



Islamabad POST

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Israel of seeking to 'dynamite' Syrian 'revolution': Erdogan

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Trump envoy in Russia for Talks with Putin

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Elena powers Kazakhstan to beat Australia

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PM calls Belarus offer "gift"

Belarus to accept 150,000 skilled Pakistani workers

Premier highlights Belarusian expertise in manufacturing equipment for mining sector

DNA

MINSK: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said that Belarus had extended a "generous offer" to invite over 150,000 young, highly skilled Pakistani workers to contribute to nation-building efforts in the eastern European nation. Calling it a "gift" for the people of Pakistan, the prime minister expressed deep gratitude for the opportunity, highlighting that this initiative will benefit the Belarusian economy and provide meaningful livelihoods to Pakistani youth.

"I assure you that the skilled Pakistani workforce, duly certified both by international standards and through national accreditation, will serve as a valuable asset to Belarus," the prime minister said while speaking at a joint press stakeout with President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko. The premier is on an official visit to Belarus at the invitation of President Lukashenko. This visit follows the latter's visit to Pakistan in November 2024, during which both nations signed more than a dozen important memoranda of understanding (MoUs) and agreements, with pledges to further expand bilateral cooperation in diverse fields.

Recalling the visit of Aleksandr Lukashenko to Pakistan in 2015-16, the prime minister said this visit laid the foundation of the long journey of friendship and cooperation in areas of mutual interest. The premier expressed the government's interest in benefiting from the experience of Belarus in various areas, especially agriculture. "Pakistan is an agrarian country, and 65% of the population resides in rural areas. We need your expertise to increase our per-acre yield by utilizing modern methodologies in the sector," he said, adding that Pakistan encourages joint ventures between companies from both countries. "The companies from Pakistan and Belarus will have a win-win situation in this regard." PM Shehbaz also highlighted the Belarusian expertise in manufacturing

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PM's Belarus visit will help further boost bilateral ties

Attallah Tarar said Pakistan's agreements with various countries were in the implementation stage



KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attallah Tarar said on Friday that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's visit to Belarus was of utmost importance, which will prove helpful in further boosting the relations between the two countries. In a media talk, the minister said during the visit of Belarusian President Aleksandr Lukashenko to Pakistan a few months ago, it was agreed to increase cooperation in several fields. He said a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will be signed during Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's visit to Belarus to increase cooperation in agricultural machinery, defense, defense production and various sectors. The minister said that there will also be discussions on further expanding relations between Pakistan and Belarus.

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MINSK: Belarusian President H.E. Aleksandr Lukashenko and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif shake hands at the Independence Palace of Belarus on 11 April 2025. - DNA

Forces kill two khwarij

Kharji Hafeez ullah Kochwan was involved in numerous terrorist activities

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: On night 10-11 April 2025, Security Forces conducted an intelligence based operation in general area Timergara, District Lower Dir, on reported presence of khwarij. During the conduct of operation, own troops surrounded and effectively engaged the khwarij location, and after intense fire exchange, two khwarij including a high value target, kharji Hafeezullah Kochwan were sent to hell. Kharji Hafeezullah Kochwan was involved in numerous terrorist activities against the security forces as well as the innocent civilians. He was highly wanted by the Law Enforcement Agencies

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China slaps 125% tariffs on US goods

China says US "should bear full responsibility" for unleashing turbulence in market with sweeping tariffs

AGENCIES

BEIJING: China said Friday it would raise tariffs on US goods to 125% but would ignore further levies by President Donald Trump because it no longer makes economic sense for importers to buy from America. After a week of market mayhem as the world's two largest economies took turns to put up trade barriers, Beijing dismissed Trump's mounting brinkmanship as a "joke" and a "numbers game". China accused Trump of

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Najfi elevated to SC

Judicial Commission approves 4 former judges as members

Justices (retd) Shakirullah Jan, Nazir Lango, Maqbool Baqar, Shaukat Siddiqui included; Chief Justices, three other judges oppose Najafi appointment

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) unanimously approved the appointment of four retired judges as members of the commission. The meeting was chaired by Chief Justice Yahya Afridi. The session also deliberated on the appointment of two judges to the Supreme Court. According to sources, the commission agreed to appoint new members in place of the acting Chief Justice. The decision to induct four retired judges into the commission was taken with consensus. Sources confirmed that Justice (retd) Maqbool Baqar of the Sindh High Court and Justice (retd) Shaukat Siddiqui of the Islamabad High Court were among those approved for membership. Additionally, Justice (retd) Shakirullah Jan of the Peshawar High Court and Justice (retd) Nazir Lango of the

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SC recommends AI guidelines for judiciary

AI must aid, not replace, human judicial decision-making, says Supreme Court

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan has issued a landmark decision on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the country's judicial system, recommending the development of formal guidelines to regulate its application. The verdict, spanning 18 pages and authored by Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, underscores the role of

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

Palestinian PM calls immediate ceasefire in Gaza

ANTALYA: Prime Minister's Office - Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of State of Palestine Dr. Mohammad Mustafa stressed that securing an immediate ceasefire in the Gaza Strip remains the top priority, as it is the only gateway to addressing the catastrophic humanitarian crisis and initiating a comprehensive reconstruction process. He emphasized that no recovery is possible without a ceasefire—one that must also open the door to a serious political process leading to an independent Palestinian state with full responsibilities in both Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. - Agencies

Pak, Jordan call stronger trade ties

DNA

AMMAN: Pakistan and Jordan has emphasized the need to further strengthen bilateral relations and enhance focus on economic and trade ties as well as people-to-people contacts. This emphasis was laid at the second round of Pakistan-Jordan Bilateral Political Consultations held in Amman. Foreign Secretary Ambassador Amna Baloch represented Pakistan, while Jordanian delegation was led by Ambassador Majeed T. ALQATARNEH, the Secretary-General for Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Jordan.

Holiday Notice

The offices of daily Islamabad POST shall remain closed on Saturday on account of weekly off therefore there will be no newspaper on Sunday. - Editor

To main in hospital

President Zardari tests negative for COVID

Physiotherapy is also being administered as part of the recovery process, says his physician

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: President Asif Ali Zardari is showing signs of improvement in his treatment, his physician Dr Asim Hussain told Geo News on Friday. "The president has tested negative for COVID-19 on a rapid test but remains under the care of infectious disease specialists," Dr Asim said. The physician added that the president was undergoing physiotherapy as part of his recovery, according to his physician, and the president was expected to remain hospitalised for another couple of days. Doctors have not yet allowed any visitors to meet President Zardari during his stay. President Zardari tested positive for COVID-19 on April 2 and has since remained in isolation under close medical supervision, with multiple diagnostic tests conducted to monitor his condition. On April 3, Dr Asim updated the media that the president was receiving medical care at



a private hospital in Karachi under the care of infectious disease specialists. "... the recent blood test reports are promising," Dr Asim informed the media. "Infectious diseases department experts examine President Asif Zardari three times a day," he said, adding that shifting him from Nawabshah to Karachi for treatment was a good decision. Dr Asim further noted that visits have been restricted as a precaution due to COVID-19, the virus President Zardari tested positive earlier this week. He added that the president's family is being provided with continuous health updates. Earlier, senior provincial minister Sharjeel Memon refuted negative reports regarding Zardari's health and stated that the president's condition was improving. In a statement, Memon said that reports suggesting that President Zardari was being shifted to Dubai for medical treatment were not true and that the latter would soon recover completely.

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Since Taliban takeover: Kabul marks deadliest day of public executions

Four men were shot dead by victims' family members in front of crowds at stadiums across three Afghan provinces

FOREIGN DESK

KABUL: Four men were publicly executed in Afghanistan on Friday, the Supreme Court said, the highest number of executions to be carried out in one day since the Taliban's return to power. The executions at sports stadiums in three provinces brought the total number of men publicly put to death since 2021 to 10, according to an AFP tally. Public executions were common during the Taliban's first rule from 1996 to 2001, with most carried out publicly in sports stadiums. Two men were shot around six or seven times by a male relative of the victims in front of spectators in Qala-Naw, the centre of Badghis province, witnesses told an AFP journalist in the city. "They were made to sit and turn their backs to us. Relatives from the victims' families stood behind and shot them with a gun," Mohammad Iqbal Rahimyar, a 48-year-old spectator, told AFP. The men had been "sentenced to retaliatory punishment" for shooting other men after their cases were "examined very precisely and repeatedly", the Supreme Court said in a statement. The families of the victims turned down the opportunity to offer the men amnesty, it said. "If the family of the victim had forgiven the men it would be better, otherwise it's God's order, and should be implemented," a


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Iran seeks 'fair' deal in nuclear talks with US

AGENCIES



TEHRAN: Iran is seeking a "real and fair" agreement with the United States on its nuclear programme, a senior aide to supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said on Friday, setting the stage for a diplomatic showdown this weekend in Oman. Longtime adversaries Iran and the US are set to hold talks on Saturday in Muscat, aimed at reaching a deal on Tehran's nuclear programme. US President Donald Trump last month sent a letter to Khamenei urging negotiations and warning of possible military action if Iran refuses. "Far from putting up a show and merely talking in front of the cameras, Tehran is seeking a real and fair agreement, important and implementable proposals are ready," Khamenei adviser Ali Shamkhani said in a post on X. He confirmed that Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi was heading to Oman "with full authority for indirect negotiations with America",




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CM KP okays innovation hub to boost IT sector

Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur emphasized the government's commitment to digital transformation, stating, "We are determined to create a tech-friendly ecosystem and equip our youth with cutting-edge opportunities"

DNA

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has approved establishment of a modern Innovation Hub at the University of Peshawar and Digital Connect centers across divisional headquarters to promote technological advancement. The decisions were made during a high-level meeting chaired by Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur here Friday. The meeting focused on enhancing higher education and IT infrastructure in the province. The proposed Innovation Hub, to be set up within the University of Peshawar's existing Incuba-

tion Center building, will feature 22 private offices, two large event halls, conference facilities, and co-working spaces. This multipurpose facility is expected to generate annual revenue of Rs. 60 million for the university while providing a collaborative environment for startups, IT companies, and young entrepreneurs. Officials highlighted that the hub would offer all necessary services under one roof to support innovation and business growth. Concurrently, the government has given principle approval for Digital Connect centers in all divisional headquarters, which will initially operate from rented buildings. These centers, comprising IT parks, co-working spaces, and com-

puter labs, aim to provide youth with access to modern technology and create employment opportunities across the province. Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur emphasized the government's commitment to digital transformation, stating, "We are determined to create a tech-friendly ecosystem and equip our youth with cutting-edge opportunities." He directed authorities to ensure swift implementation of both projects, with plans to expand the Innovation Hub model to other universities if proven successful. The meeting was attended by Special Assistant to CM for IT Shafiq Ayaz, along with secretaries of higher education and IT departments, and other senior officials.

Commissioner for fool proof security on Baisakhi Mails

RAWALPINDI: Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Engineer Aamir Khattak along with RPO Babar Sarfaraz Alpa visited Gurdwara Punja Sahib, Hassan Abdal and reviewed the security and other arrangements. According to the details, the commissioner directed the concerned quarters to ensure the security and all other facilities are for Sikh pilgrims. "At the festival, the visitors should be taken care of in all respects", he said. The commissioner was briefed that encroachments from the area surrounding the Gurdwara have been removed and the patchwork of the road was also done to ease the transportation. DPO Dr Sardar Ghiyas Gul Khan gave a detailed briefing on security arrangements. RPO Babar Sarfaraz said that foolproof security arrangements have been completed by Attock Police for Sikh pilgrims coming from different parts of Pakistan and abroad. He directed the police officers to ensure safety and security of the visitors more vigilantly. —APP

SECP issues Barwaqt App fraud alert

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) here on Friday alerted the general public about ongoing fraudulent activities related to the Barwaqt App which was operated by Seedcred Financial Services Limited (SFSL). SFSL is currently non-operational and Barwaqt App was delisted by SECP in August 2024, the commission said in a press release. The SECP has received reports that certain individuals are using social media platforms to falsely claim that they can remove or alter loan default records reported by SFSL to credit bureaus, it said. These individuals are demanding payment in exchange for such services. These practices are fraudulent and are being carried out without any legal authority. "The public is strongly advised not to pay any money to unauthorized individuals or entities offering such services," it added. —APP

Call for multi-pronged approach to prevent cervical cancer spread

PESHAWAR: Health experts have suggested adoption of a multi-pronged approach with focus on three aspects of increasing awareness, improving access to vaccination and adequate treatment for prevention of cervical cancer spread among women. "The fight against cervical cancer requires collective action at every level from raising awareness to improving education to expanding access to vaccine and other health care services," they added. These views were expressed during a session titled as 'Think Now, Act Now, Cervical Cancer Awareness Session'. The session was organized by Jhpiego, a global health organisation, with the objective of raising awareness on cervical cancer and upcoming launch of HPV (Human Papillomavirus) Vaccine in Pakistan for prevention from this fatal disease. The panellist included Dr. Raul Rico Bonifacio, Team Lead WHO EPI Pakistan, Dr. Mariyum Sarfaraz, Associate Professor Health Services Academy and Public Health Professional, Dr. Aminah Khan, Country Director Jhpiego and Craig Beyerinck, Senior Programme Manager GAVI Pakistan. Kicking off the discussion, Dr. Raul

Rico mentioned high risk of cervical cancer in developing countries due to lack of awareness, limited access to vaccines, service and treatment programme. In developed countries, he continued, screening and treatment programmes have been introduced which helped in creating awareness among masses about threats from cervical cancer and measures for its prevention. In order to contain spread of cervical cancer in developing countries, Dr. Raul suggested for adopting a multipronged approach with focus on three aspects including increasing awareness, improve access to vaccination and adequate treatment. In Pakistan, apart from introducing vaccination for prevention of cervical cancer, there is also need of focusing on screening. A single approach of merely immunization cannot address the problem and we also need to make arrangements for screening and treatment, he emphasized. Speaking on needs in incorporating contents in health curriculum on cervical cancer and HPV vaccine, Dr. Mariyum Sarfaraz of Health Services Academy said there is a gap in terms of curriculum not being adequately equipping the medical students, nurses, doctors with the knowl-

edge about sources of this cancer, prevention measures and when screening should be done. Knowledge among medical fraternity is low and awareness is also less among the general population who don't know that they are vulnerable to a type of cancer which is easily preventable through vaccination and can be treated at early stages diagnosis. Dr. Mariyum also pointed lack of screening of target women of 35 years age by hospitals and gynaecology departments. There should be awareness material displayed in hospitals about importance of screening about cervical cancer. The focus of educating health professionals about cervical cancer should not only confined to pre-service staff but also in-service practitioners, she recommended. She also suggested for efforts to demystify cultural myths and misconceptions around causes of cervical cancer and HPV vaccine. Country Director Jhpiego, Dr. Aminah Khan said cervical cancer caused by HPV (Human Papillomavirus) is a serious health challenge in Pakistan, ranking as third most frequent cancer among women claiming around 20 lives on every day. The most important point to mention here that is cervical cancer is preventable through HPV vaccine. Dr. Aminah said Pakistan is fully committed to HPV vaccine introduction in 2025 by integrating it in national immunization programme that will mark a significant step in elimination of this serious health threat.

YPP selected to host official sideline session at UN

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Youth Parliament of Pakistan (YPP) has achieved a historic milestone by being officially selected to host a sideline session at the upcoming United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Youth Forum 2025, scheduled to take place from April 15 to 17 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. This prestigious opportunity places YPP among a select group of globally recognized youth-led organizations chosen from hundreds of international NGOs, INGOs, and civil society networks, according to a press release. The ECOSOC Youth Forum is one of the most influential and inclusive intergovernmental platforms, providing young people with a direct channel to

contribute to global policy discourse—particularly in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. YPP's inclusion as a session host is not just an institutional milestone, but a national achievement that elevates Pakistan's global profile in youth development, civic leadership, and international diplomacy. YPP's official sideline session, titled "Youth in Governance: Driving Climate and Gender Action Through Digital Inclusion and Partnerships", will be held on April 16, 2025, at the Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the United Nations in New York. The session is being co-organized with the Rural Development Foundation (RDF), Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN, Prime Minister's Youth Programme, and Women & Youth for Development, and will feature participation from UN officials, diplomats, global youth leaders, and

development partners. Founder Chairman Abrar ul Haq extended his warm congratulations on this international achievement and shared key insights about the upcoming event. President of the Youth Parliament of Pakistan, Ubaid ur Rehman, who also serves as the Ambassador of the Rural Development Foundation, will act as the official focal person for the event in coordination with the United Nations Secretariat. Vice Chairman Dr. Babar Doggar and Secretary General Hammad Malik will oversee the event's execution on the ground in Islamabad, alongside featured guest speakers. Over the years, YPP has emerged as one of Pakistan's leading youth-led movements, and this recognition by the United Nations is a testament to its unwavering commitment to empowering youth as agents of change at local, national, and global levels.

Gujranwala Expo 2025 kicks off to boost local industry, exports

ISLAMABAD: A three-day Gujranwala Expo 2025 kicked off here on Friday, showcasing brands from innovation to craftsmanship, to bolster local production, promote exports and strengthen domestic economy to reduce dependence on imports. The exhibition, showcasing "Made in Gujranwala" products, was formally inaugurated by Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Industries, Haroon Akhtar Khan during a grand ceremony, attended by prominent government dignitaries, business leaders, traders, and a diverse range of attendees. This three-day event, running from April 11 to 13, 2025, is a premier Business to Business (B2B) trade fair



organized by the Gujranwala Chamber of Commerce & Industry (GCCCI), providing a platform for industry leaders, businesses, and innovators to connect, explore top-quality products,

and discover the latest market trends. At the expo, over 50 stalls have been set up, showcasing a variety of products, including home appliances, sanitary items, edibles, beauty products,

cutlery, LED lights, dresses, plastic goods, paints, and products related to the electrical industry. "These products (displayed at exhibition) will not only meet local needs but will



ISLAMABAD: Former President of Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industry Chaudhry Waheeduddin exchanging views with Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan.

5,000 cops deployed for PSL security

RAWALPINDI: More than 5,000 personnel of the Rawalpindi Police have been deployed for the security of the first match of Pakistan Super League (PSL)-2025 between Islamabad United and Lahore Qalandars being played at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Friday evening. The Elite Force, Dolphin Force and police mobiles were carrying out patrol duties around the stadium and surrounding areas, Police spokesman said. A special control room had been set up for monitoring of the security arrangements through CCTV cameras, the spokesman added. Some 367 traffic police officers were also on the city roads to maintain traffic flow, he said. The spokesman further said that senior officers were present on the ground to personally monitor the security arrangements. The Pakistan Army, Rangers, other security agencies and the district administration were also involved in the security arrangements, he added. Snipers were deployed on the rooftops along the routes of teams from the hotels to the stadium, the spokesman said. Cricket fans would be allowed to enter the stadium after passing through a walk-through gate and full body search, he added. —APP

Call for Muslim unity against Israeli aggression in Palestine

Sardar Yousaf reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering stance on the issue, stating that the country has always raised its voice against Israeli oppression on every international forum and continues to stand firmly with Palestine

MANSEHRA: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Sardar Muhammad Yousaf, has urged the Muslim Ummah to unite under the platform of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to confront the ongoing Israeli aggression in Palestine. He made these remarks while addressing a major rally in Balakot, held as part of a series of demonstrations across Mansehra district to express solidarity with the Palestinian

people. Sardar Yousaf reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering stance on the issue, stating that the country has always raised its voice against Israeli oppression on every international forum and continues to stand firmly with Palestine. "Pakistan has never recognized Israel, while many nations have established diplomatic relations. Our commitment to the Palestinian cause remains unshaken," he said. He described the protests as an expression of faith, not mere-

ly a political act, and condemned the brutal attacks on innocent civilians in Gaza. "The daylight bombings on unarmed Palestinian citizens are the height of cruelty," he asserted. The minister praised the public's participation in the solidarity rallies, saying such demonstrations reflect the true sentiments of the nation. He added that any steps taken by the government regarding the situation would echo the collective will of the people.

PIC maintains recertification audit for 2025

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: Pakistan's first ISO QMS certified public sector hospital Peshawar Institute of Cardiology has proved the ever best international standard hospital to get its successful certification Audit for this year (2025). According to the spokesperson Riffat Anjum Peshawar Institute of Card-

iology (PIC) went through the ISO 9001:2015 Recertification Audit. During the two day audit, PIC was found to have documented, implemented, and maintained its Quality Management System in compliance with the requirements of ISO 9001:2015. She said that evidence of compliance was successfully verified, and continuation to the certification was recommended by the audit team. PIC has honored

the first ever public sector hospital in the country to be ISO 9001:2015 certified in 2022. Maintaining the ISO standards of the hospital involves the tireless efforts of all the hospital staff. Spokes person Riffat Anjum. The Dean of PIC Prof. Dr. Shahakar Ahmad Shah, Medical Director Dr. Ali Raza and Hospital Director Mr. Qazi Saad appreciated its staff for their continuous hard work.



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National Days and Armed Forces Days

APRIL

- April 04/Senegal National Day
- April 07/W. H. O. World Health Day
- April 12/Somalia Armed Forces Day
- April 15/DPR Korea The Day of the Sun
- April 16/Denmark National Day
April 17/Iran Army Day
- April 17/Syria Independence Day
- April 18/Zimbabwe Independence Day
- April 24/Holy See Anniversary of His Papacy of his Pontificate
- April 25/DPR Korea Armed Forces Day
- April 26/Tanzania National Day
- April 27/Sierra Leone Independence Day
- April 27/South Africa Freedom Day
- April 30/Sweden Birthday of His Majesty
- April 30/Netherlands Birthday of Queen



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



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Mihai Eminescu, Allama Iqbal monument restored

The monument, which symbolizes the cultural bond between Pakistan and Romania, was inaugurated approximately 21 years ago by then-Prime Minister Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain

DNA

ISLAMABAD: On the direction of the Chairman of the Capital Development Authority (CDA), Muhammad Ali Randhawa the monument dedicated to Romanian poet Mihai Eminescu and Pakistan's national poet Allama Iqbal has been restored. The Chairman had promised to the Romanian embassy and the resident that the monument shall be restored to its original shape. Expressing gratitude, Romanian Ambassador to Pakistan, Dan Stoenescu had praised the CDA's swift response. In his message on X, the ambassador had remarked, "Thank you for your commitment and efforts to restore this unique monument celebrating our national poets, Mihai Eminescu and Allama Iqbal, as well as the enduring friendship between our nations." The monument, which symbolizes the cultural bond between Pakistan and Romania, was inaugurated approximately 21 years ago by then-Prime Minister Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, in recognition of the literary contributions of the two iconic poets. Both Pakistan and Romania have historically enjoyed strong bilateral relations, marked by mutual respect and cooperation across various fields. The establishment of the monument symbolized the enduring friendship and collaboration between the two nations, serving as a testament to their shared values and diplomatic ties. This monument stood not only as



ISLAMABAD: A view of the recently restored monument at the Jinnah Avenue dedicated to the National poets of Pakistan and Romania. Online

a cultural and historical landmark but also as a beacon of goodwill between the two countries. The respective Romanian ambassadors and the Pakistani government demonstrated unwavering commitment to main-

taining the monument, dedicating substantial efforts and resources to ensure its preservation and upkeep. Their collaborative endeavors underscored the significance of the monument as a representation of

their partnership. Unfortunately, in recent times, the monument suffered damage due to an act of vandalism. This incident has marred the monument's legacy and raised concerns about the protection of such sym-

bolic structures. The act highlights the need for stronger measures to safeguard cultural and diplomatic heritage, ensuring such incidents do not undermine the efforts invested in fostering international relationships.

Talal lauds forces for eliminating high-value target

ISLAMABAD: The Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry Friday praised the intelligence and armed forces for their successful operation, highlighting the government's commitment to combating terrorism, following the elimination of high-value target Kharji Hafeezullah. The intelligence department's ability to gather and analyze critical information played a pivotal role in the success of this operation," Chaudhry said while talking to a private news channel. "Their expertise in surveillance, intelligence gathering and analysis enabled our armed forces to plan and execute a precise and effective strike," he further added. He said, "This war is Pakistan's war, and every day is a step closer to success." He said the Pakistani government and security forces are jointly standing against terrorism and will soon eliminate this menace, showcasing their united front and determination to ensure national security and stability.--APP

Railways eyes modernisation, financial sustainability

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Railways organized a high-level discussion on the "Strategic Roadmap for the Modernization of Pakistan Railways" to explore reforms aimed at modernizing the system, ensuring financial sustainability, and enhancing public service delivery—in line with the Prime Minister's directives. Chaired by Federal Minister Hanif Abbasi, the meeting resolved to vigorously implement the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model to transform Pakistan Railways into a financially sustainable and operationally efficient organization. Through this model, private sector participation will be encouraged to enable investment, foster commercial development, and improve infrastructure within the railways. As per the special instructions of the prime minister, a comprehensive plan was also reviewed to upgrade railway stations across the country in accordance with modern standards. The goal is to provide passengers with world-class travel facilities. Stations will be transformed into commercial hubs, integrating cleanliness, security, advanced technology.--APP

Development requires supportive ecosystem to thrive: Ahsan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Friday stressed that national development required a supportive ecosystem, akin to those in developed countries, built upon four foundational principles including peace and harmony, at least a decade of political stability, policy consistency and continuous reforms. "The seed of development needs a conducive ecosystem, based on these four pillars, which are evident in every success story," he stated while addressing a seminar titled 'Navigating Public Policy.' He lamented the country's political instability in the past, describing it as a decades-long "musical chairs" scenario, where governments changed every two to three years, resulting in the abandonment of careful-

ly crafted policy frameworks and severely hindering national development and prosperity. While acknowledging that Pakistan has made significant strides since its inception in 1947, the minister admitted that the pace of development fell short compared to global standards. "We have to cut a sorry figure when compared with developed nations," he said. Recalling economic comparisons, Ahsan Iqbal said that in 1960, Pakistan's exports were approximately \$200 million, while South Korea, Malaysia, and Thailand had exports around \$205 million. Today, Pakistan's exports stand at around \$32 billion, in contrast to South Korea's \$600 billion, Malaysia's \$300 billion and Thailand's \$200 billion. Highlighting another comparison, he said that in 1980, Pakistan's per capita income was \$300 compared to China's \$200. However, today Pakistan's per capita income was around \$1,600,

while China's has surged to approximately \$16,000. He stressed that the Pakistani nation possessed all the essential characteristics to transform into a developed country, but reiterated that peace, political stability, policy continuity and ongoing reforms were crucial to keeping pace with rapidly evolving global technologies. Recalling the PML-N's 2013 tenure, Ahsan Iqbal said Pakistan at that time was grappling with prolonged electricity load-shedding and heightened terrorist activity. "With complete determination, within four years, we eliminated load-shedding, eradicated terrorism, and cleansed the country of terrorists," he said. He further highlighted the significance of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which brought in \$25 billion in investment. International rating agencies had predicted

that, if Pakistan maintained its development trajectory, it could be among the world's top 20 economies by 2030. "This was a validation of our Vision 2010 and Vision 2025," he remarked. Unfortunately, the minister said, a regime change in 2018 disrupted this progress, as all PML-N-initiated development policies were discarded, and a government with a "fake mandate" was installed. This shift, he argued, erased the positive international sentiment that Pakistan had worked hard to build. Now that the PML-N is back in power, he asserted, "We must become a sharper economy - more agile, smarter and faster." To achieve this, the government has introduced a "5Es Framework" under the URAAN PAKISTAN initiative, aimed at positioning Pakistan as a leading economy by boosting exports.

Kitchen Items' prices ease by 0.83pc

ISLAMABAD: The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), decreased by 0.83 percent for the combined consumption groups during the week ended on April 10, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday. According to the PBS data, the SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 317.12 points as compared to 319.79 points during the past week. As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed a decrease of 2.81 percent. The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 =100 covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups. The SPI for the lowest consumption group of up to Rs 17,732 witnessed a decrease of 0.98 per cent and went down to 305.65 points from last week's 308.66 points. The SPI for consumption groups of Rs 17,732 to 22,888; Rs 22,889-29,517; Rs 29,518-44,175 and above Rs 44,175, went down by 0.99 percent, 0.91 percent, 92 percent and 0.75 percent respectively. During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 14 (27.45%) items increased, 11 (21.57%) items decreased and 26 (50.98%) items remained stable. The items, which recorded major increase in their average prices on a week-on-week basis included chicken (14.73%), tomatoes (12.82%), onions (11.40%), garlic (8.05%), eggs (7.40%), bananas (6.72%), wheat flour (4.74%) and potatoes (2.33%). The commodities which recorded decrease in their average prices on a week-on-week basis included pulse gram (1.63%), LPG (0.64%), beef and curd (0.59%) each, long cloth (0.54%), gur (0.46%), pulse moong (0.35%), salt powder (0.26%), pulse masoor (0.24%), mutton (0.20%) and cigarettes (0.06%). --DNA

Newborns' mental health to be integrated into national policy

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Secretary for Health Dr. Nelson Azeem on Friday announced that newborns' mental health will be incorporated into Pakistan's national health policy. Speaking at the inaugural session of the country's first international Infant Mental Health Conference, he said that the earliest years of life lay the foundation for lifelong mental, emotional, and physical well-being. He highlighted that around 40 percent of Pakistan's population is under the age of 15. "If we nurture our children properly today, we can build a healthy, capable, and productive workforce that ensures economic progress and social stability," he said. The conference was jointly organized by the Health Services Academy (degree-awarding institution), The Healing Triad, and the Pakistan Institute of Living and Learning. The central theme of the event was "Baby Matters," aimed at promoting mental health services for children from birth to age three. Key speakers included Dr. Alexander Harrison, Dr. Nadeem Zafar, and Prof. Mudat H. Rana, while representatives from the Ministry of National Health Services, World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, Pakistan Paediatric Association, Pakistan Psychiatric Society, Institute of Psychiatry (Benazir Bhutto Hospital Rawalpindi), Health Services Academy, and other national and international organizations also participated. Director Projects at HSA, Nadeem Sajjad Kayani, and Additional Controller of Examinations Dr. Khalid Iqbal Malik, along with HSA's senior faculty, were in attendance. Representing the HSA Vice Chancellor, Head of Public Health Department Dr. Babar Tasneem Shaikh welcomed the participants and outlined the critical gaps in infant mental health services in Pakistan, along with their serious social and medical consequences. Dr. Shaikh emphasized the need for effective parenting, early intervention services, and community-level awareness for this age group. The conference provided a unique platform for dialogue and collaboration between international and local experts. Local participants included Dr. Abid Malik, Dr. Asad Tameezuddin, Dr. Ayesha Minhas, Dr. Sarwat, Dr. Wajid Malik, Dr. Alia Khalid, Dr. Roop Zainab Rana, and Ms. Farwa Naqvi from Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Dr. Azeem pointed out that research clearly indicates how adverse early childhood experiences—such as stress, abuse, or neglect—have a lasting impact on brain development.--DNA

Dr. Bakht appointed as new head of Mass Com deptt at AIOU

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, Vice Chancellor Allama Iqbal Open University has appointed Dr. Bakht Rawan, a senior faculty member and Associate Professor in the Department of Mass Communication, as the new head of the department. The appointment has been made under the university's transparent and merit-based policy and is being regarded

as a significant and positive step towards the promotion of academic, research, and professional activities. Dr. Bakht Rawan possesses



decades of extensive experience in teaching, research, and practical journalism. He has been serving as an Associate Professor in the Department of Mass Communication and is also fulfilling additional responsibilities as Director of Public Relations with great dedication and efficiency. Entrusting him with the leadership of the department is a recognition of his academic excellence, professional competence, strong commitment to the institution, and unwavering

integrity. It is expected that under his leadership, the Department of Mass Communication will reach new academic horizons and achieve greater heights in research. Faculty members, researchers, and administrative officials of the university have extended their heartfelt congratulations to Dr. Bakht Rawan on his new role and have termed his appointment a welcome development that will play a pivotal role in the progress of the department.

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Briefs

Entomologists recruitment to combating dengue

RAWALPINDI: The District Health Authority is preparing for the dengue preventive campaign with enhanced measures. Focusing on human resources, the authority has started hiring contingent staff in the first phase. The health authority will hire 52 entomologists to be assigned to different targeted population clusters, for which the posts have been advertised in the newspaper. According to the 'Staff Hiring Ad', females and males have been provided equal opportunity to apply for the temporary vacant jobs. Talking to APP, the CEO of the District Health Authority Rawalpindi, Dr. Asif Arbab Niazi said that following the last year's approach, the authority has begun preparations this year as well, keeping preventive measures in mind. "The District Health Authority Rawalpindi is starting the temporary recruitment of entomologists for the Dengue Program. Under this initiative, 52 entomologists will be hired for 3 months." The Health Authority has decided to recruit entomologists as part of a well-planned strategy to control dengue effectively. Dr. Asif Arbab further said that the fresh appointees would be assigned in any Tehsil or town of Rawalpindi as needed, ensuring a highly coordinated approach to dengue monitoring and surveillance.—APP

Importance of book reading on rise in this digital age

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In the modern digital age where mobile phones, e-papers and manuscript on internet or social networking websites are the primary source of information, the importance of books is still on the rise. The scholars, students and book lovers were still showing keen interest and rushing to book stalls for reading purpose. Talking to APP, Associate Professor Shah Abdul Latif University Khairpur, Dr Sahib Khan said that developing a strong reading habit involved in creating consistent routines, finding engaging material, and setting achievable goals. It can be a rewarding process that enhances cognitive skills, reduces stress, and expands knowledge, he added.

He stressed that continuously book reading habit would not only give readers immense knowledge but it would teach them how to behave with others in a manner. He emphasized that in a polarized society, book is a loyal and best friend seems to be failing into obscurity. He urged the students to focus on reading books besides their academic learning and make friendship with books for the sake acquiring information. Mujeeb-ur-Rehman, a student, said that he always enjoys reading books and cannot live without them that's reason he was visiting various libraries to acquire ample knowledge. He said that reading thousand books would tell a reader how to behave and survive in the society.

Workshop on climate change, effects along CPEC begins

Dignitaries from the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), including Dr. Kang Shichang, Director General of the Institute of Mountain Hazards and Environment, and Dr. Su Lijun, Director General of the CPJRC at Quaid-i-Azam University (QAU), Islamabad, attended the inaugural session

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The International Training Workshop on Climate Change and Water Safety Effects along the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was inaugurated at the Pakistan Academy of Sciences, Islamabad. The event was jointly opened by Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum, Executive Director of the Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan, and Mr. Xu Hangtian, Minister Counselor at the Embassy of China in Pakistan. Organized by the China-Pakistan Joint Research Center on Earth Sciences (CPJRC) and the Pakistan Academy of Sciences (PAS), with sponsorship from the Alliance of National and International Science Organizations (ANSO), the workshop brings together leading experts, academicians, and policymakers from across the region to address the pressing challenges of climate change and water security along the CPEC corridor. Dignitaries from the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), including Dr. Kang Shichang, Director General of the Institute of Mountain Haz-



ards and Environment, and Dr. Su Lijun, Director General of the CPJRC at Quaid-i-Azam University (QAU), Islamabad, attended the inaugural session. Senior Pakistani academics such as Prof. Dr. Muhammad Aslam Baig, Secretary General of PAS, and Prof. Dr. Mumtaz Shah of QAU also spoke at the event. Representatives from key national organizations—including the Pakistan Science Foundation, Global Climate Change Impact Study Centre, National Disaster Management

Authority, PMAS Arid Agriculture University, and Pakistan Meteorological Department—were also in attendance. The five-day workshop, being held from April 10-14, 2025, has attracted over 120 participants from various academic and research institutions across Pakistan and 20 international delegates from countries within the Hindu Kush Himalaya region, including China, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan. In their opening remarks, Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum and Mr. Xu Hangtian

emphasized the significance of Sino-Pakistani cooperation in promoting academic, scientific, and socioeconomic progress. They highlighted the growing challenges posed by climate change—especially its impact on cryosphere systems, water resources, disaster risk reduction, agriculture, and human livelihoods—and called for innovative, collaborative approaches to ensure sustainable water management. Other speakers underscored the increasing severity of water-related disasters

and the urgent need for trans-boundary research and solutions. They affirmed that the strong partnership between China and Pakistan is key to advancing sustainable development and climate resilience along the CPEC corridor. The workshop is expected to foster fruitful discussions, knowledge sharing, and research collaborations that will contribute to evidence-based policy and practical strategies for climate adaptation and water security in the region.

Minister briefed on preparations for overseas convention

This convention will prove to be an important milestone in highlighting the issues, roles, and contributions of Pakistanis living abroad

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Chaudhry Salik Hussain, presided over a meeting held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where preparations for Pakistan's first Overseas Pakistanis Convention were reviewed. During the meeting, Feder-

al Minister Chaudhry Salik Hussain was briefed on the preparations for the overseas convention. He stated that overseas Pakistanis are the backbone of the country's economy, and protecting their rights and addressing their issues is essential for national development. The significant increase in remittances in recent months is evidence that overseas Pakistanis have faith in Pakistan's future, said a

press release. Chaudhry Salik Hussain further noted that the government not only appreciates the financial support of overseas Pakistanis but also views them as key partners in national development. This convention will prove to be an important milestone in highlighting the issues, roles, and contributions of Pakistanis living abroad. The convention will not only pave the way for resolving issues but will also

lay the foundation for including the overseas community in national policy-making. The meeting was attended by Minister of State for Overseas Pakistanis Aoun Chaudhry, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Tariq Bajwa, officials from the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Interior, OPF, Islamabad administration, and representatives from other institutions.

Nawaz committed to lead charge on Balochistan's issues

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister, Huzaifa Rehman Friday stated that former Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif is spearheading efforts to tackle the deep-rooted problems plaguing Balochistan, with a strong commitment to forging national consensus. Talking to the state run news channel, Huzaifa Rehman lauded Nawaz Sharif as a stalwart leader who has consistently played a pivotal role in Pakistan's politics, always ready to serve the nation in times of need. Huzaifa further praised Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for steering Pakistan out of a tumultuous period sparked by Imran Khan's ouster, crediting him with navigating the country through a complex crisis and stabilizing the economy in the country. He also expressed admiration for Pakistan's recent economic stability, attributing it to the government's effective policies. He reaffirmed his commitment to working for the welfare of the people and aligning with the government's efforts to drive positive change.—DNA

NA Speaker regrets opposition walkout

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Friday expressed regret over the opposition's walkout and the subsequent pointing out of quorum during the session. He said most of the questions on the day's agenda were submitted by opposition members, making their absence all the more unfortunate. "It is disappointing that the opposition chose to walk out during proceeding when was discussing important national issues," he added. Referring to recent discussions in the House, the Speaker said that 30 members had participated in a debate on water canals earlier, while most opposition parties—except JUI—were absent on that day. He clarified that the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) had submitted a resolution on canals issue on April 7, and the matter was discussed in detail on same day. However, another similar resolution was again submitted by the opposition on April 10. Addressing broader concerns raised by opposition parties, Ayaz Sadiq said that those who frequently speak out on issues such as Palestine and border security often fail to show up when these matters are scheduled for debate in the House. "It is regrettable that the opposition distances itself from the Parliament's core responsibilities," he added.—APP

IRSA releases 88,400 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 88,400 cusecs water from various run stations with inflow of 112,400 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1412.00 feet which was 10:00 feet higher than dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 38,500 cusecs and 25,000 cusecs respectively.—APP

Pakistani farmers need to grow HC-021C canola variety

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Wuhan Qingfa Hesheng Seed Company Limited Business Head Pakistan Zhou Xusheng has exhorted the farmers to cultivate the new high-yield canola variety HC-021C, introduced under the CPEC project, to help Pakistan cut the canola oil import bill. Speaking at a training session for farmers in Piplan area of Bhakkar district, Punjab, focused on hybrid rapeseed cultivation, Zhou emphasized, "The new variety can boost edible oil production and save foreign exchange reserves for Pakistan." According to an INP's report, he pointed out that many people associate the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) with roads and dams, but during his tenure as the head of Qingfa Wuhan Hesheng Seed Company, he contributed to the CPEC by introducing this new canola variety in Pakistan.

Zhou noted that Pakistan currently grows canola on just 140,000 acres, which is insufficient to reduce the country's import bill. He highlighted the agricultur-

al cooperation agreement between the Chinese and Pakistani governments and announced his company's plans to help the farmers access canola harvesting equipment and oil extraction units from China, further promoting canola cultivation in Pakistan. He said unlike other canola varieties, HC-021C produces the oil that is not only sweet and tasty but also offers numerous health benefits. With lower levels of erucic acid and glucosinolates than the international standards, this variety is particularly beneficial for heart health. Additionally, the mustard cake left after oil extraction is highly nutritious for animals, improving milk production and reducing the maturity period of livestock, which can increase the farmers' income, he added. Zhou promised to request the Punjab government to provide subsidies for growing the new canola variety, reducing the sowing costs for farmers and boosting their profits. This support will encourage the farmers to expand the area under canola cultivation, helping Pakistan meet its oil needs, he added. Qingfa

Wuhan Hesheng Seed Company Limited and Eyyol Group have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to produce canola seed and edible oil in Pakistan. This rapeseed project is now an official part of the CPEC Phase-II Agricultural Project, supported by both governments. The two companies have been collaborating since 2009 to develop HC-021C, which offers improved yields and healthier oil. The Rapeseed Field Technical Training Program aims to further strengthen the China-Pakistan agricultural cooperation and promote modern agricultural practices, he said. Speaking on the occasion, Head of Certus Seeds, Eyyol Group Pakistan Muhammad Zafar Iqbal emphasized that HC-021C has the potential to revolutionize Pakistan's economy by meeting its edible oil requirements. He said despite being an agricultural country, Pakistan imports 500,000 tonnes of edible oil annually, spending \$4 billion. If double-zero canola is cultivated nationwide, it could become a backbone of Pakistan's agriculture sector, he added.

Naval Chief heads command and staff conference



DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Command & Staff Conference of Pakistan Navy concluded at Naval Headquarters, Islamabad. The conference was chaired by Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf. During the conference, participants assessed the evolving maritime situation in the region with a focus on national securi-

ty, geostrategic affairs, and combat readiness. Progress on ongoing Pakistan Navy projects, along with future plans, was also reviewed. The Naval Chief emphasized the importance of maintaining perpetual combat readiness to effectively counter both traditional and non-traditional threats in the maritime domain. He appreciated Navy's efforts in acquiring advanced plat-

forms and technologies, expressing confidence in its operational preparedness to safeguard Pakistan's maritime frontiers. Admiral Ashraf also commended the successful conduct of multinational exercise AMAN-25 and AMAN Dialogue, underscoring their significance in fostering maritime collaboration among regional and extra-regional naval forces. He noted that

these initiatives reflect Pakistan's commitment to cooperative maritime security, in line with Navy's vision for a secure and stable maritime environment. The Command & Staff Conference is the apex decision-making forum of Pakistan Navy, where the Chief of the Naval Staff, along with all Principal Staff Officers and Field Commanders, reviews the policies and strategic plans of the service.

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Controlling Rafah what does it mean?

FOR more than two weeks, the Israeli occupation army has been launching a multi-front ground military operation, starting from Salah al-Din Street—formerly known as the Netzarim Axis—in the center of the Gaza Strip, expanding to encompass the entire city of Rafah and the eastern part of Khan Yunis in the south, before extending to the Shujaiya neighborhood in the east of Gaza City, as well as Beit Hanoun and Beit Lahia in the north, in addition to the northern coastal strip of the territory. In a repeat of what the Israeli occupation army did in the north of the Gaza Strip in October 2024 under what was known as the General's Plan, the Hebrew newspaper Haaretz revealed the occupation army's efforts to annex the city of Rafah—which constitutes one-fifth of the Gaza Strip—land to the buffer zone that Israel prohibits Palestinians from entering. The newspaper said that the buffer zone the occupation army is preparing to establish covers 75 square kilometers, located between the Philadelphi and Morag axes, and includes Rafah city and its neighboring districts in the southern part of the Palestinian territory—effectively meaning the annihilation of any existence of the city. Haaretz added that under the annexation of Rafah and its surrounding neighborhoods into the buffer zone, the occupation army will not allow Palestinian civilians to return to Rafah, and is considering the demolition of all buildings in it. According to Haaretz, annexing a city the size of Rafah to Israel's new buffer zone will turn the Gaza Strip into an enclave within Israeli territory, distancing it from the Egyptian border. The newspaper based this view on Israeli military sources, noting that the proposed plan for Rafah and its surrounding areas is a repeat of what was done in the north of the Gaza Strip. On March 29, the occupation army announced the expansion of its ground operation in the south of the Gaza Strip to enlarge the buffer security zone it named the defensive security area, while warning Palestinians in Rafah to evacuate immediately. Days later, the occupation army began a wide-scale incursion into the city of Rafah as part of its ongoing military operation in the southern Gaza Strip, after deploying the 36th Combat Division to the area. Haaretz viewed the talk about annexing Rafah to the buffer zone as stemming from a decision by the political leadership to renew the war on the Gaza Strip last March, in light of a statement by the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that Israel would control large parts of the Gaza Strip. The newspaper continued, "The army now realizes that Israel is unlikely to receive international support for a prolonged operation in the Gaza Strip, even from the United States, and that threats made by members of the government to block humanitarian aid are unlikely to be translated into actual policy. Therefore, the army is preparing to focus its campaign on areas it believes will put pressure on Hamas leadership. These claims by the Hebrew newspaper come despite Tel Aviv's failure to fully impose its control over areas in the northern Gaza Strip, where it had tried for months to evacuate residents from Beit Lahia and Jabalia in hopes of establishing a wider buffer zone to separate its settlements from the Strip."

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China's 'fight to the end'

On Thursday, China's countermeasures against the US took effect. China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Commerce, and other departments once again issued a series of statements reiterating China's firm stance that, while China does not want to fight these tariff and trade wars, it is not scared of them. In contrast to the US government's erratic "random punches," which change almost daily, China has consistently maintained a calm, composed, and measured response, showing the world a China that can withstand pressure, remain steady, and shoulder great responsibility. China has the ability and confidence to address various risks and challenges. Facing the unreasonable "reciprocal tariffs" imposed by the US, China has, on one hand, resolutely taken necessary countermeasures in accordance with World Trade Organization rules, firmly defending its legitimate rights and interests while safeguarding the multilateral trade system and international economic order. On the other hand, China issued a white paper entitled "China's Position on Some Issues Concerning China-US Economic and Trade Relations," once again clarifying to the US and the world that China-US economic and trade relations are mutually beneficial and win-win in nature, and that the two countries should find proper solutions to resolve the issues through dialogue and consultation. Meanwhile, the "refund-upon-purchase policy" for foreign tourists' shopping and departure tax refunds has been implemented, and the 137th China Import and Export Fair, also known as the Canton Fair, and the 5th China International Consumer Products Expo are underway. This wave of backlash against globalization initiated by the US cannot change the steadfast course of China's giant ship, nor can it shake the united will and collective strength of Chinese society, where everyone works together through thick and thin. China has always remained committed to "running its own affairs well." Domestically, it promotes high-quality development, values technological innovation, and pursues reform with a problem-oriented approach. Internationally, it consistently practices true multilateralism, shares development opportunities with the world through high-level opening-up, and contributes to building a community with a shared future for mankind. China's economy enjoys ample room for maneuver, strong internal potential, and vast external space - it is like an ocean capable of withstanding turbulent winds and storms. China's "fight to the end" is backed by strong confidence. In recent days, both the European Union and ASEAN have expressed their willingness to work with China to jointly support multilateralism and the healthy, stable development of global trade. The New York Times noted that the US' "barrage" of trade levies and unpredictability about what it might do next, in fact, have made China "a more appealing option" for companies scared to make a hasty decision amid upheaval in global trade. Many have decided to stay in China, which is completely contrary to the US' original intention of exerting maximum pressure on China and calling for "investing in the US." Deutsche Welle, citing experts, stated that in the trade war, China is likely to be the more resilient side.

Trump's 90-day tariff pause: A strategic recalibration?

Qamar Bashir



In justifying his reversal, Trump said he acted on "instinct" and felt that markets and citizens alike were getting "yippy" and "a little bit afraid." His folksy language barely concealed the broader truth: the markets were plummeting, and with them, investor confidence in the administration's economic management. The president's change of course was likely motivated by a convergence of several powerful factors. The bond market had shown signs of panic, signaling fears of a looming recession. Meanwhile, the dollar wobbled

IN a surprising and dramatic policy reversal, President Donald Trump has announced a 90-day pause on his sweeping new tariffs for nearly every trading partner—except China. The move, announced just hours after the tariffs went into effect, sent markets soaring, calmed international anxiety, and opened a temporary window for diplomatic negotiations. But behind the scenes, this abrupt about-face reveals a complex interplay of economic realities, political pressures, and global trade dynamics that forced the president to back down from a central tenet of his economic ideology. The president's post on Truth Social—"a 90 DAY PAUSE"—marked a decisive pivot. While car, steel, and aluminum tariffs remain intact, the suspension of broader trade taxes sent the S&P 500 soaring over 9% in a single day, its best performance since the 2008 financial recovery. Tech stocks, airlines, and auto manufacturers all rallied sharply. Even companies still burdened by tariffs, like Ford and GM, saw significant gains. In justifying his reversal, Trump said he acted on "instinct" and felt that markets and citizens alike were getting "yippy" and "a little bit afraid." His folksy language barely concealed the broader truth: the markets were plummeting, and with them, investor confidence in the administration's economic management. The president's change of course was likely motivated by a convergence of several powerful factors. The bond market had shown signs of panic, signaling fears of a looming recession. Meanwhile, the dollar wobbled against global currencies, further stoking anxiety. Perhaps most compellingly, spontaneous demonstrations against the tariffs erupted across the country—from New York to San Francisco—as thousands of Americans protested what they saw as an unjustified and reckless trade war that risked jobs, raised prices, and destabilized global partnerships. Economists and business leaders had warned for weeks that a prolonged tariff war would increase production costs, especially in key industries reliant on imported raw materials and components. American companies—particularly small- and medium-sized manufacturers—began sounding the alarm, saying they could not pivot supply chains overnight. Even powerful corporate allies of Trump began voicing discon-

tent. The president's isolation of China in this tariff pause also underscores the deep geopolitical rivalry between the two economic superpowers. The decision to raise tariffs on all Chinese imports to 125% followed Beijing's retaliatory move of increasing levies on U.S. goods to 84%. Both sides have now entered a tit-for-tat escalation, further straining relations already tested by restrictions on technology firms, export bans, and accusations of economic espionage. China's Ministry of Commerce responded harshly, placing export controls on 12 American companies and designating six more as "unreliable entities"—effectively banning them from Chinese markets. Trump's team insists that the tariff approach is working, pointing to concessions from countries like Vietnam, Cambodia, and Ecuador, which have signaled willingness to reduce trade barriers and open markets to American products. Still, there is a growing debate over whether tariffs are the right mechanism to restore American industrial dominance. While the idea is to incentivize domestic production, there are challenges. For instance, the U.S. auto industry has struggled with quality and innovation, leading many consumers to prefer foreign-made vehicles known for their durability, fuel efficiency, and after-sales service. If the administration hopes to make tariffs a long-term policy tool, American industries will need to dramatically improve their competitiveness, not just rely on protectionism. Trade barriers alone cannot revive domestic manufacturing unless paired with major investments in innovation, training, and infrastructure. History shows that protectionism, while politically appealing, can often stifle innovation by reducing competition. In today's fast-paced global economy, the U.S. must invest in research and development, automation, and green technologies if it wants to lead again. The economic impact of tariffs also affects the dollar's value. When the U.S. imposes tariffs on imports, it increases the cost of foreign goods, often pushing the dollar higher as demand rises. Conversely, retaliatory tariffs on American exports can weaken the dollar, as foreign buyers shift away from U.S. goods. Striking the right balance is tricky, and Trump's pause might be seen as an effort to

stabilize currency markets amid growing global uncertainty. Beyond economics, international reaction has played a significant role in shaping the administration's response. Canada, a historically close ally, reacted with rare public fury. As one of the U.S.'s largest trading partners, Canada's retaliatory measures and national outrage rattled policymakers. The idea that America's most dependable neighbors were being punished indiscriminately undermined Trump's case for fair trade and weakened U.S. leadership on the world stage. The pause also raises deeper concerns about governance. During a congressional hearing on Wednesday, the president's trade representative, Jamieson Greer, was caught off guard by the announcement. Lawmakers expressed frustration, with Rep. Steven Horsford of Nevada shouting, "This is amateur hour." The last-minute decision, made without consulting key officials or allies, raises questions about how trade policy is being formulated and whether it reflects a coherent long-term strategy or moment-to-moment reactions. Meanwhile, Trump's broader policy direction continues to raise alarms. On the same day as the tariff pause, he reaffirmed plans to revive fossil fuel extraction and reopen coal mines, reversing years of environmental progress. Critics warn that such policies could trigger a global race toward dirty energy production, exacerbating climate change and harming public health. In light of these developments, it would be prudent for the administration to extend the spirit of the 90-day tariff pause to its energy agenda as well. Just as tariffs deserve reevaluation, so too does America's environmental policy. Rethinking coal and fossil fuel revival with the same urgency and pragmatism could prevent long-term damage to the planet and bolster America's standing as a responsible global leader. In the end, Trump's 90-day pause on tariffs is both a concession and an opportunity. It reflects the limits of unilateralism in a globally connected world and offers a chance to recalibrate. The U.S. can use this moment not only to renegotiate fairer trade deals but also to reinvest in its own industrial base, green technology, and diplomatic alliances. Whether this pause leads to a sustainable strategy—or merely delays another storm—remains to be seen.

Ad-hocism in de-radicalization efforts

Dr Muhammad Rizwan Bhatti

Undoubtedly, The civil society of Pakistan has embraced multiple offensives both hard and soft measures in order to mobilize, educate, apprise and sensitize the general masses about the imperils of militancy, extremism and violent extremism, the flip side is that the public awareness programmes are held for an ephemeral period. This ad-hoc approach is rather reactionary instead of adopting long lasting pro-active approach towards elimination of violent militarism. The campaigns against extremism should be sustained and durable

THE transformation of behaviour is as important as change of obscurantist ideology. Change of behaviour and reorientation of ideology is the crux of deradicalization process. One of the most formidable challenges confronting the agencies to survey the deradicalization efforts is great deal of inconsistency, aggravated by lack of information, regarding which entities, either public or private, oversee the actual rehabilitation and reintegration program at Sabaoon, Mishal or at any of other locations. Sabaoon was intended to return to civilian authorities in the nascent stage, yet the project Mishal was run by Military administration from the very outset. This invariably leads to incongruities and inconsistencies in methods, modus operandi, resources and cherished outcomes, which further spoils the overall counter-terrorism prospects of success of such rehabilitation programmes. Notwithstanding, the specter of rejection, retribution by erstwhile terrorist organization dwindles the possibility of accepting de-radicalization arguments. There would be another looming distress for loss of status and respect from peers in case of abandoning organizational ideology. For that reason, motivational handicap to convince the high status figures might be greater than the motivational barrier to convince low status figures within the terrorist organization. Undoubtedly, The civil society of Pakistan has embraced multiple offensives both hard and soft measures in order to mobilize, educate, apprise and sensitize the general masses about the imperils of militancy, extremism and violent extremism, the flip side is that the public awareness programmes are held for an ephemeral period. This ad-hoc approach is rather reactionary instead of adopting long lasting pro-active approach towards elimination of violent militarism. The campaigns against extremism should be sustained and durable in impact. The public should be kept aware on a large scale with greater socio-political impact. In Adhocism, long term planning is missing; these vigorous de-radicalization efforts should be continued even when there is interlude of peace and dormant violence. The administration needs to use developed methods to rehabilitate the host communities through dialogue and integration activities and continue to neutralize the volatile areas, nefarious

elements and eliminating factors that conducive to triggering recidivism. Militancy has become festering sore in Pakistan. At present, we are facing ethno-national, socio-political and faith-based terrorism. Counter terrorism department is doing splendid efforts in the prevention of violent extremism and extermination of terrorist networks. The will of Government is awfully essential to end the menace of militancy from society. For the eradication of terrorism, cohesive and integrated approach is required on the national level. NACTA has to prove herself as National Body to fight against extremism and terrorism. Sustainable approach, to a large measure, requires national deradicalization policy, inter-agency coordination, community based rehabilitation programmes, psychological well being, economic support and perennial surveillance/ monitoring mechanism to avert recidivism. The polarization of social fabric and religio-political fragmentation has been a mammoth impediment in evolving effective counter-extremist responses. The radicalization is rampant in Pakistan because the causes and grievances are galore. The presence of few de-radicalization and rehabilitation centers is providing paltry relief in respect of eradication of terrorism. The reformed militants received hostile environment in the living society. It is good to steer clear of violent ideology but it needs to great efforts to curb them for long. The host society plays a pivotal role in providing conducive environment for curbing violent ideologies. In the absence of all-embracing host community, the fear of relapsing remains quite impending. Bad governance, social economic disparities and ever-increasing political fragmentation produce a rich breeding ground for the growth and mushrooming of radicalization. Without addressing the root problems, the eradication of radicalization is impossible. There is a strong need of broad based de-radicalization approaches to combat extremism. Counter violent extremism approach is need of the hour to tide over the menace of militancy. Without adopting holistic de-radicalization paradigm, the defeat of extremism in Pakistan will remain an arduous task.

The gravity, scale and extent of radicali-

zation as malady are horrendous. The outcome of de-radicalization efforts is frail, short-lived and narrow in fructification. The allocation of funds is scarce. These rehabilitation centers cannot run on the donations and offertory of NGOs and philanthropic generosity. These programmes require state ownership to meet with success indices. The possibility of Sustaining these rehabilitation programmes on perennial basis and then enlarging them as a national-level activity seems a tall order. Pakistan also requires establishing an independent body for over-sighting rehabilitation programmes, propagation of national narrative and structuring legal frameworks available to militants. These efforts should emphasize on extermination of extremism, reformation of education system, buttressing the social inclusivity and mutual co-existence in society. National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA), a government-run think tank established for the creation of a counter-terrorism policy, has framed a National Prevention of Violent Extremism (NPVE) policy. The incumbent National Coordinator of NACTA Khalid Chouhan emphasized in the conference on "National Dialogue for prevention of Extremism" that whole -of- society approach is essential to root out the causes of extremism and build a resilient society. Notwithstanding, the myopic Adhocism policy spoils the long-term efficacy of deradicalization in Pakistan. However, it is never too late. There is a dire need to adopt pro-active, cohesive, integrated and institutionalized measures instead of resorting to short-term, slapdash and fragmented responses to materialize the concrete counter-radicalization efforts. As security situation is downward trajectory, so, counter violent extremism policies need to be translated into practical endeavours. However, the most important for Pakistan is to devise a strategy of de-radicalizing, rehabilitating and reintegrating militants back into society through the vigorous enforcement of sustained National Internal security policies and propagation of national counter-narratives. Dr Muhammad Rizwan Bhatti is Inspector in police & Ph.D Political Science from GCUF. He can be reached at rizwanbh79@gmail.com X: @rizwanbh79

Briefs

Belarus
to accept
150,000...

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equipment for the mining sector, saying that Pakistan had mineral deposits worth trillions of dollars and both countries could become great partners in this sector. Speaking on the occasion, Belarus President Lukashenko emphasised his country's importance on fostering strong ties with Pakistan. He said that Belarus attached great significance to its relations with Pakistan and looked forward to deepening cooperation on multiple fronts. Welcoming the Pakistani premier, President Lukashenko highlighted the potential for expanding bilateral collaboration in diverse sectors, including trade, industry, agriculture, and technology. He expressed confidence that the high-level engagement would pave the way for long-term strategic partnership and mutual growth. The president noted that the visit of PM Shehbaz Sharif would serve as a catalyst for opening new avenues of cooperation between the two nations. He stressed the need to explore untapped areas of partnership and to build upon the existing friendly relations.

PM's Belarus
visit will help
further...

FROM PAGE 01
The President of Belarus has a personal and long-standing relationship with PML-N leader Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Attaullah Tarar maintained. He said that Muhammad Nawaz Sharif has been invited as the special guest for an informal dinner. During the past year, Pakistan has moved away from isolation on the global stage and towards an active foreign policy, Attaullah Tarar remarked. Several world leaders have visited Pakistan, Attaullah Tarar said adding that Pakistan hosted the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit. Attaullah Tarar said Pakistan's agreements with various countries were in the implementation stage. He said more than 300 experts and delegates from all over the world participated in the recently concluded Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum.

President
Zardari tests
negative...

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Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif enquired about the health of President Zardari via a telephone call. The premier prayed for the early recovery of the president, adding that prayers of the entire nation were with the president. Meanwhile, National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq held a telephone conversation with President Zardari to inquire about his well-being. The NA speaker expressed his best wishes for the president's health and prayed for his swift recovery. During the conversation, Sadiq conveyed his hopes for Zardari's full recovery.

Since
Taliban...

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35-year-old man who gave his name as Zabihullah told AFP outside the stadium. Afghans had been invited to "attend the event" in official notices shared widely on Thursday. A third man was executed in Zaranj in Nimroz province, and the fourth was in Farah city in the western province of the same name, the Supreme Court said. "It's good that the Islamic Emirate shows its politics and force. I am very happy with that," said another 30-year-old spectator named Javid, referring to the Taliban government's official name. Amnesty International called on the Taliban authorities to halt public executions, which it called a "gross affront to human dignity". The previous execution was in November 2024, when a convicted murderer was shot three times in the chest by a member of the victim's family in front of thousands of spectators, including high-ranking Taliban officials, at a stadium in Gardez, the capital of eastern Paktia province.

Pak beat Oman in a friendly
hockey series match

On this occasion, a large number of hockey fans, including Pakistan Hockey Federation President Mir Tariq Hussain Bugti, Secretary General Olympian Rana Mujahid Ali Khan, Tournament Director Olympian Muhammad Asif Bajwa, Olympian Shahbaz Ahmed Senior, diplomats from Oman and other countries, Olympians, former international players and others were present



DNA

ISLAMABAD: The third match of the friendly series between Pakistan Junior and Oman teams was played at Naseer Banda Hockey Stadium, Islamabad, organized by the Paki-

stan Hockey Federation. In the said match, Pakistan Junior defeated Oman by six goals to one. On this occasion, a large number of hockey fans, including Pakistan Hockey Federation President Mir Tariq Hussain Bugti, Secretary General Olympian Rana Mujahid Ali Khan, Tournament Director Olympian

Muhammad Asif Bajwa, Olympian Shahbaz Ahmed Senior, diplomats from Oman and other countries, Olympians, former international players and others were present. Ambassador of Oman Mr. Fahad Sulaiman Al Kharusi and Deputy Head of Mission of the Romanian embassy Eduard Preda also witnessed the

match. Both the diplomats were honored with souvenirs on behalf of the Pakistan Hockey Federation. Muhammad Zikriya of Pakistan was declared man of the match. The fourth match of the friendly series between Pakistan and Oman will be played in Islamabad on April 12. Entry to all matches will be free.

Elena powers Kazakhstan to
beat Australia in BJK Cup
Rybakina beats Birrell 6-3 7-6(4) to give Kazakhstan
an unassailable 2-0 lead over Australia

WEB DESK

BRISBANE: Elena Rybakina Dominates as Kazakhstan Secures Spot in Billie Jean King Cup Finals, Australia Stunned in Shock Exit In a thrilling display of power and skill, Elena Rybakina led Team Kazakhstan to a resounding victory, securing their place in the prestigious Billie Jean King Cup Finals. The Australian team, on the other hand, suffered a shocking exit at the hands of the determined Kazakhstani players. Rybakina, along with her teammate Yulia Putintseva, delivered a masterful performance that left the Australian team reeling. The duo secured a 2-1 victory, with both players showcas-

ing their dominance in the singles matches. Rybakina, ranked number 10 in the world, breezed past Yuliana Lizarazo with a stunning 6-1, 6-2 victory in just 55 minutes, further solidifying her impressive 9-1 record in the event. Putintseva, however, stole the show with a crushing defeat over Valentina Mediorreal, who struggled in her debut, losing 6-0, 6-1 in a swift 37 minutes. Mediorreal managed to win only 14 points throughout the match, with a mere three points on her first serve, highlighting Kazakhstan's dominant performance. With the finals set to take place in Shenzhen, Rybakina expressed her excitement, stating, "We're super happy and excited to play

(the finals) in Shenzhen. We had great support, and the president of our association was here, so really nice to be here all together. Kazakhstan's spot in the finals was secured alongside hosts China and defending champions Italy, with a dead rubber match now left between Colombia and Australia. As Kazakhstan celebrates their well-deserved victory, Australia finds themselves in a state of dismay following their unexpected exit from the tournament. The absence of key players like Daria Kasatkina and Ajla Tomljanovic undoubtedly impacted Australia's performance, despite the promising talent of rising star Maya Joint. Rybakina's strategic decision to skip the Stuttgart

competition in favor of the Billie Jean King Cup has paid off immensely, as Kazakhstan now looks ahead to the playoffs in November, alongside other top performers from the Group I events held this week. The victorious playoff teams will earn coveted spots in the 2026 qualifiers, solidifying their presence in the international tennis circuit. In a match filled with intense rallies and remarkable displays of talent, Rybakina's stellar performance has cemented Kazakhstan as a force to be reckoned with in the world of tennis. As the team sets their sights on the upcoming finals, fans can expect nothing short of a spectacular showdown on the tennis court.

Delhi crush RCB to
stay unbeaten in IPL

BENGALURU: A combined bowling effort, followed by KL Rahul's unbeaten 93-run knock, powered Delhi Capitals to a commanding six-wicket victory over Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) in the 24th match of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 here at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium on Thursday. Capitals captain Axar Patel's decision to bowl first paid dividends as his bowling unit restricted a star-studded RCB batting lineup for a modest 163/7 in 20 overs. The home side, however, had a flamboyant start to their innings, courtesy of Phil Salt, who also smashed Mitchell Starc for 30 runs in an eventful third over of the innings. But the right-handed batter had an agonizing end to his blistering knock as he was run out in the next over due to a mix-up with veteran Virat Kohli. Salt smashed four fours and three sixes on his way to a 17-ball 37. His dismissal fuelled Capitals bowlers with momentum, who made regular strikes to reduce RCB to 125/7 in 17.1 overs. Tim David gave a late push to the home side total by scoring an unbeaten 37 off 20 deliveries with the help of two fours and four sixes. For Capitals, Vipraj Nigam and Kuldeep Yadav picked up two wickets each, while Mukesh Kumar and Mohit Sharma dismissed one batter apiece. Chasing a modest 164-run target, the visitors knocked the winning runs for the loss of four wickets and 13 balls to spare, courtesy of a defiant half-century by Rahul. But it was not a straightforward run chase for the Capitals as they had been reduced to 30/3 in 4.3 overs as Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Yash Dayal dismantled their top order. Skipper Patel and Rahul then attempted to launch recovery by compiling a cautious partnership. But it could yield only 28 runs until Patel (15) was dismissed by Suyash Sharma and the Capitals, as a result, slipped further to 58/4 in 8.4 overs. — Agencies

Noor clinches
U23 World
Squash xship title

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's rising Squash star, Noor Zaman on Thursday, clinched the inaugural WSF World U23 Squash Championships title with a come-from-behind victory over Egypt's Kareem El Torkey in the enthralling final. Zaman had a contrasting start to the summit clash as he was trailing Torkey 2-0 but turned the game on its head by winning the next three sets of the five-set game, winning the title by 3-2. Reflecting on the title victory, Zaman said after being two points down, his only thought was "to focus on my game". "I had it in my mind to fight till the very end," he added. The second-seeded Zaman faced Torkey in the final after defeating Malaysia's Ameeshanraj Chandaran on Wednesday at Karachi's DHA Creek Club in the semi-final stage of the event. Zaman was already two games up when his opponent retired from the game. "The crowd support has been incredible and I'll give everything to win this title for Pakistan," said Zaman after the semi-final. Zaman's outstanding performance in the tournament earned him felicitations from the country's top leadership including Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and President Asif Ali Zardari. Congratulating the entire nation on Zaman's success, the PM stated: "Noor Zaman has brought global recognition to Pakistan through his performance". — DNA

Pakistan beat Scotland in
Womens World Cup Qualifier

Pakistan reclaim top spot in the qualifying event's standings

LAHORE: Fatima Sanas four-wicket haul, followed by half-centuries from Muneeba Ali and Aliya Riaz, steered Pakistan to a six-wicket victory over Scotland in the ICC Women's World Cup Qualifier here at the Lahore City Cricket Association (LCCA) Ground on Friday. Put into bat first in a rain-reduced, Scotland accumulated a formidable total of 186/9 in the allotted 32 overs, courtesy of a captains knock by Kathryn Bryce. The European side, however, had a contrasting start to their innings as both their openers Abbi Aitken-Drummond (one) and Pippa Sproul (nine) were sent back inside five overs with just 17 runs on the board. Walking out to bat at number three, Katherine took the reins of Scotland's batting expedition until getting dismissed on the final delivery of the innings after top-scoring with a 96-ball 91, laced with 10 fours and a six. She also shared crucial partnerships with Sarah Bryce and Ailsa Lister, who contributed with 21 and 31 respectively. Sana led the bowling charge for Pakistan by picking up four wickets for just 23 runs in her five overs. Sadia Iqbal chipped in with two wickets, while Nashra Sandhu and Diana Baig made one scalp apiece. Set to chase 187, the home side knocked the

winning runs for the loss of four wickets and eight balls to spare, thanks to anchoring half-centuries by Muneeba and Aliya. The green shirts also had got off to an unwanted start to their innings as they had been reduced to 36/2 in 7.2 overs. The early stutter, however, did not bother the hosts much as Aliya joined Muneeba in the middle to launch an astounding recovery. The duo added 93 runs for the third wicket until Chloe Abel dismissed in the 24th over. She remained the top-scorer for Pakistan with a 72-ball 71, studied with 10 boundaries including a six. Aliya then shared a brief 27-run partnership for the fourth wicket with skipper Sana, who walked back in the 27th over after scoring just seven. But Aliya stood her ground firm and with the support of wicketkeeper batter Sidra Nawaz at the other end, steered her team to their second consecutive victory in the ICC Women's World Cup Qualifier. Aliya scored an unbeaten 68 off 70 deliveries, comprised of seven fours and a six, while Sidra made 14 not out from 11 balls. For Scotland, Abel led the way with two wickets but was expensive as she conceded 42 runs in six overs, while Katherine Fraser and Rachel Slater struck out one batter apiece. — Agencies

Parkha wins title, Shabbir sets pace amidst
rain drama at JA Zaman Memorial Open Golf

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The 11th JA Zaman Memorial Open Golf Championship 2025 delivered a compelling mix of skill, strategy, and resilience as players battled both fierce competition and unpredictable weather at Gymkhana Golf Course. In the Ladies Amateur Division, Parkha Ijaz delivered a masterclass in consistency and control, clinching the top gross honors with an impressive total score of 234. Her dominance was particularly evident during the second round, where she fired sublime rounds of 71 and 70, setting herself apart with composed putting and sharp course management. Bushra Fatima (239) and Aania Farooq Syed (247) secured second and third place in the gross category, rounding off the top-tier performers. In the net category, Saqiba Batool emerged victorious with a net score of 230. Leveraging her 17-handicap with smart decision-mak-



ing, she outpaced her competitors. Aleesa Rashid (262) and Ana James Gill (238) followed in second and third place, respectively, showcasing grit and determination. Despite challenging weather conditions and rain-induced delays, the second round of the Men's Professional Division produced electrifying performances. Foremost among them was Muhammad Shabbir, who fired a sensational 65-four strokes better than his solid opening round of 69. His dominance in the wet, softened conditions was underscored by impeccable drives and a clinical short game, reasserting his status as a championship favorite. Talib Hussain and Asif Ali made remarkable comebacks, each carding 67s after difficult opening rounds. Their nine-stroke improvements were a testament to mental resilience and technical adjustments. Muhammad Minhaj also stood out, improving to a 68 and moving into second place, displaying calm under pressure and consistency across both rounds.

Judicial
Commission
approves...

FROM PAGE 01

Balochistan High Court were also endorsed as members of the Judicial Commission. The Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) on Friday decided to appoint Justice Ali Baqar Najafi of the Lahore High Court as a judge of the Supreme Court. The JCP meeting, chaired by Chief Justice of Pakistan Yahya Afridi, approved the appointment of one additional judge to the Supreme Court. The decision to appoint Justice Ali Baqar Najafi to the Supreme Court was made by majority vote. The meeting reviewed the appointment of two out of five judges from the Lahore High Court to the Supreme Court. It also considered removing the observations made in the July 2, 2024 meeting regarding Justice Shujaat Ali Khan. The commission also discussed appointing a member of the Judicial Commission in place of the acting chief justices of high courts.

SC recom-
mends AI
guidelines...

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AI as a supportive tool rather than a substitute for human judges. The apex court observed that while AI tools such as ChatGPT and DeepSeek can significantly enhance judicial capacity, they cannot replace human reasoning, discretion, and empathy, which are central to justice delivery. The judgment calls upon the National Judicial (Policy Making) Committee and the Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan to jointly prepare comprehensive guidelines outlining permissible uses of AI in courts. "These [guidelines] must delineate clear boundaries, ensuring that AI is used only as a facilitative tool and never in a manner that compromises human judicial autonomy, constitutional fidelity, or public trust in the justice system," the verdict read.

China slaps
125% tariffs
on US goods

FROM PAGE 01

unleashing turbulence in the market with the sweeping tariffs that have hit the world and said the United States "should bear full responsibility" for the chaos. Trump has deployed sweeping tariffs, including painfully higher levies for dozens of major economies, as a stick to force manufacturers to base themselves in the United States and for countries to lower barriers to US goods. But following market turmoil this week, he blinked first in his push to remodel the post-war system of global commerce and froze many tariffs for 90 days, although he raised them for China to a staggering total of 145%. Beijing's latest round of retaliation brings its levies to 125%, effective Saturday.

Iran seeks
'fair' deal...

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adding that if Washington showed goodwill, the path forward would be "clear and smooth". In the lead-up to the talks, the two sides have engaged in a war of words, with Trump reiterating his warning that military action was "absolutely" possible if talks failed. Iran responded by saying it could expel UN nuclear inspectors, prompting another US warning that such action would be an "escalation". Iran has consistently denied seeking to acquire nuclear weapons. On Friday, Iran foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei said Iran was "giving diplomacy a genuine chance in good faith and full vigilance". "America should appreciate this decision, which was made despite their hostile rhetoric," he said on X.

Forces kill
two khwarij

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and Government had fixed Head money of PKR 10 Million on him. Sanitization operation is being conducted to eliminate any other Kharij force in the area as the security forces of Pakistan are determined to wipe out the menace of terrorism from the country.

Briefs

Rupee gains 09 paise against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Friday appreciated by 09 paise against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs280.46 against the previous day's closing of Rs280.55. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs280.65 and Rs282.15, respectively. The price of the Euro increased by Rs9.71 to close at Rs318.96 against the last day's closing of Rs309.25, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen went up by 05 paise and closed at Rs1.96, whereas an increase of Rs5.42 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs366.54 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs361.12.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal decreased by 03 and 02 paise to close at Rs76.35 and Rs74.71, respectively. —APP

PSX turns bearish, loses 1,335 points

ISLAMABAD: The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bearish trend on Friday, gaining 1,335.88 points, a negative change of 1.15 percent, closing at 114,853.33 points as compared to 116,189.21 points on the last trading day.

A total of 458,589,593 shares were traded during the day as compared to 638,089,718 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs31.628 billion against Rs36.924 billion on the last trading day. As many as 441 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 137 of them recorded gains and 244 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 60 companies remained unchanged. The three top trading companies were Pak Elektron with 40,742,036 shares at Rs 47.18 per share, Sui South Gas with 38,084,018 shares at Rs39.52 per share and Bank of Punjab with 33,174,212 shares at Rs 11.18 per share. —APP

Gold price ups by Rs.10,000 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat per tola gold increased by Rs.10,000 and was traded at Rs.338,800 on Friday as compared to its sale at Rs328,800 on the previous trading day, All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association reported. The prices of 10 grams of 24 karat also increased by Rs.8,573 to Rs 290,466 from Rs. 281,893 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold also went up to Rs.266,261 from Rs 258,411, respectively. The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained constant at Rs.234 and Rs2,772 respectively. The price of gold in the international market increased by \$100 to \$3,218 from \$3,118, whereas silver increased to \$31.30, the Association reported. —APP

Gaza faces starvation amid ongoing Israeli attacks, aid blockade

UNITED NATIONS: Israeli attacks across the Gaza Strip continue to take a devastating toll on the population, with daily reports of killing and injuring many civilians, UN aid coordination office, OCHA, said on Thursday. OCHA said dozens of people, including at least eight children, were killed in Gaza City on Wednesday after an Israeli strike hit a residential building. Many others are still missing under the rubble. The agency stressed that civilians must be protected and should never be a target. Israel's total blockade on all commercial and lifesaving relief supplies remains in place, though the World Health Organization (WHO) pointed to some good news as 18 Gazans were medically evacuated for specialized treatment abroad. —APP

SIF framework to drive sustainable uplift reviewed

Finance Minister introduced the draft Social Impact Financing (SIF) Framework, providing strategic vision to unlock innovative financial instruments that are aligned with national priorities and focused on achieving measurable, sustainable and Impactful development outcomes, particularly for marginalized and vulnerable communities.

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A high-level meeting of the Committee constituted by the Prime Minister on Social Impact Financing (SIF) here on Friday discussed the government's ongoing effort to design a robust, long-term social impact financing solution tailored to Pakistan's pressing development and environmental challenges. According to press release issued by finance ministry, the meeting was chaired by Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb and among others, it was attended by senior representatives from key government ministries and departments, the State Bank of Pakistan, Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan, and the country's leading micro-finance institutions, philanthropic organizations, and social impact partners. On the occasion, the Finance Minister introduced the draft Social Impact Financing (SIF) Framework, providing strategic vision to unlock innovative financial instruments that are aligned with national priorities and focused on achieving measurable, sustainable and impactful development outcomes, particularly for marginalized and vulnerable communities. It aims to orient public and private capital flows toward real-world im-



provements in key areas such as education, health, poverty alleviation, population stabilization, and climate resilience. Participants engaged in comprehensive discussions on the structure and design of the SIF Framework, including its priority pillars, funding mechanisms, risk mitigation tools, and governance roadmap. Members also explored funding sources, implementation workstreams, and the role of performance-based instruments such as impact bonds, performance-linked grants, and guarantees. A recurring theme

throughout the meeting was the necessity of linking funding to outcomes rather than inputs, ensuring accountability and transparency in resource allocation and service delivery. The Finance Minister stressed the importance of developing a sound policy framework rooted in strong public-private partnerships, emphasizing that sustainable and scalable interventions are essential to create impact and move away from action-oriented to result-oriented approaches to address Pakistan's most pressing development challenges. He high-

lighted poverty alleviation, health and wellbeing, education and human capital, population stabilization, and climate resilience as key priority areas requiring focused attention. Senator Aurangzeb further underlined the imperative of tracking and tracing the development impact of these interventions, particularly in alignment with national economic priorities and Pakistan's commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Stressing the urgency of reform, the Finance Minister called for swift action in finalizing the framework and moving towards its implementa-

tion. The meeting concluded with agreement on several next steps, including the finalization of the draft SIF Framework by next week, formation of task forces aligned with proposed fund activities, and a comprehensive update to the committee in early May. The update will include proposals for an implementable fund structure, governance model, and priority impact-focused initiatives, ensuring that Pakistan is well-positioned to attract innovative financing for inclusive and sustainable development.

Spare developing countries from new US tariffs: Rebeca

DNA

UNITED NATIONS: As governments and global markets struggle to deal with the massive upheaval unleashed by the United States' unilateral trade tariffs, Rebeca Grynspan, the head of the UN trade agency (UNCTAD) said that the poorest countries — which have a negligible effect on the US trade deficit — should be exempt. Ms. Grynspan was speaking in the wake of growing UN concern at the effect on-going uncertainty could have on the most vulnerable developing economies. On Tuesday, the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, stated that "trade wars are extremely negative," and warned that the impact of tariffs could be

"devastating." Tariffs are a tax on imports coming into a country which are usually charged to the exporter as a percentage of value — an extra cost which is normally passed on to the consumer. In an interview with the Financial Times published on Thursday morning, the UNCTAD chief appealed for the US to reconsider its strategy, noting that the 44 Least Developed Countries contribute less than two percent of the US's trade deficit, and that higher tariffs would only make their existing debt crisis much worse. Speaking to UN News, an international media website, Ms. Grynspan laid out the ways that UNCTAD is supporting developing nations, and advocated for closer regional trade ties, which can strengthen their hand in international trade ne-

gotiations. When two main global economies impose tariffs, it will affect everybody, not only the economies engaged in the tariff war, Ms. Grynspan said. "We are already in a 'new normal' of low growth and high debt, and we are worried that the global economy will slow down," she said. "Our emphasis has been to put attention on what can happen to countries that are more vulnerable, such as the Least Developed Countries, and small island developing States. What is happening to those countries is what really worries us." Asked whether this could be the end of the post-war international financial system, as being predicted by some experts, Ms. Grynspan, "We still don't know where we will end up. One of the things that we are doing is

trying to give the public a real account of what is actually taking place, and what is still just talk. "The most important point is the problem of the uncertainty. If we know the final position, we will adjust, we will have strategies and we can see how to live with the decisions that are being taken. But if we have a prolonged period of uncertainty, where things change all the time, this is damaging because we don't know what to do. Investment is paralyzed because CEOs are deciding to sit and wait, which means investment will not come back at the scale the world needs. "Our first call is for rational decisions to be taken, so we can plan, strategize and adapt to change — but we still don't know what that change will entail."

Consumption promotion campaign for foreigners set to launch

BEIJING: A major consumption promotion campaign for foreigners organized by the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) will soon launch simultaneously with the fifth China International Consumer Products Expo, which will kick off on April 13, 2025. Currently, various consumption scenarios, including the first-launch economy, intangible cultural heritage markets, immersive cultural tourism, trendy toy stores, and creative cafes, are rapidly evolving with renewed appeal, said Li Gang, director general of the Department of Market Operation and Consumption Promotion of the MOFCOM. Foreign tourists dine at a restaurant in an ancient town in Ninghai county, Ningbo, east China's Zhejiang Province. (Photo/Hu Xuejun) The series of activities will create more consumption scenarios integrating commerce, tourism, culture, sports, and health, Li added. The series of activities will focus on four major areas: boutique shopping, exquisite food, wonderful tourism, and great performances, aiming to create innovative and diverse consumption scenarios while building an internationally friendly consumer environment. This year, key commercial districts, pedestrian streets, shopping malls, supermarkets, outlets, and leading enterprises will offer promotions and launch new and premium products to attract foreign consumers. China will increase the number of departure tax refund stores and provide improved departure tax refund services this year, which means that foreigners can get their tax refunds more efficiently, said a foreign employee of a foreign-funded enterprise in China. —APP

Yemen not battleground for settling scores: Official

DUBAI: Yemen is "not a battleground for settling scores, nor part of any external compromises," a top government official told Asharq Al-Awsat in an exclusive interview. Brig. Gen. Tariq Mohammed Abdullah Saleh, a member of Yemen's Presidential Leadership Council with vice-presidential rank, further emphasized that diminishing the country to a pawn between powerful nations engaged in political play undermines its sovereignty and regional security. "The world would be making a mistake by accepting Yemen as a bargaining chip in Iranian negotiations," said Saleh, who also heads the Political Bureau of the National Resistance. He also emphasized Yemen's strategic importance to global shipping routes. Saleh has remained largely out of public view since the US intensified its air campaign against the Iran-aligned Houthis to stop the threat they pose to civilian shipping and military vessels in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. He further warned that keeping Yemen "a base for the Iranian Revolutionary Guard" threatens not only Yemenis but also regional and international interests. —APP

ICCI President bucks up govt on US Tariff issues

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Nasir Mansoor Qureshi, President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), has reiterated the Chamber's full support for the government's efforts to resolve the US-imposed tariffs issue amicably and prudently. He called upon all chambers of commerce, trade bodies, and exporters to stand united in safeguarding Pakistan's trade interests and advocating for the country's rightful position



in the global trade ecosystem. He emphasized the interconnected nature of international trade and cautioned that abrupt shifts in trade policies

by global economic powers can significantly impact the economic stability of smaller nations. "Given that the United States is Pakistan's largest trading partner, it is imperative that this matter be approached with utmost care, prudence, and strategic foresight," he remarked. The ICCI President appreciated Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for his timely and proactive leadership in forming a Steering Committee and a Working Group to assess the impact of the US tariffs and to devise an effective national response.

"This initiative is both timely and commendable. A well-coordinated and informed approach is essential to protect our national economic interests," he added. He further underscored that trade continues to be a vital engine for development and prosperity for all stakeholders involved. Expressing optimism about a peaceful resolution, President Qureshi welcomed the government's decision to dispatch a high-level delegation—comprising renowned business leaders and exporters—to the United States.

India's 'drone sisters' navigate change in farming social roles

"This was the first time I have stepped out of the house. I have been a housewife all my life and this is my first independent work"

NEW DELHI: Rajveer Kaur enjoys the attention she receives whenever she goes out to the fields to operate her drone. Once a housewife and mother, the 29-year-old is now an independent woman, known in her region as a "drone didi" or "drone sister," helping fertilize farmland and protect it from pests. Kaur was working with a self-help group in her village in Faridkot district of Punjab when she was selected to join a government program providing women with drone technology for agricultural services. "Then the central government gave us drones after giving training for a few weeks. It's now almost a year since it has happened. I get good responses from the farmers. I also got the name of a woman operating a drone in the field," she told

Arab News. "I was a housewife before becoming a drone pilot. My husband supports me, and it feels really good that a woman who has been a housewife can now step out and become a productive force." She also gets a sense of financial independence and can contribute to her household's budget, earning on average \$150 a month. "There's also a message in this — that a woman, even while being a housewife, can earn and become independent. She can show that she can be a pilot too — even if it means a drone pilot," Kaur said. "Sometimes farmers bargain, but generally I earn \$4 for spraying one acre of land. It takes only five minutes. In the last eight months since I started working as a drone pilot, I've earned close to 100,000 rupees (around

\$1,160)." She is one of the thousands of women in rural India who joined the government's scheme to empower women-led self-help groups. Launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in November 2023, the "Drone Didi" program aims to distribute 15,000 drones among the groups by the end of this year. The 25–30 kg industrial drones are designed for agricultural use — to spray pesticides and fertilizers on farmland. Kaur's job involves filling the drones' canisters with chemicals and then remotely navigating the devices over the fields to spray the crops, covering several hectares a day. Farmers were initially reluctant, but they soon realized that the method works. Kaur's neighbor, Manjinder Singh, was one of the first farmers to participate in the

program when he sowed his field in December and had five and a half acres of land sprayed by drones. "That was the first time I got my field sprayed by a drone. It was a new experience. It took less time, and it was very smooth," he said. "In terms of cost, I don't see much difference, but it saved a lot of time and physical effort." What convinced farmers to rely on the services of the drone operators is that remote spraying uses much less water and is safer for the crops. Drone operators do not walk through the fields and do not cause physical damage to the crops. They also reduce the probability of crops being infected. "Bacterial illnesses do not get transferred from one field to another when you use a drone. You are not carrying the bacteria

from one field to another because you're not physically walking through the fields," Roopendra Kaur, a 29-year-old drone pilot from Firozpur district, explained. Her main job is in large fields during the sowing seasons. But in between the seasons, drone operators are active too, only their tasks are smaller — like spraying vegetable fields or chili plantations. Since getting her drone in March last year, she has earned about \$1,200. "We have got a sense of purpose in life and to be a drone didi is really a respectable profession. Farmers were initially hesitant, but they appreciate our work," Kaur said. "This was the first time I have stepped out of the house. I have been a housewife all my life and this is my first independent work." —APP

Nearly 100 killed after heavy rain in India, Nepal

NEW DELHI: Nearly 100 people have died since Wednesday after heavy rain lashed parts of India and Nepal, officials and media said, and the weather department has predicted more unseasonal rain for the region. The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) on Wednesday raised a multi-hazard warning for the country, with heatwave conditions in the western parts and thunderstorms in the eastern and central region. In the eastern state of Bihar, at least 64 people died in rain-related incidents since Wednesday, a senior official from the state's disaster management department said. Local media reported that more than 20 people have died in India's most populous state of Uttar Pradesh. India's weather office expects heavy rain with thunderstorms, lightning and gusty winds over central and eastern India till Saturday. In Nepal, lightning strikes and heavy rain killed at least eight people, National Disaster Authority officials said. —APP

Tesla launches in Saudi Arabia

RIYADH: Tesla launched operations in Saudi Arabia, a sign that CEO Elon Musk has patched up relations with the Kingdom and that the oil capital was moving forward with an ambitious electric-vehicle policy. A Tesla Cybertruck and a redesigned Model Y sedan dominated a plaza dotted with palm trees, as the EV maker officially opened for business. A small crowd tried out the vehicles as a massive outdoor video screen showed a Cybertruck plowing through a dusky desert, leaving behind plumes of sand. Tesla needs new customers: globally, it posted a 13 percent drop in first-quarter sales, its weakest performance in nearly three years, driven by a backlash against Musk's role in the Trump administration, rising competition and an aging product lineup, beyond the refreshed Model Y. The Kingdom, a major investor in Tesla rival Lucid, aims for 30 percent EV adoption five years from now, up from about 1 percent last year. Musk engaged in a high-profile feud with the Kingdom's sovereign wealth fund over a potential investment nearly a decade ago, but relations between Riyadh and Musk have improved since he took a high-profile role in US President Donald Trump's election campaign and administration. Trump is set to visit Saudi Arabia in the coming weeks in his first foreign trip. Local Tesla executives at the launch described plans to allow online ordering of vehicles, open pop-up stores in malls and to build Supercharger stations and service centers, but Musk did not show up in person or by video. —APP

Court throws out lawsuit on Danish arms sales to Israel

COPENHAGEN: A Copenhagen court on Friday rejected a lawsuit filed by four humanitarian organizations accusing Denmark of violating international law by exporting weapons to Israel. The Palestinian human rights association Al-Haq, Amnesty International, Oxfam and Action Aid Denmark said they would appeal the decision to Denmark's Supreme Court. The four had filed their lawsuit against the Danish foreign ministry and national police last year. They argued there was a risk that "Danish military materiel (F-35 components) was being used to commit serious crimes against civilians in Gaza." In a ruling seen by AFP, the Eastern High Court wrote that the four associations "cannot be considered to be affected in such a direct, individual and concrete manner that they meet the general conditions of Danish law regarding their right to bring proceedings." Amnesty International disagreed. "Arms exports are a human rights issue, and our legal interest is clear," said the secretary general of the Danish branch of Amnesty International, Vibe Klarup, said in a statement. —APP

Briefs

Heatwave expected from next week

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has forecasted heatwave conditions in the country from next week due to the development of a high-pressure system in the upper atmosphere from April 13. According to the Met Office, most parts of the country will experience an increase in temperatures, with the southern regions, including Sindh, southern Punjab, and Balochistan, expected to face severe heatwave conditions from April 14. Daytime temperatures in these regions may remain 6-8°C above normal from April 13 to 18. In the northern and central parts – including upper and central Punjab, Islamabad, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Azad Kashmir – the temperatures are predicted to be 4-6°C above normal from April 14 to 18. Night-time temperatures are also expected to remain higher than usual throughout the forecast period. Excessive heat may also result in dust storms and windstorms, potentially damaging vulnerable infrastructure such as electric poles, trees, vehicles, and solar panels. The general public, particularly children, women, and senior citizens, are advised to avoid direct exposure to the sun and remain well-hydrated. Farmers are also urged to manage their crop activities, particularly wheat harvesting, according to the forecast, and ensure the safety of livestock.

KSA approves additional Hajj quota for Pakistan

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Saudi Arabia has approved an additional Hajj quota of 10,000 people for Pakistan. Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar contacted Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud with a special request to increase Pakistan's Hajj quota. This decision is a reflection of close relations, mutual cooperation, and Saudi Arabia's special regard for the people of Pakistan. Earlier, Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Sardar Muhammad Yusuf has said Hajj flights will begin from April 29, adding 90,000 pilgrims will go for the sacred journey officially. On Hajj preparation 2025, federal minister Sardar Yusuf said, "Our first training session has been completed. Pilgrims should go there with preparations". He said he met with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and taking measures on the instructions of the PM, adding steps were being taken for vaccination of the pilgrims. "Long-term Hajj has gone up to Rs10 lakh 50 thousand, while the short-term Hajj will be in Rs11 lakh 50 thousand.

UZBEK TOURISM ROADSHOW 2025



ISLAMABAD: Uzbek performers showcase traditional cultural performances during the Uzbekistan Tourism Roadshow 2025, organized by the Embassy of Uzbekistan in Islamabad in collaboration with the Uzbek Tourism Committee. Uzbek Ambassador Alisher Tukhtaev underscored the importance of strengthening tourism ties between the two countries in his address. —DNA

Mohsin Naqvi, Omani Ambassador discuss expansion of bilateral ties

Highlighting the fraternal ties between the two nations, Minister Naqvi emphasized that Pakistan attaches great importance to its relationship with Oman. "Pakistan and Oman share historical and brotherly relations rooted in common faith, traditions, and cultural affinities

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi met with the Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to Pakistan, Fahd Suleiman Khalaf Al-Kharousi, at the Ministry of Interior in Islamabad on Thursday. The two dignitaries discussed matters of mutual interest and expressed their shared resolve to further strengthen the deep-rooted bilateral relations between Pakistan and Oman. During the meeting, both sides reaffirmed their commitment to broadening cooperation across various sectors, particularly in the area of security. They agreed to enhance collaboration to address emerging regional challenges, bolster people-to-people contacts, and facilitate greater exchanges between the security agencies of the two countries. Highlighting the fraternal ties between the two nations, Minister Naqvi emphasized that Pakistan attaches great importance to its relationship



with Oman. "Pakistan and Oman share historical and brotherly relations rooted in common faith, traditions, and cultural affinities," he remarked. Mohsin Naqvi noted the significant contribution of the Pakistani community residing in Oman, stating that over 300,000

Pakistanis are actively participating in the development and progress of the Sultanate. He expressed hope that in the coming years, Pakistan would be able to send even more skilled and trained workers to Oman, thus further strengthening the socio-economic ties between the two countries. The Omani Ambassador, Fahd Suleiman Khalaf Al-Kharousi, lauded the role of the Pakistani community in Oman's development, acknowledging their hard work, professionalism, and commitment. He affirmed that Pakistan and Oman's relations, which span several decades, continue to grow stronger with each passing year. Both sides expressed optimism about the future of Pakistan-Oman relations and stressed the need for sustained engagement at all levels to promote mutual prosperity, regional stability, and enduring friendship. The meeting concluded with a shared pledge to continue working closely together to achieve the common goals of peace, security, and development for both nations.

Corps investiture ceremony held in to Honor soldiers

DNA



RAWALPINDI: Corps investiture ceremony of Rawalpindi Corps was held today. Commander Rawalpindi Corps, Lieutenant General Shahid Imtiaz was Chief Guest on the occasion. Awards of Tamgha-i-Imtiaz (Military), Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military) and Tamgha-i-Basalat were conferred on Army officers and soldiers. Two Junior Commissioned Officers (JCOs) and 15 soldiers were awarded Tamgha-i-Basalat. 47 officers were awarded Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military) and 102 officers were awarded Tamgha-i-Imtiaz (Military) for rendering meritorious services to the nation. Next of kin (NOK) of Shuhada received their awards posthumously. The Corps Commander interacted with the families of the Martyrs and paid a glowing tribute to their sacrifices. A large number of senior Army officers and families of awardees attended the ceremony.

Israeli attacks threaten Syria's stabilisation: Pak

'The Security Council cannot allow illegal military actions to set dangerous precedents'

DNA

NEW YORK: Pakistan has told the UN Security Council that Israel's recent air strikes across Syria were in flagrant violation of international law, and also undermined the country's pursuit of political stabilization and national reconciliation. "We are witnessing a deeply troubling pattern: continued, unprovoked Israeli military aggression; repeated violations of the 1974 Disengagement Agreement; an illegal military presence in the Area of Separation; and open declarations of indefinite occupation," Ambassador Asim Ifitkhar Ahmad, permanent representative of Pakistan to the UN, told the 15-member Council during a briefing

on the situation in Syria. Voicing alarm at the escalating attacks on multiple locations in Syria—including civilian infrastructure and urban centers—he said those military actions have caused civilian casualties and posed a grave threat to regional and international peace and security. "The Security Council cannot allow illegal military actions to set dangerous precedents," the Pakistani envoy said, pointing out that last month the Council itself reaffirmed Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity and called for upholding these principles. But Israel's actions, he said, were in direct violation of this consensus, and it must, therefore, act "decisively and ensure accountability". Pakistan was equally concerned about the broader regional implications of the Israeli actions.

Fin min hints at giving relief to salaried class

He also stated that no changes would be made to the budget after July 1

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb on Friday announced good news for the salaried class, promising relief in the upcoming budget. While speaking to the media in Islamabad, Aurangzeb stated that a program had been devised to provide relief to the salaried class in the next budget. However, he said the details cannot be shared with the media at this stage, as they would first be presented to the IMF. He added that tax collection from traders had improved, and the trader-friendly scheme should not be linked to tax collection from traders. He mentioned that 98% of suggestions for budget preparation had been received from both the public and private sectors, and the government was working jointly with the private sector on the budget proposals. He also stated that no changes would be made to the budget after July 1, and that the Tax Policy Department will start operating under the Ministry of Finance during this calendar year, adding that a new tax form was being developed that every taxpayer would be able to fill out themselves.

Israel seeking to 'dynamite' Syria 'revolution'

ANTALYA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Friday accused Israel of sowing divisions in Syria in a bid to "dynamite" the "revolution" that toppled strongman Bashar Assad. Turkiye is a key backer of Syria's new leader Ahmed Al-Sharaa whose Islamist group Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham (HTS) led the rebel coalition which ousted Assad in December. "Israel is trying to dynamite the December 8 revolution by stirring up ethnic and religious affiliations and turning minorities in Syria against the government," Erdogan told. — Agencies

Air Chief visits China to strengthen military coop

In the meeting with Chinese Defence Minister, Admiral Dong Jun, both the dignitaries reaffirmed their shared commitment to revitalize the existing bilateral ties in military-to-military cooperation and strategic alliance between the two countries

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force, called on various dignitaries during his visit to China. In these meetings, the Air Chief called on Chinese Minister of National Defence, Admiral Dong Jun, General Chang Dingqiu, People's Liberation Army Air Force Commander and Major General Cao Xiaojian, Director General Bureau of Military Equipment & Technical Cooperation (BOMETEC). The visit aimed at enhancing the existing strategic partnership between the two nations, included high-level discussions and agreements geared towards deepening military cooperation. A smartly turned out contingent presented Guard of Honor to Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu on his arrival at the People's Liberation Army Air Force Headquarters in Beijing, China. The PLAAF Commander expressed his admiration for the professionalism of PAF personnel. Both Commanders agreed to establish a Joint Working Group to fur-

ther enhance the existing collaboration between the two Air Forces. In the meeting with Chinese Defence Minister, Admiral Dong Jun, both the dignitaries reaffirmed their shared commitment to revitalize the existing bilateral ties in military-to-military cooperation and strategic alliance between the two countries. Both sides agreed on enhancing Air Force-to-Air Force cooperation, particularly through complex and aggressive tactical-level scenarios during aerial exercises. The cooperation is aimed at addressing challenges in multiple domains during joint exercises, equipping air and ground crew of both Air Forces with the skills necessary to counter modern Air and Space Warfare challenges effectively. In a separate meeting with Major General Cao Xiaojian, Director General of the Bureau of Military Equipment & Technical Cooperation (BOMETEC), Chief of the Air Staff highlighted the significance of exploring opportunities for technology transfer and collaborative development of advanced military hardware aimed at enhancing the operational capabilities of both sides.

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