



# Islamabad POST

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 30

**Canada's next PM vows to win trade war with Trump**

Detailed News On Page-08

**Pakistan not facing blanket US travel ban**

Detailed News On Page-08



**'No unnecessary' Jadeja shuts down retirement buzz**

Detailed News On Page-06



## Calls for national unity

# Unilateral policies causing 'strain' on federation: Zardari

Opposition stages noisy protest in parliament during president's speech by raising slogans against govt

ANSAR M BHATTI / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Addressing the joint session of parliament to formally kick off the second parliamentary year, President Asif Ali Zardari urged stakeholders to prioritise national interests and set aside personal and political differences for the sake of the country. President Zardari delivered speech amid strong protest by the opposition lawmakers who kept raising slogans against the incumbent government during the entire session. Let us work together to revive our economy, strengthen our democracy, and uphold the rule of law," he said. In his initial remarks, he expressed gratitude to address the parliament for the 8th time. "This moment marks not only the continuation of our democratic journey but also provides us with an opportunity to review our progress and reaffirm our commitment to building a better future for Pakistan." He urged the house to focus on promoting good governance, and political and economic stability to meet expectations of the nationals who pinned their hopes on parliament. He appreciated the government's efforts for putting the country on a positive path to economic growth as foreign exchange reserves witnessed a surge. "There was a substantial increase in Foreign Direct Investment and the stock market also surged to a historic high. The government also reduced the policy rate from 22% to 12%, and all other economic indicators have shown a healthy sign of improvement." Emphasising the importance of democracy, Zardari said: "Democracy needs give and take, and what better place to work on collective goals than this parliament? As elected representatives, you function as role models for the nation." "As you go about your parliamentary business think beyond narrow goals. Think of the unity and consensus our country so desperately needs." The president urged the government to encourage domestic and international investments for economic growth and job creation,

Continued on Page 06

## Bilawal slams opp over 'irresponsible behaviour'

The PPP chairman said that their approach should reflect concern in resolving the public affairs

DNA

ISLAMABAD: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto criticised and expressed his disappointment over the behaviour of the opposition towards public affairs. During an informal media talk at the Parliament House, Bilawal Bhutto lamented the 'irresponsible behaviour' of the opposition, and lack of interest in the issues faced by the public. The PPP chairman said that their approach should reflect concern in resolving the public affairs. He underscored the need for meaningful dialogue and collaborative efforts to effectively address the challenges confronting the nation. Further, Bilawal Bhutto at the Parliament House highlighted the historic achievement of President Asif Ali Zardari, who became the first president to address the joint session of Parliament for the eighth time. The PPP chairman commended President Zardari at Parliament House for shedding light on the government's economic policies and addressing the challenges faced by the administration. Bilawal Bhutto emphasised the importance of constructive dialogue and

Continued on Page 06

## Palestinian PM calls for global pressure on Israel

Luxembourg Reaffirms Support for Palestinian Reconstruction and Ceasefire Efforts

FOREIGN DESK

RAMALLAH: Prime Minister's Office - Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Palestine Dr. Mohammad Mustafa called for increased international pressure, particularly from the European Union, on Israel to end its aggression against the Palestinian people, open all border crossings with the Gaza Strip, and allow the unimpeded entry of humanitarian aid, temporary shelter supplies, and reconstruction materials. The Prime Minister made his remarks during a meeting with Luxembourg's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Xavier Bettel, on Monday at his office in Ramallah, joined by Minister of Health Majed Abu Ramadan. Mustafa emphasized the urgent need to halt the Israeli occupation's military incursions into northern West Bank areas, which result in the destruction of infrastructure, homes, and facilities, as well as the forced displacement of citizens.

Continued on Page 06

## SC delists all May 9 cases

Zulfiqar Naqvi requested more time, stating that Punjab govt had recently appointed him as counsel

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court has delisted all cases related to May 9 and May 10 events scheduled for the current and following week. A three-member bench, headed by Chief Justice Yahya Afridi, heard the cases. During the proceedings, senior lawyer Zulfiqar Naqvi requested more time, stating that the Punjab government had recently appointed him as counsel for the May 9 cases and he needed preparation time. Chief Justice Afridi noted that the cases were also scheduled for the next two days and criticised repeated requests for delays, emphasising that nearly 50 appeals were involved. Naqvi urged the court to postpone this week's hearings so he could prepare for the upcoming ones.

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of the Pakistan People's Party led by Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad. - DNA

## Blasts 'helpless' govt

# PTI says all decisions made outside parliament

Opposition's behaviour shows that it is not interested in public issues, says Bilawal

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Taking a dig at the "helpless coalition government", Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan claimed on Monday that all decisions were being made outside the parliament. His remarks came shortly after President Asif Ali Zardari addressed a joint session of parliament to mark the commencement of the second parliamentary year amid a strong protest by the opposition. The president urged stakeholders to prioritise national interests and set aside personal and political differences for the sake of the country. Emphasising the importance of democracy, Zardari said: "Democracy needs give and take, and what better place to work on collective goals than this parliament? As elected representatives, you function as role models for the nation." The PTI, however, believes that the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif-led coalition government does not have any real power, and its leaders publicly call the establishment the "real decision maker". During his interactions with journalists after the president's address,

Continued on Page 06

## PTI moves LHC for Lahore rally on 22

Plea complains that party's request for power show has not been decided by Lahore DC

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has moved the Lahore High Court (LHC) seeking permission to hold a public rally at Minar-e-Pakistan on March 22. The plea filed by PTI Punjab Vice President Akmal Khan Bari - which names Punjab Chief Secretary, Inspector General of Police (ICP), DIG, Lahore Deputy Commissioner and others as respondents - complains that the application for holding a power show at the said venue has not been decided by the Lahore DC. Citing the significance of commemorating the Lahore Resolution - passed on March 23, 1940 - the PTI leader's plea underscores the fundamental rights of association,

Continued on Page 06

## Briefs

### CJP praises women judges

Women judges play a key role in justice delivery: CJP Yahya Afridi

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan Yahya Afridi has lauded the contributions of women judges in ensuring justice, emphasising their growing role in the judiciary. In his message on International Women Judges Day, CJP Afridi stated that the increasing representation of women in Pakistan's judiciary is a positive development. He stressed that recognising the contributions of women judges is a collective responsibility. He further highlighted that gender equality and the inclusion of women in the judiciary mark significant progress. "Women judges play a commendable role in delivering justice, ensuring transparency, and strengthening the judicial system," he said, adding that a more conducive environment will be provided for female lawyers and judges.

### Gwadar airport fully operational

NGIA handled 42 domestic and international flights in two months

DNA

GWADAR: The New Gwadar International Airport (NGIA) is fully operational and handling domestic and international flights. According to sources, the Western media has been spreading false narratives about the NGIA's so-called failure in a bid to discredit the success of the CPEC (China-Pakistan Economic Corridor). The NGIA's Flight Operations department gave an update of the flight operation from Jan 20 to Feb 26, 2025 according to which it handled 42 domestic and international flights, which carried 1,537 passengers.

## Hamid Khan to SC

# Military courts should be limited to army personnel

Hamid Khan says military courts can function only for army personnel

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The representative of the Lahore High Court (LHC) Bar and Imran Khan's counsel Hamid Khan completed his arguments against the trial of civilians in the military courts. The hearing was resumed by a seven-member constitutional bench spearheaded by Justice Aminuddin Khan with the appeal against trial of civilians in the military courts. Supreme Court Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail said the problem is not about the trial of civilians in military courts but the problem is what will the state do if civilians commit crimes that fall under the jurisdiction of Army Act? "Can the jurisdiction of the Army Act be extended to civilians for committing crimes listed in the Army Act?" Justice Mandokhail raised a question. LHC Bar lawyer Hamid Khan said the provisions included in the Army Act under which civilians are tried are unconstitutional. "Now I will explain Article 175(3) of the Constitution in my arguments. It is clearly written in the Constitution that the judiciary shall be

Continued on Page 06

## Pakistan's civic space is 'repressed': rights watchdog

It says authorities continue to block internet, phone services ahead of protests

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has been added to the CIVICUS Monitor watchlist, which lists countries experiencing rapid declines in civic freedoms, for its government's criminalising activists, stifling opposition, and minority protests as well as restricting digital spaces. Pakistan joins United States of America, Democratic Republic of Congo, Italy, and Serbia, in the first watchlist of 2025.

Continued on Page 06

# PM Shehbaz Sharif unveils Rs. 20B Ramzan relief plan

PM directs ministries to revisit Ramazan package awareness campaign

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday directed relevant ministries to collaborate with the private sector in raising awareness about the procurement of the Rs5,000 Ramadan Relief Package through digital wallets for deserving families. The move comes after the government launched a Rs20 billion Ramazan relief package earlier this month for four million deserving families - about 20 million people - across the country. Today, while reviewing the monitoring mechanism of the Ramazan Relief Package at the National Telecommunication Corporation in Islamabad, the PM directed the relevant ministries to sit with the private sector and revisit the relief package's awareness campaign in terms of its effectiveness and outreach. "The withdrawal from the digital wallets is about 20 per cent, which is because of lack of awareness," the report quoted him as saying. "The families in need of relief are unable to access it due to a lack of awareness," the report said, adding that the PM directed ministries to ask families to call 9999 for the required information about the digital wallets. He also demanded inputs from the relevant stakeholders within a week to further expand the volume of the relief package.

Continued on Page 06

## SBP pauses rate cuts, braces for inflation uptick

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) held its key policy rate at 12% on Monday, opting for stability despite easing inflation, which is expected to rise temporarily in March and May. The decision comes after a senior-level International Monetary Fund (IMF) delegation reviewed Pakistan's \$7 billion bailout package, discussing new revenue targets and taxation measures that may influence inflation and monetary policy. The central bank's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) convened to scope the economic outlook and, after thorough deliberations, opted to maintain the policy rate at 12%. The committee noted that inflation in February 2025 turned out lower than expectation,

Continued on Page 06

**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, 1-8 Markaz  
0300-5845530 | 051-8840526 | 051-8840527

# CDA to use helicopter for seed dropping in Margalla Hills

During the meeting, Randhawa emphasized the importance of the initiative, stating, "Planting environment-friendly trees is a continuous charity. We believe in a Green Islamabad and a Green Pakistan, and no effort will be spared to achieve this vision"

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority (CDA) in a unique approach, planned to use helicopter for spraying and seed-dropping in the Margalla Hills to promote plantation in hard-to-reach areas. It was decided in a meeting presided over by Chairman Randhawa here on Monday, attended by environmental expert Rizwan Mahboob, members of the Baku environmental team, and senior officers from the CDA's Environment Wing. The meeting also decided to launch a comprehensive campaign to remove paper mulberry trees and replace them with environmentally friendly plants. The initiative, spearheaded by CDA Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa, aims to address the growing concerns over pollen allergies caused by paper mulberry trees while promoting a sustainable urban environment. During the meeting, Randhawa emphasized the importance of the initiative, stat-

ing, "Planting environment-friendly trees is a continuous charity. We believe in a Green Islamabad and a Green Pakistan, and no effort will be spared to achieve this vision." The campaign has already seen significant progress, with 5,072 paper mulberry trees removed from F-9 Park and replaced with 10,000 new trees. The CDA plans to plant approximately 30,000 eco-friendly plants in F-9 Park during the spring season. Similarly, in the Shakarparian area, 10,000 paper mulberry trees will be removed, and 50,000 new plants will be planted. Along the slopes of drains and roads, 1,000 paper mulberry trees will be replaced with 80,000 local, eco-friendly plants. Across other sectors of Islamabad, an additional 10,000 paper mulberry trees will be removed, with 50,000 new plants taking their place. The CDA has also decided to involve the private and corporate sectors in this year's plantation campaign. Chairman Randhawa directed that fruit-bearing, shade-providing, and

flowering trees be prioritized to enhance the city's greenery and biodiversity. He also called for the participation of students, teachers, and staff from both private and public educational institutions to ensure the campaign's success. Additionally, private housing societies will be encouraged to participate in the campaign, and plant stalls will be set up in low-price markets established under the Ramadan Relief Package to engage the public. To raise awareness, the CDA will display a list of suitable plants and trees for the local environment on its website. Chairman Randhawa also emphasized the role of media in promoting the campaign, urging various outlets to spread the message of environmental conservation. In a symbolic gesture, the CDA has committed to ensuring that each of its 15,000 officers and employees plants at least one eco-friendly tree. "We believe in taking practical steps," said Randhawa, highlighting the authority's dedication to leading by example.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Huqooq-ul-Ibaad trust Syed Bilal Ahmad greets and presents bouquet to Dr. Zafar Khan Safdar on becoming DG operation Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal in his office on Monday.

## Minister review implementation clean Punjab initiative

SARGODHA: Provincial Minister for Local Government Zeeshan Rafique on Monday visited Sargodha and chaired a meeting at the Commissioner's office to review price control measures, Ramadan Nigehban Package, and the Clean Punjab initiative. The meeting was attended by Commissioner Jahanzaib Awan, Deputy Commissioner Sargodha Capt (ret'd) Muhammad Waseem, Director Local Government Asif Iqbal Malik, CEO SWMC Rana Shahid Imran, CO MC Umar Farooq, CO District Council Asad Hariya, and political leaders, along with officials from the Food, Market Committee, and Industry departments. Deputy Commissioners of Khushab, Mianwali, and Bhakkar joined via video link. The provincial minister received a detailed briefing on the prices, supply, and demand of essential commodities across the four districts. He directed that strict action be taken against profiteers, ensuring they face legal consequences, including spending Eid in jail. The provincial minister also directed the authorities to seal the shops of repeat offenders for at least ten days. Taking notice of higher gram flour prices in Khushab, he ordered uniform pricing of essential food items across all four districts. He emphasized that profiteers do not deserve any leniency and reiterated the Chief Minister's stance that the public must receive relief during Ramadan.—APP

## CCPO for strengthening security measures in Ramadan

PESHAWAR: In light of the prevailing security situation, CCPO Peshawar Qasim Ali Khan on Monday chaired a high-level meeting here on maintaining peace and security in the provincial capital, particularly in the crowded markets during the final days of Ramadan and ensuring a peaceful celebration of Eid-ul-Fitr. During the meeting, discussions were held regarding the overall security and traffic management of the city, said an official communique issued here after the meeting. Strategies for prompt and effective responses to any untoward incidents were also deliberated, including mock exercises and practical measures to enhance preparedness. The CCPO reviewed the security and traffic arrangements for busy commercial centers and markets, emphasizing the need to

further strengthen these measures. He directed police officers to stay in constant contact with administrative bodies, religious leaders of various sects, and the business community to ensure collective efforts for maintaining peace. Reaffirming the commitment of Peshawar Police, Qasim Ali Khan stated, "Like in the past, all available resources will be utilized to maintain law and order in the city." The meeting was attended by senior police officials, including SSP Operations Masood Ahmed, Chief Traffic Officer Haroon Rasheed Khan, SSP Investigation Noor Jamal, SP Headquarters Hameedullah, divisional SPs, SP Security, and officers from various police units. The CCPO stressed that all efforts are being made to safeguard the lives and property of citizens. He instructed a comprehensive

security audit of key public places, religious centers, and marketplaces, followed by the development of an updated security and traffic management plan. The meeting took key decisions including directives strengthening snap-checking at entry and exit points with increased checkpoints across the district, ensuring heightened security measures during Iftar and Sehri hours, keeping a strict watch on habitual offenders and expediting legal action against illegal tenants residing within the city and enhancing nighttime security, especially in suburban areas, utilizing available resources. The CCPO concluded by reiterating the commitment of Peshawar Police to ensure a safe and peaceful environment during the holy month of Ramadan and the upcoming Eid festivities.—APP

## Man kills brother over minor dispute

DNA

PESHAWAR: A man shot and killed his own brother over a minor dispute in a village of Colonel Sher Khan Kili. Kalu Khan police informed on Monday that Visal Muhammad, a resident of Colonel Sher Khan Kili, filed an FIR stating that he was at home when he received information that his 35-year-old son, Afsar Ali, had been shot and injured on the road. Upon reaching the scene, he found his son lying unconscious and critically wounded. He was informed that his other son, Amir Ali, had fired the shots, killing his own brother. The motive behind the murder was reported to be a minor domestic dispute.

Following the father's complaint, police have registered an FIR against the accused and initiated an investigation into the case.

## Gas leakage fire left four injured

DNA

PESHAWAR: A fire broke out inside a bakery in Mardan due to a gas leakage, leaving four people severely injured on Monday. Rescue 1122 Mardan said, the incident occurred in Nehar Chowk area, where a gas leak inside the bakery led to a sudden fire. As a result, four people sustained serious burn injuries. 1122 firefighters and medical teams promptly arrived at the scene. They managed to control the fire in time and provided initial medical aid to the injured before transferring them to the DHQ Hospital. Later, the victims were shifted to the Burn Center in Peshawar for further treatment.

## SC inks MoUs with LUMS, GIKI for judicial reforms

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan (SCP) has signed Memorandum of Understanding with Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) and Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering Sciences and Technology (GIKI) to enhance judicial efficiency, transparency and technological advancement. The MoUs were formally signed by Mr Muhammad Salim Khan, Registrar, SCP, on behalf of SCP, Professor Dr Tariq Jadoon on behalf of LUMS, and Prof Dr Mohammad Hanif on behalf of GIKI in the presence of Chief Justice of Pakistan Mr Justice Yahya Afridi at SCP here, today. This collaboration aims to develop a litigant-feedback scorecard to assess public satisfaction with court services and improve transparency. It also focuses on enhancing citizen engagement by adopting modern communication tools, ensuring greater accessi-

bility for litigants and the general public. The MoUs further strengthen IT capacity within SCP through specialized training programs in collaboration with the Federal Judicial Academy, covering key areas such as Agile methodology, cybersecurity, data analytics, and emerging technologies. A comprehensive assessment will identify existing skill gaps, and targeted training programs will equip SCP's IT team to handle new technologies and infrastructure effectively. Additionally, the partnership will establish a central repository of IT best practices, troubleshooting guides, and standard operating procedures (SOPs) to streamline digital operations within SCP. Annual perception surveys will be conducted to evaluate public and stakeholder views on judicial efficiency and transparency, with the findings serving as a foundation for judicial

reforms. The MoUs also include provisions for SCP to receive expert support in strategic hiring, including job announcements, shortlisting, and candidate evaluation to ensure the appointment of top-tier professionals. Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Justice emphasized the significance of this collaboration and said "This partnership with LUMS and GIKI marks a pivotal step toward integrating technology-driven solutions for an efficient, transparent, and people-centric judiciary." Prof Dr Tariq Mahmood Jadoon and Prof Dr Mohammad Hanif reaffirmed their commitment to supporting SCP in this transformative journey, highlighting the importance of academic collaboration in advancing judicial processes and governance. The MoUs will remain in effect until 2027, extendable by mutual agreement.—APP

## Minister lauds KBM CARE humanitarian endeavors

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs & Interfaith Harmony Sardar Muhammad Yousaf on Monday admired the humanitarian and noble work of KBM CARE FOUNDATION in the country and hoped that the organization will use all its resources to serve those who need the most. The Minister was talking to KBM CARE delegation headed by Founder of KBM CARE Mr Khalid bin Majeed that called on him at the minister office, said a press release. The delegation comprised Secretary

of the Foundation Amjad Saqlain Awan and Senior Advisor Niaz Muhammad. The Minister was briefed about the KBM CARE relief activities across Pakistan in relief distribution,



Health Care and Water & Sanitation. The minister was told that despite limited resources the organization is striving hard to reach the people of the underserved areas and fill

the gaps in the provision of services. The minister was apprised the efforts of the organization in provision of cash assistance to the deserving families for treatment purposes. The delegation also briefed the minister about the KBM CARE RAMAZAN RATION DRIVE/IFTAR DINNER for the holy month of Ramadan and also invited the minister to attend the ration distribution ceremony and Iftar dinner as chief guest which he kindly accepted. On the occasion, the minister was also apprised about their ongoing welfare activities in and future initiatives.

# Iftar parties unite communities of all faiths

DNA

PESHAWAR: Rawandar Singh, a 42-year-old Sikh, is all smiles and exudes high spirit of sharing and compassion as he seeks solace in dishing out dates and pakora among fasting Muslims during Aftar on returning home from his shop in Hashtnagri. Wearing the traditional turban, Rawandar has been distributing packets of dates and other edible items among the fasting Muslims in Hashtnagri bazaar since 2012. Rawandar's father Awtah Singh has started this noble practice and later passed on to his son. "I feel inner peace and satisfaction while doing the noble practice in the

Holy month of Ramadan." "The soothing movement of distributing Aftar's items including dates, pakora, jalebi and others food dishes are still alive as fresh as today when I keenly observe my late father Awtah Singh handing over packets of Aftar food to Muslim brothers all along way from Hashtnagri to Mohalla Jogan Ramdas in interior City," Rawandar told while distributing dates and Pakora among fasting Muslims ahead of Iftar. "I strongly believe in interfaith harmony, love and brotherhood. Distribution of food in Ramadan is our mark of respect and admiration for our fasting Muslims' brothers and sisters besides giving us inner peace and satisfaction," Rawandar who is

being helped by his son in dishing out of dates and Pakora told APP. Dewa Singh and his son T Jindar Singh, who are associated with telecommunication business in Hashtnagri Peshawar said inviting people of different faiths in Aftar parties in Pakistan sends a strong message of love and brotherhood to world. "Without winning hearts and minds, we can't come closer to each other and could not develop a society whose inhabitants enjoy equal rights and respect for each other's faith," they said. "Arranging Aftar parties and Ramadan camps for Muslims is not a new practice for us. Our forefathers did the same thing to express warmth, love and friendship to our

Muslims brothers of Peshawar during Ramzan," they said, adding they are serving Aftar's foods to over dozens of fasting persons on daily basis and vowed to continue to do so in remaining days of holy month. Roadside Aftar parties are being seen at Qisa Khwani, University Road, Lady Reading Hospital, Takhto Jumat Cantonment, Tehkal, Spin Jumat and Ramadas where philanthropists invite people of different faiths for joint Aftar parties in an environment of sharing, friendship and care. The long sheets filled with food, dates, pakora, jalebi snacks, fruits and sweet beverages get fully occupied by the passerby, labourers and other segments of the society irrespective of caste,

colour and creed. Haroon Sarbdayal, a representative of Hindu community in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and a founding member of Pakistan Council of World Religions said that all prophets and founders of all religions had promoted peace, forgiveness, patience, love and tolerance through their teachings, actions and deeds. He said that misperceptions among followers of different faiths could be removed by enhancing interaction and dialogues among all religious communities. "We need to promote 'acceptance' instead of 'tolerance' because the former is more effective in establishing durable peace, patience, and pluralism in a prosperous society."

**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**

ASHRAF INDUSTRIES (PVT) LTD  
127 C, Industrial Estate  
Sukkur-51340, Pakistan  
Phones: +92-52-3256000 / 3256788  
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. Patricks 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



ISLAMABAD: Kazakhstan Ambassador to Pakistan Yerzhan Kistafin distributing the meal among deserving people during Iftar by Monal Foundation along the 7th Avenue during the month of Ramadan in Federal Capital.

## Long-term economic Policies imperative for Prosperity: Nasir

Qureshi highlighted the importance of establishing modern industrial zones equipped with state-of-the-art facilities

### DNA

ISLAMABAD: President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Nasir Mansoor Qureshi, has emphasized the need for sustainable and long-term economic policies to steer Pakistan towards lasting progress and prosperity. Speaking to representatives of the business community on Monday, Qureshi acknowledged

that while the country's economy is showing signs of recovery, significant challenges still remain there, said a release issued here on Monday. He stressed that political stability and continuity of economic policies are crucial for unlocking Pakistan's true economic potential. The government must consult with industry leaders while formulating economic policies to ensure a business-friendly environment that supports economic growth. Qureshi

highlighted the importance of establishing modern industrial zones equipped with state-of-the-art facilities. He urged the government to provide tax incentives, reduce regulatory hurdles, and improve logistic efficiency in these zones to attract both local and foreign investments. Addressing Pakistan's immense tourism potential, Qureshi called for improved infrastructure and international promotion of tourist destinations. He stressed

that developing eco-tourism, heritage tourism, and religious tourism could attract a significant number of international visitors, generating foreign exchange and creating employment opportunities. He further emphasized the urgent need for comprehensive tax reforms. By reducing unnecessary taxes and broadening the tax net, the government can significantly enhance revenue without overburdening existing taxpayers, he said. Qureshi

also reiterated ICCI's commitment to serving as a bridge between the government and the private sector. ICCI is dedicated to resolving the concerns of the business community and ensuring a conducive environment for economic growth, he affirmed. The ICCI president urged the government to collaborate closely with the business community to develop effective strategies that foster investment, create jobs, and ensure long-term economic stability.

### RCB to start monitoring encroachments

RAWALPINDI: A comprehensive operation against encroachments has been launched on Abid Majeed Road and Range Road, where hundreds of illegal sheds, stalls, signboards, and iron grills have been demolished. CEO Syed Ali Irfan Rizvi stated that additional staff has been deployed in markets where encroachments have been cleared to maintain strict vigilance. This decision aims to ensure smooth pedestrian movement and traffic flow. The operation, led by Additional CEO Arshad Khan, is being carried out with the assistance of heavy police contingents. Heavy machinery is being used to demolish encroachments, including illegal sheds, stalls, and signboards outside shops.—APP

### Twin cities abuzz with Eid preparations

### DNA

ISLAMABAD: As the second asra of Ramazan commences, Eid preparations have shifted into high gear in the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The streets were abuzz with activity, and the festive atmosphere was palpable. Residents were thronging markets and shopping centers to purchase new clothes, shoes, and accessories for the upcoming Eid-ul-Fitr celebrations. The city administrations have also swung into action, with sanitation teams working to ensure that the streets and markets are clean and tidy for the Eid celebrations. Kosar Tareen a local resident said "I'm excited to buy new clothes and shoes for my family and Eid is a time for celebration and joy, and I love the festive atmosphere in the markets." She said Eid shopping was a family tradition for them adding that they love coming to the markets together and finding new things to wear and decorate our home.

The markets were so crowded and lively during Eid shopping season and it's a great time to catch up with friends and family while shopping, she stated. Zaheer, clothing store owner said "Eid is our busiest time of the year and we start preparing months in advance to make sure we have enough stock to meet the demand." He said their sales increase by at least 50% during Eid adding that it's a great time for business, and they are grateful to customers for their support. He further stated that they love decorating store for Eid adding that it's a great way to get into the festive spirit and attract customers. He added Eid is a time of celebration and generosity and they offer special discounts and promotions to customers during this time. "We work hard all year round, but Eid is the highlight of our business. We enjoy serving our customers and helping them find the perfect gifts and outfits for the occasion, he stated.—DNA

### Govt working tirelessly to improve eco indicators: Hanif

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Railways Hanif Abbasi has stated that the PML-N government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, is tirelessly working for public service and economic improvement. He expressed these views yesterday while addressing the participants of the Iftar dinner hosted in his honor by Secretary General UBG Zafar Bakhtawari, Zahid Bakhtawari, Abid Bakhtawari, and the Bakhtawari family. The minister emphasized the need for all segments of society to unite against those spreading negative propaganda against Pakistan and its institutions. He lauded the role of state institutions in ensuring national security and stability. Effective operations by security forces against internal and external enemies are ongoing, and Pakistan's sovereignty cannot be compromised. He further stated that the business community is like his family, standing by his side since 1992. Hanif Abbasi said, "in February 2024, foreign exchange reserves stood at \$4 billion, whereas today they have increased to \$16 billion at that time, the interest rate was 22%, but now it has dropped to 12%, and, InshaAllah, within the next six months, it will reach a single-digit figure. This year, remittances are expected to reach \$35 billion. Exports in the textile and IT sectors have increased, and the inflation rate has been brought down from 38% to 10.5%. Islamabad was provided with its first transport system. These statistics are not ours but have been reported by independent monitoring institutions. The economy is on the path to improvement. The business community should stand with us as our strength to help take the country to new heights of progress. The future of the country is bright. The government and institutions are committed to the national development agenda. A public and business-friendly budget will be introduced in consultation with the trader community. All issues of the business community will be resolved on a priority basis." = Zafar Bakhtawari said that Hanif Abbasi is a representative of the business community and has always raised a strong voice in favor of traders. Like a lion, he has consistently supported the business community without concern for any political affiliation. His history shows that he stands by his friends like a rock in every difficult and challenging time. He said that today's event is recognition of his dedication and commitment. InshaAllah, with his God-given abilities, he will transform the railway into a profitable institution and strengthen the country's economy. The fate of the nation can be changed through the railway sector. They expressed hope that the country's trade and industrial activities would further flourish through the government's positive policies. Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, while addressing, said that it is an honor for us that Hanif Abbasi has been appointed to a federal ministry. The members who attended Iftar are the Punjab Assembly, Raja Muhammad Hanif and Ziaullah Shah, President FPCCI, Atif Ikram Sheikh; President ICCI, Nasir Qureshi; Chairman Founder Group, Tariq Sadiq; Group Leader Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Sohail Altaf; Council members Abdul Rauf Alam, Khalid Javed, Khalid Iqbal Malik, Zubair Ahmed Malik, and Ijaz Abbasi; former presidents Shakeel Munir and Sardar Yasir Ilyas; President Islamabad Chamber of Small Traders and Small Industries, Owais Satti; Group Leader Rawalpindi Chamber of Small Traders and Small Industries, Malik Shahid Hafaora Paracha; Group Leader of Chakwal Chamber, Qazi Muhammad Akbar; Chairman Jhelum Chamber, Raji Talat Mehmood; presidents of Islamabad markets, and a large number of business community members participated.—DNA

### AIOU extends enrollment deadline

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has extended the enrollment deadline until March 25 for already enrolled students, keeping in view their convenience. Admissions for the Spring 2025 semester are ongoing for Matriculation, FA, Associate Degree Programs, Teacher Training Programs, Postgraduate Diploma Programs, and Certificate Courses. This extension provides a golden opportunity for previously enrolled students to complete their enrollment. The decision was made under the special directives of Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Nasir Mahmood to ensure that no student loses a valuable semester.—APP

### Complaint resolution by FTO increases by 63%

ISLAMABAD: The complaints resolved by the Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO) increased by 63.69 percent and were recorded at 12,914 during 2024 compared to 7,889 complaints during 2023, according to FTO Annual Report for the year 2024. The total number of complaints also increased by 70.52 percent to 13,772 complaints registered during the period under review compared to the 8,076 complaints in 2023. The FTO settled 6,106 complaints out of 6,480 in 2022 and addressed 2,867 complainants in 2021 as against registered complaints of 3,038. In FY2024, the FTO recommended, sanctioned, and disbursed refunds amounting to Rs. 22.793 billion to taxpayers. Additionally, the average time for complaint disposal was reduced to just 34.11 days. The department received 7872 fresh complaints related to income tax; 2080 on sales tax, 3375 customs duty, 32 federal excise duty and 147 related to FIO. FTO held around 251 seminars and awareness sessions with concerned Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CCI), different Trade bodies, Tax Bars, and college/universities in 2024 compared to 113 such seminars and sessions in organized in 2023. It is pertinent to mention here that the increase in the number of complaints was seen as a positive indicator of the FTO's effective awareness campaigns, which targeted key stakeholders, including Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Tax Bar Associations, Business Community Associations, and Tax Law Practitioners.—DNA

### MARCH 2025

Pakistan's Premier News & Diplomatic Affairs Magazine

Find us on:  
www.centrelines.com.pk  
www.dnanews.com.pl  
www.islamabadpost.com.pk

@PostIslamabad/ @Editordnanews

A sister concern of

## Islamabad POST

11# Block 18-A, Awan Plaza,  
G-8 Markez, Islamabad-Pakistan  
Ph: 051-2261960, 051-2266165



## Briefs

**In Pakistan, water is squandered rather than conserved**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, the President of the Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, the President of All Karachi Industrial Alliance, the Chairman of the FPCCI Advisory Board, and the President and former provincial minister, Mian Zahid Hussain, said on Monday that Pakistan is an agricultural country. Still, no attention is paid to saving water. He said that despite water scarcity, its wastage is on the rise, which will have consequences. Mian Zahid Hussain said that, at present, water scarcity in the country has increased to an alarming extent, which is also increasing the risk of drought. Addressing the business community, the veteran business leader warned that a drought-like scenario in Punjab and Sindh could wreak havoc on both the people and the economy, underlining the serious implications of the water crisis. Therefore, it is imperative that policymakers take immediate and decisive steps to mitigate the impending crisis. The business leader said that due to the lack of rain, the water reserves in Tarbela and Mangla dams are going to reach the lowest level, which may badly affect the agriculture of Punjab and Sindh. The farmers may also suffer heavy financial losses, and food prices will start skyrocketing. At this time, while the economy is recovering, food shortages should not be allowed in the country as they will spread political unrest.—APP

**Rwanda's high Commissioner keen to boost trade with Pakistan**

ISLAMABAD: High Commissioner of Rwanda to Pakistan, Fatou Harerimana Monday said the focus of his visit to the business centres of Punjab was to promote bilateral economic and trade relations between the two countries in various sectors. His visit to various business chambers of Central Punjab including Sialkot, Gujranwala, Faisalabad and Lahore Chambers of Commerce and Industries, other trade organizations and various industrial sectors was of utmost significant for promoting bilateral trade between the two countries and enhancing collaboration with the business community, High Commissioner of Rwanda to Pakistan, Ms. Fatou Harerimana said in release issued here on Monday. On her visit to the business centre of Punjab province and during interactions with the business community in various sectors, she reiterated that there was a lot of potential for future economic and trade relations between the two countries. Rwanda's high Commissioner said that Pakistan and Rwanda are two emerging economies, "We initiated dialogue with the local business community in important trade sectors including textiles and garments, education.—APP

# PM efforts have restored the devastated economy

Samina said that the Prime Minister has decided to include women associated with cottage industries and small businesses in the Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) sector, which is a gift to the women entrepreneurs

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Samina Fazil, founder president of the Islamabad Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IWCCI), said on Monday that Prime Minister Shabbaz Sharif's tireless efforts have restored the devastated economy. She said the PM has now started the process of the country's development with a focus on women's empowerment, which is praiseworthy. Samina Fazil said that the prime minister's efforts to empower women are commendable, as it is imperative for rapid national development. Addressing a meeting of businesswomen, she said that the Prime Minister has decided to include women associated with cottage industries and small businesses in the Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) sector, which is a gift to the women entrepreneurs. She



said that the PM recently emphasized the need for women's economic empowerment and directed authorities to provide essential capital and facilities to businesswomen as a priority, which is a laudable move. "The PM has also announced measures to offer low-cost loans to women under the Youth Loan Scheme, enabling them to expand their businesses," said Samina Fazil. She said that the PM has ordered the establishment of facilitation centers and training institutes to support women engaged in small-scale

businesses and ensure their easy access to these resources. The PM has announced the formation of a special committee tasked with developing a comprehensive plan for empowering women. The committee will soon present its recommendations to the PM. Samina Fazil noted that Prime Minister Shabbaz Sharif believes that women's empowerment can only be achieved through equal access to education, skill development, and employment opportunities. The prime minister is also collaborating with provinces to enhance women's participation in economic programs and has announced the establishment of a Working Women's Endowment Fund to support women in overcoming challenges. The PM also wants to facilitate working women by establishing daycare centers in public and private departments across Islamabad and

plans to expand these facilities further. Samina Fazil said that many highly qualified women in the country quit professional careers because they struggle to balance work and family, resulting in a huge loss of skilled human resources. She said that last year, the ministries and departments were tasked with ensuring women-inclusive policies, which led to increased women's representation in departmental boards, which was a positive move. However, she noted that women's representation in government bodies remains below the targeted 33 percent, stressing the need for greater inclusion in governance and policymaking. Samina Fazil stated that if the government provides equal opportunities, 50 percent of the female population can become productive workers, which can make Pakistan a developed nation.

## AST will establish South Asia's largest eye hospital

The hospital will also extend its reach to remote and underserved communities through outreach programs using mobile eye clinics and skilled professionals to provide screening, diagnosis, and essential treatment.

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a monumental initiative that is set to revolutionize eye care in the region, the Al-Shifa Trust (AST) announced on Monday its plan to establish South Asia's largest eye hospital in Lahore. This hospital, which will be a beacon of hope for those suffering from preventable blindness and visual impairment, is a testament to the trust's commitment to serving humanity. The ambitious project, driven by the trust's committed management and supported by generous donors, aims to provide world-class eye care services to millions, particularly those from underprivileged backgrounds, a demonstration to the trust's empathy and compassion.

We have recognized the urgent need for a comprehensive, state-of-the-art eye hospital in a region where access to specialized eye care remains a significant challenge for the disadvantaged, said President AST, Major Gen. (Retired) Rehmat Khan. Speaking to media about the project, Major Gen. (Retired) Rehmat Khan highlighted the crucial role of the Government of Punjab, which has generously provided 64 Kanal prime land on the Ring Road near Ada Plot, Raiwind for the hospital. This significant contribution underscores the collective effort and support behind this humanitarian cause. He said the Chief Minister took a personal interest in allotting and transferring valuable land for the humanitarian cause. The ground will be broken in June

2025, and the project will be completed within three years. Major Gen. (Retired) Rehmat Khan said that the hospital will be able to serve 2000 OPD patients per day, and along with all other services, at least 500 corneal transplants will be held annually. He informed that advanced Retina, Glaucoma, Cataract, Oculoplasty, Paediatric, and Cornea departments will be established, and a top-notch eye cancer centre will also be part of this hospital. The trust's chief said it will be a 150-bed facility with 20 operating rooms and the latest equipment and technologies. This hospital will serve almost 20 million people in Lahore and adjacent areas, and its services will be totally free of cost. The hospital will also extend its reach to remote and underserved communities through outreach programs

using mobile eye clinics and skilled professionals to provide screening, diagnosis, and essential treatment. We will also prioritize public awareness campaigns and educational programs that promote eye health, educate communities about common eye diseases, and encourage regular eye checkups. Major Gen. (Retired) Rehmat Khan said we want to empower millions of individuals facing preventable blindness to lead productive and fulfilling lives and contribute to socio-economic development. On this occasion, the Project Director AST Brig. (Retired) Arshad Mehmood said that preparatory work on the land has been started, the boundary is near its completion, and the construction of the hospital will be completed by September 2027.

## Rwanda's high Commissioner keen to boost trade with Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: High Commissioner of Rwanda to Pakistan, Fatou Harerimana Monday said the focus of his visit to the business centres of Punjab was to promote bilateral economic and trade relations between the two countries in various sectors. His visit to various business chambers of Central Punjab including Sialkot, Gujranwala, Faisalabad and Lahore Chambers of Commerce and Industries, other trade organizations and various industrial sectors was of utmost significant for promoting bilateral trade between the two countries and enhancing collaboration with the business community, High Commissioner of Rwanda to Pakistan, Ms. Fatou Harerimana said in release issued here on Monday. On her visit to the business centre of Punjab province and during interactions with the business community in various sectors, she reiterated that there was a lot of potential for future economic and trade relations between the two countries. Rwanda's high Commissioner said that Pakistan and Rwanda are two emerging economies, "We initiated dialogue with the local business community in important trade sectors including textiles and garments, education, pharmaceutical, coffee and tea, medical equipment, rice, packaging, sports, agriculture and discussed ways to expand bilateral relations in these sectors in the future. High Commissioner of Rwanda to Pakistan, Fatou Harerimana visited business Chambers and industries of Central Punjab for five days and initiated dialogue with the business community for the promotion of bilateral economic and trade relations. The delegation led by the High Commissioner of Rwanda started from the Industrial city Sialkot and visited a manufacturing and supplying industry for surgical equipment, manufacturing and exporting industry for Textiles and garments, education institutions, Sports, aviator clothing, nomex flight suits, coveralls, bomber jackets, gloves, tactical gear, safety work wear and hunting apparel. The High Commissioner of Rwanda also visited the University of Sialkot and also spoke to the Sports industry and discussed the bilateral cooperation and future prospects for increasing bilateral ties in these sectors. She visited the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) and met with the senior leadership of the business community to negotiate for increasing bilateral trade. This tour resulted in enhancing trade ties, the possibility of extending/expanding to Rwanda; Collaborations in education and possible exchange of students and other collaborations in the education sector, She said. She said the major sectors like surgical and medical factories as well as soccer ball makers were among the areas of interest identified.—Agencies

## PAS delegation visits NUST

ISLAMABAD: The NUST Institute of Policy Studies (NIPS) and the National Science and Technology Park (NSTP-NUST), hosted a delegation from Pakistan Administrative Services (PAS) at the NUST main campus. Led by Mr. Jaffar Ali Khan, Additional Director, PAS, the delegation comprised participants of the 11th Domain Specific Mid-Career Management Course (MCMC) and 3rd Specialized Training Course of the PAS. General Manager Operations at NSTP, Mr. Adil Murtaza briefed the delegates on NSTP's mission, operations, and impact, followed by an interactive Question and Answer session. The delegation also took a guided tour of the incubation centers, gaining insights into the innovation ecosystem fostered at NSTP. The delegation acknowledged the Science Park's state-of-the-art infrastructure, its comprehensive entrepreneurial ecosystem, and its contribution to promoting Pakistan as a hub in science and technology. The visit concluded with a vote of thanks by Director Operations and Collaborations, NIPS, Mr. Amir Yaqoob who appreciated the delegates' participation and emphasized the importance of such engagements in fostering collaboration between public administration and innovation-driven institutions.—DNA



RAWALPINDI: Secretary Railways Mazhar Ali Shah giving detailed briefing about departmental performances of ministry to Federal Minister for Railways Hanif Abbasi on Monday.

## 'Pakistan having a sustainable development sector by 2047'

SANA KHETHRAN

**BACKGROUND:** With the halt of funding from United States of America through USAID (United States Agency for International Development) to the development sector in Pakistan, first tier organizations that are INGOs have mainly suffered with termination of developmental projects immediately and with trickle-down effect upon NGOs that could not carry out implementation of projects without partnership with the first-tier level INGOs, hence would not be able to serve the communities. A number of NGOs that were largely dependent upon U.S grant for each year having funding through submission of innovative projects and winning the grant by going through a competitive process have started realizing the gap.

As, the U.S has terminated the projects by not extending the support, the cost is much higher, as when the project is terminated the cost and time incurred go to waste of effort resulting in the negative impact. The U.S Stop order has resulted in not less than a 7 billion \$ funding gap only in Pakistan. This has created a huge gap. **What will happen next?** Such termination of developmental projects has given us a lesson learned that any funding can be halted by the primary donor anytime wherein the major loss will be incurred upon the implementing partner. In future we may see reduction in the size of grants from other donors in Pakistan. This is because the tariffs have been increased upon the imported goods from countries going in trade with America. And, amidst the major increase of tariff these countries

like Canada, United Kingdom and European Union may reduce the budget for the cross developmental activities. On economic scenario and mapping, the war in Gaza and Ukraine and its support of U.S has given an alarming message to the world that the war cost borne by the America will affect the developing countries more. All of a sudden one of the aid based economic engines in the development sector has stopped. **What is the solution to sustainability?** It is the high time to move towards a sustainable approach for the development sector. Sustainability is directed by inclusive growth and self-reliance. Through a discussion held on 28th of February, 2025 on 'Paradigm Shift towards Sustainability', Team for Development a project management consultancy in

Pakistan has focused upon giving a solution to the development sector towards attaining the sustainable approach. It has been envisaged that the most reliable option is the initiation of innovative and realistic projects with product development process embedded in it so that the product can make the project self-reliant and sustainable. **Envision Pakistan by 2047:** Organizations should have five years strategy expanding in five segments over twenty-five years reaching to fulfillment and achieving the vision of a self-sustainable development sector by 2047 as Pakistan will reach to the hundred years of Independence. Vision 2047 is the mark of moving towards product embedded projects with benefit to the organizations and communities for having a self-independent and growth based, inclusive approach based economy.

## Film director Masood Pervaiz remembered

ISLAMABAD, Mar 10 (APP): Death anniversary of famous film director Masood Pervaiz was observed on Monday. Masood Pervaiz was born in Amritsar in 1918 who migrated to Pakistan after partition. He made his directorial debut with Beli (1950) which was also the first film of Sabiha Khanum, Santosh Kumar and music director Rashid Attre. He was decorated with Presidential Award for Best Director in 1957 for the film Intizar. This film won a total of six Presidential Awards. Masood Pervaiz won the Nigar Award for Best Director for the films Heer Ranjha and Khak aur Khoon. Masood Pervaiz passed away on March 10, 2001 in Lahore.—APP

## ANF recovers 311 kg drugs in 8 operations

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting 8 operations across the country managed to recover over 311 kg drugs worth more than Rs 256 million and arrested 11 suspects, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman on Monday. He informed that 550 grams hashish was recovered from the possession of 2 suspects near a college in Lalazar Rawalpindi. 300 grams weed was recovered from a car intercepted near a hospital near GT Road Rawalpindi and a suspect was arrested. The arrested suspect confessed to selling drugs to the students of educational institutions. 150,000 intoxicated tablets hidden in 2 trolley bags of a passenger going to Doha at Karachi Airport were recovered. 120 kg heroin and 120 kg crystal hidden in Akhtarabad Hazarganj Quetta area were recovered during an operation. In 5th operation, a total of 19.2 kg hashish was recovered from two suspects rounded up in a passenger bus near Yaro Chowk, Chaman. In 6th operation, 4.8 kg opium, 2.4 kg hashish and 9.5 kg heroin were recovered from two suspects netted near Ahmedpur Sial in Jhang. 25.2 kg hashish hidden in a truck which was full of vegetables near North Bypass Karachi was recovered and a suspect was arrested. 10 kg heroin was recovered from a car checked near Motorway Bridge Ring Road Peshawar and two suspects were arrested during the operation. Cases have been registered against the arrested suspects under the Narcotics Control Act and further investigations are under process.—APP

The Smooth Moving Connection

# freeline MOVERS

PACKING, SHIPPING & FREIGHT FORWARDING

**Our Services**

- Packing
- Shipping
- Freight Forwarding
- Land, Sea & Air Freight
- Custom Clearance
- Relocations
- Office Removals
- Fine Art Handling
- Project Management
- Pet Relocation
- Warehousing
- Storage

**Head Office**  
3rd Floor, Yasin Plaza, 74-West, Blue Area, Islamabad.  
Tel: (+92 51) 2822471, 2274221, 2878029, 2272273, 2822711, 2874289 - Fax: (+92 51) 2825132, 2274227.  
E-mail: moving@freelinemovers.com - Website: www.freelinemovers.com

**Branch Offices:**

<b>Karachi</b> House No. 14 B/13, 3rd Floor, Kalkata Road, Main Tary Road, 17D-18 Block 2, P.E.C.H.S. Karachi. Tel: (+92 21) 3400628, 3401049. Fax: (+92 21) 3400747. E-mail: karachi@freelinemovers.com	<b>Lahore</b> P-4 Gallery Centre, Main Boulevard, Lahore. Tel: (+92 42) 3579881, 3579106. Fax: (+92 42) 3571422. E-mail: lahore@freelinemovers.com	<b>Peshawar</b> Office No. C-6, 3rd Floor, Zohar Plaza, Left Road, Ring Road, Peshawar. Tel: (+92 91) 2527778. Fax: (+92 91) 2525599. E-mail: peshawar@freelinemovers.com	<b>Kabul</b> House #4, Street #4, Chahar Anzar Road, Shahr-e-Naw, Kabul - Afghanistan. Tel: +93 79925 773. Fax: +93 79925 833. E-mail: kabul@freelinemovers.com
---	---	--	--

## Germany under Merz

**F**OLLOWING the center-right Christian Democratic party's return to power in last month's snap federal election, Friedrich Merz, the man tipped to be Germany's next chancellor, did not waste time in announcing his intention to practice an even more radical exegesis of the country's already extreme pro-"Israel" raison d'état, known as Staatsräson. One of his first acts as winner was to express his wish to invite to Germany none other than Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, an alleged war criminal wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for his role in the ongoing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza. He is specifically accused of "the war crime of starvation as a method of warfare and the crimes against humanity of murder, persecution and other inhuman acts." Unimpressed by the serious nature of the accusations, Merz quickly revealed his contempt for international justice. "I think it is a completely absurd idea that an Israeli prime minister cannot visit the Federal Republic of Germany," the chancellor-elect said at a press conference. In true autocratic fashion, he even threatened to "find ways and means for him [Netanyahu] to visit Germany and leave again without being arrested." Merz's open defiance of the ICC's arrest warrant against Netanyahu, which Germany as a signatory to the Rome Statute, the founding treaty of the court, is obliged to enforce, invited instant condemnation from global human rights actors. Amnesty International Germany [chided] Merz's unprecedented move as a "call to openly breach the law," while Francesca Albanese, the UN Special Rapporteur for the occupied Palestinian Territories lamented the "deranged reality" in Germany of "[t]reating human rights defenders like CRIMINALS, while receiving alleged int'l criminals with full honours." Albanese's tweet is in reference to German politicians' and the police's unsuccessful intimidatory efforts to silence her when she visited the country last month as part of a European speaking tour to talk about human rights law and Palestine. At a time when "Israel" is ethnically cleansing the West Bank and once again starving Palestinians in Gaza after renegeing on the ceasefire deal with Hamas, Merz's desire to invite Netanyahu, a fugitive from international law, to Berlin is not the only harbinger of what the CDU has in store for German democracy, already battered and bruised by the outgoing Social Democratic and Green party-led government's authoritarian excesses. A day after the election, an information request made by the CDU and its Bavarian sister party CSU in the Bundestag accused several NGOs, the most prominent among them being Greenpeace and PETA, of constituting a "shadow structure which uses state funds to indirectly engage in politics." Notice how the wording is hauntingly similar to Trumpian deep state rhetoric. Consisting of a whopping 551 questions, the inquiry has been described as an inquisition and an assault on democracy by Merz's critics. Understandably so, as many of the organizations CDU/CSU are attacking are the same ones that took to the streets in the lead up to the elections in protest against what Amnesty Germany has described as "Merz's inhuman migration policies" following his pre-election abrogation of the anti-AfD firewall which forbids any cooperation with the far-right Alternative for Germany party, the runner-up in the election.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 05 Issue: 271

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

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



## Cairo plan a good start

**I**NTERNATIONAL analysts would be well advised to keep a close eye on what happens in Saudi Arabia over the next few weeks, as it seems some of today's most pressing global problems might be resolved in the Kingdom. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky is due to arrive in the Kingdom on Monday for meetings with the Saudi leadership, hopefully to officially kickstart a series of talks that might put an end to the devastating Russian-Ukrainian war. This is no coincidence but rather the direct result of years of trust-building and back-channeling, at which Saudi Arabia has excelled. While Riyadh condemned the Russian aggression against Ukraine at the UN, it maintained, and despite criticisms, close and solid diplomatic relations with Moscow, not just to support the OPEC+ agreement, which guarantees oil market stability at a time of grave inflation, but because it knew that at some point the international community was going to need an adult in the room. Shortly afterward, the Saudi approach resulted in two prisoner swaps, with both the Russians and Ukrainians thanking Riyadh for its successful efforts. Now, building on the trust and strong relationship it built with President Donald Trump during his first term, Saudi Arabia is yet again the trusted and impartial facilitator between Russia, Ukraine, and the US. When it comes to an issue closer to home – Gaza – and given the rejection (albeit expected) by both Israel and the US of the Arab League proposal, the world might have to again turn to the Kingdom for a diplomatic solution. Just to be clear, the Arab League plan has been endorsed by all the attending leaders, or their representatives, in Cairo. It has also garnered the support of the UN secretary-general and a number of European countries. However, if the atrocities in the war on Gaza have taught us anything, it is that we should not forget to secure the buy-in of the elephant outside the room: the US. Trump has clearly signaled that he sees no place for Hamas, and says he still believes the Palestinians need to be moved out during reconstruction. Meanwhile, Israel, being the unreasonable player that it is, has predictably rejected any role for Hamas, as well as any involvement by the Palestinian Authority or the United Nations Relief and Works Agency. Now, with those conditions, it is futile trying to convince Israel. Its Prime Minister, or should I say, Occupier-in-Chief Benjamin Netanyahu and his coalition of lunatics clearly want the status quo to continue till every last Gazan is either displaced or killed by weapons, malnutrition or illness. At the same time, Israel will continue its intimidation in the West Bank, which could result in the region reaching a boiling point, even during the holy month of Ramadan. Trump, however, is a different political animal and – as unpopular as this sounds – a lot more straightforward to deal with. For instance, the US administration has already said it was open to ideas after the controversial Middle East Riviera plan was floated. The Americans also clarified that they are not putting boots on the ground, and have also made public that they are having direct talks with Hamas and are willing to talk to the Iranians. With a bit of logic, Washington can be convinced that Gazans who want to stay in their land while it is being rebuilt can do so, and if provided with a face-saving exit, Hamas could hopefully opt to do what is best for Palestinians, not for themselves (this will also require serious talks with Hamas, perhaps by Qatar and Egypt).

# Pakistan's relentless battle against terrorism

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



The human cost has been staggering. Countless civilians and security personnel have lost their lives to terrorist attacks and military operations.

The Pakistani armed forces, law enforcement agencies, and intelligence units have fought valiantly, often making the ultimate sacrifice. The widespread destruction of infrastructure and the displacement of communities have left deep scars on the nation's psyche.

Economically, Pakistan has suffered immeasurable losses. The direct and indirect costs of terrorism, including the damage to infrastructure, loss of foreign investment, and decline in economic growth, have amounted to hundreds of billions...

**P**AKISTAN has long stood as a bulwark in the global war against terrorism, bearing immense human and financial losses to foster peace and stability. Before the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Pakistan was a relatively peaceful nation. However, its strategic alignment with the Western bloc to counter Soviet expansion transformed it into an unintended battleground. As a consequence, Pakistan became a breeding ground for extremist activities, with bomb blasts and acts of terror becoming an unfortunate and recurring reality. Furthermore, the Kalashnikov culture and heroin addiction took root among the younger generation, severely impacting Pakistan's social fabric. From the Cold War era to the post-9/11 world, Pakistan has paid a heavy price for its unwavering commitment to eradicating terrorism. Following the September 11 attacks, the United States launched the global war on terror, pressuring Pakistan to dismantle militant networks within its borders. The country faced immense challenges, including threats of being pushed back into the Stone Age and the persistent demand to "Do More." Despite enduring relentless criticism and diplomatic isolation, Pakistan sacrificed tens of thousands of lives and spent billions on counterterrorism efforts, yet it remains entangled in economic hardship and political instability.

The human cost has been staggering. Countless civilians and security personnel have lost their lives to terrorist attacks and military operations. The Pakistani armed forces, law enforcement agencies, and intelligence units have fought valiantly, often making the ultimate sacrifice. The widespread destruction of infrastructure and the displacement of communities have left deep scars on the nation's psyche. Economically, Pakistan has suffered immeasurable losses. The direct and indirect costs of terrorism, including the damage to infrastructure, loss of foreign investment, and decline in economic growth, have amounted to hundreds of billions of dollars. The instability caused by terrorism has deterred investors, slowed down industrial growth, and forced the

government to divert significant resources towards security measures rather than development projects. Consequently, Pakistan has found itself increasingly dependent on international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), leading to a cycle of economic hardship and inflation that has severely affected the common man. While Pakistan has suffered greatly, the irony is that regional players who contributed little or nothing to the fight against terrorism have reaped economic and strategic benefits. Certain countries have secured lucrative trade and defense agreements, receiving international support and investment despite their minimal involvement in counterterrorism efforts. These discrepancies have been openly acknowledged by prominent world leaders, highlighting the double standards in global geopolitics. Pakistan, despite its sacrifices, continues to struggle economically and diplomatically, while others in the region have been rewarded with preferential treatment and economic opportunities. In addition to this, the United States has historically shaped its relationship with Pakistan based on strategic interests, engaging when needed and withdrawing when objectives were met. During the Cold War, Pakistan played a key role in countering Soviet influence, and post-9/11, it became a frontline ally in the war on terror. However, Washington's approach has often been transactional, leaving Pakistan to deal with long-term consequences once immediate interests faded. This pattern underscores the need for Pakistan to adopt a more self-reliant foreign policy that ensures its sacrifices translate into lasting national gains rather than temporary alliances dictated by external powers. Despite these adversities, Pakistan's steadfast efforts against terrorism have earned sporadic international recognition. U.S. President Donald Trump recently acknowledged Pakistan's role in capturing a high-profile terrorist, describing its cooperation as vital to global security. Similarly, former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton admitted that after leveraging Pakistan's support in defeating Soviet forces

in Afghanistan, the U.S. abandoned it, leaving Pakistan to manage the fallout. This disengagement allowed militant groups to flourish, perpetuating instability in the region. On the battlefield, Pakistan has achieved significant gains. Its armed forces and intelligence agencies have successfully dismantled major terrorist organizations, reducing the frequency and intensity of attacks. Landmark military operations such as Zarb-e-Azb and Radd-ul-Fasaad have played a pivotal role in restoring security to previously insurgency-ridden areas. The resilience of the Pakistani people, coupled with the sacrifices of their defenders, has prevented the country from succumbing to extremism. Pakistan's extensive counterterrorism experience has positioned it as a crucial player in global security discussions. The expertise of its security apparatus is recognized internationally, providing an opportunity to assume a leadership role in counterterrorism cooperation. Diplomatic efforts, such as the Pakistan-Afghanistan peace process and regional stability initiatives, further underscore the country's commitment to fostering long-term peace. As Pakistan assesses the ramifications of its prolonged engagement in the war on terror, it must reflect on both its losses and gains. The nation has endured profound human and economic suffering, faced diplomatic challenges, and contended with a distorted global narrative. Yet, its sacrifices have not been entirely in vain. The substantial decline in terrorist activities, the strengthening of security institutions, and the growing acknowledgment of its counterterrorism efforts are notable achievements. Looking ahead, Pakistan must pivot towards economic recovery, strategic regional diplomacy, and proactive global engagement. Its sacrifices should yield tangible benefits through economic partnerships, infrastructural development, and equitable treatment in international forums. Only through astute policymaking and a balanced foreign policy can Pakistan ensure that its resilience translates into lasting gains, securing a stable and prosperous future for its people.

## A just Syria is best for all its segments

Ghassan Charbel

I am afraid of foreign players who have been awaiting these opportunities to pounce on the new Syrian Arab Republic. Israel is acting as though Syria is an open arena, not an independent nation. It speaks about the security of the Druze and has hinted about the Kurds. These statements may be concealing an Israeli desire to blow up and divide Syria, or at least push it to live on the edge of wars between its various segments. Others are dreaming of reclaiming whatever influence they lost in Syria through...

**A**NYONE in Beirut observing the developments unfolding in Syria will be gripped by fear. It is very dangerous to try to turn back the hands of time. The collapse of Bashar Assad's regime was a major shock that surprised his allies and opponents alike. Inside Syria, some refuse to believe that the time of the regime is over. Outside Syria, some refuse to recognize that Syria has chosen its fate and are instead insisting on pursuing a path that will lead it back to bloodshed. Syria's fate does not concern it alone. This is a lesson that was learned in the second decade of the 21st century. When instability erupts in Syria, it is difficult to keep it confined to the country's borders. Infighting between Syrians fuels tensions in neighboring countries and creates waves of displaced people. If an anxious Syria is a problem, then a fearsome Syria is a tragedy for its people and surroundings. Blowing up the situation in Syria is no less dangerous than the ouster of Saddam Hussein. The region may not be able to contain the fallout from such a development. The most dangerous thing that can happen to a country is for those in power to exploit the fears of its various segments the way the Assad regime did. Under the regime, might held sway over justice and equality. The constitution was manipulated to suit anyone in the ruling regime. Parliament convened only to applaud the ruler. People were left to suffer in regime prisons and at the hands of cruel, mafia-like practices. My profession has taught me to be fearful of major developments from which there can be no turning back. I grow concerned when the man who previously held all the threads, fates and destinies is no longer in power. I grow concerned when an army that had long held the ground and turned the country into a prison is no more. I grow concerned when the leaders of security agencies leave

behind them piles of corpses and a series of mass graves. I grow fearful of the ire of the people when they react to barbaric acts that can be traced to simmering hatred. I grow fearful when people fall victim to parties that have sold them delusions and who eventually refuse to acknowledge defeat, so they embark on adventures that threaten their safety and perhaps their own existence. I am afraid of foreign players who have been awaiting these opportunities to pounce on the new Syrian Arab Republic. Israel is acting as though Syria is an open arena, not an independent nation. It speaks about the security of the Druze and has hinted about the Kurds. These statements may be concealing an Israeli desire to blow up and divide Syria, or at least push it to live on the edge of wars between its various segments. Others are dreaming of reclaiming whatever influence they lost in Syria through any means necessary. Interim President Ahmad Al-Sharaa's decision to form an independent investigation committee to look into the developments along the coast helps thwart the goals of the parties that were seeking to exploit the situation to make it seem that this was a war between different segments. Concerned questions have been posed by the Druze, Kurds and Alawites in recent weeks. The truth is that the only answer to these questions is that there can be no other solution in Syria besides the establishment of a Syrian state that accepts everyone. Blowing up the situation in Syria will be a tragedy for itself and its neighbors. Drowning Syria in a war of segments will alarm Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Turkey and other regional countries. Key to Syria's stability is the establishment of a state that fits all its segments and that is built on justice and equality under the rule of law. Any return to the past must be limited to learning from it and guaranteeing that the same mistakes will not be made again. In the wake

of Assad's ouster, the new Syria managed to avert a major collapse that could have resulted in endless bloodshed. President Al-Sharaa acted realistically and focused on returning Syria to its Arab family and paving the way for its existence under a new constitution and the rule of law. He sought to give the impression that Syria's main concern was restoring stability, beginning reconstruction and building a normal country away from a model that goes against its foundations and unity. He gave the impression that the new Syria does not want to export its model or infiltrate the maps of its neighbors. The recent bloodshed gave the impression that the conflict in Syria never stopped on the inside or in the region. Any foreign attempt to turn back the hands of time will lead to an escalation in the war of roles inside Syria and around it. Syria has always been an anxious country. For 60 years, it never managed to reclaim the Golan Heights occupied by Israel. It never managed to become a normal state on the inside. It was unnerved by Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdogan and its role in the NATO alliance. It was fearful of Iraq under Saddam, Jordan's moderation and the international umbrella that protects it and Lebanon, which had escaped Syrian hegemony. The anxious Baathist Syria turned into a country that sparked alarm in others when it began to collect cards that it could use to manipulate the security and stability of its neighbors. It became an even greater source of alarm when it transformed into an arena for Iran and its militias. The solution lies in Syria returning to Syria: a return to a normal state that safeguards unity and that guarantees the respect of differences through coexistence and under the rule of law. Only a normal state can close the chapter of the anxious and alarming Syria. A just Syria is the best home for its segments.

## Briefs

## Unilateral policies causing...

FROM PAGE 01  
foster social and economic justice, and ensure fairness and transparency in our system. Zardari stressed for promoting inclusive and uniform development, ensuring that no province, no district, and no village is left behind. "This House should ensure that development is not limited to a few selected areas but reaches every nook and corner of the country. The ignored and neglected areas demand urgent attention from the federal government." He maintained that the government should focus on investments in infrastructure, education, healthcare, and economic opportunities to address their sense of deprivation. The president also emphasised to improve taxation system "essential to moving forward as a country". "We must reform and expand our tax net—not by overburdening those who already contribute, but by ensuring that every eligible taxpayer participates in nation-building."

## Bilawal slams opp over...

FROM PAGE 01  
cooperation to tackle the nation's pressing challenges. Earlier, President Asif Ali Zardari addressed the joint session of Parliament on the beginning of the new parliamentary year. In his address, President Zardari expressed his profound honour as a civilian president to address the August House for the eighth time at the commencement of a new parliamentary year. He called upon the members of the House to prioritise good governance and work towards achieving political and economic stability.

## PM Shehbaz Sharif unveils...

FROM PAGE 01  
Traditionally, the prime minister's Ramazan package is offered to the general public through Utility Stores. However, the government decided to distribute the Ramazan Relief package without the involvement of the Utility Stores Corporation to prevent corruption and the distribution of low-quality commodities. Instead, the prime minister decided that each family would receive Rs5,000 through digital wallets.

## SBP pauses rate cuts, braces for...

FROM PAGE 01  
mainly due to a drop in food and energy prices. "Notwithstanding this decline, the committee assessed the risks posed by the inherent volatility in these prices to the current declining trend in inflation," it said in a statement. The committee observed that the current account, which had remained in surplus for the past few months, swung to a \$0.4 billion deficit in January 2025. "This, coupled with weak financial inflows and ongoing debt repayments, led to a decline in the SBP's foreign exchange reserves." The monetary status quo was driven by a decline in large-scale manufacturing output in H1FY25, a tax revenue shortfall in January and February, and global economic uncertainty amid ongoing tariff escalations.

## Military courts...

FROM PAGE 01  
separate from the executive," he added. "Tell me who was to separate the judiciary from the executive?" Justice Mandokhal asked and added, "Under Article 175(3), will the judiciary be automatically considered separate from the executive? Or will the judiciary or the parliament declare the separation of the judiciary from the executive?" The Constitution is pretty much clear on this matter, there is no need for a declaration by parliament," Hamid Khan said.

## NTDC regularizes services of 19 National and int'l players

President NTDC Sports, Engr. Khawaja Riffat Hassan also pays tribute to players, wishes for more success



## SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: The National Transmission & Despatch Company (NTDC) has regularized the services for 19 national and international athletes of grade 7 to grade 16. Along-with, 25 players have also been promoted to the next grades. These athletes have represented NTDC and Pakistan in a variety of sports, including hockey, cricket, football, volleyball, badminton, athletics, javelin throw, weightlifting, bodybuilding, boxing, judo, karate, swimming, wrestling, martial arts, table tennis, netball and cycling.

Managing Director NTDC, Engr. Muhammad Waseem Younas met with the players at WAPDA House, Lahore, today. While congratulating the players, MD NTDC said

that the players have proven their abilities at national and international level and have brought pride to the company & the country and we are proud of all of you. He said that the players should work hard to further improve their performance and NTDC management is taking all steps to provide coaching and other facilities to its players. He hoped that the players will continue to show such excellent performance in future competitions as well. President NTDC Sports Association, General Manager (D&E) Engr. Dr. Khawaja Riffat Hassan, expressing his views on this occasion, said that success comes only through hard work, the players should undergo intensive training to achieve success in the upcoming National Games. The players whose jobs were made permanent on the recommendations of WAPDA

Sports Board and NTDC Regularization Board include, Muhammad Yasir Sultan (Javelin Throw), Shoaib Khan (Athletics), Jahanzeb Khan (Boxing), Hanzala Dastgir Butt (Weightlifting), Waqas Maqsood, Adnan Raees, Bismillah and Muhammad Saad (Cricket), Mahsam Nazakat (Martial Arts), Danish Rashid and Mohsin Ali (Wrestling), Murad Khan, Jan Muhammad and Usman Faryad Ali (Volleyball), Niamat ullah (Karate), Muhammad Ali Larosh (Badminton), Ali Sher (Swimming) and Muhammad Tariq (Bodybuilding). The players who have been promoted to next grade include, Muhammad Khalid and Hamra Latif (Hockey), Ali Ahmed, Hayat ullah and Nageeb ullah (Boxing), Farhan Rashid (Softball), Muzaffar Ali (Bodybuilding), Muhammad Ashfaq (Powerlifting), Haider Ali and Razia Parveen (Weightlift-

ing), Syed Ali Mehdi, Bilal Jafri and Haroon Javed (Badminton), Muhammad Yasin Siddique, Muhammad Bashir and Muhammad Idris (Volleyball), Muhammad Yasir Sultan (Javelin Throw), Sadia Falak sher (Table Tennis), Ali Mahmood, Baz Muhammad and Kulsoom (Karate), Muhammad Zahid Arif and Salman Butt (Netball), Prince Muhammad Zahid Gulam and Najeeb ullah (Cycling) and Naseer Ahmed (Swimming). The ceremony was also attended by Patron-in-Chief NTDC Sports Association, Deputy Managing Director (Planning and Engineering) Engr. Qaiser Khan, General Manager (Asset Management) Engr. Muhammad Mustafa, General Manager (HR) Engr. Sohail Mumtaz Bajwa, General Manager (Media and Public Relations) Muhammad Ibrahim, sports officer Imran Zafar, coaches and other NTDC officers.

## 6 Indian, 2 Afghan players included in CT team

No Pakistan, Australian, South African, or English player made the Team of the Tournament

## WEB DESK

DUBAI: The ninth edition of the ICC Champions Trophy concluded on March 9, 2025, with India emerging as champions after defeating New Zealand in the final. The tournament witnessed several standout performances with both bat and ball, leading to the selection of the Team of the Tournament. However, no Pakistani player made the cut. Team of the Tournament Breakdown Rachin Ravindra (New Zealand) - Player of the Tournament Rachin Ravindra played a crucial role in New Zealand's campaign, delivering impactful performances

with both bat and ball. His all-round excellence earned him the Player of the Tournament award. Ibrahim Zadran (Afghanistan) Zadran played a pivotal role in Afghanistan's memorable campaign, notably scoring a stunning 177 against England—the highest individual score in Champions Trophy history. Virat Kohli (India) Despite being 36, Kohli reaffirmed his dominance in ODI cricket. He played two crucial knocks, including an 84 in the semi-final against Australia. During the tournament, he also became only the third player after Sachin Tendulkar and Kumar Sangakkara to surpass 14,000 ODI runs. Shreyas Iyer (India) Iyer was a mod-

el of consistency, scoring at least 45 runs in each of India's last four matches. He thrived in Dubai's challenging batting conditions, proving to be a pillar of stability in the middle order. KL Rahul (India) - Wicketkeeper Rahul excelled both behind the stumps and with the bat. He remained unbeaten in three out of four innings and was instrumental in India's knockout-stage victories, scoring 42 against Australia\* and 34 against New Zealand\* while chasing. Glenn Phillips (New Zealand) A powerful hitter and an outstanding fielder, Phillips showcased his athleticism by pulling off three spectacular catches, including a breathtaking grab to

dismiss Virat Kohli in the group-stage clash against India. Azmatullah Omarzai (Afghanistan) Omarzai impressed with both bat and ball. His match-winning 5/58 against England highlighted why he was named ICC Men's ODI Cricketer of the Year 2024. Mitchell Santner (New Zealand) - Captain Santner led New Zealand with distinction, guiding them to the final while also excelling as a frontline spinner. His leadership and bowling played a key role in the Kiwis' impressive campaign. Mohammed Shami (India) Shami made an emphatic return, claiming 5/53 against Bangladesh in the opening match. He also stepped up in the crucial knockout stages, picking up four wickets in the semi-final and final combined.

## Jadeja dismisses retirement rumors

Jadeja posted on his Instagram story to address the rumors

## WEB DESK

NEW DELHI: Indian all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja has dismissed rumors regarding his retirement from ODI cricket following India's Champions Trophy 2025 victory against New Zealand in Dubai. On Sunday, Jadeja hit the winning runs to secure India's third Champions Trophy title. Speculation had been swirling that the Saurashtra cricketer would step away from the format after the final, but he quickly put an end to such claims. To shut down the false reports circulating across news outlets and social media, the star all-rounder took to Instagram, posting a story that read: "NO UNNECESSARY RUMOURS" followed by folded hands and salute emojis. The 36-year-old played a crucial role in India's victory. He delivered an outstanding spell in the first innings, bowling 10 overs for just 30 runs at a miserly economy rate of 3.00, while also providing a vital breakthrough by dismissing Tom Latham. His disciplined bowling effort helped restrict New Zealand to 251-7. Fittingly, Jadeja also had the final say with the bat. With India needing runs in the closing moments, he remained unbeaten on nine off six balls and struck the winning runs in the 49th over. Alongside KL Rahul, he guided the Sharma-led side to a four-wicket victory with six balls to spare. Reflecting on the triumph, Jadeja expressed his emotions after the match. "That is how it is with me; sometimes a hero, sometimes a zero."

## Wahab Riaz withdraws from National T20 cup

Fans also slammed PCB for picking a retired pacer over a young talent

## DNA

LAHORE: Former Pakistan pacer Wahab Riaz was set to return to domestic cricket, representing Lahore Whites in the upcoming National T20 Cup. However, he has now withdrawn from the squad after facing intense criticism from fans, who voiced concerns that younger players were being denied opportunities. According to sources, the former chief selector also opted out due to personal commitments and the upcoming Champions Trophy, further influencing his decision to step away from the tournament. He had also participated in the trial matches held for Lahore-based teams, showcasing his intent to return to competitive cricket. The 39-year-old, who last represented Pakistan in 2020, initially secured his place in the squad after an impressive trial performance at a Lahore Region Cricket Association match at Aligarh Ground. Playing for Lahore Greens, Wahab took one wicket for 25 runs in three overs, dismissing young batter Rana Arsalan. With the bat, he contributed a quickfire 31 runs, including three sixes.

## Mohsin Naqvi reflects on successful hosting of Champions Trophy

Mohsin Naqvi thanked everyone for making the tournament a success

LAHORE: Pakistan has successfully hosted the ICC Champions Trophy 2025, marking a significant milestone in the nation's cricketing history. The tournament's seamless execution showcased Pakistan's ability to organize a prestigious global event, reinforcing its standing as a key player in international cricket. Following the successful conclusion of the event, Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chairman Mohsin Naqvi expressed his gratitude to everyone who contributed to making the tournament a resounding success. In a heartfelt message, he acknowledged the relentless efforts of the PCB team, law enforcement agencies, provincial governments, ICC officials, and the participating teams. "I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the dedicated PCB team, the vigilant law enforcement agencies, the supportive provincial governments, the esteemed ICC officials, and all the phenomenal participating cricket teams that traveled to Pakistan for the Champions Trophy 2025," Naqvi posted on X. "Your relentless efforts made it possible for us to hold the Champions Trophy 2025 seamlessly and turn it into a remarkable success story," he added. He emphasised Pakistan's immense pride in hosting the tournament, calling it a historic achievement for cricket fans worldwide. The successful



organization of the event is expected to bolster Pakistan's reputation as a safe and capable host for international cricket, paving the way for more major tournaments in the future. It is pertinent to mention that India defeated New Zealand to lift the Champions Trophy 2025 title by four wickets on Sunday at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium. In the final, India successfully chased down a target of 252 runs with six wickets and six balls to spare, led by a match-winning half-century from captain Rohit Sharma. Earlier, New Zealand struggled to post a competitive total, managing 251 runs despite a valiant half-century from Daryl Mitchell. For the unversed, this was India's third Champions Trophy title, having previously won the prestigious tournament in 2002 and 2013. - DNA

Rohit Sharma joins Imran in elite captaincy club  
India lift their third Champions Trophy title by beating New Zealand in Dubai

## WEB DESK

DUBAI: Indian skipper Rohit Sharma has cemented his legacy in cricketing history by securing his fourth major title as captain, following India's victory in the ICC Champions Trophy 2025. India defeated New Zealand in the final at Dubai, adding another feather to Rohit's illustrious cap and placing him in the elite league of captains with four major tournament wins. With this achievement, Rohit joins cricketing legends Imran Khan, MS Dhoni and Ricky Ponting—each of whom has led their respective teams to four major tournament victories in competitions featuring at least five teams.

## Rohit Sharma's Major Titles as Captain

- Asia Cup 2018
- Asia Cup 2023
- World Cup 2024
- Trophy 2025

## Other Captains with Four Major Tournament Wins

- Imran Khan (Pakistan)
- Austral-Asia Cup 1986



- Nehru Cup 1989
- Austral-Asia Cup 1990
- World Cup 1992
- Ricky Ponting (Australia)
- World Cup 2003
- Champions Trophy 2006
- World Cup 2007
- Champions Trophy 2009

## MS Dhoni (India)

- T20 World Cup 2007
- World Cup 2011
- Champions Trophy 2013
- T20 Asia Cup 2016

His outstanding performance in the final earned him the Player of the Match award, making him only the fourth captain in history to receive this honor in an ICC Men's Final. He joins an exclusive list of cricketing greats:

- Clive Lloyd (West Indies, CWC 1975)
- Ricky Ponting (Australia, CWC 2003)
- MS Dhoni (India, CWC 2011)
- Rohit Sharma (India, CT 2025)

Additionally, the opening batter became only the second Indian captain to win multiple ICC titles, with four trophies now to his name. Under his leadership, India has dominated ICC tournaments, winning 23 out of 24 matches across the last three major events. This Champions Trophy victory also marked India's third title in the competition, having previously won in 2002 and 2013. No other team has won more than 15 matches in the tournament's history, making India's record even more remarkable.

## Pakistan's civic space is 'repressed'...

FROM PAGE 01  
Rating Pakistan's civic space as 'repressed', a press release issued by the CIVICUS Monitor reads: "The government has brought trumped-up charges against human rights defenders for their activism." Among those targeted recently include Dr Mahrang Baloch, a leader of the Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC). She faces multiple criminal charges including under Anti-Terrorism Act, for organising sit-in across the country and attending gatherings, the press release said. Human rights lawyer Imaan Zainab Mazari-Hazir was targeted on terrorism charges for actively supporting legal redress for victims of violence and persecution and advocating for rights of persecuted religious and ethnic communities, it added. In October 2024, the press release said, the government used the Anti-Terrorism Act to ban the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM).

## PTI says all decisions made...

FROM PAGE 01  
Barrister Gohar claimed that it was an incomplete house, adding that they attended the session only to register their protest. According to the former ruling party, the lower house of parliament was "incomplete" as the reserved seats had not been allotted to the Sunni Ittehad Council so far. For his part, Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly Omar Ayub Khan said there was no rule of law in the country. Referring to hundreds of cases against the PTI's leadership, Ayub said: "Shah Mehmood Qureshi, Ejaz Chaudhry and Mian Mehmood ur Rasheed are behind bars." "Hassan Niazi (PTI founder Imran Khan's nephew) and our workers are political prisoners," he added.

## PTI moves LHC for Lahore...

FROM PAGE 01  
and speech coupled with "dignity and inviolable right to reach the people and hold peaceful rallies", and argues that that the respondents were bound to allow and facilitate such gathering under Article 4 of the Constitution. Lamenting political victimisation, the petition urges the court to direct the respondents against harassing him or his family and grant permission to hold a gathering at Minare-Pakistan on the said date from 8pm to 12am.

## Palestinian PM calls for global...

FROM PAGE 01  
The Prime Minister also welcomed the European Union's support for the Gaza reconstruction plan, which was endorsed by both the Cairo Emergency Arab Summit and the Ministerial Meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. For his part, Bettel stressed the need to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people, particularly in Gaza, and underscored the importance of securing a lasting ceasefire. He reaffirmed Luxembourg's continued support for the Palestinian Government's efforts in humanitarian relief, reconstruction preparations, and institutional reform and development.

## SC delists all May 9 cases

FROM PAGE 01  
The Chief Justice pointed out that some appeals related to case transfers, which had already been resolved, advising the lawyer to seek instructions from the government. Naqvi responded that since the judge had been transferred, the appeals would focus only on fines and observations. Subsequently, the court accepted the Punjab government's request for more time and postponed all hearings until after Eid. It is noteworthy that the Lahore High Court had granted bail to the accused in the May 9 cases, and the Punjab government has challenged these bail approvals in Supreme Court.

## Briefs

## PSX loses 42 points

ISLAMABAD: The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) lost 42.36 points, a nominal negative change of 0.04 percent, closing at 114,356.34 points as compared to 114,398.70 points on the last trading day. A total of 324,654,460 shares were traded during the day as compared to 404,365,056 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs20.704 billion against Rs27.842 billion on the last trading day. As many as 435 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 194 of them recorded gains and 170 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 71 companies remained unchanged. The three top trading companies were Power Cement with 24,823,328 shares at Rs11.76 per share, Fauji Cement with 22,194,869 shares at Rs43.91 per share and Maple Leaf with 19,750,525 shares at Rs56.03 per share. —APP

## Rupee sheds 10 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Monday depreciated by 10 paise against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs280.06 against the previous day's closing of Rs279.96.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs280.25 and Rs281.75, respectively. The price of the Euro decreased by 11 paise to close at Rs303.13 against the last day's closing of Rs303.24, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs1.89, whereas a decrease of 22 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs361.00 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs361.22.—APP

## Gold price remains unchanged

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat per tola gold remained unchanged at Rs 306,000 on Monday. All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewelers Association reported. The prices of 10 grams of 24 karat and 10 gram 22 karat also witnessed no change and were trade at Rs 262,345 and Rs 240,491 respectively. The prices of per tola and ten gram silver were also sold on same rates at Rs,3,388 and Rs.2,904 respectively. The price of gold in the international market remained constant at \$2,910 whereas that of silver remained unchanged at \$32.50, the Association reported.—APP

## Syria defense ministry ends operation on coast

DAMASCUS: Syria's defense ministry announced on Monday the end of a major security operation in coastal provinces, after days of violence and mass killings that sparked international concern. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights war monitor said nearly 1,500 people have died in the violence since Thursday, the majority civilians of them killed by security forces and allied groups in the heartland of the Alawite minority to which deposed president Bashar Assad belongs.

In a statement on official news agency SANA, defense ministry spokesman Hassan Abdul Ghani said security forces had neutralized security threats and "regime remnants" in Latakia and Tartus provinces on the Mediterranean coast. "Having achieved this, we announce the end of the military operation," Abdul Ghani said. He hailed "the success of our forces... in achieving all the objectives set" for the operation. "We were able... to absorb the attacks of the remnants of the toppled regime and its officers" and push them from "vital" locations, Abdul Ghani said. Clashes broke out last week between the security forces and gunmen loyal to Assad, with the Observatory reporting 231.—APP

## Finance Minister vows to support insurance sector

The Finance Minister emphasized that a team of experts at the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) is diligently reviewing each proposal submitted by different sectors, ensuring that the impact on the economy and revenue is thoroughly evaluated

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb has reaffirmed the government's commitment to supporting the insurance sector, recognizing its potential for significant private sector investment. He further noted that the government seeks to diversify beyond the banking sector for lending purposes, urging the insurance industry to step up and meet the growing demand. This includes expanding the sector by focusing on innovation, enhancing productivity, and driving further growth. The Minister expressed these views during a meeting held today with a delegation of chief executive officers from Pakistan's leading insurance companies. The discussion focused on the growth of the insurance sector and its contributions to the national economy, with a particular emphasis on its impact on the health system, investments in Pakistan Investment Bonds (PIBs), capital markets, and long-term investment opportunities. The Minister assured the delegation that the



government would continue to work closely with industry leaders and stakeholders to ensure the long-term prosperity of the insurance sector, which is a vital component of Pakistan's economic landscape. Earlier, the delegation presented to the Minister and his team key proposals and suggestions aimed at boosting

the growth and productivity of the insurance sector. The presentation also highlighted the current statistics of the industry, which boasts assets worth Rs 2,900 billion, alongside 20,000 direct and 234,000 indirect employees. The sector's contributions were underscored, with Rs 613 billion in gross written premiums and Rs 373 billion in

claims paid to date. Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb welcomed the delegation's presentation and expressed his appreciation for the valuable insights provided. He assured the group that the government would carefully consider their proposals, particularly regarding taxation and policy measures necessary for the future growth of the

industry. He highlighted that the consultative process for the upcoming federal budget had been deliberately advanced this year. Over 90% of the process has already been completed, with recommendations, proposals, and suggestions received from various stakeholders, including the insurance sector. The Finance Minister emphasized that a team

of experts at the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) is diligently reviewing each proposal submitted by different sectors, ensuring that the impact on the economy and revenue is thoroughly evaluated. This process aims to develop realistic and actionable policy interventions that will foster the growth of the industry and critical sectors of the economy.

## Pakistani buyer explores inverters, laser cutting machines in China

BEIJING: Inter Commerce Expo Corporation (ICEC), a Shandong-based economic and trade exchange platform, received a message from Mr. Mirza Ali of Rajput Brothers Traders in Pakistan regarding his upcoming visit to China for procurement. As early as 2023, Ali's business partner, Mr. Umar Shahzad, traveled to China to purchase bearings. With the help of ICEC, Mr. Shahzad visited several bearing factories in Liaocheng, Shandong Province, where he established business relationships and procured sample bearings to bring back to Pakistan. This time, my target products are inverters and laser cutting machines," Ali stated. Given Pakistan's deteriorating power supply, he has identified market opportunities in photovoltaic and energy storage products, prompting him to expand his distribution range. "Opportunities must be seized," he added. Pakistan's power consumption has undergone significant changes in recent times, with many consumers transitioning to solar power. This shift includes the agriculture sector, where rows of solar panels have become a new normal, according to Pakistani media outlet GEO. "Many factories in Pakistan now aspire to enhance their manufacturing capabilities, and our industrial sector needs to accelerate its development," Ali noted, predicting that trade in intermediate goods will become mainstream in Pakistan for the future. "If possible, I would like to establish my own factory," he added. It places great emphasis on the specifications, applicable scenarios, and—most importantly—the quality of inverters. "While many people assume that price is the top priority in the Pakistani market, we are increasingly focusing on product quality. I want the highest quality products." After visiting a Shenzhen-based company that specializes in inverters, he was highly impressed by Chinese manufacturing. Without hesitation, he purchased samples on the spot, intending to take them back to Pakistan upon his return, Gwadar Pro reported on Monday.

## Shelling kills 7 in Sudan city retaken by army

PORT SUDAN: Paramilitary shelling on Sunday on a strategic city in Sudan's south, where the army broke a prolonged siege last month, killed seven civilians and wounded nearly two dozen others, a medical source said. El-Obeid, the state capital of North Kordofan, came under attack by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, or RSF, at war with the army since April 2023, said the source at the city's main hospital and several witnesses. Witnesses reported intense bombardment by the RSF on Sunday, with one shell striking a public transport bus carrying passengers, on the third consecutive day of attacks from the north and east. Cholera was officially declared an outbreak on Aug. 12 last year by Sudan's Health Ministry after a new wave of cases was reported starting July 22. The hospital source said that the shelling killed seven people and wounded 23 others, all civilians. Last month, the army broke a nearly two-year RSF siege on El-Obeid, which sits at a crucial crossroads connecting the capital Khartoum to the country's western region of Darfur. The RSF has captured nearly all of Darfur while the army controls the country's north and east and recently won back large swathes of Khartoum and central Sudan. The war, pitting army chief Gen. Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan against his former deputy, RSF commander Gen. Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo, has claimed tens of thousands of lives, uprooted over 12 million, and created the world's largest hunger and displacement crises. An international aid group, meanwhile, said nearly 100 people died of cholera in two weeks since the waterborne disease outbreak began in Sudan's White Nile State, Doctors Without Borders — also known as Medecins Sans Frontieres or MSF — said that 2,700 people had contracted the disease since Feb. 20, including 92 people who died.—APP

## Pak students in Lin-gang see broad prospects in China

SHANGHAI: Pakistani students in Shanghai's Lin-gang Free Trade zone see broad business prospects in China, China Economic Net reported on Monday. Along other Pakistanis here 27-year-old Zhou Zihan, an entrepreneur from Pakistan, is also preparing to launch his business. "Starting a business in Lin-gang provides easier access to both domestic and international markets, as well as greater efficiency in cross-border operations," Zhou stated. Currently pursuing a master's degree in International Relations at East China Normal University, Zhou hails from a family with a rich history in Pakistan's textile industry. Since 2001, we have collaborated with several Chinese companies to supply textile machinery, digital printing machines, and related solutions to Pakistan's textile sector," he shared. In pursuit of further expansion, Zhou aims to establish a trading company in Shanghai to connect Chinese products with Pakistani clients. "Lin-gang is home to numerous high-tech enterprises, abundant innovation resources, and comprehensive international legal and financial services—all of which provide robust support for my company's global growth. The openness and favorable policies in this region were key factors in my decision to establish my business," Zhou explained. Although he had long contemplated starting a business in Shanghai, Zhou hesitated due to the complexities of establishing a company in a foreign country. As an international student, he faced additional uncertainties, particularly regarding visa regulations. To navigate the process, he consulted the relevant authorities and discovered that he could transition from a student visa to an entrepreneurship visa, making his business aspirations achievable. A pivotal moment occurred in November 2023 when Zhou attended the "Connecting the World, Embracing Lin-gang" event, an initiative designed to invite international students from Shanghai universities to explore the Lin-gang New Area. This was his first visit to Lin-gang, and the comprehensive policy briefings provided by officials unveiled new opportunities. Additionally, he had the chance to engage with government representatives who specialize in entrepreneurship support. "Lin-gang not only provides a secure and convenient environment for foreign entrepreneurs but also distinguishes itself as a key development area supported by both national and municipal governments. I was truly impressed," Zhou stated. According to an official from the Lin-gang New Area Administrative Committee, a variety of policies have been implemented to support international students in innovation and entrepreneurship. Initiatives such as the Lin-gang Overseas Students Entrepreneurship Park provide assistance with business registration, policy consultation, operational support, and financial and tax services. Foreign entrepreneurs can also take advantage of a five-year residence permit, a fast-track pathway to permanent residency, and an expedited process for domestic professional qualification exams. Lin-gang Special Area has emerged as an ideal launchpad for foreign entrepreneurs. To date, over 300 startups founded by international students have established themselves in the area. Lin-gang Blue Bay Park and the Marine High-tech Industrial Base serve as key hubs for overseas returnee entrepreneurship, hosting nearly 100 enterprises. Notably, 75% of these companies operate in advanced industries such as biomedicine, artificial intelligence, and integrated circuits.—DNA

## Indonesians seek escape as anger rises over quality of life

JAKARTA: Indonesian private tutor Patricia has been learning German for two years, armed with a dream of leaving for Europe and driven by a lack of opportunities, economic stagnation and little hope at home. She is one of thousands of Indonesians on social media promoting a popular hashtag that translates as "let's just escape for now." Anger at the quality of life in Southeast Asia's biggest economy — a nation of 280 million known for pervasive corruption and nepotism — has stirred student protests and driven young and middle-aged professionals to seek jobs abroad. "After working for so many years, my income remains about the same... meanwhile my needs are increasing," said the 39-year-old in the capital Jakarta, who declined to give her last name. "I don't own a house or car... if I keep working

like this, it will probably never be enough." In the last month, the hashtag has picked up steam. It has racked up thousands of mentions and reached more than 65 million accounts on X, formerly Twitter, analytics firm Brand24 said. The outpouring has coincided with student-led protests against wide-ranging government budget cuts by new President Prabowo Subianto. Savings have been channelled into a new multi-billion-dollar sovereign wealth fund — that reports to the ex-general. There were nearly 7.5 million unemployed people in Indonesia, according to the latest figures from the country's statistics agency, dating to August 2024. That has stoked anger against a perceived poor quality of life, as the divide between the emerging nation's rich and poor grows wider and the middle class is squeezed.

"After many strange policies and the change of president, I have shifted to feeling like I have to move abroad. It has become a primary necessity," said Chyntia Utami, a 26-year-old tech worker in Jakarta. "I really feel it. I don't get social assistance, and I have limited money to spend. Working is just about surviving day by day, month by month, not working with passion." Some Indonesians are taking more physically demanding jobs abroad to escape. Randy Christian Saputra, 25, left an office job at a multinational consulting firm to do manual labor on a tomato farm in Australia. "I'm tired of the system in Indonesia. If we look abroad, they usually have a better system," he said. Poor living standards in the megacity Jakarta encourage others to leave. "The longer I stay in Jakarta, the harder it is because of pollution

or traffic jams. It has more to do with the living standard," said Favian Amrullah, a 27-year-old software engineer, who is leaving for a tech startup in Amsterdam in April. "I am exhausted, and feeling hopeless." Some foreign companies are trying to capitalize on the trend, including Japanese recruitment firms posting online seeking to attract the most talented. Experts said social media offers Indonesians an outlet where they feel heard. "This showed the public's emotion," said Ika Karlina Idris, associate professor at Monash University Indonesia. She said the hashtag highlighted "the public's concerns about jobs and nepotism" as well as at "haphazard public policies." The uproar sparked criticism from some government ministers. One even told those who wish to leave should not return. "Just run away,

if necessary, don't come back," Deputy Manpower Minister Immanuel Ebenezer told a reporter last month. He did not immediately respond to an AFP request for comment. Pro-Prabowo influencers have also spread disinformation, aiming to undermine the credibility of protesters. In recent weeks, AFP's Fact Check team found more than a dozen TikTok videos pushing the baseless claim that student protesters are "paid," which attracted more than eight million views. Pro-government and pro-Prabowo content creators then posted reaction videos amplifying the misinformation on YouTube and TikTok, garnering more than two million views, AFP Fact Check found. Patricia remains undeterred, applying for a volunteer post in Germany in the hope she can find a paid job once there.—Agencies

## No justification for attacks on Alawites, other minorities in Syria: Iran

TEHRAN: Iran's foreign ministry said Monday there was "no justification" for attacks on minorities in Syria, including Alawites, the community to which toppled president Bashar al-Assad, a long-time Tehran ally, belongs. "There is no justification for the attacks on parts of the Alawite, Christian, Druze and other minorities, which have truly wounded the emotions and conscience of both the countries of the region and internationally," said foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei during a weekly press briefing. Fighting between the new security forces and loyalists of the former Assad's government erupted last Thursday, after earlier tensions, and escalated into reported mass killings. A total of 973 civilians have been killed in the coastal heartland of the Alawite minority community in Syria, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights war monitor on Monday. The fighting has also killed hundreds of security forces as well as pro-Assad fighters, according to the Observatory, with the overall death toll exceeding 1,300. Assad fled Syria in December for Moscow as rebel forces entered Damascus in a lightning offensive led by the Sunni Islamist group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) headed by Ahmed al-Sharaa, Syria's current interim president.—APP

## Floodwaters still threaten parts of Australia's east coast

WELLINGTON: Australia's prime minister cautioned that the fallout from a vicious tropical storm over the weekend was "far from over" as parts of two states remained inundated with perilous floodwaters on Monday, even as the initial threat from the deluge continued to recede. One person was killed and several others injured after heavy rain lashed Australia's east coast on Saturday, toppling trees and power lines and inundating some parts of Queensland and New South Wales with record downpours. The two states escaped the level of chaos forecast from the tropical low weather system, which was earlier expected to make landfall as the first tropical cyclone to hit south east Queensland in 51 years — before weakening as it approached. Still, 200,000 homes and businesses were without power in the region on Monday afternoon — after the storm prompted the biggest blackout in Queensland's history — and more than 700 schools were closed for the day.—APP

## Briefs

### Bilawal constitutes CB for intra-party polls

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has constituted Party's Election Board for holding the Intra-Party elections. Fausia Habib has been appointed as the convener of the Election Board. Amir FidaParacha and Syed Sibtul Haider Bukhari have been appointed as members of the Board. Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has instructed the Election Board to hold the Intra-Party elections in five weeks.

### Two cops martyred in Kohat firing

DNA

KOHAT: Two police officials were martyred in Kohat by the firing of some unknown assailants. The tragic incident took place near the Tanda Dam area in Kohat. The deceased officials were on way to their homes after performing the duty when the incident took place. The police officials were identified as Ghulam Mustafa and Zahid Rehman. The suspects fled the scene after firing. The police also reached the spot and started investigation. Meanwhile, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi condemned the attack on police officials and paid rich tribute to the martyred officers.

In his statement, Mohsin Naqvi expressed his heartfelt condolences to the families of martyred officers and offered his sympathies. Naqvi further praised the efforts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police in their ongoing fight against terrorism. The interior minister added that the brave sacrifices of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police will always be remembered.

### PR announces 20pc reduction in fares

DNA

ISLAMABAD: After taking charge of the Ministry of Railways, Hanif Abbasi announced that four special Eid trains will be launched for the public, starting from the 25th of Ramadan. Passengers will be given up to 20 percent relief on fares during the Eid days. He stated that the Prime Minister's policies on the privatization of trains would be implemented. He acknowledged issues at several stations, such as broken scanners leading to smuggling and theft, and promised to strengthen railway police similar to the CTD force. Hanif Abbasi emphasised doubling cargo services, addressing railway challenges, and enhancing security under the supervision of the IG Railways Police. He mentioned ongoing talks with two to three countries regarding the ML-1 project, with government decisions yet to be finalised. The federal minister stressed zero tolerance for corruption, stating his priority is to set targets for the department. He highlighted a plan to connect Thar Coal through cargo trains and confirmed an order for 245 coaches from China, while also building their own coaches and locomotives. Speaking as a PML-N leader, he noted PM Shehbaz Sharif's promises were fulfilled, with reserves now at \$16 billion compared to \$4 billion earlier. Inflation, once at 38%, has dropped to 1.5%.

### Bushra's interim bail extended

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) in Rawalpindi has extended the interim bail of former first lady Bushra Bibi in the November 26 protest cases. Due to the leave of ATC Judge Amjad Ali Shah, the court extended her bail until April 8 in 31 cases related to the protest. It is worth noting that Bushra Bibi faces 20 cases in Rawalpindi, 10 in Attock, and one in Chakwal.

# Canada's next PM vows to win trade war with Trump

The Liberal leadership race began in January after Trudeau resigned following nearly a decade in office. He had faced internal pressure to quit over deep unpopularity with voters, who were frustrated with a housing crisis and the rising cost of living

NEWS DESK

OTTAWA: Mark Carney has won the race to succeed Justin Trudeau as Canada's prime minister, vowing to win the trade war with the US and President Donald Trump. The former governor of the Canadian central bank and Bank of England beat three rivals in the Liberal Party's leadership contest in a landslide. In much of his victory speech, Carney, 59, attacked Trump, who has imposed tariffs on Canada and said he wants to make the country the 51st US state. "Americans should make no mistake," he said. "In trade, as in hockey, Canada will win." Carney is expected to be sworn in the coming days and will lead the Liberals in the next general election, which could be called in the coming weeks. Carney, now prime minister-designate, has never served in elected office. The Liberal leadership race began in January after Trudeau resigned following nearly a decade in office. He had faced internal pressure to quit over deep unpopularity with voters, who were frustrated with a housing crisis and the rising cost of living. Carney won on the first ballot on Sunday evening, taking 85.9% of the vote to beat his nearest rival, former Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland. Loud cheers erupted as the results were announced to a crowd of some 1,600 party faithful in Ottawa, Canada's capital. The party said more than 150,000 people had cast ballots in the race. Carney, who will lead a minority government in parliament, could either call a snap general election himself or opposition parties could force one with a no-confidence vote later this month. The governing Liberals have seen a remarkable political turnaround since Trudeau's exit, as Canadians have been galvanised by Donald Trump's trade threats and support for annexing their country. At the beginning of the year, they trailed the Conservatives, led by Pierre Poilievre, by more than 20 points in election



polls. They have since narrowed the gap and some polls show them statistically tied with Poilievre's party. Much of Carney's speech focused on what he called Trump's "unjustified tariffs" on Canada, America's largest trading partner. The US imposed levies of 25% on Canadian goods last Tuesday, but rowed back within days to exempt goods compliant with an existing trade agreement. Canada responded with retaliatory tariffs of its own as Trudeau accused his US counterpart of trying to collapse the country's economy. Carney echoed that in his victory speech, saying Trump was "attacking Canadian workers, families, and businesses". "We can't let him succeed," he added, as the crowd boomed loudly. He said his government would keep tariffs on US imports

"until the Americans show us respect". Canada's economy depends significantly on trade with the US and risks tipping into recession if the sweeping tariffs threatened by Trump are fully imposed. "I know these are dark days," Carney said. "Dark days brought on by a country we can no longer trust. We're getting over the shock, but let us never forget the lessons: we have to look after ourselves and we have to look out for each other. We need to pull together in the tough days ahead." Carney also pledged to "secure our borders" - a key demand of Trump who has accused Canada of failing to control the flow of migrants and fentanyl going south. The US president even got a mention in Carney's attacks on his main opponent, Conservative leader Poilievre. "Pierre Poilievre's plan will leave us divided and ready to be conquered," said Carney. "Because a person who worships at the altar of Donald Trump will kneel before him, not stand up to him." Shortly before Carney took to the stage, Trudeau gave an emotional farewell speech, reflecting on his 12 years as Liberal leader. He warned that Canada was facing an "existential challenge" from the US under Trump. The Conservatives have had to pivot politically since Trudeau's resignation, and are attacking Carney as not representing change but rather being "just like Justin". They accuse the Liberals of a "sneaky" plan to win a fourth term by simply substituting their leader. Poilievre's party has also accused Carney of lying about his role in moving investment firm Brookfield Asset Management's head office from Toronto to New York. Carney said the formal decision by shareholders to relocate the firm was made after he quit the board at the start of this year but a letter emerged showing he had recommended the move in December. Federal Public Safety Minister David McQuinty, who endorsed Carney, told the BBC that he "embodies the kind of quiet determination, but steady determination and competence to deal with some of these big issues". "I'm really, really excited for what's coming. And frankly, it's time for an election."

## Pakistan not facing blanket US travel ban, says minister

### Counter terrorism cooperation must improve to tackle security concerns, says Aqeel Malik

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Law and Justice Barrister Aqeel Malik has said that the US administration has not imposed a blanket ban on Pakistani nationals travelling to the US but some travel restrictions may be introduced. His remarks come amid reports that US President Donald Trump's administration is considering a new travel ban, which could include Pakistan and Afghanistan, based on a government review of security and vetting risks. These new restrictions are reportedly similar to those implemented during Trump's first term, when restrictions were placed on several majority-Muslim countries. He noted that while US has expressed concerns over the surge in terrorism-related incidents in Pakistan, it has not imposed an outright travel ban on Pakistanis. He reiterated the nations commitment to strengthen-

ing counterterrorism efforts in response to concerns raised by the United States in a recent travel advisory, issued on Saturday, urging American citizens to reconsider travel to the country due to security risks. The US State Department's Level 3 travel advisory, issued by the Bureau of Consular Affairs, warns that Pakistan's security situation remains unpredictable, with the potential for attacks on a range of civilian and government targets. It cautions that terror incidents could occur with little or no warning, affecting transportation hubs, markets, military installations, and public spaces. The advisory follows the release of the Global Terrorism Index 2025, which ranked Pakistan as the world's second-most terrorism-affected country in 2024. The country saw a 45% rise in terrorism-related deaths, with fatalities surging from 748 in 2023 to 1,081 in 2024. The number of terror attacks more than doubled, exceeding 1,000 for the first time since the index's inception.

## Mustafa case: No drugs found in exhumed body

The findings came from samples collected from four different parts of the body

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: A report has emerged following the exhumation of Mustafa Amir, who was murdered after going missing from Defence, Karachi. The report, prepared by the University of Karachi's Industrial Analytical Centre, reveals that there is no evidence of drug use or poisoning in Mustafa Amir's body. The findings came from samples collected from four different parts of the body, which showed no traces of intoxicants or harmful substances. The report bears the signatures of the Principal Investigator, Assistant Investigator, and Technical Manager. Mustafa Amir, 23, went missing from Karachi's DHA on January 6, and it took police 39 days to determine that he had been murdered. His charred body was later discovered in Ba-

lochistan. Armaghan, an acquaintance of the victim, was arrested on February 8 after a dramatic four-hour standoff, during which he opened fire on police, injuring a DSP and a constable. The case exposed links to an alleged drug network, particularly involving cannabis trade, in which both the suspect and victim were reportedly engaged in. The investigation led to a police crackdown, resulting in the arrest of several individuals, including actor Sajid Hasan's son, Sarim Hasan. Amid the unfolding investigation, Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) Nadeem of the Gizri police also came under scrutiny for his alleged ties with the suspect. Authorities revealed that ASI Nadeem had been in communication with Armaghan, which he claimed was related to ongoing investigations. However, suspicions arose that the officer may have helped shield Armaghan from legal consequences in a prior case. While ASI Nadeem was questioned and later released, officials have stated that further inquiries may follow if necessary. Additionally three police officers were suspended and demoted for mishandling the case. Moreover, the Sindh High Court (SHC) has also ruled that the judicial remand of prime suspect Armaghan Qureshi and the formation of a joint investigation team (JIT)—both ordered earlier by the administrative judge of anti-terrorism courts (ATCs) in Karachi—were unlawful. The court recommended withdrawing the administrative powers from the judge, marking a rare rebuke of procedural decisions in a case already under intense public scrutiny.

## Two Pakistan Navy officers promoted to Rear Admiral rank

### Commodore Kamran Ahmed and Commodore Kashif Munir of Pakistan Navy promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral



STAFF REPORT

KARACHI: Commodore Kamran Ahmed and Commodore Kashif Munir of Pakistan Navy have been promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral. Rear Admiral Kamran Ahmed was commissioned in Construction Branch of Pakistan Navy in 1993. The Flag Officer is a graduate of Pakistan Navy War

College, Lahore and National Defence University, Islamabad. He has also done Masters in Naval Architecture from United Kingdom. The Admiral has an illustrious career covering vast experience of various Command and Staff appointments including Commandant Pakistan Navy Engineering College, Chief Naval Overseer (Pakistan) HANGOR project, Deputy General Manager (Ship Design) at Karachi

Shipyards & Engineering Works, Manager Hull Engineering at PN Dockyard, Director Naval Construction and Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff (Projects) at Naval Headquarters, Islamabad. Rear Admiral Kashif Munir was commissioned in Marine Engineering Branch of Pakistan Navy in 1993. The Flag Officer is a graduate of Pakistan Navy War College, Lahore, and National Defence University, Islamabad. The Admiral has an illustrious career covering vast experience of various Command and Staff appointments including Commandant PNS KARSAZ, Marine Engineering Officer Ex-PNS SHAHJAHAN, Manager (Marine Engineering) at PN Dockyard, Director Ships Maintenance and Repair at Naval Headquarters, Chief Inspector of Naval Stores, Chief Staff Officer to Commander Logistics and Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff (Maintenance) at Naval Headquarters, Islamabad. In recognition of their meritorious services, both Flag Officers have been awarded Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military).

## Pakistan launches first 'dematerialised digital identity Clcard'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Database and Registration Authority (Nadra) on Monday announced the launch of Pakistan's first "dematerialised digital identity card" during its silver jubilee ceremony. This development marks a revolutionary milestone in the national identity system. The ceremony featured the unveiling of a commemorative coin by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), a special postage stamp by Pakistan Post, and a book chronicling Nadra's 25-year journey. A special event was held at Nadra headquarters, with Nadra founding chairman Major General Retd Zahid Ihsan as the chief guest. Other attendees included Nadra Chairman Lieutenant General Retd Asif Munir, the special secretary of interior, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) chief statistician, Immigration and Passport's director-general, former chairpersons, board members, and senior officials. In his written message, Federal Minister for Interior and Narcotics Control Mohsin Naqvi termed the launch of Pakistan's first dematerialised digital identity card as a significant step toward digital identity transformation. He announced that after integrating this feature into the Pak ID mobile app, citizens will be able to store their identity cards on their smartphones. Additionally, a digital verification system will be introduced soon, facilitating secure and instant verification for various services under the World Bank-backed Digital Economy Project. The pilot phase of this initiative will begin on Independence Day 2025.

## Russia expels two more British diplomats

MOSCOW: A British diplomat and the spouse of another diplomat are being expelled from Russia, the country's domestic security service has said, in what is being seen as the latest tit-for-tat escalation.

The two men are accused of "intelligence and subversive work" by the Federal Security Service (FSB) which said they had been stripped of their accreditation and ordered to leave Russia within two weeks. The UK Foreign Office said: "This is not the first time that Russia has made malicious and baseless accusations against our staff." Last month, the UK expelled a Russian diplomat - an action taken in response to Moscow's expulsion of a British diplomat in November 2024. The Russian Foreign Ministry had said then that it intended to retaliate to the expulsion. In the past year alone, there have been seven British diplomats expelled from Russia with Moscow accusing them of espionage - allegations denied by the UK. Relations between the UK and Russia have deteriorated to post-Cold War lows in the years following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. In Monday's reported action, Moscow said it was expelling the diplomats on grounds of espionage. - Agencies

## North Korea fires ballistic missiles

PYONGYANG: North Korea fired "multiple unidentified ballistic missiles" into the sea on Monday, the same day South Korea and the US began a major joint military drill. North Korea fired several ballistic missiles into the sea on Monday, South Korea's military said, hours after Seoul and Washington resumed a major annual military drill known as "Freedom Shield." North Korea has long viewed the exercise as a provocation. South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the missile firings were detected from North Korea's Hwanghae province, making them the North's fifth missile launch event this year. Earlier on Monday, South Korea and the US began their joint military exercises which are set to last 11 days. The "Freedom Shield" exercise will include "live, virtual, and field-based training" according to the US government. - Agencies

## NOW IN PAKISTAN

Invisible Braces  
Dental Implants

Dr. Abrar & Associates  
DENTAL SURGEONS

House # 6-A, Ismail Zabeeh Road, (Service Road Parallel to Faisal Avenue) F-8/3, Islamabad.  
e-mail: abrar\_associates@yahoo.com | www.drabrarassociates.com  
Ph: +92 51 228 7691 | +92 51 228 7692 | Fax: +92 51 228 7693