



Tuesday, May 20, 2025

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Detailed News On Page-08

Romania has chosen Nicser Dan as President

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Joe Biden diagnosed with cancer

Detailed News On Page-06



Operation Bunyanun Marsoos

Pak rejects Indian claims regarding Shaheen missile use

These misleading claims were triggered by a now-deleted video shared via the Indian Army's official Twitter handle, which purportedly depicted the use of Pakistan's Shaheen missile. Upon realizing that the content was factually incorrect and unverified, the Indian Army swiftly removed the video from its official platform

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs categorically rejects the unfounded and baseless allegations propagated by certain segments of the Indian media suggesting that Pakistan employed a Shaheen missile during Operation Bunyanun Marsoos (BM). These misleading claims were triggered by a now-deleted video shared via the Indian Army's official Twitter handle, which purportedly depicted the use of Pakistan's Shaheen missile. Upon realizing that the content was factually incorrect and unverified, the Indian Army swiftly removed the video from its official platform. However, by that point, several Indian media outlets had already disseminated the false narrative without any due diligence or verification. Unfortunately, some media channels in India continue to propagate this misinformation. It is particularly concerning that the Indian Army has not issued any clarification or retraction regarding the misleading post from its official handle, raising questions about the intent and professionalism behind such disinformation. Independent analysts have noted that this misinformation campaign appears to be a deliberate attempt to divert attention from India's military setbacks during Operation Sindoor, where Pakistan's superior conventional capabilities played a decisive role. These fabricated stories also coincide with New Delhi's broader effort to push a false narrative surrounding the ceasefire and unfounded allegations of so-called "nuclear blackmail" by Pakistan. The Ministry directs attention to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) press release dated 12 May 2025, which clearly outlines the weapons systems deployed by the Pakistan Armed Forces during Operation Bunyanun Marsoos. These included: Precision-guided, long-range Fatah-series missiles (F1 and F2)

PTI to send separate delegation abroad

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Senator Shibli Faraz, Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, said that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) would send its parliamentary delegations abroad to present Pakistan's stance on regional security and highlight 'unprovoked Indian aggression.' Speaking on the floor of Upper House of Parliament, Faraz condemned India's attacks and stressed the need for international notice of the recent stand-off. He also lauded national unity in response to Indian aggression but pointed out the exclusion of opposition members from committees tasked with presenting Pakistan's case abroad. He called for greater inclusivity of all political parties in order to effectively plead the case of the country.

Advanced loitering munitions (killer drones). Precision long-range artillery systems. The military targets struck inside India and Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJ&K) are also detailed in the aforementioned ISPR press release. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasizes that dissemination of unverified and inflammatory content by official or semi-official Indian platforms is irresponsible and detrimental to regional peace and stability.

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, visited Pakistan Navy Dockyard to pay tribute to the Pakistan Navy for its pivotal role in Operation Bunyanum Marsoos. – DNA

Shehbaz arrives in Karachi for 1 day

During the visit, the PM will go to the Pakistan Navy Dockyard, where he will meet with officers and personnel of the Pakistan Navy

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Prime Minister Mohammad Shehbaz Sharif arrived in Karachi on Monday for a one-day visit. Upon his arrival, he was received by Federal Minister for Education Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui. During the visit, the PM will go to the Pakistan Navy Dockyard, where he will meet with officers and personnel of the Pakistan Navy. He is also scheduled to address

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Pak hopeful ceasefire will hold

Following four days of missile and aerial exchanges, senior officers from both countries remained in contact

NEWS DESK

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan's military has expressed hope that the ceasefire agreement with India will continue to hold, citing ongoing communication between senior officials via a dedicated military hotline. In an interview with a US-based outlet, Director General of Inter-Services Public Relations (DG ISPR) Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry said: "We expect the ceasefire

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Pakistan-India tensions

DPM Dar arrives in China to hold high-level talks

Three-day official visit to focus on recent regional developments and multifaceted Pakistan-China relationship

DNA

BEIJING: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar has arrived in Beijing on a three-day official visit to discuss the regional situation in the light of recent standoff between Pakistan and India. The deputy prime minister's special aircraft landed in the Chinese capital, where senior government officials welcomed him and his delegation at the airport. This visit also marks the first high-level contact between Pakistan and China following the ceasefire between Pakistan and India. Ishaq Dar is visiting China at the invitation of the Chinese government. During his stay in Beijing, Dar will hold an important meeting with his Chinese counterpart, Wang Yi. Discussions are expected to cover a range of bilateral and regional issues and the multifaceted Pakistan-China relationship.

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No deal with PTI founder: Irfan Siddiqui

APP

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary leader of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) in the Senate, Senator Irfan Siddiqui, on Monday categorically denied any backchannel contacts, talks, or negotiations between government officials and the founder of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). Speaking to a private news channel, he clarified, "If there have been any meetings with the PTI founder, they were either with

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No-confidence motion

NA Speaker Ayaz Sadiq downplays PTI strength

We are keeping this option under consideration, says PTI's Asad Qaiser

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Tuesday expressed confidence that many Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf lawmakers would not support a proposed no-confidence motion against him. During an informal interaction with journalists in Islamabad, the NA speaker said that those "friends" who were eager to

bring the no-confidence motion against him may go ahead. "I have heard that a no-confidence motion is being brought against me," he added. According to PTI sources, the former ruling party was considering tabling no-confidence motions against Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and the NA speaker, in collaboration with opposition allies. During a recent meeting between incarcerated PTI founder Imran Khan, his legal team, and his sisters, the idea of a no-confidence motion against the speaker was actively discussed, the well-placed sources added.

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Briefs

Noor Mukadam was 'brutally murdered': SC Judge



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Justice Hashim Kakar of the Supreme Court remarked on Monday that a "girl was brutally murdered" as the hearing of convict Zahir Jaffer's appeal against his death sentence in the Noor Mukadam murder case resumed. A three-member bench, led by Justice Kakar and comprising Justice Ishaq Ibrahim and Justice Ali Baqar Najafi, heard the appeal in the high-profile case. During proceedings, Justice Kakar further said: "Judges must be willing to bear some pain. It shouldn't be that we admit an appeal for a preliminary hearing and then don't hear it. People remain on death row for 10 years - this will not happen anymore."

9 Khwarij killed, 2 solders martyred

3 terrorists Killed in Balochistan

DNA

RAWALPINDI: On 17-18 May 2024, nine Khwarij belonging to Indian Proxy, Fitna Al Khwarij, were sent to hell in multiple engagements in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. An intelligence based operation (IBO) was conducted by the Security Forces in Lakki Marwat District. During the conduct of operation, own troops effectively engaged the khwarij location and resultantly, five Indian sponsored khwarij were sent to hell.

War with India delayed move

PTI 'mulls no-confidence' against PM, NA speaker

Imran Khan's legal team, sisters briefed him on opposition consensus

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is considering tabling no-confidence motions against Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, in collaboration with opposition allies, sources said on Monday. According to party sources, during a recent meeting between PTI founder Imran Khan, his legal team, and his sisters, the idea of a no-confidence motion against the speaker was actively discussed. The founder was briefed on the opposition alliance's stance, including that of Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party leader Mahmood Khan Achakzai, who has publicly expressed no confidence in the current speaker. The sources further claim that the PTI founder directed the party's leadership and allied opposition parties to move ahead with planning the motion, giving them full authority to execute the strategy when the time was right. Party insiders also quoted the PTI founder as saying that the current government must be challenged - both inside and outside Parliament.

Continued on Page 06

Is a deal with Imran Khan around the corner?

MONITORING DESK

ISLAMABAD: Despite swirling rumours in political circles, no deal or concession has yet been extended to Imran Khan or his party, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). Far from being recipients of an offer, it is the PTI leadership itself that is quietly working behind the scenes, seeking to open a backchannel dialogue with both the government and establishment. While public statements remain firm and defiant, no formal dialogue has begun - largely because Khan and his close allies insist that any process remain hidden from the media spotlight. Maintaining secrecy is seen as crucial to avoid backlash from both supporters and internal critics.

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PAF always ready to defend aerial frontiers

Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force visited the residence of Squadron Leader Usman Yousaf Shaheed in Rawalpindi to offer Fateha and to convey his condolences to the bereaved family

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force visited the residence of Squadron Leader Usman Yousaf Shaheed in Rawalpindi to offer Fateha and to convey his condolences to the bereaved family. The Air Chief paid rich tribute to Squadron Leader Usman Yousaf Shaheed, who gave the supreme sacrifice and embraced martyrdom in the line of duty during the recent enemy attack on an operational Air Base of Pakistan Air Force. Chief of the Air Staff assured the family of the Shaheed officer that the services and sacrifices of our martyrs will forever be etched in the nation's memory and honored with unwavering reverence. He also offered Fateha for the elevation of the martyr's ranks in heaven and



prayed that Allah Almighty grant patience to the bereaved family. Later, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu visited Combined Military Hospital Rawalpindi, where he met with injured personnel from Pakistan Air Force, Pakistan Army as well as civilians who sustained injuries during the conflict. He also received a comprehensive medical briefing on their condition and interacted with the wounded personnel, lauding their resilience and unwavering courage in the face of adversity. He directed the hospital staff that the best possible medical care and administrative support be provided to the injured personnel. Speaking on the occasion, Chief of the Air Staff reiterated Pakistan Air Force's steadfast resolve to defend the aerial frontiers of Pakistan at every cost and to uphold the legacy of valour & commitment demonstrated by its personnel in the line of duty.

Hanif calls for more comfortable environment at stations

The minister emphasized that the initiatives are part of broader efforts to revamp Pakistan Railways and make stations more inclusive, people-friendly and aligned with the needs of modern-day commuters and communities

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi Monday reaffirmed the government's commitment to enhancing passenger experience by providing a more comfortable and welcoming environment at railway stations across the country.

Chairing a meeting regarding the renovation and modernization of Golra and Margalla railway stations, the minister highlighted the importance of transform-

ing these facilities into accessible, modern and community-friendly spaces "The government is dedicated to upgrading railway stations to meet modern standards, making them not just transit points, but vibrant public spaces," he said. As part of the renovation plan, modern-style restaurants will be established at both stations. These will be operated through outsourcing to ensure high service standards and a quality experience for visitors. Hanif Abbasi also announced the installation of modern electric poles and the provision of clean, comfortable benches for

passengers and guests. "We aim to create a peaceful and pleasant atmosphere, particularly in the evenings, where people can relax and enjoy," he added. In addition, a state-of-the-art cafeteria will be developed to serve students from nearby educational institutions, offering them a contemporary and comfortable space, he added. The minister emphasized that the initiatives are part of broader efforts to revamp Pakistan Railways and make stations more inclusive, people-friendly and aligned with the needs of modern-day commuters and communities.

Youm-e-Tashakur marked across Balochistan to promote community resilience

QUETTA: In a spirit of national unity and appreciation for community resilience, the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF), in collaboration with its partner organizations, has organized a series of events to celebrate Youm-e-Tashakur (Day of Gratitude) across Balochistan. These celebrations aim to recognize the efforts of grassroots communities, local organizations, and district-level stakeholders in promoting peace, harmony, and inclusive development, said a news release.

The initiative is being implemented through PPAF's committed partner organizations, with events taking place in key districts including Lasbela, Kech, Panjgur, Killa Saifullah, Jafarabad, Quetta, Musakhel, Pishin, Mastung, Kohlu, and Barkhan. Activities have been thoughtfully designed to bring together political leadership, district administrations, civil society actors, youth, religious scholars, media representatives, and local community members to reaffirm a shared commitment to a peaceful and cohesive society. These vibrant district-level gatherings feature a wide range of activities including interfaith dialogues, peace walks, cultural performances, panel discussions, and award recognitions for local peacebuilders and volunteers.—APP

Resilient agriculture imperative for food security

FAISALABAD: Experts called for joint efforts to ensure sustainable and resilient agricultural system including climate smart agriculture, plant health management, digital innovations, and others and said that it is imperative for national food security. They were addressing an inaugural session of the three-day 5th International Colloquium titled "Challenges and Opportunities of Maize, Fodder & Pulses Production" at Center for Advanced Studies (CAS), University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF).—APP

Sahiwal Plant represents pivotal moment in energy narrative

DNA

ISLAMABAD: More than just a generator of electricity, the 'Sahiwal Coal-Fired Power Plant' represents a pivotal moment in the country's energy narrative where the dark days of blackouts met the dawn of energy reliability and infrastructural excellence. According to the official sources, the project lies in the vast plains of Punjab, one of South Asia's most transformative energy projects. Constructed by Huaneng Shandong Ruyi (Pakistan) Energy Company Ltd., a joint venture between two major Chinese energy giants, the plant was completed in record time from groundbreaking to commissioning from engineering brilliance to environmental stewardship. Sahiwal is not just a coal-fired facility, it

is a symbol of modern progress and a living case study of balancing infrastructure development with environmental responsibility. For years, millions of people endured the daily hardships of chronic power shortages. Load-shedding was not just a nuisance; it was a national crisis. Factories shut down mid-production. Cold storage failed. Students studied under flickering candlelight, and hospitals operated without assurance of uninterrupted power. Livelihoods collapsed, and economic momentum stalled. The Sahiwal Coal-Fired Power Plant changed that narrative by injecting 1,320 megawatts (MW) into the national grid, enough to electrify nearly 2.5 million homes, the plant played a pivotal role in reducing electricity

shortfalls, particularly in Punjab. Sahiwal not only helped power machines; it helped power dreams that had long been stalled. It features two supercritical steam turbine units, each generating 660 MW. Supercritical technology allows the plant to operate at higher pressure and temperature reducing carbon emissions per unit of electricity generated. A custom-built rail line connects the plant to Port Qasim for coal transport, ensuring an efficient and enclosed supply chain that minimizes dust and logistical delays. Enclosed conveyors, dust suppression units, and advanced monitoring systems keep the process clean and efficient. Closed-loop cooling systems reduce thermal pollution, while zero-liquid discharge (ZLD) systems ensure no wastewater is released into the environment.

Civil Service trainees briefed on cultural revival initiatives

LAHORE: A detailed briefing session was held for the under-training officers of the 52nd Common at the Civil Services Academy on Monday, chaired by Secretary Information and Culture Punjab, Tahir Raza Hamdani. The session provided a comprehensive overview of the department's mission, institutions and strategic initiatives aimed at promoting language, literature and the arts across the province. Secretary Hamdani emphasised that under the leadership of Provincial Minister for Information and Culture, Azma Bukhari and with the support of Chief Minister Punjab, Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the department is advancing several key initiatives to preserve Punjab's rich cultural heritage and empower the creative community. The session featured an in-depth presentation by Section Officer Nauman Majeed, highlighting the department's achievements, organisational structure and service delivery models. He also shed light on leadership and innovation across institutions under the Information and Culture Department.—APP

Interior Minister, Qatar envoy discuss bilateral ties

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi met with the Ambassador of Qatar, Ali Mubarak Ali Essa Al-Khater in Islamabad. During the meeting, discussions were held on bilateral relations and matters of mutual interest. Moreover, recent visit of Interior Minister to Qatar and the situation after the ceasefire between Pakistan and India was also discussed. Mohsin Naqvi stated that Pakistan has always been an advocate of peace and desires sustainable peace in the region. He said the recent visit to Qatar was highly successful. He added that During meetings with Qa-

tar's Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, and Interior Minister, there was a mutual agreement to enhance bilateral co-



operation. He highlighted that In-depth discussions were held on counter-narcotics, counter-terrorism, security cooperation, and



ISLAMABAD: Chief guests Jamal Shah and Uxi Mufti being presented bouquet at an exhibition

Int'l moot on computing and related technologies

KARACHI: Sindh Madressatul Islam University (SMIU) is going to organize 2-Day 4th International Conference on "Computing and Related Technologies" (IC-CRT-2025) on 21st – 22nd May (Wednesday and Thursday) at its premises. The distinguished thought leaders are invited to shape the future of computing, AI, and society. Among the speakers are Prof Dr Martin Maier, world-renowned expert in AI, sustainability, and Society 5.0. Ranked among the top 2% most cited scientists globally, Prof Dr Bhawani Shankar Chowdhry, renowned for his 40+ years of research in Wireless Sensor Networks, Digital Twins & Instrumentation, and his exceptional leadership in the ICT domain, Prof Dr Nadeem Mahmood, Healthcare AI pioneer and next-gen database expert, Prof Dr Tariq Rahim Soomro, distinguished professor and rector, Prof Dr Aqeel ur Rehman, Innovator transforming agriculture through AI and IT, Dr Rana Shahzad Qaiser, Digital transformation architect spearheading Sindh's e-governance revolution and others. The convener of the International Conference and Dean Faculty of IT Dr Aftab Ahmed Shaikh has said that the inaugural session of the International Conference will be held on Wednesday, May 21 at 9:00 am, at the Sir Shah Nawaz Bhutto Auditorium.—APP

Art exhibition 'A Moment in Time' showcases masterpieces

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) and ForArtSake successfully concluded the "A Moment in Time" art exhibition, featuring works by three senior artists: Jimmy Engineer, Amna Ismail Pataudi, and Rahat Naveed Masud. Three senior artists who have individually made giant strides came together to showcase this exhibition "A Moment in Time". Jimmy Engineer is a social worker and an artist par excellence who has produced many masterpiece series. Perhaps his best series is about Partition, and his paintings of that time resonate with the current political situation. Amna Ismail Pataudi is an excellent artist with a soul that melts and becomes one with the landscapes. Her prowess as a portrait painter is unparalleled. She has painted the harrowing events of Army Public School, Peshawar, the soul-numbing tragedy of Gaza, and the Indian atroci-

ties in held Kashmir. Rahat Naveed Masud is an artist and academic whose masterful portraiture captures the mood of the artist and ambience of the surrounding environment. This exhibition represents a distinct segment of her repertoire – her self-portraits. She is the only artist in Pakistan who has painted such a large body of self-portraits. Each painting is a moment in time of Rahat's life. Pakistan National Council of the Arts, National Art Gallery, in collaboration with ForArtSake, successfully concluded the "Moment in Time" exhibition, curated by Amna I Pataudi and Dr. Rahat Naveed Masud. Held in Hall No. 1 and 3 of the National Art Gallery. Chief guests Mr. Jamal Sh h and Mr. Uxi Mufti praised the exhibition's approach, title, and the artists' ability to address pertinent social issues through their work. Mr. Jamal Shah said that the exhibition brought together a diverse range of artworks that sparked meaningful conversations and connections. Mr. Mufti particu-

larly appreciated the vibrant colours and the relevance of the paintings to the present moment. The exhibition drew a wide audience, including artists, art collectors, enthusiasts, and students from Fatima Jinnah Women University, Rawalpindi, who engaged deeply with the artworks and the artists themselves. People from various walks of life showed remarkable interest, interacting with the artists and expressing their desire for more exhibitions that bridge the gap between artists and the general public. M. Ayoub Jamali, Director General PNCA, thanked the participating artists and said that ForArtSake has worked with us on many projects. PNCA is committed to providing its platform for artists, and organisations like ForArtSake are more than welcome to collaborate with PNCA for similar art events. The curators, Amna I. Pataudi and Dr. Rahat Naveed Masud, along with artist Jimmy Engineer, captivated the audience with thought-provoking discussions about their work.

Beirut's choice: PM urges citizens to shape their city's future

BEIRUT: Lebanon held the third round of municipal and mayoral elections on Sunday. Sunday's vote was held in the governorates of Beirut, Bekaa, and Baalbek-Hermel. Prime Minister Nawaf Salam inspected the central operations room overseeing the elec-

toral process at the Ministry of Interior and across various electoral centers in Beirut. Defense Minister Michel Menassa and Interior Minister Ahmad Hajjar accompanied him. After casting his ballot in Beirut, Salam said that the elections provided an opportu-

nity for citizens to express their true wishes for the city and voiced hope for a high voter turnout. He stated that the people of Beirut should not miss the chance to decide what kind of city they want. "I urge them to participate in the elections in large numbers." Salam affirmed that the people of Beirut "are capable of ensuring representation for everyone in the municipal council." He said that the new municipal council is not obligated to support the government's efforts.—APP

Siliguri corridor – A new front for indo-Pak war

TANVEER HUSSAIN



If you look at the map of India, you will see that the Siliguri Corridor located in West Bengal, is one of India's most important geographical and strategic locations. This narrow corridor is 60 kilometers long and only 22 kilometers wide. It is the sole route that connects India's seven northeastern states (commonly known as the "Seven Sisters") to the rest of the country. These states include Assam, Tripura, Himachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Manipur, Meghalaya, and Nagaland. Interestingly, sep-

arist movements already exist in all these states. To suppress them, the Indian army has been committing widespread human rights violations. Situated between Bhutan, Nepal, and Bangladesh and close to China, this narrow corridor is referred to as the "Chicken Neck" due to its shape. If any of these neighboring countries were to take control of this 22-kilometer-wide area, the seven northeastern states would not only be cut off from the rest of India but separatist groups would likely not hesitate to declare independence. Another serious concern for India is that China claims the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh. China considers Himachal Pradesh as part of "South Tibet" or "Jinnan." The main cause of the 1962 Sino-Indian war was this very territory. Historically, Himachal Pradesh

was part of Tibet, and during the British colonial era, it was forcibly annexed to India. The local population never accepted the British decision and have been consistently running a freedom movement against Indian occupation. In addition, China has also not accepted India's control over Sikkim. The Siliguri region is so sensitive for India that the Indian army, Assam Rifles, Border Security Force, and West Bengal Police are constantly patrolling it. India's intelligence agency RAW has to closely monitor Nepali, Bhutanese, and Bangladeshi activities to safeguard this corridor. According to Indian media, Pakistan and China have been very active in infiltrating this region. As long as there was a pro-India government in Bangladesh, India felt mentally assured that in case of foreign control over Siliguri, it could use Bangladeshi territory to maintain contact

with its northeastern states. However, after Sheikh Hasina's government came to an end, Indian interests in Bangladesh have suffered a serious blow. A government that is hostile to Indian interests has now been established, and unlike Sheikh Hasina, it will not protect Indian interests during wartime. Although Siliguri is far from Pakistan's border, India's interference in Balochistan and FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas) has given Pakistan the opportunity to reduce Indian pressure and keep India engaged within its own territory—by holding its "neck." It is reported that China is building a military airbase in the northern Bangladeshi city of Lalmonirhat, which is located very close to Siliguri. Bangladesh's interim prime minister invited China to invest in this project during his visit to China. Accord-

ing to Indian media, Pakistan is also a stakeholder in this project. The Pakistan Air Force has also been training Bangladeshi pilots to date. Now India fears that its neighboring countries—Pakistan, China, and Bangladesh—may one day unite and "grab it by the neck" to exact retribution for the atrocities in Jammu & Kashmir and against Indian Muslims. In the past, India had signed defense agreements with Iran and the Afghan government allowing India to use their territories during war. Similarly, Pakistan should consider signing a defense pact with Bangladesh and establish a major airbase there, so that in future wars, pressure can be applied on India at Siliguri. This would not only avenge the fall of East Pakistan but also deliver a decisive blow to the enemy and pave the way for the liberation of Kashmir.

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- May 09/European Union National Day
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- May 21/Hungary Armed Forces Day
- May 22/Yemen Republic Re-unification Day(National Day)
- May 24/Eritrea National Day
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Diplomatic efforts termed key to globalizing Kashmir issue

ISLAMABAD: The portrayal of the Kashmir issue as a bilateral matter between India and Pakistan is gradually giving way to a more globalized understanding, driven in part by diaspora activism. At the same time, Pakistan's recent shift in diplomacy is characterized by compelling narratives and a more prominent presence in world media discourse. Harnessing this momentum for the Kashmir cause involves articulating a coherent policy, forging closer ties between diplomatic missions and diaspora-driven advocacy, investing in policy research, and deepening engagement with academic and media platforms. These views were shared at a gathering of Kashmiri diaspora leaders, activists, and former diplomats at the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) Islamabad, under the theme 'Rejuvenated Case of Kashmir: Perspectives and Future Prospects.' The delegation included Muhammad Ghalib, president Tehreek-e-Kashmir Europe, Dr Muzammil Ayyub Thakur, president World Kashmir Freedom Movement, and Zaffar Nazir Quraishi, chairman Kashmir Campaign Global. Also present were Ambassador (r) Sardar Masood Khan, former president AJK, as the chief guest, Khalid Rahman, chairman, IPS, and other participants. Speakers underscored that aligning grassroots activism with state-level diplomacy through a unified, narrative-driven strategy is essential to reshaping perceptions and advancing the Kashmir cause on the international stage as a human rights concern. Ambassador (r) Masood Khan said a shared ideological commitment unites all organizations working for the Kash-



mir cause. He said it is Pakistan's responsibility to match the diaspora's resolve and amplify the Kashmir cause on the global stage. He listed three key outcomes that have emerged after the Pakistan-India hostilities: The US has begun treating both countries as strategic equals, trade considerations are shifting toward parity, and the Kashmir issue has regained global visibility. He added that Pakistan must strengthen its diplomatic, military, and economic pillars while fostering unity. Muhammad Ghalib called

on Pakistan's foreign missions to more actively support diaspora initiatives aimed at raising awareness. A clear and consistent Kashmir policy is essential for advancing Pakistan's position globally, and the government should formally engage key countries and energize its diplomatic apparatus. In Europe, the prevailing view of Kashmir as a bilateral issue deters intervention. However, he said, recent events have highlighted the urgency of resolving the conflict, as the consequences could be dire. Zaffar Quraishi cit-

ed the lack of coordination among the Kashmiri activists and urged unifying their efforts under a broader platform. Pakistan's active and sustained support is vital to this legitimate struggle, which requires preparing a comprehensive strategic framework. It is time for Pakistan to fully own the Kashmir issue and take concrete diplomatic and strategic steps. He suggested producing credible academic research, engaging international think tanks and policymakers, and actively mobilizing the influential Kashmiri diaspora in the UK. Muzammil Thakur noted a shift in public interest in the Kashmir issue within the UK, driven by increased outreach and community-level engagement. He said perceptions about India have also changed. India's use of bot accounts to promote pro-Israel narratives has undermined its credibility and damaged its international image. On social media, Pakistani users have successfully countered Indian disinformation, often using satire and humor to their advantage. This evolving narrative landscape now favors the Kashmiri cause and must be strategically harnessed to sustain progress. In concluding remarks, Khalid Rahman emphasized that the Kashmir issue must be understood within the broader global context. In the evolving world order, pursuing win-win strategies that protect Pakistan's national interests while advancing the Kashmir cause is essential. Narrative warfare is decisive in shaping international opinion; however, narratives crafted for domestic audiences often fail to resonate globally.—DNA

Naqvi visits Jinnah Square Murree Road underpass project

ISLAMABAD: Approximately 90% of the work on the Jinnah Square Murree Road Underpass Project has been completed. Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, accompanied by Minister of State for Interior Talla Chaudhry, paid an early morning visit to the project site. Mohsin Naqvi reviewed the progress on the construction work. Interior Minister directed that all construction activities be completed within the stipulated timeframe and emphasized that work on all sections of the project should continue simultaneously around the clock (24/7). He stated that the construction of the underpass will provide a signal-free corridor from the airport to Murree and Kashmir, saving both time and fuel for citizens. On this occasion, Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa gave a briefing regarding the project. He apprised that construction activities are in their final stages and that the roof of the Jinnah Square Murree Road Underpass has been completed.—APP

Cracks down on corruption, fugitive criminals in major operations

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has made significant breakthroughs in two separate operations targeting white-collar crime and violent offenders. In a major anti-corruption drive, the FIA Anti-Corruption Circle Islamabad arrested two individuals — Imdad Ali, a Principal Appraiser at Pakistan Customs, and his accomplice Sabir Ali — for their alleged involvement in large-scale financial misconduct. According to initial investigations, the suspects caused a loss of over PKR 814 million to the national exchequer through under-invoicing. Between 2019 and 2021, Sabir Ali's company imported 29 shipments of American-branded ice cream using falsified and under-valued invoices, with the support of customs officer Imdad Ali. Their pre-arrest bail was cancelled by a Special Central Court, after which both were taken into custody for further interrogation. In a separate set of operations, FIA Immigration Sialkot, in collaboration with Interpol, apprehended three fugitive suspects wanted for heinous crimes including murder and attempted murder.—APP

Bakhtawari demands relocation of Pindi cricket stadium outside city

ISLAMABAD : The business community, civil society, and residents of the twin cities have strongly demanded that the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium be relocated outside the urban area. Speaking to representatives of trader organizations today, Chairman of the Clean and Green Islamabad Movement, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, said that the current location of the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium is having a negative impact on urban life and economic activities. He noted that the stadium is located in the center of Rawalpindi, and whenever national or international matches are held, extensive security arrangements — which are commendable for preventing any untoward incidents — lead to the complete sealing of the surrounding area. During recent matches, traffic in the twin cities remained blocked for hours, causing severe inconvenience for daily commuters. Nearby markets and business centers are forced to close, resulting in significant financial losses for traders. Access to hospitals, schools, and offices becomes difficult, severely disrupting public life. Bakhtawari emphasized that while traders support the promotion of sports, organizing matches at the expense of citizens' comfort is unacceptable. He highlighted that repeated security lockdowns and traffic disruptions are causing daily financial losses amounting to millions of rupees and are damaging the local economy. He urged the government to immediately shift the stadium out of the city. He suggested relocating it near the motorway or in the outskirts of Rawat, where a modern stadium can be constructed with better arrangements for parking, security, and other facilities. He called on the government to take this matter seriously and initiate prompt action for the stadium's relocation to provide a lasting solution to the public's grievances.—DNA

Abbasi meets German envoy to strengthen bilateral ties

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi held a significant meeting on Monday with German Ambassador to Pakistan, Alfred Grannas, focusing on enhancing diplomatic, economic, and industrial cooperation between the two countries. The meeting focused particularly on the modernization and upgradation of Pakistan's railway system to align it with the latest international standards and technologies. Minister Abbasi expressed Pakistan's commitment to benefiting from Germany's extensive experience and technical expertise, emphasizing the goal of equipping Pakistan Railways with both improved infrastructure and cutting-edge facilities. This, he noted, would enable the provision of safe, fast, and high-quality travel services for the public. During the meeting, both sides



discussed opportunities for technological exchange, infrastructure development, and industrial collaboration in the railway sector. They also explored the potential

for future joint ventures and agreed on the importance of elevating Pakistan-Germany relations to new heights for the mutual benefit of their economies and people. Minister Abbasi invited Ambassador Grannas to visit the historic Golra Railway Station Museum, a significant initiative aimed at preserving and promoting Pakistan's railway heritage. The Ambassador warmly welcomed the invitation and reaffirmed Germany's commitment to continued cooperation in this area, expressing optimism for more collaborative ventures in the future. This meeting marks a positive step forward in enhancing economic, industrial, cultural, and technological cooperation between the two nations. It is expected to play a key role in improving Pakistan Railways and strengthening Pakistan-Germany bilateral relations.

Event held to pay tributes to armed forces of Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A special ceremony was organized at the secretariat of Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt, former President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce, and Omar Shahid Butt, President Pakistan Business Network, to pay rich tribute to the Pakistan Armed Forces for their historic victory in the recent battle for justice. The event was attended by a large number of notable business figures and dignitaries who expressed deep admiration for the sacrifices and valor of the Pakistani forces. Participants also paid homage to the martyrs who laid down their lives for the country. A specially prepared cake was cut to mark the occasion. Distinguished attendees included President of Jinnah Super Market Asad Aziz, President of Super Market F-6 Shehzad Abbasi, former Federal Minister Dr. G.G. Jamal, President of National

Press Club Azhar Jatoi, Justice (R) Mudassar Khalid Abbasi, senior journalists Malik Manzoor Ahmed, Malik Na-deem, Akhtar Jameel Abbasi, Khurshid Qureshi, Hamza Rehman, former ICCI President, Basir Dawood, Salman Dar, Usman Khan bin Rashid, Hasbi Ahmed, and Parvez Abbasi. Addressing the gathering, Dr. Shahid Rashid Butt, Umar Shahid Butt, Dr. G.G. Jamal, Jameel Abbasi, Mudassar Khalid Abbasi, and other speakers praised the courage and professional



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Briefs

Food export decreases 1.04%, imports increase 0.56%

ISLAMABAD: Food group exports from the country during the last 10 months of the current financial year decreased by 1.04 per cent, whereas food imports grew by 0.56 per cent as compared to the imports and exports of the corresponding period of the last year.

During the period from July-April, 2024-25, the food commodities valued at \$6.164 billion were exported as compared to the exports of \$6.229 billion of the same period of the last year, according to the data of the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. Meanwhile, food commodities worth of \$6.855 billion were imported during 10 months of the current financial year as compared to the imports of \$6.817 billion of the same period of the last year, it added. In the last 10 months, the imports of the commodities, including wheat un-milled decreased by 100 per cent, tea 5.13 per cent, which went down from \$547.430 million to \$519.368 million during the period under review, the data revealed. The food items which recorded an increase in their respective imports, milk cream and milk food for infants, grew by 18.35 per cent as 28,513 metric tons of above mentioned commodity valued at \$103.322 million were imported as compared to the imports of 26,158 metric tons \$87.302 million of the same month of the last year. The other commodities with positive growth in their respective imports included soyabean oil 139.82 per cent, palm oil 24.78 per cent as soyabean valued at \$279.626 million and palm oil worth of \$2.870 billion were imported as compared to the imports of \$116.600 million and \$2.300 billion of the same period of the last year, it added.—APP

BMP calls for promoting industrialization

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry's Businessmen Panel (BMP) has called for promoting industrialization and enhancing exports through lowering cost of production, paying early refunds to solve liquidity crunch and relaxing import policy for industrial raw material. The FPCCI former president and Businessmen Panel (BMP) Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar said that business community was facing tough challenges because of limited business. In this context, he sought attention of the government for formulation of regional, provincial and central level task force, and formulation of sector wise regional policies which would help the government address the problems confronted by exporters. He suggested that One Window Operation should be introduced for the replacing the lengthy procedures that involve interaction of manufacturers with various agencies. The government agencies were harassing the textile industry every day.—APP



RAWALPINDI: Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force visited the residence of Squadron Leader Usman Yousaf Shaheed in Rawalpindi to offer Fateha and to convey his condolences to the bereaved family.—DNA

Al-Shifa Trust urges caution as scorching heat wave hits Pak

Dr. Tayyab Afghani, Senior Consultant and Head of the Oculoplastics Department at Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital in Rawalpindi, said that disproportionate screen time is associated with eye problems, depression, anxiety, sleep issues, obesity, and impaired social development.

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Al-Shifa Trust (AST) on Monday raised concerns about the increasing health problems linked to excessive time spent on mobile and computer screens. The trust stated that both children and adults are using screens more than ever, resulting in significant physical and mental health issues. Dr. Tayyab Afghani, Senior Consultant and Head of the Oculoplastics Department at Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital in Rawalpindi, said that disproportionate screen time is associated with eye problems, depression, anxiety, sleep issues,

obesity, and impaired social development.

Talking to reporters, he explained that children are especially at risk as it can affect their eyes, sleep, attention span, language, and emotional growth.



He advised parents to limit screen time according to age, encourage outdoor play, avoid screens during meals and bedtime, and use storytelling and educational activities instead of just games and videos.

Dr. Afghani said that professionals also face similar issues. Constant use of screens for emails, meetings, and messages causes eye strain, headaches, back pain, and poor posture. He suggested that after every 20 minutes on screen, people should look at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds to reduce eye problems. He added that people should prioritise their well-being by setting clear limits between work and personal time, especially

when working from home.

Dr. Afghani also urgently warned about the ongoing heat wave and growing air pollution. He stressed that the hot weather and air pollution are increasing health risks, such as eye, breathing, and heart problems, especially for children, the elderly, and people with medical conditions. He noted that temperatures in many cities are reaching record highs, making outdoor exposure increasingly dangerous. To stay safe, he advised avoiding going out during the hottest part of the day, drinking plenty of water, wearing sunglasses and light clothes, staying in cool places, using face masks outdoors, keeping

windows closed, and using air purifiers if possible. Dr. Tayyab Afghani emphasised that public awareness and early action can prevent long-term damage. He encouraged schools, parents, and employers to work together in creating screen-safe environments and healthier routines, especially during the ongoing heat wave, when people's vulnerability to eye strain and dehydration increases significantly. He also mentioned that with its comprehensive services, Al-Shifa Trust offers nearly 80% of its patients free eye treatment at hospitals in Rawalpindi, Chakwal, Kohat, Sukkur, Muzaffarabad, and Gilgit. A new hospital in Lahore will start operations by 2027.

Indian PM baseless propaganda exposed

QAZI SHOAIB KHAN

ATTOCK: The Federal Minister for Railways Mr Muhammad Hanif Abbasi strongly contradicting the false and groundless propaganda of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that Indian Prime Minister exposed before the entire world after defeating by the Pakistani Armed forces who is now trying to save his skin under the garb of different negative tactics. The Federal Minister for Railways Mr Muhammad Hanif Abbasi was addressing the thanks giving victorious ceremony hosted by the PML (N) ticket holder Malik Hameed Akbar for MPA ATTOCK and local office bearers of PML(N) in mehria marquee. The colour full event was also attended by the chairman district monitoring committee member public accounts

committee MPA ATTOCK Nawabzada Sher Ali, former provincial minister Punjab Mr Jahangir Khanzada, Muslim leaguers Mrs Khalida Rana, Ch Sajid Mahmood, Malik Hamza Safdar, Mr Asim kamrial, Sardar Iftikhar Ahmed, Salim Shahzad, President Goldsmith Association ATTOCK Mr Iftikhar Ahmed, large number of workers and elites of the district. Speaking on the occasion the Federal Minister for Railways Mr Muhammad Hanif Abbasi has said that historical victory of Pakistan Armed forces has proved that we are not terrorist and upholding the peaceful environment through constructive dialogues but 240 million people of the country are stand by the Pakistani Armed forces if war is imposed by India. He also appreciated the wisdom of Prime Minister MIAN SHAHBAZ SHAREEF

and war planning of Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir, Chief of Air Staff and Naval Chief to destroy the Indian air defense system in a few hours teaching a lesson to Indian forces that they are not in a position to face our well trained forces. The Federal Minister Mr Muhammad Hanif Abbasi also recognized the tremendous support of China, Turkey, Azerbaijan to fight against Indian aggression. In his address Mr Hanif Abbasi said that Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif has very kindly consented to provide more than four billions rupees for the upgradation of Railways lines besides providing free medical treatment at Rawalpindi Institute of Cardiology, disbursement of stipends of rupees Millions, laptops to the brilliant students, welfare programs for socio-economic development of the province.

Tayyip Erdogan Interchange maintenance routine work

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) on Monday clarified that recent maintenance work on the Tayyip Erdogan Interchange (F-8) was a routine and planned activity, dismissing concerns raised on social media. The authority confirmed that the work has been completed, with full access restored by Sunday evening to minimize disruption. "This maintenance was part of our standard quality assurance protocols to ensure the interchange's long-term durability and safety," the CDA stated. "Public safety and infrastructure quality remain our top priorities." The interchange is now fully operational, and the CDA assured citizens that such measures demonstrate their proactive approach to infrastructure upkeep.—APP

Call for precautionary steps amid intense heatwave

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi currently grapples with a severe heatwave, with temperatures soaring to a scorching 40 degrees Celsius which has created challenging conditions for the city's residents. The continuous rise in temperature, caused by the absence of necessary rainfall has prompted health authorities to issue urgent advisories to mitigate the risks associated with the extreme weather. Dr. Asif Arbab Niazi, CEO District Health Authority Rawalpindi, has emphasized the gravity of the situation and said that the prolonged dry spell has intensified the heat. He urged the citizens to take preventive measures. Reduce outdoor activities, particularly during the peak heat hours of the day, regularly use head covers or umbrella while walking in direct sunlight, he said. To prevent the adverse effects of the heatwave, Dr. Asif urged the residents to maintain high fluid intake containing electrolytes, prioritizing water and traditional drinks such as Lassi and Shikanbehen, which help fill up essential salts lost through perspiration. He also recommended taking multiple cool showers throughout the day to lower body temperature and reduce the risk of heat-related illnesses. The CEO called for special attention to recognize the symptoms of heatstroke, a potentially life-threatening condition. "In case of an emergency, immediate first aid should be administered by moving the affected person to a shaded area, ensuring proper ventilation, and using cool water sponging to bring down their body temperature before seeking medical assistance," he said. The Meteorological Department had earlier issued warnings about the impending heatwave, and local health authorities remain on high alert to address any emergencies. "Citizens, particularly vulnerable groups such as the elderly.—APP

ANF arrests 3 smugglers with over 516 kg of drugs

RAWALPINDI: The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF), conducting five operations across the country, recovered as many as 516.51 kg of drugs worth more than Rs 3.9 million and arrested three suspects, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman on Monday. He informed that 6.110 kg of ice tactfully hidden in raw sugar had been recovered from a passenger travelling in public transport at the Islamabad Motorway Toll Plaza. Similarly, 4.8 kg of hashish was recovered from a vehicle near Sohrab Goth, Karachi and the accused was arrested. 480 kg of suspected narcotics hidden for smuggling were recovered in an uninhabited area near Gandhi Jungle, Chagai. As much as 24 kg of hashish hidden for smuggling in bushes was recovered near Shahrah-e-Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Road, Karachi. Cases have been registered against the arrested suspects under the Narcotics Control Act, and further investigations are underway.—APP

NUST hold symposium on youth

RAWALPINDI: A symposium titled 'Youth Leading the Charge: Next Steps in the Energy Transition' was held here at the US-Pakistan Centre for Advanced Studies in Energy (USPCASE) at the National University of Science and Technology (NUST). The event focused on the growing energy needs and the role of youth in acquiring modern and environmentally friendly technologies, a NUST news release said on Monday. Dr Mubarak Hussain Haider, Executive Director of Quantum Mechanics, in his special lecture on the subject emphasized the importance of renewable energy, green financing and the role of youth in shaping Pakistan's sustainable energy future. He highlighted the vast opportunities for environmentally friendly energy production in Pakistan and encouraged youth to acquire expertise in the field. Dr Haider mentioned various renewable energy sources available in Pakistan, including solar, wind, geothermal, biomass, hydro and ocean energy. He lauded NUST's efforts for promoting solar energy and encouraged students to develop skills in the field. The symposium also featured an exhibition of solar energy devices developed by Quantum Mechanics and Intel Energy Pakistan, which evinced keen interest among students. The symposium emphasized the crucial role of youth in Pakistan's energy transition and encouraged them to develop expertise in renewable energy technologies.—APP

An unjust tax system obstructing eco growth

ISLAMABAD: The Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, the President of the Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, the President of All Karachi Industrial Alliance, the Chairman of the FPCCI Advisory Board, and the President and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain, said on Tuesday that Pakistan's current tax system stands as a formidable barrier to the economic growth, stifling innovation and entrepreneurship.

He said that taxation complexities and inefficiencies create a challenging environment for businesses, diminishing their potential to thrive and expand. Mian Zahid Hussain said that the flawed system hinders the vibrant spirit of economic progress, leaving many opportunities untapped in a country rich with potential. Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that the system is rooted in injustice and inequality and continues

to fuel fiscal deficits, rising debt, and balance-of-payment crises. The business leader said the government is under pressure from the IMF to reduce the budget deficit and achieve a primary surplus under the \$7 billion loan programme. However, he warned that the burden may again fall disproportionately on salaried individuals and the corporate sector, a fact that cannot be ignored and should be a cause for concern for all of us. The tax target for the current fiscal year was initially set at PKR 12.9 trillion; later, it was revised downward to PKR 12.3 trillion, with a projected shortfall of up to PKR 1 trillion. He said additional taxation seems inevitable to bridge this gap. The upcoming fiscal year's tax target is expected to be PKR 14.3 trillion. The IMF is pressing for more revenue in the new budget. Still, he said it remains unclear whether the government will continue taxing compliant sectors or finally act against powerful groups

that have long remained outside the tax net, referring to industries such as retail, real estate, and agriculture. Mian Zahid Hussain emphasised that if the government truly intends to relieve the public and the salaried class, it must eliminate unnecessary tax exemptions and take action against tax evaders. He also stressed the need to address losses from state-owned enterprises, power, and gas sectors, which are straining public finances. He acknowledged that certain industrial and trade groups strongly resist current tax reform plans. However, he urged the government to engage these stakeholders through meaningful dialogue and integrate them into the tax system. He further advocated completely digitalising all business transactions to curb tax evasion and improve compliance. This move requires the active participation of all stakeholders. The business leader said it is time to stop repeatedly targeting the salaried class.—APP

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World community needs to be with Palestine people

THE ongoing humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza is a stain on the conscience of the world. With thousands of innocent lives lost, families torn apart, and entire neighborhoods reduced to rubble, the international community can no longer turn a blind eye. The deliberate targeting of civilians, the blockade that has strangled the region for years, and the indiscriminate bombings have created an unbearable cycle of suffering that must be stopped. This is not just a political crisis—it is a moral one. For decades, Palestinians in Gaza have lived under siege, deprived of basic necessities such as food, medicine, and clean water. The systematic destruction of infrastructure, hospitals, and schools has made survival almost impossible. What is unfolding in Gaza is not merely war—it is a genocide. The evidence is clear: entire families wiped out, children orphaned, journalists targeted, and humanitarian workers killed while trying to provide aid to the wounded. Despite overwhelming documentation of these atrocities, global powers remain largely silent or complicit. The failure of international institutions to hold perpetrators accountable is deeply troubling. The United Nations, meant to uphold human rights and prevent mass atrocities, has issued resolutions that are ignored. Countries that champion democracy and justice have either justified the violence or refused to intervene meaningfully. The world's selective outrage is unacceptable. Genocide anywhere is a crime against humanity, and what is happening in Gaza fits every definition of the term. Even as the destruction continues, the resilience of the Palestinian people shines through. They refuse to be erased, their voices demanding justice even in the darkest of times. The world owes them more than just sympathy—it owes them action. The ceasefire agreements, often broken within days, are not enough. There must be permanent and enforceable measures that end the occupation, lift the blockade, and ensure Gaza's right to exist with dignity. The media plays a crucial role in shaping public perception, but misinformation and biased coverage have obscured the reality of Gaza's suffering. It is imperative for journalists and news outlets to report the truth with integrity, amplifying voices from the ground rather than propaganda designed to justify war crimes. Every human being, regardless of nationality or religion, has a responsibility to stand against genocide. Silence is complicity. Leaders who allow this horror to persist must face accountability. War crimes trials, sanctions, and diplomatic isolation should be pursued relentlessly until justice is served. The people of Gaza cannot afford another year, another month, or another day of unending destruction. The world must demand an immediate and unconditional end to the genocide, ensuring that such atrocities never happen again—anywhere. The time for half-hearted statements and empty promises is over. The massacre in Gaza must end. Humanity demands it. History will remember who stood up and who stayed silent.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 06 Issue: 20

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A wake-up call for the Muslim organizations

THE Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), founded in 1969 in the aftermath of the arson attack on Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, was meant to serve as the collective voice of the Muslim world. With 57 member states, it is the second-largest intergovernmental organization after the United Nations. Yet, more than five decades later, the OIC remains a symbol of unfulfilled promises, hollow statements, and political paralysis. From Gaza to Kashmir, from Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar to the Uighurs in China, and from repeated episodes of Islamophobic attacks in the West to the publication of blasphemous cartoons—whenever the Muslim world has cried out for justice and solidarity, the OIC has responded with little more than verbal condemnations and watered-down resolutions. On Gaza in particular, while children are being massacred and entire neighborhoods are reduced to rubble, the OIC's actions have remained timid, divided, and largely symbolic. Instead of leading a unified diplomatic offensive or initiating humanitarian interventions, it has issued apologetic statements, seemingly more worried about offending Western sensibilities than defending Muslim lives. This is not what the founders of the OIC envisioned. It was supposed to be a platform to protect Muslim sanctities, defend Muslim nations under occupation or oppression, and promote political and economic cooperation among Islamic countries. Sadly, it has become a forum for photo-ops, empty rhetoric, and bureaucratic formalities. The inability of the OIC to act decisively is not due to a lack of capacity, but a lack of will. Member states are deeply divided—politically, ideologically, and economically. Many are more interested in pleasing their Western patrons than in supporting their fellow Muslim nations. The OIC's headquarters in Jeddah may still hold symbolic value, but it has lost moral authority in the eyes of the Muslim youth, activists, and even ordinary citizens across the world who see the suffering of their brothers and sisters go unanswered. If the OIC cannot fulfill its mandate, it is time to seriously consider whether it should continue to exist in its current form. A bold alternative must be explored. A new bloc—comprising sincere, independent, and capable Muslim countries like Pakistan, Turkey, Indonesia, Malaysia, Iran, and even Afghanistan—could be formed. This new organization should not be bogged down by bureaucracy but must be built on a clear charter of action, unity, and resistance against oppression. Such a grouping could speak with one voice on international platforms, create joint economic projects, pool defense resources, and coordinate responses to global Islamophobia. Most importantly, it would restore a sense of dignity and strength to a fragmented Muslim world desperately in need of leadership. Muslims around the world are watching, and they are losing faith—not just in their leaders, but in institutions like the OIC that were supposed to protect their interests. It is time to either activate the OIC into a true force of unity and action, or accept its irrelevance and build something new. The suffering of the Ummah demands no less.

The struggle for technological supremacy

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



However, merely excluding Huawei is not sufficient. If the United States and its allies do not develop competitive, cost-effective alternatives, Huawei will maintain its global market lead. To this end, the Biden administration engaged financial institutions like the U.S. Export-Import Bank and the International Development Finance Corporation. These entities have been tasked with funding projects that help countries transition from Huawei networks to trusted Western providers. For example, Costa Rica received support to move from Huawei's 4G systems to secure 5G networks developed by US allies

WHEN Ren Zhengfei founded Huawei in 1987, the company had humble beginnings. With only a few thousand dollars in the bank, Huawei's early ambition was to reverse engineer foreign technology and develop domestic alternatives for China. Within a few years, by 1994, Huawei had achieved its first major milestone by manufacturing switching equipment critical hardware and software components that enable modern telecommunications. During this time, Ren met with then Chinese Communist Party Secretary General Jiang Zemin, where he stressed that telecommunications infrastructure was a matter of national security. He likened the absence of indigenous switching equipment to a nation lacking its own military. Jiang reportedly agreed with Ren's assessment, signaling the beginning of a long-standing and strategic partnership between the Chinese government and Huawei, aimed at securing and controlling China's telecommunications landscape. While Huawei aggressively expanded with the support of the Chinese state, the United States maintained a different approach. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the U.S. was the undisputed leader in global telecommunications. Its companies pioneered technologies such as 2G, 3G and 4G, setting international standards and securing widespread adoption. However, this dominance led to a sense of complacency. Trusting that the free market and innovation would maintain their lead, U.S. policymakers paid little attention to the geopolitical implications of telecom infrastructure. In contrast, China, through massive investments and strategic planning, methodically positioned Huawei and other companies to outcompete their Western rivals. By 2012, Huawei had succeeded in deploying telecommunications equipment across vast areas of rural America, including locations housing U.S. nuclear weapons. For Beijing, this represented an intelligence victory, allowing them potential access to critical U.S. infrastructure. Despite increasing scrutiny and eventual bans most notably the exclusion of Huawei from U.S. networks starting in 2016 the company has continued to grow. Today, Huawei is the world's largest supplier of 5G infrastructure and is already laying the groundwork for dominance in the forthcoming 6G era. Its global expansion is not merely economic; it also carries significant national security concerns. Huawei's dominance has been achieved, in part, through accusations of intellectual property theft and massive state subsidies. These tactics have allowed Huawei to undercut competitors and drive major Western players like Cisco, Motorola, Lucent, Alcatel, Siemens and Nortel out of the equipment market. Now, only Ericsson (Sweden) and Nokia (Finland) remain as global competitors to Huawei and even they rely heavily on the U.S. market for survival.

The broader issue is not simply market competition. It is the fact that Huawei's infrastructure transmits vast amounts of data, which, under Chinese intelligence laws, can be accessed by Beijing upon request. In the age of artificial intelligence (AI), such data becomes a critical resource. Huawei's deployment of Smart City services integrating camera surveillance, utility data and even social media analysis has spanned over 200 cities across 40 countries. These datasets are essential for training AI models and can be funneled directly to China's military and intelligence services. This could elevate China to not just a leader in telecommunications but a dominant power in AI-driven national security technologies. The recently uncovered "Salt Typhoon" hacking campaign against major U.S. telecom firms underscores the lengths to which China is willing to go to infiltrate foreign networks. Recognizing the threat posed by Huawei and Chinese telecom dominance, both the Trump and Biden administrations have taken action. President Trump initiated a ban on Huawei technology within the U.S., citing national security threats and worked with allies to encourage similar action. President Biden continued this approach, focusing on dismantling existing Huawei infrastructure and finding trusted alternatives. Both administrations have also aimed to tackle Huawei's cost advantage, which is largely fueled by Chinese subsidies and the company's ability to sell products below market prices.

However, merely excluding Huawei is not sufficient. If the United States and its allies do not develop competitive, cost-effective alternatives, Huawei will maintain its global market lead. To this end, the Biden administration engaged financial institutions like the U.S. Export-Import Bank and the International Development Finance Corporation. These entities have been tasked with funding projects that help countries transition from Huawei networks to trusted Western providers. For example, Costa Rica received support to move from Huawei's 4G systems to secure 5G networks developed by U.S. allies. Historically, the United States played a leading role in the development of global telecommunications. U.S. government investments in research during the twentieth century led to the creation of revolutionary technologies such as the internet, high-speed networking and GPS. American firms further advanced global communications by innovating the early generations of mobile technology. However, these efforts largely relied on the private sector, with the government playing a supportive but non-intrusive role. In stark contrast, China treated telecommunications as a state-led strategic sector. Its government and military backed firms like Huawei not only to build economic strength but also to further Beijing's geopolitical interests.

Between 2008 and 2018, Huawei reportedly received over \$75 billion in government support. This allowed the company to rapidly expand, offering equipment at prices Western firms could not match. At the end of the 1990s, Western firms controlled almost 90% of the telecom equipment market. By 2025, Ericsson and Nokia, even after acquiring struggling competitors, are projected to command only 40% of the market. Chinese companies have already claimed an equal share. Today, the telecom landscape continues to shift in China's favor. Despite U.S.-led sanctions and export restrictions, Huawei's technological capabilities remain unmatched by its Western counterparts. The company's research and development budget is more than twice that of Ericsson and Nokia combined, giving it a significant edge in innovation. Moreover, China is aggressively promoting Huawei's deployments abroad by offering attractive financing and infrastructure deals, especially in developing countries. These efforts further entrench Chinese influence and expand its access to critical global data. In reaction, both Trump and Biden administrations acknowledged the need for a broader strategy. While banning Huawei products in the U.S. was a first step, the ultimate challenge lies in offering a viable global alternative. That includes not only funding research and development but also supporting deployment in key strategic regions. A critical element of this strategy is spectrum management the allocation of the radio frequencies used for wireless communication. Efficient and strategic use of this limited resource is essential to maintaining leadership in future telecom innovations, including 6G. If the United States fails to act decisively, China will continue to extend its lead. The global transition from 5G to 6G presents a pivotal moment. Without coordinated action among Western allies, including shared investments, standard-setting and competitive financing, China will cement its dominance in global telecommunications infrastructure. This poses a significant risk, as sensitive military, intelligence and civilian operations around the world could become increasingly vulnerable to surveillance and manipulation by Beijing. Huawei's rise is a story of strategic planning, state support and long-term vision. It is also a stark warning to countries that have relied solely on free-market dynamics to maintain technological supremacy. The battle for telecommunications leadership is no longer confined to commercial competition; it is now deeply intertwined with national security, geopolitical influence and the future of global technology standards. The United States and its allies must act with urgency, cooperation and sustained investment to ensure that the world's communications infrastructure remains open, secure and trustworthy in the decades to come.

Drowning Humanity: Another chapter in Modi govt's brutality

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



The Modi government's silence and refusal to acknowledge, let alone apologize for, these acts, reflects not just policy failure but a complete erosion of ethical governance. The image of Indian naval ships—symbols of national strength—being used to commit such cruelty against helpless refugees is a grotesque distortion of national power

ANOTHER story of the Modi government's brutality and inhumanity has come to light on the part of India, which makes one bow their heads in shame, but the Modi government is not ashamed. This time, the horrifying tale involves Rohingya refugees—already among the world's most persecuted minorities—who have now become victims of an act so barbaric that it has alarmed the international conscience. Credible reports have surfaced indicating that dozens of Rohingya refugees were forced off Indian naval vessels into the Andaman Sea and made to swim toward Myanmar, a country from which they had fled to escape genocide and systemic oppression. The incident is not only deeply disturbing but also a grave violation of international humanitarian norms. Tom Andrews, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, has rightly termed it an "unconscionable, unacceptable act." The very idea that refugees—already bearing the trauma of statelessness and persecution—could be blindfolded, forcibly transported, and thrown into open sea, speaks volumes about the moral degradation of those in power. These actions represent a blatant breach of the international principle of non-refoulement, which forbids returning individuals to territories where they are at risk of persecution or death. The details are chilling. Dozens of Rohingya refugees, reportedly holding identification documents, were rounded up from Delhi and Assam. Around 40 of them were blindfolded and flown to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, only to be loaded onto an Indian naval vessel. In an act reminiscent of medieval cruelty, they were later handed life jackets and ordered into the sea—forced to swim toward a Myanmar island. Though they reportedly survived the perilous journey, their fate remains unknown. Another group of about 100 Rohingya refugees has also gone missing

after being removed from a detention center in Assam and relocated to a border area with Bangladesh. Their condition and whereabouts are equally unclear. The Modi government's silence and refusal to acknowledge, let alone apologize for, these acts, reflects not just policy failure but a complete erosion of ethical governance. The image of Indian naval ships—symbols of national strength—being used to commit such cruelty against helpless refugees is a grotesque distortion of national power. What makes it worse is that these acts are not isolated. They are consistent with a growing pattern of hostility, discrimination, and abuse against minorities, especially Muslims, under the current regime. On March 3, 2025, Special Rapporteur Andrews had already communicated with the Indian government, raising concerns over arbitrary and indefinite detention of Rohingya refugees and asylum seekers. He had warned against the dangers of refoulement and emphasized the need for access to places of detention and fair treatment of refugees. Yet, the response from the Indian authorities has been not just dismissive but defiant—escalating their inhumane tactics instead of correcting them. India, which once proudly opened its borders to refugees—from Tibet, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, and Sri Lanka—now stands accused of pushing stateless Rohingyas into the sea. Instead of honoring its civilizational heritage of hospitality and compassion, it is now following a path marred by hatred and exclusion. The Modi government's repeated targeting of the Rohingya community—detaining them, denying them basic rights, and now reportedly casting them into the ocean—reflects not just xenophobia but a dangerous, calculated strategy to appease a hyper-nationalist, anti-Muslim constituency. The international community, particularly human rights organizations and the United Nations, must act with ur-

gency. It is no longer sufficient to express concern or issue condemnations. Concrete diplomatic, legal, and economic measures are required to hold the Modi government accountable. The United Nations must press India to explain these incidents, grant access to the victims, and prosecute those responsible for these grave human rights violations. Refugee protection is a global responsibility, but when a country as large and influential as India shirks this duty with such cruelty, it sets a dangerous precedent for others to follow. Mr. Andrews' efforts deserve support and reinforcement. As a representative of the UN Human Rights Council, though he serves in a personal and unpaid capacity, his voice carries the weight of the international community's moral authority. His inquiry must be allowed to proceed unhindered, and his recommendations must be taken seriously—not just by India but by all member states committed to upholding human rights and international law. This episode, if verified, is not just a humanitarian disaster; it is a political and moral catastrophe. It strips away the veneer of democracy and secularism that India still claims to possess and exposes the rotten core of a regime that sees compassion as weakness and cruelty as strength. The Rohingya, who escaped death in Myanmar only to be thrown into the sea by India, symbolize a global failure of conscience—but above all, they are evidence of the Modi government's disdain for human dignity. To feel shame is a sign of humanity. Yet, the Modi government seems incapable of it. The world must ensure that while the victims may be voiceless, their suffering does not go unheard. Their story—of survival, displacement, and betrayal—must remain a constant reminder of the cost of indifference, the horror of inhumanity, and the urgent need to reclaim our shared humanity from the clutches of state-sponsored brutality.

Briefs

**Pak rejects
Indian claims
regarding
Shaheen...**

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Such actions further erode the credibility of institutions involved in their propagation. Pakistan remains committed to maintaining peace and stability in the region and urges responsible behavior, particularly from official entities that are expected to adhere to principles of professionalism and factual accuracy.

**PTI
'mulls no-
confidence'..**

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Commenting on the matter, senior PTI leader and former speaker Asad Qaiser confirmed that both the prime minister and the speaker were being considered as targets for no-confidence motions. "We are keeping this option under consideration," he said. "Due to Pakistan-India tensions, we have temporarily held back. If we moved now, it might be seen as politicising a time of national crisis." Qaiser added that the no-confidence option would be used "at the appropriate time" and reiterated that both posts – prime minister and speaker – remained under scrutiny by the opposition camp. It is pertinent to note that in Pakistan's history, Khan was the only prime minister to be ousted through a no-confidence motion in April 2022.

**Is a deal
with Imran
Khan...**

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However, it has also led to mixed signals from within PTI's own ranks. Notably, Aleema Khan, Imran Khan's sister, denied reports that the former prime minister had responded positively to an offer for dialogue from the current premier Shehbaz Sharif. Her firm dismissal of any such engagement has only deepened the confusion. According to informed sources, a significant moment occurred last week when PTI Chairman Gohar Ali Khan, accompanied by other lawyers, met Imran in jail. During the meeting, Bushra Bibi, Imran's wife, requested the other lawyers to step outside, wanting to discuss something privately with Imran and Gohar.

**DPM Dar
arrives in...**

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Special Representative for Afghanistan, Mohammad Sadiq, is also part of the Pakistani delegation accompanying the Deputy Prime Minister. The meeting between the foreign ministers of Pakistan and China will include a comprehensive review of bilateral relations between the two countries. The visit comes at a time of heightened diplomatic engagement between Pakistan and China in the wake of ongoing tensions with India following Pahalgam incident. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in a statement issued earlier in the day, noted that the visit is part of ongoing high-level exchanges and reflects the continued strength of the All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership between the two brotherly countries.

**No deal
with PTI...**

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his lawyers, party leaders, or family members such as his sisters. No one from the government has made any contact." He reiterated, "Let me be absolutely clear, there have been no communication, no discussion, no offer, and no deal from the government side. These kinds of rumors surface regularly, but they have no basis in fact." Dismissing ongoing speculation, senator said that such claims have been made dozens of times, and just as many times refuted. "I don't see any substance in them," he said. Given the current state of the PTI founder and his party, they are beyond the stage of talks or offers, he added.

India likely to withdraw from Asia Cup amid tensions with Pakistan

BCCI has reportedly informed the ACC verbally about its withdrawal from Women's Emerging Asia Cup

DNA

NEW DELHI: Owing to continued political tensions with Pakistan, this year's Asia Cup, scheduled to be held in India, is unlikely to take place, Indian media reported on Monday. According to reports, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has decided to withdraw from both the Asia Cup and the Women's Emerging Asia Cup, citing Pakistan's leadership role in the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) as a reason for its refusal to participate. The Asia Cup 2025 is scheduled for September in India, while the Women's Emerging Asia Cup is due to take place in June in Sri Lanka. However, the BCCI has reportedly informed the ACC verbally about its withdrawal from the women's tourna-

ment, and has placed other upcoming ACC events on hold, according to Indian media. Sources say that the BCCI has not formally communicated its withdrawal to the ACC, but internal deliberations and coordination with the Indian government are ongoing. An unnamed BCCI official was quoted as saying, "The Indian team cannot participate in a tournament headed by a Pakistani minister," referring to Mohsin Naqvi, who currently serves as both Chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and President of the Asian Cricket Council. India is the defending champion of the Asia Cup, having won the previous edition. Reports suggest the BCCI's decision is politically motivated, stemming from rising tensions between New Delhi and Islamabad in recent months. Earlier this month, India's head coach Gautam Gambhir said he personally believes India

should not play any cricket with Pakistan, not even in neutral venues, after a deadly militant attack in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) last month. Two-way cricket between the nuclear-armed neighbours remains suspended since 2013 and they play each other only in multi-team tournaments, mostly in neutral venues. "My personal answer to this is absolutely no," Gambhir said on Tuesday, hours before India launched unprovoked airstrikes on Pakistan, when asked for his view on India-Pakistan cricket. "Till all this doesn't stop, there should not be anything between India and Pakistan."

Any match between the arch-rivals remains a cricketing blockbuster and is declared soldout within hours after tickets go on sale. Pakistan's men's team toured India for the 50-overs World Cup in 2023 but their neighbours have not reciprocated.

India refused to tour Pakistan for the Champions Trophy earlier this year and played all their matches in Dubai instead. Gambhir said he would follow whatever the Indian cricket board (BCCI) or the government decide on bilateral cricket with Pakistan. "Ultimately, this is (the) government's decision whether we play them or not," Gambhir said. "This is not up to me, it's not in my jurisdiction. This is for BCCI and, more importantly, the government to decide whether we should play them or not. "Whatever decision they make, we should be absolutely fine with it and not politicise it." Last month India's star javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra withdrew his invitation to Pakistan's Olympic champion Arshad Nadeem to compete in a May 24 event in the southern city of Bengaluru following the Pahalgam attack.

Olympian Anjum Saeed banned for one year

ANSAR M BHATTI/DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a landmark decision that could reshape the future of Pakistan's national sport, the Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) has imposed a one-year ban on Olympian Anjum Saeed. The decision was made by PHF President Mir Tariq Hussain Bugti, marking a significant shift toward accountability, transparency, and meritocracy within the federation. The ban on Anjum Saeed is not just about disciplinary action against one individual; it's a message to the entire hockey fraternity. The PHF has taken this step to cleanse the system of entrenched practices that have long plagued the sport, such as favoritism, nepotism, and misuse of authority. This action signals the beginning of a new era of reforms in Pakistan hockey. The PHF's decision comes after an internal inquiry revealed serious violations by Anjum Saeed. The specific charges include: Receiving double daily allowances, an unethical financial practice. Favorit-

ism in team selections and umpiring, giving undue preference to certain players and officials. Nepotism, promoting associates and relatives within the system. Blatant violation of PHF regulations, undermining the federation's credibility and integrity. These findings represent a pattern of behavior that contradicts the core values of fairness, professionalism, and national interest. In a strong and clear message, PHF President Mir Tariq Hussain Bugti stated: "We are committed to restoring Pakistan hockey to its former glory. Corruption, favoritism, and moral decay will no longer be tolerated. This decision is just the beginning of a series of reforms to ensure transparency and merit-based opportunities." His statement underscores a resolve to purge the federation of malpractices and create a level playing field for all. The response from players, coaches, and fans has been overwhelmingly positive: Young players welcomed the decision, calling it a "clean-up move" for the sport. Coaches and sup-

port staff appreciated the federation's willingness to take tough action. On social media, hashtags like #HockeyJustice, #CleanHockey, and #MeritInPakistanHockey trended widely, indicating widespread support for the decision. This outpouring of public and professional support shows a collective desire for change and accountability in the sport. With this bold step, the PHF has set the tone for a new chapter in Pakistan hockey: Merit-based selection will be the new standard. Transparency in operations will be enforced. Young and deserving talent will be given priority and a platform to shine. The ban on Anjum Saeed serves as a warning to all officials and stakeholders that integrity and professionalism will be non-negotiable going forward. If Pakistan hockey is to reclaim its place on the world stage, such reforms are not only necessary—they are urgent. As the PHF continues its journey of reform, the hope is that Pakistan's golden era of hockey can be revived, with discipline, fairness, and dedication at its core.

Pakistan hammer Iran to reach semis of West Asia Baseball Cup

Wasim Akram emerged as the standout performer with the bat, driving in three runs on two hits, while Saeed Akhtar matched his RBI tally and showcased his speed with three stolen bases

DNA

KARACHI: Pakistan baseball team delivered another masterclass performance on Friday, overwhelming Iran with a resounding 14-0 victory in their Group B clash of the West Asia Baseball Cup. The defending champions, with near-flawless performances, have topped the group B with two wins in the two games. From the opening innings, Pakistan's batters dominated Iran's pitching, scoring three runs in the first, six in the second, and three more in the third to effectively put the game out of reach. They added two insurance runs in the fifth against the hosts before the game was called after seven innings due to the mercy rule. Pakistan's offensive firepower was backed by a flawless defensive effort, with pitcher Muhammad Haris tossing six scoreless innings while striking out 13 batters and allowing just two hits. Wasim Akram emerged as the standout performer with the bat, driving in three runs on two hits, while Saeed Akhtar matched his RBI tally and showcased his speed with three stolen bases. The victory follows Pakistan's 10-6 triumph over Bangladesh in their tournament opener, cementing their position atop Group B.

India denies reports of Asia Cup pullout

"At this stage, our prime focus is on the ongoing IPL and subsequent England series," says BCCI secretary

DNA

NEW DELHI: The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on Monday refuted media reports claiming that India had decided to pull out of the upcoming Asia Cup and the Women's Emerging Teams Asia Cup – both key tournaments under the Asian Cricket Council (ACC). "Since this morning, it has come to our notice about some news reports that the BCCI has decided not to participate in the Asia Cup and the Women's Emerging Teams Asia Cup, both of which are ACC events. Such news are devoid of any truth as till now," BCCI Secretary Devajit Saikia told ANI. He further clarified that the BCCI has not even discussed or taken any such steps regarding the upcoming ACC events, Indian media reported. "At this stage, our prime focus is on the ongoing IPL and subsequent England series, both men's and women's," he added. Earlier in the day, Indian media had reported that owing to continued political tensions with Pakistan, the BCCI had decided to pull out of all ACC-organised tournaments.

NA Speaker Ayaz Sadiq downplays...

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The PTI founder was briefed on the opposition alliance's stance, including that of Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party leader Mahmood Khan Achakzai, who has publicly expressed no confidence in the current speaker. The sources further claimed that the PTI founder directed the party's leadership and allied opposition parties to move ahead with planning the motion, giving them full authority to execute the strategy when the time was right. Party insiders also quoted the PTI founder as saying that the current government must be challenged, both inside and outside the parliament.

Shehbaz arrives in Karachi...

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naval officers and sailors who defended Pakistan's maritime borders and waters during the Battle of Haq, paying tribute to their service. Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Asif, Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal, and Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar are accompanying the premier on this visit.

Pak hopeful ceasefire...

FROM PAGE 01

between Pakistan and India to remain intact. The hotline between both sides is operational." He explained that following four days of missile and aerial exchanges, senior officers from both countries remained in contact through the hotline, a mechanism he said contributed to preventing further escalation.

Sahiwal Coal-Fired Power Plant represents pivotal moment

ISLAMABAD: More than just a generator of electricity, the 'Sahiwal Coal-Fired Power Plant' represents a pivotal moment in the country's energy narrative where the dark days of blackouts met the dawn of energy reliability and infrastructural excellence. According to the official sources, the project lies in the vast plains of Punjab, one of South Asia's most transformative energy projects. Constructed by Huateng Shandong Ruyi (Pakistan) Energy Company Ltd., a joint venture between two major Chinese energy giants, the plant was completed in record time from groundbreaking to commissioning from engineering brilliance to environmental stewardship. Sahiwal is not just a coal-fired facility, it is a symbol of modern progress and a living case study of balancing infrastructure development with environmental responsibility. For years, millions of people endured the daily hardships of chronic power shortages. Load-shedding was not just a nuisance; it was a national crisis. Factories shut down mid-production. Cold storage failed. Students studied under flickering candlelight, and hospitals operated without assurance of uninterrupted power. Livelihoods collapsed, and economic momentum stalled. The Sahiwal Coal-Fired Power Plant changed that narrative by injecting 1,320 megawatts (MW) into the national grid, enough to electrify nearly 2.5 million homes, the plant played a pivotal role in reducing electricity shortfalls, particularly in Punjab. Sahiwal not only helped power machines; it helped power dreams that had long been stalled. It features two supercritical steam turbine units, each generating 660 MW. Supercritical technology allows the plant to operate at higher pressure and temperature reducing carbon emissions per unit of electricity generated. A custom-built rail line connects the plant to Port Qasim for coal transport, ensuring an efficient and enclosed supply chain that minimizes dust and logistical delays. Enclosed conveyors, dust suppression units, and advanced monitoring systems keep the process clean and efficient. Closed-loop cooling systems reduce thermal pollution, while zero-liquid discharge (ZLD) systems ensure no wastewater is released into the environment. Sahiwal's infrastructure is not just about scale, it's about smart integration, precision engineering, and sustainable design. Water usage is a major concern in thermal power plants. Sahiwal uses advanced closed-cycle cooling systems that dramatically reduce water consumption per unit of power. – APP

Joe Biden diagnosed with aggressive prostate cancer

WASHINGTON: Former US president Joe Biden has been diagnosed with an "aggressive" form of prostate cancer that has spread to his bones, and is reviewing treatment options, his office said Sunday. On Friday, the 82-year-old Democrat – whose son Beau Biden died of cancer in 2015 – was diagnosed with the disease after he experienced urinary symptoms and a prostate nodule was found, a statement from his office said. "While this represents a more aggressive form of the disease, the cancer appears to be hormone-sensitive which allows for effective management. The President and his family are reviewing treatment options with his physicians," it continued. US President Donald Trump, who has long derided political rival Biden over his cognitive abilities, said he was "saddened" by the news. "We extend our warmest and best wishes to Jill and the family, and we wish Joe a fast and successful recovery," Republican Trump said on Truth Social, referring to Biden's wife, Jill Biden. – Agencies

Gael Garcia Bernal retells Philippines history in new film

"Magellan", which premiered at the Cannes film festival on Sunday, is the latest feature from Filipino director Lav Diaz, who acknowledges he is tackling sensitive issues

CANNES: Mexican actor Gael Garcia Bernal stars in a new film which re-examines the discovery of the Philippines by European explorers and questions the existence of a national resistance hero. "Magellan", which premiered at the Cannes film festival on Sunday, is the latest feature from Filipino director Lav Diaz, who acknowledges he is tackling sensitive issues. The film takes its title from Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan, played by Bernal, who set sail in the early 1500s across the Atlantic in search of Far East riches. "He is the first European to be able to set foot in the Philippines. And at the same time, the conversion (to Christianity) of the Filipinos started with him," Diaz told AFP. "And, of course, colonisation eventually." Magellan, who was sponsored by the Spanish crown, died at the Battle of Mactan on April 27, 1521, killed in combat by warriors said to be led by Lapulapu. Diaz puts forward a theory in his film that Lapulapu, who is now revered for his resistance, was in fact an invention of Humabon, the monarch of a neighbouring island. The Battle of Mactan "was a trap" for the explorer, who was told that people on Mactan island were resisting the arrival of Christianity. "No-one ever saw Lapulapu," Diaz says, adding that his conclusions are based on "years of research" into this key episode in Philippine history. Evidence for him is only found in the writings of Antonio Pigafetta, an Italian who accompanied Magellan and whose testimony Diaz considers unreliable. "There will be people who accuse me of revisionism," added the Filipino filmmaker, who won the Golden Lion top prize in Venice in 2016 for "The Woman Who Left". Diaz is part of the "slow cinema" movement, which has a contemplative and minimalist style. He has described his film-making as a way for his fellow citizens to find their national identity after centuries of colonisation by Spain and the United States. Known for his lengthy works – he once said his movies were so long no-one would buy them – this latest feature is a relatively brisk two hours and 40 minutes. "I'm just an observer. I don't like being an intruder," he said of his directing style. His longest film runs to 11 hours and his 2016 entry for the Berlin film festival "A Lullaby to the Sorrowful Mystery" was eight. Diaz's film-making is strongly influenced by his tumultuous childhood, growing up in the conflict-plagued southern town of Datu Paglas. His parents, both state school teachers, uprooted themselves from the peaceful north to teach children in war zones how to read and write. – Agencies

Air Chief and US envoy witness match

Lahore Qalandars qualify for playoffs

Fakhar Zaman's fifty, Salman Mirza's four-wicket haul play crucial role in Qalandars' victory

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Lahore Qalandars advanced to playoffs by thumping Peshawar Zalmi in the rain-reduced match of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) Season 10 played at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Sunday. The defeat marked a new low for Peshawar Zalmi as they failed to qualify for the PSL playoffs for the first time in the marquee league's history. Chasing a daunting 150-run target in 13 overs, Zalmi could only manage 123 for the loss of eight wickets. Lower-order batter Daniel Sams remained the top-scorer for Zalmi with an unbeaten 26, followed by Ahmed Daniyal (24), Abdul Samad (17) and Babar Azam (16), while the rest of their batters failed to amass double figures. Debutant Mirza was the pickout bowler for the Qalandars, standing up four wickets for 31 runs in his three overs. Skipper Shaheen Shah Afridi bagged two wickets,



while Sikandar Raza and Haris Rauf chipped in with one scalp apiece. Put into bat in the match, reduced to 13 overs per side, the Qalandars accumulated 149/8. The Qalandars got off to a flamboyant start to their innings as

their opening pair of Fakhar Zaman and Mohammad Naem put together 54 runs in just 3.4 overs. Fakhar was the core aggressor of the opening stand, while Naem played a supportive role until falling victim to Daniel Sams in the

fourth over after scoring 22 off 10 deliveries, laced with three fours and a six. Fakhar then shared brief partnerships with Abdullah Shafique and Kusal Perera, who made modest contributions with five and 17, respectively.

The Qalandars then lost three more wickets in quick succession setback in the 10th over when Ali Raza dismissed in-form Sikandar Raza on four, bringing the total down to 115/4 in 9.4 overs. Hard-hitting batter Asif Ali, who walked out to bat at number six, played a brisk 18-run cameo before being dismissed by Ahmed Daniyal, who struck again on the next delivery to send Shakib Al Hasan back for a golden duck. The Qalandars then suffered a massive blow to their batting expedition when Daniel Sams cleaned up set batter Fakhar on the second delivery of the penultimate over. Fakhar remained the top-scorer for the Qalandars with a 36-ball 60, featuring 10 boundaries including three sixes. Following his departure, skipper Shaheen Shah Afridi and Haris Rauf added 10 more runs to the total until the latter got run out on the final delivery of the innings. For Zalmi, Sams, Ali and Daniyal bagged two wickets each.

Briefs

Rupee sheds 10 paisa against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Monday depreciated by 10 paisa against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 281.76 against the previous day's closing of Rs 281.66.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 282.25 and Rs 283.75, respectively. The price of the Euro increased by Rs 0.90 to close at Rs 316.63 against the last day's closing of Rs 315.73, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs 1.94, whereas an increase of Rs 1.56 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 376.61 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 375.05. The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 03 paisa each to close at Rs 76.71 and Rs 75.12, respectively.—APP

PSX gains 40 points

ISLAMABAD: The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed a bullish trend on Monday, gaining 40.49 points, a positive change of 0.03 percent, closing at 119,689.63 points as compared to 119,649.14 points on the last trading day. A total of 425,372,280 shares were traded during the day as compared to 572,287,175 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 22.274 billion against Rs 29.026 billion on the last trading day. As many as 465 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 222 of them recorded gains and 199 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 44 companies remained unchanged. The three top trading companies were Fauji Foods Limited with 60,601,551 shares at Rs 16.28 per share, Crescent Star Insurance Limited with 20,056,727 shares at Rs 3.15 per share and At-Tahur Limited with 18,289,768 shares at Rs 46.13 per share. PIA Holding Company LimitedB witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 1,245.77 per share closing at Rs 13,703.44 whereas runner-up was Rafhan Maize Products Company Limited with Rs 926.69 rise in its share price to close at Rs 10,193.54.—APP

Gold price increases to Rs 342,500 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat per tola gold witnessed an increase of Rs 4,000 on Monday and was sold at Rs 342,500 against its sale at Rs 338,500 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 3,429 to Rs 293,638 from Rs 290,209 whereas the price of 10 grams of 22 Karat also increased to Rs 270,348. The rates of per tola silver and ten gram remained unchanged and closed at Rs 3,410 and Rs 2,923. The price of gold in the international market increased by \$40 to \$3,241 from \$3,201 whereas that of silver went up by \$0.24 to \$32.52, the Association reported.—APP

FDA to auction commercial plots, public utility sites on 21st

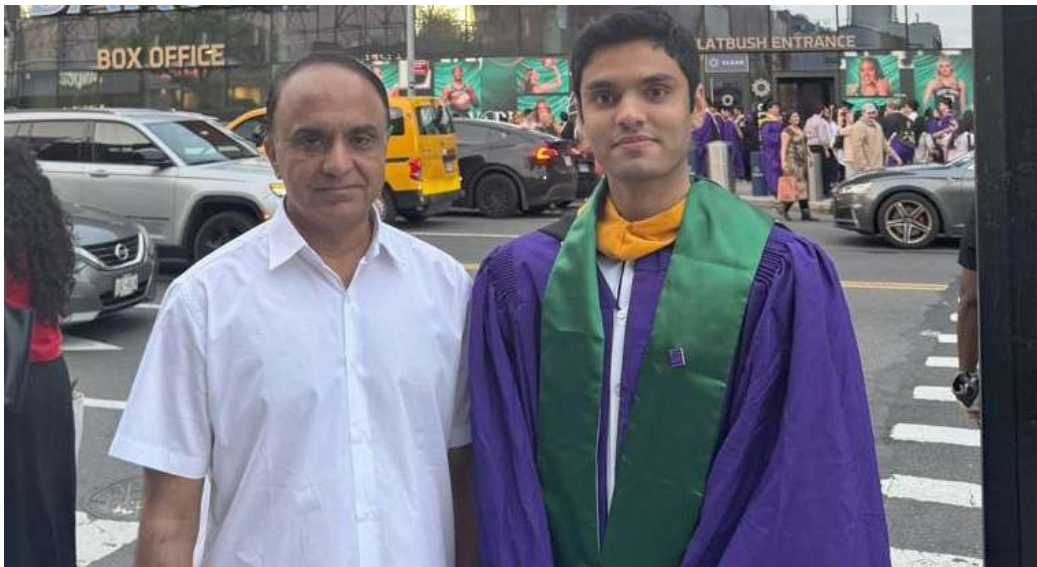
FAISALABAD: The Faisalabad Development Authority (FDA) administration has decided to auction FDA-owned commercial plots and public utility sites of different measurements in the second phase here on May 21. Presiding over a meeting here on Monday, Director General FDA Muhammad Asif Chaudhary said that the auction would be held at FDA Complex at 11 a.m. and in this connection, all necessary arrangements have been completed. He reviewed the matters of auctioning the plots and directed to ensure transparency in the entire auction process. He said that best environment and facilities would be provided to bidders.—APP

Saad secures master degree from New York University

Saad's achievement marks a significant milestone, not only for him personally but also for his family. His academic journey at one of the world's leading universities has equipped him with advanced knowledge and skills in construction planning, project management, and sustainable development practices

DNA

NEW YORK: Saad Raza, son of Abid Raza—Deputy Editor of the Daily Islamabad POST and CEO of Shifa Builders—has proudly earned his Master's degree in Construction Management from New York University (NYU), USA. Saad's achievement marks a significant milestone, not only for him personally but also for his family. His academic journey at one of the world's leading universities has equipped him with advanced knowledge and skills in construction planning, project management, and sustainable development practices. To celebrate this momentous occasion, Abid Raza traveled from Pakistan



to the United States to attend his son's graduation ceremony. His presence was a source of immense pride and joy, symbolizing a father's unwavering support and the importance of family in moments of success. Saad's dedication and hard work have been widely appreciated by peers and mentors alike. With a solid academic foundation from NYU, he is expected to contribute significantly to the construction and development sector, both in Pakistan and internationally. The entire team at the Daily Islamabad POST extends heartfelt congratulations to Saad Raza on this remarkable achievement and wishes him continued success in his future endeavors.

Canada pauses some counter tariffs against US

The US president has slapped general tariffs of 25 percent on Canada as well as sector-specific levies on autos, steel and aluminum, but he has suspended some of them pending negotiations

OTTAWA: Canada has temporarily paused some counter tariffs against the United States, but Finance Minister Francois-Philippe Champagne on Sunday pushed back against claims they have all been quietly lifted. This came as Prime Minister Mark Carney and US Vice President JD Vance discussed trade in Rome after they attended the inauguration mass at the Vatican for Pope Leo XIV. According to a read-out from Carney's office, they spoke about "immediate trade pressures and the need to build a new economic and security relationship." Vance in a brief statement called it "a casual meeting" about their two nations' shared interests and goals, "including fair trade poli-

cies." Carney, who won Canada's April 28 election on a pledge to stand up to US President Donald Trump, had slapped counter tariffs on billions of dollars of imports from the United States in response to US tariffs on Canadian goods. During the election campaign, automakers were offered a reprieve, provided they maintained production and investment in Canada. This was outlined on May 7 in the Canada Gazette, the government's official newspaper, along with a pause on tariffs on products used in food and beverage processing and packaging, health, manufacturing, national security and public safety. The moves went mostly unnoticed until Oxford Economics said in a report this week that

the exemptions covered so many categories of products that the tariffs rate against the United States was effectively dropped to "nearly zero." Opposition leader Pierre Poilievre pounced on the claim, cited in the media, to accuse Carney of having "quietly dropped retaliatory tariffs to 'nearly zero' without telling anyone." Champagne called those assertions "falsehoods." "To retaliate against US tariffs, Canada launched largest-ever response — including \$60B of tariffs on end-use goods. 70% of those tariffs are still in place," he said on X. Canada's counter tariffs, his office told AFP, were "calibrated to respond to the US while limiting economic harm to Canada." Tariff relief was provided for six

months to give some Canadian companies "more time to adjust their supply chains and become less dependent on US suppliers," Champagne spokesperson Audrey Millette said. Canada continues to charge tariffs on roughly Can\$43 billion (US\$31 billion) of US goods, she added. The nation of 41 million people sends three-quarters of its exports to the United States, and the latest jobs report shows tariffs imposed by Trump are already damaging the Canadian economy. The US president has slapped general tariffs of 25 percent on Canada as well as sector-specific levies on autos, steel and aluminum, but he has suspended some of them pending negotiations.—DNA

Chinese investors to set up Mini Truck assembly plant in Karachi

ISLAMABAD: Chinese investors have agreed to set up Super Mini Truck assembly plant in Karachi. This is a major move toward industrial growth and technological collaboration between the two countries. The announcement to this effect was made by Sindh's Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon during the unveiling ceremony of the Super Mini Truck in Bozhou, China, Gwadar Pro reported on Monday. Sharjeel Memon said at the event that the Chinese investors have agreed to set up the assembly plant in Karachi, which will benefit various business groups and individuals. He also revealed plans to establish electric vehicle (EV) charging stations across Sindh in the near future. Super Mini Truck is a kind of revolutionary vehicle developed jointly by China's Chery Holding and Peddy Technology Company Limited. One of the key features of the Super Mini Truck is its adaptability — it can easily be converted into a super mini car, making it a versatile transport solution. Memon praised the vehicle as an outstanding example of Pakistan-China industrial cooperation and technological exchange, which, he said, would open new doors for development and prosperity in both countries. "The Super Mini Truck is a sustainable, affordable, and accessible transportation solution that addresses logistics challenges in both urban and rural areas," said Memon. He added, "It combines advanced engineering, intelligent design, and environmental compatibility, and has the full potential to meet Pakistan's growing demand for light commercial vehicles." Memon said that the upcoming assembly plant in Karachi will accelerate industrial development, local parts manufacturing, job creation, and technology transfer. "This project marks a practical step toward transforming Karachi into a regional automotive manufacturing hub," he stated.—DNA

China Focus: Homecoming of 2,300-year-old silk manuscripts

BEIJING: In the predawn hours of Sunday, a commercial flight from Washington D.C. touched down in Beijing carrying an extraordinary cultural payload — a collection of ancient Chinese silk manuscript fragments, dating back to the Warring States period (475-221 BC). Unknown to most passengers, their journey coincided with one of China's most significant cultural repatriations to date. Returned by the Smithsonian's National Museum of Asian Art on Friday, the fragments are from "Wuxing Ling" and "Gongshou Zhan," the latter two volumes of the Zidanku Silk Manuscripts. Time has been kind to the first volume, which remains largely intact, albeit outside China. Collectively, the silk manuscripts, containing more than 900 Chinese characters, are the earliest examples of silk text discovered to date and the oldest classical Chinese book in the true sense. "Wuxing Ling" consists of lunar month illustrations paired with explanatory texts, recording seasonal taboos and auspicious practices throughout the year. "Gongshou Zhan" features texts arranged in a rare circular formation that are read clockwise, indicating the favorable and unfavorable directions, dates, and timing for attacking and defending cities.—APP

Japan to launch prescreening of visa-free travelers

TOKYO: Japan will launch prearrival screening of visa-free travelers in fiscal 2028, as the government aims to boost its booming inbound tourism further, according to the Justice Ministry. The government is looking to raise the efficiency of the process by introducing screening modeled on the United States' Electronic System for Travel Authorization, the ministry said last month. A record 36.87 million foreign travelers visited Japan in 2024, up 47.1 percent from the previous year, and as tourism is a main pillar in Japan's growth strategy, the government aims to lift the number to 60 million in 2030. Under the new system, travelers from countries with visa exemptions for short-term stays in Japan will be required to provide travel and personal information, such as their names, purposes of stay and locations, at least several days before arrival. The Immigration Services Agency of Japan will be able to examine the travelers' data in advance, and if they have any criminal history or record of illegal stays in Japan, the agency may not allow them to board planes to Japan, the ministry said.—APP

Qatari PM meets Iranian president in Tehran

DUBAI: Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian received Sheikh Mohammed Al-Thani, Qatar's prime minister and minister of foreign affairs, in Tehran on Sunday for high-level talks, Qatar news agency reported. The two officials discussed enhancing cooperation between their countries, particularly in economy and trade. They also reviewed the latest developments in the Gaza Strip and the occupied Palestinian territories, as well as other regional and international issues of mutual concern. Moreover, Iraq's Minister of Foreign Affairs Fuad Hussein arrived in Tehran on Sunday to take part in a forum on regional security, Iraqi state news agency INA reported. The Tehran Dialogue Forum aims to "discuss ways to enhance regional security and joint cooperation, and exchange views on the political and economic challenges facing the region," according to the INA report. Hussein is expected to take part in sessions at the forum, which will host ministers, senior officials, research center leaders, and international experts. He was received by Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Middle Eastern and Gulf Affairs Mohammad Ali Beyk.—APP

Egypt recovers antiquities smuggled to Australia

CAIRO: Egypt's antiquities ministry said Sunday it had retrieved 21 artefacts, including a funerary figurine and an eye of Horus amulet, that had been smuggled illegally to Australia. Most of the items had been "on display at a renowned auction house in Australia, before it became clear that there were no proper ownership documents," Supreme Council of Antiquities chief Mohamed Ismail Khaled said. The collection, which also included a fragment of a wooden sarcophagus, was handed over to the Egyptian embassy in Canberra. Officials did not say how or when the pieces had been smuggled out of the country. Such thefts are not uncommon, however. During the 2011 uprising that ousted Egypt's longtime ruler Hosni Mubarak, looters ransacked museums and archaeological sites, spiriting away thousands of priceless pieces. Many of the stolen artefacts later appeared on the international market or ended up in private collections. Officials say Egypt has successfully retrieved around 30,000 smuggled artefacts over the past decade. Six years ago, the country's embassy in Australia also received a long-lost fourth and final part of a stone stela dating back to the fourth century BC. The stela, or information slab, disappeared from an excavation site in Luxor in 1995. Known as the Sheshn Nerfertem stela, it was smuggled in pieces to Switzerland, from where three pieces were repatriated in 2017. The now-complete stela, and the artefacts repatriated from Australia, are now "at the Egyptian Museum in Tahrir for restoration in preparation for display in a temporary exhibition," the antiquities ministry said.—DNA



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Pakistan to US envoy Rizwan Saeed Sheikh held meeting with representatives of Datarocx.

Pakistan strengthens commitment to GIs, for sustainable export growth: Jam

In closing, the Minister called on all stakeholders to actively engage in the consultations and contribute to shaping an inclusive, effective GI ecosystem. "With the right policies and coordination, GIs can become a cornerstone of Pakistan's trade and development strategy," he affirmed

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan on Monday said Pakistan strengthened its Commitment to Geographical Indications (GIs) for export growth, economic Prosperity, and heritage protection. Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan, reaffirmed Pakistan's strong commitment to promoting and institutionalizing its Geographical Indications (GI) regime during the National Conference on Geographical Indications Awareness, jointly organized by the Ministry of Commerce and the Food

and Agriculture Organization (FAO) at local hotel. Delivering the keynote address, the Minister stated that GIs are more than just intellectual property tools—they are powerful instruments for protecting cultural heritage, enabling rural development, and creating new export opportunities. "We stand at a critical juncture where Pakistan can elevate its identity in global markets—not just as a producer of commodities, but as a custodian of quality and heritage," he said. He highlighted that Pakistan has so far registered 20 GIs, including globally recognized products such as Basmati rice,

Chilghoza pine nuts, Sindhri mangoes, and Multani blue pottery, while applications for international protection are underway in key markets such as the European Union. The Minister emphasized the need to build robust value chains based on certification, product specifications, branding, and traceability to deliver meaningful economic returns to producers. The conference was attended by a wide range of stakeholders from federal and provincial governments, development partners, registrants, chambers of commerce, academics, legal experts, and private sector end users. The forum

served to raise awareness on the role of GIs in national development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), enhance institutional coordination, and promote capacity building for GI identification, value addition, and marketing. Mr. Khan noted that 200 products have already been identified as potential GIs in Pakistan, and appreciated FAO's continued support—particularly through the TRI-Chilghoza project—in identifying four potential GI zones for Chilghoza pine nuts across Gilgit-Baltistan, North and South Waziristan, Sherani (Balochistan), and Chitral. He stressed that the GI system can contribute not only

to economic growth but also to ecological sustainability and community resilience. He also shared that the Ministry of Commerce is working to establish a dedicated GI Registry and is in the process of developing a National Geographical Indications Protection Strategy, which will serve as a guiding framework for expanding and protecting GI products domestically and internationally. In closing, the Minister called on all stakeholders to actively engage in the consultations and contribute to shaping an inclusive, effective GI ecosystem. "With the right policies and coordination, GIs can become a cornerstone of Pakistan's trade and development strategy," he affirmed.

Briefs

Romania
has chosen
Nicser Dan as
the President

BUCHAREST: Interim President Ilie Bolojan congratulated Nicusor Dan on Monday morning for winning the presidential elections. 'Romania has chosen. Congratulations, Nicusor Dan! Thank you to the citizens of our country for turning out in large numbers to vote, regardless of their choice. I am grateful to all those involved in organizing the elections for ensuring the smooth running of the second round. Thank you, Romania!', Ilie Bolojan wrote on his Facebook page. Nicusor Dan, an independent candidate, received 6,168,642 votes (53.60%) in the second round of the presidential election, according to data published on the website of the Permanent Electoral Authority (AEP) after the centralisation of all 20,085 polling station reports. George Simion, the candidate of the AUR, ranked second as he received 5,339,053 votes, representing 46.40%. Over 11.6 million Romanians voted in the second round of the elections. - APP

Iran says open
to regional
nuclear fuel
consortium

NEWS DESK

TEHRAN: Iran on Monday said it was open to establishing a regional nuclear fuel consortium, reiterating that it would not stop enriching uranium. Tehran and Washington have held four rounds of Omani-mediated nuclear talks since April 12, the highest-level contact between the two foes since the United States abandoned the 2015 nuclear accord. US officials have recently voiced strong opposition to Iran's uranium enrichment activities, while Tehran has repeatedly insisted that it was "non-negotiable". International media, including The Guardian and The New York Times, have in recent days reported that Iran floated the idea of forming a regional consortium to enrich uranium. Iranian foreign ministry spokesperson Esmail Baqaei denied that Iran had proposed the idea but said it was floated in the past by several countries, without elaborating.

Hungary and Pakistan:
a growing friendship

An Interview with H.E. Béla Fazekas, Ambassador of Hungary to Pakistan

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: As his tenure in Pakistan comes to a close, the Hungarian Ambassador to Pakistan, H.E. Béla Fazekas, reflects on the evolving bilateral relationship between Hungary and Pakistan. In a candid and thoughtful interview, Ambassador Fazekas offers insight into the diplomatic, economic, and cultural ties that have developed over the years—and outlines opportunities for a brighter, more connected future between the two nations. First of this interview was published in this newspaper on May 12, 2025. When asked to assess the current state of political, economic, and cultural relations between Hungary and Pakistan, Ambassador Fazekas described the relationship as being "more than friendly and less than strategic." However, he emphasized that the two nations are just a "stone's throw away" from forging a truly strategic partnership. "Over the past five years, we've covered significant ground," he noted, underscoring the importance of consistent diplomatic engagement. "Economic and trade relations, however, tell a different story." The ambassador highlighted one of the most remarkable economic success stories: the long-standing presence of Hungarian oil and gas giant MOL in Pakistan. Since 1999, MOL has been active in the country's energy sector, investing over USD 3 billion and contributing immensely to Pakistan's energy security—particularly in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Despite security challenges in that region, MOL has remained committed, even as many other Western companies exited. "This unwavering engagement speaks volumes about MOL's



confidence in Pakistan and its people," said Fazekas. On the flip side, the broader picture of bilateral trade leaves room for improvement. Though the trade volume has doubled in five years—from USD 50 million to USD 100 million—Ambassador Fazekas pointed out that this still does not reflect the true potential of the relationship. Referencing the past "Nokia era," when Hungarian-made cellphones were ubiquitous in Pakistani households, he said, "Those days might not return, but we must find a substitute—another flagship product to revive the vibrancy of our trade relations." Ambassador Fazekas is particularly proud of Hungary's contributions to education in Pakistan. Despite being a relatively small nation in terms of geopolitical power, Hungary boasts one of the highest numbers of Nobel Prize winners per capita—a

feat he attributes to its world-class higher education system. In the last decade, Hungary has steadily increased the number of government-funded scholarships for Pakistani students, beginning with 80 and now offering 400 scholarships annually. The demand is overwhelming, with 15,000 to 18,000 applicants every year, demonstrating the high regard in which Hungarian education is held among Pakistani youth. Additionally, hundreds of Pakistani students pursue self-funded studies in Hungary, making them one of the largest Pakistani student diasporas in Europe—and the largest under any single government's scholarship program. "These young people are ambassadors of Pakistan in Hungary," said Fazekas, emphasizing the role of education in building long-lasting people-to-people connections.

On how Pakistan can enhance its presence in Hungary, Ambassador Fazekas offered pragmatic advice. "Establish a commercial counselor's post at the embassy—or better yet, open a dedicated trade office in Budapest," he recommended. He also emphasized the need to leverage the presence of Pakistani students to deepen cultural understanding. "They can organize cultural events, culinary festivals, even introduce cricket to Hungarian youth. They are energetic, smart, and full of potential. Let them establish Pakistan as a beloved brand in Hungary." When asked if he would consider returning to Pakistan in the future, Ambassador Fazekas responded with warmth and realism. "Yes, I would. But being closer to 70 than 60, I don't think Pakistan will be high on my bucket list. Still, I look forward to watching Pakistan become one of the success stories of the 21st century—something I believe will happen sooner or later." "A young country with ancient civilization," Fazekas said without hesitation—capturing the essence of Pakistan's identity in a single, powerful sentence. In his parting words, the ambassador expressed deep gratitude: "I just want to thank my Pakistani friends for treating me like one of their own. I apologize if at times I was too honest—perhaps even too blunt—but it was never against them, always for them." Ambassador Béla Fazekas leaves Pakistan with admiration and hope. His tenure has been marked by mutual respect, shared values, and a vision for even closer ties between Hungary and Pakistan. As both nations look to the future, it is evident that education, trade, and cultural exchange will form the bedrock of a truly strategic partnership.

Turner
appointed
UK envoy
to UN

DNA

LONDON: Dr Christian Turner CMG has been appointed UK Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN in New York. Dr Christian Turner CMG has been appointed UK Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York in succession to Dame Barbara Woodward DCMG, OBE. Dr Turner will take up his appointment at the end of 2025. Christian Turner has also served in Pakistan as the British High Commissioner from 2019 to 2023. Jane Marriott had replaced Ambassador Turner.

Indonesia
searches for
19 people
after landslide

JAKARTA: Indonesian rescue teams were searching for 19 people missing after heavy rain caused a landslide at a gold mine in its easternmost region of Papua, officials said on Monday. - Agencies

Wildfire erupts in Margalla Hills

The wildfire, which started in an ecologically sensitive zone, is a cause for serious concern given the area's rich biodiversity and its popularity among hikers and nature lovers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A wildfire broke out afternoon in the picturesque Margalla Hills National Park, specifically near Saidpur Dara, Jungle Number 15, and the Rumli area. The blaze prompted an immediate and coordinated emergency response from the Islamabad Wildlife Management Board (IWMB) and the Capital Development Authority (CDA), both of which have deployed teams to the affected area to battle the flames. According to IWMB spokesperson Umar Bilal, the ongoing firefighting operation is being challenged by strong wind gusts that are fanning the flames and spreading the fire rapidly across the dry, rugged terrain. "The wind pressure is a major obstacle, making it extremely difficult for our teams to contain and extinguish the fire. Despite this, additional firefighting personnel and equipment have been dispatched to strengthen the operation," he said. The wildfire, which started in an ecologically sensitive zone, is a cause for serious concern given the area's rich biodiversity and its popularity among hikers and nature lovers. Margalla Hills National Park is home to various species of wildlife, including leopards, foxes, porcupines, and numerous bird species, many of which could be at risk due to the fire. As of now, no human casualties or property damage have been reported. Authorities are working vigilantly

to ensure that the fire does not spread to residential areas or tourist trails. CDA and IWMB have called on volunteers and community members to remain at a safe distance and refrain from venturing into the hills until the fire is fully under control. Rangers, forest officials, and CDA's Environment Wing are coordinating their efforts to establish firebreaks and prevent the flames from advancing further into densely forested zones. Officials emphasized that all available resources were mobilized to contain the situation. Emergency water tankers, portable pumps, and fire beaters are being used on the ground, while lookout teams are monitoring other vulnerable sections of the park to detect any additional flare-ups. The exact cause of the fire is yet to be determined, but such incidents are not uncommon during the hot, dry months leading up to the monsoon season. Experts suggest that discarded cigarette butts, unattended campfires, or deliberate human negligence could be contributing factors, and investigations are ongoing. In a statement, the IWMB chairperson expressed deep concern over the recurrence of wildfires in the area and reiterated the board's commitment to protecting Islamabad's natural heritage. "We urge citizens to act responsibly. The Margalla Hills belong to all of us, and it's everyone's duty to help preserve them."

UK-EU set to seal closer ties
in first summit since Brexit

EU diplomats say deal has been reached on resetting ties with UK after late night talks to resolve differences

CENTRELINE REPORT

LONDON: UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer was set to seal a deal for closer ties with the European Union at a landmark summit, opening a new chapter after Britain's acrimonious exit from the bloc five years ago. EU diplomats said on Monday a deal had been reached on resetting ties with the UK after late night talks to resolve differences on key sticking points. EU member states had approved a trio of texts to be signed, particularly on defence, and, after a last-minute breakthrough, the thorny issue of fishing rights. Starmer has pushed for closer UK ties with its European neighbours. The Labour government argues the EU deal negotiated with the UK's previous Conservative government "isn't working for anyone". But Starmer, who came to power in last July's general elections ousting the Conservative Party, has several red lines he has said he will not cross. Sticking points have remained over some EU demands and the Conservatives are already criticising the reset move as a "surrender". The two



sides would ink the "Security and Defence Partnership" — the highlight of Monday's sit-down between Starmer and EU leaders Ursula von der Leyen, Antonio Costa and chief diplomat Kaja Kallas. Under the final agreement, Britain will keep its waters open for European fishermen for 12 years after the current deal expires in 2026, in return for the 27-nation bloc indefinitely easing red tape on food imports from the UK, diplomats said.

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Indian shelling
devastates
AJK village

MIRPUR: Intense unprovoked Indian shelling and firing were reported on Saturday night in various areas close to the Line of Control (LoC) in Kotli district, Azad Jammu Kashmir. The shelling caused significant damage, destroying several homes and resulting in civilian casualties. One of the affected homes belonged to Nisar Ahmad, located in Indrala Kothera, Tehsil Khairatta, District Kotli. The local correspondent of APP reported this from Mirpur on Sunday. According to the details, fortunately, Nisar Ahmad and his family survived the attack unharmed. They had sensed the danger in time and relocated to a safe place, avoiding any casualties. However, their home was completely destroyed, leaving them homeless. Ahsan Nisar, Nisar Ahmad's son, informed the APP that his family is currently staying at a temporary location and urgently needs assistance. The local community and the affected family have appealed to the Government of Azad Jammu Kashmir's relevant authorities and welfare organizations to provide immediate assistance, including shelter, financial aid, and rehabilitation support. - APP

Kartarpur Corridor
shut from Indian
side for nine days

Head Granthi Sardar Gobind Singh said that Pakistan is awaiting its Sikh brothers and appealed to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to allow Sikh pilgrims to visit Kartarpur

DNA

LAHORE: Sikh pilgrims from different countries visit the Shrine of Baba Guru Nanak Dev at the Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, in the Pakistani town of Kartarpur, near the Indian border, on November 6, 2019. The Kartarpur Corridor has remained closed from the Indian side for the past nine days, according to the Darbar administration. Head Granthi Sardar Gobind Singh said that Pakistan is awaiting its Sikh brothers and appealed to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to allow Sikh pilgrims to visit Kartarpur. He stated that India should keep politics separate from religion, and noted that even during the World Wars, pilgrimage to religious sites was not suspended. Local pilgrims in Shakargarh also called on India to reopen the corridor and permit Sikh visitors to access the shrine.

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