



Saturday, May 24, 2025

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**Pakistan-Africa cooperation vital: Gilani**

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**Naila Kiani conquers top peak**

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## After school bus bombing

# Govt vows decisive action against Fitna al-Hindustan

School bus bombing targeted schoolchildren, aimed to sabotage regional peace, says interior secretary

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Interior Secretary Captain (retd) Khurram Muhammad Agha on Thursday said Pakistan's response to the recent Fitna al-Hindustan attack in Khuzdar would be "decisive", warning that the perpetrators would not succeed in their objectives. Addressing a joint press conference alongside Director General of the Inter-Services Public Relations (DG ISPR) Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry, the interior secretary condemned the tragic terrorist incident and said the government stands in full solidarity with the affected families. Captain (retd) Agha said that initial investigations point to the involvement of Fitna al-Hind in the attack, terming it a continuation of India's subversive strategy in the region. He stressed that the attack on Khuzdar was not just an act of terrorism, but a direct assault on Pakistan's traditions and educational values. The top official revealed that schoolchildren were deliberately targeted in the incident and accused Fitna al-Hindustan of attempting to destabilise regional peace through such violent acts. The interior secretary said that the Ministry of Interior, in collaboration with the provincial government and other institutions, is reviewing every aspect of the attack.

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## Briefs

### Bilawal seeks PM's guidance

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Bilawal Bhutto Zardari Friday called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif to seek guidance for highlighting Pakistan's position in important world capitals and putting Indian aggression and provocative agenda before the global community. Senator Sherry Rehman and former Federal Minister Hina Rabbani Khar were also accompanying the PPP Chairman during the meeting, said a news release by the Prime Minister's Office. Earlier, the prime minister had tasked Bilawal Bhutto Zardari with leading a high-level delegation presenting 'Pakistan's case for peace' on recent Indian aggression to the international community.

### Budget to be presented on June 10

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The federal government will now present the Budget 2025-26 on June 10, a delay from the earlier announced date of June 2, as it struggles to finalise fiscal targets with IMF, according to officials. The federal government is set to present the budget for the next fiscal on June 2, with Rs921 billion allocated for development projects, far short of the Rs1,600 billion minimum deemed necessary by the Ministry of Planning.

### Holiday Notice

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

## 'India can block Pakistan's water is insane thinking'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Lt Gen Chaudhry says if Kashmiris join Pakistan, all rivers will belong to us, making India lower riparian state Director General of the Inter-Services Public Relations (DG ISPR) Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry has dismissed the notion that India could block Pakistan's water supply as "insane thinking". In an interview with Al Jazeera, the spokesperson of armed forces said, "Only a mad person can think that India can stop Pakistan's water. It is not possible to cut off water for 240 million people." Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said that Pakistan will not get water from rivers over which India has rights. The statement came a month after a deadly attack in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) led New Delhi to suspend a key river water-sharing treaty between the neighbours. Responding to the comment, DG ISPR pointed out that six rivers originate from the Kashmir region and that, under United Nations resolutions, Kashmir remains a disputed territory. "If the people of Kashmir decide to join Pakistan, all those rivers will belong to us, making India a lower riparian state," he explained. "At that point, it will be for Pakistan to decide how to deal with that situation." New Delhi unilaterally suspended the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), an agreement negotiated by the World Bank in 1960, among a slew of measures announced by India against Pakistan last month

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## Visits Quetta

# Indian designs will never succeed: Tarar

He especially mentioned Subedar Saleem who had buried his two daughters whereas his son was seriously injured in Khuzdar bus blast

DNA

QUETTA: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar said on Friday that India wanted to destabilize Balochistan through its proxies and its nefarious designs will never succeed. Talking to the media after visiting the children injured in the Khuzdar incident and meeting with their families, the minister said the children of the nation made a great sacrifice in the heartbreaking Khuzdar bus incident. "No one can defeat the morale of the Pakistani nation", he said referring to the determination and high spirits of the children affected in the Khuzdar incident. He especially mentioned Subedar Saleem who had buried his two daughters whereas his son was seriously injured in Khuzdar bus blast. "Despite the martyrdom and injuries of his children, Subedar Saleem continued to chant slogans in favour of Pakistan in front of the ambulance," he remarked. Tarar said that four children of a person were seriously injured but his morale was high and he said his family was ready to give more sacrifices for the motherland. Today, international and national media was brought to Khuzdar to inform them about the real situation in the area. He lamented that India had attacked a soft target after its humiliating defeat in the Operation Bunyanun Marsus.

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## Pakistan extends airspace ban

Restriction applies to all aircraft registered, operated, owned, or leased by India and includes military aircraft

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan extended its airspace closure for all Indian-owned or Indian-operated airlines until 4:59 am local time on June 24, the Pakistan Airports Authority said in a statement on Friday. The restriction applies to "all aircraft registered, operated, owned, or leased by India" and includes Indian military aircraft, the authority said in a statement. Meanwhile, India also extended airspace closure for Pakistan or Pakistan-operated airlines till June 23. The move extends restrictions first imposed last month amid continuing tensions between the two nuclear-armed neighbours following the Pahalgam attack in April, which resulted in the deaths of 26 tourists in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). India had unilaterally closed its airspace to Pakistani flights on April 23,

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## Brave Police foil terror attack in Bannu

APP

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi praised the bravery and professionalism of Pakistan's security forces after they successfully stopped a terrorist attack in Bannu and killed three terrorists in Mianwali. According to the minister, police officers in Bannu bravely fought with a group of terrorists, preventing a serious attack on a police checkpoint. He applauded their courage and quick action. In a separate operation in Mianwali, officials from the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) confronted terrorists and killed three of them. Minister Naqvi said the CTD team showed great skill and bravery, and they deserve full credit for their success.

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## Yunus 'not going to step down'

84-year-old Nobel Peace Prize winner had threatened to quit

NEWS DESK

DHAKA: Bangladesh's Muhammad Yunus "needs to remain" in office as interim leader to ensure a peaceful transition of power, a cabinet member and special adviser to Yunus said on Friday. Yunus, the 84-year-old Nobel Peace Prize winner who took over after a mass uprising last year, had threatened to quit the job if parties did not give him their backing, a political ally and sources in his office said.

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## FO Spokesperson

# Belligerent posturing exacerbates tensions, Pakistan warns India

Modi govt warned against resorting to dangerous approach of threats and boasting about military action

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has stressed that escalatory statements and belligerent posturing serve no purpose other than exacerbating tensions after India's top leadership made baseless allegations. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said a day earlier that Pakistan would not get water from rivers over which India has rights, a month after a deadly attack in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) led New Delhi to suspend a key river water-sharing treaty between the neighbours. "Pakistan will have to pay a heavy price for every terrorist attack... Pakistan's army will pay it, Pakistan's economy will pay it," Modi said at a public event in the northwestern state of Rajasthan, which borders Pakistan. In a statement on Friday, the Foreign Office said that Pakistan categorically rejects the baseless, provocative, and irresponsible allegations made by the Indian prime minister during the public address in Rajasthan.

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# UNSC condemns 'heinous' terror attack on school bus

Council reaffirms that terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, remains "serious threats to int'l peace"

DNA

NEW YORK: The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has strongly condemned the recent terrorist attack on a school bus in Khuzdar, Balochistan, describing the act as "heinous and cowardly". A powerful explosion near Zero Point in Khuzdar targeted a school bus, martyring five, including three students, on the spot and injuring dozens of others, drawing condemnations from across the country as well as the international community on Wednesday. In a statement released on Thursday, the UNSC expressed its "deepest sympathy and condolences to the families of the victims and

to the government and the people of Pakistan", while also extending wishes for "a speedy and full recovery" to the injured. The Council reaffirmed that terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, remains "one of the most serious threats to international peace and security". Members of the Council stressed the importance of holding accountable "the perpetrators, organisers, financiers and sponsors" of such acts and called on all States to cooperate with Pakistan "in accordance with their obligations under international law and relevant Security Council resolutions". The statement went on to reiterate the UNSC's firm

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# IMF rejects Indian objections on Pakistan bailout

IMF stresses that funds are intended solely to address balance of payments issues and are channelled to SBP

CENTRELINE REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Thursday defended its recent disbursement to Pakistan under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF), rejecting Indian concerns that the bailout could be misused by Islamabad. The IMF executive board approved on May 9 a fresh \$1.4 billion loan to Pakistan under its climate resilience fund and approved the first review of its \$7 billion programme, freeing about \$1 billion in cash. Addressing a presser, the IMF spokesperson Julie Kozack said, "Board approved the disbursement after finding that Pakistan had met all performance targets and made progress on structural reforms." She stressed that IMF funds

are intended solely to address balance of payments issues and are channelled to the central bank, not used for budget financing or military purposes. "There are also strict safeguards in place," Kozack said, pointing to conditionalities including a zero limit on central bank lending to the government and a focus on strengthening fiscal management. Responding to questions about India's objection and the removal of its executive director from the Fund, Kozack declined to comment, saying such appointments are the prerogative of individual member states. India had asked the IMF for a broader review of its loans to Pakistan, as tension builds between the nuclear-armed neighbours. An April attack on tourists in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and



Kashmir (IIOJK) killed 26 and triggered the worst fighting between Pakistan and India in nearly three decades. At the end of her briefing, Kozack expressed condolences for the lives lost in recent tensions between Pakistan and India and called for a peaceful resolution. The May 9 review approval brings disbursements to \$2 billion within the \$7 billion program. No fresh money from the resilience loan was made immediately available. "Pakistan's policy efforts under the (programme) have already delivered significant progress in stabilising the economy and rebuilding confidence, amidst a challenging global environment," the IMF said in a statement following the approval. Meanwhile, a top government source in New Delhi told Reuters on Friday that In-

dia would push the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), a global financial crime watchdog, to add arch-rival Pakistan back to its "grey list" and oppose upcoming World Bank funding to Islamabad. The source said India would not miss any opportunity "in opposing Pakistan and the next one is funding by World Bank, and we will raise our protest there too." Pakistan's finance ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Pakistan has denied any hand in the Kashmir attack and has said India's move of keeping the Indus Waters Treaty in abeyance is an act of war. Pakistan was taken off the FATF grey list in 2022, giving it a clean bill of health on terrorist financing and boosting its reputation among lenders, essential for Pakistan's crisis-hit economy.



## Gandapur announces district status for Allai

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur chaired a high-level meeting with elected representatives from Hazara Division to discuss the upcoming Annual Development Program (ADP) and review the progress of ongoing development projects in the region.

The meeting was attended by Speaker of the Provincial Assembly, members of both National and Provincial Assemblies from Hazara Division, and senior officials from the divisional administration. During the meeting, Chief Minister announced a decision to upgrade Tehsil Allai in District Battagram to the status of a full-fledged district. The move was hailed as a long-standing demand and pressing need of the people of the area. Elected representatives from Battagram warmly welcomed the decision, terming it a significant step toward addressing local issues and ending the backwardness of the region. "The people of Allai are deeply thankful to the Chief Minister for this historic initiative," the representatives stated.—APP

## NCRC finalizes curriculum for business students

PESHAWAR: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan, in collaboration with the Institute of Management Sciences (IMSciences), Peshawar, convened a two-day meeting of the National Curriculum Review Committee (NCRC) for Business Administration in accordance with the HEC Undergraduate Education Policy Version 1.1. The meeting commenced with the recitation of the Holy Quran, followed by the introduction of participants and a welcome address by Prof. Dr. Usman Ghani, Director IMSciences. Distinguished speakers included Mr. Nasir Shah, Director General of HEC's Regional Center Peshawar, and Prof. Dr. Naukhez Sarwar, Chairman of NBEAC.—APP

## FIA Lahore arrests four fugitives in major crackdown

LAHORE: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Lahore Zone has arrested four notorious suspects involved in human trafficking and visa fraud during a series of targeted raids in Lahore and Sheikhupura.

A spokesperson for the FIA said the arrested individuals have been identified as Umair Rafiq, Muhammad Yousaf, Shahid Rasool and Norez Sadiq. The suspects were wanted for deceiving citizens by offering fake overseas employment opportunities and extracting large sums of money. Umair Rafiq is accused of defrauding citizens of Rs. 10 million under the pretense of facilitating immigration to Canada, later disappearing without delivering on his promises.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Chairman CDA Ali Randhawa briefing Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Murree Road Interchange-Jinnah Square project.

# Ceasefire at risk as India sends mixed signals: Masood

Sardar Masood Khan emphasized that the world now recognized Kashmir as the core issue between two nuclear-armed states—India and Pakistan, without the resolution of which, peace and stability in the region could not be guaranteed.

MUZAFFARABAD: Former President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and senior diplomat Sardar Masood Khan has said that India's history is rife with broken promises. In an interview on Friday, he said that India tends to make commitments in times of crisis, only to renege on them once the pressure subsides. "After suffering a setback at the hands of the Pakistan Army during the recent conflict and realizing that further military engagement would result in heavy financial and human losses, India not only accepted a ceasefire but also expressed willingness to engage in dialogue over all issues, including Kashmir. However, he warned that it is quite likely India may now backtrack on that commitment," Khan observed. Sardar Masood Khan emphasized that the world now recognized Kashmir as the core issue between two nuclear-armed states—India and Pakistan, without the resolution of which, peace and stability in the region could not be guaranteed. Global peace is intrinsically linked to the security of South Asia, he stressed. Commenting on U.S.

President Donald Trump's offer to mediate on Kashmir, Khan said that Trump's initiative has once again brought the Kashmir issue onto the international agenda. He noted that similar offers were made by President Trump in 2016 and 2019, but they failed due to India's non-cooperation. He asserted that Trump's latest offer reflects a deliberate and calculated diplomatic move. U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio has also indicated that both the United States and Pakistan are open to broad-based dialogue—at a neutral venue—where Kashmir would be a central issue. He termed this a significant development but added that the onus now lies with India to respond positively. When asked about the promotion of Army Chief General Asim Munir to the rank of Field Marshal, Khan said that the honor was based on his performance during the recent conflict. He added that this also serves as a strategic signal to India, warning that Pakistan is fully prepared to engage in a broader war if India pursues aggressive military ambitions. He remarked that India continues to send mixed signals—sometimes advocating for

peace, while at other times presenting its military setbacks as victory to appease its domestic audience. Khan shared that he recently visited the Abbaspur sector along the Line of Control (LoC), where he paid tribute to the martyrs at a military post and met with soldiers, praising their courage and morale. "These brave defenders put their lives at risk to safeguard our nation," he said. Commenting on Indian Congress leader, Rahul Gandhi's statement in Parliament that the Congress policy aimed to keep China and Pakistan apart, but the current BJP government's flawed policies have brought them closer, Khan said Gandhi's remarks expose the real face of Indian statecraft. He claimed that both BJP and previous Congress governments have historically tried to drive a wedge between China and Pakistan, but failed. He further accused the BJP of running training camps for terrorism in Delhi and other parts of India and establishing proxy bases in Afghanistan and Iran. He alleged these were being used to carry out terrorist activities

inside Pakistan, while maintaining a diplomatic facade for the global audience. Referring to targeted attacks on Chinese nationals in Dasu and Karachi, Khan claimed India orchestrated these incidents to drive a wedge between Pakistan and China, but the strategy failed. He highlighted that trilateral talks between China, Pakistan, and Afghanistan in China reflect a forward-looking approach, especially within the framework of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and China's Belt and Road Initiative. "In contrast, India's vision remains narrow and regressive, rooted in destabilizing neighbors through terrorism," he said. On whether integrating Afghanistan into CPEC might anger the United States, Khan responded that even strategic thinkers in the U.S. understand the value of fostering trust among China, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. He noted that the U.S. itself is interested in investment and partnerships in the mineral sector of this region. "International relations are complex and cannot be seen in black and white," he added. Addressing

a question about the perceived tilt of the Afghan Taliban towards India during the recent Pakistan-India standoff, Khan called it unfortunate. He emphasized that Pakistan has long supported the Afghan people, offering refuge to millions and standing by them in their struggle for freedom. However, he acknowledged that India has manipulated Afghan public opinion by spreading anti-Pakistan propaganda. "There are factions within the Taliban—some are sympathetic to Pakistan, while others have fallen prey to Indian deception," he said. Khan concluded by warning that in times of war, tensions can escalate to unpredictable levels, impacting global supply chains. He emphasized that China's top priority, as it approaches the centenary of its independence, is to emerge as a leading economic and strategic power. Any regional conflict could destabilize China's Belt and Road Initiative and its investments across more than a hundred countries and all continents. "This is why China—and Pakistan—remain staunch advocates of peace and stability," he said.—DNA

## Kundi discusses CPEC concerns with Naqvi

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, met with Federal Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi here on Friday to discuss the law and order situation in the province, with a particular focus on public and commercial challenges at the Torkham and Taftan border crossings, as well as security concerns related to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). During the meeting, Governor Kundi expressed concern over the growing incidents of unrest and abductions, especially in the Dera Ismail Khan region along the CPEC route. He highlighted that these security challenges were not only raising fears among locals and workers but also hindering ongoing development projects. The Governor also brought attention to the difficulties faced by traders and ordinary citizens at the Torkham border and the problems encountered by pilgrims at the Taftan crossing. He stressed that both locations were of significant national and regional importance and required improved facilities and enhanced security measures. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi assured the Governor that effective steps are being taken to safeguard CPEC projects and that addressing the concerns of traders and pilgrims at both border points is a top priority. He reiterated the government's commitment to resolving the issues at Taftan on a priority basis. Responding to the Governor's request, the minister also assured prompt action for the establishment of a passport office in Tehsil Paharpur. He added that he plans to visit both Torkham and Taftan borders in the near future.—DNA

## World urged to intervene for settlement of Kashmir dispute

ISLAMABAD: The All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) has urged the United Nations and the world peace and freedom-loving countries to urgently intervene and address the long-pending Kashmir dispute in accordance with United Nations resolutions. APHC spokesman Advocate Abdul Rashid Minhas in a statement issued after a meeting of APHC leaders in Srinagar, has appealed to the United Nations and the global community to help settle the lingering Kashmir dispute. The statement also called for the release of illegally detained Hurriyat leaders including Massarat Alam Butt, Muhammad Yasin Malik, Shabbir Ahmed Shah, Aasiya Andrabi, Naheeda Nasreen, Fehmeeda Sufi, Nayeem Ahmad Khan, Ayaz Akbar, Pir Saifullah, Merajuddin Kalwal, Shahid-ul-Islam, Farooq Ahmed Dar, Syed Shahid Yousuf Shah, Syed Shakeel Yousuf Shah, Mushtaq-ul-Islam, Bilal Siddiqi, Molvi Bashir Irfani, Ameer Hamza, Dr Hameed Fayaz, Abdul Ahmad Parra, Noor Muhammad Fayaz, Hayat Ahmed Butt, Showkat Hakeem, Zaffar Akbar Butt, Firdous Ahmed Shah, Dr Muhammad Qasim Fakhtoo, Dr Muhammad Shafi Shariati, Ghulam Qadir Butt, Rafiq Ahmad Ganai, Zahoor Ahmed Butt, Shakeel Ahmad Yatoo, Umar Adil Dar, Saleem Nanaji, Muhammad Yasin Butt, Fayaz Hussain Jaferi, Adil Siraj Zargar, Dawood Zargar, human rights defender Khuram Parvaiz, Ahsan Utoot and journalist Irfan Majeed who have been lodged in different jails of India and IIOJK.—DNA

## Convocation ceremony of 54th PN staff course held

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Convocation Ceremony of 54th Pakistan Navy Staff Course was held at Pakistan Navy War College (PNWC), Lahore. According to Directorate General Public Relations (Pakistan Navy), Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. Convocation ceremony of 54th PN staff course held at Pakistan navy war college During the ceremony, degrees were conferred upon 118 graduates, including 74 officers from Pakistan Navy, Pakistan Army, and Pakistan Air Force, as well as 44 officers from friendly countries. These countries included Bahrain, Bangladesh, Türkiye, China, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nigeria, Oman, Palestine, Saudi

Arabia, South Africa, Yemen, and the UAE. In his address, the Chief of the Naval Staff congratulated the graduating officers from both Pakistan Armed Forces and friendly nations. He lauded the high professional standards upheld by Pakistan Navy War College and emphasized the importance of understanding the evolving dynamics of modern warfare and emerging maritime security threats. He said that the Red Sea has be-

come a battleground for competing interests, posing a significant threat to international peace and security. He further underlined the transformation in warfare marked by asymmetrical conflicts and the growing influence of non-state actors, and stressed the need for traditional military strategies to evolve in response to these complex challenges. Admiral Naveed Ashraf also observed that the Indian Ocean Region

remains fluid and contested, with new geopolitical realignments and ongoing power rivalries continuing to impact the regional security environment. Referring to the recent four-day crisis between India and Pakistan, he remarked that it stands as testimony to the changing nature of warfare. The conventional, one-dimensional study of war, he asserted, is now outdated and no longer applicable.



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## Railways inducts 30 freight wagons to boost trade

LAHORE: In a significant step to modernize Pakistan's freight transport system and support the business community, the Pakistan Railways has inducted 30 new high-speed and high-capacity freight wagons into its network.

The inauguration ceremony was held at the Lahore Cantt Railway Station on Friday, where Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Railways, Aamir Ali Baloch, announced that the new wagons have been designed to meet international standards and cater to the growing demands of the trading sector. Each wagon has the capacity to carry 60 tons of cargo, a development hailed as revolutionary for the country's freight operations.—APP

## Portuguese Guitarist Joia to perform cultural program in Lahore

LAHORE: After starting his performance in Pakistan on 23rd May in Islamabad at "International Jazz Festival" at Silk Road Culture Center, the Portuguese Guitarist Pedro Joia will engage in a diversified program of activities, shows, masterclasses, and interactions in Lahore, the capital of Punjab.

Pedro Joia will be performing on the Sunday, 25th May show of the "International Jazz Festival" at Alhamra Arts Center. The same day he will also be offering two masterclass sessions to musicians, instrumentalists, and artists. First at 11 am, co-organized by Aga Khan Cultural Services, Lahore and Olomopole Media, and the second one at 5 pm at Alhamra Arts Center.

## Peace Council holds rally in support of armed forces

ABBOTTABAD: The Pakistan Peace Council for Human Rights and Interfaith Harmony organized a rally in Abbottabad to celebrate the success of operation Bunyam Marsoos and express solidarity with the Pakistan Armed Forces. Led by District Chairman Sardar Abdul Rasheed, the rally began at Fawara Chowk and concluded at the Baloch Regiment Center. Participants, including council leaders, office-bearers, and youth, raised national flags and chanted slogans in support of the military.—APP



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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RGH.....9290301-7

Holy Family.....9290322-7

PIMS.....9261170-79

Polyclinic.....9218300-09

Shifa International 4603666



Departments

CDA.....9221334-43

CDA.....9208301-04

Met Office.....9250360-6

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TMA.....5770886

Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

# Kazakhstan envoy explores coop avenues during his IHCBA visit

At the end of the meeting, Secretary Mr. Chaudhary Manzoor Ahmad Jajja gave the concluding remarks. He thanked the Ambassador and praised his sincere efforts to bring Pakistan and Kazakhstan closer. He assured the Ambassador of the Association’s full support in carrying forward this legal cooperation. Both sides agreed to begin online discussion

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan to Pakistan, Yerzhan Kistafin, paid an official visit to the Islamabad High Court Bar Association (IHCBA), marking a key step towards building stronger legal and professional ties between Kazakhstan and Pakistan. The Ambassador was warmly welcomed by President Mr. Wajid Gillani, Mr. Chaudhary Manzoor Ahmad Jajja Secretary, Mr. Zaildar Ahsan Shah Chairman of the International Relations Committee, Mr. Murtaza Khan Vice Chairman of the International Relations Committee, Mr. Fahad Chaudhary, Mr. Safer Shah and Mr. Tajamal Hussain Latti Members of the International Relations Committee along with the full cabinet of the Islamabad High Court Bar Association.



In his welcome speech, President Mr. Wajid Gillani spoke about the brotherly relationship between Pakistan and Kazakhstan, highlighting the deep-rooted cultural, historical, and religious ties that bind the two nations. He shared the vision and achievements of the

IHCBA and expressed a strong desire to build international legal linkages, especially with legal institutions in Kazakhstan. In a special address, Mr. Zaildar Ahsan Shah, speaking as a sincere and longstanding friend of Kazakhstan, delivered a heartfelt tribute to Ambassador Yerzhan Kistafin. He praised the Ambassador’s unwavering dedication to strengthening ties between

the two nations, stating, “We have seen with our own eyes how tirelessly H.E. Yerzhan Kistafin has worked to promote genuine and lasting friendship between Pakistan and Kazakhstan. He is not just an ambassador in the traditional sense he is a true bridge between our nations. Among the many diplomats we have hosted, he stands out as one of the finest. His approach is rooted in sincerity, his

efforts are consistent and passionate, and his love for Pakistan is evident in every initiative he undertakes.” Mr. Zaildar Ahsan Shah then presented a visionary proposal titled the “Pakistan–Kazakhstan Legal Cooperation Initiative,” which received strong support from both sides. Ambassador Kistafin highlighted important recent developments that reflect the growing relationship between the two countries.

He mentioned the historic visit of Pakistan’s Chief of Army Staff, General Syed Asim Munir, to Astana earlier this year, the successful 13th Session of the Pakistan–Kazakhstan Intergovernmental Commission held in Islamabad, and the Pakistan–Kazakhstan Business Forum held in Karachi. He said these events show the commitment of both nations to work together in various fields. The Ambassador of

the Republic of Kazakhstan to Pakistan, H.E. Yerzhan Kistafin, warmly praised the proposal presented by chairman International Relations committee Mr. Zaildar Ahsan Shah, describing it as a forward-looking and impactful initiative. Pakistan is a country full of promise it offers vast opportunities in business, trade, and investment. It truly is a remarkable nation. The proposal put forth by Mr. Zaildar Ahsan Shah is outstanding and reflects a clear vision for the future. Initiatives like these legal linkages are essential for building strong, lasting cooperation between our countries. I extend an open invitation to all of you to visit Astana, where we can move forward together in meaningful collaboration. Legal linkages, in particular, play a vital role in fostering mutual trust, promoting institutional harmony and laying the groundwork for friendly and enduring ties. At the end of the meeting, Secretary Mr. Chaudhary Manzoor Ahmad Jajja gave the concluding remarks. He thanked the Ambassador and praised his sincere efforts to bring Pakistan and Kazakhstan closer. He assured the Ambassador of the Association’s full support in carrying forward this legal cooperation. Both sides agreed to begin online discussion.

Alibaba partners with CPEX to boost Pakistani exports to 200+countries

ISLAMABAD: Alibaba, a leading B2B e-commerce platform, has partnered with the international courier company CPEX to help Pakistani businesses export their products to over 200 countries. The company announced the rollout of a robust online logistics service aimed at streamlining export operations for Pakistani suppliers. According to a report carried by Gwadar Pro on Friday, this partnership offers end-to-end trade solutions, simplifying the export process for manufacturers and suppliers by covering everything from packaging and warehousing to international shipping and delivery. The goal is to reduce costs and improve efficiency for exporters. As cross-border e-commerce continues to expand rapidly, Pakistani small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are finding more opportunities to enter global markets. However, they still face significant challenges particularly in logistics. Reliable and cost-effective shipping solutions are essential for timely deliveries and effective risk management. The Chinese e-commerce platform is addressing these challenges by leveraging its global logistics network to provide secure, timely, and affordable shipping. The platform offers transparent pricing, inclusive of freight, surcharges, and taxes, helping businesses manage their costs more effectively. With AI-driven logistics tools, Pakistani exporters gain access to optimized shipping routes, 24/7 real-time tracking, and efficient customs clearance. The digital platform also enables instant pricing, online booking, and full shipment visibility. A case in point is Clush Industries, a Pakistani garment manufacturer specializing in products like T-shirts, hoodies, and tracksuits. Since joining Alibaba.com in 2024, the company has derived all of its export revenue through the platform and successfully expanded into major markets including the U.S., Canada, Australia, and the U.K. This initiative comes at a time when Pakistan’s e-commerce exports—especially in apparel, textiles, and handicrafts—are showing significant promise. The Alibaba-CPEX partnership aims to enhance the global competitiveness of Pakistani products, particularly in key markets like North America, Europe, and the Middle East.—DNA

Kitchen items’ prices decrease by 0.29pc

ISLAMABAD:The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), decreased by 0.29 percent for the combined consumption groups during the week ended on May 22, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday. According to the PBS data, the SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 312.34 points as compared to 313.24 points during the past week As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week

under review witnessed an increase of 1.35 per cent. The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 =100 covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups. The SPI for the lowest consumption group of up to Rs 17,732 witnessed a decrease of 0.26 per cent and came down to 300.18 points from last week’s 300.97 points. The SPI for consumption groups of Rs 17,732 to 22,888; Rs 22,889-29,517; Rs 29,518-44,175 and above Rs 44,175, came down 0.27 percent, 0.26 percent, 0.28 percent and 0.30 percent

respectively. During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 13 (25.49%) items increased, 14 (27.45%) items decreased and 24 (47.06%) items remained stable. The items, which recorded major decrease in their average prices on a week-on-week basis included Chicken (7.26%), Onions (5.43%), Garlic (2.71%), LPG (2.44%), Potatoes (0.95%), Mustard Oil (0.80%) Diesel (0.78%), Pulse Masoor (0.46%), Cooking Oil (0.14%), Rice IRR16/9 (0.09%), Firewood (0.06%), and Vegetable Ghee 2.5Kg & Sugar (0.05%) each. The commodities which recorded major increase in their average prices on a week-on-week basis included Tomatoes (12.01%), Eggs (8.16%), Gur (1.50%) Bananas (1.00%), Pulse Moong (0.79%), Wheat Flour (0.63%), Pulse Gram (0.39%), Powdered Milk (0.36%), Rice Basmati Broken (0.34%), Pulse Mash (0.30%), Mutton (0.26%), Energy Saver (0.21%) and Beef (0.12%). Year-on-year basis, the commodities that witnessed increase included Ladies Sandal (55.62%), Chicken (45.12%), Pulse Moong (30.79%), Powdered Milk (24.01%), Bananas (22.43%), Sugar (22.12%), Eggs (21.52%), Pulse Gram (20.70%), Beef (17.56%), Vegetable Ghee 2.5Kg (13.86%), LPG (13.05%), and Vegetable Ghee 1Kg (12.76%).—APP

Yousaf lauds national unity in Pak-India conflict

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Sardar Muhammad Yousaf on Friday expressed gratitude for Pakistan's victory in the recent escalation with India and praised the unity and resilience demonstrated by the Pakistani nation and armed forces. Addressing a 'Thanksgiving Day' event organized by the Hazara Journalists Association at the National Press Club, the minister said, "With the grace of Allah, Pakistan emerged victorious in the recent conflict with India. This success is a testament to the strength of our nation and our armed forces," and urged the public to thank Allah in times of triumph. "Our Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) taught us to express gratitude to Allah when truth prevails over falsehood." He criticized the Indian perception of Muslim weakness and underscored the importance of national celebration in the face of adversarial aggression. "The enemy underestimated our strength. In response to India's provocation, the entire Pakistani nation stood as a united, impenetrable wall." Referring to the attacks on children in Balochistan, Sardar Yousaf accused the Indian government of violating international laws and norms out of arrogance. "The Modi administration unilaterally violated the special status of Kashmir and the Indus Waters Treaty, further demonstrating its disregard for international conventions." He emphasized that Pakistan's response was a necessary measure to safeguard national security. He contrasted India's military operation, codenamed 'Sindoor', with Pakistan's spiritually inspired code name 'Bunyan un Marsoos' (a reference from the Quran signifying solid structure and unity). The minister also extended congratulations to the Pakistani armed forces, the government, and the nation for their unified response, calling for Field Marshal status to be conferred upon Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir in recognition of his leadership. He highlighted the spiritual legacy of the Air Chief's family, noting that his father was a renowned Islamic scholar. "When believers confront non-believers, their faith transforms them into iron," he said, reinforcing his message of religious and national strength. Sardar Yousaf also reaffirmed support for the ongoing movement for the creation of Hazara province, urging greater attention to the region's local issues.—DNA

ANF arrests 5 smugglers with over 49 kg of drugs

RAWALPINDI:The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF), conducting three operations across the country, recovered as many as 49 kilograms of drugs worth more than Rs 9 million and arrested five suspects, including an Afghan national, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman on Friday. He informed that 4 kg of hashish was recovered from the possession of two suspects near the university area on Belleli Road, Quetta.The arrested suspects confessed to selling drugs to students of educational institutions. In another operation,43 kg of opium was recovered from an Afghan national riding a truck on Kachlak Bypass Road, Quetta. As much as 2 kg of ice was recovered from a rickshaw near Othian Stop, Sialkot, and two suspects were arrested. Cases have been registered against the arrested suspects under the Narcotics Control Act, and further investigations are underway.

DNA

Pakistan, Uzbekistan agree to deepen climate cooperation

DNA

ISLAMABAD:Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Dr. Musadik Malik, met with the Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Pakistan, Alisher Tukhtaev, on Friday to discuss avenues for enhanced bilateral cooperation on climate change and environmental sustainability. During the meeting, the Ambassador emphasized the strategic partnership between Pa-



kistan and Uzbekistan, underscoring the immense potential for collaboration across various sectors, especially the green economy. Tukhtaev presented several forward-looking proposals to jointly address climate challenges, including the formation of a bilateral working group, joint climate ventures, innovative programs, and the exchange of research, data, and technology. The Ambassador Tukhtaev appreciated Pakistan's active participation in multilateral climate forums and affirmed that both

countries could serve as regional leaders by transforming shared climate challenges into opportunities. Minister Dr. Musadik Malik welcomed Uzbekistan's proposals and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to regional cooperation on environmental issues. The Minister highlighted the deep civilizational and historical ties that bind Pakistan and Uzbekistan, extending beyond religion to thousands of years of shared heritage. The Minister lauded Uzbekistan's commitment to climate action, particularly their efforts in launching green and blue energy projects, including the national afforestation campaign aiming to plant 1 billion trees. Dr. Malik expressed concern over regional environmental crises such as the drying of the Aral Sea and the rapid melting of glaciers in Pakistan—both seen as warning signs of global environmental disruption. He reiterated Pakistan's commitment to climate education and innovation, sharing that the Prime Minister envisions a “Green University” in Pakistan with the potential to promote climate research, student and faculty exchanges, and joint ventures with partner nations such as Uzbekistan.



STATE LIFE

INSURANCE CORPORATION OF PAKISTAN



Hiring Services of Service Providers for Dissemination of SMS to Policyholders of State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan

Tender Notice No. PHS/PO/24/2025

Hiring Services of Service Providers for Dissemination of SMS to Policyholders of State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan.

State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan intends to hire the services of well-reputed mobile phone operators for providing SMS Services for a period of three years (initially for a period of two years, further extendable for one more year with mutual consent of both the parties).

Sealed Technical & Financial proposals are invited in accordance with the PPRA rules, through E-PADS under the "Single Stage - Two Envelope" Procedure from well recognized firms dealing with mobile SMS Service operators, registered with the Income Tax/Sales Tax Department, having their own offices and phone/fax numbers, etc.

The tender notice along with the tender documents can be seen/downloaded from the PPRA/SLIC website i.e. www.ppra.org.pk and www.statelife.com.pk. The tender notice along with the tender documents has been uploaded on the E-PADS System as well. Bids will be received from firms who are registered with PPRA for E-procurement on the E-PADS system for tendering in SLIC through their e-mail addresses latest by 11-06-2025 before 11:00 a.m. Technical bids will opened on the same day at 11:30 a.m.

State Life reserves the right to reject all bids or proposals in accordance with the PPRA Rules.

Divisional Head, Central Procurement Division, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor, State Life Building  
No. 11, Abdullah Haroon Road, Karachi. (Pakistan) Tel: 021-99204521

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PK ID - 361724

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## Briefs

## Eight committee reports presented in Senate

ISLAMABAD: The Senate on Friday received eight reports from various committees, covering a range of legislative and policy matters. The reports presented included, The Income Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2025, Annual Report of the Committee for the period June 2024 to March 2025, Report from the Committee on Federal Education and Professional Training, The Pakistan Penal Code (Amendment) Bill, 2024, The Criminal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024, The Muslim Family Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024, The National Institute of Health (Re-organization) (Amendment) Bill, 2024 and The Mental Health (Amendment) Bill, 2025.—APP

## Cattle markets roar to life as annual trading season begins

ISLAMABAD: From the cattle markets of Karachi to the thriving livestock Mandies of Punjab, the annual trading season has kicked off, highlighting a diverse range of animals, including impressive heavyweight bulls, sturdy cows, and majestic oxen, as well as quick goats, gentle camels and adorable sheep. According to media news reports, from dawn till dusk, the mandies pulsate with activity, as buyers and sellers engage in intense bargaining, seeking to strike the perfect deal. According to the mandi administration, people are flocking to the livestock markets from far-flung areas, bringing with them a diverse range of animals for sale. "We have seen a significant influx of buyers and sellers from distant regions, all eager to participate in the annual trading season," said a mandi official. These visitors are engaging in intense bargaining, seeking to secure the best deals on high-quality animals, said an official of Karachi livestock market. "The atmosphere is electric, with intense bargaining and negotiations taking place throughout the market," said a citizen of Bahawalnagar. Another official added, "We are expecting a record number of animals to be traded this season, with many buyers looking to stock up for the upcoming Eid celebrations." Some buyers are even visiting the market collectively, pooling their resources to purchase a large number of animals for resale or for Eid celebrations. "We have had groups of 5-10 buyers coming together to negotiate prices and share the risk," added the official. "This collective bargaining approach allows them to get better deals and makes the market more dynamic," said a citizen of Multan. One notable attraction is a massive cow from Multan, weighing an impressive 15 Kg, which is drawing huge crowds and sparking intense bidding. "This cow is one of the biggest we have seen this season and buyers are willing to pay top dollar for it," added the official. The cow's exceptional quality and majestic appearance have sparked a fierce bidding war among buyers.—APP

## Pakistan and Türkiye to cement bilateral ties

During the meeting, Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik expressed profound gratitude for Türkiye's unwavering support to Pakistan during the India-Pakistan conflict. He emphasized that the Pakistan-Türkiye friendship has "passed every test of time with flying colors," reflecting the deep-rooted bond between the two brotherly nations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik, held a meeting with Irfan Neziroglu, Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye to Pakistan, today at the Ministry of Petroleum. The discussions centered on enhancing bilateral cooperation in the energy sector, including offshore and onshore exploration, as well as collaboration in critical minerals. During the meeting, Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik expressed profound gratitude for Türkiye's unwavering support to Pakistan during the India-Pakistan conflict. He emphasized that the Pakistan-Türkiye friendship has "passed every test of time with flying colors," reflecting the deep-rooted bond between the two brotherly nations. He thanked the Ambassador on behalf of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for the unambiguous support. He said that "His excellency President Erdogan has been open about his love for Pakistan, Pakistani Government and people highly value this brotherhood and reciprocate the same love." H.E Irfan Neziroglu underscored the Türkiye's commitment towards Pakistan and



remarked that it is a time-tested brotherhood. Pakistan managed the situation well right from the start. Although India did aggression but Pakistan, like a responsible state, showed restraint. He further added that, the youth of both countries now

have a refreshed understanding of the Pak-Türkiye shared heroes and historic relationship. The Minister highlighted the immense potential for expanding cooperation in the petroleum and mineral sectors, noting that both countries could benefit from joint

ventures, technology transfer, and investment opportunities. He reiterated Pakistan's commitment to fostering a robust partnership with Türkiye in energy and resource development. Türkiye's state owned company Turkish Petroleum Corporation has been

provisionally awarded two on-shore blocks in the recent bidding round on May 13, 2025. One of the awarded blocks is located in Balochistan – Ziarat North, where the JV partners are MariEnergies (33.16%, operator), OGDCL (24.87%), PPL (24.87%), TPOC (10%), and Government Holdings Private Limited (GHPL) (7.10%). The other successful bid is for the Sukhpur-II block in Sindh, with the following JV structure: Prime (25%, operator), OGDCL (30%), MariEnergies (30%), and TPOC (15%). Moreover, Turkish Petroleum has also executed a Joint Bidding Agreement with a consortium of Pakistan companies (MariEnergies, OGDCL, PPL) for participation in upcoming Offshore Bid Round 2025. Ambassador Neziroglu reaffirmed Türkiye's dedication to strengthening ties with Pakistan across all sectors, particularly energy and mining. He praised Pakistan's efforts in creating a conducive environment for foreign investment and expressed optimism about future collaborations that would drive mutual economic growth. Both sides agreed to expedite discussions on joint exploration projects and the critical minerals, which are vital for industrial and technological advancements.

## Pakistan's glorious Gandhara legacy shines

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The rich artistic and cultural heritage of ancient Pakistan is being celebrated at the prestigious "Entering Xiangshan - Exploring the Origins of Gandhara Art" exhibition at Shenzhen's Fanya Art Museum from May 15 to June 15. The month-long showcase presents Pakistan's Gandhara civilization, one of history's most remarkable cultural crossroads, to Chinese audience through rare artifacts and stunning photographic documentation. The exhibition's title references the spiritual connections between China's sacred Xiangshan (Fragrant Mountain) and Pakistan's ancient Buddhist sites, symbolizing centuries of shared heritage along the Silk Road. "Entering Xiangshan - Exploring the Origins of Gandhara Art" exhibition in Shenzhen. [Photo provided by Shenzhen Fanya Art Museum] The exhibition features more than 50 authentic Gandharan artifacts from the museum's collection alongside 100 carefully selected photographs from over 5,000 images documenting 16 archaeological sites across Pakistan's historic northwest region. These materials, curated with contributions from six leading museums, highlight Gandhara's unique position as a melting pot of Greek, Persian and Indian artistic traditions that gave birth to distinctive Buddhist art forms.—APP

## Over 15kg single-use plastics seized

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) seized over 15 kg of banned single-use plastics during an enforcement drive in Islamabad's G-6 sector on Friday. An inspection team, led by Dr. Zaigham Abbas, Director (Lab/NEQS), conducted raids in key commercial areas, issuing six warnings to shopkeepers for violations. "Most shops are complying with the Single-Use Plastics (Prohibition) Regulations and shifting to eco-friendly alternatives," said a Pak-EPA spokesperson. However, illegal items were still found and confiscated.—APP

## India can't fight Pakistan militarily for the next decade

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Omar Butt, the President of the Pakistan Business Network, made a bold statement on Friday, asserting that India, despite its claims of being a dominant regional power, has recently experienced a significant and embarrassing military defeat at the hands of Pakistan. He emphasized that this outcome has led to a critical realization among India's political and military leaders that their demoralised armed forces are unable to alter the existing balance of power in South Asia. In a statement issued today, Omar Butt said this defeat serves as a wake-up call, highlighting the limitations of India's military capabilities in the face of Pakistan's strategic resilience. He stated that if India wishes

to challenge Pakistan, it would require at least ten years of sustained and organized preparation. Omar Butt stated that following the failure of military options, India is increasingly concentrating on promoting terrorism within Pakistan and recent condemnations on a school bus is part of its plan. However, the Pakistan Armed Forces remain vigilant and prepared on all fronts. They will not allow such hostile ambitions to succeed under any circumstances. He stated that Modi is overstepping his boundaries, but Pakistan has made it clear that any aggression will be met with a decisive and forceful response. India had assumed that Pakistan, facing economic pressure along with internal political instability and terrorism, would be unable to mount a significant military response, which was a serious miscal-

culation. Now, in an attempt to cover up its embarrassment, the Modi government is resorting to frequent false statements and media propaganda. Nevertheless, the international community has begun to recognize India's true face. The world now understands that India has not only become militarily weaker, but its behavior has jeopardized the peace of the entire region. He warned that without a fair and lasting resolution to the Kashmir dispute, sustainable peace in South Asia is unattainable. Tensions between the two nuclear-armed countries could escalate into open war at any moment, posing unacceptable risks for the entire world. Butt further stated that Syed Asim Munir's promotion to the rank of Field Marshal acknowledges his strategic insight, leadership, and

military acumen, reflecting Pakistan's military professionalism, superiority, and unwavering defensive resolve. Today, every patriotic Pakistani feels pride in their Army Chief's advancement, which has instilled new hope and confidence among the public. He emphasized that the business community firmly believes that national security is the foundation of economic growth. Strong and cohesive military leadership ensures investor confidence. Following this significant achievement, Pakistan will proceed with renewed resolve and unity.

## Senate passes Civil Courts (Amendment) Bill, 2025

ISLAMABAD: The Senate on Friday passed The Civil Courts (Amendment) Bill, 2025 with a majority vote. The bill was introduced by Senator Dr. Shezra Mansab Ali Kharral. The primary aim of the bill is to ease the growing workload of the Islamabad High Court (IHC) by allowing certain appeals, currently heard by the IHC, to be redirected to district courts. This legislative move is expected to streamline judicial proceedings and ensure quicker resolution of civil cases in the federal capital. The bill had already secured approval from the National Assembly, marking a significant development toward enhancing the efficiency of Islamabad's judicial system. The need for this amendment stems from the rising value of properties in Islamabad Capital Territory, which has pushed the valuation of most Regular First Appeals beyond Rs 2.5 million. As a result, the appellate workload on the IHC has increased significantly. Currently, under clause (a) of sub-section (1) of section 18 of the West Pakistan Civil Courts Ordinance, 1962, the IHC holds appellate jurisdiction over cases exceeding Rs 2.5 million. —DNA

## Pakistan to expose India through legal diplomacy

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Law and Justice, Barrister Aqeel Malik, Friday vowed to expose India globally through legal channels, citing unprovoked aggression and India's purported inability to control water flows effectively.

In an exclusive interview with a local news channel, Barrister Aqeel Malik stated that Pakistan will pursue legal avenues to highlight India's alleged unprovoked aggression and its claimed inability to manage water resources. Aqeel Malik emphasized that Pakistan will tackle these issues through a combination of robust legal frameworks and effective diplomatic strategies,

ensuring a comprehensive approach to address the concerns. Barrister Aqeel stated that Pakistan will dispatch high-level delegate teams, comprising skilled diplomats, to engage with international organizations, including the UN Security Council, to address the issues at hand. Barrister Aqeel Malik accused India of state-sponsored terrorism, alleging its support for militant groups in Balochistan, including the TTP and BLA. Barrister Aqeel Malik vowed that Pakistan will exhaust all avenues to expose India's alleged actions and will pursue all available legal measures to bring attention to

the matter. Responding to a query, Barrister Aqeel Malik elaborated on the Indus water issue, stating that India lacks the necessary infrastructure capability and capacity to effectively control and manage the waters. He alleged that instead of focusing on constructive management, India aims to weaponize water as a tool, potentially exacerbating tensions in the region. Barrister Aqeel Malik assured that Pakistan will handle the situation with maturity and through legal means to defuse India's alleged provocations and bring international attention to the matter.—APP

## DMA spokesperson warns Pakistan to brace for early monsoon



DNA

ISLAMABAD: GM Technical/Spokesperson at National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Syed Muhammad Tayyab Shah, stated on Friday that the department has issued an advisory for an early monsoon season starting June 26 and lasting until mid-September, bringing cloud bursts and thunderstorms. In an exclusive conversation with a private news channel, the Spokesperson cautioned that the monsoon is expected to arrive around June 26-27, approximately 3-4 days earlier than its usual onset. The country can anticipate above-normal rainfall, with a projected increase of up to 5%. Notably, north-eastern Punjab is likely to experience a significant

surge, with rainfall expected to rise by 50%," he added. He stated that the authorities are prepared to handle cloud bursts and highlighted the specific regions in each province that are expected to be affected by flash floods, torrential rains and riverine flooding. Punjab is expected to receive above-normal rainfall this monsoon season, with an anticipated 388mm compared to the usual 344mm, he mentioned. "We are enhancing disaster preparedness, upgrading forecasting systems, and fostering greater collaboration between federal and provincial authorities to mitigate the impacts of climate-related risks," he added. Responding to a query, he further explained that Pakistan these few weeks are facing a severe heatwave, with temperatures

expected to soar across the country in the next few coming days from Hunza to Karachi and particularly in Sindh, which is being declared one of the hottest regions in Pakistan this year. The NDMA spokesperson urged citizens to take precautionary measures, such as staying hydrated, avoiding direct exposure to sunlight, and taking necessary precautions to protect themselves from heat-related illnesses. In response to the question, he stated that climate change is causing severe weather conditions in Pakistan and South Asia with data suggesting that these conditions will worsen over time. He warned that this trend is not only persisting but is also expected to further intensify in the coming years, underscoring the urgent need for adaptive measures and re-

silience-building in the face of these evolving climatic challenges. "The previous year saw record-breaking heat, and this year is turning out to be even more scorching, with the intensity increasing daily," he added. He further explained that extreme climate variations lead to prolonged stress on the human body, making people more susceptible to various health issues due to intense heat. He emphasized that heatwaves can trigger the activation of various viruses, leading to diseases and stressed the need for citizens to take precautionary measures. The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) in coordination with Provincial Disaster Management Authorities (PDMAs) is proactively working to raise awareness and ensure public safety.


**Directorate General Immigration & Passports**  
**G-8/I Mauve Area, Islamabad**


# TENDER NOTICE

No: 09/01/2025/5-RPOs/LOG

**TENDER FOR SITE UP-GRADATION WORKS TO BE EXECUTED AT 05 REGIONAL PASSPORT OFFICES UNDER SINDH ZONE**

Sealed Technical and Financial Proposals are invited from NTN and GST registered companies for execution of site up-gradation works (electrification, networking, civil work and miscellaneous work) at five (5) Regional Passport Offices under Sindh Zone, in accordance with the "Bidding Documents which can be collected from Logistics Section of this office during office hours on payment of non-refundable Rs.2,000/- in the form of pay Order/ Demand Draft/ Banker Cheque in favour of Directorate General Immigration & Passports, by presenting request at company letter head. The detail of respective Regional Passport offices are as under:-

Sr. No	Name of RPOs
1	Regional Passport Office Ghotki/ Mirpur Methalo
2	Regional Passport Office Tando Allah Yar
3	Regional Passport Office Sajawal
4	Regional Passport Office Umar Kot
5	Regional Passport Office Jamshoro

2. The requisite specifications for site up-gradation work are provided in **Annexure-D** of the bidding document.
3. **Terms & Conditions for Submission of Proposals:**
  - a) National Tax Number (NTN) and Sales Tax Registration Certificate.
  - b) The proposals must reach the undersigned on or before **Wednesday 11th June 2025 at 12:00 PM**.
  - c) The Tender shall be evaluated on the basis of both Technical & Financial Proposals, single stage two (2) envelope procedure (Rule 36 (b) of PPRA Rules, 2004)
  - d) Technical and Financial Proposals should be submitted in separate envelopes, the words 'Technical Proposal' or 'Financial Proposal' as the case may be, and **No. 09/01/2025/5-RPOs/LOG** being clearly written on the top of the respective envelope and both 'Technical and Financial Proposal' should be in one envelope.
  - e) In the first instance, Technical Proposal shall be opened by a committee **Wednesday 11th June 2025 at 12:30 PM** in the conference Room of this office. After technical evaluation, Financial Proposals of only technically qualified companies shall be opened on a date/time to be announced subsequently.
  - f) A Tender Security of fixed **amount Rs.408,000/-** must be attached with the Financial Proposal in the form of a Pay Order/Demand Draft/Bank Guarantee in favour of Directorate General Immigration & Passports HQ.
  - g) All taxes shall be charged as per Government Rules on the subject.
  - h) Directorate General, Immigration & Passports reserves the right to cancel or reject any/all tenders under rule 33, of the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) Rules, 2004.
  - i) Incomplete and without bid security proposals shall not be entertained.
  - j) This tender notice has also been posted onto PPRA Website **www.ppra.org.pk**, DG I&P Website **www.dgip.gov.pk**.
  - k) Detailed terms and conditions have been elaborated in the bidding document.

**Asim Fawad Mirza**  
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## Aftermath of US President’s visit to Gulf States – symbolism vs substance

THE recent visit of the U.S. President to several Gulf states marks another chapter in Washington’s long-standing but increasingly complex relationship with the Middle East. As with previous high-profile tours, this one was cloaked in the familiar rhetoric of “strategic partnership,” “regional stability,” and “mutual cooperation.” However, as the dust settles, questions are being raised over the tangible outcomes of this diplomatic engagement and what it truly means for a region marred by conflicts, power rivalries, and humanitarian crises—particularly the ongoing genocide in Gaza. While the optics of the visit were carefully choreographed—warm handshakes, joint press conferences, and pledges of continued cooperation—the aftermath reveals that many of the core issues remain unresolved. The Palestinian crisis, which should have been a central topic, was largely reduced to platitudes. Although the U.S. President made a fleeting acknowledgment that “Gaza needs help,” this statement fell drastically short of a strong, principled stance against Israel’s continued aggression. The comment appeared more as a diplomatic gesture to appease Gulf leaders emotionally invested in the cause, rather than a commitment to action. Notably, the visit did not result in any firm policy shift or economic sanctions to pressure Israel into ceasing its military campaign. Nor was there a roadmap for a ceasefire, humanitarian access, or rebuilding war-torn Gaza. Instead, the U.S. administration maintained its traditional balancing act—voicing concern over humanitarian issues while continuing to support Israel militarily and diplomatically. For Gulf leaders, the visit offered a platform to reiterate their calls for justice in Palestine and push for stronger economic ties with the West. Yet even they are limited in their leverage. Despite outward expressions of solidarity, few Gulf nations are willing to confront Washington or Tel Aviv with any real consequence—whether by halting trade, limiting oil exports, or severing diplomatic ties. This lack of collective pressure renders their calls for peace hollow. Another key takeaway is the growing perception among youth and civil societies across the region that Western powers continue to prioritize geopolitical interests over human rights. This sentiment is particularly acute in light of increasing awareness—largely fueled by social media—of the disproportionate suffering of Palestinians. The credibility gap between words and actions is not only eroding public trust in Western leadership but also putting pressure on local governments to rethink their passive postures. Furthermore, the visit underscored the U.S.’s desire to counter Chinese and Russian influence in the region, particularly in the energy and defense sectors. However, focusing on great-power competition without addressing regional grievances—such as the plight of the Palestinians or internal conflicts in Yemen and Syria—risks alienating key populations and emboldening extremist narratives. In conclusion, while the U.S. President’s visit to the Gulf may have served diplomatic decorum, it lacked the moral courage and actionable commitment needed in times of crisis.

Pakistan’s First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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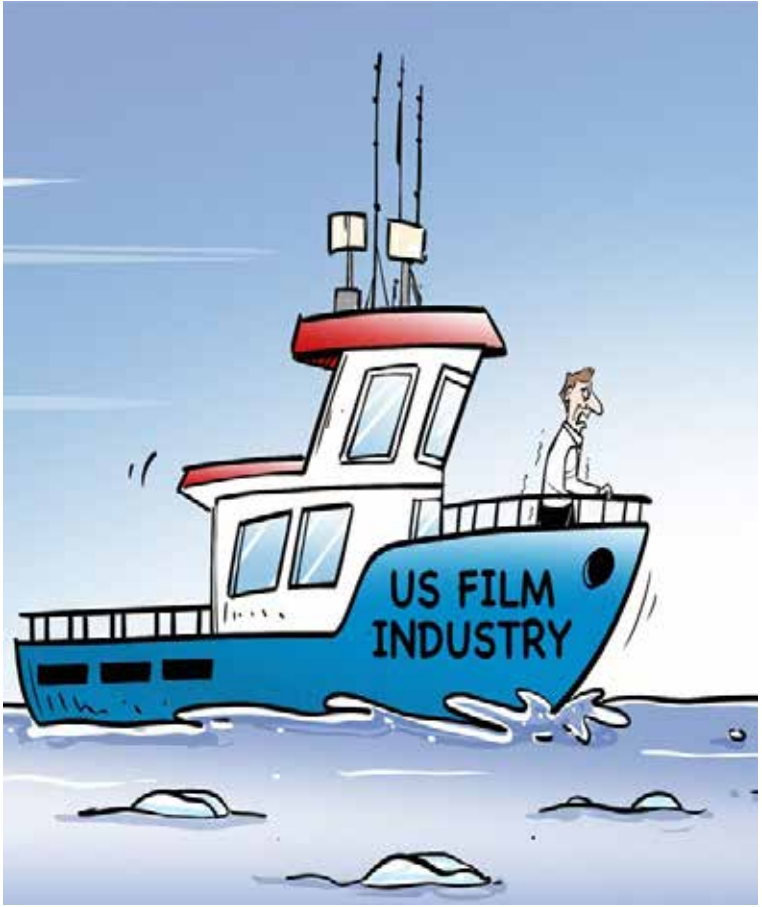
Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 06 Issue: 24

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## ‘US President bid to make his country invincible’

US President Donald Trump has unveiled an ambitious missile defense initiative known as the Golden Dome, a project aimed at shielding the United States from aerial threats, including ballistic, cruise, and hypersonic missiles. With an estimated cost of \$175 billion, the plan seeks to integrate land, sea, and space-based technologies to create a multi-layered defense system. While Trump has touted the project as a game-changer in national security, critics argue that it may be too costly and technologically unrealistic. The Golden Dome plan echoes Ronald Reagan’s Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), famously dubbed “Star Wars,” which aimed to develop space-based missile defense systems in the 1980s. Trump has positioned his plan as a continuation of Reagan’s vision, claiming that advancements in technology now make such a system feasible. The initiative would rely on hundreds of satellites to detect and intercept enemy missiles before they reach U.S. soil. Trump’s administration has earmarked \$25 billion in initial funding for the project, but experts warn that the final cost could far exceed the projected \$175 billion. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has estimated that space-based missile defense alone could cost over \$500 billion in the next two decades. Given the economic challenges facing the U.S., including inflation and national debt, many question whether such an investment is financially responsible. While Trump has promised that the Golden Dome will be operational by 2029, military analysts remain skeptical. The system would need to track and intercept missiles at various stages, including before launch, mid-flight, and final approach. This requires highly advanced sensors, AI-driven tracking systems, and rapid-response interceptors, many of which are still in development. Additionally, critics argue that Russia and China could respond by accelerating their own missile programs, potentially triggering a new arms race. The Golden Dome plan has already sparked international concerns, with China and Russia warning that it could destabilize global security. Some U.S. lawmakers, particularly Democrats, have raised concerns about transparency and the selection process for key contractors, with companies like SpaceX and Lockheed Martin expected to play a major role. Meanwhile, Canada has expressed interest in joining the initiative, signaling potential international collaboration. Trump’s Golden Dome plan represents a bold vision for U.S. defense, but its high costs, technological hurdles, and geopolitical risks make it a controversial proposal. While supporters argue that missile defense is essential in an era of growing threats, skeptics warn that the project could become another expensive experiment with uncertain results. As the debate unfolds, the U.S. must weigh the benefits of enhanced security against the financial and strategic risks of pursuing such an ambitious defense system.

# White’s blood is more red than the blood of other races

Qamar Bashir



A tale of two leaders. Ramaphosa—scolded for being “soft” on violence allegedly committed by his people. Netanyahu—celebrated for perpetrating mass violence with American weapons against an occupied people. Let us rewind history a little and examine how Asian and white refugees were treated by those nations that profess racial equality. When U.S. and NATO destroyed Iraq (2003), Libya (2011), and helped plunge Syria into endless war, they unleashed one of the largest refugee crises since World War II. Over 13 million Syrians were displaced. The bodies of children like Alan Kurdi, washed ashore on Turkish beaches, broke hearts...

ONCE upon a time, there was a land called South Africa, ruled not by its native people, but by a foreign settler minority—white colonialists—who built an inhuman and infamous system known as apartheid. Under this regime, white South Africans lived in opulence—villas, exclusive suburbs, and protected enclaves—while Black South Africans, the rightful heirs of the land, were confined to segregated, impoverished townships and were barred from entering the privileged zones without permits. They toiled in gold and diamond mines, built roads, fished, and farmed, creating the wealth that the white elite luxuriated in. And then came Nelson Mandela, a beacon of resistance. He dared to challenge this brutal system and paid the price with 27 years in prison. But history turned. Under immense internal and global pressure, the apartheid regime finally crumbled in the early 1990s. In 1994, South Africa held its first multiracial elections, Mandela was elected president, and a new era of democracy and reconciliation began. But history, as ever, is not done teaching us irony. On Wednesday, May 21, 2025, a disturbing diplomatic episode unfolded when South African President Cyril Ramaphosa visited Washington to reset U.S.–South Africa relations. But instead of a respectful bilateral engagement, the meeting was choreographed more like a royal tribunal—where Ramaphosa was treated not as a visiting head of state, but as a defendant. Under the full glare of the media and in front of Trump’s inner circle, he was subjected to a public interrogation, humiliation, and scolding—not based on verifiable facts, but on a highly edited and inflammatory video and selectively quoted Western media articles. He was charged with allowing the persecution of white South Africans of Dutch descent—Afrikaners—under what Trump labeled a “white genocide movement.” Despite Ramaphosa’s composure and the presence of his multiracial delegation—including the white agriculture minister John Steenhuisen, golf icons Ernie Els and Retief Goosen, and billionaire Johann Rupert—Trump persisted in his denunciation, reminiscent of his earlier televised humiliation of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. Trump falsely alleged: “You’re taking people’s land away from them and those people in many cases are being

executed. They’re being executed and they happen to be white.” The king Trump intoxicated with power, issued his verdict: that all white families allegedly affected by the so-called genocide would be granted fast-tracked citizenship. This starkly contradicted his broader anti-immigration policies, under which thousands of asylum seekers from Central America, the Middle East, and Africa were detained, deported, or barred at the border. While Syrian, Afghan, and African refugees were branded threats, the white Afrikaners were welcomed with open arms. Now, let us pivot to another chapter: Palestine. In 1948, following the horrors of World War II, Western powers carved out Israel in the heart of historic Palestine—a move that displaced over 750,000 Palestinians in what is known as the Nakba (catastrophe). Over decades, Israel expanded, annexing more than 85% of historic Palestine, confining Palestinians to slivers of land in Gaza and the West Bank, often surrounded by walls and military checkpoints, deprived of basic rights, water, and dignity. Then came October 7, 2023. Hamas launched a surprise attack, killing around 1,200 Israelis. But what followed was a military onslaught by Israel of such intensity that the world had not seen in decades. By May 2025, over 75,000 Palestinians, including thousands of children, were reported killed in Gaza. And how did the self-declared leader of the free world react? President Joe Biden the King at of that time, moved and apparently impressed by Israel’s genocide, flew to Tel Aviv, stood shoulder to shoulder with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and declared unwavering support for what many international observers and human rights organizations called the genocide of Palestinians. There were no red lines drawn, no threats of sanctions, and no outrage over the staggering toll of more than 75,000 Palestinian deaths. Instead, there were handshakes, pledges of solidarity, and red carpet receptions. A tale of two leaders. Ramaphosa—scolded for being “soft” on violence allegedly committed by his people. Netanyahu—celebrated for perpetrating mass violence with American weapons against an occupied people. Let us rewind history a little and examine how Asian and white refugees were treated by those nations that profess racial equality. When U.S. and NATO destroyed Iraq (2003),

Libya (2011), and helped plunge Syria into endless war, they unleashed one of the largest refugee crises since World War II. Over 13 million Syrians were displaced. The bodies of children like Alan Kurdi, washed ashore on Turkish beaches, broke hearts but didn’t move Western policy. More than 20,000 migrants have drowned in the Mediterranean since 2014, according to the International Organization for Migration. European borders closed. Camps like Moria in Greece became open-air prisons. Refugees were called “invaders” and “threats to Western civilization.” Now contrast that with Ukraine. When Russia invaded in February 2022, the Western world sprang into action. Over 8 million Ukrainian refugees were welcomed with open arms. Germany, France, Poland, and the UK offered residency, work permits, education, and healthcare almost overnight. Biden pushed for billions in aid, including a fast-track path to U.S. resettlement. Ukrainian refugees were “Europeans,” “civilized,” and “like us,” as several European officials shockingly admitted on air. Their suffering mattered more. Why this double standard? Because in the eyes of the West, especially its power centers, the value of life is racialized. White lives evoke emergency, solidarity, and action. Brown and Black lives, whether African, Arab, or South Asian, evoke suspicion, indifference, and restraint. The blood of the white man stains the conscience of the world. The blood of others barely makes headlines. And thus, we return to the hypocrisy. A world where the apartheid of South Africa is a memory to be condemned, but the apartheid in Israel, as labeled by Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, is funded and defended. A world where the United Nations resolutions on Palestine are ignored, while Russia is sanctioned for invading Ukraine. A world where Nelson Mandela is hailed, but Palestinian resistance is criminalized. History has shown us that empires fall not from external threats, but from internal contradictions—from moral bankruptcy and hypocrisy. And unless these global double standards are confronted, the West risks losing not just its credibility, but its very soul.

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# Electoral Systems of UK and Germany

Ayesha Zulfiqar



Germany’s MMP system, introduced after World War II to avoid the instability of the Weimar Republic, seeks to balance local and proportional representation. Each voter casts two votes: one for a constituency candidate (similar to FPTP) and one for a political party. Half of the Bundestag members are elected directly, while the rest are chosen from party lists to ensure proportionality

THE United Kingdom and Germany present two distinct approaches to electing their governments, each rooted in its historical and political traditions. The UK adheres to the First-Past-the-Post (FPTP) system, characterized by its simplicity and emphasis on local representation. Germany, in contrast, employs the Mixed-Member Proportional (MMP) system, which blends constituency-based elections with proportional representation to ensure a more balanced reflection of the national vote. This essay explores both electoral models, comparing their advantages and drawbacks and analyzing which system aligns more closely with democratic values such as fairness, stability, and accountability. Under the UK’s FPTP system, the country is divided into 650 constituencies, each electing one Member of Parliament (MP). Voters choose one candidate, and the individual with the most votes wins. A party must secure at least 326 seats to form a majority government. If no party meets this threshold, coalition or minority governments may emerge. The FPTP model evolved over centuries, rooted in Britain’s unwritten constitution and parliamentary tradition. It wasn’t deliberately designed for fairness but rather grew through historical precedent. One of its strongest features is its simplicity: voters cast a single vote, and the outcome is straightforward. This clarity fosters strong ties between MPs and their local communities, reinforcing accountability. The system also tends to produce majority governments, reducing the need for prolonged coalition negotiations and providing clear lines of responsibility. However, the FPTP system is not without flaws. It often produces a mismatch between the national vote share and parliamentary representation. For instance, a party can win a majority of seats without securing a majority of votes. This distorts the democratic principle of equal representation. Additionally, many votes are effectively “wasted”—either cast for losing candidates or as surplus votes for winners. Tactical voting is also common, as voters may support candidates they see as most likely to defeat their least preferred option, rather than their actual favorite. Moreover, regional imbalances arise, with certain areas overrepresented, and smaller parties find it difficult to gain

seats despite significant national support. Germany’s MMP system, introduced after World War II to avoid the instability of the Weimar Republic, seeks to balance local and proportional representation. Each voter casts two votes: one for a constituency candidate (similar to FPTP) and one for a political party. Half of the Bundestag members are elected directly, while the rest are chosen from party lists to ensure proportionality. A party must either cross the 5% national vote threshold or win at least three direct seats to gain representation. This hybrid model has multiple strengths. It ensures that parliamentary seats closely mirror the national vote, promoting fairness and inclusivity. Voters enjoy more flexibility, being able to split their votes between a preferred local candidate and a different national party. Local accountability is retained through constituency MPs, while party lists allow smaller parties with broad support to participate meaningfully in governance. This fosters political diversity and encourages coalition-building, often leading to broader consensus-based policies. Nonetheless, the MMP system is more complex, potentially confusing for voters unfamiliar with its mechanics. Government formation usually requires coalition negotiations, which can delay decision-making. To maintain proportionality, the Bundestag may expand, as seen in recent years. Despite these challenges, the system is designed to represent voter preferences more equitably. Strategic voting still occurs, but its impact is less pronounced than in FPTP systems. Additionally, the 5% threshold, though aimed at preventing fragmentation, can result in some votes not translating into seats. When it comes to representation, Germany’s MMP system outperforms the UK’s FPTP. For example, in the UK’s 2019 general election, the Green Party received over 865,000 votes but secured only one seat, whereas a Conservative candidate required only about 38,000 votes to win a seat. Germany’s proportional system ensures a closer correlation between votes and seats, enhancing democratic fairness. In terms of government stability, the UK often produces single-party majorities capable of decisive action. However, coalition-building in Germany, while slower, generally results in durable, inclusive governance. Thus, the UK has the edge in decisiveness,

while Germany excels in creating stable power-sharing arrangements. Regarding voter accountability, the UK’s FPTP system strengthens the link between constituents and their MPs, as each MP serves a specific area. Germany preserves this link partially through its direct vote, though the party list system can dilute individual accountability. Therefore, the UK leads in personal representation, while Germany offers wider national representation. Both systems have mechanisms to discourage extremism. The UK’s system tends to marginalize fringe parties due to its winner-takes-all nature. Germany uses a 5% threshold to filter out minor parties unless they gain genuine support. While both approaches are effective, Germany’s is more deliberate and flexible. In terms of voter engagement, Germany consistently sees higher turnout rates (around 70–80%) compared to the UK (65–70%). This is likely because most votes in Germany contribute to the final result, increasing the sense of voter efficacy. Thus, Germany’s system encourages greater democratic participation. On the issue of reform, the UK theoretically has more legal flexibility to change its electoral laws, but reforms are rare due to political resistance and tradition. Germany, in contrast, has consistently updated its electoral system to improve fairness and address systemic flaws, such as the growing size of the Bundestag due to overhang seats. Ultimately, the superiority of one system over the other depends on which democratic values one prioritizes. Germany’s MMP system is superior in ensuring fair representation, voter engagement, and political diversity. It accommodates a wider array of political voices and ensures that nearly every vote counts toward shaping governance. On the other hand, the UK’s FPTP system delivers clarity, simplicity, and strong local accountability, making it effective for decisive governance and constituency service. While both systems are effective within their own political and cultural contexts, Germany’s approach arguably better reflects modern democratic ideals by combining proportional fairness with local representation. Still, there is no one-size-fits-all solution—electoral systems are products of history, culture, and national priorities.

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## Briefs

## Govt vows decisive action...

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He further stated that following the failure of Operation Sindoor, India instructed its proxies to carry out attacks in Balochistan. Captain (retd) Agha added that the Pakistani state has the capability to eliminate those involved and asserted that after failing to strike hard targets, these elements have now turned to soft targets. Reaffirming the state's resolve, he concluded: "Our response will be decisive. They will not succeed." For his part, DG ISPR Lt Gen Chaudhry said that Pakistan had provided evidence of Indian-sponsored terrorism to the United Nations in 2015, and again in 2019. He added that in 2009, the Government of Pakistan had also presented similar evidence to the Indian Prime Minister in Sharm El Sheikh, a city in Egypt. He said that India had been involved in state-sponsored terrorism for the past 20 years, and this record was now being placed before the public. Lt Gen Chaudhry reminded the world that Indian spy Kulbhushan Jadhav was arrested from Pakistan, while several captured terrorists had confessed to receiving support from India. Lt Gen Chaudhry said that India wanted to sabotage regional peace, and the attack on May 21 was carried out by Fitna al-Hindustan on direct orders from India. He termed this as the "terrorist and brutal face of India" and clarified that these attacks had nothing to do with Baloch or Pakistani identity. He said that on April 12, 2024, 12 labourers were martyred in Nushki. On April 28, two labourers were killed in Tump Kech. On February 14, 10 people lost their lives in an IED blast in Harnai. Innocent civilians and off-duty security personnel were martyred in the Jaffer Express attack, while three innocent barbers were martyred in Lasbela on May 9, he mentioned. Six children were martyred in the Khuzdar attack on May 21, and 51 children were still fighting for their lives, he added. He said that terrorists, acting on Indian instructions, were now targeting women and children. However, the resilience of the people of Balochistan could not be broken. Videos of the families of those martyred in Balochistan were shown during the press conference.

## Indian designs will never...

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"Kulbhushan Jadhav's arrest from Balochistan is clear manifestation of India's involvement in terrorism. Militants Gulzar Imam Shambe and Sarfaraz Bangulzai have confessed to Indian patronage," he maintained. Even during Operation Marqae-Haq, 33 attacks took place in Balochistan which were foiled by security agencies, he added. Attaullah Tatar announced that Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir were determined to uproot the scourge of terrorism and make Balochistan a cradle of peace. He said that the DG ISPR has also presented evidences of India's involvement in terrorist acts inside Pakistan.

## Belligerent posturing...

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"The remarks, replete with distortions, misrepresentations, and inflammatory rhetoric, are clearly aimed at stoking regional tensions for narrow political gains," the Foreign Office said. Modi was referring to the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), negotiated by the World Bank in 1960, which was among a slew of measures announced by India against Pakistan last month after the April 22 attack that killed 26 men, mostly Hindu tourists. New Delhi accused Islamabad of the attack without presenting evidence and launched missile strikes on Pakistani cities, triggering the worst military clashes in nearly 30 years before both sides agreed to a ceasefire on May 10.

## Pak Volleyball Federation unveils ambitious int'l calendar for 2024

*Chaudhry Yaqoob emphasized the need for strong governmental support, stating that without state backing, it would be challenging to consistently raise Pakistan's profile internationally*

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Pakistan Volleyball Federation (PVF), Chaudhry Muhammad Yaqoob, held a press conference to outline the federation's international participation plans for the year 2024. Despite limited resources, Pakistan is set to participate in seven major international volleyball events, demonstrating its commitment to elevating the sport and promoting the country's image on the global stage.

One of the most significant announcements was the visit of the Russian national volleyball team, which will tour Pakistan from June 23 to 27. This historic tour is expected to boost bilateral sporting ties and offer valuable exposure to the national team. Chaudhry Yaqoob emphasized the need for strong governmental support, stating that without state backing, it would be challenging to consistently raise Pakistan's profile internationally. "Governmental assistance is vital if we are to continue making Pakistan proud on the world stage," he said.

He also announced that the national senior team will participate in the Central Asian Volleyball League in Uzbekistan starting May 29, and later in the Asian Nations Cup in Bahrain. The U-16 national team will tour Uzbekistan and Thailand in June and July, while the U-19 team will make its debut at the World Championship to be held in Uzbekistan from July 24 to August 3. In addition, Pakistan's junior team is set to participate in the Asian Youth Games, marking another step in the federation's

strategy to develop young talent. Chaudhry Yaqoob highlighted the talent emerging from Pakistan, saying, "Our young players are immensely talented, and many of them are already playing in international volleyball leagues." He credited the federation's efforts for this success and expressed optimism about the future of volleyball in Pakistan. The PVF's roadmap reflects an ambitious vision to place Pakistan firmly on the international volleyball map, nurturing future stars and expanding the country's footprint in global competitions.

## PVF hoping for good results in 2025 International events



## OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Volleyball Federation (PVF) Chairman Chaudhry Muhammad Yaqoob has expressed optimism for a promising year ahead, as Pakistan's junior and senior national volleyball teams are set to participate in seven major international competitions in 2025. Speaking at a press conference at the Pakistan Sports Complex in Islamabad, Chaudhry Yaqoob said the year's packed international calendar is a reflection of

the sport's growing stature and development in Pakistan. He underscored the need for increased investment and consistent government support, adding, "We are doing our best to send our teams abroad despite limited resources, but to truly excel, we need stronger backing from the authorities." Providing event details, Yaqoob shared that the Pakistan Senior Men's Volleyball Team will take part in two major events: the CAVA Nations League, scheduled from 29 May to 4 June 2025 in Fergana, Uzbekistan, for which the

team departs on 27 May, and the AVC Men's Nations Cup, to be held from 17 to 24 June 2025 in Bahrain. These competitions feature top Asian teams and offer Pakistan a key opportunity to demonstrate its progress on the continental stage. Meanwhile, the Pakistan U16 Men's Team is set to compete in the CAVA U16 Men's Volleyball Championship from 10 to 16 June 2025 in Uzbekistan, followed by the 2nd Asian U16 Men's Volleyball Championship from 20 to 27 July 2025 in Nakhon Pathom, Thailand. These events are

part of PVF's long-term youth development strategy aimed at grooming future talent. The Pakistan U19 Men's Team will also have a busy year, participating in the FIVB U19 World Championship, which will take place from 24 July to 3 August 2025 in Uzbekistan. Pakistan qualified for this prestigious global event after a strong performance in the Asian Championship. The team will also compete in the 3rd Asian Youth Games, scheduled for 22 to 31 October 2025 in Bahrain, providing another vital platform for young players to gain experience and boost international rankings. Additionally, both the Senior Men's and Women's Teams will represent Pakistan at the 6th Islamic Solidarity Games, to be held from 7 to 21 November 2025 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The inclusion of the women's team highlights PVF's commitment to developing the women's game in parallel with the men's program. The PVF remains hopeful that these international participations will not only enhance skill level of national players but also raise Pakistan's profile in the global volleyball community.

## Lahore Qalandars end Karachi Kings' PSL X journey

Lahore Qalandars will face Islamabad United in eliminator 2 to battle for tournament's final

ABDULLAH Shafique's fifty powered Lahore Qalandars to seal a six-wicket victory over Karachi Kings in the Pakistan Super League (PSL) 10's Eliminator 1 played at Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium on Thursday. The defeat marked the end of the Kings' campaign, while Qalandars advance further and will take on defending champions Islamabad United in the Eliminator 2, scheduled to be played at the same venue on Friday. Chasing a daunting 191-run target, the Qalandars comfortably knocked the winning runs for the loss of just four wickets and eight balls to spare. The hosts had a steady start to the pursuit as Fakhar Zaman and Mohammad Naeem put together 42 runs for the first wicket until the latter fell victim to Hasan Ali in the fifth over. Naeem scored 14 off 12 deliveries with the help of one four and a six. Fakhar then shared a brief 33-run partnership for the second wicket with Abdullah Shafique until Fawad Ali dismissed him in the ninth over. The left-handed opener remained a notable run-getter for Qalandars with a 28-ball 47, laced with five fours and three sixes. Following his dismissal, Shafique took the reins of Qalandars' run chase with a well-crafted half-century until walking back to the dug-out in the 16th over when the home side needed a further 33 runs from 28 deliveries. Shafique remained the top-scorer for the Qalandars with a 35-ball 65, studded with three fours and five sixes. He also shared an anchoring 83-run partnership for the third wicket with Kusal Perera, who made a vital contribution with a 24-ball 30. For Kings, Hasan Ali led the way with two wickets, while Fawad Ali and Mir Hamza chipped in with one scalp apiece. Opting to bat first in the must-win clash, the Kings accumulated 190/8 in 20 overs. The Kings got off to a decent start to their innings as openers Warner and Tim Seifert laid a solid foundation for a big total by putting together 43 runs at a brisk pace. Seifert was dismissed by Qalandars captain Shaheen Shah Afridi in the fourth over after scoring an eight-ball 16, laced with three boundaries. — Agencies

## Mountaineer Naila Kiani conquers Kanchenjunga, nears historic 14-peak goal

Pakistani mountaineer marks her 12th summit as she scales world's third-highest peak

KARACHI: Pakistan's top and most successful female mountaineer Naila Kiani has scaled Kanchenjunga, the world's third-highest peak, marking her 12th summit above 8,000 metres. With her latest feat, Kiani has moved closer to her dream of joining the elite group of women who have conquered all 14 of the world's highest mountains. Standing at 8,586m (28,169 feet), Kanchenjunga straddles the border between India and Nepal and is also the tallest peak in India. However, it is not permitted to climb the mountain from the Indian side. Naila Kiani began her final ascent from Camp IV on Thursday evening and successfully reached the summit at around 6am PKT, hoisting Pakistan's flag at the top of the world's third highest, Nepal's second highest and India's highest peak. According to her basecamp team, the final summit push began at approximately 6:30pm PKT and continued through the night in severe high-altitude conditions, including intense snowfall and sub-zero temperatures. Despite the challenges, Kiani remained firm and reached the summit, driven by unshakable determination. "From Pakistan to Kanchenjunga, this summit is not just a personal milestone, it's a message to every girl and woman in Pakistan and beyond: you are stronger than you think," said Kiani, in a message shared via her team. "I'm proud and I'm grateful, but the journey is far from over. Pakistan, this is for you." With this achievement, Kiani becomes the only Pakistani woman to summit 12 of the 14 peaks above 8,000m. — Agencies



ISLAMABAD: Governor KPK Faisal Karim Kundi holds important discussion with Minister Railway Muhammad Hanif Abbasi at his office. — DNA

## Milan star Pulisic to skip USA's summer games

LOS ANGELES: USA captain Christian Pulisic has pulled out of his country's final tournament ahead of the 2026 World Cup citing a need for rest. Mauricio Pochettino's USA will compete in the CONCACAF Gold Cup in June after playing friendly matches in the States against Switzerland and Turkey. AC Milan winger Pulisic was not named in the 27-man squad and US Soccer technical director Matt

Crocker said his absence had been requested. "Christian and his team approached the Federation and the coaching staff about the possibility of stepping back this summer, given the amount of matches he has played in the past two years at both the club and international level with very little break," Crocker said in a statement. "After thoughtful discussions and careful consideration, we made the collective

decision that this is the right moment for him to get the rest he needs. The objective is to ensure he's fully prepared to perform at the highest level next season," he added. Pulisic is one of several regular Europe-based starters who will be missing the upcoming games — West on McKennie and Tim Weah are unavailable as their Italian club Juventus is playing in the Club World Cup, while Borussia Dortmund's Giovanni Reyna is also part of that tournament. Pochettino defended the decision to back Pulisic's desire to gain some recovery time. "Many people can say it's really important for us to be all together for the last time before the World Cup. — Agencies

## 'India can block Pakistan's water is...

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after the April 22 attack that killed 26 men, mostly Hindu tourists. Lt Gen Chaudhry emphasised the unity and resilience of the Pakistani people. "If you go into the streets and cities of Pakistan, you will find the answer written on the faces of the people," he said, adding that the conflict is not just political or military, but a battle of truth and principle.

## UNSC condemns 'heinous'...

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position that "any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation, wherever, whenever and by whomsoever committed." As the investigation into the Khuzdar attack continues, Pakistan's authorities have vowed to bring those responsible to justice. Following the incident, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir expressed the resolve that time has come for Pakistan to show unwavering national resolve, similar to that demonstrated against Indian aggression, to eliminate foreign-sponsored terrorism and bring the fight to a decisive conclusion. "Pakistan's security forces and law enforcement agencies will relentlessly pursue all those involved in this barbaric act," the prime minister was quoted as saying in the official statement during his day-long visit to Quetta to review the law-and-order situation following the terror attack.

## Pakistan extends airspace ban

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prompting a reciprocal ban from Islamabad the next day. India then took several other measures against Pakistan. Later, on May 6-7, India launched unprovoked attacks on multiple Pakistani cities. In response, the armed forces of Pakistan launched a large-scale retaliatory military action, named "Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos", and targeted several Indian military installations across multiple regions on May 10. Pakistan's response led to the mobilisation of the global powers, following which a ceasefire was reached, which remains intact. While India's aviation industry has faced heavy losses, the impact on Pakistani aviation has been minimal. With only one eastbound flight rerouted via China and limited operations in the Far East, Pakistan's aviation sector remains largely unaffected.

## Yunus 'not going to step down'

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The South Asian nation has been in political turmoil since the student-led revolt that toppled then-prime minister Sheikh Hasina in August 2024, with parties protesting on the streets over a string of demands. "For the sake of Bangladesh and a peaceful democratic transition, Professor Yunus needs to remain in office," Faiz Ahmad Taiyeb, a special assistant to Yunus, and head of the Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology, said in a post on Facebook. "The Chief Adviser is not going to step down," he added. "He does not hanker after power." He later deleted his post. Bangladesh's political crisis has escalated this week, with rival parties protesting on the streets of the capital Dhaka with a string of competing demands. Yunus's reported threat to stand down came after thousands of supporters of the powerful BNP rallied in Dhaka on Wednesday, holding large-scale protests against the interim government for the first time.

## Brave Police foil terror...

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He also said the nation is proud of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police and CTD teams, who continue to fight terrorism with courage and dedication.

## From Caliphate to Kingdom - The Evolution of Power



TANVEER HUSSAIN

DURING the First World War, the Ottoman Empire sided with Germany, but unfortunately, Germany was defeated. This period proved to be extremely challenging for Turkey. As a consequence of siding with Germany, the Western powers became deeply antagonistic towards Turkey and collectively launched military action against it. The British government attacked Turkey in an effort to strip it of its Arab territories. Britain sent troops from its colony, India, and initially launched an offensive against Iraq. When the British forces arrived in Iraq, the Ottoman army chose

to retreat rather than resist. The cowardice of the soldiers infuriated the Ottoman Caliph, who initiated disciplinary actions against military officers for their dereliction of duty and cowardly retreat. In response, the provinces of Basra, Karbala, and Najaf, backed by Iran, rebelled. These rebels welcomed the British forces by waving white flags. Consequently, all areas under Iranian influence came under British control. However, the Ottoman army made great efforts to defend Baghdad and successfully prevented the British from capturing it. After failing to take Baghdad, Britain shifted its focus to Egypt, a major strategic move against the Ottomans. At that time, the Hijaz region was under the administration of the Sharif of Mecca, who had been appointed by the Ottoman Empire. The British government approached Sharif Hussein bin Ali (the Sharif of Mecca) with an offer: if he rebelled against the Ottoman central government and seized control of Hijaz, they would support him in becoming the emperor of all Arab lands. They promised full support. Seeing an opportunity, Hussein

bin Ali declared a rebellion against the Ottoman Empire on June 10, 1916, with British support. Britain provided him with naval and artillery assistance to expel the Ottomans from Arab regions. In the early stages of the rebellion, the rebels captured Mecca, Jeddah, and Taif. T.E. Lawrence, better known as Lawrence of Arabia, was a British spy who played a key role in uniting Arab tribes and training them in guerrilla warfare. With British support, Sharif Hussein bin Ali's forces gradually took control of most of Hijaz. The Ottomans made several unsuccessful attempts to reclaim Jeddah, Mecca, and Medina. In 1917, the rebels captured Aqaba, and in 1918, Damascus also fell into their hands—marking a major victory for Sharif Hussein. He declared himself "Caliph of the Muslims," but the broader Islamic world rejected this claim. Meanwhile, under the Sykes-Picot Agreement and the Balfour Declaration, Britain and France divided the Middle East into colonial territories. As part of this arrangement, Sharif Hussein's son Faisal was made king of Iraq and Abdullah

king of Jordan. However, the Muslim world was deeply unsettled by Sharif Hussein's control over Hijaz. At the same time, a prominent religious scholar, Sheikh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab, was leading a reformist movement aimed at purging religious innovations and restoring original Islamic principles in the sacred land of Hijaz. The House of Saud strongly supported this movement. Eventually, an alliance was formed between the two parties, with the goal of establishing a powerful state grounded in Islamic reform. It was agreed that the House of Saud, with help from the Ikhwān (religious warriors), would expel Sharif of Mecca from Hijaz and then establish an Islamic state under the guidance of Sheikh Abdul Wahhab. Although Sharif of Mecca had gained control over large parts of the Arab world, he was an unpopular ruler with little public support. This situation worked in favor of the Saudis, who presented a popular narrative of establishing an Islamic state. In 1924–1925, Abdulaziz Al Saud launched a campaign against Sharif of Mecca, alongside the Ikhwān.

They attacked Hijaz and took control of Mecca, Medina, and Taif, effectively ending Sharif Hussein's rule in the region. For a few years, Hijaz and Najd were governed separately. Then, on September 23, 1932, Abdulaziz unified both regions and declared the establishment of a new state called Al-Mamlakah Al-Arabiyah As-Sa'udiyah—the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The newly founded Saudi state adopted the Qur'an and Sunnah as its constitution. Sharia courts were established, and Islamic rulings and punishments were enforced. The discovery of oil greatly improved the Saudi economy. The government expanded the Masjid al-Haram in Mecca and the Prophet's Mosque in Medina, along with other mosques. Comprehensive arrangements were made for Hajj and Umrah, including roads, hotels, transport, and security services. Saudi Arabia extended generous support to Muslims fighting for freedom across the world, including Palestine. Despite political disagreements, the truth remains that Saudi Arabia has consistently played an important role in the welfare of the Muslim world.



## Briefs

## Rupee gains 09 paise against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Friday appreciated by 09 paise against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 281.97 against the previous day's closing of Rs 282.06. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 282.65 and Rs 284.15, respectively. The price of the Euro decreased by 38 paise to close at Rs 319.74 against the last day's closing of Rs 319.36, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen came down by 01 paise and closed at Rs1.96, whereas an increase of Rs 1.36 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 380.18 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 378.82. The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal decreased by 02 each to close at Rs 76.77 and Rs 75.17, respectively.—APP

## Documentary film on Xinjiang cotton farmers wins acclaim

BEIJING: "Fabric of Lives," a documentary film that follows two cotton-planting families in northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, has drawn widespread acclaim for its portrayal of local farmers' resilience and harmonious co-existence. The documentary, which hit screens nationwide on May 7, employs a cinéma vérité approach to chronicle the two families' journey of overcoming various challenges and ultimately achieving a bountiful cotton harvest in Awat County, known as the home of premium Chinese long staple cotton. The production team embedded cinematographers with the farming households, capturing daily life through an observational lens while letting authentic events dictate the narrative flow, according to Liu Guoyi, the film's director. "Throughout our months-long shoot, we shared meals and living spaces with the two families, and were deeply moved by their hard-working spirit," said Liu Yang, the film's producer. As one of the world's key cotton-producing regions, Xinjiang's cotton cultivation and processing, as well as its cotton textile industry, have been crucial pillars of prosperity for people of all ethnic groups in the region.—APP

## Business community demand withdrawal of tax ordinance

RAWALPINDI: The 17th All Pakistan Chambers Presidents Conference 2025, organized by the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI), concluded at the Mövenpick Hotel Centaurus in Islamabad. Over 70 chamber presidents, government officials, and business leaders attended the conference to discuss Pakistan's economic scenario and propose a roadmap for sustainable development. The conference demanded the immediate withdrawal of the tax ordinance, terming it a "killer for the economy." The business community also recommended gradual reduction in GST to 10% and corporate tax to 25%. Other key proposals included simplifying tax filing, reducing withholding tax on exports, and providing incentives for new exporters. The conference proposed special incentives for sectors like textiles, IT, agriculture, and pharmaceuticals, including tax exemptions and export rebates. A five-year formal economy inclusion program for SMEs was also proposed, offering tax concessions and subsidized financing facilities for new filers. RCCI President Usman Shaukat emphasized the need to broaden the tax base instead of burdening existing taxpayers. Group Leader Sohail Altaf called for a sound national economic policy and an end to frequent issuance of SROs. Chairman APCPC Rashid Wane urged the government to include the chamber's proposals in the upcoming federal budget.—APP



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of International Monetary Fund led by Jihad Azour called on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## Gillani envisions robust Pak-Africa partnership rooted in shared aspirations

The event was attended by Deputy Chairman Senate Syedaal Khan, PML-N Parliamentary Leader Senator Irfan-ul-Haq Siddiqui, PTI Parliamentary Leader Senator Syed Ali Zafar, PPP Parliamentary Leader Senator Sherry Rehman, Senator Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar, and members of the National Assembly, along with African diplomats and dignitaries

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani on Thursday reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to deepening strategic, multi-faceted ties with the African continent, describing Africa as a vital partner in Pakistan's present and future diplomatic, economic, and developmental vision. Addressing a distinguished gathering on Pakistan-Africa Friendship Day at the Parliament House, Chairman Gilani warmly welcomed dignitaries including Mohamed Karmoune, Dean of African Missions and Ambassador of Morocco; Mohamed Yahya, UN Resident Coordinator; as well as ambassadors, high commissioners, parliamentarians, and diplomatic representatives from African nations. Describing the presence of African dignitaries as a testament to the strong fraternal bonds, Gilani recalled

Pakistan's historic support for African nations during their independence movements. "Our shared colonial past has shaped a mutual consciousness and solidarity that transcends time," he said. He noted that many African leaders once traveled under Pakistani passports during times of diplomatic isolation, raising voices for their nations at global platforms—underscoring Pakistan's unwavering commitment to justice and international cooperation. Gilani highlighted the evolution of Pakistan-Africa relations—from political solidarity to vibrant cooperation in peacebuilding, trade, and development. Observing Pakistan-Africa Friendship Day, he added, reflects the shared aspirations and enduring nature of this relationship. Referring to Pakistan's Engage Africa Policy, he said the country has expanded diplomatic missions, signed new bilateral agreements, and enhanced trade volumes, which crossed USD

5.45 billion in FY 2023–24. Key exports include rice, textiles, and pharmaceuticals, while valuable imports from African partners contribute to Pakistan's economy. He stressed the importance of South-South Cooperation, not as an ideology but as a pragmatic framework for development. Citing his participation in the Third South-South Parliamentary Dialogue Forum in Morocco, he said such forums enable the Global South to share solutions and reduce trade barriers. Gilani also invited African parliamentary leaders to actively join the Inter-Parliamentary Speakers' Conference (ISC), where he was recently elected founding chairman, aimed at promoting equitable partnerships and dialogue within the Global South. Highlighting shared challenges—poverty, food insecurity, health crises, education, and climate change—he emphasized the opportunities these issues present. "Africa's youthful pop-

ulation and abundant resources align naturally with Pakistan's strengths in agriculture, IT, and pharmaceuticals," he said. Gilani expressed Pakistan's readiness to expand cooperation in defense, renewable energy, infrastructure, education, and agriculture, citing successful examples such as Nigeria's acquisition of JF-17 fighter jets, Zimbabwe's procurement of Super Mushshak aircraft, and the resumption of Ethiopian Airlines flights to Karachi. He underlined the Senate's commitment to strengthening parliamentary diplomacy through friendship groups, exchange programs, and collaborative initiatives. The Senate, he said, had officially passed a resolution to commemorate Pakistan-Africa Friendship Day, demonstrating Pakistan's intent to elevate ties with Africa. Gilani lauded the efforts of African ambassadors and high commissioners based in Islamabad for their critical

role in strengthening bilateral relations. "Let us renew our collective commitment to building a strategic and enduring Pakistan-Africa partnership," he concluded. Also addressing the gathering, Misbah Khar, Adviser to the Chairman Senate, emphasized the Upper House's focus on enhancing inter-parliamentary collaboration in key sectors like agriculture, defense, food security, and climate resilience. She noted that institutional partnerships are essential to overcoming shared challenges.

The event was attended by Deputy Chairman Senate Syedaal Khan, PML-N Parliamentary Leader Senator Irfan-ul-Haq Siddiqui, PTI Parliamentary Leader Senator Syed Ali Zafar, PPP Parliamentary Leader Senator Sherry Rehman, Senator Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar, and members of the National Assembly, along with African diplomats and dignitaries.

## Confronted challenges in cooking oil, ghee sector discussed

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Industries and Production Haroon Akhtar Khan on Friday held a detailed discussion with representatives of Pakistan Vanaspati Manufacturers Association (PVMA) on the issues and challenges faced by the cooking oil and ghee sector. During a meeting with PVMA Chairman Sheikh Umar Rehan, he said the government was fully aware of the issues being faced by the ghee sector and committed to not putting the industry under any additional pressure, a news release said. Secretary of the Ministry of Industries and Production Saif Anjum and representatives of the ghee industry were also present in the meeting. Haroon Akhtar assured that all outstanding dues would be paid promptly, adding, "The government will ensure the timely disbursement of all pending payments." While acknowledging that cash disbursements take time, he emphasized that efforts would be made to expedite the process. The SAPM also highlighted the government's recent efforts in supporting low-income families, saying "Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif successfully delivered the Ramadan package directly to deserving households." He reiterated the Ministry's commitment to resolving the industry's concerns and emphasized, adding the government was committed to taking every possible step for the facilitation of the business community.—APP

## New vaccination centres to serve undeserved population

ISLAMABAD: The World Health Organization (WHO), in partnership with the Government of Pakistan has started building prefabricated vaccination centres in underserved areas across the country. WHO has built 13 prefabricated vaccination centres and initiated the procurement process to deliver further 13 additional facilities to serve a population of over 750,000 people. These 26 centres—funded by GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance—represent the first batch of prefabricated facilities to be built over a three-year period as part of a plan, led by the Federal Directorate of Immunization (FDI) and its Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI), to progressively expand vaccination and basic health care infrastructure across the country. In addition to providing access to lifesaving vaccines, the centres will offer essential health care services to populations that previously lacked access due to factors such as distance to the nearest public health facility and absence of transportation.—APP

## Turkiye to provide Syria with 2b cubic meters of gas annually

DAMASCUS: Turkiye will provide 2 billion cubic meters of natural gas to Syria each year, Turkish energy minister Alparslan Bayraktar said on Thursday. In a joint news conference with his Syrian counterpart in Damascus, Bayraktar said that Turkiye's gas exports to Syria will contribute to an additional 1,300 megawatts of electricity production in the country. Ankara, which supported rebel forces in neighboring Syria throughout the 13-year civil war that ended this month with the ousting of Bashar Assad, is now positioning itself to play a major role in Syria's reconstruction. Turkiye will also provide an additional 1,000 megawatts of electricity to neighboring Syria for its short term needs, he added. Syrian Energy Minister Mohammed Al-Bashir said they agreed to activate a gas pipeline that connects Syria with Turkiye, with gas flows expected in June. "This will significantly boost electricity generation, which will positively impact the Syrian people's electricity needs," Al-Bashir said.—APP

## FGP, ICCI sign MoU for sustainable economic empowerment

ISLAMABAD: In a landmark development for sustainable economic empowerment and environmental responsibility, Freedom Gate Prosperity (FGP) and the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at the ICCI headquarters on Friday. The MoU was formally signed by Muhammad Anwar, CEO of FGP, and Nasir M. Qureshi, President of ICCI. Also present on the occasion were former ICCI President Aamir Waheed; Executive Members Faisal Muzammal and Atiq-ur-Rehman, Advisor to the President Naeem Siddiqui; FGP Board Director Urooj Raza Sayyami and representatives from FGP, including Farhan Javadi, Shafqat Aziz, and Amna Kayani. The MoU establishes a strategic partnership between the two organizations to promote youth and women entrepreneurship in collaboration with academic institutions, conduct skills-based training programs, and work jointly on climate resilience efforts. A flagship initiative under this partnership is the "Clean Islamabad" campaign, through which both parties aim to eliminate the use of plastic bags and promote sustainable, plastic-free alternatives. The collaboration will also include policy dialogues, the development of green business models, research support, and capacity-building activities. Speaking on the occasion, Nasir M. Qureshi, President of ICCI, stated: "This partnership is a timely step toward inclusive growth and environmental stewardship. ICCI strongly believes in supporting initiatives that empower youth and women entrepreneurs while promoting responsible business practices. Our collaboration with FGP reflects our shared commitment to a cleaner, greener, and economically stronger Islamabad." Muhammad Anwar, CEO of FGP, expressed his gratitude for ICCI's proactive vision and stated: "This MoU marks a meaningful beginning for collaborative, people-centered development. FGP believes that true empowerment comes when economic opportunity is linked with sustainability.—DNA



UZBAKISTAN: The Turkish business community delegation led by President of the Tape Aid Association of Turkey led by Ms. Holya visited Uzbekistan. Vice President of the Tape Aid Association of Turkey Nizamtin Dursun and other officials and members were present on this occasion.

## Hezbollah seeks boost in Lebanon vote as disarmament calls grow

NABATIEH: Amid the rubble left by Israeli bombardment of south Lebanon, campaign posters urge support for Hezbollah in elections on Saturday as the group aims to show it retains political clout despite the pounding it took in last year's war. For Hezbollah, the local vote is more important than ever, coinciding with mounting calls for its disarmament and continued Israeli airstrikes, and as many of its Shiite Muslim constituents still suffer the repercussions of the conflict. Three rounds of voting already held this month have gone well for the Iran-backed group. In the south, many races won't be contested, handing Hezbollah and its allies early wins. "We will vote with blood," said Ali Tabaja, 21, indicating loyalty to Hezbollah. He'll be voting in the city of Nabatieh rather than his village of Adaiseh because it is destroyed. "It's a desert," he said. The

south's rubble-strewn landscape reflects the devastating impact of the war, which began when Hezbollah opened fire in support of Hamas at the start in October 2023 of the Gaza conflict and culminated in a major Israeli offensive. Hezbollah emerged a shadow of its former self, with its leaders and thousands of its fighters killed, its influence over the Lebanese state greatly diminished, and its Lebanese opponents gaining sway. In a measure of how far the tables have turned, the new government has declared it aims to establish a state monopoly on arms, meaning Hezbollah should disarm—as stipulated by the US-brokered ceasefire with Israel. Against this backdrop, the election results so far indicate "the war didn't achieve the objective of downgrading Hezbollah's popularity in the community," said Mohamad Hage Ali of the Carnegie Middle East Center, a think

tank. "On the contrary, many Shia now feel their fate is tied to Hezbollah's fate." Hezbollah's arms have long been a source of division in Lebanon, sparking a brief civil conflict in 2008. Critics say Hezbollah has unilaterally dragged Lebanon into hostilities. Foreign Minister Youssef Raji, a Hezbollah opponent, has said that Lebanon has been told there will be no reconstruction aid from foreign donors until the state establishes a monopoly on arms. Hezbollah, in turn, has put the onus on the government over reconstruction and accuses it of failing to take steps on that front, despite promises that the government is committed to it. Hage Ali said that conditioning reconstruction aid on disarmament was intended to expedite the process, but "it's difficult to see Hezbollah accepting this." Hezbollah says its weapons are now gone from the south, but links any

discussion of its remaining arsenal to Israel's withdrawal from five positions it still holds, and an end to Israeli attacks. Israel says Hezbollah still has combat infrastructure including rocket launchers in the south, calling this "blatant violations of understandings between Israel and Lebanon." A French diplomatic source said reconstruction would not materialize if Israel continues striking and the Lebanese government does not act fast enough on disarmament. Donors also want Beirut to enact economic reforms. Hashem Haider, head of the government's Council for the South, said the state lacks the funds to rebuild, but cited progress in rubble removal. Lebanon needs \$11 billion for reconstruction and recovery, the World Bank estimates. In Nabatieh, a pile of rubble marks the spot where 71-year-old Khalil

Tarhini's store once stood. It was one of dozens destroyed by Israeli bombardment in Nabatieh's central market. He has received no compensation, and sees little point in voting. Expressing a sense of abandonment, he said: "The state did not stand by us." The situation was very different in 2006, after a previous Hezbollah-Israel war. Aid flowed from Iran and Gulf Arab states. Hezbollah says it has aided 400,000 people, paying for rent, furniture and renovations. But the funds at its disposal appear well short of 2006, recipients say. Hezbollah says state authorities have obstructed funds arriving from Iran, though Tehran is also more financially strapped than two decades ago due to tougher US sanctions and the reimposition of a "maximum pressure" policy by Washington.—Agencies



## Briefs

Türkiye  
attracts  
10.59M  
tourists

ISTANBUL: Türkiye hosted 10.59 million foreign tourists in the first four months of 2025, according to official figures released on Friday. The number of foreign arrivals in January-April fell by 0.6% compared to the same period last year, the Culture and Tourism Ministry's data showed. Istanbul, Türkiye's largest city by population and a top tourist destination, welcomed 50.4% of all foreign visitors, or nearly 5.34 million, in the four-month period. It was followed by the Mediterranean resort city of Antalya, and Edirne in north-western Türkiye, which borders both Bulgaria and Greece. As for the nationalities of foreign tourists, Germany took the first place with a 10.8% share, over the same period, followed by Russia and Iran. In April alone, 3.9 million foreigners visited Türkiye, up 8% on a yearly basis. — Agencies

CDWP  
approves  
seven  
projects

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives/Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Friday chaired a meeting of the Central Development Working Party (CDWP) that approved seven different development projects worth Rs 1.04 billion. "Out of these, four projects with a cumulative cost of Rs 8 billion were approved at the CDWP level. Additionally, three major projects, amounting to approximately Rs96 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 Awaiz Manzoor Sumra, along with the Chief Economist, 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 two projects related to industries and Commerce namely "1000 Industrial Stitching Units (Phase-II)" worth Rs 1950 million and "Acquisition of Land for Establishment of SME Facilitation Centers at Various Locations" worth Rs1250 million. It okayed two projects related to Information Technology namely "Development of Pakistan Lunar Exploration Rover (PLEXR) for Chang'E-8 Mission" worth Rs2535 million and "Pakistan Manned Space Mission" worth Rs2243.20 million.

Brave Police  
foil terror  
attack in  
Bannu

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi praised the bravery and professionalism of Pakistan's security forces after they successfully stopped a terrorist attack in Bannu and killed three terrorists in Mianwali. According to the minister, police officers in Bannu bravely fought with a group of terrorists, preventing a serious attack on a police checkpoint. He applauded their courage and quick action. In a separate operation in Mianwali, officials from the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) confronted terrorists and killed three of them. Minister Naqvi said the CTD team showed great skill and bravery, and they deserve full credit for their success. He also said the nation is proud of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police and CTD teams, who continue to fight terrorism with courage and dedication.

## Poland slams attack on school bus, hails Pak-India ceasefire

In his keynote address, Polish Ambassador H.E. Maciej Pisarski began on a somber note, strongly condemning the recent terrorist attack on schoolchildren in Khuzdar, Balochistan. "To shutter the life, future, dreams of the young ones is just beyond comprehension and condemnation



MAHNOOR ANSAR / DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Islamabad hosted a vibrant and emotionally resonant ceremony on Thursday evening to mark the Constitution Day of Poland, drawing a distinguished gathering of diplomats, parliamentarians, civil servants, and media personnel. In his keynote address, Polish Ambassador H.E. Maciej Pisarski began on a somber note, strongly condemning the recent terrorist attack on schoolchildren in Khuzdar, Balochistan. "To shutter the life, future, dreams of the young ones is just beyond comprehension and condemnation. No

cause can ever justify such heinous action," he stated, urging global unity against violence targeting innocent lives. Amid the solemn backdrop of ongoing global conflicts, Ambassador Pisarski reaffirmed Poland's commitment to peace, lauding recent de-escalatory steps taken by Pakistan and India. "One could only hope the Russian leadership follows the example of more responsible leaders," he added, referencing continued Polish support for Ukraine amid Russian aggression. The ambassador reflected on the historic significance of Poland's May 3rd Constitution of 1791, the first in Europe and second globally, as a lasting symbol of democratic ideals and civic rights. "This evening marks

the closing of our Constitution Day celebrations, which began with a concert of Chopin and Moniuszko. Today, we celebrate not just history, but our enduring friendship with Pakistan," he said. He also highlighted the deep historical ties between Poland and Pakistan, recalling the contributions of Polish airmen such as Air Commodore Wladyslaw Turowicz to the early development of the Pakistan Air Force. "The slogan 'Pak-Poland Dosti Zindabad' is not just symbolic—it reflects a growing partnership," the ambassador noted, citing expanding trade and investment initiatives. The evening culminated in a spirited jazz recital by the renowned Polish ensemble, JAH Trio. Part of the "Jazz po polsku"

(Jazz in Polish) project, the performance featured pianist Jan Jarecki, bassist Michal Aftka, and drummer Marcin Sojka—rising stars of Poland's contemporary jazz scene. The trio, known for blending traditional jazz elements with modern improvisation, captivated the audience with their rhythmic sophistication and melodic charm. Their performance added a refreshing cultural flourish to the event, which also included Polish cuisine and lively diplomatic exchanges, symbolizing the warmth of Poland-Pakistan relations. As the notes of jazz echoed through the embassy gardens, guests celebrated not only a historic constitution but also a shared vision of peace, resilience, and cultural exchange.

US and  
Iran try  
to bridge  
chasm

DNA

DUBAI: Iranian and US negotiators resumed talks on Friday in Rome to resolve a decades-long dispute over Iran's nuclear ambitions, Iranian media reported, despite Tehran warning that a new deal might not be possible amid mutually exclusive demands. The stakes are high for both sides. President Donald Trump wants to curtail Tehran's potential to produce a nuclear weapon that could trigger a regional nuclear arms race and perhaps threaten Israel. The Islamic Republic, for its part, wants to be rid of devastating sanctions on its oil-based economy. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi and Trump's Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff were expected to lead a fifth round of talks, through Omani mediators. "This round of talks is especially sensitive ... we need to see what issues will be raised by the other party ... and based on that, we will proceed with our positions," Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baghaei told state TV in Rome.

Several  
arrested for  
stopping  
Aseefa convoy

NAZIR SIYAL

HYDERABAD: Police on Friday lodged a FIR and arrested several individuals for stopping First Lady Aseefa Bhutto-Zardari's convoy at Jamshoro toll plaza. According to Jamshoro senior superintendent of police, Aseefa Bhutto, youngest daughter of President Asif Ali Zardari, was heading to Nawabshah in a convoy when they were stopped near the Jamshoro toll plaza yesterday. A group of people were staging a demonstration against the controversial canals project, that has been postponed indefinitely by the federal government last month, said the police officer. Charged protesters also struck vehicles in the convoy with batons, the SSP said, adding that the police personnel safely cleared Aseefa Bhutto's vehicle within a minute. Following PPP's objection to the project, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif last month confirmed that no new canals will be constructed unless a consensus is reached in CCI.

## PM Shehbaz offers condolences to China over landslide deaths

At least four dead, 17 missing after rain-triggered landslides hit China's Guizhou province

MEHTAB PIRZADA / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday expressed deep sorrow over the tragic loss of life caused by landslides in Guizhou, China. Offering condolences to the bereaved families, the prime minister said Pakistan stands in solidarity with the people and government of China during this difficult time and prayed for the safe recovery of those still missing. At least four people have been confirmed dead and 17 remain missing after torrential rains triggered two separate landslides in southwestern China's

mountainous Guizhou province on Thursday, according to state media reports. The first landslide struck Changshi township in Dafang County at around 3am local time (1900 GMT Wednesday), followed by a second in Guowa township at approximately 9am, state broadcaster CCTV reported. Nineteen people from eight households were initially trapped, with ongoing efforts to locate survivors. Aerial footage showed entire villages submerged in thick brown mud, with farmland inundated at the base of densely forested hillsides. In response, authorities activated a Level II emergency response — China's second-highest alert — for geological disasters. The Ministry of Natural Resources has dispatched a specialised team to oversee rescue operations, while the emergency management ministry urged rescue personnel to exert "every possible effort" despite difficult terrain. However, it said the remote region was "high and steep" and that rescue efforts were proving "difficult".

## Four dead in Karachi as Covid sees 'odd' summer surge

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: At least four people — mostly elderly individuals with compromised immune systems and pre-existing health conditions — have died of Covid-19 in Karachi amid a marked uptick in cases over the past fortnight, officials and infectious disease experts confirmed on Thursday, The News reported. All the fatalities occurred at Aga Khan University Hospital (AKUH), which has reported a steady rise in Covid-19 admissions — a trend described by experts as "unusual" for this time of year. Prof Dr Syed Faisal Mahmood, an infectious diseases specialist at AKUH, said the hospital has been seeing a consistent influx of Covid patients. "And we're seeing patients getting hospitalised daily with Covid-19." Describing the current wave as "odd", Dr Mahmood noted that being a respiratory illness, Covid has typically seen higher transmission in winter months, but this time the cases are rising even as the city is experiencing daytime temperatures exceeding 40°C. "It's a flu-like infection, and its spikes are usually seen in winter. However, this year we're witnessing a midsummer rise, which is not something we usually expect." Reassuring the public, he said that while the virus is circulating, it is largely causing mild, flu-like symptoms among healthy individuals. He advised those with symptoms such as sore throat, cough, runny nose and fever to wear a mask, avoid gatherings, and consult a healthcare provider for symptomatic treatment.

Judges transfer case  
SC to continue  
hearing on May 26

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court's constitutional bench Friday adjourned the hearing of Islamabad High Court (IHC) judges' transfer and seniority case until Monday (May 26). A five-member bench, headed by Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, conducted proceedings on Friday. During the hearing, lawyer Faisal Siddiqi continued his arguments, stating that in India, judges were transferred without their consent and their seniority remains intact. He argued that while the appointment of judges was mandatory for the Judicial Commission, the President was not obligated to approve a transfer. Justice Mazhar remarked that the President had constitutional authority over transfers and cannot be compelled to act. He advised the counsel to limit his arguments to the issue of judicial transfers. Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan noted that Siddiqi had earlier stated that the presidential power regarding transfers was not being challenged. Justice Salahuddin Panhwar added that the lawyer had said his focus would be on seniority. Faisal Siddiqi contended that judicial transfers should be time-bound, especially since judges from high courts were appointed to the Federal Shariat Court for a three-year term. Justice Mazhar questioned the relevance of this, pointing out that such appointments were considered promotions, while transfers between high courts were lateral moves. The lawyer further argued that Justice Asif was an additional judge at the time of his transfer, and questioned how such a judge could be appointed to the IHC without a fresh evaluation by the Judicial Commission. — APP

## IMF reluctant on budget relief measures, ties them to FBR revenue

Government seeks IMF waiver on fertiliser and pesticide taxes in upcoming budget

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The visiting International Monetary Fund (IMF) team has indicated its unwillingness to support broad-based relief for the salaried, property, beverage, and export sectors, linking any such measures to a corresponding reduction in government expenditures and the Federal Board of Revenue's (FBR) tax collection target. This position has emerged as the central theme of the ongoing discussions, with the IMF delegation set to conclude its visit on Friday (today). One notable exception to the Fund's austerity push is the defence budget, which the Pakistani government is expected to increase due to prevailing geopolitical considerations. On Thursday, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his economic team met with the IMF delegation, headed by Jihad Azour, the Fund's Director for the Middle East and Central Asia.

Pakistan has requested the Fund to defer an increase in the FED on fertiliser from 5 to 10% and 5% imposition on pesticides. The IMF may grant its assent to some extent on the prime minister's request. The increase in salaries and pensions would be minimal, mainly because the much-trumpeted rightsizing exercise had lost its steam. "We are clueless about how this number crunching for finalising budgetary estimates will be done," said sources, adding that the government would announce the budget on June 2 following which virtual talks were expected to continue. Before the Finance Bill 2025 becomes a finance act, all IMF conditions would be aligned and fulfilled to avoid criticism during the budget approval process. However, a top government official confirmed that the taxation would set the country's direction for the next couple of years, as they were making last ditch efforts to convince the IMF to allow reduction in the rates of income slabs for the salaried class. "The FBR's tax collection target will be fixed at over Rs14.1 trillion in the coming budget depending upon the ability of the Finance Division to reduce its expenditure proportionally." Defence budget allocation will only be an exception in the next budget, as it will be hiked keeping in view the country's needs.

