



Islamabad POST

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Macron opposes any displacement in Gaza, West Bank

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China accuses Washington of economic bullying

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Saim Ayub declared fit to join Zalmi

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Dar, Rubio hold call

US seeks stronger economic relations with Islamabad

DPM/FM Dar highlighted Pakistan's efforts in successfully fighting terrorism during 2013-18, which caused Pakistan huge economic and human losses



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar held a telephone call with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio today. The two leaders discussed bilateral relations, regional security, and economic cooperation. During the call, DPM/FM Dar reiterated Pakistan's commitment to strengthening its partnership with the United States. He emphasized the importance of strengthening cooperation in areas such as trade, investment and counter-terrorism. Secretary Rubio reciprocated the desire to collaborate with Pakistan in trade and investment in various sectors, especially critical minerals. He said that cooperation in economy and trade would be the hallmark of future relations between the two countries. DPM/FM Dar highlighted Pakistan's efforts in successfully fighting terrorism during 2013-18, which caused Pakistan huge economic and human losses. Secretary of State Rubio also appreciated Pakistan's efforts in the fight against terrorism and expressed the US desire to further enhance counter-

Donald Trump threatens further 50% tariffs on China

US president has imposed 20% added duties on Chinese imports over alleged role in fentanyl supply chain

DNA

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump on Monday threatened huge additional tariffs on imports from China if Beijing did not withdraw its retaliation plans, adding that Washington would begin negotiations with other countries that want them. "If China does not withdraw its 34% increase above their already long term trading abuses by tomorrow, April 8th, 2025, the United States will impose ADDITIONAL Tariffs on China of 50%, effective April 9th," Trump said in a Truth Social post.

terrorism cooperation. The two leaders also discussed the situation in Afghanistan. Secretary Rubio agreed on the need to resolve the issue of US Military equipment left behind in Afghanistan. DPM/FM Dar and Secretary of State Rubio agreed to remain in close contact and to work together to advance the shared interests of both countries.



TASHKENT: The Chairman Senate of Pakistan, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, met with the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, His Excellency Shavkat Mirziyoyev, on the sidelines of the 150th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). - DNA

'Don't want to interfere in HC'

The CJP said that the LHC had sent a message to the government, which was also agreed upon

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice Yahya Afridi on Monday upheld the Rs2.2 million fine imposed on the prosecutor general of Punjab by the Lahore High Court (LHC) while disposing of appeals regarding the transfer of cases from the Rawalpindi ATC judge in the case related to May 9 mayhem. The CJP observed that the high court's decision would not affect the careers of the prosecutor general and the ATC (anti-terrorism court) judge. The counsel for the Punjab government stated that the judge had already been transferred, and the

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Terrorist ringleader among nine killed

Ringleader Shireen was involved in martyrdom of Capt Hasnain Akhtar

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Security forces killed nine terrorists including a ringleader based on an intelligence based operation in Takwara area of Dera Ismail Khan on night between 6/7 April 2025. During conduct of the operation, own troops effectively

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Pak-Uzbek ties cemented Mirziyoyev, Gillani review progress on investment plans

The volumes of mutual trade, the number of joint ventures, and direct flights are increasing

DNA

TASHKENT: As part of the 150th anniversary Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev met with a delegation from the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, headed by the Chairman of the Senate Yousuf Raza Gillani.

At the beginning of the meeting, the distinguished guest conveyed the sincere greetings and best wishes of President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to Head of Uzbekistan. With deep satisfaction, the growing dynamics of the development of Uzbek-Pakistani

strategic partnership were noted. The volumes of mutual trade, the number of joint ventures, and direct flights are increasing. Business forums and exhibitions involving leading companies from both countries are regularly held. Special attention was given to strengthening the role of parliaments in ensuring the effective implementation of agreements reached during the recent historic high-level visit to Uzbekistan. The importance of accelerating priority projects and programs in the trade-economic, investment, and transport sectors was emphasized, including the promotion of the Trans-Afghan corridor construction, as well as expanding interregional cooperation and humanitarian exchanges.

Briefs

Rs 9 billion grant for finance division

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet met today under the chairmanship of Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb. The meeting was attended by several key federal ministers, including Minister for Power, Sardar Awaiz Ahmed Khan Leghari, Minister for Petroleum, Mr. Ali Parvez Malik, Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan, and Federal Minister for National Food Security & Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain. Senior officials from various ministries and divisions were also present. During the meeting, the ECC reviewed and approved several Technical Supplementary Grants (TSGs) for ongoing projects and initiatives from different ministries and divisions.

Malaysia, Turkey models inspire Pak Waqf plan

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The SECP has issued a concept paper exploring the revival and modernization of Waqf to align with contemporary socio-economic needs. The paper discusses the historical significance of Waqf, an essential institution in Islamic society, and its contemporary practices. Historically, Waqf has funded education, healthcare, and social welfare, supporting institutions like Al-Azhar and the Ottoman public works system. It remains an important player in the socio-economic fabric of the Muslim world, said a press release issued here Monday.

No contact with US delegation PTI not behind 'Pakistan Democracy Act' in US Congress

Imran Khan-founded party to finalise future strategy with opposition alliance, says chairman

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Reacting to a bipartisan bill introduced in the US House of Representatives seeking sanctions against Pakistan, PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan clarified on Monday that his party has no connection with legislation in the US Congress. His comment came after two US lawmakers in the House of Representatives last month sought sanctions against Pakistani state officials via the bill titled 'Pakistan Democracy Act' over alleged human rights violations, including the "persecution" of former prime minister Imran Khan. The bill aims to invoke the US Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act, which permits the US to deny visas and entry to individuals accused of committing human rights violations. Talking to reporters at the Parliament House,

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JIT summons PTI leaders

The PTI leaders summoned include Raouf Hasan, Hamad Azhar, Shibli Faraz

DNA

LAHORE: A Joint Investigation Team (JIT) probing "malicious campaigns on social media" to allegedly "create chaos and disorder" in the country has summoned the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) leaders to appear before it on Tuesday (tomorrow). As part of the investigation, the JIT summoned PTI leaders again on charges of spreading unrest on social media. The PTI leaders summoned include Raouf Hasan,

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'All deals off' if Afghan govt don't comply with concerns

"Pakistan could be very helpful to Afghanistan if we could stop terrorism coming from the other side of the border. I totally would be pragmatic and honest about it," he further said

DNA

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump on Monday threatened huge additional tariffs on imports from China if Beijing did not withdraw its retaliation plans, adding that Washington would begin negotiations with other countries that want them. "If China does not withdraw its 34% increase above their already long term trading abuses by tomorrow, April 8th, 2025, the United States will impose ADDITIONAL Tariffs on China of 50%, effective April 9th," Trump said in a Truth Social post. Beijing has issued countermeasures after Trump announced another sharp tariff hike on goods from the world's second biggest economy last week. Since returning to the presidency, Trump has imposed 20% added duties on Chinese imports over its alleged role in the fentanyl supply chain. A fresh 34% levy on the country's products is due to kick in on Wednesday, bringing the added rate this year to 54%. It is not immediately clear how Trump's new threat factors into this calculation.

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As deadline expires FIA constitutes 8 teams for repatriation of Afghans

Over 4,100 undocumented migrants deported from Punjab; more than 5,950 shifted to holding centres

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has constituted eight teams for the repatriation of Afghan refugees in Punjab with five teams designated for Lahore and three for Sheikhupura, Nankana and Kasur, the investigation agency's spokesperson said on Monday. The Lahore team will be led by Assistant Director Sajid Amin, Imran Bhatti and Babar Shaharyar will head the Sheikhupura and Nankana Sahib teams,

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SERENA HOTELS

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Asian real estate is safe

US President Donald Trump's recklessness knows no bounds. On April 2, he announced new "reciprocal" tariffs on nearly all the US trading partners, raising levies to levels last seen with the enactment of the infamous Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act in 1930 that prolonged the Great Depression. The new trade regime penalises countries with the largest bilateral surpluses with the United States. Among the 10 economies running the biggest surpluses, seven are in Asia. Although China's exports to the US have fallen since Trump's 2018-19 trade war, other Asian economies have become more dependent on trade with the US. According to data from Morgan Stanley, South Korean, Japanese and Taiwanese goods exports to the US accounted for between 19 and 24 per cent of the three economies' total exports last year. JPMorgan is right to describe the economic blow to Asia as an "outsized tariff shock". The mounting threat of a full-blown trade war – China responded swiftly by announcing tariffs of 34 per cent on all US imports – puts a premium on domestic demand as a counterweight to the damage wrought by the onslaught of protectionism. In Asia's commercial real estate sector, domestic demand is a key source of resilience in occupier and investment markets and an important theme shaping the performance and outlook for the industry. There are different facets to domestic demand, some of them less apparent than others. The most obvious one is the expansion of the middle class. India has the best of both worlds. In the office market, strong demand from multinational firms tapping into the country's vast talent pool to set up increasingly sophisticated global capability centres (GCCs) is fuelling leasing activity. In the first quarter of 2025, leasing volumes reached a record high of 28.2 million sq ft, with GCCs accounting for 44 per cent of demand, according to Knight Frank data. The office boom has contributed to a surge in demand for residential properties. With GCCs alone employing nearly 2 million people, sales of mid- to upper-range flats near business districts in Tier 1 cities are growing briskly. In Australia, strong population growth is a key factor heightening the appeal of shopping centres in capital cities. Non-discretionary spending has held up well since the eruption of the Covid-19 pandemic. Although shopping centre capital values fell 30 per cent between 2019 and mid-2024, retail turnover rose 30 per cent, according to JLL. The combination of population growth, undersupply of retail space and a sharp repricing of assets since 2022 presents attractive investment opportunities. In January, global property investment manager Hines teamed up with a specialist Australian retail investor to buy the Westpoint shopping centre in Blacktown, a suburb of Sydney, marking Hines' first retail acquisition in the Asia-Pacific. "It's an interesting way to play the domestic demand story in the region," said Jon Tanaka, head of Asia-Pacific and country co-head of Japan at Hines. However, domestic demand is not just about consumption. In the leading office markets in the region, domestic tenants account for 59 per cent of leasing activity. Even in India, whose office market has been largely driven by the expansion of multinational companies, domestic tenants comprised 45 per cent of leasing activity last year, with flexible space operators and technology firms spurring demand.

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China values harmony

IN response to the US abuse of tariffs against all its trading partners, including China, under various pretexts, the Chinese government released its position on opposing US abuse of tariffs. The statement clearly said that "pressure and threats are not the right way to deal with China" and that "China-US economic and trade relations should be mutually beneficial in nature." At the same time, China responded with a series of countermeasures. The world has witnessed China's sense of responsibility as a major power that "does not make trouble, but has no fear of it" in the face of unilateralism, protectionism, and economic bullying. It has also observed China's firm resolve to safeguard its sovereignty, security, and development interests, as well as its clear stance on urging the US to return to the right path of dialogue and cooperation. China and the US differ in history, culture, social systems, and development paths. Yet since the normalization of bilateral relations, despite experiencing ups and downs, they have written numerous success stories of mutually beneficial cooperation and, through practice, have identified a right way to coexist: mutual respect, peaceful coexistence, and win-win cooperation. In the economic and trade sphere, bilateral trade has grown more than 200-fold in the past 45 years, with deeply integrated industrial and supply chains forming a mutually beneficial relationship of "interdependence." Both sides benefit from each other's development and share a strong desire to deepen cooperation. Hence, maintaining stable economic and trade ties and expanding the "cooperation pie" is a shared aspiration of people and businesses in both countries. Today, the US faces some developmental challenges, such as insufficient competitiveness in manufacturing and growing pressures on once-dominant industries. However, the US government has wrongly chosen to make others pay for its own problems. By shirking responsibility, shifting blame, and resorting to tariff hikes and maximum pressure tactics, it has not solved any real issues; rather, these actions have greatly impacted global markets and the international economic and trade order. Back in 2018, when the US first launched a trade war against China, public opinion within the US widely held that it was American consumers who bore the brunt. Now, once again, the US is unlikely to gain what it imagined from a trade war – a conclusion echoed broadly across global public opinion, including US media. Whether then or now, China has remained committed to dialogue and communication, striving to build consensus. Its stance has been consistent and clear: There are no winners in a trade war; and the US must not pursue its interests at the expense of sacrificing other countries' legitimate interests. Some Western media outlets have described China's 11 countermeasures as a "significant warning" to Washington. It is important to clarify that the actions taken by China, in accordance with the law, to safeguard its sovereignty, security, and development interests are in no way intended to harm US businesses or consumers. China has consistently shown its determination to bring China-US relations back on the right track, while also demonstrating its firm resolve not to tolerate the US to recklessly violate global trade rules, undermine the stable relationship that has been established between the two countries, or harm the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese businesses and consumers.

China's angry rebuttal to Trump's tariff tsunami

Qamar Bashir



Despite Washington's reduced military footprint, the US remains committed to containing Iran. Key outposts like the Al-Tanf base on the Syrian-Iraqi border are instrumental in severing the so-called Iranian land bridge from Tehran to Beirut. Nicola argues that while David's Corridor is not an explicit US policy, Washington is likely to support Israeli initiatives that align with American strategic goals: "The United States does not mind Israel implementing the project if it serves its interests, even though it is not part of its immediate strategy

MY reading of China has always been of a country that is sagacious, forgiving and accommodating—an entity flowing naturally through history, shaped by the burden and blessing of over 5,000 years of civilizational legacy. China has long carried the unique distinction of never being an occupying force in the historical sense, never driven by the imperial ambition to rule the world. Despite holding immense power at different junctures in history, China refrained from conquest. Its Great Wall was built not as a launchpad for outward domination, but as a safeguard for inward integration. This tradition of strategic restraint and internal focus has morphed into the philosophical foundation of President Xi Jinping's economic and diplomatic agenda in the 21st century. China's foreign policy, even amid rising global tensions, has maintained its emphasis on win-win cooperation, mutual growth, and infrastructural diplomacy. It does not promote regime change, nor does it meddle in the internal politics of other nations. China's strength lies in its ability to uplift weaker economies through massive infrastructure projects, energy support, port development, and institutional capacity-building. These efforts are not intended to dominate but to elevate. That is the spirit of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), offering struggling nations an alternative model of growth without conditionalities that mirror neo-colonialism. In contrast, the Trump administration's aggressive "America First" policy has been marked by an unrelenting tariff war, often in violation of international norms, bilateral treaties, and the principles of the World Trade Organization (WTO). These tariffs were not just protectionist; they were unilateral assaults on the interconnected architecture of the global economy. By weaponizing tariffs, Trump sought to coerce trading partners and reconfigure supply chains through brute economic power. However, in doing so, the administration not only antagonized allies and adversaries alike but also disrupted global trade balances, supply chains, and investor confidence. The global economy is an ecosystem. If one part of it is harmed, the ripple effects are felt across continents. In this context, the Trump tariffs didn't just target China—they undermined the very structure of global trade and collaboration. The United States, which once championed free trade, suddenly became its greatest disruptor. This led to global uncertainty, inflation in various sectors, and rising consumer prices within the United States itself. In response to this unprecedented tariff regime, China issued its strongest

economic and diplomatic rebuttal to date. Breaking from its traditional quiet diplomacy, Beijing made it unequivocally clear that it would not succumb to unilateral economic bullying. For the first time, Chinese officials accused the United States of distorting international trade norms and harming global economic recovery. China argued that the United States had, in fact, been the largest beneficiary of globalization. With a massive 25% share in world trade, the U.S. economic dominance was built on the very trade practices it was now dismantling. China emphasized that it did not initiate the trade war but would not hesitate to defend its interests. It pledged to open up its economy further, reduce tariffs, and increase imports—not out of compulsion, but to demonstrate its commitment to global cooperation. This stands in sharp contrast to the inward-looking, protectionist tendencies of the Trump administration. China's response was calm but resolute. It promised to uphold the principles of extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits. It reaffirmed its belief in genuine multilateralism, rejecting all forms of unilateralism and economic coercion. China stood firmly in support of the international system with the United Nations at its core and the multilateral trading system with the WTO at its foundation. China's declaration also emphasized that the vast majority of nations still believed in fairness, justice, and the rule of international law. These countries, it argued, would eventually stand on the right side of history—not because of allegiance to any one superpower, but because equity must triumph over hegemony. Trump, meanwhile, sought to justify the economic fallout from his tariff blitzkrieg by promising future investments totaling \$7 trillion. However, even he admitted that the U.S. stock market had lost nearly \$6 trillion in value within days. While the theoretical future investment may or may not materialize over four to five years, the immediate damage was undeniable. The American consumer bore the brunt of the tariffs, with increased prices on everything from electronics to household goods. What Trump failed to recognize—or perhaps chose to ignore—is that tariffs on imports function as a hidden tax on American citizens. When tariffs are levied on goods from China or any other country, U.S. importers pass those costs onto retailers, who in turn pass them onto consumers. So, while the U.S. Treasury may gain in the short term from tariff revenues, it is ultimately the American people who pay the price. This disconnect between political rhetoric and economic reality triggered public backlash. Demonstra-

tions erupted across the United States, not just from ideological opponents of Trump but from ordinary citizens suffering from inflation and job insecurity. The symbols associated with Trump's protectionist agenda—banners, flags, and campaign props—became the targets of public outrage, a visible expression of disillusionment with failed promises and mounting hardship. The damage was not just economic; it was reputational. America's standing as a leader of the free world, a promoter of open markets and democratic values, was called into question. The aggressive imposition of tariffs on allies and adversaries alike sent a message that America was retreating from the world stage, abandoning its commitments, and undermining its credibility. What is the via media in this escalating trade conflict? The answer lies in dialogue, cooperation, and mutual respect. Instead of unilaterally imposing tariffs, the United States must return to the table and engage its partners through negotiation, evidence-based studies, and inclusive policy-making. Any trade policy that causes disproportionate harm to a segment of the global population—be it American or foreign—is inherently flawed. Tariffs should be the last resort, not the first weapon of choice. They must be evaluated based on who truly benefits and who bears the cost. If the people of both nations stand to gain, then policy adjustments may be justified. But if tariffs disproportionately hurt consumers, strain diplomatic ties, and fracture global supply chains, then they are not only counterproductive but dangerous. The world today demands cooperation over confrontation. It requires strategic empathy rather than economic nationalism. China's model of infrastructure-led diplomacy and economic integration may not be perfect, but it offers an alternative vision to brute-force protectionism. A world driven by consultation and shared prosperity is far more stable than one governed by unilateral decrees and economic coercion. The battle between tariff wars and trade cooperation is not just a contest of policies—it is a contest of visions. The world must choose between retreating into silos or building bridges across continents. In this defining moment, China's calm and strategic response to Trump's aggressive tariffs may well mark a turning point in the global order. It is a call for equity—not hegemony.

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

World's new diet of trade wars and protectionism

Chris Doyle

China, which was hit by tariffs of 34 percent in addition to the 20 percent previously imposed, did not wait to consider the ramifications. In all probability, the EU will respond too. Some other states have pressed the pause button. The UK, for example, has decided not to retaliate at this stage but to push for a trade deal with the US, notably not described as a "free trade deal" in Westminster. Other states may also look for trade deals with the US to offset the worst effects, but on what sort of terms?

DID Americans feel liberated on April 2? It is hard to determine from what exactly. What did President Donald Trump mean by the US having been "looted, pillaged, raped and plundered by nations near and far?" It was not just the motivation behind the extraordinary blanket imposition of tariffs that was not clear. Everything about the announcement was opaque, confusing and counterproductive. All economies have to be prepared for shocks that can precipitate sudden stock market crashes, but it is hard to recall an act of such great self-inflicted financial harm. This was no small event. This was the world's most powerful leader ripping up the global economic order that had prevailed ever since the end of the Second World War; the era of Bretton Woods, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, and the World Trade Organization. It spells the death of globalization and a return to the sort of protectionism not seen since the 1930s. It was, in many ways, a trashing of the very economic order that had propelled the US economy to being the most dynamic, most competitive and most powerful on the planet. But given the nature of decision-making in the Trump White House, uncertainty remains. Many still ask if it will actually happen as set out in the Rose Garden. Trump is not immune from the impact of stock market falls. His administration has not been averse to sudden shifts and reversals of policies, including on tariffs. On the assumption this all goes ahead, what could be the impact? It certainly raises questions about doing business with the US. Businesses want stability, to be able to

plan ahead, but how is that possible with this form of decision-making? Investors may take their money elsewhere. Does the US risk creating bad blood with erstwhile allies? This will hit the US economy, but it will also risk a global recession, even depression. Few leaders were calling for the US to do this. Few want a trade war even now, but it looks inevitable. It is just a question of the extent. China, which was hit by tariffs of 34 percent in addition to the 20 percent previously imposed, did not wait to consider the ramifications. In all probability, the EU will respond too. Some other states have pressed the pause button. The UK, for example, has decided not to retaliate at this stage but to push for a trade deal with the US, notably not described as a "free trade deal" in Westminster. Other states may also look for trade deals with the US to offset the worst effects, but on what sort of terms? Anomalies abound. Reunion, the island in the Indian Ocean, got hit by a 10 percent tariff even though it is part of France and therefore the EU, whose rate is 20 percent. Countries like Lesotho, whose major exports are diamonds, were also hit hard, but this only means that US consumers will have to pay more for their diamonds. And just what is the point of imposing a 41 percent tariff on Syria, which the US has sanctioned for decades? In 2024, the US imported just \$11 million of goods from the crisis-stricken state. Israelis may want an explanation why their great ally and protector has decided to impose a 17 percent tariff on their goods. Myanmar, which has just endured an appalling earthquake, was hit by a

massive 45 percent. Perhaps most bizarre of all was the identity of one of the few countries not on the list: Russia. It is sanctioned, said administration officials, but in 2024 US-Russia trade was valued at \$3.5 billion. There are other unforeseen consequences. While the EU got hit by a blanket 20 percent tariff, the UK will only suffer 10 percent. Brexiters claim this is a wonderful benefit of leaving the UK, but the reality is that it is now harder and more expensive for Britain to trade with both the EU and the US than it was before Brexit. But the trickier challenge will be Northern Ireland, which gets a lower tariff than the Republic of Ireland to the south. This will reopen the whole border issue that bedeviled the Brexit talks. This is politics determining economic policy. It is about trying to impose US economic dominance, but with serious questions as to whether it can work. Who wins out of this? Inflation is likely to spiral, most economists say. Trump came to power promising to reduce the cost of living but, according to the Federal Reserve chair, this will slow growth. Even some of his richest supporters will have been hit hard by the stock market crash, the worst since the COVID-19 pandemic. And what about the dollar? Is its status as the world's strongest and most stable currency waning? For the moment, it feels like the world will have to face a diet of trade wars and protectionism. It will be a case of batten down the hatches.

Chris Doyle is director of the Council for Arab-British Understanding in London. X: @Doylech

Briefs

PTI not behind 'Pakistan Democracy Act' in US Congress

FROM PAGE 01

Gohar said countless legislations and resolutions are passed in the US Congress, however, the former ruling party has no connection with the said bill. He also clarified that his party is not in contact with the US delegation that arrived in Pakistan. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs had brushed aside what was seen as an anti-Pakistan bill introduced in the US House of Representatives and hoped that the US would instead continue its supportive role in strengthening the Pak-US ties. "We are aware of the bill being introduced in the House of Representatives. This is an initiative of a single individual legislator. We believe the timing and context of the bill do not align well with the current positive dynamics of Pakistan-US bilateral relations based on mutual respect, understanding and non-interference in each other's affairs," said the Foreign Office spokesperson Shafiqat Ali Khan at a press briefing. Pakistan remains committed to constitutionalism, rule of law, protection of human rights and freedom of expression because it considers democracy as a vehicle for prosperity and progress as a nation, he added. To a query regarding PTI-establishment contacts, Gohar gave a vague response, saying he was just as aware of the development as the media. Some reporters questioned Gohar about the PTI's next political move. To this, Gohar said that the PTI would finalise its future strategy after forming an alliance with the opposition parties. He detailed that Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam-Fazl (JULF) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman will announce his decision on April 15 after consulting his party's executive committee. The joint opposition will decide on terms of reference for the upcoming anti-government movement. It is noteworthy to mention here that the Imran Khan-founded party expedited efforts to form a grand opposition alliance to launch an anti-government movement after Eid ul Fitr. Following Khan's directives, PTI leaders approached every political party to form a grand opposition alliance and launch an anti-government movement. In April 2024, the PTI formed the Tehreek-e-Tahaffuz-e-Ayeeen-e-Pakistan (TTAP), a multi-party opposition alliance comprising the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP), Balochistan National Party (BNP-M), Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), and Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimeen (MWM). Whereas, after talks between the government and the opposition collapsed in January, the PTI made another push to establish a joint front against the ruling coalition by roping in ex-premier Shahid Khaqan Abbasi last month to become part of its movement. Commenting on the internal rifts among the PTI leadership, Gohar said in today's media talk that all of them are part of a democratic party which doesn't stop anyone from expressing opinions. He, however, advised the PTI leaders to discuss party affairs within the party.

FIA constitutes 8 teams for repatriation of Afghans

FROM PAGE 01

whereas the one for Kasur will be led by Assistant Director Immigration Rana Bilal. The spokesperson further added that Afghan citizens will be kept in shelters in Lahore before being sent to Afghanistan. The refugees will initially be kept at Thokar Niaz Baig, Railway Station, Data Darbar, Sabzi Mandi, and Lari Adda, he added. The development comes in the light of the federal government's decision to expel illegal refugees, including Afghan nationals.

Power outage paralyses Sector G-8: IESCO's silence adds to residents' misery

When contacted, the local IESCO (Islamabad Electric Supply Company) officials informed that the transformer servicing our area had gone out of order. Surprisingly, they insisted that all residents must contribute financially to arrange a replacement. This demand appears not only unreasonable but also contrary to the standard operational and billing procedures expected from a public utility service provider like IESCO

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In the heart of Pakistan's capital, Sector G-8 is facing persistent electricity outages that have thrown daily life into disarray. Despite repeated complaints and pleas from residents and business owners, the Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) has shown little to no response—raising serious concerns about governance, infrastructure, and accountability in one of the city's most central and populous areas. The frustration extends beyond the home. Shopkeepers and small business owners in G-8 Markaz Awan Plaza—the commercial heartbeat of the area—are reeling from the economic impact. "We've had to shut down our shop early multiple times this week," says Imran Khan, who runs a small electronics repair store. "Without electricity, we can't work. Every hour we're closed, we're los-

ing money—and our customers' trust." Perhaps most concerning is the complete lack of communication from IESCO. Despite the frequency and severity of the outages, no official explanation has been offered, nor has a restoration timeline been shared. Residents allege that their complaints go unanswered and field staff are either unavailable or unwilling to engage. When contacted, the local IESCO (Islamabad Electric Supply Company) G 8 Circle, officials informed that the transformer servicing our area had gone out of order. Surprisingly, they insisted that all residents must contribute financially to arrange a replacement. This demand appears not only unreasonable but also contrary to the standard operational and billing procedures expected from a public utility service provider like IESCO. Transformers and other infrastructure components are the responsibility of the utility company, which is tasked with

maintaining, repairing, and replacing them as part of their mandate to ensure uninterrupted power supply. IESCO, being a government-regulated entity, collects monthly bills from consumers, which include service charges intended to cover such maintenance and repair work. Therefore, expecting residents to pool money for a new transformer raises serious concerns regarding accountability and transparency. Furthermore, if there truly are financial constraints or delays in procurement, IESCO has the authority and infrastructure to recover repair or replacement costs through future billing—spreading the expense across the affected consumers in an equitable and officially documented manner. This would not only be more ethical and lawful but would also ensure proper record-keeping and avoid exploitation. This silence has led to growing speculation about the causes—ranging from outdated

infrastructure and maintenance failures to possible load management missteps. However, without transparency, accountability, or even basic updates, the public is left in the dark both literally and figuratively. What Sector G-8 needs is not just electricity—it needs answers, accountability, and action. IESCO must immediately engage with the public, provide clear communication, and outline a timeline for permanent resolution. The city administration should also intervene to ensure such basic services are not held hostage to bureaucratic neglect. In conclusion, the request for direct contributions from residents bypasses official channels and raises questions about the legitimacy of such a practice. It is essential for IESCO to adhere to its own protocols and uphold public trust by managing infrastructure issues transparently and professionally, without burdening residents beyond what is already collected through their electricity bills.

PODA Advocates for Right to health as a constitutional right

Focusing on the current theme of World Health Day, Ms. Sameena Nazir, Chief Executive Officer of PODA said "recognizing health as a constitutional right is key to quality healthcare for every mother and newborn

MAHNOOR ANSAR

Islamabad; Monday 7 April 2025: On World Health Day, PODA Alliance for Rural Women Leadership - Pakistan, representing over 2,000 rural women leaders from 130+ districts, reiterates its call to incorporate right to health in the fundamental chapter of rights of the Constitution of Pakistan. There is no specific article directly related to right to health in the Constitution of Pakistan. However, Pakistan affirms its commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by adopting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as its own national development agenda through a unanimous National Assembly Resolution in 2016. SDG 3 states "ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages." In this perspective, it's obligation of the

government to fulfill all indicators described under SDG 3 specifically and Article 38 of the Constitution of Pakistan which safeguards access to healthcare services. The World Health Organization (WHO) was founded in 1948 with the goal of promoting health, keeping the world safe, and serving the vulnerable. The First World Health Assembly, held that same year, designated April 7 as World Health Day to be celebrated annually starting from 1950. According to WHO the right to health features in approximately three-quarters of the constitutions of the 194 WHO Member States (at least 140). Focusing on the current theme of World Health Day, Ms. Sameena Nazir, Chief Executive Officer of PODA said "recognizing health as a constitutional right is key to quality healthcare for every mother and newborn. Advocacy, policy reforms, and invest-

ment in healthcare infrastructure can make this right a reality." The current theme "Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures" highlights the importance of ensuring healthy starts in life. By addressing child marriages and promoting access to healthcare, Pakistan can work towards achieving this goal and creating a brighter future for its citizens, said Sameena Nazir. PODA is implementing a 3-year project, "Reduce Early Marriages to Enhance Gender Equality," supported by the Norwegian Embassy in Islamabad. The project acknowledges the link between child marriages and healthcare in Pakistan, aiming to reduce early pregnancy and related health risks for young mothers and their children. A key strategy involves advocating for a uniform law establishing a minimum age for marriage to mitigate child marriages and associated health issues.

Chairman reviews development projects

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: An important meeting was chaired by Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Chairman CDA and Chief Commissioner Islamabad Muhammad Ali Randhawa to review the latest progress on ongoing projects, challenges, and future strategies for developmental works in various sectors of Islamabad in order to meet the residence requirements of the citizens of Islamabad. The meeting was attended by CDA board members, senior officers from the Engineering and Estate Wings, and officers from relevant wings. Chairman CDA was given a detailed briefing on the on going development activities especially in Sector C-14. He directed all concerned to ensure the completion of all developmental works, including roads, drainage, sewerage, streetlights, and the handover of residential plots to residents by June this year. Emphasis was placed on providing overseas Pakistanis with all basic amenities, issuing timely demand notices for utilities, and expediting payment processes. Instructions were also issued to install modern solar streetlights in new sectors and enhance the beauty of these areas through horticulture, landscaping, and tree plantation. During the briefing, it was informed that over 50% of road infrastructure work in Sector E-12 has been completed. Chairman CDA instructed strict action against land grabbers, encroachers and warned against any leniency in this regard. The phased handover of plots after the completion of all developmental works and clearance of development charges was also approved during the meeting.

Saim declared fit to join Zalmi

SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: Peshawar Zalmi has received a significant boost as star opening batter Saim Ayub has been declared fit to participate in the upcoming 10th edition of the Pakistan Super League (PSL 10), which is set to begin on April 11, 2025. Ayub, who had been sidelined due to an ankle injury, completed a month-long rehabilitation program in London before returning to Pakistan to celebrate Eid with his family. A month ago, the left-handed batter began his recovery phase by exercising in the gym, including balancing drills such as single-leg squats, tightrope walks, and single-leg jumps. The injury, which Ayub sustained during the Test series against South Africa in early 2024, led to his absence from international cricket, ruling him out for more than six weeks. As a result, he was not included in Pakistan's squad for the ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025 or the recently concluded New Zealand tour. The latest update confirms that Ayub, along with wicketkeeper-batter Mohammad Haris, will join the Peshawar Zalmi squad today, marking the second day of their training session ahead of the tournament. The highly anticipated PSL 10 will kick off on Friday, April 11, 2025, with defending champions Islamabad United facing two-time winners Lahore Qalandars in the opening match at Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium. Peshawar Zalmi will begin their campaign on Saturday, April 12, against Quetta Gladiators at the same venue.

ECO meeting scheduled in Lahore

FAISAL SHEIKHI

ISLAMABAD: Secretary-General of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), Dr. Asad Majeed Khan is scheduled to pay an official visit to Pakistan from April 8-10, 2025. During the visit, the secretary-general will call on Pakistan's leadership, including President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, and other federal ministers. In the meetings, the secretary general will present ECO's initiatives and his reform agenda aimed at revitalizing the Organization and strengthening ECO's relations with member states as well as Pakistan to expand regional cooperation and development.

FPCCI to host 60-member ASEAN business delegation

Atif Ikram Sheikh added that the ASEAN delegation comprising prominent businessmen from various sectors – textiles, apparel, agriculture, fisheries, food, beverages, carpets, footwear, construction, insurance, information technology, oil

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, has apprised that the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) is set to host a high-profile business delegation of 60 members of different sectors from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on April 21, 2025, at its Head Office in Karachi. President FPCCI continued that the ASEAN comprises an alliance of Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Singapore, Myanmar, the Philippines, Vietnam and Brunei. The meeting will be followed by a special B2B session; providing a platform for Pakistani businessmen to engage with their

ASEAN counterparts and explore potential business opportunities. Atif Ikram Sheikh added that the ASEAN delegation comprising prominent businessmen from various sectors – textiles, apparel, agriculture, fisheries, food, beverages, carpets, footwear, construction, insurance, information technology, oil, handicrafts, jewelry, cosmetics, perfumes, healthcare, renewable energy, pharmaceuticals, coffee beans, green coffee, electronics, fruits and spices – aims to strengthen trade relations and explore business opportunities between Pakistan and ASEAN countries. It is obvious that this situation causes great harm to the economy and society, weakens the functioning of socio-economic institutions, and ultimately limits people's opportunities.

Ethiopian embassy, ICCI to hold business forum

Both sides discussed various matters of mutual interest, including trade relations between the FDR Ethiopia and Pakistan, and also different modalities to hold a successful business forum on April 15th, 2025 in the Islamabad Chamber

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Ethiopian Embassy Islamabad and the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) have agreed to hold a Business Forum at the ICCI on April 15th, 2025, to mobilize traders and investors for the Single Country Exhibition, being organized by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from May 15th to May 17th, 2025. The decision to this effect was taken during a meeting between H.E. Dr. Jemal Bekir Abdula, Special Envoy and Ambassador Extraordinary of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE), and H.E. Nasir M. Qureshi, President of ICCI, at the Islamabad Chamber on Monday. Both sides discussed various matters of mutual interest, including trade relations between the FDR Ethiopia and Pakistan, and also different modalities to hold a successful business forum on April 15th, 2025 in the Islamabad Chamber. On the occasion, the Ambassador congratulated Mr. Qureshi on assuming the office of



President ICCI and highlighted the strong connection between the Ethiopian Embassy Islamabad and ICCI, recalling their joint initiatives to strengthen trade and investment relations between the two countries. He briefed the ICCI President about extraordinary business, trade, and investment opportunities in the FDR Ethiopia following the successful implementation of homegrown economic reforms in two phases undertaken by H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister of Ethiopia. The Ambassador said the Government of Ethiopia and the business community in the country are fully prepared to host the traders from Pakistan for the Single Country Exhibition that is coinciding with "Invest In Ethiopia 2025," a high-level business forum scheduled from May 12th to May 14th 2025 in Addis Ababa. The ICCI President assured the Ambassador of his full support in further strengthening the bilateral trade relations between the two countries. He said the ICCI would extend full support to the Ethiopian Embassy and other stakeholders to ensure the Single Country Exhibition in Addis Ababa is successful.

'All deals off' if Afghan...

FROM PAGE 01

China's response included export controls on rare earth elements, and Beijing plans for its own 34% tariff on US goods, stacking atop existing Chinese levies set to begin April 10. Trump took aim at Beijing's economic practices on social media on Monday, criticizing its "non-monetary tariffs" and "illegal subsidisation of companies." He added that "all talks with China concerning their requested meetings with us will be terminated." But "negotiations with other countries, which have also requested meetings, will begin taking place immediately," Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform.

'Don't want to interfere...'

FROM PAGE 01

issue is regarding the high court's remarks and the fine. Chief Justice Afridi mentioned that the chief justice of the high court has to manage the entire province and had to send a message to the government regarding the reference against the judge. The CJP said that the LHC had sent a message to the government, which was also agreed upon by the administrative Judge. The Supreme Court does not wish to interfere in the jurisdiction of the high court, and paying the fine is not a major issue. A three-member bench headed by the Chief Justice of Pakistan is hearing the Punjab government's petitions seeking cancellation of bail granted to the May 9 incidents accused. Other members of the bench are Justice Musarrat Hilali and Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb.

Terrorist ringleader among...

FROM PAGE 01

engaged their location and after an intense fire exchange, nine terrorist including ring leader Shireen were killed. Weapons and ammunition were also recovered from the killed militants, said Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) on Monday. Shireen was highly wanted by the law enforcement agencies due to his involvement in numerous terrorist activities. Besides being involved in target killing of numerous innocent civilians, he was also responsible for martyrdom of Captain Hasnain Akhtar on 20 March 2025. "Today's operation has avenged the heinous act and has brought the main perpetrator to justice," ISPR said. It added that sanitization operation is being conducted to eliminate any other terrorist found in the area, as the security forces of Pakistan are determined to wipe out the menace of terrorism from the country.

JIT summons PTI leaders

FROM PAGE 01

Hamad Azhar, Shibli Faraz, Alia Hamza, and Arsalan Khalid. The notice instructs the PTI leaders to appear before the JIT tomorrow morning at 11am.

Pakistan crush West Indies women

DNA

LAHORE: A combined bowling effort, followed by half-centuries from Muneeba Ali and Natalia Parvaiz, propelled Pakistan to a resounding five-wicket victory over West Indies in their second warm-up match of the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup Qualifier here on Monday. Chasing a modest 189-run target, the green shirts comfortably knocked the winning runs for the loss of just five wickets and 23 balls to spare, solidifying their winning momentum ahead of the all-important event, scheduled to run from April 9 to 19 across two venues here. Leading the way for Pakistan were vice-captain Muneeba and Natalia, who scored anchoring half-centuries in the run chase. Muneeba top-scored with 87 off 113 deliveries, while Natalia made a 60-ball 53. The duo was supported by a sensible 28-run knock by Gull Feroza.

Briefs

Relief in oil prices to boost economy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said the government is working on a long-term mechanism to ensure that the recent drop in international oil prices benefits both the economy and the general public. Chairing a meeting on maritime sector reforms, he announced the formation of a task force to restructure and improve the sector. He also shared that electricity prices had been slashed by an average of Rs7.50 per unit, calling it significant relief for domestic and industrial consumers. The PM highlighted that further reforms were underway to reduce power tariffs even more. He stated the decline in electricity rates would lower production costs and positively impact all sectors. Shehbaz also expressed satisfaction over achieving macroeconomic stability, noting that the government had worked hard to provide financial relief. He reiterated his commitment to ensuring the benefits reach the common man and national industry.

Singer Salman Ahmad booked under Peca

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: A case has been registered against Salman Ahmad, a veteran Pakistani musician, under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (Peca) for allegedly running anti-state propaganda, police said on Monday. According to the police, the case was filed at Defence A police station, Lahore, on behalf of the state. The first information report (FIR) stated that Ahmad had allegedly spread false propaganda against state institutions on social media and shared a hate-inciting post, which went viral. It added that the post was seen by an on-duty police officer, which led to the registration of the case. The federal government introduced and passed the controversial amendments to the Pakistan Electronic Crimes Act in January 2025.

Israeli diplomat removed from AU summit

ADDIS ABABA: A high-ranking Israeli diplomat has been expelled from the annual summit of the African Union in Ethiopia due to a growing conflict regarding the Tel Aviv regime's accreditation to the continental bloc. On Monday, Israeli ambassador to Addis Ababa Avraham Neguisse had to walk out of the auditorium during the opening ceremony of the summit to commemorate the 31st anniversary of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. The top Israeli diplomat was expelled after several African countries refused to allow him to participate in the African Union summit being held in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa. - Agencies

Stock exchanges crash after Trump measures

"Investors are reacting to the uncertainty emanating from the Trump tariffs," says expert

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The bourse witnessed a sharp decline on Monday as the KSE-100 Index went down by nearly 3,900 points, reflecting a severe loss of investor confidence driven by global market turmoil and unresolved domestic policy issues. The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX)'s benchmark index settled at 114,909.48 points, down by 3,882.18 points or -3.27%, from the previous close of 118,791.66. Earlier in the day, the KSE-100 had sunk to an intraday low of 110,103.97, reflecting a staggering drop of 8,687.69 points, or -7.31%. Even at its highest point of the session of 117,601.62, the index remained -1.00% below the previous close. The sharp plunge prompted the PSX to impose a lower lock after the market declined by more than 5%. In an official announcement, the exchange said that all pending orders had been cancelled and trading would resume at 1:03pm. Despite the break, selling pressure resumed once the market reopened, with the KSE-100 slipping further into red territory before recovering slightly. "Investors are reacting to the uncertainty emanating from the Trump tariffs and in particular, its fallout both in the US and Asian Markets," said Mustafa Mustansir, Director of Research and Business Development at Taurus Securities Limited. "Apart from this, some of the negative sen-

Starlink services to launch in Pakistan by Nov or Dec

ISLAMABAD: Starlink, the satellite internet service, is set to launch in Pakistan by November or December, according to Minister of State for Information Technology (IT) and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja. The minister shared the update during a meeting of the National Assembly Standing Committee on IT and Telecom, chaired by Aminul Haq. Last month, Khawaja confirmed that the satellite-based internet provider was granted temporary registration in Pakistan following the directives of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. "With the consensus of all security and regulatory bodies, Starlink has been issued a temporary no-objection certificate (NOC)," she said in a statement on March 21. The Chairman of the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) informed the meeting that the Pakistan Space Activities Regulatory Board (PSARB) had granted Starlink a temporary licence. The PTA chairman clarified that the company would receive a full licence once the regulatory framework for satellite internet is given final touches. Addressing questions from the committee, IT minister Khawaja assured that there were no significant hurdles in issuing the licence. - DNA

timed also seems to have come from the delays in finalisation of the government's bank borrowing plan to settle power sector circular debt. Also, investors do not seem to have appreciated the cut in power tariffs as a major portion of these cuts is going to be temporary, with no adjustment to the base tariff," he added. Head of Research at Al Meezan Investment, Amreen Soorani, said: "The KSE-100 index has seen a substantial drop today during the market hours, losses exceeding 3% since the start of the session." "Contributing factors have been global market meltdowns, including concerns about international trade tensions, following a potential recession period," she added. Major stock indexes plunged in Asia as White House officials showed no sign of backing away from their sweeping tariff plans. Japan's Nikkei sank 6% to hit lows last seen in late 2023, while South Korea dropped 5%. MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares

outside Japan fell 3.6%. Chinese blue chips lost 4.4%, as markets waited to see if Beijing would respond with more stimulus. Taiwan's main index, which had been shut on Thursday and Friday, tumbled nearly 10%, leading policymakers to curb short selling. In Saudi Arabia, where the markets were open Sunday, the bourse was down 6.78% - the worst daily loss since the COVID-19 pandemic, according to state media. Adding to investor jitters was skepticism surrounding Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's recent announcement of a Rs7.41 per unit reduction in electricity prices, which was initially celebrated as a significant step toward economic relief. The breakdown of the Rs7.41 relief includes Rs1.71 per unit from petroleum levy adjustments, Rs1.90 per unit from quarterly tariff adjustments (QTA), and Rs1.36 per unit from monthly fuel cost adjustments (FCA), split between 46 paisa for one month and 90 paisa over three months. An additional relief of over Re1 per unit is expected from the upcoming quarterly adjustment. This brings the actual pre-tax relief to around Rs5.98 per unit, with the remaining benefit arriving through tax-related deductions. While the relief package was part of a broader effort to reform Pakistan's ailing energy sector, investors remained cautious amid delays in the finalisation of the Rs1.25 trillion bank borrowing plan to tackle the Rs2.4 trillion circular debt.

Journalist Farhan Mallick released

DNA

KARACHI: Journalist Farhan Mallick has been released from Malir jail, where he was in judicial custody, after a local court approved his bail in multiple cases concerning his alleged involvement in spreading anti-state content and defrauding people via an illegal call centre, the District Malir jail Superintendent said on Monday. The court, granting bail to Mallick in the case registered under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (Peca), directed him to submit a surety bond worth Rs100,000. The journalist, a former news director of a private TV channel, was initially taken into custody by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on March 20 for allegedly violating Peca and involvement in defamation. Apart from the Peca case, the court also approved Mallick's bail in a case related to his alleged involvement in operating an illegal call centre responsible for stealing data from foreigners and defrauding them. The court ordered him to furnish a surety of Rs100,000 for his bail in this case as well.

China slams US foreconomic bullying

BEIJING: China has criticized US foreign economic policy, accusing the United States of unilateralism, protectionism and economic bullying with tariffs. Foreign Affairs spokesperson Lin Jian told reporters on Monday that US trade war was dealing a severe blow to the global economy. "Putting 'America First' over international rules is a typical act of unilateralism, protectionism and economic bullying," Lin said. Last week, the US slapped an additional 34 percent tariff on Chinese goods as part of "Liberation Day," coming on top of two rounds of 10 percent tariffs already declared in February and March, which Trump said was due to Beijing's role in the fentanyl crisis. World nations, including China, quickly reacted to the new tariffs. Beijing also suspended sorghum, poultry and bonemeal imports from some of the companies in the United States. - Agencies

Canal case: SHC issues stay

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The Sindh High Court (SHC) issued on Monday a stay order against the water availability certificate given by the Indus River System Authority (IRSA) for the construction of canals in Cholistan and Thal. The regulatory body approved the water supply to the Cholistan Canal System project, and also issued a water availability certificate to the Punjab government despite opposition from Sindh. Under the approval, Punjab was allowed to construct the Cholistan Canal project, branching from the Sutlej River at Sulemanki Headworks, according to IRSA, providing access to 450,000 acre-feet of water, which has been termed "an unfair move" for Sindh.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Junaid Anwar Chaudhry talking to Danish Ambassador Jakob Linulf who called on him at his office in Islamabad. - DNA

Macron says he opposes any displacement, of Palestinians

Egypt, along with Qatar and the United States, has been a mediator between Israel and Hamas

FOREIGN DESK

CAIRO: France's President Emmanuel Macron said on a visit to Cairo on Monday that he was strongly opposed to any displacement or annexation in Gaza and the Israeli-occupied West Bank. "This would be a violation of international law and a serious threat to the security of the entire region, including Israel," he said as he met his Egyptian counterpart Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. Macron started talks dominated by the Gaza war on Sunday with Egypt's President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi after arriving in Cairo. On Monday, Macron, el-Sisi and Jordan's King Abdullah II will hold a summit as Israel renews its offensive against Hamas in Gaza. On Tuesday, the French leader will head to the Egyptian port of El-Arish, near Gaza, to highlight the territory's humanitarian plight. Macron and el-Sisi held a dinner in a Cairo souk just after the French president arrived for the 48-hour visit. Macron also took time for a private visit to the new Grand Egyptian Museum, to be officially inaugurated on July 3, that will show off 100,000 historic artefacts. The two presidents held a more formal meeting on Monday morning before the summit with King Abdullah. "The situation in Gaza will be widely discussed," the French presidency said of the meetings stressing the importance of Egypt



and Jordan in ending the war. Egypt, along with Qatar and the United States, has been a mediator between Israel and Hamas. The United States has meanwhile called on Jordan and Egypt to accept Palestinian refugees from Gaza. Israel has pushed to seize Gaza territory since the March 18 collapse of a short-lived truce with Hamas, in what it has called a strategy to force the militants to free hostages still held in Gaza. Simultaneously, Israel has escalated attacks on Lebanon and Syria. The port of El-Arish, 50 kilometers (30 miles) west of the Gaza Strip, has been a key transit point for international aid arriving for Gaza. Macron is to meet humanitarian and security workers there to demonstrate his "constant mobilization in favor of a ceasefire," his office said. Most international aid went through the Rafah crossing between Gaza and Egypt but this has been suspended by Israel since early March.

Army Act to apply if civilian damages military installation

Justice Mandokhail raises procedural concerns about Army Act's civilian application

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The Army Act will be applied if a civilian damages a military installation or steals military property, said Khawaja Harris, the counsel representing the Ministry of Defence during proceedings in the Supreme Court on Monday. He made these remarks while continuing his rebuttal in the case against the annulment of civilian trials in military courts. A seven-member constitutional bench, headed by Justice Aminuddin Khan, is hearing the case. Other members of the bench include justices Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Musarrat Hilali, Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Hasan Azhar Rizvi, Naeem Akhtar Afghani, and Shahid Bilal. Harris argued that under the Pakistan Army Act, armed forces are empowered to arrest civilians involved in crimes such as attacking military installations or stealing military property. However, Mazhar remarked that an FIR is a legal prerequisite for any arrest. Justice Rizvi added that any arrested individual must be presented before the relevant magistrate. Justice Mandokhail questioned the procedural aspects of such cases: "How is the case registered? Who investigates it? What is the process? We want to understand." He further said that a person only becomes an accused under Section 2(d) of the Army Act once they have been indicted. Harris countered that the Constitution itself grants a distinct jurisdiction for court martial proceedings and cited previous rulings, including those by former chief justice Saeed-uz-Zaman Siddiqui, to reinforce his argument. The defence counsel added that there were numerous court judgements regarding court martials. Harris further stated that it was up to lawmakers to decide where a trial should take place. However, Justice Mandokhail said the court's role is to assess if the trial is constitutional. He further emphasised that it is not for the judiciary to consider whether a verdict would reduce or increase terrorism: "Controlling terrorism is the parliament's job, not the court's." The defence counsel also maintained that military courts do not fall under Article 175 of the Constitution, prompting Justice Mandokhail to ask under which constitutional provision they operate. The hearing on the appeals against the annulment of civilian trials in military courts was adjourned until Tuesday (tomorrow), with Khawaja Harris scheduled to continue his rebuttal.



ISLAMABAD: Chief Guest of the event Additional Foreign Secretary (Africa), Hamid Asghar Khan along with High Commissioner of Rwanda Ms Harerimana Fatou, lights a candle to mark beginning of the Kwibuka 31st Commemoration of the 1994 Genocide against Tutsi, in Federal Capital. - Online

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