



Wednesday, April 09, 2025

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 30

Iran says, deal can be reached if US shows goodwill

Detailed News On Page-08

Pak reaffirms commitment to minority rights

Detailed News On Page-08


Egyptian ambassador fetes friends

Detailed News On Page-08



Raw material export banned

Shehbaz invites investors to tap mineral resources

At Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum, PM says will not allow raw materials to be shipped out of country

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: In a major initiative for economic development, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday invited local and foreign investors to invest in Pakistan's abundant natural resources, valued at trillions of dollars. Addressing the two-day Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2025 (PMIF25) in Islamabad, he expressed confidence that harnessing these great assets would help Pakistan get rid of loans. Highlighting the potential of mineral resources in different areas of the country, the prime minister emphatically said that Pakistan will not allow raw materials to be shipped out of the country. He emphasised the importance of exporting finished and semi-finished products, saying it would be a win-win situation. He said any agreement should also entail that technology will be transferred to Pakistan over a period of time. He said entrepreneurs would also be welcome to establish joint partnerships for training the youth in modern skills by setting up vocational training centres. The prime minister emphasised that the federal and provincial governments, along with other institutions, would work together to transform Pakistan into one of the leading countries in the world. The two-day PMIF25 is taking place in the federal capital with an estimated 2,000 people in attendance, in an effort to exhibit the nation's enormous mineral potential. During the event from April 8 to 9, the government would present Pakistan's mineral-rich terrain, which covers around 600,000 square kilometres. The attendees include 300 representatives from overseas. Representatives of Azerbaijan, Saudi Arabia, China, the US State Department, the US Exim Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and CEOs of mining companies from Denmark, Kenya, Finland, and the UK are among the participants. It is expected that a number of agreements and memorandums of understanding (MoUs)

Continued on Page 06

Army to ensure robust security for investors: COAS

General Asim Munir says military stands ready to play due role in supporting development of Pakistan's mineral wealth

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir assured both local and international investors that the Pakistan Army would provide a strong security framework and take proactive steps to protect their interests, aiming to boost confidence in the country's mineral sector. Addressing the Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2025 on Tuesday, General Munir emphasised that economic security has become a vital pillar of national security, and the military stands ready to play its role in supporting the development of Pakistan's mineral wealth. He highlighted Pakistan's potential to become a global leader in the mineral sector and invited international organisations to bring their expertise, explore investment avenues, and collaborate in tapping the country's vast resource base. "To unlock Pakistan's mineral wealth, we need engineers, geologists, operators, and skilled miners," the army chief stated.

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif visiting stalls at the exhibition organized during the the Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2025. – DNA

Pak, Jordan political consultations

During the above consultations different regional and international matters of mutual interest and concern

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Secretary Ambassador Amna Baloch would be undertaking an official visit to Amman, Jordan, to lead Pakistan delegation for the 2nd round of Bilateral Political Consultations between Pakistan and Jordan scheduled to be held on 10 April 2025. During the above consultations different regional and international matters of mutual interest and concern, including inter alia current situation in Occupied Palestinian Territories; evolving dynamics in the Levant,

Continued on Page 06

US terminates semester exchange program

The program, named Global UGRAD, was in place for 15 years

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a decision that has caused shockwaves among the Pakistani students, the United States has decided to discontinue the Global Undergraduate Exchange Program from Pakistan in light of Donald Trump's aggressive national security review.

Continued on Page 06

Dar meets Meets Azerbaijan's minister

Pakistan, Azerbaijan vow to strengthen economic cooperation

The meeting underscored the mutual ambition to fast-track priority projects that can serve as catalysts for broader economic initiatives—especially in sectors such as infrastructure, energy, and IT

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: A high-level meeting was held today between the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Pakistan and the Minister for Economy of Azerbaijan, Mikayil Jabbarov, to accelerate ongoing efforts to strengthen bilateral economic cooperation. The discussion reaffirmed the shared commitment of both sides to enhancing trade, investment, and long-term economic collaboration between the two brotherly nations. The Pakistani delegation conveyed its gratitude and appreciation

Continued on Page 06

Pakistanis can now avail 5-year UAE visas

Tessori thanked the UAE diplomat for his country's investment in the province, especially in Karachi

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Pakistanis can now avail a five-year visa after the resolution of existing issues, Ambassador of the

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

400 students face US admin wrath

The students whose visas were cancelled were mainly from Muslim countries

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON: In a highly anticipated move, the United States of America on Tuesday cancelled visas of almost 450 international students, including Pakistani students, from several top-rated universities. According to the US media, the students whose visas were cancelled were mainly from Muslim countries. The abrupt cancellation of visas of international students were carried out without any notice, leaving the international students at the mercy of immigration authorities. The move comes as the Trump administration is specifically targeting students who had earlier participated in demonstrations in support of Palestinians against the Israeli aggression in Gaza.

CJP Afridi chairs judicial reform session

Only those reforms yield results that have ownership of stakeholders

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan, Mr. Justice Yahya Afridi, held a consultative session at the Supreme Court of Pakistan to engage stakeholders and improve justice service delivery. The session was attended by Attorney General of Pakistan, Mr. Khawaja Haris, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court, Mr. Fazal iHaqAbbasi, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court, Mr. Kamran Murtaza, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court, Mr. Faisal Siddique, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court, Mr. Munir Paracha, Senior Advocate Supreme Court.

Aid those behind bars

Qureshi urges party leaders to maintain unity

Gohar steps in as peacemaker, asks PTI leaders to make peace

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Amid reports of infighting among Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders, incarcerated Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Tuesday urged them to maintain unity in their ranks and "do something for those behind bars". Qureshi, during an informal media talk at an accountability court in Lahore, asked PTI leaders to "refrain from delivering statements and criticising each other". "Those in jail are looking towards the current PTI leadership," he said. He added that PTI's infighting hurts the jailed party leaders and workers. "There is a difference of opinion but everyone should be treated with respect," Qureshi added. Regarding cases against him, the former foreign minister reiterated that he was "not involved in any conspiracy, vandalism or any such incident". He claimed that he was facing the same accusations in all cases registered against him. He went on to say that he secured bail in 14 cases in Rawalpindi and five in Multan, whereas he also got bail in 8 out of

Continued on Page 06

Several arrested as PTI workers, police clash

Imran's sisters Aleema Khan, Uzma Khan and party leaders were also taken into custody

FAISAL SHEIKH

RAWALPINDI: A clash broke out between Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) workers and police on Tuesday near Adiala jail in Rawalpindi, leading to multiple arrests and a brief standoff. The confrontation occurred at the Gorkhpur checkpoint, where PTI workers had gathered and chanted slogans after the party leaders were denied permission to meet the jailed party founder Imran Khan. In response, police resorted to baton charging the protesters,

Continued on Page 06

Taliban government seeks UN role in Afghans' repatriation

Kabul also urges Islamabad to fulfil its Islamic and neighbourly responsibilities

NEWS DESK

KABUL: Afghanistan has called upon the UN and other international organisations to play a role in the dignified return of Afghan refugees from Pakistan. The interim Afghan government said this in a statement released following a meeting, presided over by the Taliban government's Prime Minister Mullah Mohammad Hasan Akhund, at the Afghan Presidential Palace (Arg) in Kabul. The Afghan government discussed the ongoing deportation of Afghan refugees from Pakistan. The meeting participants urged the Pakistani leadership to fulfil its Islamic and neighbourly responsibilities, reminding that citizens of the two countries had been enjoying the decades-long good relationship. The forum further stressed the desire to maintain religious, historical, and cultural ties, saying "they are essential for both the nations and their people". Participants in the Kabul meeting cautioned that wrong steps would be detrimental to both countries. The Afghan government's high commission for refugees has been directed to utilise all available resources to address the issues faced by the refugees. The meeting also emphasised providing facilities, temporary accommodation, and services to those returning to Afghanistan.

Continued on Page 06

Thousands of Afghans depart Pakistan

SHAMIM SHAHID

SPIN BOLDAK: Thousands of Afghans have crossed the border from Pakistan in recent days, the United Nations and Taliban officials said, as Islamabad ramped up pressure for them to return to Afghanistan. Pakistan last month set an early April deadline for some 800,000 Afghans carrying Afghan Citizen Cards (ACC) issued by Pakistan authorities to leave the country, another phase in Islamabad's campaign in recent years to repatriate Afghans. Families with their belongings in tow lined up at the key border crossings of Torkham in the north and Spin Boldak in the south, recalling similar scenes in 2023 when tens of thousands of Afghans fled deportation threats in Pakistan. "In the last 2 days, 8,025 undocumented and ACC holders returned via Torkham and

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

Rafah: A ghost town

THE city of Rafah, located in the far south of the Gaza Strip, has become a disaster zone due to the ongoing Israeli aggression. The relentless attacks have caused widespread destruction of infrastructure and public services and led to mass killings of unarmed civilians—marking one of the most horrific examples of ethnic cleansing in modern history. According to a statement issued Sunday by the Government Media Office (GMO), the Israeli occupation has turned Rafah into a “closed military zone,” completely cut off from the rest of Gaza. The city has been subjected to horrific massacres and massive destruction that has touched every aspect of life. Although a ceasefire agreement came into effect on January 19, Israeli forces have continued their assaults, resulting in dozens of civilian casualties—many of whom were attempting to return to check on their destroyed homes. Rafah, which spans 60 square kilometers and was home to around 300,000 people, is now uninhabitable. More than 90% of the city's homes—over 20,000 buildings containing more than 50,000 housing units—have been completely destroyed. Additionally, 22 out of 24 water wells, including the vital “Canada Well,” have been demolished, depriving tens of thousands of families of clean drinking water, according to the GMO. The statement also noted that around 85% of the city's sewage system has been destroyed, turning Rafah into a breeding ground for disease. Nearly 320 kilometers of roads have been bulldozed, and 12 health centers—including the Abu Yousef Al-Najjar Hospital, the Maternity Hospital, and the Indonesian Hospital—have been completely leveled. In education, eight schools have been entirely destroyed, and the rest have suffered extensive damage. Over 100 mosques have been demolished, and vast stretches of farmland—including trees and greenhouses—have been wiped out. Rafah's municipality has declared the city a “total disaster zone” after the forced displacement of tens of thousands of residents and the destruction of 30 out of 36 government buildings, including the municipality's main office. The occupation also flattened a 12-kilometer-long, 900-meter-deep stretch along the border with Egypt, erasing 90% of residential neighborhoods—especially in the districts of Al-Salam, Brazil, Al-Jneina, and Rafah Camp. The crisis has been made even worse by the ongoing closure of the Kerem Shalom crossing for over a month, which has prevented the entry of fuel needed to operate water pumps and essential spare parts for repairing damaged infrastructure.

The GMO is calling on the international community, the United Nations, and humanitarian organizations to fulfill their legal and moral responsibilities by taking urgent steps to save what remains of the devastated city, including:

- Pressuring the occupation to withdraw from Rafah.
- Securing safe corridors for humanitarian aid to reach besieged civilians.
- Dispatching international fact-finding missions to document war crimes.
- Immediately beginning reconstruction and restoring infrastructure.
- Holding the occupation accountable for crimes committed against civilians.

The statement concluded by emphasizing that Rafah has not just been bombed—it has been methodically destroyed and wiped off the map in a deliberate effort to depopulate the land and alter its geographical and demographic identity. Yet, the resilience of its people stands as a powerful testament that the will to live is stronger than the machinery of death.



Tariff blackmail

THE US government, under the guise of “reciprocity,” has announced tariff hikes on all its trade partners, including China, provoking widespread outrage in the international community. The Chinese government's position on opposing the US abuse of tariffs emphasizes that the US has used tariffs as a tool for extreme pressure and to pursue selfish interests. Previously, China announced a series of countermeasures, and the international community has clearly seen China's firm determination and will to defend its sovereignty, security, development, and to uphold international fairness and justice. Tariff blackmail will not intimidate China, nor will it undermine justice. China does not provoke trouble, nor is it intimidated by trouble. Pressuring and threatening are not the right way in dealing with China. China's firm stance on striking countermeasures stems from the fact that the US' reason for tariff hikes is utterly unfounded. Under the guise of addressing “unfair foreign trade practices,” the US has slapped high tariffs on its global trade partners. In reality, this is nothing more than protectionism and unilateral bullying - political blackmail wrapped in the cloak of economic means. Such actions blatantly violate the core rules of the World Trade Organization and trample on China's legitimate rights in global trade, as well as its long-standing efforts to open up. The so-called “reciprocal tariffs” have caused enormous damage to the world trade system and global supply chains, and they will pose a serious drag on global economic growth. China is an ancient civilization known for its traditions of etiquette and respect. The Chinese people value sincerity and trust as the foundation of their relationships. However, standing firm in the face of pressure and threats is equally a defining trait of the Chinese spirit. Looking back at history, China stood tall even in times of poverty and weakness - much less will it ever yield to hegemony today. Compared to the US government's initiation of a trade war with China in 2017, today we have a much stronger capacity to withstand pressure, richer experience in handling struggles, and comprehensive preparations to face challenges. China's industrial system and technological autonomy have significantly improved, its domestic market and economic structure continue to optimize, and its multilateral cooperation and trade partnerships have become more diverse. These factors give China greater confidence in the face of risks. As Bloomberg put it, “China has already trade-war-proofed its economy.” More importantly, China stands on the side of morality and historical righteousness. The US' latest round of tariff hikes targets more than 180 countries and regions around the world, including even the United Nations-designated “least developed countries.” Some commentators have noted that such high tariffs will deal a devastating blow to vulnerable nations with narrow economic structures and heavy reliance on exports. China's decisive countermeasures against the erroneous practices of the US not only defend its own interests but also actively uphold a fair and free world trading system. China's countermeasures are not a call to confrontation, but a declaration to defend fairness. Amid the US repeatedly wielding the tariff stick, China has consistently responded with reason, strength, and restraint. Behind this calm and composed approach lies China's firm understanding that the key is to focus on doing its own things well.

National Budget: Tone for the year

Dr. M Ali Hamza



Is all type of milk good? Raw milk is unpasteurized and untreated, meaning it contains natural nutrients but also potential harmful bacteria like Salmonella, E. coli, and Listeria, which can cause serious health risks. In contrast, processed milk undergoes pasteurization, eliminating harmful microbes while maintaining nutritional value. Developed countries transitioned to processed milk due to public health concerns

IN a developing country like Pakistan, the national budget plays a crucial role in economic stability and growth. A well-planned budget fosters sustainable development, economic resilience, and improved living standards. In multiple search results, the two consistent top priorities when drafting the national budget of a developing country like Pakistan were education and healthcare funding, ahead of other considerations such as infrastructure investment, fiscal deficits, external debt, inflation management, currency stabilization, and tax reforms. To assure healthcare funding in a national budget, mostly disease burden, medical Infrastructure, healthcare workforce availability, and cost-effectiveness of medical programs are considered as main factors. The neglected part is nutrition: a fundamental pillar of a country's healthcare system that directly impacts public health and economic productivity. Poor nutrition leads to malnutrition, weakened immunity, stunting and increased susceptibility to diseases, placing a heavy burden on healthcare services. In developing countries undernutrition and deficiencies in essential nutrients contribute to maternal and child mortality. On the other hand, unhealthy diets cause obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases, escalating healthcare costs. A well-nourished population is more productive and requires fewer medical interventions. Investing in nutrition through public health programs, food security initiatives, strict safe food regulations, and awareness campaigns strengthens a nation's overall healthcare system and economic growth. In Pakistan, human nutrition statistics reveal a complex picture marked by both progress and persistent challenges. Recent surveys indicate that chronic undernutrition remains widespread, with nearly 40 percent of children under five years of age affected by stunting. Wasting, which signifies acute malnutrition, is also prevalent, impacting many children and increasing their susceptibility

to infections. Malnutrition is also contributing to impaired cognitive development.

Governments of developing countries have implemented various budget policies to address malnutrition by boosting access to nutritious food and healthcare services. For example, India's budget has supported initiatives like subsidized food distribution under the National Food Security Act, which provides vulnerable populations with essential staples. Brazil's Zero Hunger Program, backed by significant budget allocations, combines cash transfers, school feeding programs, and nutrition education to improve diet quality and food access. In Bangladesh, considerable public spending on health and nutrition has facilitated widespread distribution of micronutrient supplements and fortified foods. Additionally, many countries have reformed their trade policies to reduce import tariffs on nutrient-rich foods, incentivizing local production, exempting sales taxes, and lowering market prices. Investments in rural infrastructure, agricultural subsidies for fruits, vegetables, and dairy products, as well as enhanced water and sanitation facilities, further contribute to improved nutritional outcomes. Besides government initiatives the international organizations like WHO, FAO, GAIN (Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition), Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement etc. aim to address these issues through nutrition funding, nutrition education, and fortification programs.

Is the government using a nutrition-focused approach to assess and plan the health landscape of Pakistan? Perhaps in some cases, yes, but in many others, no. For instance, in a food bucket, milk is one of the most nutritionally complete foods, providing essential proteins, calcium, vitamins A and D, and other micronutrients crucial for bone health, muscle development, and overall growth. Regular milk consumption has been linked to better immunity, reduced risk of osteoporosis, improved cognitive development in children, and

less burden on healthcare facilities.

Is all type of milk good? Raw milk is unpasteurized and untreated, meaning it contains natural nutrients but also potential harmful bacteria like Salmonella, E. coli, and Listeria, which can cause serious health risks. In contrast, processed milk undergoes pasteurization, eliminating harmful microbes while maintaining nutritional value. Developed countries transitioned to processed milk due to public health concerns. In the early 20th century, the United States and Europe experienced frequent outbreaks of milk-borne diseases, leading to mandatory pasteurization laws. Governments worldwide have facilitated the transition from raw to processed milk by enforcing strict food safety laws, such as the FDA pasteurization mandate (US) and EU milk hygiene regulations, supporting dairy cooperatives, exemption from taxes, and running public awareness campaigns to educate consumers about the dangers of raw milk and the benefits of processed alternatives.

In Pakistan, packaged milk was historically zero-rated under the Sales Tax Act, 1990, but national budget of Pakistan 2024-25 imposed 18% sales tax on packaged milk. The decision pushed many consumers toward raw milk that is indeed an unsafe alternative, and goes against the government priorities to improve access to safe nutrition, advancement in health index and support farmer livelihoods. Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, UAE, South Africa, Canada, USA, Australia, India and several other countries have 0% sales tax on packaged milk and other countries have 10% or less. Why these countries do not compromise? The reason is simple “nourishing healthy societies”. A nutrition-focused approach is essential for ensuring long-term improvements in the overall health status of Pakistan's diverse population. Targeted interventions, robust policy measures, long sightedness are vital for sustainable progress. Budget 2025-26 is just around the corner. It is going to set the tone for the year. We hope the tone is set for nourished Pakistan.

Washington, Moscow and Kyiv

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



Moscow's strategy involves leveraging Trump's diplomatic openness to secure a direct bilateral agreement that would ostensibly bring an end to the war in Ukraine. This envisioned agreement, from the Kremlin's perspective, would impose substantial restrictions on Kyiv and grant Russia a decisive influence over Ukraine's political landscape. While an ideal scenario for Putin would involve comprehensive limitations on Western military assistance to Ukraine, Moscow may also settle for partial measures that weaken Kyiv's strategic position over time

THE discourse surrounding former U.S. President Donald Trump and his policy shift concerning Ukraine has been met with measured responses from Russian President Vladimir Putin, who has strategically avoided overt displays of triumph. Following Trump's reinstatement to the White House, his interactions with Putin have underscored an attempt at recalibrating U.S.-Russia relations, with the Kremlin emphasizing the importance of trust building. During their first officially acknowledged conversation on February 12, Putin articulated that the primary objective of diplomatic engagements was to foster trust between both states. This sentiment was reiterated in a subsequent two-hour discussion on March 18, during which the Kremlin's official communication indicated that both leaders affirmed their commitment to pursuing a bilateral resolution to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. However, despite Putin's reserved demeanor, subtle indications of Moscow's satisfaction with Trump's policy shift are discernible. Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov, in February, described the U.S. stance as adopting a “more balanced position” a stance that Moscow openly welcomed. Additionally, the Kremlin later expressed gratitude to Trump for his purported commitment to facilitating an end to hostilities, acknowledging the significant diplomatic and strategic benefits accrued by Russia in a relatively short period. Trump's engagement with Russia has resulted in a series of symbolic and material concessions favorable to Moscow. Notably, following an intense discussion in the Oval Office on February 28 involving Trump, U.S. Vice President J.D. Vance and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Trump temporarily suspended U.S. military assistance to Kyiv. Moreover, Washington disengaged from an international investigative body dedicated to examining Russian war crimes, opposed a United Nations resolution condemning Russia's role in the conflict and echoed Russian narratives regarding the origins of the war, attributing blame to Kyiv. These developments have provided Russia with a significant diplomatic advantage, reinforcing its strategic objectives. Despite these apparent gains, Russia remains cognizant of the unpredictability of Trump's foreign policy approach. Given his history of abrupt policy shifts and his fluctuating positions on international issues, the Kremlin recognizes that his warmth towards Moscow may not be enduring. The precedent set during his first term, where initial hopes for improved U.S.-Russia relations were thwarted by congressional sanctions and the provision of lethal aid to Ukraine, serves as a cautionary reminder for Moscow. Consequently, while the Kremlin seeks to maximize its gains under the current U.S. administration, it remains wary of potential policy reversals. Moscow's strategy involves leveraging Trump's diplomatic openness to secure a direct bilateral agreement that would ostensibly bring an end to the war in Ukraine. This envisioned agreement, from the Kremlin's perspective, would impose substantial restrictions on Kyiv and grant Russia

a decisive influence over Ukraine's political landscape. While an ideal scenario for Putin would involve comprehensive limitations on Western military assistance to Ukraine, Moscow may also settle for partial measures that weaken Kyiv's strategic position over time. Even in the event of Ukrainian and European rejection of such an accord, the Kremlin anticipates that Trump's administration may use this as a pretext to withdraw U.S. support entirely, thereby facilitating Moscow's long-term objectives. Beyond the Ukrainian conflict, Russia aims to leverage its relationship with Trump to recalibrate broader U.S.-Russia diplomatic and economic relations. The Kremlin seeks a reduction in economic sanctions and an overall improvement in bilateral ties. However, should these aspirations remain unfulfilled, Moscow appears prepared to persist with its current strategic trajectory. While the Russian economy faces significant challenges due to sustained Western sanctions, its leadership maintains a degree of stability and has capitalized on work force advantages over Ukraine to sustain military operations. In this context, the Kremlin's overarching objective remains the strategic defeat of Ukraine, with or without direct U.S. support. Russia's diplomatic overtures toward the Trump administration commenced shortly after the 2024 U.S. presidential election. The Kremlin sought engagement through official intelligence channels, informal networks linked to Trump's political and business associates. One notable figure in this diplomatic maneuvering was Kirill Dmitriev, CEO of the Russian Direct Investment Fund, who utilized his connections with Jared Kushner and other members of Trump's inner circle to facilitate discussions with Steve Witkoff, Trump's special envoy for the Middle East. These backchannel negotiations culminated in a high-profile meeting in Riyadh on February 18, attended by key Russian and U.S. officials, including Secretary of State Marco Rubio and National Security Adviser Mike Waltz. This engagement laid the groundwork for subsequent diplomatic interactions between Trump and Putin, shaping the U.S. administration's evolving stance on Ukraine. Putin's strategy has been multifaceted, incorporating psychological and ideological appeals to Trump's worldview. Following their February 12 conversation, Trump's rhetoric increasingly aligned with Kremlin talking points, including characterizing Zelenskyy as a “dictator” and raising concerns about corruption in Ukraine. Simultaneously, Putin propagated the narrative that the 2020 U.S. presidential election had been “stolen,” suggesting that had Trump remained in power, Moscow would not have initiated military action against Kyiv. This manipulation underscores Putin's calculated efforts to appeal to Trump's personal and political biases to advance Russia's strategic objectives. Beyond personal persuasion, Moscow has positioned itself as a valuable partner in advancing Trump's global agenda. Russia has expressed willingness to assist in U.S. negotiations with Iran, endorsed proposals to reduce military expenditures and subtly suggested a willingness to reconfigure its strategic partnership with China. These

overtures, coupled with the rhetoric of U.S. officials such as Rubio and Vance regarding a potential “reverse Nixon” strategy—aimed at driving a wedge between Beijing and Moscow—have further ingratiated Russia with the Trump administration. While such a geopolitical shift remains unlikely, Moscow has skillfully exploited these discussions to create the impression that closer U.S.-Russia relations could yield significant strategic dividends for Washington. Additionally, Russia has employed cultural and ideological arguments to strengthen its ties with the Trump administration. The Kremlin has highlighted historical U.S.-Soviet cooperation during World War II, emphasized shared opposition to progressive social policies and positioned itself as an ally in challenging Western liberal elites. Furthermore, Moscow has suggested that economic normalization could result in lucrative business opportunities, a prospect underscored in Riyadh, where Dmitriev presented an analysis (albeit flawed) suggesting that U.S. companies had suffered significant financial losses due to sanctions on Russia. Amid these diplomatic overtures, Russia has reframed the Ukrainian conflict as an impediment to a broader U.S.-Russia strategic partnership. The Kremlin has played into Trump's frustrations with Kyiv's insistence on strong security guarantees, portraying Zelenskyy as a primary obstacle to peace. Additionally, Moscow has propagated the narrative that Ukraine lacks a legitimate democratic mandate, suggesting that elections should precede any diplomatic resolution—a perspective that Trump has seemingly embraced. Zelenskyy's reluctance to engage in negotiations stems from the existential nature of the conflict and his profound distrust of the Kremlin's intentions. Putin's demands remain maximalist, including territorial concessions, the recognition of Russian sovereignty over occupied regions, Ukrainian military reductions and limitations on Ukraine's security partnerships with the West. While Trump may not immediately endorse all of these conditions, Russia anticipates a gradual shift in U.S. policy toward positions favorable to Moscow. The Kremlin views a potential one-on-one summit between Putin and Trump as a critical opportunity to cement a favorable agreement. Moscow recalls Trump's 2018 Helsinki summit with Putin, during which Trump expressed greater trust in the Russian leader than in U.S. intelligence agencies. Should such a meeting occur, Russia hopes to secure Trump's commitment to policies that undermine Ukraine's security while advancing Moscow's long-term geopolitical interests. Even if Trump is unable to fully implement Russia's preferred policies, Moscow believes that diplomatic engagement can still yield meaningful gains. The Kremlin is optimistic that Trump's pressure on European states could erode their support for Ukraine, thereby weakening Kyiv's defensive capabilities. Additionally, Russia views Trump's potential cessation of U.S. military aid as a significant strategic victory, given Ukraine's continued reliance on Western assistance. Simultaneously, Russia continues its efforts to reestablish full diplomatic ties with the United States and secure incremental sanctions relief.

Briefs

Shehbaz
invites
investors...

FROM PAGE 01
will be inked at the forum. Despite its vast potential, the mineral sector currently contributes only 3.2% to Pakistan's GDP, with exports accounting for a mere 0.1% of the global total. However, with increased exploration, foreign investment and infrastructural development, the industry is poised for significant growth. A key highlight of the forum will be the official launch of the National Minerals Harmonisation Framework 2025 by the federal government, aimed at attracting investment in the mineral sector. The United States would be represented by Eric Meyer, Senior Bureau Official for the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, to advance US interests in the mineral sector.

Army to
ensure...

FROM PAGE 01
He said that 27 students from Balochistan are currently undergoing specialised training in mineral exploration in Zambia and Argentina as part of efforts to build a skilled domestic workforce for the sector. General Munir stressed the importance of not just extraction but also investing in refining and value addition industries within Pakistan. "Development of both upstream and downstream mineral industries is essential to reduce costs and diversify markets," he noted.

Qureshi
urges party..

FROM PAGE 01
14 cases in Lahore. When questioned about the Punjab chief minister's performance, Qureshi said that he would prefer to maintain silence on the matter, adding that he would "not ignite fires but put them out". Amid reports of infighting among PTI leaders, PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan is playing the role of a peacemaker and urged party leaders to make peace. It was learnt that Gohar held discussions with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, Asad Qaiser, Atif Khan, and Shahram Tarakai. The sources added that the said leaders showed agreement to end their differences.

Several
arrested...

FROM PAGE 01
while PTI supporters pelted stones at law enforcement personnel. Several PTI leaders and workers were taken into custody during the altercation. The situation was defused after Leader of Opposition in National Assembly Omar Ayub intervened and assured police of cooperation. Meanwhile, the police also detained Imran's sisters — Aleema Khan and Uzma Khan — and PTI leader Aliya Hamza, sources said. PTI leader Sahibzada Hamid Raza was also among those detained.

Taliban govt
seeks UN...

FROM PAGE 01
Meanwhile, the repatriation process for Afghan Citizen Card (ACC) holders and illegal immigrants from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is underway. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Home and Tribal Affairs Department reported that 3,042 illegal immigrants were sent back via the Torkham border on April 7, along with 2,355 ACC holders. Whereas, a total of 5,568 ACC holders have been repatriated from KP since April 1, after the fresh repatriation drive kicked off.

Thousands
of Afghans...

FROM PAGE 01
Spin Boldak crossings," the UN International Organization for Migration (IOM) said in a post on social media platform X on Monday. "IOM stands ready to scale up its response at key border points with returns expected to surge in the coming days," it said.

Ethiopian PM's book added
to National Library collection

Dr. Jemal Beker, Special Envoy and Ambassador Extraordinary of the FDR Ethiopia to Pakistan, formally presented multiple copies of the book to Mr. Raja Javed Iqbal, Director General of the National Library, during a formal handing over ceremony held here in Islamabad at the NLP

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The book "Medemer Generation", authored by H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE), has been formally added to the diverse collection of the National Library of Pakistan (NLP) under the "African Corner Initiative" of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. H.E. Dr. Jemal Beker, Special Envoy and Ambassador Extraordinary of the FDR Ethiopia to Pakistan, formally presented multiple copies of the book to Mr. Raja Javed Iqbal, Director General of the National Library, during a formal handing over ceremony held here in Islamabad at the NLP.

The book is the third edition of the "Medemer" series authored by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, elucidating his "Medemer" philosophy, which signifies togetherness, inter-generational collaboration, and synergy. Speaking on the occasion, the Ambassador expressed his gratitude to the government of Pakistan for taking such a significant initiative, which will eventually forge a strong bond and connection between the nations through cultural ex-



changes. The Ambassador also highlighted the core message of the book and the Medemer philosophy, which embodies a practical approach of inter-generational connectivity, unity and togetherness. He said, "Medemer Generation" stresses our collective duty to nurture a responsible and capable generation that can carry

forward a positive legacy from the previous generations. "We believe sharing these ideas contributes to the bridge of understanding between Ethiopia and Pakistan." He added that this philosophy serves as a guiding principle for Ethiopia's contemporary reforms and development strategy, emphasizing collaboration, inter-generational responsibility, and building a prosperous future. The Ambassador cited landmark Ethiopian initiatives guided by the 'Medemer' philosophy, including the Green Legacy Initiative, the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, and agricultural self-sufficiency programs (like 'Ye Lemat-Tirufat', often translated as 'Bounty of the Basket'), as examples reflecting Ethiopia's commitment to development, regional integration, and pan-Africanism. The Director General of the National Library, Mr. Raja Jave, said it was an honor for the National Library to add the book of H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed to our collection, making it available to scholars, students, and the public. "This initiative will not only offer valuable insights to the youth of Pakistan into modern Ethiopia's political and social philosophy but also facilitate the cultural exchanges between the two nations," he added.

CPL first franchise becomes
Overseas Ambassador

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Premier League (CPL), Pakistan's first national-level domestic cricket league, has achieved a significant milestone as its first franchise has officially been acquired by an Overseas Ambassador. Australia's Pacers Academy secured the franchise rights. The signing ceremony was held in Islamabad, where CPL Chief Executive Nayanar Siddiqui and CEO of Australian Pacers Academy, Sohail Shah, signed the agreement. Speaking at the event, President of the Capital Premier League, Arshad Ali Bega, said the league will offer young players a valuable platform to showcase their talent. "We are committed to making

CPL one of the best leagues," he said. He added that legendary fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar has been appointed as the league's official brand ambassador. He also confirmed that all formalities with the Pakistan Cricket Board have been completed, and the league's schedule will be announced soon. Sohail Shah, CEO of the Overseas Ambassador franchise, expressed his excitement about being part of the initiative. "We are proud to be involved in this league. Our aim is to bring top international cricketers to Pakistan and introduce the country's emerging talent to the world," he stated. "I have selected some of the best talent from Pakistan and helped them play for different clubs in Australia. Players like Haris Rauf and Salman Irshad are now part of top teams," Sohail Shah added.

Pakistan offers lowest
Hajj costs in region

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Sardar Muhammad Yousaf on Tuesday said Hajj expenses in Pakistan are lower compared to other countries in the region, while comprehensive and high-quality arrangements have been made for the pilgrims. Addressing a Hajj training workshop Hajj camp Islamabad, the minister said the government is committed to providing maximum facilitation to the pilgrims. "We have reviewed the arrangements in Saudi Arabia ourselves, and every effort will be made to ensure that no pilgrim faces any difficulty," he emphasized. He informed participants that this marks the second phase of the Hajj training sessions and that the vaccination of pilgrims will begin on the 20th of this month. The minister also urged all Pakistani pilgrims to strictly adhere to the laws and regulations of Saudi Arabia during their stay. Speaking on the occasion, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony's spokesperson Muhammad Umar Butt informed that a total of 142 one-day Hajj training workshops will be organized across the country to guide and prepare the pilgrims effectively. - APP

Pooran, Marsh help
LSG edge KKR

WEB DESK

KOLKATA: Quickfire half-centuries from Nicholas Pooran and Mitchell Marsh powered Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) to edge past defending champions Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) by four runs in the 21st match of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 here at the Eden Gardens on Tuesday. KKR captain Ajinkya Rahane's decision to bowl first backfired as his bowlers were dominated by the spirited LSG batting unit, which accumulated 238/3 in the allotted 20 overs.

IESCO says private
transformer repair
customers' responsibility

The news agency suggested that, although the repair of the transformer is typically the customer's responsibility, IESCO should facilitate the early repair or replacement of the transformer for the sake of better customer service

DNA

ISLAMAVAD: With reference to news published in national newspapers regarding electricity issue in the Sector G 8 Markaz. IESCO management has clarified that no load management is being carried out in entire IESCO region. Due to fault rectification or for system up gradation work approved shutdowns are taken and the prior intimation to valuable customers has been provided through Print and social media. IESCO further clarified that installation or repair of Public Transformers is IESCO responsibility while installation/repair

of independent transformer installed on plaza or other places is customer responsibility as per approved SOPs. For timely registration and rectification of customer's complaints relevant SDO complaints offices numbers, Help line 118 and CCMC numbers 051-9252933 and 051-9252934 are available round the clock. "The news agency suggested that, although the repair of the transformer is typically the customer's responsibility, IESCO should facilitate the early repair or replacement of the transformer for the sake of better customer service. The cost of repair or replacement could then be billed to the customers who are receiving power from that specific transformer."

DMA director
visits ICCI

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Director Municipal Administration (DMA), Dr. Anam Fatima, visited the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and held a fruitful and interactive session with President Nasir Mansoor Qureshi, Senior Vice President Abdul Rehman Siddiqui, Vice President Nasir Mehmood Chaudhry, and office bearers representing various business hubs of the capital. During the meeting, Dr. Anam Fatima assured the business community of her fullest cooperation in resolving key issues faced by the industrial and trade sectors, with a special focus on tackling encroachments, parking challenges, and the complications of multiple trade licensing. She also addressed the long-standing demand of H-13 sector residents for a dedicated graveyard by promising to allow burials in H-11 graveyard. Emphasizing the importance of inclusive decision-making.

Person with zero
experience appointed
Chief Engineer

MUMTAZ AHMED BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: A storm of controversy has erupted in Punjab's Small Dams Zone, Rawalpindi, following the recent appointment of a new chief engineer who reportedly lacks any prior experience in small dam construction. This development has sparked widespread criticism and raised serious questions about the management and oversight of critical infrastructure projects in the region, with allegations of corruption, mismanagement, and political interference now coming to the forefront. Punjab Irrigation Department, the newly appointed chief engineer was selected despite having no demonstrable expertise in the specialized field of small dam construction. This decision has baffled experts and local stakeholders, who argue that such a critical position demands a seasoned professional with a proven track record. Compounding the issue, several politically influential engineers—previously removed from the Small Dams Zone under various charges of misconduct—have allegedly managed to secure repeated postings in the same region. Critics claim that a powerful clique has entrenched itself within the zone, systematically blocking the appointment of engineers with extensive experience in small dam projects. Monitoring reports indicate that small dams in the Rawalpindi division are not being constructed according to established standards. Essential quality control measures, such as compaction tests and material laboratory tests, are either being neglected compromising the structural integrity and safety of these vital water management projects. Monitoring reports from M&E have further corroborated these concerns, identifying "serious irregularities" in ongoing construction efforts.

Lahore Qalandars' overseas
stars arrive in Islamabad

L AHORE Qalandars' star players David Wiese, Sam Billings, Rishad Hossain and Kusal Perera have arrived in Islamabad for the upcoming 10th edition of the Pakistan Super League (PSL). The franchise announced the arrival of its overseas players on social media with the caption: "Touchdown Islamabad. Our Qalandars have started to arrive for the HBL PSL 10." Namibian all-rounder David Wiese, who played just one season for Karachi Kings, has since been a consistent performer for Lahore Qalandars. He has featured in 53 PSL matches, scoring 629 runs at an average of 25.16 and a strike rate of 162.11. With the ball, he has taken 38 wickets at an economy rate of 8.20. On the other hand, English wicketkeeper-batter Sam Billings has played 20 PSL matches, scoring 402 runs at an average of 25.12 and a strike rate of 131.37. Kusal Perera and Rishad Hossain are set to make their PSL debuts this season. It is pertinent to mention that the much-anticipated 10th edition of the HBL Pakistan Super League is set to begin on Friday, April 11, with defending champions Islamabad United taking on two-time winners Lahore Qalandars at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium. The six-team tournament will feature a total of 34 matches from April 11 to May 18. Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium will host 13 matches, including the two Eliminator and the grand final. In addition to the main tournament, an exhibition match is scheduled for April 8 in Peshawar. The participating teams for this special fixture will be announced in due course. Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium will host 11 matches, including the first Qualifier on May 13. Karachi's National Bank Stadium and Multan Cricket Stadium will each host five matches. The event will also feature three double-headers, with two scheduled on Saturdays and one on Labour Day (May 1). Lahore Qalandars squad for PSL 10: Shaheen Shah Afridi, Fakhar Zaman and Daryl Mitchell (all platinum), Haris Rauf, Sikandar Raza and Kusal Perera (all diamond), Abdullah Shafique, Jahandad Khan and Zaman Khan (all silver), David Wiese, Asif Ali, Asif Afridi, Muhammad Akhlaq and Rishad Hossain (all silver), Momin Qamar and Momin Azab (both emerging), Muhammad Naeem, Salman Ali Mirza and Tom Curran (all supplementary).
Lahore Qalandars HBL PSL X schedule
11 April – Islamabad United v Lahore Qalandars, Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium
13 April – Quetta Gladiators v Lahore Qalandars, Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium
15 April – Karachi Kings v Lahore Qalandars, National Bank Stadium, Karachi
22 April – Multan Sultans v Lahore Qalandars, Multan Cricket Stadium
24 April – Lahore Qalandars v Peshawar Zalmi, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore
26 April – Lahore Qalandars v Multan Sultans, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore
30 April – Lahore Qalandars v Islamabad United, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore
1 May – Lahore Qalandars v Quetta Gladiators, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore
4 May – Lahore Qalandars v Karachi Kings, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore
9 May – Peshawar Zalmi v Lahore Qalandars, Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium

Pakistan,
Azerbaijan
vow to...

FROM PAGE 01
to Minister Jabbarov for his leadership and dedication to deepening Pak-Azerbaijani economic ties, which have the potential of high growth. The personal interest and guidance of the President of Azerbaijan and the Prime Minister of Pakistan, continue to serve as a driving force in translating the strong political will between the two countries into tangible economic partnerships. It was noted that both sides have been working diligently since the recent visit of Pakistan's Prime Minister to Azerbaijan, which catalyzed a renewed focus on critical investment projects. This momentum has been sustained through consistent engagement between the relevant authorities of both countries, including through platforms such as the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), with a particular emphasis on Government-to-Government (G2G) and Business-to-Business (B2B) collaboration.

Pakistan-
is can now
avail 5-year..


FROM PAGE 01
United Arab Emirates to Pakistan Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Al-Zaabi announced on Tuesday. The development came during a meeting between Zaabi and Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori at the Governor's House. "Visa issues have been resolved, Pakistanis can get a five-year visa," Zaabi was quoted as saying in a press release from the Governor House. He also invited the governor to visit the visa centre at the Karachi consulate. Tessori thanked the UAE diplomat for his country's investment in the province, especially in Karachi. The ambassador praised ongoing projects under the governor's initiative.

Pak, Jordan
political...

FROM PAGE 01
developments in South Asia as well as state of cooperation in different domains of Pakistan-Jordan relations would be discussed. Foreign Secretary's above visit to Jordan underscores the deep-rooted fraternal ties between Pakistan and Jordan. The above consultations between Pakistan and Jordan would pave the way for increased mutual understanding and enhanced coordination on different bilateral, regional and international matters.

US
terminates
semester...

FROM PAGE 01
The program, named Global UGRAD, was ongoing for 15 years and it provided opportunity to hundreds of Pakistani students to get in touch with the US education system. The program is handled by USEP Pakistan which is a bi-national commission established in 1950 by the US and Pakistan governments. Its mission is to promote understanding between the peoples of Pakistan and the US through educational and cultural exchange programmes. It said in a statement: "We understand that this news may be disappointing, especially for those who applied this year and were looking forward to this opportunity."



E-Tender Notice No P-05/2025

Procurement for the supply, installation & configuration / testing of Web Application Firewall (WAF)

Pakistan Revenue Automation (Private) Limited (acronym – PRAL). PRAL is a private limited company registered under section 32 of the companies ordinance, 1984 (XLVII of 1984 PRAL is working with federal and provincial tax and revenue agencies to provide wide variety of tax and revenue collection automation solutions, since its incorporation.

PRAL invites online e-bids/proposals from sales tax registered bidders for the subject Tender. The interested companies / firms can obtain the detailed bidding document, containing the terms and conditions, method of procurement, procedure for submission of bids, bid security, bid validity, opening of bids, evaluation criteria, clarification / rejection of bids and performance guarantee etc. through the e-Pak Acquisition & Disposal System (EPADS) or download from <https://pral.com.pk/home/viewtender>.

The bidder should be a registered supplier on the e-Pak Acquisition & Disposal System (EPADS) to participate in the subject tender. To register electronically suppliers can visit <https://eprocure.gov.pk/#/supplier/registration>.

- ➔ The bids must be submitted electronically on e-Pak Acquisition & Disposal System (EPADS) of PPRA by or before 11:00 AM, April 24, 2025 and will be opened online on the same day i.e., April 24 2025 at 11:30 AM in the presence of interested bidders or their representatives who may wish to attend.
- ➔ The bidding procedure shall be governed strictly in accordance with the applicable procurement rules.
- ➔ For any clarification, please contact on the below mentioned address.

Admin & HR Department (Procurement Wing), Pakistan Revenue Automation Pvt Ltd
Software Technology Park, 2nd Floor, Service Road (North), Sector I-9/3, Islamabad – Pakistan.
Phone: (+92) 51-9259353 | Website: www.pral.com.pk

PID(I)6812/24

Briefs

Egyptian
envoy fetes
friends

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Ihab Abdel Hamid, Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt, hosted a gracious dinner attended by Additional Foreign Secretary Shaharyar Akbar Khan, Zafar Bakhtawari (Secretary General UBG), Nasir Mansoor Qureshi (President ICCI), Usman Shoukat (President Rawalpindi CCI), M. Munir Peshawari (President Gujrat CCI), Saqib Rafiq (former president of RCCI), Ghulam Murtaza (Secretary General ICCI), Muhammad Usman Muzaffar (Secretary General of Gujrat chamber), Sameh Alghamrawi (DCM of Egypt Embassy), Air Commodore (R) Ahmed Helal, Egypt defence Attaché, and the staff of Egypt Embassy. The evening served as a platform to foster trade, investment, and diplomatic ties between Egypt and Pakistan.

Newly
appointed
DG FIA
calls on Naqvi

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi met with the newly appointed Director General of FIA, Riffat Mukhtar Raja, and Director General of the National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA), Waqaruddin Syed. Minister of State for Interior Tallal Chaudhry and Federal Secretary for Interior Muhammad Khurram Agha were also present on the occasion. The Interior Minister assigned DG FIA the task of formulating an effective strategy against illegal immigration and ordered a nationwide crack-down on human trafficking networks. He emphasized that those involved in this heinous crime are playing with innocent lives and must be dealt with with an iron hand. He stressed that the FIA and all law enforcement agencies must work together to eliminate illegal spectrums and organized crime from the country. Minister of State Tallal Chaudhry remarked that human traffickers deserve no leniency.

Deal can be
reached if
US shows
goodwill: Iran

TEHRAN: Iran's top diplomat said Tuesday he believed a new nuclear deal could be agreed with the United States provided Tehran's longtime foe shows sufficient goodwill in talks to begin in Oman on Saturday. Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said Iran's principal aim remained the lifting of sweeping US sanctions. Their reimposition by President Donald Trump in 2018 has dealt a heavy blow to the Iranian economy. Trump made the surprise announcement that his administration would open talks with Iran during a White House meeting on Monday with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, whose country is an arch foe of Tehran. — Agencies

SC hints at wrapping
up military trials case

“How can a law be applied to a conspiracy that has not yet taken place?” asked Justice Mandokhail

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: A seven-member constitutional bench of the Supreme Court, led by Justice Aminuddin Khan, indicated that the case challenging the annulment of military trials for civilians could be concluded within the next two hearings. The bench also included Justices Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Musarrat Hilali, Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Hasan Azhar Rizvi, Naeem Akhtar Afghan, and Shahid Bilal. During the proceedings, Justice Mandokhail posed a pointed query: “How can a law be applied to a conspiracy that has not yet taken place?” Responding to the bench, the Ministry of Defence's counsel, Khawaja Haris, argued that the Army Act does indeed cover the act of conspiracy itself. Justice Mazhar drew a parallel with criminal law, pointing out that Pakistan's Criminal Procedure Code distinctly classifies murder and attempted murder under separate sections. Justice Mandokhail stressed that the criminal justice system is safeguarded under Article 175(3) of the Constitution. Justice Hilali expressed concern over potential media misinterpretation of judi-

SC orders trial courts
to conclude May 9 cases
Anti-terrorism courts are capable of
delivering timely performance: CJP

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court has directed trial courts to conclude all May 9 related cases within four months. A three-member bench headed by Chief Justice Yahya Afridi issued the order during a hearing concerning the cancellation of bail for several accused in the May 9 events. During the proceedings, a defense lawyer questioned the feasibility of completing the trials within the given timeframe, stating, “We are facing 35 cases; it is not possible to conclude all trials in such a short period.” In response, Chief Justice Afridi remarked that during his tenure as Chief Justice of the Peshawar High Court, the Mashal Khan murder case in Mardan was concluded within three months. “Anti-terrorism courts are capable of delivering timely performance,” he said. It is worth noting that just a day earlier, the Supreme Court had also instructed trial courts to conclude cases within three months.

taken away from citizens through ordinary legislation? Should a constitutional amendment not have been required to try civilians in military courts?” She further

noted that India provides an independent forum for contesting military trials. In response, Justice Mazhar clarified that the right to appeal is not currently under judicial scrutiny. Justice Mandokhail added that if the case cannot be brought under Article 8(3A), “then it ends there—what appeal are we even discussing?”

Justice Aminuddin directed that following the conclusion of the defence counsel's arguments, the Attorney General himself must appear before the court.

At one point, Haris argued that the May 9 incidents were against the interests of the state. However, Justice Mandokhail noted, “Any violation of the law is against state interest—every crime, by its very nature, undermines the state.” He questioned whether the Bolan train attack, for instance, was not a matter of national security. “The primary role of the armed forces is to defend Pakistan,” Justice Mandokhail added. In a striking analogy, Justice Mandokhail noted that even a police officer stationed at the Supreme Court gate is tasked with protecting the state. “If he disappears for five minutes, it's a breach of discipline. Isn't that also a failure of state security?” he asked.

Pakistan-KSA eye enhanced
coop in energy sectorSaudi Delegation Meets Pakistan's Petroleum Minister on
Sidelines of Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2025

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A high-level Saudi delegation, led by Abdulrahman Al-Belushi, Deputy Minister for mining met with Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik on the sidelines of the Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2025 to discuss enhanced collaboration in the energy and minerals sectors. Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan was also present. The meeting focused on strengthening bilateral ties and exploring investment opportunities in Pakistan's oil, gas, and mineral resources. Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik

highlighted Pakistan's vast potential in the energy sector, particularly in minerals & mining, and reiterated the government's commitment to facilitating foreign investors through an investor friendly policy framework.

The Saudi Deputy Minister mining lauded the successful Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum. He further said that such forum should be done every year. To which Ali Pervaiz Malik remarked that Pakistan has already pledged to make this an annual activity. CEO of Saudi Geological survey, Mr Abdullah Al Shamrani invited a team from Geological Survey of Pakistan to visit Saudi Arabia for knowl-

edge sharing and technology cooperation. The delegation expressed keen interest in Pakistan's energy and mineral sectors. Discussions also revolved around joint ventures, technology transfer, and capacity-building initiatives to maximize resource extraction and sustainable development. Minister Malik emphasized that Pakistan values its deep-rooted relations with Saudi Arabia and looks forward to increased Saudi investment in Pakistan's energy and mining industries. He also commended the Saudi government for its continued support and assured full cooperation from Pakistani authorities.

Pakistan reaffirms
commitment to
minority rightsThe Minister outlined key initiatives,
including protective legislation, national
observances promoting religious
inclusion, and equitable policy measures

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan reiterated its dedication to protecting minority rights and fostering interfaith harmony during a high-level meeting between Federal Minister for Law & Justice and Human Rights, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, and United Nations Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues, Professor Nicolas Levrat. The discussion, on Tuesday held, here, centered on Pakistan's legal and policy measures to safeguard marginalized communities. Minister Tarar highlighted the country's active collaboration with UN human rights mechanisms, including the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and UN Treaty Bodies. Professor Levrat commended Pakistan's efforts in advancing minority rights, acknowledging the government's engagement with international human rights frameworks. The Minister outlined key initiatives, including protective legislation, national observances promoting religious inclusion, and equitable policy measures. A significant focus was the Jaranwala incident, where the government's swift action ensured justice for victims and support for affected communities. The Minister emphasized that such responses reflect the state's zero-tolerance policy toward violence against minorities. The role of the National Commission for Minorities (NCM) was underscored as a vital body for addressing grievances and protecting minority rights. Minister Tarar also highlighted Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's commitment to improving Pakistan's Human Rights Index through inclusive governance. Reaffirming Pakistan's transparency, the Minister expressed willingness to engage with UN mandate holders, including potential country visits, in line with national protocols. Both sides agreed to enhance cooperation in promoting minority rights through continued dialogue.

‘China committed to fostering
amity, inclusiveness in Asia’Lin's remarks came in response to a media query at a regular press
briefing, following a recent think tank article which noted that China
and ASEAN are emerging as a new center of influence in East Asia

FOREIGN DESK

BEIJING: China remains firmly committed to rooting itself in its neighborhood and contributing to regional development, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said on Tuesday. He emphasized that the principles of amity, sincerity, mutual benefit and

inclusiveness will continue to benefit more people across Asia and contribute to building an Asian community with a shared future, bringing greater stability and hope to the world. Lin's remarks came in response to a media query at a regular press briefing, following a recent think tank article which noted that China and ASEAN are emerging as a new center of influence in East Asia.

The article highlighted that the China-ASEAN relationship – grounded in complementary interests, frequent trade and shared values – holds significant relevance not only for Asia but also for the global community, with observers pointing to China-ASEAN cooperation as a model for China's broader engagement with neighboring countries. Over the past three decades,

China and ASEAN have maintained a stable and growing dialogue partnership, Lin said, adding that their cooperation has become increasingly resilient, dynamic and productive, making it one of the most vibrant and successful collaborative models in both the Asia-Pacific region and the world. Lin said that China and ASEAN have been each other's largest trading partners for five consecutive years, with bilateral trade reaching 6.99 trillion yuan (around 970.32 billion U.S. dollars) in 2024 and the 3.0 upgrade protocol of China-ASEAN Free Trade Area is expected to be signed within the year. China-ASEAN relationship vividly reflects China's longstanding principles of amity, sincerity, mutual benefit and inclusiveness in neighborhood diplomacy, as well as its commitment to fostering friendship and partnership with neighboring countries, Lin said, adding that political mutual trust and shared interests between China and its neighbors continue to deepen.

ISSI and
Russian
think-tank
sign MoU

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) has concluded an MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) with the Institute of China and Contemporary Asia of the Russian Academy of Sciences (ICCA RAS) to forge a collaborative partnership. The ICCA RAS is a premier Russian think-tank providing policy inputs for several decades now. At the meeting held at ISSI, the Russian delegation was led by Dr. Kirill Babae, Director of ICCA RAS, and included Dr. Vladimir Sotnikov, Researcher at the Center for Central Asian Studies, and Dr. Olga Gerasimova, Head of the Department of International Cooperation and External Relations. On the ISSI side, Director General Ambassador Sohail Mahmood was joined by Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman BOG ISSI; Dr. Neelum-Nigar, Director CSP; and members of ISSI's research faculty including Mr. Asadullah Khan, Ms. Mahrukh Khan, Mr. Taimur Khan, and Ms. Maheen Shafiq.

Pak financial
literacy week
from 14th

DNA

KARACHI: Governor State Bank of Pakistan, Mr. Jameel Ahmad will inaugurate Pakistan Financial Literacy Week, 2025 on April 14th, 2025 in a prestigious ceremony at Karachi. The weeklong activities will be conducted from April 14th to April 18th, 2025 on country wide basis. The theme for this year is “Financial Inclusion-with collaboration and innovation. Deputy Governors, Executive Directors, International Dignitaries of World Bank, Alliance for Financial Inclusion, Asian Development Bank, commercial Banks' Presidents and Lead Focus Persons of NFPL, Distinguished Guests from Government Departments, Fintech, PSX, SECP, PBA and many other dignitaries from financial sector as well as academia and chamber of commerce will be present in the ceremony.

ECP sets up
control room
for NA 213

DNA

KARACHI: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has set up a monitoring control room at the office of the Provincial Election Commissioner Sindh for the monitoring of the by-elections scheduled to be held at National Assembly's constituency NA-213 Umerkot. According to the statement issued by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), the Provincial Monitoring Control Room will function uninterruptedly from 9 am to 5 pm. The candidates as well as people of the constituency have to lodge their complaints at the telephone number 021-99205338 and email pmcrsindh@gmail.com. The monitoring control center will issue timely instructions to the monitoring teams for immediate redressal of complaints and action.

Coherent response to
terrorism need of hour

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: In a high-profile panel discussion hosted by the Institute of Regional Studies, (IRS), leading governance and security experts emphasized the need for a coherent and comprehensive response to deal with the alarming spike in terrorism in the country, as well as for diligently pursuing consensus-based initiatives of the National Action Plan. The experts including Mr. AnwarulHaqKakar, former caretaker Prime Minister of Pakistan, Lt. Gen. Nasir Khan Janjua, former National Security Advisor, Dr. Moeed Yusuf, VC BNU and former NSA, Amb. Asif Ali Khan Durrani, former special envoy for Afghanistan, Lt. Gen. Asif Yasin Malik former defence secretary, Mr. Ihsan Ghani, former IG Police and Chief of NACTA, Mr. Imtiaz Gul, Executive Director, CRSS, Mr. Amir Rana, President, PIPS, Mr. Abdullah Khan, MD, Pakistan Institute for Conflicts and Security Studies, and Mr. Ifthikhar Firdous, editor and founder, Khorasan Diary, noted that while there were some issues of capacity that needed to be addressed, but political will to make bold decisions

was the most essential element of an effective counter-terrorism strategy. They stressed that Pakistan's past resilience in overcoming challenging times, was a testament to the strength of its people in the face of an evil which had a global dimension.

The eminent experts provided a detailed analysis of the historical context of the current security situation in Pakistan. They suggested key recommendations for addressing Pakistan's national security challenges advocating a strong counter-narrative in response to the rising incidents of terrorism in the country. To address systemic vulnerabilities, they advocated governance reforms such as strengthening law enforcement, criminal justice system, improving inter-provincial coordination, cracking down on corruption, ensuring local body elections, and increasing youth engagement in decision-making. They also emphasized education reform, focusing on revising the curriculum so to instill values emphasizing peace and harmony.

Chairing the session, Amb Jauhar Saleem, President IRS underlined the need for a coordinated and cohesive tactical approach to address perennial security challenges in Pakistan backed by a well thought out long term strategy.

APRIL 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, 051-8488394