



# Islamabad POST

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**Kremlin warns against rushing peace talks but claims 'progress'**

Detailed News On Page-08

**Peace in Asia requires risk reduction**

Detailed News On Page-08

**United interested in signing Wolves forward Cunha**

Detailed News On Page-06



## Galaxy Space eyes investment

# PM seeks stronger space technology coop with China

Chinese space technology firm shows interest in investment, joint projects

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said Pakistan was keen to increase cooperation with China in the fields of space technology, satellites, telecommunications, and satellite internet. The prime minister, in a meeting with a delegation from the Chinese space technology company Galaxy Space, led by the company's Chairman Xu Ming, said that Pakistan gave great importance to the space technology sector. The delegation members also showed keen interest in investing in Pakistan's space industry and joint projects with Pakistani space institutions, as well as private telecom companies. Thanking the government for warm hospitality, they told the prime minister that their meetings with officials from the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication and Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (Suparco) were very productive. The meeting was also attended by Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Ahsan Khan Cheema, Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Advisor to PM Dr Tauqir Shah and officers from other relevant government departments. Pakistan has been paying special attention to its space-related advancement, as earlier this year, it successfully launched the country's first indigenous Electro Optical Satellite (EOS) from Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre (JSLC), China. The satellite reportedly delivers timely updates on floods, landslides, and earthquakes for effective response. Last year, Suparco launched its first satellite mission to the moon, iCube Qamar, on board China's Chang'E6 from Hainan, China, for which PM Shehbaz said that the satellite was Pakistan's first step in space. Moreover, a satellite internet service, Starlink, is also set to

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## Pak require financial assistance to cope with climate change

He said the government was ensuring that efforts for climate adaptation and mitigation in vulnerable communities

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday emphasized that Pakistan and other countries affected by the climate change, require special financial assistance from international financial institutions to address the challenges posed by climate change. Talking to Secretary General International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) Luc Triangle here at the PM House, the prime minister said that Pakistan was among the countries most affected by the climate change. "The 2022 floods alone caused losses amounting to \$30 billion." He noted that due to these climate-related challenges, workers and laborers in Pakistan had faced significant employment difficulties and suffered losses. He said the government was ensuring that efforts for climate adaptation and mitigation in vulnerable

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## PM Shehbaz reaches Turkiye

Premier will hold extensive discussions with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on bilateral relations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has reached Turkiye on an official two-day visit at the invitation of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Turkiye's Defence Minister Yashar Guler received the PM Shehbaz at the airport. According to a press release from the PM Office, a high-level delegation has also accompanied the premier for the trip. This delegation includes Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammed Ishaq Dar, Information and Broadcasting Minister Attaullah Tarar, and Special Assistant to PM Tariq Fatemi. During the visit, the prime minister will hold extensive discussions with President Erdogan on bilateral relations. Both leaders are also expected to exchange views on recent developments in the region and beyond. "As long-standing allies and strategic partners, Pakistan and Turkiye maintain a tradition of regular high-level exchanges, reflecting the exceptional bonds of

Continued on Page 06

## 100,000 Afghans left Pakistan in April

Convoys of Afghan families have been heading to border since start of April when deadline to leave expired

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: More than 100,000 Afghans have left Pakistan in the past three weeks, the interior ministry said on Tuesday, after the government announced the widespread cancellation of residence permits. The government in Islamabad launched its mass eviction campaign on April 1. Analysts say the expulsions are designed to pressure neighbouring Afghanistan's Taliban authorities, which Islamabad blames for fuelling a rise in border attacks. The interior ministry told AFP that "100,529 Afghans have left in April". Convoys of Afghan families have been heading to the border since the start of April, when the deadline to leave expired, crossing into a country mired in a humanitarian crisis. "I was born in Pakistan and have never been to Afghanistan,"

Continued on Page 06



ANKARA: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif being received by Minister of National Defense of Turkiye Yashar Guler upon arrival. – DNA

## Criticizes restrictions on meetings

# Pakistan needs both establishment and PTI for unity: Imran

The statement was conveyed by Imran's legal representative, Advocate Faisal Chaudhry

KHAYAM ABBASI

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founding chairman Imran Khan has said that the country and its people need both the establishment and his party to secure national unity and stability. The statement was conveyed by Imran's legal representative, Advocate Faisal Chaudhry, following a meeting at Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail, where Imran remains imprisoned. Speaking to reporters, Chaudhry said that Imran expressed concerns over what he described as systematic attempts to sideline the PTI. He claimed that the country

Continued on Page 06

## Senate panel shoots down resolution for KP senate election

Senate panel shoots down resolution for KP senate election

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: A resolution for Senate election for 12 vacant seats from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was turned down by a majority vote during a Senate Advisory Committee meeting chaired by

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## Briefs

### Nawaz undergoes medical check-up

Reports are expected within next couple of days

DNA

LONDON: Former prime minister Nawaz Sharif returned to his residence at Avenfield House after undergoing a medical check-up at the Harley Street Clinic, sources said. According to informed citations, former PM Sharif underwent additional tests, the results of which are expected within the next couple of days. A decision regarding his return to Pakistan will be made in light of these medical reports. Upon his arrival at the Avenfield residence, he was accompanied by his son, Hassan Nawaz, and his personal physician, Dr Adnan.

### 24 killed in IIOJK gunmen attack

The attack took place in Pahalgam, a popular destination in the scenic Muslim-majority territory

SRINAGAR: At least 24 people were killed in India-occupied Kashmir when gunmen opened fire on a group of tourists, a senior police officer said, with authorities calling it the worst attack on civilians in years. "At least 24 people have been killed," the senior police officer in Kashmir told AFP on condition of anonymity, with the toll not yet announced officially. The attack took place in Pahalgam, a popular destination in the scenic Muslim-majority territory, that draws thousands of visitors every summer as gunmen violence has reduced in recent years. The injured had been rushed to a local hospital, the source said on the condition of anonymity as they are not authorised to speak to media. – Agencies

## Anti-canal protesters

# Sindh CM urges to avoid causing hardship

Murad Ali Shah says PPP and protesters share same goal, another protest held in Karachi

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah on Tuesday urged protesters, demonstrating against the construction of new canals, to remain peaceful and not cause hardships for the people by blocking the highways and main thoroughfares. Addressing a press conference in Karachi, CM Murad said: "Lawyers and nationalists should continue their protest without troubling their own people." He said that the PPP and protesters share the same goal, adding that his party would also stage protests if their ongoing negotiations with the federal government remained fruitless. In February this year, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir and Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz launched the Green Pakistan Initiative in Cholistan aimed at revolutionising agriculture and providing farmers with agricultural facilities under one roof. The project triggered a wave of unrest across Sindh, and the provincial assembly in March unanimously passed a resolution against the

Continued on Page 06

## PPP senators walk out from session to protest

The issue on canal is one of the larger issues which the PML-N is facing with its ally PPP

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party lawmakers staged a walkout from the Senate session on Tuesday to protest against the controversial canal project. The issue on canal is one of the larger issues which the PPP is facing with its ally PML-N. Chief of the Army Staff Gen Asim Munir and Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz inaugurated the ambitious Cholistan project to irrigate south Punjab's lands on February 15. There have been nationwide protests in

Continued on Page 06

# Aurangzeb assures WB of sustainable economic stability

In a meeting with World Bank Group President Ajay Banga, the finance minister expressed appreciation for the bank's historical support to Pakistan, particularly the Country Partnership Framework (CPF)

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has reaffirmed the government's commitment to achieve "sustainable economic stability" in the country as he held a series of meetings with officials from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank in Washington, a press release from the Press Information Department said on Tuesday. The meetings, scheduled from Monday, April 21 to Saturday, April 26, were held on the sidelines of the 2025 Spring Meetings of the World Bank Group and the IMF in the US. The forum brings together finance ministers and central bank governors from 191 countries to address global challenges such as sovereign debt, climate finance, and reforming the international financial system. The meetings, held twice a year, provide a rare forum for high-level consultations among global financial institutions and policymakers. According to the press release, in a meeting with World Bank Group President Ajay Banga, the finance minister expressed appreciation for the bank's historical support to Pakistan, particularly the Country Partnership Framework (CPF).

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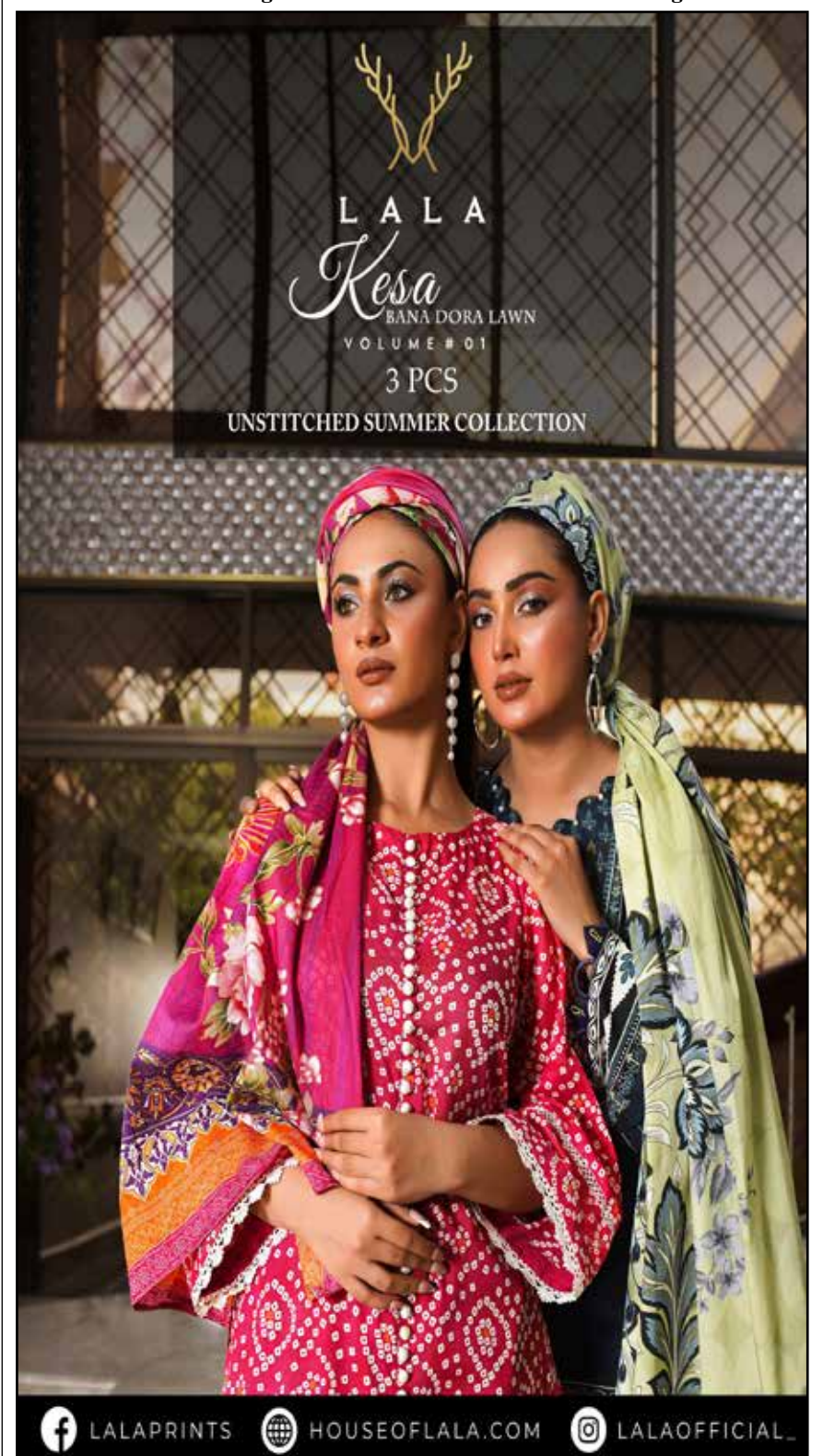
## Pak looks to increase imports from US

Islamabad in talks with Washington to tear down non-trade barriers to open its markets to more US products, says minister

AGENCIES

NEW YORK: Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb has said Pakistan is looking to buy more goods from the US and remove non-tariff barriers to mitigate President Donald Trump's high tariffs. The finance minister made the remarks while talking to a foreign media outlet during his week-long trip to the US to participate in the spring meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. He said Islamabad was in talks with Washington to tear down non-trade barriers to open its markets to more US products.

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We will continue working with the leadership of Gilgit-Baltistan to promote peace, progress, and mutual interests in the region," he said

**GILGIT:** In a major step toward strengthening friendship, trade and cooperation between Gilgit-Baltistan and China's Xinjiang region, a high-level virtual inauguration ceremony was held here on Tuesday to mark the year-round (all-weather) opening of the Khunjerab Border. The event was attended by Chief Minister of Gilgit-Baltistan Haji Gulbar Khan and senior officials from Kashgar, China. The Governor of Xinjiang and other officials from both sides participated in discussions, reaffirming their commitment to elevate trade, economic, and diplomatic relations to new heights. During the meeting, Chinese officials presented a comprehensive video showcasing their customs clearance system. Following this, the Commissioner of

Kashgar and the Customs Collector of Gilgit-Baltistan provided detailed briefings on customs operations on both sides. At the beginning of the ceremony, delegates from both regions introduced their respective teams. The growing cooperation between the two governments was appreciated, and hope was expressed for continued positive developments in the future. Addressing the gathering, Chief Minister Haji Gulbar Khan stated, "Today marks a historic milestone not only for Gilgit-Baltistan but for the entire nation of Pakistan. The decision to keep the Khunjerab Border open throughout the year will breathe new life into the region's economy. Trade will no longer be restricted by seasonal limitations, allowing our business community to

operate without interruptions." He emphasized that this move is a practical step toward realizing the vision of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and vowed to further strengthen this vital partnership. "This initiative will bolster regional connectivity and usher in a new chapter of mutual economic development under CPEC," he added. Xinjiang's Governor remarked that Pakistan and China's long-standing friendship has entered a new phase. "The transformation of Khunjerab into an all-weather border will directly benefit the people of both regions. This is not just a border—it is a symbol of development, prosperity, and cooperation. We will continue working with the leadership of Gilgit-Baltistan to promote peace, progress, and mutual interests in region," he said. — DNA

FAISALABAD: Pak Korea Nutrition Center (PKNC), University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF), has started serving 30-day fortified meals to students of Laboratory School under the Chair Nutrition and Public Health (NPH) PKNC. A UAF spokesman said here on Tuesday that in compliance with Nutrition and Public Health, the PKNC took step forward toward improving child nutrition. He said that the NPH has started serving fortified meals to students of Laboratory School and College System UAF with collections of pre-meal samples of students for bio-chemical and nutrition based assessments. The program involves collecting pre-meal samples from students for biochemical assessment, followed by the provision of fortified meals for thirty days, he added. Prof. Dr. Imran Pasha, Dean Faculty of Food Nutrition and Home Sciences, UAF, visited the school and said that the school-meal program has the potential to make a significant impact on the health and well-being of school children in Pakistan. He said that by providing fortified meals and monitoring nutritional status, the PKNC would create a healthier and more productive future generation. Prof. Dr. Beenish Israr, Chair Nutrition and Public Health, supervised the implementation of school-meal program and interacted with the students, teachers, and PKNC team. The nutritional status of the students is being closely monitored through nutrition-based assessments.—APP

In the court of Medium Faiza Riaz Civil Judge 1st Class Kharian  
Title: Sher Ali  
Versus Secretary Union Council etc.  
Notice to:  
1. Secretary Union Council Karnana,  
2. Yasir Mehmood S/o. Muhammad Waris,  
3. Sajjad Hussain S/o. Muhammad Sadiq,  
4. Habib ur Rehman S/o. Sahabdad cast Gujjar R/o. Lamborr PO. Karnana Tehsil Kharian District Gujrat.

Suit for Declaration with consequential relief

Whereas in the above mentioned case it has been proved to the satisfaction of the court that the above mentioned defendants are not served in ordinary way. It is therefore proclaimed under order 5 rule 20 CPC that if the said defendants will not appear personally or through a duly authorized agent or pleader in court at 8 AM on 26-04-2025, otherwise case will be decided ex parte.

I have lost my registration card registration, JA 86 Cultus 2005 Engine NO F 365523 Chassis No 981137 If some one found plz contact at 03255113103 Abdul Munaf

## DNA

**RAWALPINDI:** Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi has announced to outsource railway hospitals and schools across the country. "The plight of railway hospitals is not good. Instead of providing relief to the people, their doctors prescribe vaccines worth Rs 50,000 to be purchased from outside," he said while addressing a reception on Monday night. Keeping in view the sorry state of affairs, "we have decided to outsource the railway hospitals and 14 schools as well", he added. The reception was hosted by UC-14 Nazim Chengiz Khan, Bahadur Khan and Chaudhry Shahze Khan Barzada. Federal Parliamentary Secretary

for Defence Production Usama Ashfaq Sarwar, former Mayor Sardar Naseem, Members of Punjab Assembly Ziaullah Shah, Malik Iftikhar Ahmed, Raja Hanif Advocate, Asma Naz Abbasi and Rifaat Abbasi, PML-N local leaders, former union council office-bearers, and others attended the reception. The minister said there was no room for work shirkers in the Pakistan Railways any more. He had accepted the demands of 58,000 employees, including overtime, and now they should ensure their attendance on a daily basis under the digital biometric system, and work hard and diligently as a team so that the Railways could be made a profitable and exemplary institution of Pakistan. He said the people no more trusted those who had be-

trayed them and done nothing for them during their 35-year tenure in power. "It is the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) only that, under the leadership of Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, laid a network of schools and colleges, and built sports fields in Rawalpindi. "PM Shehbaz has given a grand project like the metro bus, in which 175,000 residents of the twin cities benefit from the best travel facilities every day. He has also built a cardiology hospital according to international standards, in which the people of Rawalpindi and Islamabad, as well as other areas of Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan are also being treated." —APF

avoiding them of being disruptive and avoiding meaningless discussion. "May be they have no questions to raise, or they lack the courage to listen. But if they want to take part in a productive debate, I along with senior cabinet members are here to answer," he said. Tatar further said that the issue had already been discussed with coalition partners on the prime minister's special instructions. He added that a broader multi-party consultation was also being considered to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive solution. Commenting on the opposition's recent by-election loss in Tharparkar, the law minister said, "The people of Sindh have rejected you. If this is the kind of politics you want to continue after being defeated, it won't help the country or democracy."

PESHAWAR: Khyber Medical University (KMU), Peshawar, and the Pasteur Institute of Tunis have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at establishing a WHO-supported Satellite Regional Training Center for the Eastern Mediterranean Region, in collaboration with the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR). The agreement was formalized during the 5th International Public Health Conference held at KMU on Tuesday. This partnership marks a significant advancement in promoting implementation research and public health training across EMRO countries. The new training center will be established at KMU's Institute of Public Health & Social Sciences (IPH&SS), where, under the supervision of the WHO-TDR Global Training Centre in Tunis, certified courses, diploma programs, mentorship, and research support will be provided. Renowned academician and Vice Chancellor of KMU, Prof. Dr. Zia ul Haq (Sitara-i-Imtiaz), will serve as the Principal Investigator of the project, while Dr. Khalid Rehman (Director, IPH&SS) and Dr. Sheraz Fazid (Head, Department of Epidemiology & Biostatistics) will serve as Co-Principal Investigators. Dr. Wafa Kamoun will represent the Pasteur Institute of Tunis. On this occasion, Prof. Dr. Zia ul Haq described the partnership as a milestone for Pakistan's public health sector. He stated that this collaboration would play a key role in promoting evidence-based policymaking and strengthening health systems across the region. The declaration of KMU as a WHO Satellite Regional Training Center for the Eastern Mediterranean is not only a great honor but also a major achievement for Pakistan's health and education sector. This center will offer training, research support, and professional mentorship, benefiting health professionals across the region and helping to improve public health policy and practice. "We are proud to be part of this global initiative aimed at health research and capacity-building. We extend our gratitude to WHO, TDR, and all our collaborators for their trust and support," said Prof. Dr. Zia ul Haq. This initiative is in line with the WHO-TDR mission to strengthen research capacity in low- and middle-income countries to tackle pressing health challenges. —DNA

## DNA

**SIALKOT:** Dr. Jemal Beker Abdula, Special Envoy and Ambassador Extraordinary of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, has received the Best Ambassador Award from the University of Sialkot, which marks fifth official recognition for His Excellency in Pakistan due to his crucial role in strengthening the bilateral relations between the two brotherly nations H.E. Faisal Manzoor, Chairman of

the University of Sialkot (USKT), presented the award to Ambassador Dr. Jemal Beker during a Green Legacy Forum held at the university that was attended by over 1,000 participants, including students, faculty, media and civil society in Sialkot. The Best Ambassador Award received by Ambassador Dr. Jemal from Sialkot also acknowledges His Excellency's significant efforts and critical role in strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries. Upon receiving the honor, the Ambassador expressed his sincere

gratitude to the leadership of the University of Sialkot. He pledged to continue his dedicated efforts to further enhance the strong bilateral ties between Ethiopia and Pakistan. Previously, the Ambassador has been honored by different institutions including the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), COMSTECH (OIC Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation), and the National Peace and Justice Council of Pakistan, and the Diplomatic Insight.

**ISLAMABAD:**In a significant development aimed at tackling the rising threat of cybercrime, the Government of Pakistan has formally established the National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) as an independent institution, granting it full authority to investigate and act against cyber-related offenses across the country. Previously operating as a wing of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), the cybercrime unit has now been elevated to an autonomous body in light of increasing incidents of online fraud, harassment, digital black-

mail, identity theft, fake websites, and social media crimes. According to an official statement from the FIA spokesperson, all responsibilities related to cybercrime prevention, investigation, and enforcement will now be handled exclusively by the newly-formed NCCIA. With this shift, the FIA's Cyber Crime Wing has been officially dissolved, and citizens are advised to contact NCCIA for all future complaints and queries regarding cyber offenses. The newly established agency is tasked with responding promptly to any reports of suspicious online

activity or cybercrimes. Citizens can reach out to the NCCIA Helpdesk via phone at 051-9106091 or email at [helpdesk@nr3c.gov.pk](mailto:helpdesk@nr3c.gov.pk). The spokesperson further emphasized: "It is important to note that the FIA no longer deals with cybercrime matters. For any complaints or guidance related to cybercrimes, the public is encouraged to visit the nearest NCCIA Circle Office." This move is expected to streamline operations and improve the country's capacity to combat digital threats in an increasingly connected world. —APP



**SIALKOT:** Faisal Manzoor, Chairman of the University of Sialkot (USKT), presented the award to Ambassador Dr. Jemal Beker during a Green Legacy Forum held at the university

## Canal decision to be made through consensus: Law Minister

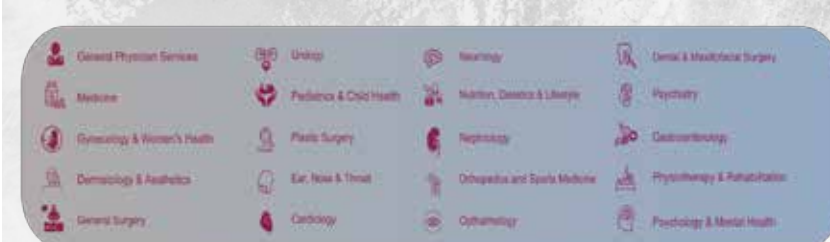
ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar on Tuesday said that the decision regarding the canal project would be made in line with the Constitution and laws of the country, through mutual consultation, especially with coalition partners, including the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and the Sindh government.

Speaking at the floor of the Senate, he said that Political Adviser Rana Sanaullah had formally contacted the Sindh government and PPP leadership to assure them that the federal government was committed to resolving the issue through constitutional means. "The decision is clear—nothing will be forced," he added.

He criticized the Opposition, accusing them of being disruptive and avoiding meaningful discussion. "May be they have no questions to raise, or they lack the courage to listen. But if they want to take part in a productive debate, I along with senior cabinet members are here to answer," he said. Tarar further said that the issue had already been discussed with coalition partners on the prime minister's special instructions. He added that a broader multi-party consultation was also being considered to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive solution. Commenting on the opposition's recent by-election loss in Tharparkar, the law minister said, "The people of Sindh have rejected you. If this is the kind of politics you want to continue after being defeated, it won't help the country or democracy."



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## DNA

**ISLAMABAD:** On the occasion of Earth Day, a special event was organized by CDA in collaboration with the Denmark Embassy for launching the Fruit Orchard Plantation Drive at Fatima Jinnah Park F-9. The event was attended by Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa, Denmark's Ambassador Jacob Linulf, representatives from the corporate sector and other stakeholders. The event commenced with a tree-planting campaign in F-9 Park, aimed at expanding Islamabad's green areas. Speaking on the occasion of Earth Day, Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa stated that this day reminds

us of our responsibility to protect our planet and environment. He mentioned that, with the support of the Prime Minister of Pakistan and the Interior Minister, a

target has been set to plant one million trees in the capital this year under the Tree Plantation Campaign 2025, which is a significant step toward making the city

greener. He urged all citizens, especially the youth, to actively participate in the Tree Plantation Campaign 2025 to control environmental pollution and transform

Islamabad into one of the most beautiful and lush federal capitals in the world. Denmark's Ambassador Jacob Linulf said on the occasion, "Earth Day provides us an opportunity to understand the importance of environmental protection. He noted that Islamabad is among the most beautiful cities of the world, and the CDA is playing a crucial role in further improving it. He added that Denmark is always ready to cooperate with Pakistan in the field of environmental sustainability. Chairman CDA emphasized that the campaign's objective is not only to increase the green cover of the city but also to raise public awareness about environmental protection.





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



Emergency

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Rescue (Police).....                     | 15         |
| Bomb Disposal.....                       | 15         |
| Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad..... | 1122 & 16  |
| Emergency Ambulance.....                 | 1122       |
| & Rescue Services.....                   | 4451122    |
| Motorway Police.....                     | 9266044    |
| Motorway Police.....                     | 9270601-20 |
| Women Police Stations Islamabad.....     | 9222596    |
| Rawalpindi.....                          | 9270601-20 |



Enquiry

|                       |           |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| Edhi Ambulance.....   | 115       |
| PIA Flight Info.....  | 114       |
| PIA Cargo.....        | 9280979   |
| Railway Inquiry.....  | 117       |
| Railway Exchange..... | 9270831-5 |
| WASA Rawalpindi.....  | 5555489   |
| CAA.....              | 9281092   |



Hospitals

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



Departments

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

Water Tank

|                |              |
|----------------|--------------|
| Islamabad..... | 0321-5744480 |
|----------------|--------------|

# NUML spring festival kicks off in a vibrant celebration of colors

The Spring Festival at NUML will continue till Friday, featuring more cultural activities, performances, and interactive sessions that promise to create lasting memories and deeper connections

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The National University of Modern Languages (NUML) was awash with colours, joy, and cultural vibrance as the much-anticipated Spring Festival kicked off with a grand Opening Ceremony. The event brought together students, faculty, and international dignitaries in a heart-warming celebration of diversity, harmony, and global friendship. Ambassadors, cultural attachés, and members of the diplomatic corps from various countries graced the ceremony, witnessing an enthralling showcase of Pakistan's rich and diverse cultural heritage. Traditional performances from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, Balochistan, Hazara, Saraiki region, Sindh, Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan painted a vivid picture of the country's vibrant cultural mosaic, leaving the international guests in awe. One of the most heartfelt moments of the event was when all ambassa-



dors stood in solidarity with the Kashmiri students during their parade, deeply moved by their artistic and cultural display. Their presence was a powerful gesture of support for peace, resilience,

and the rich cultural identity of Kashmir, celebrated through unity and expression. Rector NUML, Major General Shahid Mahmood Kayani HI(M) (Retd), addressed the gathering, emphasizing the

significance of cultural exchange and mutual respect. He stated, "This festival is not just a celebration of spring—it is a tribute to our shared humanity. At NUML, we believe that cultural under-

standing bridges divides, fosters peace, and builds enduring global partnerships." He also highlighted NUML's role as a hub of multicultural engagement and encouraged students to learn from one another's traditions and values. Adding a global flavor to the festivities, over 15 international cultural stalls showcased the traditions, attire, crafts, and cuisine of various countries including China, Iran, Türkiye, Palestine, Indonesia, EU, Germany, KSA and others. Visitors indulged in delightful tastes, colourful handicrafts, and fascinating displays of heritage from across continents.

Rector NUML, along with dignitaries and foreign guests, visited the stalls and lauded the students for their creative efforts and commitment to promoting intercultural dialogue. The Spring Festival at NUML will continue till Friday, featuring more cultural activities, performances, and interactive sessions that promise to create lasting memories and deeper connections.

## Mussadaq calls for collective action to protect planet

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan joined the global observance of World Earth Day 2025 on Tuesday, with Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Dr. Mus-sadiq Malik, emphasizing the need for collective action to protect the planet. Under the global theme "Our Power, Our Planet," Dr. Malik stressed that addressing the climate crisis requires immediate and unified efforts. "The solution to the climate crisis lies in our hands," he said in his Earth Day message, highlighting Pakistan's vulnerability to climate change. The minister reaffirmed the government's commitment to transitioning to clean energy, calling it a "top priority." Initiatives such as "Roshan Pakistan," green stimulus programs, and promoting electric vehicles remain key focuses. Dr. Malik urged practical steps like tree planting, water conservation, and reducing plastic use, stating, "Through unity, awareness, and innovation, we can heal the Earth." He also underscored Pakistan's active role in climate leadership and efforts to build a "safer, more sustainable future" in sectors like water, energy, food, health, and education. Pakistan, among the countries most affected by climate change, faces pressing environmental challenges, making mitigation efforts "imperative," the minister added.—APP

## Asif includes as independent director of BoG of OPF

ISLAMABAD: Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Pak Japan Group Chaudhary Asif Mehmood was included as independent director in the Board of Governors (BoG) of Overseas Pakistanis Foundation (OPF). Ch Asif has experience of serving as Ambassador at-Large in Japan and Far East. Overseas Pakistanis including Chairman Pakistan Business Association South Korea Mudassar Cheema has appreciated government for including Ch Asif in BoG. They said that the step will help boosting services of OPF and increasing foreign remittances.—APP

## Pakistan enhances biosafety governance

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) has trained Institutional Biosafety Committees (IBCs) nationwide on using the Pakistan Biosafety Clearing-House (Pak-BCH) portal for online submissions of genetically modified (GM) work applications. The move strengthens compliance with the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and modernizes regulatory processes.—APP

## Jam, Kyrgyz Ambassador discusses ways to boost bilateral trade connectivity

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan to Pakistan, Avazbek Atakhanov, called on Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan, at his office on Tuesday to discuss avenues for strengthening bilateral trade and economic cooperation. Rana Ihsaan Afzal, Coordinator to the Prime Minister and senior officials of the Ministry of Commerce were also present during the meeting, said a press release issued here on Tuesday. Commerce Minister, Kyrgyz Ambassa-

dor discusses ways to boost bilateral trade connectivity commerce minister welcomed the ambassador and emphasized the importance Pakistan attaches to its historic and cultural ties with Kyrgyzstan. He expressed Pakistan's strong desire to transform these brotherly relations into a comprehensive economic partnership for mutual benefit. During the meeting, both sides reaffirmed their commitment to enhancing collaboration across various sectors, especially in trade, investment, and regional connectivity. Jam Kamal Khan briefed the ambassador on Pakistan's improving

economic indicators, including declining inflation and interest rates, reduced energy costs, and a stable foreign exchange market—factors that indicate macroeconomic stability and present new opportunities for trade and investment. He stressed the need to address trade-related issues and encouraged greater engagement between the business communities of both sides. Ambassador Atakhanov appreciated the reform efforts undertaken by the Pakistani government and noted that a major business delegation from Kyrgyzstan is expected to visit Pakistan in the near fu-

ture. He also underscored Pakistan's geographical importance as a trade hub for the region and emphasized Kyrgyzstan's interest in boosting cooperation for regional economic growth and stability. Both sides discussed the development of new trade routes and reaffirmed the need to open fresh avenues for trade connectivity. The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to continue high-level engagement and coordination, including the upcoming 5th session of the Pakistan-Kyrgyzstan Joint Inter-Governmental Commission scheduled for May 2025.

## PEC okays Young Engineers National Forum

ISLAMABAD: In a landmark move aimed at empowering the next generation of engineers, the Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) has officially approved the formation of the Young Engineers National Forum. The decision was taken during a recent meeting of the PEC Governing Body, reflecting the Council's commitment to address the pressing challenges faced by young professionals in the engineering sector. The newly formed forum is envisioned as a unified, nationwide platform representing young engineers from across Pakistan. It will bring together associations of young engineers from various disciplines, fostering an integrated network focused on professional development, skill enhancement, and leadership cultivation. According to PEC, the forum will play a pivotal role in organizing training programs, seminars, and conferences designed to equip young engineers with modern knowledge and tools to meet the evolving demands of the industry. Speaking on the occasion, PEC Chairman Engr. Waseem Nazir emphasized the crucial role of youth in national progress. "The guidance and growth of young engineers remain a top priority for PEC. This forum will not only be the voice of our engineering youth but also serve as a transparent and effective platform for their representation," he said. Chairman Nazir further added that the initiative will open doors for young engineers to excel not only at the national level but also to represent Pakistan on international platforms—marking a significant milestone for the country's engineering landscape.—DNA

## RIMS to organize free consultation for surgical disorders camp

ISLAMABAD: Rising Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS) International Hospital is hosting a free consultation camp for surgical disorders here on Saturday to provide guidance and evaluations for patients suffering from various surgical disorders. The consultation camp will take place at RIMS Hospital's facility located at 68-E Jinnah Avenue, Blue Area, Islamabad, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., said a press release. A team of surgeons led by General, Laparoscopic, Bariatric Surgeon, and Laser Proctologist, Dr. Danish Ali Haider, will provide expert advice and treatment options. The camp will cover various surgical disorders, including: abdominal issues, obesity and anorectal conditions (hemorrhoids, fistulas). On the occasion, the patients can also discuss with Dr. Danish the benefits of modern surgical practices, including: laparoscopic surgery (minimally invasive procedures), bariatric surgery (life-changing procedure for obesity management), laser-based treatments for fistulas and hemorrhoids. The interested patients can visit the camp on the scheduled day and get further details through: Phone Number: +92-51-2348005-06-07 or visiting the hospital's website at [www.rimshospital.org.pk](http://www.rimshospital.org.pk). This initiative reflects RIMS Hospital's mission to make advanced surgical solutions more accessible and raise awareness about early diagnosis and modern treatment options.—APP

## Sixth meeting of OIC Steering Committee on STI

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The two-day 6th Meeting of the Steering Committee for reviewing progress on the implementation of the OIC Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Agenda 2026 commenced on Tuesday at COMSTECH (the Ministerial Standing Committee of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) for Scientific and Technological Cooperation). The high-level meeting is being attended by heads and representatives of 15 OIC institutions from Saudi Arabia, Kazakhstan, Türkiye, Jordan, Uganda, Bangladesh, Malaysia, and Pakistan, reaffirming their commitment to strengthening STI collaboration across OIC member states. In his welcome address, Coordinator General,

OIC-COMSTECH, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary thanked the delegates for their active participation. He emphasized that the Steering Committee meeting would focus on assessing the implementation progress of the OIC STI Agenda 2026, which was launched following the First OIC Summit on STI in Astana, Kazakhstan, in 2017. The agenda is designed to foster research collaboration, promote knowledge sharing, and enable technology transfer to support sustainable development in the Islamic world. In his opening remarks, Assistant Secretary General OIC, Ambassador Aftab Ahmed Khokhar, appreciated COMSTECH's efforts in hosting this pivotal meeting. He highlighted the urgency of reviewing the STI Agenda, addressing associated

challenges, and outlining a way forward for impactful outcomes. He also emphasized the need for greater interactions with the member states for the successful implementation of STI agenda 2026, and to define future actions beyond 2026. The key agenda items of the meeting included a review of member states' progress towards the STI Agenda 2026 goals, identification of new joint initiatives and partnerships, discussions on future actions aligned with the proposed OIC STI Agenda, and institutional presentations on progress, challenges, and recommendations under the Abu Dhabi Declaration (2022). The participating institutions included the OIC General Secretariat, Islamic Development Bank Group (IsDB), ISESCO, IOFS, UNA, SESRIC, SMIC, among others.

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## Briefs

**KP police  
praised for  
foiling terrorist  
attack in Bannu**

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has commended the bravery and professionalism of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police for successfully foiling a terrorist attack on a police post in Bannu. In a statement issued on Monday, the interior minister lauded the swift and courageous response of the police personnel who thwarted an assault by extremist militants. He said, "The timely action of the Bannu police forced the terrorists to retreat, preventing a potentially devastating incident." The minister praised the police officers, calling them heroes of the nation. "The officers who defeated the evil intentions of these extremist terrorists are true heroes of our country," he said. Mohsin Naqvi expressed his pride in the courage displayed by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police, stating, "We are proud of the bravery and professional capabilities of our police force. They deserve the highest praise." He further added, "I congratulate the entire team for their outstanding performance and fearless action." The minister reaffirmed the government's full support for law enforcement agencies and emphasized that their dedication and sacrifices for the safety and security of the nation will always be honored and remembered.—APP

**NDMA  
organizes  
seminar ON  
strengthening  
risk  
communication**

ISLAMABAD: National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Tuesday conducted a seminar titled "Strengthening Risk Communication through Impactful Disaster Reporting" here at the National Emergencies Operation Center (NEOC) Auditorium. NDMA organizes seminar on "Strengthening Risk Communication through Impactful Disaster Reporting" The seminar brought together a diverse group of media professionals, disaster management practitioners, policymakers, youth influencers, and representatives from government and non-government organizations to discuss the evolving role of media in disaster risk communication and preparedness. Chairman NDMA underscored the growing importance of responsible disaster reporting in an age of rapid information dissemination. A comprehensive media brief was presented by the Deputy Director Media, highlighting innovative strategies and AI driven initiative for effective risk communication. The seminar featured two thematic sessions, first session focused on understanding the framework of disaster reporting, emphasizing the media's influence on public perception and behavior during emergencies while second session highlighted the media's role in risk awareness and resource mobilization, showcasing successful collaborations between media, government, and humanitarian organizations.—APP

# Malaysian envoy attends APTEx 25 show at NUST

The event aimed to foster meaningful partnerships, promote academic and industrial collaborations, and explore opportunities for joint innovation in areas such as digital transformation, green technologies, smart manufacturing, and AI-driven solutions

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Mohd Syafik Firdaus, Deputy Head of Mission attended the ASEAN-Pakistan Technology Expo 2025 (APTEX'25), held at the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), Islamabad. The event brought together leading minds in technology, innovation, and policy from across ASEAN member states and Pakistan. The Chief Guest of the event was Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary, Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives of Pakistan, who emphasized the critical importance of regional cooperation in science and technology for sustainable development and economic growth. APTEX'25 served as a vital platform to showcase cutting-edge research, technological solutions, and entrepreneurial ventures from ASEAN countries and Pakistan. The event aimed to foster meaningful partnerships, promote academic and industrial collaborations, and explore opportunities for joint innovation in areas such as digital transformation, green technologies, smart manufacturing, and AI-driven solutions.



## Al-Shifa Trust warns of gaps in access to cataract treatment

The national cataract surgical rate has improved significantly, reaching 5,307 surgeries per million people, more than double the rate in 2002. Still, Prof. Dr. Sabihuddin Ahmed, head of the Cataract Department at Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital in Rawalpindi, said it is insufficient to meet the current demand

DNA

RAWALPINI: A Al-Shifa Trust (AST) announced on Tuesday that, although Pakistan has made significant strides in expanding cataract treatment services, considerable gaps still remain, particularly in rural and underserved areas. The national cataract surgical rate has improved significantly, reaching 5,307 surgeries per million people, more than double the rate in 2002. Still, Prof. Dr. Sabihuddin Ahmed, head of the Cataract Department at Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital in Rawalpindi, said it is insufficient to meet the current demand. Talking to

the media, he emphasized that achieving the projected demand by 2030 necessitates performing at least 1.84 million cataract surgeries each year, as the backlog of untreated cases runs in the millions. He said that the private sector performs 42.4 percent of cataract surgeries in Pakistan, NGOs perform 39.9 percent, and the government sector performs 17.7 percent. This indicates a significant gap in public healthcare provision. He attributed the problem to factors such as cost barriers, diabetes, ageing, lack of awareness, malnutrition, prolonged exposure to ultraviolet rays, genetic predispositions, and late diagnosis. He said cat-

aract surgical services are predominantly available in urban areas, leaving many rural areas underserved. Also, there is a significant mismatch in the distribution of ophthalmologists, with many rural areas lacking access to qualified eye care professionals. Moreover, he said that the cost of surgery is a barrier for many low-income people to access eye care services, particularly among women, rural residents, and the uneducated population. He said that many public hospitals face challenges such as outdated equipment, long waiting lists, and insufficient resources, which hinder the delivery of timely and effective cataract treatment. Prof.

Dr Sabihuddin Ahmed said that with the help of generous donors, AST doctors perform almost 6,000 free-of-cost cataract surgeries per month at their six hospitals. The cost of cataract surgery and related expenses in many private hospitals ranges from Rs 40,000 to Rs 100,000. Suppose the average price of a surgery is Rs 50,000. In that case, AST provides a monthly relief of Rs 30 crore to needy people. He informed that, despite having dedicated staff and state-of-the-art facilities, long queues of patients could be seen awaiting free cataract surgery, as the current facilities are insufficient.

## Meteorologist predicts more extreme heatwaves

ISLAMABAD: Meteorologist Anjum Nazeer Zaigham Tuesday warned citizens to take precautions against the heat and predicted more severe summers in the coming years due to climate change, urging welfare organizations to set up heatwave camps and provide shaded areas and water. A meteorologist, talking to a private news channel, predicted that cities will experience increased suffocation, with Autumn and Spring seasons being slightly skipped, resulting in only two distinct weather patterns remaining. Pakistan is highly vulnerable to climate change, ranking among the top 10 countries most affected by climate change and natural disasters. He warned that summers will be marked by more frequent heatwaves, underscoring the growing impact of climate change. According to Anjum Nazeer Zaigham, the National Disaster Management Authority's (NDMA) National Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC) has forecast hot and dry weather across most regions of the country from April 22 to 27, 2025. Zaigham warned that these unusual and intensified weather events are becoming more frequent due to the ongoing climate crisis, urging authorities and the public to remain alert and prepared. Zaigham stressed that planting more trees is crucial for mitigating the impacts of climate change, such as heatwaves and rising temperatures, and urged the public and authorities to prioritize tree plantation efforts. He warned that summers will become increasingly prolonged in the coming years compared to previous years, further exacerbating the challenges posed by climate change. He also warned that Karachi's temperature will increase, aligning with historical trends, which show the city experiencing rising temperatures over the years. Specifically, Karachi has seen nighttime temperatures increase by 2.4°C over the past 60 years, indicating a steady warming trend.

## Cutlery exports increase 4.60% in 9 months

ISLAMABAD: The exports of cutlery witnessed an increase of 4.60 percent during the first nine months fiscal year 2024-25, as against the exports of the corresponding period of last year. The cutlery exports from the country were recorded at US \$45.783 million during July-March (2024-25) against the exports of US \$43.768 million during July-March (2023-24), according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). Meanwhile, year-on-year basis, the cutlery exports witnessed a decline of 19.57 percent during the month of March 2025 as compared to the same month of last year. The exports of cutlery from the country during March 2025 were recorded at US \$4.595 million against the exports of US \$5.713 million in March 2024. On a month-on-month basis, cutlery exports also decreased by 6.81 percent during March 2025 when compared to the exports of US \$4.931 million in February 2025, the PBS data revealed. It is pertinent to mention here that the overall exports from the country increased by 7.69 percent during the first nine months of the current fiscal year as compared to the corresponding months of last year.—APP

## Local output of trucks and buses increased

ISLAMABAD: Trucks and buses assembling in the country during first 08 months of the current financial year grew by 106.71 per cent and 55.95 percent respectively as compared to the assembling of the corresponding period of the last year, according the summary of Provisional Quantum Index Numbers of Large Scale Manufacturing Industries (QIM) The QIM for February 2025, released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the QIM for July-February 2024-25 was estimated at 115.82. During the period from July-February, 2024-25, over 3,113 trucks were locally assembled as compared to the assembling of 1,506 trucks of the same period of the last year, the data revealed. Meanwhile, about 524 buses were locally produced during the period under review as compared to the production of 336 buses of the same period of the last year, it added.—APP

## Int'l Earth Day highlights individual power to protect planet

ISLAMABAD: International Earth Day observed on Tuesday, with this year's theme, "Our Power, Our Planet," focusing on the role of individuals in safeguarding the environment and the need for collective action to ensure sustainability. The theme underscores the idea that every person has the ability to contribute to environmental protection and urges communities worldwide to take meaningful steps toward a greener future. "This Earth Day, we recognize that the power to protect our planet lies in the hands of people everywhere," stated Umar Bilal,

an ecologist adding "Small actions, when multiplied, can lead to transformative change." Earth Day, first celebrated in 1970, has grown into a global movement promoting environmental awareness and policy changes. This year's campaign encourages reducing plastic use, conserving water, planting trees, and supporting renewable energy initiatives. "Sustainability is not just a goal but a shared responsibility," said CDA DG Environment Nazia Abrar while talking to APP. By working together, she said we can address climate change, preserve biodiversity, and create

a healthier planet for future generations. Events such as community clean-ups, educational workshops, and advocacy campaigns are being held worldwide to mark the occasion. Citizens, organizations, and governments are being called upon to take immediate and long-term actions to combat environmental degradation. As the world faces escalating climate challenges, Earth Day 2025 serves as a reminder that individual and collective efforts are crucial in shaping a sustainable future.—APP

## Teachings of Sufi saints promote peace, tolerance: Gilani

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani on Tuesday said that the teachings of Sufi saints offer a timeless message of peace, love, and tolerance. Addressing the Eighth International Conference on "Mevlana Bahau and Hadrat Sultan Bahau," Gilani underscored the profound impact of Mevlana Rumi and Hadrat Sultan Bahau in guiding societies toward ethical, spiritual, and moral development. He said that while he is often recognized for his political roles, including as former Prime Minister, Senate Chairman, and Founding Chairman of the Inter-Parliamentary Speakers Conference (ISC), his true identity lies in his spiritual lineage with the great Sufi saint Hazrat Sheikh Abdul Qadir Gilani

(RA). "I am known as a political worker, but my real identity is rooted in my connection with Hazrat Sheikh Abdul Qadir Gilani," Gilani said. Highlighting the spiritual bond between Sultan Bahau and Mevlana Rumi, he described their legacy as deeply embedded in Sufi philosophy and

service to Islam, noting that they were spiritual leaders and reformers who preached through action, humility, and compassion. Gilani said that Sufism's message of brotherhood and nonviolence played a transformative role in spreading Islam across the subcontinent, particularly

through the literary, cultural, and humanistic contributions of Sufi saints. Expressing concern over rising Islamophobia, Gilani said that Sufi teachings can help counter global misconceptions by promoting the true essence of Islam — a religion of love, mercy, and mutual respect.



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Face-saving way in trade war

‘Gleichschaltung’ in America

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THE escalating trade war between China and the United States has pushed the global economy to the brink of recession. Neither side shows signs of blinking. Washington has ramped up tariffs and tightened restrictions on Chinese tech, prompting retaliation from Beijing, which pledges to “fight till the end”. US President Donald Trump insists that America will emerge victorious; Chinese President Xi Jinping warns there will be “no winners” in a trade war. In reality, both countries have reasons to negotiate, but neither wants to make the first move. Any unilateral gesture could risk being framed as capitulation. Yet continued escalation carries far higher costs. To break the deadlock, two diplomatic paths offer face-saving ways forward: Beijing could publicly invite the US to negotiate in China, or a neutral third party – perhaps Malaysia, this year’s Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) chair – could broker a meeting on the sidelines of a regional summit. Reciting a statement apparently dictated by Trump, White House spokesperson Karoline Leavitt has said “the ball is in China’s court”. The Trump administration says around 75 countries have reached out to Washington through various channels. Meanwhile, Beijing’s public reluctance to reach out has become conspicuous – an act of defiance that seems to have stoked Trump’s ire. Last week, the US government barred Nvidia from selling its H20 chip to China, further inflaming tensions in an already volatile tech stand-off. Moreover, the US has sought to leverage trade negotiations to pressure other countries into isolating China, economically and politically. Ultimately, Trump aims to force Xi to the negotiating table. Beijing, for its part, has turned to its neighbours and beyond in search of alternative markets and political support. In late March, top officials from China, Japan and South Korea convened their first trade talks in five years, signalling a renewed interest in regional economic integration amid Trump’s mounting tariff threats. In mid-April, Xi hosted Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez and celebrated the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations with Indonesia. Xi embarked on a three-nation tour of Vietnam, Malaysia and Cambodia, and called on them to safeguard world trade, a clear response to Washington’s pressure campaign. From Beijing’s point of view, Trump’s global tariff blitz is not merely economic coercion; it is blackmail wielded through US dominance of the global trading system. Chinese leaders have no interest in being seen to be begging for a deal. Compounding this stance is the belief that the US stands to suffer more in the trade war and that its public tolerance for economic pain is far lower than China’s. Yet despite the rhetorical brinkmanship and nationalist confidence on both sides, officials in Washington and Beijing have signalled a willingness to negotiate. The real question is who moves first, and how. Both sides would benefit from a cooling of tensions. Trump’s hardball tactics have created growing friction with US business leaders who depend on Chinese manufacturing and supply chains which are difficult to replace. The Trump administration exempted smartphones, computers and other electronics from tariffs.



WHEN Adolf Hitler came to power in the spring of 1933, he immediately went about dismantling the fragile democratic system of the Weimar Republic with the intention of destroying its pluralistic ethos. Those who refused to march in lockstep were arrested, many were killed. This process of Nazification, which forcibly integrated all social, political, economic, and cultural forces under the unified organisation and ideological control of the National Socialist dictatorship has a name in German: Gleichschaltung, or “bringing into line.” History is repeating itself in Trump’s America. In the three months following his return to power, the president has sought to remake the country in his own image, seemingly implementing the “blueprint for authoritarianism” that is the Heritage Foundation’s infamous “Project 2025”, a 900-page manifesto which has been likened to Hitler’s “Mein Kampf.” Trump’s mass deportation of undocumented migrants whom he has described in words that echo Hitler as “poisoning the blood of our country”, his medieval crusade against DEI, his taking control of state institutions by staffing them with MAGA loyalists and removing those who refuse to bend to his dictatorial whims, they all have the same goal: to transform a work-in-progress democracy that operates under the official slogan of “E pluribus unum” (Out of many, one) into a racially pure and ideologically homogenous authoritarian polity. The staggering number of 100, largely anti-progressive executive orders which Trump signed in his first two months in power, more than any other president has signed in their first 100 days in office, are the Trumpian iteration of the Führerprinzip, the basis of Hitler’s executive authority which placed the word of the Führer above written law and subordinated government policies and officials to his supreme will. One characteristic trait of Gleichschaltung in Nazi Germany was “anticipatory obedience” which saw organisations such as the DeutscherRichterbund (German Association of Judges) or the Verband der DeutschenHochschulen (Association of German Institutions of Higher Education) voluntarily obey Nazi dictates in advance. US tech giants have been among the first to adapt to the US’s metastasising political climate under Trump 2.0, conforming of their own accord to his blatant authoritarianism in advance. Take Meta, for instance: Twelve days before Trump’s second inauguration, CEO Mark Zuckerberg pledged to end third-party fact-checking across Meta-owned social media sites such as Facebook and Instagram and move the company’s content moderation team from blue state California to red state Texas. Meta also donated \$1 million to Trump’s inauguration fund and named Ultimate Fighting Championship CEO Dana White, a longtime Trump supporter, to its board of directors. As history has proven, academic institutions are particularly vulnerable to wilfully conforming to the dictates of fascist leaders. Three days after Trump’s inauguration in January, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) put out a statement warning of the new administration’s accelerated attacks on academic freedom and urging the higher education community “not to surrender to such attacks—and not to surrender in anticipation of them.”

# Mohammed Bin Salman’s sharia doctrine

Qamar Bashir



Referencing the Prophet’s own recorded stance on Hadith, he remarked: “When the Hadith was first recorded, the Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered those records to be burnt and forbade the writing of Hadith.” This, he said, should apply even more rigorously to khabar Hadiths, so that people “are not obliged to implement them from a Sharia perspective.” More importantly, he cautioned that unreliable Hadiths might be used “as ammunition to dispute...

IN a rare and groundbreaking public interview, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman of Saudi Arabia laid out a precise and systematic framework for implementing Islamic law in modern governance—one rooted unwaveringly in the Quran and guided selectively by verified Sunnah. In doing so, the Crown Prince has redefined the contours of Sharia interpretation at the highest levels of state, sending a bold message not just within the Kingdom, but across the Muslim world. “As I said earlier, our constitution is the Quran—has been, still is, and will continue to be so forever,” he declared. This statement is not symbolic. It is a declaration of legal and ideological centrality that positions the Quran as the unshakeable foundation of Saudi Arabia’s governance, past, present, and future. The Crown Prince reiterated that Saudi Arabia’s basic system of governance “stipulates this very clearly.” Whether it is the government, the Shura Council as the legislator, or the King as the reference point for the three branches of authority, they are “bound to implement the Quran in some form or another.” This obligation, he emphasized, is non-negotiable and systemic. However, he also offered a nuanced differentiation within the domain of application: “In social and personal affairs, we are only obliged to implement stipulations that are clearly stated in the Quran.” He cautioned against overextending Sharia enforcement beyond what is explicitly ordained, stating, “I cannot enforce a Sharia punishment without a clear Quranic stipulation or an explicit stipulation from the Sunnah.” Mohammed bin Salman delved into the methodology that should be used to interpret and apply Hadith, the sayings and traditions attributed to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). He pointed out that while traditional compilations such as Bukhari and Muslim have categorized Hadith into “correct” and “weak,” this typology is not sufficient for governance. A more critical classification, he argued, lies in the chain of narration: whether a Hadith has been passed down by a collective chain (mutawatir) or by individuals (ahad or khabar). “When we talk about a mutawatir Hadith—narrated and handed down from one group to another starting with the Prophet—these Hadiths are very few in number but they are strong in terms of veracity,”

he explained. However, even these require context: “Their interpretations vary based on the time and place they were revealed and how the Hadith was understood at the time.” In contrast, ahad Hadith—narrated from a single person to another in a non-collective chain—are not as authoritative. “This type of Hadith is not as compelling as the mutawatir Hadiths unless paired with clear Quranic stipulations and a clear worldly good to be had.” He noted that even when classified as “correct,” such Hadiths form a small and cautious part of legal reference. He was most skeptical of khabar Hadiths—narrations passed through single individuals and with potential breaks or unknown sources in the chain. “This represents the majority of Hadith, and this type is unreliable whatsoever,” he said bluntly. “Its veracity is not established and it isn’t binding.” Referencing the Prophet’s own recorded stance on Hadith, he remarked: “When the Hadith was first recorded, the Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered those records to be burnt and forbade the writing of Hadith.” This, he said, should apply even more rigorously to khabar Hadiths, so that people “are not obliged to implement them from a Sharia perspective.” More importantly, he cautioned that unreliable Hadiths might be used “as ammunition to dispute God Almighty’s power to produce teachings that are fit for every time and place.” Therefore, the responsibility of any government that bases its legitimacy on Islamic law is to implement “Quran regulations and teachings in mutawatir Hadiths,” investigate the reliability of ahad Hadiths, and “disregard Hadiths entirely unless a clear benefit is derived from it for humanity.” This legal precision carries serious implications. “There should be no punishment related to a religious matter except when there is a clear Quranic stipulation,” he said, and even then, “this penalty will be implemented based on the way that the Prophet (peace be upon him) applied it.” He illustrated his point with the case of adultery. “The unmarried adulterer is flogged, the married adulterer is killed—this is a clear stipulation,” he said. But then he invoked the Prophet’s method, which was not rushed or punitive. “When the woman adulterer came to the Prophet and told him that she had committed adultery, he delayed judgment several times.” She had

to return multiple times, even after confirming pregnancy and nursing, before the Prophet addressed her confession. “She could have not returned,” the Crown Prince noted, “but he did not ask about her name or who she was.” The takeaway was profound. “To take a Quranic stipulation and implement it in a manner other than the manner followed by the Prophet, and look for the person to prove a certain charge against them... then that is not what God has ordained.” He warned against abusing the label of Sharia to justify unsubstantiated punishments. “To implement a penalty on the pretext that it is a Sharia penalty, while there is no stipulation for such a penalty in the Quran or in the mutawatir Hadith, is a falsification of the Sharia.” In his closing theological reflection, Mohammed bin Salman offered a reminder of divine mercy and human fallibility. “When God Almighty wanted us to punish a certain religious crime, He stipulated this clearly. And when He prohibited a deed and promised punishment in the Hereafter, He did not ask us as humans to penalize that deed.” Instead, he said, God left such matters to individual conscience, “knowing there would be a Day of Reckoning.” “And in the end,” he concluded, “God is merciful, all-forgiving—except in the case of polytheism.” This is not merely a religious statement. It is a legal doctrine. It is the architecture of a jurisprudence that insists on precision, on authenticity, and on the humanity of law. With his statements, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has carved a new pathway—firmly rooted in the Quran, cautious of unauthenticated tradition, and conscious of God’s mercy and justice. In an era where Islamic law is either politicized, romanticized, or misapplied, his vision stands out as both principled and practicable. It is now up to scholars, jurists, and statesmen across the Muslim world to consider: is this the future of Sharia? One rooted in Quranic clarity, prophetic mercy, and justice tempered with wisdom? Only time will tell. But for now, the voice from Riyadh echoes with rare courage—and resounding clarity.

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# If the US launches a ground operation against Yemen, it will backfire

Robert Inlakesh

While managing to inflict countless defeats on what was supposed to be a militarily superior opposition - on paper - the Yemeni government in Sanaa continued to expand its power and territorial control in a country that has historically been divided between north and south. In late 2021, game changing technological advances introduced a new dynamic to the conflict, ultimately pressuring the Saudi-led coalition to accept a UN mediated ceasefire proposal. By early 2022, after an expansion of the ground war the previous year, the Yemeni Armed Forces had launched...

FURSTATED by its costly ongoing offensive campaign against Yemen, the Trump administration is said to be in talks to launch a ground effort aimed at seizing the strategic port city of Hodeidah, before effecting regime change in Sanaa. If this offensive does occur, it will result in a disastrous defeat for Washington. In 2015, when then-US President Barack Obama backed the Saudi-led coalition’s war on Yemen, Riyadh had estimated that it would only take a few months to uproot the Ansar Allah leadership that had taken over Sanaa. Instead, they faced defeat after defeat at the hands of a highly-motivated armed force that received the backing of the majority of Yemen’s Armed Forces. A decade later, despite the 2022 ceasefire, the conflict remains unresolved - and Ansar Allah’s power has only continued to grow. The movement that once seized control of Sanaa with the backing of key elements of the existing power structure, including segments of the military, was a shadow of what it has since become. Not only has it forged strong alliances with various tribal factions across Yemen, but it has also made leaps and bounds in developing both offensive and defensive weapons technologies. The Yemeni Armed Forces that aligned with the Ansar Allah-led government proved capable of holding off the combined power of the Saudi-backed and UAE-backed Yemeni forces, in addition to various militant groups like Al-Qaeda and ISIS, also battling Saudi Arabia’s armed forces and later mercenary fighters from Sudan and elsewhere. They fought on the ground for years, amidst a US-Saudi blockade in the Red Sea, combined with US-British-Israeli logical support being provided to their enemies, backing Riyadh’s air attacks against the country. While managing to inflict countless defeats on what was supposed to be a militarily superior opposition - on paper - the Yemeni government in Sanaa continued to expand its power and territorial control in a country that has historically been divided between north and south. In late 2021, game changing technological advances introduced a new dynamic to the conflict, ultimately pressuring the Saudi-led coalition to accept a UN mediated ceasefire proposal. By early 2022, after an expansion of the ground war the previous year, the Yemeni Armed Forces had launched a wave of successful drone and

missile attacks at targets across the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia. While Riyadh had been dealing with Ansar Allah’s drones and missiles for years by that point, it was clear that a significant technological advancement had occurred. And whereas the Saudi State had some capacity to absorb limited attacks on its vital infrastructure, the Emirati regime was far less equipped to withstand repeated blows from Yemen. Abu Dhabi in particular cannot afford to absorb sustained waves of drone and missile attacks, especially if Dubai becomes a target. Unlike Saudi Arabia, the UAE is a tiny and vulnerable country. If Yemen decides to blanket them with strikes, their endeavors to diversify their economy will likely disintegrate, and no amount of deals with the US nor the Israelis can help them. The claims that are being spread, particularly across Arabic language media, speculate that a Saudi-UAE backed force of about 80,000 soldiers is being amassed in order to launch an offensive aimed at seizing Hodeidah. Then, so goes the report, the US will offer air support and even launch a smaller ground attack to invade Yemen. Yemen was once dubbed Egypt’s Vietnam - and if the United States decides to launch a ground campaign there, the outcome is unlikely to align with President Donald Trump’s intentions. Already, the air campaign alone, which has already killed around 150 civilians, has proven to be an embarrassing failure, costing US taxpayers billions of dollars with little to show in return. Despite this war of aggression against Yemen being launched without a popular mandate, nor congressional approval, the US corporate media have largely chosen to ignore it. Yet, if Trump sends boots on the ground, Yemen will quickly dominate headlines, for the simple reason that US service members will start returning home in coffins. So far, the Yemeni Armed Forces have limited their confrontations with the US’s naval fleets to defensive maneuvers, meaning that they have not been attempting to sink ships or aircraft carriers and are focused on defending their nation. If a large-scale ground operation is launched, the defensive posture will shift to one of offense. The ground campaign will not only be costly and far from a walk in the park, the US will also endure direct hits to its vessels and significant casualties. Additionally, we

should expect major attacks on both Saudi and Emirati infrastructure, which will disrupt oil markets. It is also very likely that US bases located in the Arabian Peninsula and beyond will come under attack. Furthermore, we should probably expect occasional strikes against the Zionist regime that will be more intense than previous waves. If we begin to see the civilian death toll climb dramatically in Yemen, while the war is overtly an American-Zionist aggression, the way in which Ansar Allah will deal with it won’t be restricted any longer. On top of this, it could even end up uniting the people of Yemen to an even greater degree as a result, including factions and tribes that have always been at odds with Ansarallah. Yemen is not Iran, but it has the capacity to inflict considerable losses on the US-aligned regimes surrounding it and can target US forces directly. The question then becomes, can Riyadh and Abu Dhabi endure continuous barrages of munitions being fired towards them? Also, when the war lasts much longer than anticipated and the proxy ground force used to attack Yemen is suffering severe losses, as American soldiers return home in body bags, what will the strategy be then? Will the 80,000 strong force continue to fight if they are suffering considerable losses, all in order to achieve a victory for Israeli strategic interests? Or will they begin to experience serious morale issues and defections? Will the US public be able to stomach the losses, and can the US military itself justify the loss of assets in a pointless fight to please their Zionist allies? There will be no benefits to launching such an assault, and the US has not amassed nearly enough ground troops to launch a war alone. On every level, this would be a catastrophic strategic blunder. If they lose, this would be an embarrassment of historic proportions and nation-defining victory for the Ansar’s government, despite the immense civilian suffering that will inevitably come from the war. All of this leaves out the potential involvement of other regional actors who may take advantage of the situation too. If Trump decides to go ahead with such a conflict, in order to please his Zionist ally, it will greatly backfire. There will also be no way to hide the fact that he is working against US interests and sacrificing his own citizens in order to make the Israelis satisfied, without any real end goal or vision for victory.



## Briefs

## PM seeks stronger space...

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launch in Pakistan by November or December, state minister Shaza Fatima told the National Assembly Standing Committee on IT and Telecom earlier this month. A Chinese company, Shanghai SpaceCom, had also applied for a satellite internet licence in Pakistan.

## Pak require financial assistance...

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communities also protect the livelihoods of economically disadvantaged groups. The prime minister appreciated the efforts of the International Trade Union Confederation for advocating workers' rights at global level. He emphasized that Pakistan, in collaboration with the International Labour Organization, was working towards the protection of the rights of laborers and workers. The government is expanding the scope of Employees Old-Age Benefit and Worker Welfare Fund so that maximum number of employees and workers can benefit from them, the prime minister remarked.

## Sindh CM urges to avoid...

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construction of six new canals on the Indus River. Meanwhile, the Grand Democratic Alliance (GDA) and other nationalist parties took to the streets and staged massive rallies in different cities of the province, including Karachi. In his hard-hitting presser today, the Sindh CM announced that the contentious canal project will be blocked at all costs. "The Sindh government and the PPP will not allow the canal project to be built with the power of the people," he added. The CM maintained that work on the canal project had been stalled since July 2024, and the approval of the project had been pending since November last year. He wondered why the project was not abandoned.

## PPP senators walk out from...

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the past few months from political parties, including the ruling coalition ally PPP. As the Senate session started today, Soon after today's, PPP lawmakers walked out. Speaking on the floor of the Senate, Federal Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar said the decision regarding the canal project would be made according to the Constitution and laws of the country. He said Political Adviser Rana Sanaullah had formally contacted the Sindh government and PPP leadership to assure them that the federal government was committed to resolving the issue through constitutional means. "The decision is clear—nothing will be forced," he added. He criticized the Opposition, accusing them of being disruptive and avoiding meaningful discussion. "May be they have no questions to raise, or they lack the courage to listen. But if they want to take part in a productive debate, I along with senior cabinet members are here to answer," he said.

## Aurangzeb assures WB of...

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During the meeting, Banga was given a "detailed overview of Pakistan's macroeconomic turnaround" while Aurangzeb reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to "sustainable economic stability", the statement said. In January, Pakistan became the first country to launch a longer-term CPF with the World Bank. According to the World Bank, the new framework aims to "support inclusive and sustainable development through a strong focus on building human capital".

## Uzbekistan stuns KSA with 9 men to claim U-17 title

*The team scored 17 goals and conceded only 3. Their campaign began with a 4-1 thrashing of Thailand, followed by a tough 2-1 victory over China, securing early qualification to the knockout stage and a spot in the upcoming FIFA U-17 World Cup*

## SPORTS DESK

TASHKENT: In one of the most sensational finals in AFC U-17 Asian Cup history, Uzbekistan's youth football team overcame monumental odds to defeat host nation Saudi Arabia 2-0, despite being reduced to nine players in the first half. The victory, achieved in dramatic fashion on April 20, crowned Uzbekistan as champions of Asia for the second time in their U-17 history. The match, held at the King Fahd Sports City in Taif, Saudi Arabia, was filled with tension and controversy. Two Uzbek players, Nurbek Sarsenbayev and Miraziz Abduraimov, were shown red cards in the 40th and 45th minutes respectively by Qatari referee Abdulrahman Al-Jassim. With nine men on the pitch and facing the full force of Saudi Arabia's squad and home crowd, Uzbekistan could have crumbled. Instead, they rose. In the 50th minute, striker Muhammad Hakimov converted a coolly taken penalty to put Uzbekistan in front. The second goal came in the 70th minute, following a stunning counterattack. Goalkeeper Nematullo Rustamjonov made a string of heroic saves before launching the ball forward, allowing midfielder Sadridin Hasanov to race past the Saudi defense and slot it home, sealing the result.

Led by Head Coach Islombek Ismoilov,



Uzbekistan's journey through the tournament was nothing short of dominant. The team scored 17 goals and conceded only 3. Their campaign began with a 4-1 thrashing of Thailand, followed by a tough 2-1 victory over China, securing early qualification to the knockout stage and a spot in the upcoming FIFA U-17 World Cup. They con-

cluded the group stage with a statement 3-0 win – again over Saudi Arabia. In the knockout rounds, they maintained their clinical form, defeating the UAE 3-1 and North Korea 3-0 in the semifinal. This is Uzbekistan's second AFC U-17 Championship title, with their first triumph dating back to 2012 when they defeated Japan in the final

hosted in Iran. The current team has not only equaled that achievement but arguably surpassed it in dramatic impact and national pride. Several Uzbek players earned top individual honors. Asilbek Aliyev was named the Top Scorer with 5 goals. Sadridin Hasanov was recognized as the Player of the Tournament. Nematullo Rustamjonov was awarded Best Goalkeeper. These accolades reflect the all-around quality of the Uzbek side – from defense to attack. Following the historic win, President of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, issued a heartfelt congratulatory message to the players, coaches, and the nation. In his address, he stated: "This unforgettable victory, achieved while down to nine men against a formidable host team, will be etched in the golden annals of Uzbek football. Your courage, determination, and fighting spirit symbolize the strength of the youth of New Uzbekistan." The President went on to commend the coaching staff and families of the players, emphasizing the importance of the country's ongoing investment in youth sports development. As a gesture of appreciation, the President awarded: – Head Coach Islombek Ismoilov with the title "Honored Coach of Uzbekistan" – All 23 players with the prestigious "Kelajak Bunyodkori" (Builder of the Future) Medal. Additionally, each player and coach were gifted a car by the government in recognition of their achievement.

## Pak looks to increase imports from US

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"It's a bigger canvas that we are looking at in terms of engaging the US. We will constructively engage, and we will have a formal delegation coming in," he added. "Pakistan is open to foreign direct investments (FDI) from US firms and is preparing to debut its first-ever Panda bond in the range of \$200m to \$250m this year." The finance czar added that they were looking to buy more cotton and soybeans from the US. "We can also look at whether there are any issues with respect to non-tariff discussion, whether there are any onerous inspections at our end for US products, we can obviously view that," he added. He further stated that a trade delegation will also visit Washington in the coming months to bridge the trade gap. The minister said that authorities in Pakistan were trying to rebuild the country's battered economy after it came close to a default in 2023 and had won an initial nod for a \$2.3bn IMF loan that will give it funding visibility until 2027.

## Pak needs both establishment...

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had been turned into a "banana republic" to crush the party, and that institutions including the judiciary, Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), and police had been damaged in the process. Imran also criticised restrictions on meetings with family and legal counsel, stating it was his constitutional right. "At one time, even nine lawyers could meet him. Now, only two were allowed," Chaudhry added. "He noted that Imran's health was good, but he had been informed that his sisters and several party leaders were denied visitation rights. Imran also raised objections about his wife, Bushra Bibi, facing mistreatment in custody," he added.

## Senate panel shoots down...

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Senate Chairman Yousuf Raza Gilani. Opposition Leader Shibli Faraz, who tabled the resolution on behalf of PTI, found himself up against the tide, as almost all committee members, except MWM, opposed the move. Members from ANP, JUI-F, and BAP also voted against it. Things got heated when Shibli Faraz exchanged words with committee members, accusing them of sidelining KP's representation in the Upper House. "The House of Federation is losing a province's voice, this is unacceptable," he said.

## PM Shehbaz reaches Turkiye

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brotherhood between the two nation," the statement said. "The upcoming meeting represents a continuation of this robust dialogue and underscores the shared commitment to further elevate the multifaceted partnership between Pakistan and Türkiye," it added. This trip follows President Erdogan's visit to Islamabad in February during which he co-chaired the 7th session of the High Level Strategic Cooperation Council (HLSCC) for cooperation and coordination on various issues of mutual interest.

## 100,000 Afghans...

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27-year-old Allah Rahman said at the Torkham border on Saturday. "I was afraid the police might humiliate me and my family. Now we're heading back to Afghanistan out of sheer helplessness." Afghanistan's Prime Minister Hasan Akhund on Saturday condemned the "unilateral measures" taken by the neighbouring country after Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar flew to Kabul for a day-long visit to discuss the returns. Akhund urged the Pakistani government to "facilitate the dignified return of Afghan refugees".

## Manchester United interested in Wolves' Matheus Cunha

Cunha - Wolves' top scorer this season with 16 goals to his name in all competitions - plays in a similar system under current boss Vitor Pereira

## WEB DESK

LONDON: Manchester United are interested in signing Wolves forward Matheus Cunha this summer. The Brazilian, who has a £62.5m release clause in his Wolves contract, is expected to leave Molineux at the end of the season. Multiple club sources have told BBC Sport the 25-year-old is one of a number of attacking options on United's shortlist, with Ipswich Town striker Liam Delap, 22, also of interest. Improving United's scoring record is a priority for head coach Ruben Amorim. Only Southampton, Leicester City, Ipswich, Everton and West Ham have scored fewer than the 38 goals United have managed in 33 Premier League matches this season. Cunha is viewed as an ideal addition to play in one of the two attacking midfield positions in Amorim's preferred 3-4-2-1 formation. Cunha - Wolves' top scorer this

season with 16 goals to his name in all competitions - plays in a similar system under current boss Vitor Pereira. United are set to face competition from a number of Premier League clubs for Cunha, with Liverpool, Arsenal, Chelsea and Newcastle all known to be looking to sign a forward this summer. Cunha has scored 32 times in 87 appearances for Wolves but his disciplinary record may be of some concern to suitors. The former Atletico Madrid striker has been sent off twice this season, missing six games in total through suspension. The forward said in an interview with the Observer in March that he has told Wolves he needs to "take the next step" and fight for titles. United's planning for next season is hindered by uncertainty over their financial situation. At a conservative estimate, the club stand to gain around £100m in additional funds if they win this season's Europa

League and qualify for the Champions League. But, with each league position worth £3m in the Premier League, United stand to lose around £24m should they finish in their current position of 14th compared to an eighth-placed finish last season. Following Sunday's home defeat by Wolves, Amorim said the club have a "plan" to improve the squad but that the situation could not be addressed until the summer. An aggressive attacking player, capable of dropping deeper and linking play or threatening the opponents' goal - and scoring. He is the kind of player Amorim's squad has been crying out for all season, with neither Rasmus Hojlund or, before his season-ending injury, Joshua Zirkzee looking like the answer in the most advanced position. Work is going on behind the scenes at Old Trafford to come up with a summer transfer plan. However, there is a big but. It is quite obvious

United's status, in terms of the finances they have to spend, will be shaped by whether they win the Europa League or not. If they beat Athletic Bilbao in the semi-final, then either Tottenham or Bodo/Glimt in the final, United can count themselves fortunate the damage of this appalling campaign has not been too extensive and can create a more rounded squad in the belief results will be far better in 2025-26. If they don't, a decision will have to be made over whether they prioritise a couple of positions, believing all the spare midweek fixture slots will give Amorim a chance to work with his players, or lower their sights and bring in more players with the profile the former Sporting boss wants. It is clear United are desperate for forwards. But they probably need more than one. They also need wing-backs, central midfield players and central defenders.

## Pakistan women cricketers move up in latest ODI ranking

Pak captain Fatima surged in both bowling and all-rounders' rankings



LAHORE: Pakistan's dominant run at the ICC Women's World Cup 2025 Qualifiers has not only secured their place in this year's main event but also propelled several of their players up in ICC Women's ODI Player Rankings. Remaining unbeaten throughout the tournament, hosts Pakistan capped off their campaign with a convincing seven-wicket victory over Bangladesh in Lahore last week, finishing at the top of the table. Their standout performances have now been recognised in the latest ODI rankings, with multiple top performers making significant gains in both

batting and bowling departments. Pakistan captain Fatima Sana, who was their leading wicket-taker in the tournament with 12 scalps, jumped five places to secure joint 27th position in the bowling rankings. She also scored 103 runs in four innings at an average of 34.33 and thus also experienced a notable jump in the all-rounders' rankings, leaping 10 spots to clinch the joint-15th spot. Pakistan's left-arm spinner Sadia Iqbal was also rewarded for taking nine wickets in the qualifying event as she improved five spots to 17th in the ODI bowling rankings. Nashra Sandhu also experienced a significant improvement in her ranking as she has been promoted to the 13th position, moving one place up. On the other hand, top-order batter Sidra Amin, who finished as Pakistan's top scorer in the Qualifier with 225 runs in five innings at an average of 45 and with the help of three half-centuries, jumped five places to secure 18th position in the ODI batting rankings. Meanwhile, her fellow top-order batter Muneeba Ali achieved a career-best ranking of 30th. Bangladesh, who qualified for the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup in India, alongside hosts Pakistan, saw their players being rewarded in the rankings update. Left-arm spinner Nahida Akter climbed two places to register a career-high ranking of 10th for taking six wickets during the Qualifier. – DNA

## Najmul Shanto leads BD recovery on rain-hit day

Bangladesh secure a handy 112-run lead with six wickets in hand

## WEB DESK

SYLHET: Bangladesh captain Najmul Hossain Shanto scored a defiant half-century on the rain-hit third day of the first Test against Zimbabwe here at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium on Tuesday. The home side resumed their second innings from an overnight score of 57/1, trailing by a further 25 runs, through Mahmudul Hasan Joy and Mominul Haque after three hours of the day were washed out due to rain. Bangladesh had a rocky start as Blessing Muzarabani dismissed Mahmudul Hasan Joy in the 20th over. The opening batter 33 off 65 deliveries with the help of six boundaries. Haque was then joined by skipper Shanto in the middle and together they raised an important partnership which put Bangladesh into the lead. The 65-run partnership ended in the 35th over when Victor Nyauchi dismissed Haque, who walked back after scoring 47 off 84 deliveries with the help of six boundaries. The hosts then suffered another blow to their batting expedition when Mushfiqur Rahim fell victim to Muzarabani in the 42nd over after scoring just four off 20 deliveries. Najmul Hossain Shanto was then joined by wicketkeeper batter Jaker Ali and together they scored an unbeaten 39 runs for the fifth wicket before stumps were called. At the conclusion of the third day, Bangladesh were 194/4, leading by 112 runs, with skipper Shanto and Ali, unbeaten on 60 and 21 respectively.

## Forest stun Tottenham to boost UCL hopes

Forest scored their first goal within five minutes

## WEB DESK

LONDON: Nottingham Forest boosted their hopes for a Champions League spot with a 2-1 victory over Tottenham Hotspur on Tuesday in North London, moving them up to third in the Premier League table. Elliot Anderson and Chris Wood scored early goals to hand Spurs their 18th defeat of the season—the most by any team outside the relegation zone. Forest started the game strongly, opening the scoring in just the fifth minute when Anderson's blistering volley took a deflection off Rodrigo Bentancur before finding the net. Wood doubled the lead in the 16th minute, slotting home his 19th league goal of the season from Anthony Elanga's pinpoint pass. The second half began without VAR after the Premier League confirmed a temporary suspension due to

a fire alarm at the VAR Hub in Stockley Park. "The match will be operating without VAR until further notice due to a fire alarm at the VAR Hub at Stockley Park," the Premier League said in a statement. However, VAR was operational earlier in the match and played a key role in disallowing a goal from Wood after confirming he was offside—an incident that occurred before the system was suspended. Tottenham's struggles continued as they failed to build on their recent Europa League success, where a victory over Eintracht Frankfurt on Friday secured their place in the semi-finals. Despite dominating possession (70%), creating more chances, and registering more shots on target, Spurs were unable to capitalize on their opportunities. Forest, who began the match in sixth place, have now kept their dream of qualifying for Europe's elite competition well and truly alive.





## Briefs

## Rupee gains 10 paisa against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Tuesday appreciated by 10 paisa against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 280.76 against the previous day's closing of Rs 280.86.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 280.90 and Rs 282.40, respectively. The price of the Euro decreased by Rs1.66 to close at Rs 322.78 against the last day's closing of Rs 324.44, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs1.99, whereas a decrease of Rs 1.07 paisa was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 375.54 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 376.61. The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal decreased by 03 and 01 paisa to close at Rs 76.43 and 74.84 respectively.—APP

## Gold price surges further by Rs 5,900 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat per tola gold witnessed an increase of Rs.5,900 on Tuesday and was sold, all time high, at Rs.363,700 against its sale at Rs. 357,800 on the previous trading day, All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewelers Association reported. The prices of 10 grams of 24 karat also increased by Rs.5,059 to Rs.311,814 from Rs 306,755 whereas the price of 10 grams of 22 Karat increased by Rs.4,637 to Rs.285,839 from Rs. 281,202. The rates of per tola and ten gram silver remained stagnant at Rs.3,441 and Rs.2,950. The price of gold in the international market increased by \$59 to \$3,454 from \$3,395 whereas that of silver remained unchanged at \$32.77, the Association reported.—APP

## Jazz' leadership principles to power its transformation into ServiceCo

ISLAMABAD: As Jazz accelerates its evolution from a telecom operator to a full-fledged ServiceCo, the company has launched a bold set of Leadership Principles to anchor this transformation in a culture of purpose-driven leadership, accountability, and inclusion. Designed for every level of the organisation—from frontline employees to the Executive Leadership Team—the principles serve as a unifying framework to inspire action, foster ownership, and build a future-ready workforce, said a news release. "This is more than a framework—it's a mindset shift," said Tazeen Shahid, Chief People Officer at Jazz. "We're building a culture where leadership is not defined by role, but by behaviour. These principles will guide how we show up for each other, our customers, and the country." The Leadership Principles are structured across four tiers—Everyone, People Managers, Female Leadership Team (FLT)—APP



ISLAMABAD: French Ambassador Nicolas Gale, Canadian Charge d Affaires, Ambassador Mohammad Karmoune Dean of the African Group, CEO The Centaurus Sardar Yasir Ilyas, President of the Centaurus Group Dr. Rashid, General Manager Movenpick Hotel for a picture on the occasion of opening of Sky 24 restaurant at the Movenpick Hotel. —DNA

## Ahsan urges ASEAN-Pakistan tech alliance at expo

The two-day Expo brought together distinguished delegates from ASEAN member states, academia, industry leaders, and students to foster collaboration in science, technology and innovation

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday made a compelling call to action, urging stakeholders to re-imagine ASEAN-Pakistan relations not solely through the traditional lenses of trade and diplomacy, but as a 'dynamic technology alliance' aimed at inclusive and sustainable prosperity. Addressing the ASEAN-Pakistan Technology Expo 2025 at the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) here, the minister proposed the establishment of an ASEAN-Pakistan Technology Co-operation Forum, to be held annually, to identify joint initiatives, exchange innovative ideas and evaluate collaborative progress. He also suggested launching an ASEAN-Pakistan Startup Bridge to connect incubators, venture capitalists, and entrepreneurs across the region in order to foster a vibrant cross-border innovation ecosystem. Additionally,

he emphasized the need to promote the development of regional standards and interoperability in digital technologies to enable efficient, seamless collaboration and integration among member states. The minister called for co-hosting technology expos, hackathons, and innovation challenges to crowdsource solutions for shared development challenges and stimulate youth-led innovation. He further proposed institutionalizing a structured digital dialogue involving policymakers, academia, industry leaders, and young innovators to ensure that technology policies remain inclusive, future-oriented, and people-centered. Highlighting the significance of the Expo, Ahsan Iqbal described it as a symbol of the shared commitment between Pakistan and ASEAN nations to harness the transformative power of technology. He underscored the dual nature of technological change, which offers immense promise but also presents formidable challenges. From artificial intelligence to clean energy, he

noted that disruptive innovations are reshaping global economies and societies, while also widening the technology gap, digital divide, and skills mismatch in developing regions. The minister identified common challenges faced by Pakistan and ASEAN countries, including climate change, youth unemployment, and uneven digital infrastructure. However, he also pointed to shared strengths such as a young and tech-savvy population, strong universities, and a growing appetite for innovation – the elements he said formed the foundation for deeper cooperation in science and technology. Reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to its partnership with ASEAN, Ahsan Iqbal outlined a forward-looking vision for technology collaboration, built on three strategic pillars: These include fostering knowledge and talent exchange through academic partnerships and innovation fellowships; building joint research and development platforms in emerging fields; and ensuring

that technology contributes to sustainable and inclusive development, particularly in climate resilience, health, and education. He also highlighted recent milestones in Pakistan's journey toward a knowledge-based economy, including the launch of the National AI Policy, the creation of Special Technology Zones to attract global investment, the digitization of governance through the E-Pakistan initiative, and the strengthening of institutions like NUST and Ignite to support startups and applied research. Stressing the importance of cooperation, innovation and a shared vision for the future, Ahsan Iqbal praised NUST's leadership in technology education and research. He urged the youth to develop technologies that serve not only markets, but also the broader public good.

The minister expressed hope that the ASEAN-Pakistan Technology Expo would begin a new era of collaboration, shaping a smarter, greener and more

inclusive future for the region. In his welcome remarks, Umar Khan, Project Director of the National Centre of Robotics and Automation (NCRA) at NUST, acknowledged the minister's pivotal role in establishing key national research centers. He noted that the NCRA, along with the National Centre of Artificial Intelligence, the National Centre of Big Data and Cloud Computing, the National Centre of Cyber Security, and the National Centre of GIS and Space Applications, were all launched during 2017-2018 under the minister's vision to position Pakistan as a technology-driven nation. He emphasized that Ahsan Iqbal's unwavering commitment has transformed these initiatives into thriving ecosystems of innovation, commercialization, and national impact. The two-day Expo brought together distinguished delegates from ASEAN member states, academia, industry leaders, and students to foster collaboration in science, technology and innovation.

## Syria detains two leaders of Palestinian Islamic Jihad

DAMASCUS: Syrian Arab Republic authorities have detained two senior members of the Palestinian militant faction Islamic Jihad, which took part in the October 2023 attacks on Israel from Gaza, the group's armed wing and a Syrian official said on Tuesday.

In a statement, the Al Quds Brigades said Khaled Khaled, who heads Islamic Jihad's operations in Syria, and Yasser Al-Zafari, who heads its organizational committee, had been in Syrian custody for five days.

The group said the men had been detained "without any explanation of the reasons" and "in a manner we would not have hoped to see from brothers," and called for their release.

An official from Syria's interior ministry confirmed the detentions, but did not respond to follow-up questions on why the pair had been arrested. A Palestinian source in Damascus also confirmed the arrests.

Islamic Jihad joined its ally Hamas, Gaza's ruling group, in the attack on Israel in 2023. It is a recipient of Iranian funding and know-how, and has long had foreign headquarters in Syria and Lebanon. But its allies in both countries have recently suffered devastating blows: an Israeli air and ground offensive last year severely weakened the Lebanese Iranian-backed group Hezbollah, and Syria's leader Bashar Assad, closely allied to Tehran, was ousted by a rebel offensive last year. The new Islamist leadership in Damascus has cut diplomatic ties with Iran and is hoping to rebuild Syria's regional and international backing, not least to eliminate sanctions and fund reconstruction after a brutal 14-year civil war.—APP

## Gaza 'land of desperation' after 50 days of total siege: UN

GENEVA: The United Nations warned Tuesday that Gaza was facing deepening hunger 50 days into a total Israeli blockade on all aid entering the war-ravaged Palestinian territory.

"Gaza has become a land of desperation," Philippe Lazzarini, head of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees UNRWA, said on X.

"Hunger is spreading and deepening, deliberate and manmade. After 18 months of devastating war and an Israeli blockade on aid since March 2, the UN has warned of a dire humanitarian situation for the 2.4 million inhabitants of the Palestinian territory. Israel has accused the Palestinian militant group of diverting aid, which Hamas denies. The heads of 12 major aid organizations warned last Thursday that "famine is not just a risk, but likely rapidly unfolding in almost all parts" of the territory. "You can see a clear tendency toward total disaster," Jens Laerke, spokesman for the UN humanitarian agency OCHA told reporters in Geneva Tuesday. "It is true that right now is probably the worst humanitarian situation we have seen throughout the war in Gaza." In his post on X, Lazzarini questioned "how much longer until hollow words of condemnation will translate into action to lift the siege, resume a ceasefire and save whatever is left of humanity?"—APP

## Vance calls for greater ties with India

NEW DELHI: US Vice President JD Vance on Tuesday called for enhanced engagement with India and said that the South Asian country should buy more defense equipment and energy from the US and allow Washington greater access to its market, lending momentum to an expected bilateral trade deal Vance, who is on a four-day visit to India, said that he and Prime Minister Narendra Modi made progress on trade talks during their discussions on Monday, and confirmed that both sides had finalized the terms of reference for the trade negotiation – a vital step toward setting the road map for the final agreement. India and the US hope to seal a bilateral trade agreement this year and have set an ambitious target of more than doubling their bilateral trade to \$500 billion by 2030. If achieved, the trade deal could significantly enhance economic ties between both countries and potentially strengthen diplomatic ties as well. "I believe there is much that India and America can accomplish together," Vance said at an event in the western city of Jaipur, where he, his wife Usha Vance and their three children were on a sightseeing tour. Vance's first visit to New Delhi came amid the backdrop of US President Donald Trump's partially-paused tariff program against most countries, including India. Earlier this month, Trump announced a 90-day pause in which imports from most countries would face a baseline 10 percent tax so that there was time to hold talks and possibly structure broader deals. —DNA

## Saudi, ME, global leaders offer condolences following Pope's death

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman sent cables of condolences on the death of Pope Francis on Monday, the Saudi Press Agency reported. The Muslim World League secretary-general Mohammed bin Abdulkarim Al-Hssa, who met the Pope at the Vatican in December 2024, told Arab News that their friendship had strengthened cooperation between the League and the Vatican in "shared goals ... championing just humanitarian causes and promoting the values of coexistence and global peace, in the face of the ideas and practices of religious and civilizational conflict and strife." The Pope was a man of "wisdom, just stances, and positive contributions, particularly to the Islamic world and its causes," Al-Hssa said. The Muslim Council of Elders, headed by Egypt's Grand Imam Ahmed Al-Tayeb, also mourned Pope Francis' passing and extended their condolences to "the leaders of the Catholic Church, our Christian brethren, and all advocates of peace and coexistence worldwide." Pope Francis and Sheikh Ahmed co-authored the historic Document on Human Fraternity, widely regarded as one of the most significant documents in modern human history. "Pope Francis devoted his life to serving humanity and advancing the values of dialogue, tolerance, coexistence, peace, and human fraternity while he also tirelessly supported the vulnerable, needy, refugees, and the displaced, embodying a singular example of compassion and becoming a historic religious figure whose enduring humanitarian legacy will inspire future generations," the group said in a statement on X. Egypt's president Abdel Fattah El-Sisi also offered his condolences following the death of Pope Francis on Monday. "Pope Francis was a voice of peace, love and compassion," said El-Sisi. Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed, President of the UAE, said Francis dedicated his life to promoting the principles of peaceful coexistence and understanding. "I extend my deepest condolences to Catholics around the world on the passing of Pope Francis, who dedicated his life to promoting the principles of peaceful coexistence and understanding. May he rest in peace," said Sheikh Mohamed via statement on X. I extend my deepest condolences to Catholics around the world on the passing of Pope Francis, who dedicated his life to promoting the principles of peaceful coexistence and understanding. May he rest in peace. Prime minister of UAE Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum said Pope Francis was a great leader whose compassion and commitment to peace touched countless lives. We are deeply saddened to hear of the passing of His Holiness Pope Francis @Pontifex , a great leader whose compassion and commitment to peace touched countless lives. His legacy of humility and interfaith unity will continue to inspire many communities around the world . pic.twitter.com/5LwoJq2Hx In a statement on X, Sheikh Mohammed said "his legacy of humility and interfaith unity will continue to inspire many communities around the world." Jordan's King Abdullah II, on X, meanwhile said: "Deepest condolences to our Christian brothers and sisters around the world. Pope Francis was admired by all as the Pope of the People. He brought people together, leading with kindness, humility, and compassion. His legacy will live on in his good deeds and teachings."

## The Silent Crisis: Child Marriages in Pakistan

NABEELA ASLAM

CHILD marriages are like polio for our social fabric, they cripple the future of our children, especially girls, perpetuate cycles of poverty and inequality, and require a collective effort to eradicate. There is a lot of hue and cry over a small number of polio cases in the entire country, yet no alarm bells ring when it comes to the widespread cases of child marriages, which cripple the social fabric far worse than polio ever could. According to UNICEF, Pakistan has the 6th highest rate of child marriage in the world, with far-reaching consequences for girls' education, health, and economic empowerment. In every term-increasing cases of child abuse and violence, rising population that is engulfing all resources, and the escalating

cost of healthcare services—child marriage remains a deeply rooted issue that amplifies each of these crises, yet continues to be met with silence and inaction. Last April, the Lahore High Court ruled that the Child Marriage Act of 1929 was discriminatory due to its different age requirements for males and females, setting the minimum age at 18 for boys and 16 for girls. Justice Shahid Karim directed the Punjab government to revise the law within 15 days to end this age-based distinction. However, it's been over a year, and the government hasn't implemented the court's verdict yet. The court's decision aimed to protect girls from child marriages and exploitation, emphasizing equal rights under Article 25 of the Constitution. Pakistan has a significant problem with child marriages, with

18% of women aged 20-24 in Punjab married before turning 18, according to the Pakistan Demographic Health Survey 2017-18. The economic cost of child marriage in Pakistan is estimated to be around 4.5% of GDP annually, underscoring the need for urgent action. MPA Sarah Ahmad has indeed spearheaded the Punjab Child Marriage Restraint Bill 2024, which aims to raise the minimum



mum age of marriage for girls from 16 to 18 years. This bill is a significant step towards preventing child marriages and protecting girls' rights in Punjab. Chief Executive Officer of PODA, Ms. Sameena Nazir, briefed that under the project "Reducing Early Marriages to Enhance Gender Equality," PODA has been conducting meetings with women Members of the Provincial Assembly (MPAs) and community leaders. They're advocating for a legal amendment to raise the minimum age of marriage for girls to 18 years, highlighting the negative impacts of child marriages on girls' health, education, and well-being, she added. PODA, an organization advocating for women's and vulnerable communities' rights in Pakistan, collaborates with various stakeholders, including leg-

islators, community leaders, legal professionals, media, religious scholars, and health workers, to combat child marriages and secure girls' fundamental rights, particularly the right to education, for social and economic empowerment. "In our interactions with rural communities, we discovered alarming statistics: in a group of 30 women, 6 to 7 had been married before turning 18, and 3 to 4 before turning 16. This indicates a higher rate than reported by national and international organizations. Child marriage robs a significant portion of the population of their aspirations and dreams to lead a healthy, dignified life as full-fledged citizens, contrary to the constitutional guarantee of equality irrespective of age, race, sex, and ethnicity," Ms. Nazir said. Pakistan's inconsistent marriage laws, with only Sindh and ICT for Chris-

tians setting the minimum age at 18, contradict the country's commitment to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 5 on gender equality, underscoring the need for uniform legislation to protect children's rights and promote gender equality nationwide. The National Assembly of Pakistan passed a unanimous resolution adopting the SDGs Agenda as its own national development agenda through a resolution in 2016. This commitment underscores Pakistan's dedication to achieving the SDGs, including Goal 5 on gender equality, which is crucial for addressing issues like child marriage. Advocate Khawaja Zahid Nasim, Chairperson of the Naheeda Mehboob Elahi Foundation, which works to provide free legal aid to victims of gender-based violence, said: "While the Sindh Child

Marriage Restraint Act has been a step forward in curbing early marriages, its effectiveness is undermined by those who misuse the legal system. In contrast, the Punjab Child Marriage Restraint Act's loopholes, particularly regarding spousal age requirements, have enabled manipulators from other provinces to pursue their vested interests in Punjab." Factors like climate change are indeed exacerbating existing vulnerabilities, such as increased poverty and safety concerns, which in turn contribute to a rise in child marriages. The devastating floods in Sindh have highlighted this issue, with a significant surge in cases often referred to as "monsoon brides." This alarming trend underscores the urgent need for targeted interventions to protect girls' rights in the face of climate-related disasters.



## Briefs

## SBC threatens nationwide rail blockade

DNA

SUKKUR: The Sindh Bar Council (SBC) has warned of a nationwide rail blockade if the controversial canals project is not withdrawn. The Sindh Bar Council Tuesday announced its protest campaign against the controversial canals project, declaring plans to bring railway traffic to a halt after April 25 if the scheme is not withdrawn.

Speaking to the media in Sukkur, Vice Chairman of the Sindh Bar Council, Shafqat Rahim Rajput, said that if the authorities failed to reverse the decision on the disputed canals, the protest movement would be broadened further.

Rajput warned that sit-ins would be staged not only along the national highways but also on railway tracks across Sindh starting April 25. He urged citizens to avoid train travel after that date to prevent inconvenience. He said demonstrations have already taken place at different places in the province.

"The River Indus is the life-line of our province. We cannot allow any compromise on our water rights. This canal project is nothing less than an attempt to deprive Sindh of its due share," he remarked. He reiterated that the people of Sindh would not remain silent in the face of what he termed an "assault on the province's rights."

## Azma Bokhari slams CM Murad

## BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari has slammed Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah, saying that he and his party have ruled Sindh for 16 years and now it's high time they show their performance. Reacting strongly to Murad Ali Shah's recent press conference, Bokhari said the Sindh CM seemed more concerned about Punjab's farmers than his own. "Punjab has its own leaders to speak for its farmers", she added. She questioned whether the Sindh government had fixed wheat price or even begun purchasing the crop from farmers. Bokhari highlighted Punjab's achievement under CM Maryam Nawaz, including Rs110 billion package for farmers, solar tube wells, green tractors, super seeders and record wheat production. She also accused Shah of supporting protesters who blocked Sindh's main highways, urging him to act differently from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa CM Ali Amin Gandapur.

## Justice must prevail in Sanam's case

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan heard the Punjab government's appeal against the acquittal of PTI leader Sanam Javed in a case related to the May 9 violence. A three-member bench led by Justice Hashim Khan Kakar heard the case. The government's counsel argued that Sanam Javed was acquitted by LHC during the hearing of her plea against physical remand, a move he claimed was beyond the court's authority. However, Justice Kakar countered this by stating that the high court does possess the authority to act even upon receiving a mere letter indicating injustice. He emphasised that "justice must prevail, and any signs of injustice demand intervention." Justice Sala-uddin also supported this view, noting that the High Court held *suomotu* powers in criminal revision matters. Meanwhile, Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim questioned the delay, asking, "Did it take the state a full year to realize she committed a crime?" Sanam Javed's counsel clarified that both remand opposition and acquittal requests were filed together in the High Court. Justice Kakar further commented that the confessional statement of a co-accused held limited legal weight, implying that the case may not have strong footing.

## Celebrating Culture and Nature on Mother Earth Day

## Serena Hotels hosts screening of first Burushaski-language film

The screening was part of Serena Hotels' ongoing Cultural Diplomacy initiative, which supports artistic expression and creative industries as vital tools for cultural preservation and community engagement



MAHNOOR ANSAR / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Serena Hotels held a special screening of Hun Dan, a Burushaski-language feature film by filmmaker Karamat Ali, on Mother Earth Day at Islamabad Serena Hotel, in partnership with UNESCO. The event marked a significant cultural milestone as Hun Dan is the first-ever feature film in Burushaski, one of the oldest living languages, currently classified as definitely endangered by UNESCO. Rooted in traditional storytelling, the film explores the deeply interconnected themes of intangible cultural heritage, wildlife conservation,

climate change, and coexistence with nature. Hun Dan is a feature film inspired by folklore, highlighting the importance of coexisting with nature and addressing climate change. The story revolves around human resilience, the struggle between good and evil, and the consequences of harming the environment. The screening was part of Serena Hotels' ongoing Cultural Diplomacy initiative, which supports artistic expression and creative industries as vital tools for cultural preservation and community engagement. Serena Hotels is always committed to celebrating and safeguarding cultural diversity. Through the Cultural Diplomacy platform, we proudly

support creative voices that bring attention to the importance of heritage, the environment, and community well-being. Mr. Antony Kar Hung Tam, Officer-in-Charge of the UNESCO Office in Pakistan, affirmed that "UNESCO is proud to support expressions of indigenous knowledge showcased in this remarkable film, which reflects how cultural and creative industries can help to safeguard cultural diversity and preserve the planet's natural ecosystems." Filmmaker Karamat Ali emphasized the collaborative nature of the project, noting, "This film reflects the stories of our people, our landscapes, and our traditions. It was made with the passion

and talent of indigenous artists, whose voices are central to the narrative." He said, "Hun Dan showcases the rich cultural heritage of Gilgit-Baltistan, highlighting through folklore and intangible traditions how our community has coexisted with nature for centuries amidst the majestic mountains. As the first feature film from this region to be released nationally and globally, it marks a significant milestone in sharing our unique cultural identity with the world. The screening of Hun Dan served as a meaningful celebration of Mother Earth Day, inviting reflection on the importance of environmental stewardship, cultural identity, and the power of indigenous storytelling."

## Kremlin warns against rushing Ukraine talks

KYIV: The Kremlin on Tuesday warned against rushing Ukraine peace talks, pushing back on US President Donald Trump's hopes for a speedy deal the day before Ukraine's allies are set to meet in London. Trump, who promised on the campaign trail to strike a deal between Moscow and Kyiv in 24 hours, has in three months failed to wrangle concessions from Russian President Vladimir Putin to halt his invasion. The Republican had said over the weekend he hoped a peace deal could be struck "this week" despite no signs the two sides are anywhere close to agreeing even a ceasefire, let alone a wider long-term settlement. Moscow's forces occupy around a fifth of Ukrainian territory and tens of thousands have been killed since they invaded in February 2022. "This topic is so complex, connected with a settlement, that, of course, probably it is not worth setting any rigid time frames and trying to get a settlement, a viable settlement, in a short-time frame,"

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told state TV on Tuesday. After rejecting a US-Ukrainian offer for a full and unconditional ceasefire last month, Putin announced a surprise Easter truce over the weekend. Fighting dipped during the 30-hour period but Russia launched fresh attacks on residential areas on Monday and Tuesday, Ukrainian officials said. Kyiv and its allies dismissed the truce as a PR exercise from Putin. "The Easter truce that he announced somewhat unexpectedly was a marketing operation, a charm operation aimed at preventing President Trump from becoming impatient and angry," French Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot told the FranceInfo broadcaster. Ukraine's allies will meet in London on Wednesday, a senior Kyiv official told AFP, where they are expected to continue discussions on the contours of a possible deal they could all get behind. European leaders are scrambling to work out how they can support Ukraine should Trump pull Washington's vital military and financial backing. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said his team's "first priority" at the London talks would be the idea of "an unconditional ceasefire." Zelensky proposed to Russia on Sunday halting missile and drones strikes against civilian facilities for at least 30 days. While saying he would "analyze" the idea, Putin threw doubt on it 24 hours later by accusing Kyiv of using civilian facilities for military purposes. He held open the prospect of bilateral talks on the topic, though the Kremlin said there were no fixed plans to engage with Kyiv. - Agencies

## Rwandan FM showcases nation's transformation at ISSI Islamabad

ISSI hosts Rwanda's Foreign Minister for wide-ranging Address

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East and Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) organized an address by His Excellency Olivier J.P. Nduhungirehe, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Rwanda, titled "Rising Africa: Diplomatic and Economic Success Story of Rwanda." The event was held under the rubric of ISSI's 'Distinguished Lecture Series' and was part of ISSI's efforts to reinforce Pakistan's "Engage Africa" policy. His Excellency Olivier J.P. Nduhungirehe, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Rwanda; Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General, Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI); Ambassador Hamid Asghar Khan,

Additional Foreign Secretary (Africa), Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and Ms. Amina Khan, Director, Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East and Africa (CAMEA), ISSI, spoke on the occasion. Ms. Amina Khan welcomed H. E. Olivier J.P. Nduhungirehe and shed light on the importance of fostering greater understanding of Africa's political and economic transformation, particularly Rwanda's inspiring development model. DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, in his remarks, highlighted the growing importance of Africa in global affairs and the significance of Rwanda's experience as a model of resilience and transformation. He said that the Foreign Minister's visit marks a significant milestone in the growing relationship between Pakistan and Rwanda. Besides successful national reconciliation, he highlighted Rwanda's rapid economic growth and its strides in governance, socio-economic development, gender empowerment.



ISLAMABAD: Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Rwanda/Ambassador Olivier Jean Patrick Nduhungirehe along with Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry and High Commissioner of Rwanda to Pakistan Harerimana Fatouin, cuts the ribbon to inaugurate the High Commission of Rwanda in Pakistan. - Online

## Peace in SA requires reciprocal risk reduction

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: The Center for International Strategic Studies (CISS), Islamabad, hosted a two-days International Conference on "Nuclear Deterrence in the Age of Emerging Technologies," bringing together a distinguished group of scholars and experts from around the world. The conference aimed at fostering constructive dialogue on global strategic issues and sharing Pakistan's policy perspectives. General Sahir Shamsah Mirza, NI (M), Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, was the Chief Guest and delivered a keynote address on the first day of the conference. Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee highlighted Pakistan's commitment to continued dialogue and collaboration in addressing the challenges posed by emerging technologies. He also emphasized that peace and stability in South

Asia can only be achieved through reciprocal measures for nuclear risk reduction and instituting a balance in a wider geostrategic construct. The forum was attended by prominent international scholars from United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), National Institute for Deterrence Studies (NIDS), Australia, Ploughshare Foundation, Canada, China Arms Control and Disarmament Association (CACDA), Peking University, China, Center for Polar and Oceanic Studies, China, European Leadership Network (ELN), LSE School of Public Policy, Center for Energy and Security Studies (CENESS), Russia, Institute of World Economy and International Relations of the Russian Academy of Sciences (IMEMO RAS), Saint Petersburg State University, Russia, Geneva Center for Security Policy, Switzerland, North Carolina State University, USA and Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

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