deadly fentanyl, with Canadian energy to face a lower rate. But the month-long pause ends Tuesday. Following reporters' questions on whether he planned to proceed on the tariffs next week, Trump wrote on social media Thursday that until the problem of fentanyl stops "or is seriously limited," the proposed levies will happen as scheduled. "China will likewise be charged an addition-

al 10 percent Tariff on that date," he added, referring to March 4. Earlier this month, Trump imposed a sweeping 10 percent tariff hike on imports from China, prompting Beijing to retaliate. A US official confirmed to AFP that the new 10 percent levy adds to the existing one over fentanyl, saying that there has been "insufficient progress" on the drug front. The official added that Washington had to act against all three countries in order to tackle the fentanyl issue. On Thursday, Chinese Commerce Minister Wang Wentao expressed concerns over Washington's earlier 10 percent tariff. "China firmly opposes this and has taken corresponding countermeasures," Wang said in a letter to newly confirmed US Trade Representative (USTR) Jamie Greer. China's leadership will convene next week to hammer out plans to shield its economy from Trump's threats. Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum on Thursday said she hoped to speak with Trump to avoid being hit by his threatened tariffs. A high-level Mexican delegation is in Washington in search of an agreement. And Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said officials are working around the clock to avert US levies but would have an "immediate" response if measures were imposed next week.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif witnesses exchange of an agreement between SUPRACO and China Manned Space Agency with regard to manned space mission of Pakistan. - DNA

**General Practice HOSPITAL**

We Are **OPEN**

General Practice Hospital is a state-of-the-art healthcare facility offering comprehensive medical services to the community. Our hospital is equipped with advanced diagnostic and treatment modalities, including specialized OPD clinics, an urgent care unit, a modern radiology unit, well-equipped IPD rooms, operation theatres, an on-site laboratory for precise diagnostics, dialysis services, and comfortable inpatient wards. We are dedicated to providing quality, easily accessible, and patient-centred healthcare in a welcoming and professional environment.

- General Physician Services
- Medicine
- Gynaecology & Women's Health
- Dermatology & Aesthetics
- General Surgery
- Urology
- Pediatrics & Child Health
- Plastic Surgery
- Ear, Nose & Throat
- Cardiology
- Neurology
- Nutrition, Dietetics & Lifestyle
- Hepatology
- Orthopedics and Sports Medicine
- Ophthalmology
- Dental & Maxillofacial Surgery
- Psychiatry
- Gastroenterology
- Physiotherapy & Rehabilitation
- Psychology & Mental Health

Empathic & Caring for everyone

We know that seeking medical care can be overwhelming, but you're not alone. With empathy at the heart of our care, we listen, understand, and support you every step of the way. In our clean, premium environment, you'll feel safe, valued, and truly cared for. Book your appointment today and experience healthcare with compassion.

FOR APPOINTMENT: +92 33 47 47 47 01

Pakland Tower 2, New Blue Area, Islamabad | www.generalpractice.com.pk | @generalpracticeislamabad | +92 61 620 474 | +92 61 621 474