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Govt decides to make Gen Asim Field Marshall

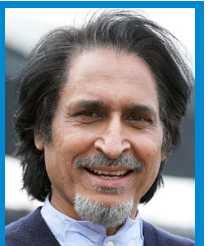
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Pakistan reaches world against Indian designs

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War victory

COAS Gen Asim promoted to rank of field marshal

The government approved the promotion of COAS Gen Munir to the rank of field marshal for ensuring the security of the country

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In recognition of his exemplary exceptional leadership during Pakistan's recent military clashes with India and the successful execution of "Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos", the federal government on Tuesday elevated Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir to the rank of field marshal. The decision was made during a federal cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. The government approved the promotion of COAS Gen Munir to the rank of field marshal for ensuring the security of the country and defeating the enemy via best strategy and courageous leadership during "Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos". During the cabinet meeting, PM Shehbaz congratulated the entire Pakistani nation on the success of "Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos" and foiling of the enemy's nefarious designs, read a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office. "COAS Gen Munir led the Pakistan Army with exemplary courage and determination and coordinated the war strategy and efforts of the armed forces in a comprehensive manner," it added. The cabinet meeting paid tribute to the army chief for his exceptional strategy that led Pakistan to success in Marka-e-Haq. "In recogni-

Field Marshal Asim Munir expresses gratitude to the nation

RAWALPINDI: Field Marshal Asim Munir has said he is deeply thankful to Allah Almighty upon being conferred the prestigious rank of Field Marshal. "This honour is dedicated to the entire nation, the Pakistan Armed Forces—especially our civil and military martyrs and veterans," he stated. He expressed gratitude to the President of Pakistan, the Prime Minister, and the Cabinet for placing their trust in him. "This title is a sacred trust of the nation, and millions of Asims are ready to sacrifice everything to uphold it," said Field Marshal Munir. He emphasized that the honour is not an individual one, but rather a recognition bestowed upon the Armed Forces of Pakistan and the entire nation. Field Marshal Asim Munir extended heartfelt thanks to the people of Pakistan for their continued trust and support. — DNA

tion of his brilliant military leadership, courage, and bravery, ensuring Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity and courageous defense against the enemy, the cabinet approved the prime minister's proposal to promote General Syed Asim Munir to the rank of field marshal," read the statement. Earlier, PM Shehbaz met President Asif Ali Zardari and took him into confidence regarding the decision. The cabinet also unanimously decided to continue the services of Air Chief Marshal Zaheer

Ahmed Babar Sidhu after his term in office ends. The federal cabinet also decided that officers and soldiers of Pakistan Armed Forces, ghazis, martyrs, and civilians from different fields will be awarded high government awards in recognition of their valuable services during Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos. The rank of Field Marshal is the highest position in the Pakistan Army, placed above the rank of a general.

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif called on President Asif Ali Zardari. The President supported government decision to promote General Asim Munir to the rank of field marshal. — DNA

PM for steps to check tax evasion

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday directed the immediate and effective implementation of ongoing reforms in the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), with a strong focus on digitization and automation of the tax system. The prime minister while chairing a high-level review meeting here, emphasized the need for decisive action to correct what he described as "70 years of mismanagement" in the tax system. PM Shehbaz Sharif stated that while maximum facilitation would be provided to honest taxpayers and businesses, those involved in tax evasion would face strict legal action without any concessions.

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Imran Khan says 'never closed' door on talks

Barrister Gohar says PTI founder had previously refused talks only with govt, not military establishment

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Incarcerated Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan has reiterated that he never closed the door on dialogue with the establishment, party chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan confirmed on Tuesday. Speaking to journalists after meeting the PTI founder at Adiala Jail, Gohar clarified that the former prime minister

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Pakistan makes it clear Israeli Gaza expansion plan unacceptable

Pakistan reiterated its call on the international community for an immediate end to Israel's genocidal campaign, and to ensure a lasting ceasefire in Gaza

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan condemns in the strongest possible terms the continued Israeli aggression in Gaza, resulting in the deaths of dozens of Palestinians, as well as deliberate targeting of hospitals and other critical infrastructure, along with mass evacuation orders. The expansion of Israeli ground operations in Gaza, as well as its announcement to "take control of all" of Gaza, poses a grave threat to efforts aimed towards achieving peace and stability in the region. In addition, Israel also continues to deliberately obstruct critical humanitarian aid from reaching millions in dire need, which amounts to the imposition of collective punishment on the besieged Palestinian people. The UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, recently expressed his alarm at

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Canada, UK & France oppose Israel's expansion into Gaza

APP

ISLAMABAD: The governments of Canada, UK and France have strongly opposed the expansion of Israel's military operations in Gaza and warned of "concrete actions" in response, including targeted sanctions. "Israel must halt settlements which are illegal and undermine the viability of a Palestinian state and the security of both Israelis and Palestinians. We will not hesitate to take further action, including targeted sanctions," said a joint

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Briefs

Pakistan economy grows 2.4 % in 3rd Qtr

NAZIR SYAL

KARACHI: Pakistan's economy grew 2.4% in the third quarter of the fiscal year that ends in June, the National Accounts Committee (NAC) said on Tuesday, while revising up growth prospects for the current fiscal year. In a statement, the committee approved a projection of 2.68% provisional growth in GDP during FY25, taking the size of Pakistan's economy to \$410.96 billion. Brokerage Topline Securities, in a note, said the average quarterly growth for 9MFY25 was estimated at around 1.8%, while the government had published a provisional growth of 2.68% for FY25, lower than the targeted growth of 3.6%.

UK suspends trade talks with Israel

DNA

LONDON: Britain on Tuesday paused free trade talks with Israel, summoned its ambassador, and announced further sanctions against West Bank settlers after Prime Minister Keir Starmer said he was horrified by the military escalation in Gaza. Foreign minister David Lammy said the offensive was not the way to bring remaining hostages home, called for Israel to end the blockade of aid and condemned what he called "extremism" in some sections of Israel's government. "We cannot stand by in the face of this new deterioration. It is incompatible with the principles that underpin our bilateral relationship," Lammy told lawmakers. "Frankly, it's an affront to the values of the British people. Therefore, today, I'm announcing that we have suspended negotiations with this Israeli govt on a new free trade agreement."

Golden Temple issue Pakistan holds places of worship in 'highest esteem'

In fact, it was India that targeted different places of worship in Pakistan, says Foreign Office

MAHNOOR ANSAR / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has strongly rejected Indian allegations that it attempted to target the Golden Temple through drone and missile attacks on the night of May 7-8. In response to a media query regarding the claim made by a senior Indian army officer, the Foreign Office spokesperson said: "We categorically reject the allegations that Pakistan attempted to target the Golden Temple, the most revered place in the Sikh faith." The spokesperson emphasised that Pakistan respects all religious sites and would never consider attacking a place of worship. "We hold all places of worship in the highest esteem and cannot think of targeting a holy site like the Golden Temple," the statement said. Referring to the night of May 6 and 7, when New Delhi launched barbaric attacks on Islamabad, the spokesperson said it was India that carried out strikes on

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India yet again denies Trump role

Despite repeated claims by US president of brokering truce, New Delhi refuses to acknowledge his role

DNA

NEW DELHI: India has dismissed claims that the United States played any role in brokering the recent ceasefire with Pakistan, saying the halt in fighting was only "bilateral", while Islamabad has repeatedly thanked American President Donald Trump for helping in ending the cross-border hostilities. The ceasefire was reached on May 11 after hours of exchange of fire along the Line of Control (LoC), which

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DG ISPR says after Allah, Pak relies on its own power

"If we are resolute and have a strong commitment... world community will also play its role," says Lt Gen Chaudhry

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a loud and clear manner, Director General of Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry has said that Pakistan relies on its own strength and determination, and that the role of the international community in peacemaking is contingent upon the country's commitment and resolve. Speaking to China's CGTN, Lt Gen Chaudhry said: "The most important thing is Pakistan's resolve and its own strength. After Allah, we rely on ourselves and our own power. So only if we are resolute and have a strong commitment — which we have already shown [in the recent powerful response to Indian aggression] — the international community will also play its complete role." He added that the world today faces much larger issues, including climate change, misinformation, and a growing population. In this context, he questioned the actions of India trying to dominate others based on false claims.

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Pakistan, India agree to pull back troops

Military leadership from both countries actively coordinating phased pullback, say sources

FIAZ CH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and India have reached a mutual understanding to reposition their armed forces back to peacetime deployments along the Line of Control (LoC) and international border by May 30, according to senior officials familiar with the development. Military leadership from both countries, particularly the Directors General of Military Operations (DGMOs), are actively coordinating the phased pullback, sources told Geo News on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter.

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Sindh okays SIUT for Rahimyar Khan, Pindi

The Chief Minister told his cabinet that under the federal government's funds of Rs9 billion, housing reconstruction for flood-affected areas of Sohbatpur, Jaffarabad, and Dera Murad Jamali in Balochistan has been allocated Rs 2 billion, and Dera Ismail Khan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Rs1 billion

DNA

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has said that the federal government, in view of the exceptional performance of the provincial government institutions, paid Rs 9 billion to his government for the establishment of Sindh Institute of Urology and Transplantation (SIUT) in Rahimyar Khan and Rawalpindi, and for the reconstruction of houses for flood-affected people in Balochistan, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as well as for the establishment of SZABIST and IBA institutes, for which a decision will be taken later. This, he said while addressing the cabinet meeting held at CM House, was attended by provincial ministers, advisors, special assistants, the Chief Secretary, and concerned secretaries. The cabinet approved the proposal of the establishment of two SIUT (Kidney Hospital) facilities in Rahimyar Khan and Tehsil Gujjar Khan, Rawalpindi. "This initiative aims to enhance public health services across Pakistan, with a particular focus on serving the people of Punjab and the neighbouring regions of Sindh and Baluchistan," the CM said. To support this initiative, the Provincial Cabinet has recommended allocating Rs 2 billion for the establishment of SIUT Rahimyar Khan and Rs. 1,000 billion for SIUT Rawalpindi, along with an additional Rs 500 million for annual operational costs. A transparent monitoring framework will be implemented, including quarterly

progress reports, third-party audits, and site visits by Sindh Government officials to ensure responsible fund utilisation. The CM Murad Shah said that this initiative is expected to significantly boost Sindh's national image, demonstrating a commitment to equitable development and showcasing provincial generosity and national solidarity. The Chief Minister told his cabinet that under the federal government's funds of Rs9 billion, housing reconstruction for flood-affected areas of Sohbatpur, Jaffarabad, and Dera Murad Jamali in Balochistan has been allocated Rs 2 billion, and Dera Ismail Khan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Rs1 billion. This funding comes with a proposal to enhance housing cash grants, addressing the rising costs of materials and transportation in remote areas. The CM stated that it would be his government's commitment aimed at supporting the rebuilding of homes in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, showcasing a commitment to helping communities recover and thrive after the floods. The National Rural Support Programme (NRSP) has been chosen as the implementing partner, as it operates across all provinces and can mobilise quickly to assist in these efforts. The Cabinet is also considering how the allocated funds will be managed, whether through development or non-development budgets, and if a formal approval process is necessary. The Local Government Department requested the cabinet for approval of additional funding to support two

crucial projects. The first Rs 532.310 million for the construction and improvement of roads, water supply, and drainage systems along Allama Rasheed Turabi Road. And Rs1,000 million for the second project to build a two-plus-two (2+2) lane underpass at Karimabad. Murad Shah approved the required funds and simultaneously directed the Local Government Department to review their allocation and consider reallocating funds from slower-moving projects. This collaborative approach is aimed at ensuring the timely completion of these important public infrastructure projects. On the Chief Minister's directives, the cabinet, in principle, approved certain amendments in the concerned laws to vehicle regulations in Sindh, aimed at enhancing road safety and compliance. Heavy vehicles will now incur a registration fee of 0.50 per cent based on their invoice value, alongside an annual tax of Rs 1,000 and a transfer fee of Rs 2,000, which covers the new smart card and number plate. All commercial vehicles operating in Sindh must obtain fitness certification, with fines of Rs 10,000 for non-compliance. Additionally, there are new restrictions on permits for older vehicles, banning those over 20 years old on interprovincial routes and those exceeding 25 years on intercity routes. The penalties for violations escalate significantly with each infraction. Moreover, substandard rickshaws and Loaders face a complete ban, ensuring safer roads for everyone.



LAHORE: The British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Ms Jane Marriott called on Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Tuesday.

26 computers, internet devices given to rural areas girls

FAISALABAD: Provincial Minister for Health and Population Khawaja Imran Nazir has said that practical steps are being taken to empower rural women under the Punjab CM's 'Skilled Punjab Initiative'. The minister, under the slogan of "Mein Digital", distributed 26 desktop computers and internet devices among post-graduate girls belonging to rural areas. He said that girls would also be imparted 6-month training for online earning with Rs30,000 monthly stipend under the programme. Chairperson Chief Minister's Task Force for Skill Development, Adnan Afzal Chatha, Arfa Karim's parents Col. (retd) Amjad and Mrs. Amjad were also present. ADCG, CEO Health, Punjab Skill Development Fund officers also attended the ceremony. Khawaja Imran Nazir paid a rich tribute to the late Arfa Karim during the ceremony and said that the Punjab CM is taking practical measures to empower rural women in the province. He said that 'Punjab Skill Development Program' is a game-changing program for rural women. He said that there would be a golden opportunity for educated women in rural areas to earn a livelihood at home. "Pakistan has now started its journey of development with day and night hard work," he said, adding that soon the country would prosper. The minister also eulogized the Pak armed forces for their befitting response to India on its cowardly act and said that the spirit.—APP

KP steps to protect tourist areas from pollution

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government has announced a temporary ban on new construction in key tourist destinations, including parts of Swat, Galiyat and Kumrat, to address environmental degradation. The decision came during a high-level meeting chaired by Chief Secretary Shahab Ali Shah, who directed authorities to enforce building codes and environmental regulations strictly. Officials reviewed master plans and land-use policies for several development authorities, including those overseeing Galiyat, Kaghan, Kumrat, and

Upper Swat. The meeting highlighted concerns over illegal construction and poor waste management by hotels and restaurants, which have contributed to pollution. The Chief Secretary ordered immediate action against violators and emphasized that no compromises would be made on environmental laws. To ensure sustainable tourism, the government will fast-track master plans for ecologically sensitive areas and enhance monitoring systems. The Kailash Development Authority has already finalized its master plan,

while the Galiyat Development Authority plans to engage stakeholders in implementing sanitation regulations. Chief Secretary stressed that these measures aim to balance tourism growth with environmental protection, ultimately benefiting local businesses and residents. Monthly review meetings will assess progress, ensuring authorities remain accountable. The meeting reflects the provincial government's commitment to preserving natural attractions while promoting responsible tourism.

Cybersecurity awareness session held at Sarhad varsity

PESHAWAR: A detailed awareness session on cybersecurity was held at Sarhad University aiming to educate students and young professionals about the increasing threats in the digital world. The event was organised by Cyber Pashto, in collaboration with Metrix Pakistan and Sarhad University. The session focused on current digital risks, with speakers addressing phishing attacks, identity theft, data breaches and social engineering. Attendees were also introduced to basic tools and practices for protecting their online presence, including password hygiene, two-factor authentication, and recognizing suspicious links or communications. "Cybersecurity is a shared responsibility. As more people come online, it's crucial that they know how to navigate digital spaces safely," said a member of the Cyber Pashto team. Students from various departments participated actively, raising questions and sharing their own experiences with digital threats. The session encouraged open discussion and practical understanding of how common cybercrimes can affect individuals and institutions alike. The event was led by Muhammad Jawad, Community Manager at Cyber Pashto, and supported by the organization's wider team. —APP

Muqam vows for Kashmiris right to self-determination

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Baltistan and SAFRON Engineer Amir Muqam on Tuesday reiterated Pakistan's unwavering support for the people of Jammu and Kashmir, reaffirming the country's commitment to their legitimate struggle. During a meeting with a high-level delegation from Jammu and Kashmir, led by PML-N Azad Jammu and Kashmir President Shah Ghulam Qadir and General Secretary Tariq Farooq, Minister for Kashmir Af-

fairs Amir Muqam emphasized Pakistan's firm resolve to raise the Kashmir dispute on all international forums. He reiterated that Pakistan remains committed to supporting the Kashmiris' right to self-determination in accordance with United Nations resolutions. The delegation praised Federal Minister Amir Muqam's recent two-day visit to Azad Jammu and Kashmir, describing it as a strong gesture of solidarity and support. On the occasion, Minister Engineer

Amir Muqam expressed gratitude for the warm hospitality and reaffirmed his firm commitment to the Kashmir cause. The delegation noted that this was Muqam's second visit to Azad Kashmir, aimed at expressing solidarity with the Kashmiri people and honoring the martyrs and those injured due to Indian aggression. The federal minister stated, "We stand side by side with our Kashmiri brothers and sisters and will persist in supporting them at all forums." The delegation stated that Federal Minister Amir Muqam's two-day visit to Azad Jammu and Kashmir significantly boosted bilateral relations and demonstrated Pakistan's unwavering solidarity with the Kashmiri people. —APP

Pre-budget seminar sparks vital dialogue on KP's fiscal future

PESHAWAR: The Centre for Governance and Public Accountability (CGPA), in collaboration with the Development Insights Lab (DIL) and the Department of Economics, University of Peshawar on Tuesday hosted a high-level Pre-Budget Seminar to encourage inclusive discussions around Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's (KP) 2025-26 budget. The seminar aimed to bring together diverse voices to explore fiscal priorities, transparency and strategies for equitable public financing. Held at the University of Peshawar's Economics Department Conference Hall, the event gathered policymakers, academics, economists, civil society members, students, and business leaders to deliberate on challenges and opportunities in KP's financial planning. In her opening remarks Shazadi Rubab, Program Officer at CGPA, opened the session by outlining the organization's commitment to transparency, accountability, and public engagement. She acknowledged DIL and the Department of Economics for co-hosting the event. Prof Dr Muhammad Taib, Dean of Social Sciences, emphasized the importance of data-driven, inclusive planning to ensure that budget allocations reflect the actual needs of the province. Chairman of the Department of Economics Sajjad Ahmad Jan a comparative fiscal analysis, highlighting KP's record-high proposed budget of Rs. 1,754 billion. He underscored climate change as a key disruptor to economic stability and called for climate-resilient development strategies. MPA Ahmed Kundi addressed budget formula on challenges, advocating for greater flexibility, clear performance indicators, and citizen-focused planning. He encouraged the public to use social media platforms to voice budget-related concerns and participate in the policy process. Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) President Fazal Moqem Khan stressed the need to retain local talent and promote innovation-led growth. He pointed to the fiscal complications following the FATA merger and urged for improved funding and infrastructure in these areas. Former MPA Ghazan Jamal praised the KP government's budget presentation but criticized the limited allocation for the Newly Merged Districts (NMDs). He argued that the current National Finance Commission (NFC) resource allocation formula has failed to reflect the post-merger fiscal realities. With 73.3 percent of the NMDs' population living below the poverty line, he called for a revision of the formula under the principle of "Finance Follows Function. Renowned journalist Lehaz Ali emphasized that despite KP's monthly budget of Rs 83 billion and an annual Rs 800 billion allocated for government salaries, budget mismanagement continues to hinder effective service delivery. He highlighted systemic inefficiencies in planning, spending, and oversight as key issues.—DNA

Kazakhstan envoy, CDA chief discuss matters of mutual interest

At the conclusion of the meeting, both sides agreed to continue active efforts to foster cooperation between the capitals of the two countries

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A meeting was held between the Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Yerzhan Kistafin, and the Chairman of the Capital Development Authority of Islamabad Muhammad Ali Randhawa. During the conversation, the Ambassador briefed the head of the capital administration on the key outcomes of the 13th session of the Kazakhstan-Pakistan Joint Intergovernmental Commission and the Business Forum, which took place this year in Islamabad and Karachi. He emphasized the growing mutual interest in developing mul-



tifaceted cooperation and spoke about the agreements reached in areas such as trade, standardization, sports, information, as well as between the capital chambers of commerce and industry, leading universities, and regional authorities. Given Astana's extensive experience in hosting high-level international events, the Pakistani side also expressed interest in exchanging expertise in this area. In turn, Mr. Muhammad Ali Randhawa conveyed his interest in expanding cooperation with Astana in trade, economy, investment, education, and culture. At the conclusion of the meeting, both sides agreed to continue active efforts to foster cooperation between the capitals of the two countries.

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

- MAY
- May 03/Poland National Day
- May 06/Bulgaria Armed Forces Day
- May 06/UAE Armed Forces Day
- May 07/ Kazakhstan Armed Forces Day
- May 08/Czech Republic National Day
- May 09/European Union National Day
- May 17/Norway Constitution Day
- May 21/Hungary Armed Forced Day
- May 22/Yemen Republic Re-unification Day(National Day)
- May 24/Eritrea National Day
- May 25/Lebanon Liberation and Resistance Day
- May 25/Argentina National Day
- May 25/Jordan Independence Day
- May 28 /Azerbaijan Republic Day
- May 28/Ethiopia National Day
- May 31/Brunei Armed Forces Day



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Islamabad.....	0321-5744480

Call, click or visit ICT citizens get three ways to complain

The meeting also reviewed operations targeting beggars, the use of plastic bags, pending court cases, the polio and anti-dengue campaigns and actions against touts. The meeting also reviewed operations targeting beggars, the use of plastic bags, pending court cases, the polio and anti-dengue campaigns and actions against touts

DNA

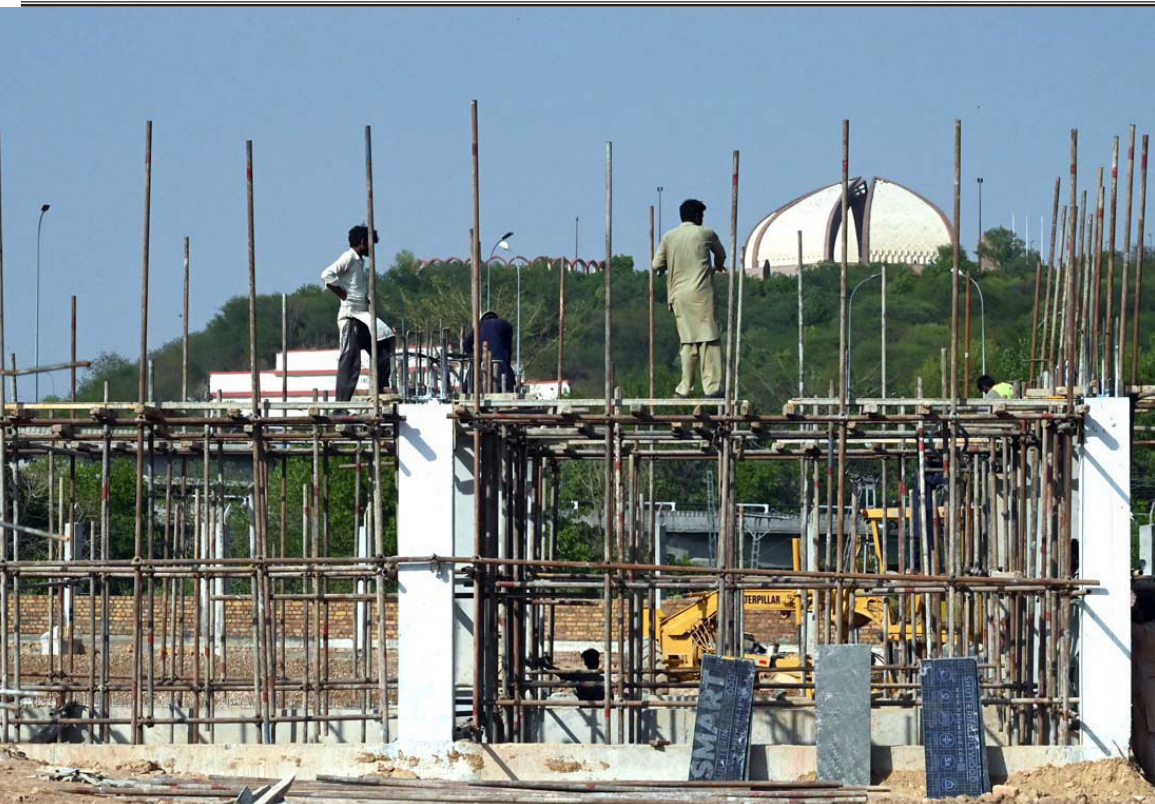
ISLAMABAD: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon is meeting citizens every day to directly address their problems and without needing a reference or appointment, residents can speak to him and get their complaints forwarded to the relevant officials on the spot. According to the spokesman of ICT administration here, Deputy Commissioner Irfan Nawaz Memon, is holding open court sessions daily to listen to public concerns and ensure immediate action by government officers present at the venue. These sessions aim to bridge the gap between the public and administration. Talking to media, DC Memon said that any citizen can visit the open court without needing any recommendation. The purpose, he added, is to provide a platform where residents can raise their issues directly and find a timely response. To make the process more accessible, the district administration has also shared a contact number — 051-9108084 — where citizens can register their complaints. The administration will review each complaint and take necessary steps for its resolution. In addition to the phone line, residents are also encouraged to use the Prime Minister's Citizen Portal to file complaints. This platform allows users to share their concerns online, which are then sent to the relevant departments for action. According to DC Memon, public engagement is a key part of improving governance. By interacting with citizens on a daily basis, the administration can better understand the problems faced by different communities in the capital. He said the process is simple and open to all residents of Islamabad. He explained that the open courts are helping to address a variety of issues including water supply, waste collection, road maintenance, encroachments, and official delays. Many of these complaints are resolved on the spot through coordination with relevant officers. The DC said that citizen participation in these sessions is steadily growing, which shows the public's interest in resolving local issues through direct communication. He noted that people from both urban and rural areas of Islamabad are attending the sessions, highlighting a wide range of problems from basic civic services to land and administrative matters. The administration is also maintaining a record of all complaints received during the open courts, as well as through the phone and online portals. Follow-ups are being conducted to ensure that each complaint is addressed properly. DC Memon added that the aim of these efforts is to build a responsive and people-focused administration. He said that the complaints and suggestions gathered from these meetings are also used to improve service delivery across departments. He encouraged citizens to continue using the available platforms to voice their concerns and help the administration in identifying areas that require attention. The DC assured that every complaint will be taken seriously and efforts will be made to resolve it within the shortest possible time. By making these complaint mechanisms widely available, the district administration wants to ensure that every resident of Islamabad has the opportunity to report their problems and contribute to improving their surroundings. Daily public meetings, along with a complaint hotline and the Prime Minister's Portal, offer multiple channels for communication between the administration and the people. These efforts reflect a growing trend toward more open and accessible local governance in the capital. Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad on Tuesday chaired a 15-day review meeting from May 1 to 15 to assess the work of Assistant Commissioners and Price Control Magistrates. According to DC office, during the 15-day period, magistrates took action against price violations, arresting 528 shopkeepers, sealing 8 shops and imposing fines totaling Rs 194,500. The meeting also reviewed operations targeting beggars, the use of plastic bags, pending court cases, the polio and anti-dengue campaigns and actions against touts.

Pakistan to fully facilitate Chinese healthcare investments: Kamal

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Health, Mustafa Kamal on Tuesday said that the Government of Pakistan will provide full facilitation to Chinese investments in the healthcare sector. During meeting with the Chinese Minister of Health at Geneva, the Minister also expressed a commitment to fully support Chinese experts in the field of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). Both agreed to strengthen bilateral cooperation in the health sector. Highlighting Pakistan's potential, Minister Kamal stated that the country possesses strong capabilities for local production of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs), vaccines, medical devices, and diagnostic equipment. To further streamline cooperation, a dedicated desk for Chinese companies will be established at the National Institute of Health (NIH), with an official notification expected soon. The Chinese Health Minister welcomed the proposals and agreed to appoint a focal person to coordinate with Pakistani counterparts.—DNA

NUST Open Houses showcase transformative student innovations

ISLAMABAD: The National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) recently hosted a series of Open Houses across three of its premier institutions, highlighting groundbreaking student innovations and strengthening academia-industry linkages. The institutions included the School of Civil and Environmental Engineering (SCEE), the School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (SEECs), and the School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering (SMME). The events served as dynamic platforms for final-year students to exhibit cutting-edge projects that reflect NUST's commitment to research, innovation, and real-world problem-solving. At SCEE's Open House and Job Fair, students from Civil Engineering, Environmental Engineering,—APP



ISLAMABAD: Construction work at bus charging station is in full swing in sector H-8.

Govt reviews monsoon preparedness amid rising flood risks

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has ramped up preparations for the upcoming monsoon season, warning of higher-than-usual temperatures and increased flood risks due to glacial melt. Federal Minister for Climate Change Dr Musadik Malik and NDMA Chairman Lt Gen Imam Haider Malik met on Tuesday to assess disaster readiness. The NDMA chief highlighted concerns over rising temperatures in northern regions, which could speed up glacial melting and trigger flooding in the Indus River basin. "Climate adaptation is inherently disaster mitigation," said Dr Malik, stressing the need for joint financing and coordination between climate and disaster agencies. Officials reviewed NDMA's three-tier early warning system, which uses seasonal forecasts, advisories and confirmatory data to mobilize preventive measures. They also analyzed monsoon triggers like sea temperatures and snow cover to improve forecasting. Pending flood mitigation projects were discussed, with plans for a formal review to address delays. A follow-up meeting with meteorologists and local disaster teams will ensure faster implementation. The ministry vowed to strengthen climate resilience through data-driven planning and inter-agency collaboration as Pakistan faces escalating weather threats.—DNA

Civil defence trains 7,000 students in Islamabad schools

ISLAMABAD: A three-day Civil Defence training program for boys' schools and colleges in Islamabad was completed successfully on Tuesday, benefiting more than 7,000 students. The initiative was launched by the Directorate General of Civil Defence under the leadership of Ch. Muhammad Ali Randhawa, Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA). The training aimed to teach students how to protect themselves and help others during emergencies such as fires, earthquakes, and other disasters. The program was organized in collaboration with the Capital Development Authority (CDA) and the Federal Directorate of Education. A total of 70 boys' schools and colleges took part in this important initiative. Expert trainers from the Civil Defence and CDA conducted practical sessions where students learned basic life-saving techniques, fire safety, first aid, and how to stay calm during emergencies. Six teams from the Civil Defence and four teams from CDA worked together to deliver the training. Students participated actively and showed great interest in learning how to help their families and communities in times of need. CDA Chairman Ch. Muhammad Ali Randhawa praised the efforts of all the trainers and organizations involved. He also announced that similar training programs will soon be launched for girls' schools and colleges in Islamabad, with the goal of making safety training a regular part of students' education. Officials believe this initiative will help build a safer, more prepared society by empowering the youth with knowledge and skills that can save lives.—DNA

IFA seizes 100kg of harmful tea in F-10 area

ISLAMABAD :The Islamabad Food Authority (IFA) on Tuesday launched a major crackdown on vendors using substandard tea leaves, raising concerns about food safety in the federal capital and confiscated 100 kilograms of substandard tea leaves. Talking to APP, Deputy Director of Islamabad Food Authority (IFA) Dr. Tahira Siddique said that the authority's food safety teams took a major action against the unsafe tea being sold at local tea stalls. She said that the Islamabad Food Authority has acted against tea sellers using low-quality and harmful tea leaves across the city. In a recent operation, the authority's food safety teams confiscated 100 kilograms of substandard tea leaves from the F-10 area. The tea unit was also sealed during the inspection. Dr. Tahira Siddique said that the operation was carried out after the vendor failed to follow previously issued instructions. During the inspection, samples of the tea were tested on the spot and found to be unfit for consumption. The deputy director said that the confiscated tea leaves had already been used once. They were then reprocessed by adding banned coloring agents, making them unsafe. Dr. Tahira further said the tea leaves were found lying on a broken and unclean floor, showing the poor condition of hygiene at the site. She added that the use of such tea could cause health issues, especially affecting the stomach and intestines. The IFA is continuing its inspections to prevent such harmful practices in the city. Speaking on the risks, the IFA warned that colored and recycled tea leaves not only lack nutritional value but can also be dangerous if consumed regularly. The chemicals used in the coloring process are not allowed under food safety standards. Dr. Tahira stressed that the inspection was not a random check but a follow-up after earlier instructions were ignored. "We had issued clear warnings to the vendor, but there was no change in practice. So we were left with no choice but to act," she said. During the inspection, the team also found that the place where the tea was being prepared lacked basic cleanliness. Utensils were dirty, floors were unhygienic, and the workers did not follow proper food handling protocols. The IFA has urged the public to be cautious when buying food and beverages from local stalls. Dr. Tahira advised consumers to ensure that only approved and safe products are used in the items they purchase. She also called on all food businesses in Islamabad to meet the hygiene standards set by the food authority. Vendors found violating these regulations would face strict action, including sealing of their units and legal proceedings. The authority plans to expand its inspections across other sectors of the capital in the coming days. Special teams have been formed to carry out surprise visits to tea stalls, food points, and street vendors.—DNA

Cattle Markets spring up in twin cities ahead of Eid ul Azha

ISLAMABAD: As Eid ul Adha approaches, Cattle Markets (Bakra Mandis) have sprouted up across Islamabad and Rawalpindi, offering a wide range of sacrificial animals to cater to the growing demand. The twin cities were abuzz with activity as vendors and buyers alike prepare for the festive occasion. The markets, set up in various locations, offer goats, cows, and other livestock for sacrifice. Buyers can be seen haggling over prices, inspecting the health and quality of the animals, and negotiating with vendors. Saqib Khan, a local Resident said "It's a tradition like no other saying that the bakra mandi is a place where you can find a sense of community and connection with others". He told the cost of sacrificial animals has gone up significantly this year but for them, it is not just about the money, it is about fulfilling our religious obligations. Despite the challenges, the Cattle Markets were a vital part of the Eid ul Azha celebrations and for many, it's a time to reconnect with family and friends, and to reflect on the values of sacrifice and compassion, he stated. Another buyer at Cattle market said "I am excited to buy a qurbani animal for Eid this year. The bakra mandi near my house has a good selection of goats and cows". He said the prices are a bit high this year, but he is willing to pay for a healthy animal adding that their cattle market is filled with animals from all over the country. As the Cattle Markets continue to bustle with activity, the owners remain optimistic about the season ahead. With Eid ul Azha just around the corner, they're working tirelessly to ensure that customers have a positive experience. Bakir Hussain, a cattle market owner said "We've had a good turnout so far, but we are hoping for a better season this year". When asked about prices of sacrificial animals he said "The prices of animals have gone up, but we expect demand to remain strong. He further told Eid is a time of sacrifice, and people are willing to pay a premium for good quality animals adding that they were doing their best to provide healthy and affordable options for customers.—DNA

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Briefs

FIA arrests 14 agents for cheating people outside passport office

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has arrested 14 people involved in cheating citizens outside the Gujranwala Passport Office. These individuals were part of an agent mafia that promised people quick passport services in exchange for money. According to the FIA spokesperson, the operation was carried out in and around the passport office after reports of illegal activity. The arrested agents were taking advantage of people who were unaware of the official process and charging them extra money. The agents arrested during the raid include Mohsin Shehzad, Sajjad Ali, Muhammad Ali, Muhammad Afzal, Hafiz Usama Akhtar, Mehr Ali Hassan, and Muhammad Imran Siddiqui. Others arrested include Faisal Mushtaq, Babar Akram, Muhammad Iqbal, Muhammad Tariq, Abdullah Saeed, Muhammad Asad Bhatti, and Muhammad Younas. All of them belong to different areas of Gujranwala. During the operation, the FIA also recovered several suspicious items from the agents, including empty bank challans, photocopies of passport tokens, MRP (Machine Readable Passport) fee receipts, and NADRA family tree certificates. The FIA has started investigating the arrested suspects and is continuing operations to catch other people involved in the network. Officials have said that more arrests are expected in the coming days. The FIA has urged citizens to avoid dealing with agents and to follow the official procedure for passport applications.—APP

Favoritism: The 'unspoken inequality' in classrooms

ISLAMABAD: In an ideal learning environment, every student should be treated equally, assessed objectively, and given the same opportunities for growth. But in reality, subtle forms of favoritism often creep into classrooms, creating silent but harmful divisions. When certain students are consistently given special treatment, whether due to personal connections, popularity, or unspoken biases, it affects the motivation, mental well-being, and academic performance of others. Left unchecked, favoritism can lead to a toxic environment, undermining trust in teachers and the integrity of the educational system. Recognizing and addressing this issue is essential for nurturing a fair and inclusive academic atmosphere. A 2019 study by the American Psychological Association revealed that 20-30% of students reported experiencing favoritism, particularly toward high-achieving and confident peers. Similarly, a 2017 study published in the International Journal of Educational Development found that over 40% of students in Pakistan felt they faced favoritism in classrooms, especially in grading and participation. Interviews conducted by APP from the teachers and students of the twin cities' different educational institutions reveal that favoritism is not only present as an "unspoken inequality" but often mistaken for other behaviours. Students report that certain classmates receive advantages unrelated to merit. Rania Imran, a student at Fatima Jinnah Women's University, shared that internship opportunities offered through department coordinators often benefit a select few, leaving others feeling excluded. "It's not always intentional," she noted, "but the impact is real."—APP



ISLAMABAD: British Economist Stefan Dercon called on SAPM Haroon Akhtar Khan at ministry of industries and production on Tuesday. — DNA

Pakistan showcases food offerings at SIAL Shanghai

Housed in a dedicated national pavilion organized by the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) and Pakistan's Consulate General in Shanghai, the exhibitors are showcasing 20 product categories, including rice, sesame seeds, corn, dry fruits, pasta, fruit concentrates and halal-certified dairy items

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Eleven Pakistani food and beverage companies are showcasing an array of premium products from 19-21 May at SIAL Shanghai 2025, Asia's premier food exhibition, as Pakistan seeks to capitalize on growing Chinese demand under a landmark trade pact. Housed in a dedicated national pavilion organized by the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) and Pakistan's Consulate General in Shanghai, the exhibitors are showcasing 20 product categories, including rice, sesame seeds, corn, dry fruits, pasta, fruit concentrates and halal-certified dairy items, Gwadar Pro reported on Tuesday. The three-day event, which spans 200,000 square meters, has drawn 5,000 exhibitors from 75 countries and features 350,000 food products. Shehzad Ahmad Khan, Consul General of Pakistan in Shanghai highlighted Pakistan's growing role in the global food industry. Food exports



reached \$3.959 billion in the first half of FY2024-25 (July-December 2024), marking a 13.83% year-on-year increase, according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). The consul general

also underlined the growing bilateral trade between China and Pakistan in the food sector, facilitated by the China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement (CPFTA). "Pakistan's exports

to China, particularly rice, sea-food, sesame seeds, boiled beef, spices, dry fruits, and processed foods, have seen a significant uptick," he stated. "Chinese investments in Pakistan's food

processing and agricultural technology sectors are also rising, focusing on modernizing production, packaging, and halal certification to meet China's demand." At the Pakistan Pavilion, Usman Akram of Pure Foods Ltd. reported strong interest in the company's tropical fruit-based products. "We've received preliminary orders for our mango nectars," Akram said. "Chinese buyers value our preservative-free concentrates, which align with their preference for natural ingredients." Abdullah Shahid from Tooba Rice Mills, a first-time exhibitor but a long-time rice exporter to China, shared his optimism about expanding the market reach. "We've supplied rice to China for over a decade, but this expo has introduced us to new buyers interested in both basmati and non-basmati varieties, as well as sesame seeds," Shahid said. "We're holding meetings with existing and potential clients to strengthen our presence in the coming days," he added.

Mobilink Bank bags top employer in Pakistan for 2025

DNA

ISLAMABAD : Pakistan's leading digital microfinance bank, Mobilink Bank, has been certified as a Top Employer in Pakistan for 2025 by the prestigious Top Employers Institute, a global authority recognizing excellence in people practices. Mobilink Bank is Pakistan's first and only bank to receive this prestigious certification, affirming its standing as one of the country's most inclusive and diverse institutions. The certification places Mobilink Bank among the most enterprising organizations that provide a thriving work culture and prioritize employee well-being and professional growth. The milestone elevates the

bank as only the second OpCo within the VEON Group (after Beeline Uzbekistan) and among the top ten organizations across Pakistan to have achieved this distinction. Mobilink Bank's recognition stems from its pioneering initiatives that champion inclusivity and empowerment within the workplace and beyond. Its 'MobilinkHer' program is a dedicated women's returnship initiative designed to reintegrate talented women into the workforce after career breaks, offering them tailored support and professional development opportunities, while 'Humqadam' focuses on creating a more accessible and accommodating environment for differently-abled persons. Meanwhile, the flagship Women Inspirational Net-

work (WIN)' actively promotes female leadership and financial inclusion through capacity building, mentorship, and outreach. "This global recognition reflects our team's drive to build an inclusive and empowering workplace," said Haaris Mahmood Chaudhary, President and CEO Mobilink Bank. "Diversity and a strong organizational culture fuels innovation, and we're proud to lead by example in Pakistan's financial sector." Aleena Tanvir, Chief People Officer at Mobilink Bank, said, "At Mobilink Bank, our people are at the heart of everything we do. We are deeply committed to building a workplace rooted in inclusivity, growth, and continuous learning. Being recognized by the prestigious Top Employers Institute

is a powerful affirmation of our efforts to cultivate and nurture a culture that inspires talent, drives innovation, and reinforces our position as an employer of choice." The Top Employers Institute Certification Program assesses companies through a detailed Best Practices Survey that looks at their people strategy, work environment, hiring practices, diversity and inclusion efforts, and employee well-being. In 2025, the Top Employers Institute certified over 2,400 organizations across 125 countries/regions, positively impacting more than 13 million employees globally. By securing the prestigious certification, Mobilink Bank has raised the industry benchmark for people-centric leadership and inclusive growth.

Tobacco exporters seek Policy support

The meeting concluded with a mutual commitment to strengthening public-private cooperation for enhancing the country's tobacco export potential and creating a more enabling environment for industry stakeholder

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of leading tobacco exporters on Tuesday met with Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan on Monday to discuss ways to enhance Pakistan's tobacco exports and address challenges related to tariffs and regulatory frameworks. During the meeting, exporters appreciated the government's ongoing efforts to promote trade and highlighted the significant contribution of the tobacco industry to employment, rural development, and export earnings, said a release issued here. They shared that with targeted facilitation, tobacco exports have the potential to increase substantially, supporting national revenue goals. Exporters pointed out that the current tax structure which includes a Federal Excise Duty (FED) of Rs. 390 per kg, Provincial Excise Duty (PED) of Rs. 50 per kg, Federal Tobacco Cess of Rs. 15.15 per kg, and a Provincial Development Cess of Rs. 25 per kg totals Rs. 480.15 per kg. They said this cost poses a challenge particularly for smaller exporters and suggested that a more competitive taxation model would help enhance Pakistan's position in the global tobacco market. The exporters emphasized that tobacco, like other agricultural commodities such as sugarcane, cotton, and citrus, should be supported through market-based policies. They noted that annual price adjustments are mandatory under current regulations, which can affect competitiveness in export destinations. Minister Jam Kamal Khan acknowledged the concerns raised and reiterated the government's commitment to balanced and growth-oriented policies. He remarked that optimal revenue generation comes not only from taxation but also from encouraging industry expansion and boosting exports. He noted that similar concerns have also been raised by other sectors, such as beverages, regarding the impact of high taxation on consumer demand and revenue collection. The exporters also called for the revival of the Pakistan Tobacco Board (PTB) to support coordinated efforts in export promotion and policy facilitation. In response, the Minister proposed the establishment of a Sectoral Council for Tobacco, similar to other existing sectoral councils, to provide a structured platform for industry dialogue and representation. The Minister further informed the delegation that for the first time, the revenue policy committee has been made independent of the revenue collection mechanism—an important step toward more informed and consultative policymaking. Exporters appreciated the positive response from the Minister and expressed confidence that with continued government support, the industry could significantly increase its export footprint. —DNA

ANF arrests 9 smugglers with over 77 kg of drugs

RAWALPINDI: The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF), conducting 8 operations across the country, recovered as many as 77.271 kg of drugs worth more than Rs 25.7 million and arrested nine suspects, including a woman, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman on Tuesday. He informed that 600 ecstasy pills were recovered from the possession of an accused near Alfalah Market in Peshawar. The arrested accused confessed to selling drugs to students of educational institutions. In another operation, 42 kg of ice tactfully concealed in bed sheets and pillows in two parcels being sent to Australia were recovered at the Upper Mall Scheme, Lahore, courier office. As many as 72 capsules filled with ice weighing 436 grams were recovered from the stomach of a passenger departing for Karachi at Bacha Khan International Airport, Peshawar. Similarly, 500 grams of hashish and 3.6 kg of ice were recovered from the secret compartments of a vehicle near the Islamabad Motorway Toll Plaza, and three suspects, including a woman, were arrested. As much as 16.8 kg of hashish was recovered from a passenger travelling on a bus at Wadhu Wah Gate near Qasimabad, Hyderabad. During another operation, 3.6 kg of hashish was recovered from the possession of two suspects riding a motorcycle on Ferozwalla Main GT Road, Lahore. As many as two kg of ice was recovered from the possession of a suspect near Sakhi Sarwar Road, Tonmi Mor, Dera Ghazi Khan. Similarly, 8 kg of heroin hidden for smuggling was recovered in the uninhabited area of Kech, Mand Road, Kech Kor. Cases have been registered against the arrested suspects under the Narcotics Control Act, and further investigations are underway.—APP

Export of footwear increases 11.79%

ISLAMABAD: The export of footwear from the country witnessed an increase of 11.79 percent during the first ten months of the current fiscal year (2024-25) as compared to the exports of the corresponding months of last year. The country exported footwear worth US\$ 148.439 million during July-April 2024-25 as opposed to the export of US\$ 132.788 million during July-April 2023-24, showing growth of 11.79 percent, according to the data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). Among the footwear products, the exports of leather footwear witnessed an increase of 14.14 percent, from US\$ 100.982 million to US\$ 115.261 million during the months under review. Canvas footwear exports however decreased by 18.25 percent by declining from US\$ 2.522 million last year to US\$ 2.062 million, the PBS data revealed. The exports of all other footwear rose by 6.26 percent to US\$ 31.116 million from US\$ 29.284 million in the same months last year. Meanwhile, year-on-year basis, the footwear exports depreciated by 7.73 percent during the month of April 2025 as compared to the same month of last year.—APP

OEC offers paid internships to fresh graduates, postgraduates

ISLAMABAD: The Overseas Employment Corporation (OEC), under the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (OP&HRD), will facilitate foreign employment under G-to-G and B-to-B arrangements and take measures for the emigration promotion of Pakistani citizens. According to the OEC website, in alignment with the OEC's Internship program, it is offering paid internships to fresh graduates and postgraduates, providing practical skills and professional experience in a dynamic environment. Currently, internship opportunities are available with OEC in disciplines including Information Technology (IT)/Computer Science (Proficient in MERN Stack, Python development with hands-on experience in system architecture design and requirement analysis, and familiarity with graphic design tools such as Canva, Figma, etc.) Finance and Audit (Proficient in Financial analysis, budgeting, audit planning, IFRS compliance, risk assessment, reporting tools

(Excel, ODDO, Quick Book) Marketing and Research (Proficient in research, planning, and execution of awareness programs, fairs, and seminars; skilled in data analysis, content development, stakeholder engagement, and familiar with tools like Canva, Adobe Suite, and video editing software) Human Resource Management (HRM) (Proficient in Recruitment & selection, performance management, HRIS, employee engagement, labor laws, training & development). The Internship Duration will initially be for 2 years, based on the Intern's performance and the fulfillment of program objectives. As per the Eligibility Criteria & Monthly Remuneration, the applications must hold a degree from an HEC-recognized university, and specific qualifications are required for each discipline: are as graduate (14 Years of education) Rs 50,000 per month, Post Graduate (16 Years of education) Rs 60,000 per month, Specialization after Post Graduation (18 years of education) Rs. 70,000 per month. Candi-

dates with degrees from HEC-recognized universities, obtained within the last two years, and with a minimum of 3.0 CGPA or 70% marks, will be eligible for the OEC Internship Program, provided their qualifications are in the specified disciplines. Applicants (Male and Female) should not be more than 30 years old, with age calculated as of the application deadline. Interns are responsible for arranging their laptops and transportation during the Internship program. Interns are required to join the program on a full-time basis and adhere to OEC's prescribed Rules and Policies, including official working hours and confidentiality requirements. Applicants must present original documents, along with attested copies of their degree/certificates from HEC-recognized institutions, at the time of the interview. If any information provided by the applicant is found to be false, their candidature will be canceled, and legal action may be taken at any stage.—DNA

Sherry Rehman thanks parliament

ISLAMABAD: Vice President of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Senator Sherry Rehman has expressed her gratitude to the Parliament, opposition parties, and the general public for supporting the bill against child marriage. In a statement following the passage of the bill, she also thanked President Asif Ali Zardari, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, and senior leader Faryal Talpur for their continued backing of the legislation. "The PPP has always been at the forefront of advocating for the fundamental rights of women and children," she said, adding, the bill's passage a major step toward ensuring a safer future for young girls in Pakistan. Highlighting the historical significance.—APP

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Deal or no deal with Imran Khan?

RECENT developments in Pakistan's political landscape have once again stirred speculation about a possible thaw in relations between the military establishment and former Prime Minister Imran Khan. At the heart of the matter lies a series of covert yet significant contacts during the recent heightened tensions with India. According to credible sources, the establishment reached out to Imran Khan during the conflict and requested his cooperation in urging his supporters to back the military in this critical national moment. In a gesture of statesmanship, Khan complied, reportedly asking his followers to express solidarity with the armed forces through social media—particularly on X (formerly Twitter). Soon after this display of cooperation, the ban on X in Pakistan, which had frustrated millions of users and curbed digital discourse, was lifted. The timing of this move was not lost on observers. While no official statement confirmed a quid pro quo, the sequence of events suggests an implicit understanding. If this is indeed part of a broader reconciliation effort, it must be welcomed and encouraged. However, whether there is a formal “deal” or merely tentative backchannel communication, one fact remains indisputable: Imran Khan and his party, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), command a massive popular following. Ignoring or suppressing such a force within the country's political framework is neither democratic nor pragmatic. For national stability and international credibility, the system must include, not exclude, its most influential stakeholders. This newspaper has consistently argued that Imran Khan must be taken on board. No durable political or economic strategy can succeed in Pakistan if PTI remains at loggerheads with the establishment. Without inclusive political engagement, the state's actions risk being perceived as partisan, and thus lose legitimacy in the eyes of the people. If these contacts between Khan and the establishment mark the beginning of a new chapter, they should not be viewed with cynicism but with cautious optimism. Yet, one-off engagements in times of national emergency are not enough. There must be a sustained and sincere effort to bridge the trust deficit between PTI and the powers that be. Any reconciliation must be grounded in fairness, mutual respect, and the rule of law. Looking ahead, one possible way to resolve the deepening political impasse is through fresh, transparent elections. For these elections to have credibility, PTI must be allowed to participate fully and fairly. Attempts to sideline or fragment the party will only exacerbate tensions and further alienate a large segment of the population. In the final analysis, Pakistan's future depends on unity, not division. If behind-the-scenes conversations are underway, let them evolve into a genuine political process. Deal or no deal, the imperative is clear: all political actors, including Imran Khan, must be treated justly and given a seat at the table. Only then can the country move beyond its current crisis toward a more stable and democratic future.

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China-US relations during the Trump tenure

THE tenure of U.S. President Donald Trump marked a significant shift in China-U.S. relations, characterized by turbulence, unpredictability, and a departure from traditional diplomatic approaches. The once interdependent economic relationship between the world's two largest economies experienced a downturn, as Trump's administration pursued an aggressive stance aimed at countering China's growing global influence. The policies enacted during his presidency reshaped the trajectory of bilateral ties, leaving lasting implications that continue to shape international geopolitics. One of the most defining aspects of Trump's approach to China was the trade war that erupted in 2018. The administration imposed steep tariffs on Chinese imports, citing unfair trade practices, intellectual property theft, and market restrictions imposed by Beijing. China retaliated with counter-tariffs, creating a cycle of economic hostilities that disrupted global supply chains and affected businesses and consumers in both nations. Despite multiple rounds of negotiations, a comprehensive resolution remained elusive, with partial agreements failing to fully mend the growing rift. Beyond trade disputes, the Trump administration took unprecedented steps in challenging China's geopolitical ambitions, particularly in areas of technological dominance and military expansion. The blacklisting of Chinese tech giants such as Huawei, citing national security concerns, marked a dramatic escalation in technological decoupling. Furthermore, Trump reinforced American support for Taiwan, a move that incensed Beijing and added strain to the already fragile diplomatic relations. The South China Sea tensions also intensified as the U.S. took a more confrontational stance against China's territorial claims in the region, amplifying concerns over military conflict. The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated tensions, with Trump repeatedly blaming China for the virus outbreak and branding it the “China virus,” a term that fueled animosity. The deteriorating trust between Washington and Beijing hindered meaningful cooperation in addressing global health challenges, with mutual accusations overshadowing any attempts at diplomatic reconciliation. Human rights issues, including Beijing's actions in Hong Kong and against the Uighur Muslim population, were also met with U.S. sanctions, drawing fierce rebuttals from Chinese officials. Despite the hostilities, certain areas of engagement persisted. The Phase One trade deal, signed in early 2020, sought to alleviate economic tensions, with China committing to increased purchases of American goods. However, implementation faced challenges as broader disagreements persisted, illustrating the difficulty in achieving lasting stability. Trump's tenure redefined China-U.S. relations, shifting the dynamic from cautious engagement to open confrontation. His approach, rooted in economic nationalism and geopolitical competition, set the stage for a more adversarial relationship that extended beyond his presidency. As subsequent administrations navigate this complex landscape, the echoes of Trump's policies continue to shape diplomatic strategies, influencing decisions that will define the future of global power dynamics.

How the Gulf's economic leverage May liberate Palestine

Qamar Bashir



They have not compromised their solidarity with Palestine. They have not abandoned their moral compass. Rather, they have recalibrated their instruments of power. They know that economic interdependence can shape political behavior more effectively than empty threats or symbolic resolutions. And they know that Trump, in his second term, is focused more than ever on economic revival—and less interested in military adventures that drain national wealth. In the same breath, they have offered Trump something Israel cannot...

DURING President Donald Trump's recent visit to the Middle East, one major theme emerged with clarity and significance: the transformative use of money, investment, and trade as strategic instruments of diplomacy. The Gulf states, particularly Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar, have recognized that in the current global order—where hard power has its limits—economic might can achieve what missiles and tanks cannot. They applied this new doctrine with precision, targeting none other than the most powerful man on earth—President Donald Trump himself. Trump, a successful businessman known globally for his admiration of wealth and commerce, has consistently prioritized economic gain over military entanglements. Recognizing this, the Gulf states unveiled a diplomatic strategy rooted not in coercion but in commerce—offering billions in trade deals, unprecedented investment pledges, and economic opportunities tailored to revitalize the U.S. economy under Trump's leadership. At the heart of this strategic courtship lies a humanitarian and moral objective: the liberation of Palestine and the cessation of Israel's brutal war on Gaza. But unlike past attempts, this was not a call to arms. The Gulf states chose not to challenge Israel through kinetic military engagement. They knew that a military confrontation with the U.S.-backed Israeli war machine would bring catastrophic consequences—not just for their own nations, but for the broader Islamic world and global stability. Instead, the Gulf's leaders—Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman of Saudi Arabia, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed of the UAE, and Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani of Qatar—adopted a wiser, calculated approach. By opening the gates of their economies to American companies, pledging over \$13 trillion in long-term investments, and offering deep trade concessions, they provided Trump with the very lifeline he needs to fulfill his campaign promises: jobs, prosperity, and economic resurgence. Speaking alongside these leaders, President Trump praised the Gulf's transformation and economic evolution. He marveled at the skyscrapers, the architectural brilliance, and the futuristic cities rising from the desert. “Riyadh is becoming not just a seat of government but a major business, cultural, and high-tech capital of the entire world,” he stated. Trump emphasized that what he witnessed was unlike anything seen before, acknowledging that the transformation “has not come from Western interventionists,” but from the people of the region themselves. In his address, Trump also noted that the Gulf nations have done what even the most sophisticated Western efforts failed to do in Kabul or Baghdad: build cities of prosperity, peace, and purpose through self-driven visions, national pride, and smart investments. In parallel, the Amir of Qatar echoed a message of interconnected peace. “Americans and Qataris want peace,” he said. “I believe we have a God-given duty to bring about peace. I truly believe that you [Trump] are a president of peace.” He emphasized the urgency of diplomacy, revealing that U.S. and Qatari teams were working intensely to achieve a ceasefire in Gaza, protect civilians, and secure the release of hostages. The Amir added that resolving this

conflict is essential to broader regional stability, from the West Bank to Yemen and Lebanon. In exchange, the Gulf states put forward a united, unambiguous demand: an end to Israeli aggression in Gaza and a durable, just solution to the Palestinian issue in line with numerous United Nations Security Council resolutions. The message was unmistakable: continued economic engagement is contingent on peace and justice in Palestine. This strategy represents a dramatic shift in the geopolitical toolkit of the Muslim world. In earlier decades, Muslim nations responded to Israeli aggression with protests, condemnations, and sometimes military retaliation. But such measures proved ineffective against the combined might of the United States and Israel. Worse, these moves exposed their societies to economic destruction, political instability, and social upheaval. This time, however, the Arab world has chosen intellect over instinct. They have not compromised their solidarity with Palestine. They have not abandoned their moral compass. Rather, they have recalibrated their instruments of power. They know that economic interdependence can shape political behavior more effectively than empty threats or symbolic resolutions. And they know that Trump, in his second term, is focused more than ever on economic revival—and less interested in military adventures that drain national wealth. In the same breath, they have offered Trump something Israel cannot: massive foreign direct investment, expanded trade opportunities, and access to the most rapidly transforming economies in the Middle East. Unlike Israel, whose leverage in Washington lies in political lobbies, media influence, and campaign financing, the Gulf states bring real money—tangible, immediate, and essential for Trump's domestic success. One of the most telling decisions during this Gulf tour was President Trump's deliberate omission of Israel from his itinerary. Unlike past U.S. administrations that prioritized visits to Tel Aviv or Jerusalem, Trump focused solely on Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar. Analysts believe this move signaled a subtle but significant sidelining of Israel. While not a break in relations, it underscored Trump's recalibration of U.S. foreign policy toward economic pragmatism and away from ideological commitments. The Trump administration appears increasingly aware that its core interests—regional stability, economic growth, and diplomatic influence—can no longer be chained to Israel's headline policies. Moreover, recent diplomatic breakthroughs such as the ceasefire with the Houthis, the initiation of U.S.-Iran nuclear talks in Muscat, and even discussions on lifting sanctions on Syria, were achieved without Israeli involvement. The release of an Israeli-American hostage by Hamas also occurred without Israeli mediation, indicating a shift in the U.S.'s diplomatic channels. Trump's administration, thus, seems to recognize that Israel is no longer the sole or even central conduit to Middle Eastern peace. Instead, the Gulf monarchies have emerged as credible, effective interlocutors. The brilliance of this strategy lies in its dual-edged nature. If Trump aligns with the Gulf and distances the United States from Israel's unrelenting war on Gaza, the

economic windfall will flow freely into America. If he refuses, the Gulf states now hold the power to stall or withdraw these investments, undermining Trump's economic narrative and denting public optimism, investor confidence, and stock market momentum. For a president who thrives on optics, numbers, and headlines, this risk is substantial. Moreover, the Gulf's economic leverage has created a rare window of opportunity for the Palestinians. If Arab investments become more appealing to the United States than the traditional Israeli lobby, Washington's strategic calculus could tilt in favor of a Palestinian peace settlement. Israel, long dependent on unwavering American support, may then be forced to reconsider its policy of occupation, siege, and indiscriminate violence in Gaza. This dynamic does not mean that Israel's influence in Washington has vanished. Far from it. The Israeli lobby—anchored by powerful individuals, corporations, and media empires—still wields considerable power in U.S. politics. Through campaign donations, think tanks, and lobbying groups, it shapes congressional behavior and White House policies. But what the Gulf nations are now offering is not influence—it is impact. They are not seeking to match Israel's political muscle dollar for dollar. Instead, they are offering a vision of partnership rooted in mutual benefit: American economic gain in return for geopolitical fairness. In this vision, Palestine is not a bargaining chip—it is a litmus test of justice and moral leadership. This shift in strategy should not be underestimated. The Muslim world, long accused of being reactive, fragmented, and militarily ineffective, is now demonstrating strategic maturity. It is using its comparative advantage—wealth, markets, and investment capital—to shape global events in its favor. Even Turkey and Iran, who historically adopted more confrontational stances, are now aligning with this economic approach, recognizing its effectiveness and global appeal. This is not appeasement—it is adaptation. It is the realization that military conflict with Israel, backed by a nuclear-armed superpower, is futile. It is the acknowledgment that winning hearts, markets, and boardrooms in Washington may prove more transformative than battlefield victories. At a time when Gaza lies in ruins, thousands of innocent Palestinians are dead, and the global conscience remains disturbed, this new approach offers hope—real, actionable hope. It offers a way forward not just for Palestinians, but for all Muslims who have long desired a peaceful and dignified resolution to one of the most enduring injustices in modern history. If President Trump truly wishes to be remembered not just as a builder of hotels but as a maker of history, he must embrace this opportunity. He must realize that aligning with the economic powerhouses of the Muslim world may not only secure American prosperity but also secure his own legacy as a peacemaker. And for the Muslim world, the message is clear: the era of kinetic power and military posturing is fading, giving way to an age where economic influence and financial diplomacy reign supreme. Now is the time to construct, invest, and shape outcomes through prosperity—not to destroy, fragment, or surrender to despair.

A temporary thaw in trade war

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



Looking ahead, the possibility of a meeting between President Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping offers a potential venue for further breakthroughs. However, given the complex nature of the disputes and the political stakes involved, a comprehensive trade deal remains a distant prospect

THE announcement on Monday of significant tariff reductions by both the United States and China marks a notable, albeit tentative, de-escalation in a trade war that has roiled global markets and strained diplomatic ties since its inception during Donald Trump's presidency. Following high-level talks in Geneva, U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and Trade Representative Jamieson Greer confirmed that tariffs on Chinese goods would be reduced from 145% to 30%, while China announced a cut from 125% to 10% on U.S. goods. Though welcomed by investors and observers alike, the reductions are best understood not as a resolution, but as a strategic pause in a much larger geopolitical contest. The Geneva talks, led on the Chinese side by Vice Premier He Lifeng, were conducted in a tone of mutual respect and cooperation, a marked shift from previous months of acrimony. The two sides issued a joint statement emphasizing continued dialogue and a 90-day pause in escalating trade measures. Both governments conveyed a shared desire to avoid complete economic decoupling a scenario that had become increasingly likely given the scale of prior tariff impositions and export restrictions. According to Bessent, the tariffs had effectively created a “trade embargo,” and the new agreement aims to reset the tone of engagement. Despite the optimistic headlines, analysts were quick to caution against overinterpreting the developments. The reductions are partial and selective and many of the most damaging measures remain in place. For example, U.S. tariffs imposed over China's alleged inaction on fentanyl precursors and the reciprocal Chinese duties on American agricultural goods remain untouched. Moreover, non-tariff barriers such as blacklisting and export controls were only suspended, not eliminated. This selective rollback underscores the temporary and strategic nature of the

agreement rather than any fundamental resolution of the underlying trade and political disputes. The trade war's economic impact has been profound for both countries. The U.S. economy, though relatively resilient, has faced supply chain disruptions and inflationary pressures due to high import costs. China, meanwhile, is grappling with economic stagnation marked by high youth unemployment, weak domestic consumption and deflationary trends. The April Consumer Price Index (CPI) figures revealed a third consecutive monthly decline, underscoring waning consumer confidence and forcing businesses to lower prices amid fierce competition. The trade war has added further strain to these systemic issues, incentivizing Beijing to seek a truce. From a geopolitical standpoint, the agreement is as much about managing perceptions as it is about altering policy. Each side sought to portray the outcome as a diplomatic victory. U.S. officials presented the reduction as a consequence of Trump's headline stance compelling China to return to the negotiating table. Conversely, Chinese state media emphasized Beijing's strength and resilience, with nationalist commentators framing the developments as evidence of China's principled resistance. This dual narrative approach reflects the high domestic political stakes involved in any perceived concession. Further complicating the picture is the continued mistrust between the two powers. While the Geneva meeting was reportedly cordial, the road ahead remains uncertain. Underlying issues such as intellectual property theft, state subsidies, technology transfer requirements and political tensions over Taiwan and the South China Sea remain unresolved. Additionally, accusations of transshipment the rerouting of Chinese exports through third countries to evade tariffs highlight persistent challenges to trade transparency and enforcement.

Market reactions were cautiously optimistic. Asian stock markets rose in response to the announcement, driven by investor hopes that the easing of tariffs might lead to more stable global trade flows. Yet, economists and political analysts maintain that the fundamental trajectory of U.S.-China relations remains tense. As Alicia Garcia-Herrero from Natix is noted, the tariff cuts are not a reconciliation but rather a way to manage the pace and cost of a broader decoupling. Her assessment that the agreement resembles a “more civilized divorce” encapsulates the prevailing sentiment that economic bifurcation, while temporarily slowed, is still underway. Looking ahead, the possibility of a meeting between President Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping offers a potential venue for further breakthroughs. However, given the complex nature of the disputes and the political stakes involved, a comprehensive trade deal remains a distant prospect. The current agreement serves primarily as a cooling mechanism, buying time for both sides to reassess strategies and mitigate the risk of immediate economic fallout. The tariff reductions agreed upon in Geneva mark an important but limited step in temporarily easing U.S.-China trade tensions. While they temporarily relieve some economic pressure and improve the diplomatic atmosphere, they do not resolve the structural issues at the heart of the dispute. As both nations seek to balance domestic political considerations with international economic realities, the global community watches with cautious hope and lingering skepticism. Whether this agreement leads to genuine progress or simply delays the inevitable will depend on the willingness of both sides to pursue not just dialogue, but meaningful compromise.

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Briefs

COAS
Gen Asim
promoted to
rank of field...

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It is a five-star designation conferred in recognition of extraordinary and exemplary military leadership. In their separate statements, President Zardari, PM Shehbaz, federal ministers, the chairman joint chiefs of staff committee, and services chiefs extended their congratulations to the army chief on his promotion to the rank of field marshal. In a statement issued by the President House, President Zardari lauded Field Marshal Munir for his role in giving a strong response to unprovoked Indian aggression and thwarting the enemy's malicious intentions. "The rank of field marshal is a recognition of your services in defense of the homeland," the president said. He highlighted that Field Marshal Munir and the Pakistan Armed Forces deserved appreciation for their effective response to Indian attacks. Under the leadership of the field marshal, the Pakistan Armed Forces crushed the enemy's arrogance with an excellent strategic response to Indian aggression, the president remarked.

Pakistan,
India agree
to pull...

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The move is seen as a critical next step following the ceasefire that has largely held since hostilities escalated earlier this month. Officials described the de-escalation as a "continuation of confidence-building measures," marking a potential thaw after weeks of heightened military alert. "The return to normal military positions is part of the second phase of the ceasefire framework," a senior government source said, adding that the decision was facilitated by diplomatic efforts from the United States and other concerned nations.

Pakistan
holds places
of worship...

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various places of worship inside Pakistan. "The allegations levelled by the Indian side cannot shift attention from this unacceptable act." The Foreign Office added that Pakistan is the proud custodian of several key Sikh religious sites and welcomes thousands of Sikh pilgrims annually, including through the visa-free Kartarpur Corridor. "In that backdrop, any claim concerning Pakistan's attempt to target the Golden Temple is absolutely baseless and incorrect," the spokesperson concluded.

India yet
again denies
Trump role

FROM PAGE 01
separates Azad Jammu and Kashmir from the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Both sides had been involved in heightened military confrontation following India's strikes in Pakistan, branded as response to last month's Pahalgam incident. The cross-border tensions raised concerns of a nuclear war. Speaking during a visit to Karachi on Monday, Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said the US played an important part in securing the agreement.

Israeli Gaza
expansion...

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the prevailing situation, with one in every five people in Gaza facing starvation, and the entire population facing high levels of acute food insecurity and the risk of famine. These latest actions by the occupying power yet again demonstrate Israeli impunity, and its blatant disregard for international law and humanitarian principles. Pakistan reiterated its call on the international community for an immediate end to Israel's genocidal campaign, and to ensure a lasting ceasefire in Gaza.

PSL X: United defeat
Kings to finish second

After restricting Karachi to below 204, Islamabad to set up tournament's qualifier with Quetta Gladiators

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad United jumped to second position on the points table after grabbing a dominating victory over Karachi Kings by 79 runs in the Pakistan Super League (PSL) 10 match played at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Monday. The 79-run victory helped the three-time champions to secure the top-two finish, meaning they will take on leaders Quetta Gladiators in the Qualifier on Wednesday. The Kings, on the other hand, slipped to third and will take on arch-rivals Lahore Qalandars in the Eliminator on Thursday. Chasing a daunting 252-run target and 204 to remain second in the PSL 10 standings, the 2020 champions could only muster 172 before being bowled out in the penultimate over. The Kings, however, had a promising start to the run chase as their opening pair of skipper David Warner and Tim Seifert put together 56 runs. The opening stand was broken by Salman Irshad in the sixth over when he cleaned up Seifert, who made 26 off 17 deliveries. Meanwhile, Warner was then involved in brief partnerships with in-form James Vince (eight) and Saad Baig (five) until falling victim to Imad Wasim in the 11th over. He remained the top-scorer for the Kings with a 28-ball 43, laced with four fours and two sixes. His dismissal sparked a match-defining collapse, which saw the Kings lose four



more wickets in quick succession and consequently slip to 114/8 in 13.4 overs. Abbas Afridi salvaged some fightback with a brisk 34-run cameo, coming off just 13 deliveries and featuring two fours and three sixes. The number 10 batter eventually fell victim to Irshad in the 17th over, bringing the total down to 155/9. Irshad struck again in his next over, dismissing Aamir Jamal to cap off a high-rewarding victory for the United.

Captain Shadab Khan was the standout bowler for the United, taking four wickets for 45 runs in his four overs, followed by Irshad, who bagged three. Imad Wasim sent back two Kings batters, while Salman Ali Agha chipped in with one scalp. Kings captain David Warner's decision to bowl first backfired as the hosts notched up 251/5 in their allotted 20 overs. The United got off to a flamboyant start to their innings as

their new opening pair of Alex Hales and Sahibzada Farhan ran riot, putting together 153 runs, the joint-highest partnership by the team in the league's history. The record-equalling stand eventually concluded in the 12th over when Farhan tried to scoop the ball over fine leg but ended up spooning a straightforward catch to Abbas Afridi off Mir Hamza. Farhan smashed a dozen boundaries, including three sixes, on his way to a 41-ball 73, his third fifty-plus score in PSL 10. The home side then lost two more wickets in quick succession as Rassie van der Dussen and Salman Ali Agha walked back after mustering one and seven, respectively. The back-to-back wickets reduced United to 172/3 in 14.1 overs. Skipper Shadab Khan then joined set-batter Hales in the middle, and the duo could add 27 runs to the total until Khushdil Shah gave Kings a much-needed success by dismissing Hales. Hales remained the top-scorer for the United with a sensational 88 off just 35 deliveries, studded with six fours and eight sixes. Following his departure, skipper Shadab took the reins of United's batting charge and played a blistering 42-run cameo before getting run out on the second delivery of the final over. He was also involved in a crucial 38-run partnership for the fifth wicket with Haider Ali, who made an unbeaten 19 off nine deliveries with the help of one four and a six. For Kings, Aamir Jamal, Khushdil Shah and Mir Hamza picked up one wicket apiece.

Ahmed Bodla secures 17th
Guinness World Record

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's martial artist Ahmed Amin Bodla, has achieved yet another historic milestone by breaking his 17th Guinness World Record, setting a new global benchmark for the most full-contact punches in one hour using one hand. Bodla delivered an astonishing 18,079 punches, smashing the previous record of 15,000 that had remained unbeaten since 2018. This latest achievement not only high-



lights Bodla's unwavering dedication to his craft but also places Pakistan once again on the world map of elite martial arts talent. The 7-year-old record was surpassed with a remarkable margin of over 3,000 punches – a feat that speaks volumes about Bodla's endurance, discipline, and commitment. Already a holder of 16 Guinness World Records, Bodla is currently ranked world number one in three other Guinness categories including, most kicks in one minute (355), most kicks in three minutes (801), most kicks in one hour (6,970) etc. He is also the first Pakistani to be inducted into the United States Martial Arts Hall of Fame as an outstanding martial artist – a rare honor that solidifies his global stature. Beyond his physical prowess, Bodla is a committed academic. He holds multiple international certifications in exercise science, has completed his MPhil with distinction, and is now set to begin his PhD in sports sciences. "I am very thankful to my friends and family who have supported me throughout, and I am especially grateful to the Chairman of Al-Kabir Developers, Chaudhary Aurangzeb, for his unconditional support. I have been training hard since 2011, and in these 14 years, I have not only broken many world records but have also become a known figure worldwide," he told APP. Bodla wants to continue bringing international recognition to Pakistan through his achievements. – APP

Pakistan's
duo set
Guinness
World Record

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Young martial artists' duo of Adnan Mehsood and Sufiyan Mehsood of Waziristan, have broken the Guinness World Record for the most leap frog jumps in one minute. Talking to APP, Adnan Mehsood and Sufiyan Mehsood's coach and Irfan Mehsood, who has also broken plentiful of world records, said the most leapfrog jumps in one minute by a team of two (under16) is 47 which was achieved by Adnan and Sufiyan. "Guinness World Records set a target of 20 leapfrog jumps and they achieved the record by completing 47 which is amazing," he said. He said Sufiyan is Pakistan's youngest Guinness World Record holder who has also broken two Guinness World Records of India, previously.

Indian, Romanian
climbers die on
Nepal's Lhotse

"Our guides are trying to bring his body back," says Prakash Acharya of Makalu Adventure

DNA

KATHMANDU: Two climbers from Romania and India have died on Nepal's Mount Lhotse, the world's fourth highest peak, officials said Monday, taking the number of fatalities this season to at least nine. Romania's Barna Zsolt Vago, 48, died on Sunday as he was ascending the 8,516-metre (27,940-foot) mountain, Liladhar Awasthi of Nepal's tourism department told AFP. He was not using supplemental oxygen. On the same day an Indian climber, Rakesh Kumar, 39, died between Camp 3 and Camp 4 as he was descending after a successful summit. "Our guides are trying to bring his body back," Prakash Acharya of Makalu Adventure, his expedition organizer, Nepal has issued over 1,100 permits to mountaineers this season, including 107 for Lhotse. Climbers attempting Lhotse use the same base camp as those aiming for Everest's summit. They follow the same route up the mountain, scaling the sheer Lhotse Face – a 1,125-metre wall of ice – before the path to the neighbouring summits divides. The incident comes after two people – a Filipino and an Indian climber – died on neighbouring Everest last week. At least five others, including one French, one American, an Austrian and two Nepali climbers, have died on Himalayan mountains since the spring climbing season began. Nepal is home to eight of the world's 10 highest peaks and welcomes hundreds of climbers each spring, when temperatures are warmer and winds typically calmer.

DG ISPR says after Allah...

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"In such a situation, should a country try to impose hegemony on other countries around it on the basis of a false narrative, for no reason and without any evidence?" he asked. On India's unprovoked aggression, the armed forces of Pakistan launched a large-scale retaliatory military action, named "Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos", and targeted several Indian military targets across multiple regions on May 10. The strikes, described by officials as "precise and proportionate", were carried out in response to India's continued aggression across LoC and within Pakistan's territory, which New Delhi claimed were aimed at "terrorist targets". Pakistan downed its six fighter jets, including three Rafale, and dozens of drones. After at least 87 hours, the war between the two nuclear-armed nations ended on May 10 with a ceasefire agreement brokered by the United States. According to ISPR, a total of 53 individuals, including 13 personnel of the armed forces and 40 civilians, were martyred in Indian strikes during the recent military confrontation. The military confrontation between the two countries was triggered by last month's attack in IIO-JK that left 26 tourists dead, with India blaming Pakistan for the attack without offering any evidence. Referring to Pakistan's defence forces, Lt Gen Chaudhry said: "The Pakistani nation, we have never bowed down nor ever will. Because I have said it before and will say it again – for us, the wish to embrace martyrdom is more beloved than living. "It is an honour and privilege for each one of us who is wearing this uniform, whether blue, white or khaki [Pakistan Air Force, navy and army], to die for our homeland. It's the biggest honour."

RISJA election
schedule
announced

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The Rawalpindi-Islamabad Sports Journalists Association (RISJA) has announced the schedule for its 2025–26 elections. According to Election Committee Chairman Shahryar Khan, nomination papers for the positions of President, Senior Vice President, Vice Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer and Joint Secretaries can be obtained from the election committee and submitted by 7:00 PM on May 23 at the National Press Club (NPC), Islamabad. The preliminary list of candidates will be displayed on May 24 after scrutiny. Objections and withdrawal of nomination papers can be submitted until 7:00 PM on May 25. The final list of candidates will be issued on May 26, while polling will take place on Tuesday, May 27, from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM at the National Press Club, Islamabad. Former President of the National Press Club, Shahryar Khan, is serving as Chairman of the RISJA Election Committee. Other committee members include Asim Jilani, member of the National Press Club Governing Body, and Rana Farhan Aslam, member of the Governing Body of the Rawalpindi-Islamabad Union of Journalists (RIUJ).

Reconstruction of
Tanda Dam Canal

Once completed, the rehabilitation of this major canal system is expected to significantly alleviate the region's long-standing water shortage issues

PESHAWAR: The provincial government has formally launched the reconstruction work of Tanda Dam Canal in Kohat district, said an official statement on Tuesday. The project, estimated at Rs 700 million, aims at restoring the 84-kilometer-long canal that originates from the Tanda Dam. This canal has long served as a crucial source of irrigation and drinking water for the local population but had fallen into severe disrepair. Nearly 70% of the canal had become dilapidated, and improper sewage disposal from nearby residential areas had further polluted the water, affecting both its quality and flow. Local farmers and orchard owners have welcomed the project, expressing hope that the canal's restoration will lead to a steady and clean water supply. They believe this will not only boost agricultural productivity but also strengthen the local economy. Once completed, the rehabilitation of this major canal system is expected to significantly alleviate the region's long-standing water shortage issues. – DNA

India's attack on cricket ground was a cowardly act: Ramiz Raja

Senior sports associations Abdul Mohi Shah and Shakeel Awan also addressed the event, paying heartfelt tribute to the Pakistan Armed Forces on behalf of the sports journalism community. "We are proud of our forces for defending the country and giving India a befitting response — a response the whole world witnessed. The entire nation stands behind our military. On the media front, sports journalists have also delivered a powerful message to India," they said

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Former Chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), Ramiz Raja, has strongly criticized India, calling its actions cowardly and accusing it of attacking the cricket ground. He stated that Pakistan turned a challenge into an opportunity and emerged as a hero. He expressed these views while addressing the Youm-e-Tashakur (Thanks-giving Day) ceremony organized by the Rawalpindi-Islamabad Sports Journalists Association (RISJA), to celebrate the remarkable victory of the Pakistan Armed Forces in the Markha-e-Haq. The event was attended by senior sports journalists including Abdul Mohi Shah, Shakeel

Awan, Faheem Anwar Khan, Afzal Javed, Shahryar Khan, Nasir Naqvi, Zulfiqar Baig, and Shakir Abbasi, along with a large number of members from the sports journalism community. Ramiz Raja said, "In just four days, Pakistan has emerged as a united nation. I'm proud to witness the confidence in our people. After every crisis comes an opportunity to become a hero – and Pakistan has proven that. On the other hand, India showed no restraint and attacked the cricket ground. No honourable nation attacks water or cricket – both are sacred." He further expressed regret that Pakistan cricket has not progressed in many areas, despite its vast potential. "Every individual in Pakistan is a stakeholder in cricket. If there is crick-



et, there is respect. It is our collective responsibility to take Pakistan cricket to greater heights," he emphasized. Also speaking on the occasion, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Pakistan Super League (PSL), Salman Naseer, condemned India for failing to separate sports from politics, and said that resuming the PSL was a strong and fitting response. "When a drone crashed outside the Rawalpindi Stadium, we realized how serious the situation had become. Pakistan has always maintained a clear boundary between sports and politics – but India failed to do so," said Salman. "The situation was changing by the hour. Initially, we considered completing the PSL in the UAE, but as tensions escalated, we were forced to postpone the

tournament for a few days." He added, "After the ceasefire, the PCB Chairman instructed us to keep the foreign players in Dubai. Restarting the PSL was a bold and clear message to India. PSL now holds importance beyond cricket itself." Senior sports journalists Abdul Mohi Shah and Shakeel Awan also addressed the event, paying heartfelt tribute to the Pakistan Armed Forces on behalf of the sports journalism community. "We are proud of our forces for defending the country and giving India a befitting response – a response the whole world witnessed. The entire nation stands behind our military. On the media front, sports journalists have also delivered a powerful message to India," they said.

Canada, UK
& France
oppose...

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statement issued by Canada, the United Kingdom and France, released by their governments. The statement mentioned the three countries opposed any attempt to expand settlements in the West Bank. "We strongly oppose the expansion of Israel's military operations in Gaza. The level of human suffering in Gaza is intolerable. Yesterday's announcement that Israel will allow a basic quantity of food into Gaza is wholly inadequate," it said. The statement added, "We call on the Israeli Government to stop its military operations in Gaza and immediately allow humanitarian aid to enter Gaza. This must include engaging with the UN to ensure a return to delivery of aid in line with humanitarian principles." "The Israeli Government's denial of essential humanitarian assistance to the civilian population is unacceptable and risks breaching International Humanitarian Law," it stated.

PM for steps
to check...

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The prime minister acknowledged the efforts of the FBR and its supporting enforcement agencies in enhancing tax revenue and appreciated their work as commendable. The meeting reviewed the introduction of a National Targeting System aimed at curbing sales tax evasion. This system will use e-tags and digital devices to track vehicles transporting goods and will be supported by an e-Bilty mechanism issued through the FBR's system. Digital monitoring systems will be installed at major highways and city entry points to reduce smuggling and save time for commuters. The meeting was informed that a Customs Targeting System was also being introduced at ports and airports to automate the monitoring of imports and exports. The system will use artificial intelligence and integrate with domestic and international databases to combat smuggling and tax fraud.

Imran Khan
says 'never...

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had previously refused talks only with the incumbent government, not the military establishment. His remarks came amid media reports about Imran, who has been detained since August 2023, entering a deal with the government after Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's invitation for talks. Sources said that the cricketer-turned-politician also instructed Gohar to proceed, albeit with a condition to keep the process out of the media spotlight. However, the development was rejected by Barrister Gohar and Imran's sister, Aleema Khan, with the former saying that "no deal has been made" with any quarters regarding the party's incarcerated founder. PTI Information Secretary PTI Shaikh Waqas Akram, when contacted by The News, said that presently there are no talks, including backchannel, between the PTI and the government or establishment. To a question relating to Imran's reported willingness to meet any representative of the establishment in Adiala jail, Shaikh said that meetings in Adiala jail are not regulated by Imran.

Briefs

Rupee sheds 15 paise against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Tuesday depreciated by 15 paise against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 281.91 against the previous day's closing of Rs 281.76. 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 Rs1 to close at Rs 317.63 against the last day's closing of Rs 316.63, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen went up by 01 paise and closed at Rs 1.95, whereas an increase of Rs 0.73 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 377.34 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 376.61. The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 04 and 02 paise to close at Rs 76.75 and Rs 75.14, respectively.—APP

Gold price increases Rs 300 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat per tola gold witnessed an increase of Rs.300 on Tuesday and was sold at Rs.342,800 against its sale at Rs.342,500 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.257 to Rs.293,895 from Rs.293,638 whereas the price of 10 grams of 22 Karat went up by Rs.236 to Rs.269,413. 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 \$3 to \$3,244 from \$3,241 whereas that of silver went remained stagnant to \$32.52, the Association reported.—APP

EU seeks to relax rules on turning away asylum seekers

BRUSSELS: The EU on Tuesday unveiled plans to make it easier to send asylum seekers to certain third countries, in the latest overhaul aimed at reducing migration to the bloc, sparking criticism from rights groups. The European Commission said it proposed broadening the so-called "safe third country" concept, which allows member states to "consider an asylum application inadmissible when applicants could receive effective protection" elsewhere. "EU countries have been under significant migratory pressure for the past decade," said migration commissioner Magnus Brunner, describing the proposal as "another tool to help member states process asylum claims in a more efficient way." Brussels has been under pressure to clamp down on arrivals and facilitate deportations, following a souring of public opinion on migration that has fueled hard-right electoral gains in several member states. Under current rules, asylum seekers can have their application rejected if they could have filed it in a "safe" third country where they have "a genuine connection." This is normally understood to mean a nation where the applicant has lived and worked or has family. The commission proposal weakens such requirements to include any country that an asylum seeker has transited through on the way to Europe, as long as it is considered safe. This opens the way for failed applicants to be sent there. The planned reform also says that the safe third country concept can be applied in absence of any connection or transit, if there is a deal between member states and a third "safe nation," and removes the suspensive effect of appeals. The change would significantly boost the number of those who could see their applications refused and become eligible for deportation, as many cross numerous borders on their way to Europe. In April for example, of almost 20,000 people who reached Europe via sea from northern Africa, many came from as far away as Bangladesh, Eritrea, Pakistan and Syria, according to the EU's border agency.—APP

CDWP approves Rs 249b for 10 uplift projects

While thoroughly discussing the project, Ahsan Iqbal emphasized it was essential to securing the country's technological sovereignty and enhancing its future global competitiveness

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives/Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday chaired a meeting of the Central Development Working Party (CDWP) that approved a total of ten development projects, amounting to Rs 249.17 billion. "Out of these, four projects with a cumulative cost of Rs21.83 billion were approved at the CDWP level. Additionally, six major projects, amounting to approximately Rs227.34 billion, were recommended to the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) for final consideration and approval," a news release said. The meeting was attended by Secretary Planning Awais Manzoor Sumra, along with Chief Economist, VC PIDE, other members of the Planning Commission, Federal Secretaries, heads of Provincial Planning & Development (P&D) departments, and senior representatives from relevant Federal Ministries and Provincial Governments. The forum approved a project related to Information Technology namely "Expansion of Safe City, Islamabad (New)" worth Rs 7499.339 million, to be financed through PSDP. Un-



der the project, 100 percent all major areas including major roads, religious places, VVIP areas and government buildings, Entry/Exit and other important points would be covered as currently 35% of Islamabad is under surveillance. It also approved a project of Higher Education sector namely "Establishment of National Center for Quantum Computing (NCQC) - (New)" worth Rs 3318.363 million. While thoroughly discussing the project, Ahsan Iqbal emphasized it was essential to securing the country's technological sovereignty and enhancing its future global competitiveness. He said that quantum computing held transformative potential in fields such as cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, drug discovery, and climate modeling. A

dedicated center would foster cutting-edge research, build a skilled talent pool, and promote innovation across key economic sectors, the minister said, adding as major powers rapidly advance in this field, Pakistan must act to avoid strategic and technological lag. He said that the center would also enable public-private-academic collaboration, positioning Pakistan to harness quantum technologies for national security, economic development, and scientific leadership in era of the fourth industrial revolution. This initiative builds on the strategic vision of Professor Ahsan Iqbal, who laid the foundation for Pakistan's digital future by establishing National Centers in Artificial Intelligence, Big Data, Robotics & Automation,

and Cybersecurity. These centers have served as catalysts for capacity building, talent development, and the integration of digital technologies across academia and industry. The CDWP referred a project related to Higher Education sector presented namely "Higher Education Development in Pakistan (HEDP) (Revised)" to ECNEC with a revised cost of Rs 21190.777 million. Besides, it referred a project "Dualization of Sargodha-Khushab-Mianwali Road (60.43 km) in District Khushab - (Revised)," to ECNEC for further consideration at a revised cost of Rs. 11,806.516 million. Another project of T&C sector namely "Development of a Controlled Access Corridor Facility from Niazi Interchange

to Babu Sabu Interchange, Lahore (New)" worth Rs. 10842.253 million was referred to ECNEC for further consideration. The forum forwarded a project namely "Dualization of Road from Gujranwala to M-2 Interchange at Kot Sarwar via Hafizabad Length (70.5 Km) (Revised)" to ECNEC for further consideration at a revised cost of Rs13230.672 million. A project of Pakistan Railways was also presented and approved "Rehabilitation of Track Maintenance Machines (Revised)" worth Rs 5312.876 million by the forum. The CDWP referred a project namely "Reconstruction of National Highway N-5 under Pakistan's Resilient Recovery and Reconstruction Framework Project, Phase-I 210 Km (New)" worth Rs. 155408.403 million to ECNEC for further consideration. The forum forwarded a project namely "Dualization of Road from Chishtian to Chak No 46/3R via Dahnawala (41.154 km) including Two Lane Link Road from Dahnawala to Chak 175M (4.859 km) - (Revised)" worth Rs 14859.054 million to ECNEC for further consideration. It also approved a project namely "IPF Component for Punjab Clean Air Program (PCAP) (New)" worth Rs5700.351 million by the forum.

Japan to launch offshore 'blue carbon' study

ISLAMABAD: The Japanese government will launch offshore "blue carbon" research aimed at capturing carbon dioxide through cultivated sea plants and storing it in the deep sea to accelerate decarbonization, sources familiar with the matter said Monday. The government hopes these plants will play a key role in mitigating climate change, as CO2 is highly soluble in water, and marine vegetation grows by absorbing dissolved CO2. Coastal and ocean plants, such as mangroves and kelp, are known to absorb and store more carbon than terrestrial vegetation. Blue carbon typically refers to carbon trapped in the deep sea after being captured by marine ecosystems through photosynthesis, while green carbon refers to carbon stored in terrestrial ecosystems such as forests. The Environment Ministry will commission the Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology, major oil distributor Eneos Corp., and others to study how seaweed behaves when submerged at considerable depths and to assess the environmental impact of such carbon capture and storage projects, according to the sources. Although CO2 emissions in Japan have declined mainly due to the expansion of renewable energy and the restart of nuclear reactors, the government still needs to boost carbon capture efforts to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.—APP

Australia lowers policy rate to 2-year low of 3.85%

ISTANBUL: The Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) cut its policy rate by 25 basis points to 3.85% on Tuesday, the lowest level in two years, citing the global outlook and falling inflation at home. The decision also matched the market expectations. The central bank said in a statement that upside risks to inflation have diminished, while international developments are expected to put pressure on the country's economy. "Inflation is in the target band and upside risks appear to have diminished as international developments are expected to weigh on the economy," the statement said. It warned of ongoing shocks in the global economy due to the US President Donald Trump administration's trade policies and the deteriorating geopolitical environment. The central forecasts are subject to considerable uncertainty due to the rapid change in world trade policy. "Setting aside overseas developments, private domestic demand appears to have been recovering, real household incomes have picked up and there has been an easing in some measures of financial stress," it added.—APP

Jordan, Syria agree on roadmap to cooperate in energy, transport

LONDON: Ayman Safadi, Jordan's minister of foreign affairs, on Tuesday discussed strengthening cooperation during a meeting in Damascus with his Syrian counterpart, Asaad Al-Shaibani. The Jordanian delegation included the ministers of water, industry, trade, energy, and transport, who discussed coordination with their Syrian counterparts and signed an agreement to establish a coordination council between the two countries. Al-Shaibani said that diploefforts resulted in the lifting of European sanctions shortly after the US announced it would lift sanctions on the country. He added that lifting sanctions on Syria would enhance cooperation with Jordan in transport and energy, positively affecting the region. The minister said Syria shares borders with Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan, and aims to maintain its security while addressing threats, as its security would affect neighboring countries. Al-Shaibani and Safadi opposed the Israeli intervention in Syria after the change of rule in Damascus in December 2024, the SANA agency reported.—APP

Microsoft CEO heckled over company's ties to Israeli military

Aboussad and Agrawal were subsequently dismissed by the company. Google also fired 50 people last year after a series of internal protests against its own cloud-computing relationship with the Israeli military

LONDON: A keynote address by Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella was interrupted by an employee protesting the company's relationship with Israel on Monday. Joe Lopez, a firmware engineer who works on Microsoft's cloud-computing platform Azure, shouted "Satya, how about you show how Microsoft is killing Palestinians" during the company's annual developer conference. Before he was escorted from the room, he added: "How about you show how Israeli war crimes are powered by Azure?" It was not the only protest against Microsoft's relationship with Israel amid the ongoing war in Gaza. A group called No Azure for Apartheid, which has been campaigning for over a year, also demonstrated at the conference. Azure is believed to have been used by Israel in surveillance of Palestinians and is utilized by the Ofek Unit, a branch of the air force that identifies airstrike targets, The Guardian reported. Lopez emailed colleagues to explain his actions. "As one of the largest companies in the world, Microsoft has immeasurable power to do the right thing: demand an end to this senseless tragedy, or we will cease our technological support for Israel," he said. "If leadership continues to ignore this demand, I promise that it won't go unnoticed. The world has already woken up to our complicity and is turning against us. The boycotts will increase and our image will continue to spiral into disrepair." Lopez added: "Leadership rejects our claims that Azure technology is being used to target or harm civilians in Gaza. Those of us who have been paying attention know that this is a bold-faced lie." He concluded: "We don't need an internal audit to know that a top Azure customer is committing crimes against humanity. We see it live on the internet every day." Anna Hattle, a Microsoft employee and organizer of the No Azure for Apartheid campaign, emailed senior management on May 15 stating: "One year ago, workers launched the No Azure for Apartheid campaign and petition in a state of urgency after 7 months of genocide." Referencing the 1948 mass displacement of an estimated 750,000 Palestinians known as the Nakba, Hattle said the world is "currently witnessing the same crimes committed 77 years ago with one key difference: now, the Israeli Occupation Forces are carrying out this genocide at a much greater scale thanks to Microsoft cloud and AI technology." On April 6, employees Ibtihal Aboussad and Vaniya Agrawal accused Microsoft AI CEO Mustafa Suleyman of profiting from war at an artificial intelligence event. Aboussad and Agrawal were subsequently dismissed by the company. Google also fired 50 people last year after a series of internal protests against its own cloud-computing relationship with the Israeli military. Microsoft refused to comment on Lopez's protest. An earlier investigation by the company concluded that there was "no evidence" Israel uses its technology to harm or target people.—APP

Armed forces boost Pak's global standing, national pride

LAHORE: Punjab Assembly (PA) Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan has commended Pakistan's armed forces for their historic and decisive response to Indian aggression, stating that the Pakistan Air Force, Army, and Navy have taught India a memorable lesson and elevated the nation's pride on the global stage. He was addressing the inaugural session of the 12th international conference on Research in Education (ICORE) organized by the Institute of Education and Research (IER), University of the Punjab, under the theme "Education for the Future: Challenges and Opportunities" at Faisal Auditorium, here on Tuesday. The ceremony was attended by a large number of academics, researchers, faculty members, and students from universities across Pakistan. Notable attendees included Vice Chancellor Punjab University Prof. Dr. Muhammad Ali, VC Allama Iqbal Open University Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, VC Government College University Faisalabad Prof. Dr. Raufi-Azam, VC University of Jhang Prof. Dr. Faheem Aftab, VC Emerson University Multan Prof. Dr. Muhammad Ramzan, VC University of Gujrat Dr. Zahoorul-Haq, renowned educationist Dr. Shahid Siddiqui, Chairman TEVTA Brig. (R) Sajid Khokhar, IER Director Prof. Dr. Abdul Qayyum Chaudhry, and Conference Secretary Prof. Dr. Muhammad Shahid Farooq. In his address, PA Speaker Malik Ahmad said Pakistan has played a frontline role in the global war against terrorism, sacrificing over 90,000 lives and incurring economic losses worth billions of dollars.—DNA

WHO recommendations to stay safe during heat wave

ASTANA: Heat has become the leading cause of weather-related deaths worldwide. According to the World Health Organization, an estimated 489,000 people die from heat-related causes each year. Kazinform News Agency correspondent reports on WHO recommendations on how to stay safe during heat-waves. In extreme heat, the human body struggles to regulate internal temperature, increasing the risk of heat exhaustion, kidney injury and cardiovascular stress. The effects can be sudden and severe: hospitalizations and deaths may spike within hours or days of a heatwave onset. WHO emphasizes that the health impacts of heat are predictable and largely preventable. With effective public health measures and coordinated action across sectors, many deaths and illnesses can be avoided. However, awareness remains low both among health workers and the general public. The WHO recommends staying indoors during the hottest parts of the day, and keeping living spaces cool by blocking direct sunlight with curtains or blinds and ventilating at night. Using fans or air conditioning, if available, can offer critical relief, with air conditioners recommended to be set at 27 °C. Even a few hours in a cool environment each day can significantly reduce the risk of heat-related illness. Hydration is another key aspect of heat protection. People are advised to drink water regularly, even if they do not feel thirsty, about one cup per hour and at least 2 to 3 litres per day. They should avoid beverages that can lead to dehydration, such as alcohol and sugary drinks. Eating lighter meals more frequently can also help the body cope with high temperatures. Taking cool showers or baths can help lower body temperature, and those who must go outside should remain in shaded areas as much as possible. Light, loose-fitting garments made of breathable fabric, as well as wide-brimmed hats and sunglasses, can offer additional protection outdoors. WHO also emphasizes the importance of checking in on family, friends and neighbours, especially those who are older, live alone or have health conditions that put them at greater risk during extreme heat. "Some people are particularly vulnerable to the effects of heat, including young children, older people, and people with chronic health conditions, so keep in touch with family, friends and neighbours, especially those who spend much of their time alone. By looking after each other and staying informed, we can minimize the impact of extreme heat on our communities," notes Dr. Skender Sylva.—APP

President for enhanced bilateral cooperation in various fields

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has called for further improving bilateral ties with Thailand, the Philippines, Slovenia, Serbia, Burkina Faso, Zambia, and Latvia, in the fields of trade, economy, and culture. The President expressed these views while talking to the Ambassadors-designates of Thailand, Philippines, Slovenia, Serbia, Burkina Faso, Zambia, and Latvia to Pakistan, who called on him and presented their diplomatic credentials to him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr today. The Ambassador-designate of Thailand, Mr Rongvudhi Virabutr, the Ambassador-designate of

the Philippines, Dr Emmanuel R. Fernandez, Non-Resident Ambassador-designate of Slovenia, Mr Igor Jukić, Non-Resident Ambassador-designate of Serbia, Mr Damir Kovacevic, Non-Resident Ambassador-designate of

Burkina Faso, Mr Mohamadi Kabore, Non-Resident Ambassador-designate of Zambia, Mr Ivan Zyuulu, and Non-Resident Ambassador of Latvia, Ms Dana Goldfinča, presented their diplomatic credentials to President

Asif Ali Zardari during a credentials ceremony at Aiwan-e-Sadr. Upon their arrival, the envoys were presented with the guard of honour by a smartly turned-out contingent of the Armed Forces. The President highlighted the need for

further expanding bilateral trade and business relations with the respective countries. He congratulated the Ambassadors on their new assignments and wished them success in the exercise of their duties.



Briefs

PTI dismisses
claims of no-
confidence
motion

PTI chairman says that issue of no-confidence motion is neither on "our agenda nor on the cards"

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan on Monday categorically denied reports suggesting that his party is planning to table a no-confidence motion. Speaking to the media, The News reported, Gohar clarified that the notion of PTI initiating a no-trust move was baseless, stating that such a proposal is neither on "our agenda nor on the cards." He further said that PTI has not held any meetings on the subject. Calling for calm, Gohar added that with a ceasefire now in place with India, the situation had changed significantly in the past week and urged that domestic political peace should also be prioritised. Earlier, the media had quoted the ex-speaker of the National Assembly, Asad Qaiser, as saying that a no-confidence motion would be brought against the Speaker or the prime minister. He maintained they were currently reviewing if the motion should be moved during current tension with India. It was denied "if the no-confidence motion was moved during the tense situation, our patriotism would be doubted."

Trump signs
new bill
against
AI-generated
harassment

"Anyone who distributes explicit images without subject's consent will face up to three years in prison," says Trump

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump has signed a new law that makes it a crime to share fake or real intimate images created without someone's permission. The law targets videos and pictures made using artificial intelligence – known as deepfakes – which are often used to harass or embarrass people online. The new rules mean anyone who shares such content without consent could face up to three years in prison. The Take It Down Act, passed with overwhelming bipartisan congressional support, criminalises the non-consensual publication of intimate images, while also mandating their removal from online platforms. "With the rise of AI image generation, countless women have been harassed with deepfakes and other explicit images distributed against their will," Trump said at a signing ceremony in the Rose Garden of the White House. "And today we're making it totally illegal," the president said. "Anyone who intentionally distributes explicit images without subject's consent will face up to three years in prison." – Agencies

Pakistan's
retaliatory
actions were
"measured"

DNA

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistani Ambassador to the UN, Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, told his counterparts at the Arab Group on Monday that Pakistan's response to the recent Indian aggression was "measured and proportionate", as he briefed them on the prevailing situation in the region. Pakistan, he said, had acted in exercise of its right to self-defence under the UN Charter, and will abide by the May 10 ceasefire between the two South Asian neighbours, according to a press release of the Pakistani Mission. Ambassador Asim also said that the Indian actions, including the unilateral suspension of the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty, were provocative and escalatory, and in gross violation of international law and the UN Charter.

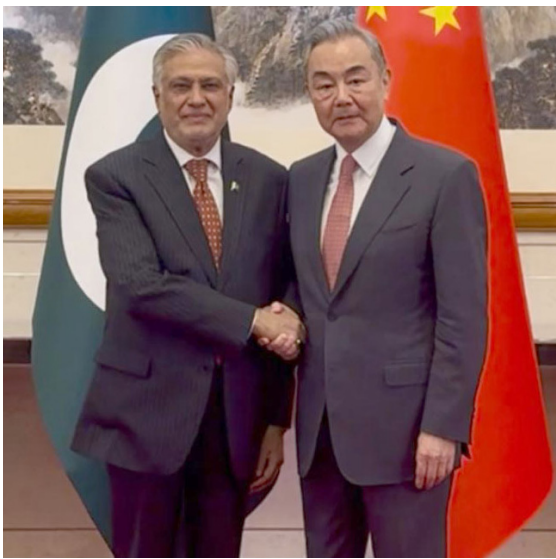
Meets Chinese FM Wang Yi

Ishaq Dar appreciates
China support to Pakistan

DPM Dar emphasized the country's inherent right and capability to safeguard its territorial sovereignty and the security of its people. He also drew attention to India's unilateral suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty

DNA

BEIJING: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar held in-depth consultations with the Foreign Minister of China, Wang Yi, today in Beijing. Both sides exchanged views on evolving situation in South Asia, future trajectory of Pakistan-China friendship, and CPEC 2.0. Hailing All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership and ironclad friendship between Pakistan and China, both leaders expressed satisfaction at the commonality of views on all issues of mutual interest and expressed their firm resolve to continue bilateral cooperation for regional peace, development and stability. Earlier, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Tuesday lauded China's steadfast support for Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity during a high-level diplomatic meeting with Liu Jianchao, Minister of the International Department of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC), held here. The meeting comes at a critical time following the recent



ceasefire between Pakistan and India. Both sides underscored the importance of adhering to the principles of the UN Charter and international law to uphold regional peace and stability, a DPM's Office news release said.

DPM Dar emphasized the country's inherent right and capability to safeguard its territorial sovereignty and the security of its people. He also drew attention to India's unilateral suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty, urging the international community to take serious note of what he described as an illegal and provocative move. The Foreign Minister reiterated that a just resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, in accordance with relevant UN Security Council resolutions, is indispensable for lasting peace in South Asia. Dar also expressed appreciation for the IDCPC's role in deepening ties between the Communist Party of China and Pakistan's political parties, noting its significance in further strengthening bilateral understanding. With Pakistan and China set to celebrate the 74th anniversary of diplomatic relations on 21 May, both sides reaffirmed their commitment to preserving the "ironclad" friendship and ensuring its transmission to future generations.

Noor Mukadam case
Supreme Court upholds Zahir
Jaffer's death sentence

The apex court dismissed Jaffer's appeal, maintaining the verdict handed down by high court



DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court has upheld the death sentence of Zahir Jaffer, the convicted murderer in the Noor Mukadam case. The apex court dismissed Jaffer's appeal, maintaining the verdict handed down by the trial and high court. Regarding Jaffer's co-accused – the household staff – the court reduced the sentences of his watchman and gardener. It ruled that the punishments already served by both would suffice. The Supreme Court's ruling marks a major moment in the trial of the

brutal murder of Noor, which took place in July 2021 – a case that sparked widespread outrage and prompted debate about justice and women's safety in the country. The case: Noor, 27, was discovered dead at a private residence in Sector F-7/4, Islamabad, on July 20, 2021. Zahir Jaffer, the primary suspect, was taken into custody at the crime scene and an FIR was filed by the victim's father later the same day. According to the original FIR, Noor's father reported that she had been "beheaded after being killed with a sharp weapon" in a gruesome act that shocked the nation. In February 2022, a district and sessions court sentenced Jaffer to death, alongside a 25-year prison term with hard labour and a fine of Rs200,000, concluding the trial that continued for over four months.

Besides the prime accused, two members of his domestic staff, Iftikhar and Jameel, were each handed 10-year prison sentences, while other co-accused – including Jaffer's parents and several TherapyWorks employees – were acquitted. In March 2023, the Islamabad High Court upheld Jaffer's death sentence and upgraded his 25-year sentence to an additional death penalty, on the appeals filed against the punishment awarded to the convicts. An appeal challenging the IHC verdict was subsequently filed in the Supreme Court in April last year. Shaukat Mukadam, a former diplomat, had previously held a press conference on Noor's birth anniversary, urging the apex court to expedite proceedings in the case that has remained pending for over 18 months. The defence lawyer, Salman Safdar, presented the complete medical history of the convict dating back to 2013. He argued that the accused was sentenced to death for murder, life imprisonment for rape, and 10 years for kidnapping.

Trump announces ceasefire
between Russia and Ukraine

US President Donald Trump claims breakthrough in Ukraine war talks, says negotiations to begin "immediately" – Vatican may host

ANKARA: President Donald Trump announced that Russia and Ukraine have agreed to begin immediate negotiations toward a ceasefire and a potential end to the war, following a two-hour phone call with Russian President Vladimir Putin. In a statement, Trump described the conversation as highly productive, stating, "The tone and spirit were excellent. Russia and Ukraine will now move forward with talks to stop this catastrophic bloodbath." He emphasized that the conditions for peace would be determined solely by Moscow and Kyiv, as they possess critical details unknown to outside parties. Trump also revealed that he informed Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, and leaders of France, Germany, Italy, and Finland of the development. Notably, he mentioned the Vatican's interest in hosting negotiations,



with Pope Francis offering to facilitate the process. Trump highlighted Russia's desire for large-scale trade with the U.S. post-war, calling its economic potential "unlimited." He also framed Ukraine's reconstruction as an opportunity for prosperity through international trade. While Trump's announcement suggests a major diplomatic breakthrough, skepticism remains. Previous ceasefire attempts have collapsed, and Ukraine has long insisted on territorial sovereignty – a key sticking point. Neither the Kremlin nor Kyiv has yet independently confirmed Trump's claims. World leaders are likely to respond cautiously. The U.S. State Department, under President [current administration], has not commented, but European officials may seek clarity given Trump's unofficial role. If confirmed, Vatican-mediated talks could mark a historic shift. However, with trust in short supply, the path to lasting peace remains uncertain. – DNA

Pakistan plans United States,
EU outreach to challenge India

Delegation to visit US, UK, France, Belgium and Russia to present Pakistan's peace stance

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: A high-level diplomatic delegation from Pakistan is set to visit key global capitals, including London, Brussels, Paris, the United States, and Russia, to counter Indian propaganda and highlight Pakistan's commitment to regional peace, Climate Minister Dr Musadik Malik said on Tuesday. Speaking on Geo News' programme "Geo Pakistan", Dr Malik said that the government responded swiftly and responsibly during the recent conflict, fulfilling the task entrusted to it by the public and Parliament. He noted that the government acted without delay, coordinating closely with defence institutions and forming a diplomatic team to represent Pakistan's position abroad. Malik explained that those chosen to represent the country included not only members of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), but also individuals from the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and others with past experience as foreign ministers and ambassadors. He said that the government had formed a small but highly

effective team of six to seven people, as opposed to India's larger delegation, to engage with major global powers.

Dr Malik said the delegation is expected to visit key capitals, including London, Brussels, Paris, and the United States, with an additional single-member mission likely to be sent to Russia. He added that Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar continues to engage with regional counterparts, especially in the Middle East.

Countries such as Turkey, China, and Azerbaijan remain in close and regular contact with Pakistan, and those bilateral engagements would continue, although the immediate focus would be on Europe and the United States.

According to a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office last week, PM Shehbaz has decided to dispatch a diplomatic delegation to key global capitals to present Pakistan's stance and push for peace, and to expose Indian propaganda on the international level.

The premier has assigned the task to PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, appointing him as the head of the delegation. The delegation will include Federal Ministers Dr Malik, Khurram Dastgir Khan, Sherry Rehman, and former minister of state Hina Rabbani Khar, according to the official statement. The statement further noted that Senator Faisal Sabzwari, former foreign secretary Tehmina Janjua, and former ambassador to the US and EU Jalil Abbas Jilani will also be part of the delegation.

PSX slides
ahead of
budget as
investors
turn cautious

KSE-100 Index falls to intraday low of 118,527.09 points, down 1,162.54 points, or 0.97%

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The capital market fell sharply on Tuesday as market participants adopted a cautious stance ahead of the upcoming federal budget. The Pakistan Stock Exchange's (PSX) benchmark KSE-100 Index fell to an intraday low of 118,527.09 points, down 1,162.54 points, or 0.97%, from the previous close of 119,689.63. The index touched a high of 119,900.37 points, posting a modest gain of 210.74 points, or 0.18%, before reversing course amid selling pressure. "The market is now anticipating the new budget and the new policies or taxation that will be introduced. This is causing participants to adopt a wait-and-watch strategy in order to gain clarity before making any moves," said Ahfaz Mustafa, CEO of Ismail Iqbal Securities. Pakistan and IMF are reportedly working through proposals to raise an additional Rs700 billion in revenue through new taxation and enforcement measures in the 2025-26 federal budget, scheduled to be presented in Parliament on June 2.

Eid likely
on June 7

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Eid ul Adha will be observed on June 7 as there is no chance of the Zil Hajj moon sighting in Pakistan on May 27 as per astronomical calculations. Astronomer Dr Faheem Hashmi said that the new moon is unlikely to be visible in Pakistan on May 27 as it will only be 11 hours old at the time of sunset on that day. Hashmi also predicted that the crescent of Zil Hajj is likely to be visible on May 28 and there is a strong possibility that Eid ul Adha will fall on June 7. He added that the moon will be over 35 hours old on May 28 which will make its sighting more likely. In United Arab Emirates (UAE), the auspicious festival in the Islamic calendar is expected to fall on June 6, according to the Emirates Astronomy Society. Moon which marks the beginning of the month of Dhu al Hijjah, the final month in the Islamic lunar calendar, is expected to be visible on May 27.

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