



Wednesday, May 28, 2025

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 30

Field Marshal visits Military headquarters of Iran; discuss coop

Detailed News On Page-08

Mohsin gets a warm welcome in Mashhad

Detailed News On Page-07



Cristiano Ronaldo leaving Al-Nassr soon?

Detailed News On Page-06



Shehbaz-Ilham meeting

Pak, Azerbaijan pledge to further cement relations

PM reaches Azerbaijan for Trilateral Summit on third leg of diplomatic push

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and President Ilham Aliyev have pledged to further solidify relations. The Prime Minister thanked the Azerbaijan president for whole-hearted support during Pakistan-India tensions. Earlier, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif arrived in Lachin, Azerbaijan, on Tuesday for the Pakistan-Turkiye-Azerbaijan Trilateral Summit, the third stop on a five-day tour focused on regional tensions and ties following a military escalation sparked by unprovoked Indian aggression. The PM concluded his two-day bilateral visit to Iran earlier in the day and departed for Azerbaijan. Following his visits to Türkiye, Iran, and Azerbaijan, he will proceed to Tajikistan. At Lachin Airport, the prime minister was received by Azerbaijan's Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov, Pakistan's Ambassador to Azerbaijan Qasim Mohiuddin, and other diplomatic staff, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar, and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Tariq Fatemi are accompanying the prime minister. PM Shehbaz, along with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, will participate in the Trilateral Summit. The prime minister is also scheduled to hold a bilateral meeting with President Aliyev. The four-nation tour follows a military stand-off between Pakistan and India. The latest escalation began on May 7 when at least 31 civilians were martyred in unprovoked Indian strikes in different areas of Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir. In retaliation, Pakistan downed its six fighter jets, including three Rafale, and dozens of drones. During the four-day standoff, at least 11 troops and 40 civilians were martyred at the hands of India.

Both nations halted their worst fighting in nearly three decades after agreeing to a ceasefire on May 10, following four days of intense cross-border drone and missile strikes, which took place after India launched unprovoked attacks on Islamabad.

Pakistan has intensified its diplomatic efforts to expose Indian propaganda and counter its hostile narrative at international forums. As part of those efforts, Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari will also lead a high-level delegation to brief world leaders, parliamentarians, and international media in various countries about Pakistan's peace-focused stance.

In their meeting today, PM Shehbaz and Aliyev reviewed the "full spectrum of bilateral relations and expressed satisfaction over the upward trajectory of political, economic, defence, and cultural cooperation" between their countries, Radio Pakistan stated. The prime minister thanked Aliyev's country for its steadfast support during the recent Pakistan-India confrontation and "acknowledged the public expressions of solidarity from both the leadership and the people of brotherly Azerbaijan".

He noted that the people of Azerbaijan "celebrated the success of Pakistan in Maarka-i-Haq against India", referring to the Pakistan armed forces' response to Indian aggression. Upon his arrival in Lachin, PM Shehbaz was received by Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov, Pakistan's Ambassador to Azerbaijan Qasim Mohiuddin and other diplomatic staff, the Associated Press of Pakistan reported, citing a PM Office press release. The prime minister is set to attend the Pakistan-Turkiye-Azerbaijan Trilateral Summit alongside presidents Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Ilham Aliyev, state-run Radio Pakistan reported. He is also scheduled to hold a bilateral meeting with the Azerbaijani president.



BAKU: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev, exchange pleasantries during a meeting in Baku, on Tuesday. – DNA

Islamabad hits back at Modi's violent rhetoric

Pakistan regrets "continued erosion of maturity and decorum in Indian statecraft," says FO statement

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Tuesday said that the hate-driven invocation of violence in the recent remarks of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi was deeply disturbing, urging the international community to take serious note of India's escalating rhetoric, undermining regional stability and the prospects for lasting peace. "Pakistan has taken note of the recent remarks by the Prime Minister of India, delivered in Gujarat with the theatrical flourish of a campaign rally rather than the sobriety expected of the leader of a nuclear-armed state. The hate-driven invocation of violence in his remarks is deeply disturbing,

Continued on Page 06

World Bank warns Pak rising tariffs stifling exports

Tariffs are threatening its competitiveness and long-term economic prospects, warns institution

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Pakistan's declining export performance, despite years of tariff protection, is threatening its competitiveness and long-term economic prospects, the World Bank has warned in its latest policy assessment. Exports have shrunk

Continued on Page 06

Security beefed-up

Policeman protecting polio workers martyred

President Zardari, PM Shehbaz condemn attack, stress full eradication of crippling disease in Pakistan

DNA

NUSHKI/QUETTA: A police constable providing security to an anti-polio team was martyred while another sustained injuries when unidentified attackers opened fire on them in Nushki, Balochistan, on Tuesday. The incident prompted authorities to temporarily suspend the ongoing polio vaccination campaign in the district. The Pakistan Polio Programme officially commenced its third National Immunisation Days (NIDs) campaign on Monday, to make Pakistan a polio-free nation. The week-long campaign aims to immunise over 45 million children under five years of age. This effort is seen as a decisive step in the country's final push to stop poliovirus transmission and achieve eradication by the end of 2025. According to the Balochistan government spokesperson, Shahid Rind, the attack was an attempt to sabotage a vital national campaign and instil fear among the public. "The anti-polio drive is a national obligation, and any attack on it is intolerable," he said in a strongly worded statement, calling the assault a

Continued on Page 06

PM condemns firing on anti-polio team in Noshki

APP

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday condemned a firing incident targeting an anti-polio team in Noshki, Balochistan and expressed his grief over the death of Abdul Wahid, a police personnel. The prime minister expressed condolence and sympathy with the bereaved family of Shaheed police personnel, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. He reiterated that attack on polio vaccination team that was securing the future of children was unacceptable, adding the miscreants working against anti-polio drive would be dealt in strongly.

Russia offers to mediate Pak-Armenia diplomatic ties amid geopolitical shifts

Pakistan is currently the only country globally that does not recognize Armenia as a sovereign state. This stance is rooted in Pakistan's unwavering support for Azerbaijan in protracted Nagorno-Karabakh conflict

ALI FURQAN

ISLAMABAD: In a significant diplomatic development, Russian Ambassador to Pakistan, Albert P. Khorev, announced on Tuesday that Moscow has extended an offer to facilitate the establishment of formal diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Armenia. This initiative aims to remove a longstanding barrier hindering Pakistan's potential engagement with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), a Russia-led economic bloc. During a media briefing in Islamabad, Ambassador Khorev revealed that Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexey Overchuk had formally discussed this proposal with Pakistani Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar during his visit to Islamabad in 2024. Khorev emphasized that while the decision rests with Pakistan, the absence of diplomatic ties with Armenia remains



a significant obstacle to advancing free trade agreements between Pakistan and the EAEU. Pakistan is currently the only country globally that does not recognize Armenia as a sovereign state. This stance is rooted in Pakistan's unwavering support for Azerbaijan in the protracted Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Islamabad has consistently backed Baku's claims over the disputed region, aligning with Azerbaijan's position on territorial integrity. In return, Azerbaijan has been a steadfast supporter of Pakistan's stance on the Kashmir issue, reinforcing a strategic alliance between the two nations.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is also on his visit to Baku to thank the Azerbaijani people and leadership for their unwavering support for Pakistan during the recent tensions with India. Addressing questions about recent claims by Pakistani military officials regarding the destruction of Russian-made S-400 air defense systems, Ambassador Khorev stated that he had heard of these reports but lacked confirmation. Regarding the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, Khorev reiterated Moscow's commitment to peace negotiations, emphasizing that Russia's primary objective is to protect Russian-speaking populations in Ukraine. He warned that if diplomatic efforts fail, Russian forces may advance towards Kyiv, asserting, "We don't need more territories; we need to protect Russian-speaking people in Ukraine."

Briefs

Eid ul Adha on June 7

Maulana Abdul Khabeer Azad announces decision following Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee meeting

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Zil Hajj moon has not been sighted and Eid ul Adha will fall on June 7 (Saturday), Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee Chairman Maulana Muhammad Abdul Khabeer Azad announced on Tuesday evening. According to the announcement, the first day of Zil Hajj will fall on Thursday, May 29, 2025, while Eid ul Adha will be observed on Saturday, June 7. Addressing a press conference, Azad said that no testimony of sighting the moon of the month was received from any part of Pakistan. "It was decided with consensus that Zil Hajj 1, 1446 Hijri would be on May 29, Thursday and Eid ul Adha would be observed on June 7, Saturday," he added.

Explosion at China chemical plant kills five

Videos shows gigantic column of grey smoke rising into sky, fire in industrial zone

DNA

BEIJING: An explosion at a chemical plant in eastern China on Tuesday killed at least five people, with six more still missing, state media said. The blast occurred at the Youdao Chemical plant at around 12pm local time in Gaomi, a town in Shandong province around 450 kilometres southeast of the capital Beijing, according to Xinhua news agency. Videos broadcast by the Beijing newspaper Xinhua showed a gigantic column of grey smoke rising into the sky, a fire in an industrial zone and shop windows apparently blown out by the explosion.

SOST SERENA
HOTEL

Opening Soon



Punjab CM opens model cattle market

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif inaugurated the country's largest and most advanced model cattle market in Shahpur Kanjran, Lahore, on Tuesday. The model market is a landmark project aimed at transforming the traditional livestock trade with modern facilities and infrastructure. During her visit, the Chief Minister reviewed the available facilities and was given a comprehensive briefing on the project. She was informed that the Shahpur Kanjran Model Cattle Market spans 74 acres and is equipped to accommodate 25,000 large animals and 150,000 small animals. The market features 20 large animal sheds, each fitted with fans, a first in the history of cattle markets in Pakistan. The briefing further revealed that a dedicated quarantine centre has been established within the facility to protect livestock from infectious diseases. The market also includes 20 residential units for cattle traders, ensuring convenience and comfort for those conducting business on-site. Additional facilities include a mosque, washrooms, a veterinary clinic, a tuck shop, and an ATM. For efficient logistics, a loading and unloading bay, truck centre, and spacious parking area have been constructed. A police post and expansive open grounds enhance both security and functionality.

In a major innovation, the market is also equipped with a modern auction bay and a state-of-the-art slaughterhouse, further streamlining livestock trade and processing. The CM was informed that Punjab's second-largest model cattle market is planned to be established in Jhang, continuing the provincial government's commitment to improving livestock infrastructure.—APP

Plan devised to combat human trafficking: Uzma

SIALKOT: Member Provincial Assembly (MPA) and Chairperson Special Committee on Human Trafficking Uzma Kardar has said that a comprehensive national strategy has been adopted to eradicate serious and inhuman crimes like human trafficking and forced labour, in which the role of media and civil society is of central importance. She said that the government alone cannot effectively combat these crimes unless the society, media, educational institutions, and various stakeholders play their full role. She expressed these views while addressing an awareness session organized by the District Administration Sialkot as the special guest, which aimed to create awareness about human trafficking and provide information related to the law. The session was attended by a large number of officers from various departments and representatives of civil society. In her address, Uzma Kardar said that a special committee has been formed under the effective measures against human trafficking, which is in close contact with all the relevant institutions. The aim of this committee is not only to improve the legislation but also to make its implementation effective. She said that comprehensive planning has been carried out to make law enforcement agencies more effective.—APP

Foundation varsity, Romanian embassy host 'Foundation Film Festival 2025'

Ambassador Dr. Dan Stoescu reflected on Romania's complex geopolitical position during the war and its lasting impact on global order

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Department of Arts and Media at Foundation University Islamabad (FUI), in collaboration with the Embassy of Romania, proudly hosted the Foundation Film Festival 2025, a dynamic celebration of cinematic arts that featured the acclaimed Romanian documentary *The King's War* as a centerpiece. The festival commenced with the arrival of His Excellency Dr. Dan Stoescu, Ambassador of Romania to Pakistan. He was received by professor Dr. Qaiser Ali Malik, Director of Foundation University, School of Science and technology, along with Dr. Hina Shahid, Head of the Department of Arts and Media. Renowned artist and former Federal Minister for Culture, Mr. Jamal Shah, also attended as a distinguished guest. Furthermore, Zaildar Ahsan Shah, chairman of the Romania-Pakistan Friendship Association participated to the opening ceremony as well. In her welcome address, Dr. Hina Shahid emphasized the crucial role of arts and media in promoting narratives of peace during times of conflict. She highlighted the academic achievements and cultural outreach of the Department of Arts and Media, and announced the submission of 92



films across categories including short films, animated movies, and visual art. The highlight of the day was a special screening of *The King's War* a Romanian historical documentary that delves into the pivotal role played by King Michael I of Romania during World War II. In his keynote address, Ambassador Dr. Dan Stoescu reflected on Romania's complex geopolitical position during the war and its lasting impact on global order. He emphasized the

importance of film, art, and theater in preserving national history and promoting dialogue. Ambassador Stoescu also inaugurated a Romanian cultural exhibition, featuring a series of carefully curated collages of archival images and artifacts that portrayed Romania's artistic legacy. The exhibition offered students and guests a unique visual journey through Romanian history and its post-Communist cultural evolution. Additionally, the ambassador visited the Indigenous

Art Gallery, where the rich diversity of Pakistani cinema and fine arts was showcased by Foundation University's students and curators. Dr. Stoescu praised the depth and vibrancy of Pakistani artistic expression and acknowledged its role in strengthening cultural bridges between Romania and Pakistan. Zaildar Ahsan Shah, Chairman of the Romania-Pakistan Friendship Association while speaking to media representatives, shared his remarks on the enduring and

exceptional relations between Pakistan and Romania. He emphasized that the two countries enjoy a strong and promising bilateral relationship rooted in mutual respect and shared interests. He noted that the Pakistan-Romania Friendship Association has long been committed to promoting and strengthening ties between the two nations across various sectors including culture, tourism, business, education, and media. Reflecting on a recent collaborative initiative, Zaildar Ahsan Shah stated that the primary objective was to introduce the people of Pakistan to the richness and vibrancy of Romanian culture. He expressed his sincere gratitude to the Ambassador of Romania for his gracious presence, which contributed greatly to the success of the event he remains confident that the Pakistan-Romania Friendship Association will continue to serve as a vital bridge working with even greater success to deepen and expand bilateral cooperation in the years ahead. He affirmed that under the Ambassador's tenure, this partnership is destined to grow stronger, with expanded cooperation in culture, education, tourism, media, and beyond. The event concluded with an award ceremony, where souvenirs were presented to honored guests and participants in recognition of their contributions to the festival.

National unity stressed at Youm-e-Takbeer conference

MULTAN: Speakers at the annual Youm-e-Takbeer conference in Multan stressed the spirit of national pride, defence preparedness, and unity against external threats, recalling the historic nuclear tests of May 28, 1998. The event was jointly organized by Young Pakistanis Organization Multan, Nazriya Pakistan Forum Multan, and Government Wilayat Hussain Islamia Graduate College. Presided over by Principal Prof. Hafiz Abdul Samad Tahir, the conference featured DPI Colleges South Punjab Prof. Dr. Fareed Sharif Farooqi and former Director Colleges Prof. Dr. Hameed Raza Siddiqui as chief guests. Other notable guests included Barrister Syed Abid Imam Shah (Central Leader Syed Group), Sajjada Nasheen of Hazrat Daud Jahaniyan shrine Makhdoom Shoab Akmal Qureshi Hashmi, educationist and social figure Dr. Riaz Hussain, and Young Pakistanis Organization President Naeem Iqbal Naeem. Dr. Farooqi and Dr. Siddiqui recalled the critical global and regional context in 1998, stating that Pakistan's nuclear response gave a befitting reply to Indian aggression. "Pakistan was created to last forever, and by the grace of Allah, it shall remain strong," they stated.—DNA

Youm-e-Takbeer symbolizes Pak's strength: Kundi

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi, in a special message on the occasion of Youm-e-Takbeer (May 28), congratulated the nation on Tuesday and hailed the day as a powerful symbol of Pakistan's strength, unity, and unwavering commitment to national defence. He lauded the historic 1998 nuclear tests as a defining moment that elevated Pakistan as the first Islamic nuclear power, asserting the country's right to safeguard its sovereignty at all costs. On the occasion of Youm-e-Takbeer, Governor Faisal Karim Kundi paid tribute to

Pakistan's historic achievement of becoming the first Islamic nuclear power. In his message, the Governor said, "May 28 is a day of pride, determination, and national dignity. It marks the moment when Pakistan gave a befitting response to enemy threats and established itself as a nuclear power, proving that we are ready to go to any lengths for our defense." = Governor Kundi emphasized that Youm-e-Takbeer is not just a commemoration of nuclear tests, but a celebration of a long and determined journey that began with the vision of

Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who declared, "We will eat grass, but we will build the atomic bomb." This dream was fulfilled in 1998, despite intense international pressure. "This day reminds us that when nations dream, sacrifice, and unite with purpose, they become invincible," he said. Reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to peace, the Governor said, "Youm-e-Takbeer sends a clear message that while Pakistan desires peace, progress, and prosperity in the region and the world, it will never compromise on its sovereignty and national honor." He further

added that Pakistan's recent strong response to Indian aggression was just a glimpse of its defense capability and resolve. Governor Kundi called upon the nation to pay tribute to the country's scientists, patriotic leadership, armed forces, and every individual who contributed to making Pakistan a strong and dignified nuclear state. "Youm-e-Takbeer is not just a date, it is an ideology, a commitment, and a message that Pakistan stood tall, stands tall, and God willing, will always stand tall," he concluded.—APP

First Sindh startup exhibition held

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has said that during the recent conflict with India, the power of the people combined with technology played a vital role and urged the youth to contribute to national investment and defence. He said this while speaking at the '1st Sindh Startups Exhibition-2025', organised by the Sindh Higher Education Commission (HEC) in collaboration with the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI). The event was attended by diplomats of different countries, leading industrialists and academics. The Chief Minister declared the event "not merely another academic event; it is a statement. Sindh is ready to invest in innovation, talent, and the future." He emphasised the culmination of months of thoughtful planning, which built a vital bridge "between classrooms and boardrooms, between research and real-world impact." The exhibition featured ideas from students and faculty across Sindh's public and private universities, many evolving

from academic inquiries into prototypes and potential products. In the lead-up to the exhibition, Business Matchmaking Round Tables were organised, connecting young founders with seasoned investors, corporate leaders, and potential partners. Project leaders confidently pitched their startups, presenting prototypes, Minimum Viable Products (MVPs), and well-calculated financial plans, aiming to turn ideas into investment. From the 50 projects, five outstanding entries were selected by industry leaders based on their potential for scaling, adoption, and industrialisation. Each winning team will receive a cash award of five lakh rupees, intended to recognise their efforts and fuel their continued journey. The Chief Minister lauded the Sindh HEC for its vision and commitment to strengthening higher education, noting a shift from routine learning to real innovation and collaboration. He urged all Vice Chancellors and university leaders to draw inspiration from this initiative and leverage their

Offices of Research, Innovation and Commercialisation (ORICs) to cultivate a local culture of invention, entrepreneurship, and applied research. Murad Shah assured that the Sindh government is vigorously promoting higher education. The province allocates the highest development budget for universities, amounting to Rs35 billion, with an additional Rs8 billion for development portfolios. "This funding surpasses the combined allocations of the other three provinces and the federal government," he said. Expressing optimism, Murad Ali Shah remarked that he believes this initiative will progress significantly and is much needed. He proudly referred to the people of Sindh as part of one of the world's oldest civilisations, citing the ancient Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa as examples of their glorious heritage. The CM also mentioned some remarkable inventions attributed to the region, such as the invention of shirt buttons and the creation of the first computer virus by children in Lahore to protect software.—DNA

COMSATS industrial connect-career expo spring 25



DNA

ISLAMABAD: COMSATS Industrial Connect-Career Expo Spring 25 was held under supervision of Prof. Dr. Sohail Asghar In Charge COMSATS University Islamabad-Islamabad Campus at CUI, Islamabad Campus on Tuesday 27th May, 25. The event was inaugurated by Worthy Rector COM-

SATS University Islamabad Prof. Dr. Sajid Qamar, and was attended by 60 prominent Companies of Pakistan including Allied Bank, Askari Bank, HBL Microfinance Bank, Mobilink Microfinance Bank, Haideri Beverages, Gourmet cola, Cheezious, Tapal Tea, Study in Australia Education Consultancy, Times Consultancy, Study- In, Jin Technologies, Alachisoft,

Zameen.com, Elctronic Interconnect Engineering, Ciklum, Urtasker, Claim Care, Jazz, Ace Money Transfer, Paysa, Nayatel, Shanghai Zixel Company and many more top notch companies of Pakistan. The event also displayed final year projects of students of different Programs of Computer Science (including Software Engineering, Artificial Intelligence,

Cyber Security and Data Science) as well as final year projects of Departments of Electrical Engineering, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Physics, Chemistry and Bio-Sciences. The event was a huge success as Industry leaders visited the Expo for hiring of students and took great interest in their Final Year Projects.

Kazakhstan eager to build stronger ties with Pak in various sectors: Kistafin

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Kazakhstan's Ambassador to Pakistan, Yerzhan Kistafin, on Tuesday reaffirmed his country's commitment to further strengthening ties with Pakistan through cooperation, emphasizing Islamabad's strategic position as a vital trade corridor for Central Asia. Speaking at an event organized by Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) here, to launch a book titled "Examining the Feasibility of an East-West Economic Corridor for South and Central Asia: Views from India and Pakistan." The book is a result of collaboration between IPRI (Pakistan), the RAND Corporation (USA),

and India's IMPRI. The envoy highlighted the growing importance of regional cooperation and Pakistan's potential to serve as a bridge between landlocked Central Asian nations and global markets. Ambassador Kistafin said Kazakhstan values its 35-year-long relationship with Pakistan and is eager to build stronger connections in multiple sectors. According to him, leadership on both sides is committed to enhancing cooperation. "Pakistan holds a unique position to support Central Asian countries in accessing global markets," he said, noting that Kazakhstan, being the largest landlocked country in Central Asia, is actively working to improve its trade links

through Pakistan. Kistafin said regional connectivity is vital and mentioned ongoing efforts to link Kazakhstan with Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, and Pakistan. He added that after 2021, the situation in Afghanistan was getting stable. Afghanistan is an integral part of our regional cooperation. Highlighting recent progress in bilateral cooperation, he said that last month, over 300 members from Kazakhstan visited Karachi and signed agreements worth more than \$200 million. The visit, he said, allowed Kazakh stakeholders to witness Pakistan's trade potential firsthand. The ambassador pointed out two key challenges to deeper co-

operation: limited communication and weak connectivity between the two nations. He stressed the need for improved media collaboration and business exchange to overcome these gaps. "We must close the communication gap between Kazakhstan and Pakistan, including improving collaboration between the media and business sectors. Pakistan can act as a connector between landlocked Central Asian countries," he stated. Kistafin said Kazakhstan is shifting from a landlocked to a "land-linked" country by improving its regional transport and trade infrastructure. In this effort, Pakistani ports like Gwadar, Karachi, and Port Qasim are

crucial gateways for Kazakhstan to reach markets in the Gulf, Africa, and beyond. He also noted the importance of strengthening people-to-people ties and encouraged closer interaction between communities of both nations. According to the ambassador, greater public awareness can support long-term partnerships. Kistafin concluded that closer cooperation could benefit South Asia, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia by creating new routes for trade and economic exchange. He stressed that Central Asian countries, including Kazakhstan, are looking forward to boosting relations with Pakistan to build a stronger network of regional integration.

The Smooth Moving Connection

freeline MOVERS

PACKING, SHIPPING & FREIGHT FORWARDING

Our Services

- Packing
- Shipping
- Freight Forwarding
- Land, Sea & Air Freight
- Custom Clearance
- Relocations
- Office Removals
- Fine Art Handling
- Project Management
- Pet Relocation
- Warehousing
- Storage

Head Office
3rd Floor, Yasin Plaza, 74-West, Blue Area, Islamabad.
Tel: (+92-51) 2822471, 2274221, 2878029, 2272273, 2822711, 2874289 - Fax: (+92-51) 2825132, 2274227.
E-mail: moving@freelinemovers.com - Website: www.freelinemovers.com

Branch Offices

Karachi
House No 14 & 15, 3rd Floor, Kalkashan Mall, Main Tariq Road, 172-Block-2, P.E.C.H.S. Karachi. Tel: (+92-21) 34530026, 34310478. Fax: (+92-21) 34631747. E-mail: karachi@freelinemovers.com

Lahore
P-4, Gullberg Centre, Main Boulevard, Lahore. Tel: (+92-42) 35798881, 35791065. Fax: (+92-42) 35791426. E-mail: lahore@freelinemovers.com

Peshawar
Office No. C-8, 2nd Floor, Zafar Plaza, Left Afsad, Ring Road, Peshawar. Tel: (+92-91) 2562278. Fax: (+92-91) 2562298. E-mail: peshawar@freelinemovers.com

Kabul
House #4, Street #4, Chah-e-Arman Road, Shahr-e-Naw, Kabul - Afghanistan. Tel: (+91 78829) 773, 50 797956 006, 50 77949 008. E-mail: kabul@freelinemovers.com

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

Turkish Airlines.....8494949

Emergency

Rescue (Police).....15

Bomb Disposal.....15

Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....1122 & 16

Emergency Ambulance.1122

& Rescue Services.4451122

Motorway Police.....9266044

Motorway Police.9270601-20

Women Police Stations Islamabad.....9222596

Rawalpindi.....9270601-20

Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115

PIA Flight Info.....114

PIA Cargo.....9280979

Railway Inquiry.....117

Railway Exchange9270831-5

WASA Rawalpindi..5555489

CAA.....9281092

Hospitals

CMH.....5611111

MH.....561116

Cantt Hospital...9270907-11

DHQ.....5556311-4

RGH.....9290301-7

Holy Family.....9290322-7

PIMS.....9261170-79

Polyclinic.....9218300-09

Shifa International 4603666

Departments

CDA.....9221334-43

CDA.....9208301-04

Met Office.....9250360-6

RDA.....5555864

TMA.....5770886

Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480



ISLAMABAD: Members of the Floral Art Society attending a briefing session held at Islamabad Serena Hotel, on Tuesday. —DNA

Call for regional trust to realize East-West Economic Corridor idea

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to regional economic integration, calling for an urgent shift from political hostilities to mutual cooperation. Addressing a book launch ceremony titled "Examining the Feasibility of an East-West Economic Corridor for South & Central Asia," here at the Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI), he outlined Pakistan's strategic vision to transform South and Central Asia through connectivity projects that transcend borders and unlock the region's economic potential. "The idea of an East-West Economic Corridor is not new," he said, suggesting that it was time to move from aspiration to action, as this required political will and mutual trust. The corridor, he said, envisioned linking Central Asia, Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, and India through trade, transport, and digital connectivity and was seen as a key pillar in Pakistan's geo-economic development agenda under the national strategy 'Uraan Pakistan'. He said that Pakistan has already begun laying the groundwork by upgrading the Gwadar deep seaport, expanding the ML-1 railway line, and digitizing border crossings with Afghanistan and Central Asia. However, the minister emphasized that regional peace was a prerequisite for regional trade. "Connectivity cannot thrive in an environment of coercion, occupation and hegemonic ambition," he said, reiterating "Pakistan stands for peaceful coexistence, regional integration, and mutually beneficial cooperation."

He said that it was India that had sabotaged integration efforts through unilateral actions, citing the abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir, the prolonged deadlock of the SAARC process since 2016, and India's recent suspension of its obligations under the Indus Waters Treaty, a decades-old accord that has survived wars. "These actions reflect an irresponsible and inconsistent attitude towards regional cooperation," the minister said, adding, "Corridors cannot grow while borders are blocked. Access to markets cannot happen when treaties are suspended." Despite these challenges, the minister said Pakistan has shown maturity and restraint. "Even during recent tensions, we resumed Afghan transit trade quickly, a gesture of goodwill and regional responsibility," he said. Ahsan Iqbal noted that connectivity could not operate in a vacuum, saying "It requires trust, and trust cannot be built with fencing, fire, or force. It must come through honest engagement and shared benefit." Highlighting the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as a successful model, he noted how Pakistan's collaboration with China had created a modern transportation network, revitalized energy systems, and delivered tangible development. He stressed that the same principles including transparency, inclusivity and strategic alignment should guide future regional projects. "Pakistan welcomes the participation of all partners, regional or global, in such initiatives, as long as engagements are based on mutual respect and shared benefit." The minister cited global examples to argue that trade could coexist with political differences. "Look at the United States and China. Despite strategic differences, they are each other's largest trading partners. The key difference is that neither has violated the other's sovereignty or suspended binding treaties." He said anti-Pakistan sentiment was routinely used by India to fuel electoral narratives. "Every time India approaches an election, we see a surge in border tensions and hate speech. This is not the sign of a confident nation. It's a sign of deep insecurity." He described this as a recurring psychological pattern. "With a 77-year-old state like Pakistan, we have never needed to vilify others to win elections. But India, with thousands of years of civilizational history, seems gripped by paranoia." He urged regional leaders to rise above old animosities as this was not just about India and Pakistan but for future of South Asia, reminding "Without peace, there will be no prosperity."

Tirmizi highlights Pakistan's cultural diversity

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador Faisal Niaz Tirmizi, Pakistan's envoy to the United Arab Emirates on Tuesday highlighted Pakistan's rich cultural and artistic diversity and underscored the vital role of the creative industry as a form of soft power in shaping global perception of Pakistan. The ambassador along with Consul General Hussain Muhammad and members of the Pakistani diplomatic mission attended a special ceremony in Dubai held to honour renowned Pakistani film artists Humayun Saeed and Mahira Khan for their outstanding contributions to Pakistani cinema and arts, a press release said. During the ceremony, Ambassador Tirmizi presented commemorative shields to the artists.—APP

NPC Trust to host Youm-e-Takbeer

ISLAMABAD: To commemorate Youm-e-Takbeer, the Nazriya Pakistan Council Trust will host a special event titled "Youm-e-Takbeer, A Secure Pakistan" at F-9 Park, Islamabad, on May 29 at 4:00 PM. The event aims to discuss national security and the significance of Youm-e-Takbeer. According to an official, Senator Abdul Qayyum will preside over the event, featuring prominent speakers Dr. Farooq Adil, Ms. Naeem Fatima Alvi, and Dr. Muhammad Afzal Babar, among others. Guests of honor include Mr. Haroon Nasir, CEO of a renowned international hospital, and Dr. Kamran Jahangir, Managing Director of the National Book Foundation. Mr. Abdullah Hameed Gul, head of Tehreek-e-Nojawan Pakistan/Kashmir, will be the guest of distinction. The event promises to be a significant platform for intellectual discourse on Pakistan's security and progress.—APP

پاکستان الیکٹرانک میڈیا ریگولیٹری اتھارٹی

PEMRA

عوامی سماعت

برائے اجراء ضلع کی سطح پر کیبل ٹی وی نیٹ ورک لائسنسز

پاکستان الیکٹرانک میڈیا ریگولیٹری اتھارٹی آرڈیننس 2002 ترمیم شدہ میٹرا (ترمیمی) ایکٹ 2023 کی سیکشن 24(2) کی رو سے ضلع کی سطح پر کیبل ٹی وی نیٹ ورک کے لائسنسوں کے اجراء کے سلسلے میں عوامی سماعت کا انعقاد کر رہی ہے۔ عبوری طور پر کامیاب پولی دہندگان/اہل کمپنیوں کی فہرست میٹرا کی ویب سائٹ www.pemra.gov.pk پر دستیاب ہے۔

عوامی سماعت درج ذیل شیڈول کے مطابق منعقد کی جائے گی۔

شہر	مقام	تاریخ	وقت
اسلام آباد	میٹرا ریجنل آفس، G-8/1، ماڈ ایریا، اسلام آباد فون نمبر: +92-51-9107133	4 جون 2025 (بدھ)	دن 11:00 بجے
لاہور	میٹرا ریجنل آفس، ہاؤس نمبر، A-80/80 برج کالونی، عابد مجید روڈ، لاہور کیٹ فون نمبر: +92-42-99220530		
پشاور	میٹرا ریجنل آفس، درکرز ویلفیئر بورڈ بلڈنگ فیز-5، حیات آباد، پشاور فون نمبر: +92-91-9216590		
کراچی	میٹرا ریجنل آفس، D-71، بوٹ بین کلفٹن، کراچی فون نمبر: +92-21-99332212		
کوئٹہ	میٹرا ریجنل آفس، ہاؤس نمبر 52/2، زرغون روڈ، کوئٹہ کیٹ فون نمبر: +92-81-9201199		

مذکورہ عوامی سماعت میں شمولیت اور اعتراضات/استفسارات/آراء دینے کے لیے سٹیک ہولڈرز بشمول عوام الناس اور خواہشمند افراد ریجنل دفاتر کے پاس ٹیلیفون یا بذریعہ تحریری درخواست مورخہ 2 جون 2025 کو دفتر کی اوقات ختم ہونے یعنی شام 5:00 بجے تک اپنے ناموں کی رجسٹریشن کروا سکتے ہیں۔

ڈائریکٹر جنرل لائسنسنگ ڈسٹری بیوشن

میٹرا ہیڈ کوارٹرز 4th فلور، ماڈ ایریا، G-8/1 اسلام آباد

فون نمبر +92(51)9107131 اور +92(51)9107178

www.pemra.gov.pk

PID(0)8216/24

UBG's continuous struggle for business community's rights praised

ISLAMABAD: A high-level delegation from the Jhelum Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI), led by President Zahid Hussain, visited the Islamabad office of the United Business Group (UBG), where they held a special meeting with UBG Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari and UBG Central Core Committee member Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari. During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on the coun-

try's current economic situation, the challenges faced by the business community, and the effective role of chambers. The delegation appreciated UBG's business-friendly policies, principled stance, and continuous struggle for the rights of the business community, expressing full confidence in its leadership. The delegation stated, "We have stood with UBG in the past, and we will continue to fully support it in

this struggle for the business community. UBG is the only platform that effectively highlights the real issues of traders at the highest level and takes serious steps for their resolution." On this occasion, the delegation also invited the UBG leadership to attend the inauguration ceremony of the Jhelum Chamber of Commerce and Industry's new building on June 29.—DNA



Polio vaccination drive underway

Dr. Usman emphasized that any negligence in protecting polio workers will not be tolerated and immediate legal action will be taken in the event of any untoward incident

ISLAMABAD: VThe third anti-polio vaccination campaign of 2025 has commenced on Tuesday across Punjab with Punjab Police deploying more than 18,000 officers and personnel to ensure the security of vaccination teams administering drops to children under five. According to Punjab Police spokesperson, Inspector General (IG) of police, Dr. Usman Anwar said that comprehensive security was being provided to all polio vaccination teams and workers across the province, including Lahore. The security arrange-

ments include 457 inspectors, 1,013 sub-inspectors, 1,654 assistant sub-inspectors and more than 350 female constables actively participating in safeguarding the campaign, spokesperson added. In Lahore alone, more than 1,500 officers and personnel are engaged in securing polio workers. The police have mobilized vehicles and motorcycles from local stations for active patrolling in areas where the campaign was being conducted. IG Punjab directed dolphin

force, PRU and local police teams to ensure vigilant patrolling in all union councils involved in the vaccination effort. Regional Police Officers (RPO) and District Police Officers (DPO) have been instructed to personally monitor the security arrangements for polio teams. Dr. Usman emphasized that any negligence in protecting polio workers will not be tolerated and immediate legal action will be taken in the event of any untoward incident.—APP

Briefs

Rawalpindi achieves 98% Polio vaccination target

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi District has reported a highly successful first day of its National Immunization Days (NID) polio vaccination campaign, achieving 98% of its overall target by reaching out to a total of 206,746 children out of a target of 211,551. According to the details, the campaign also demonstrated strong household outreach, with 91% of targeted households visited, reaching 143,469 out of 158,136. A significant contributing factor to this success was the robust “out-of-house” vaccination strategy, which accounted for 63,277 additional children vaccinated. The data released by the District Health Authority shows that 29,856 children were vaccinated at schools, 9,729 guest children vaccinated, 7,880 children vaccinated at fixed sites, and 9,039 children were vaccinated at transit points. Performance across towns and tehsils was generally strong, with most areas exceeding their individual targets, notably Kallar Sydan and Kotli Sattian. Rawalpindi’s powerful launch of the NID campaign underscores the unwavering dedication of the district administration, partners, and the health management team in their multifaceted fight to eradicate polio.—APP

Drug paddler received 9 years imprisonment

RAWALPINDI: According to details, the accused Muhammad Taj was arrested by Saddar Wah Police in December 2023 after 4 kg and 20 grams of hashish was recovered from him. In view of solid evidence and effective prosecution, the court sentenced the accused along with imposing fine of Rs 80,000. The City Police Officer (CPO) Syed Khalid Hamdani while appreciating the legal and investigation teams directed for further accelerating the crackdown against the menace of drug paddling. “All steps are being taken to eradicate the scourge of drugs”, said CPO Syed Khalid Hamdani.—APP

HEC conducts training sessions

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has conducted training sessions in Karachi for focal persons from Sindh-based universities on the Pakistan Qualification Register (PQR). According to the official details, the sessions focused on improving accuracy and transparency in qualification data. Participants were trained on data submission procedures, documentation requirements, and using the Internal Portal for Universities (IPFU). PQR is HEC’s central database for verifying academic programmes and ensuring alignment with national standards and the National Qualifications Framework.—APP

NBF hosts literary event ‘Adabi Rabtay’

DNA

ISLAMABAD: National Book Foundation (NBF), under the auspices of the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training (MoFE&PT), successfully hosted the third installment of literary event ‘Adabi Rabtay’ at its esteemed Ahmed Faraz Auditorium. The event was graced by the presence of Muhammad Hameed Shahid, a distinguished intellectual, acclaimed fiction writer, and respected literary critic, as the chief guest. Guests of honor included celebrated poet, writer, humorist, and sketch writer Salman Basit, renowned poet Abdul Qadir Taban, prominent



ISLAMABAD: Guests enjoying various Arican delicacies on the occasion of Africa Day celebrations held at the ISSI. —DNA

President says polio to be eradicated from Pakistan

I am confident that together, we can make Pakistan polio-free. Let us seize this moment to vaccinate every child and protect our people from the crippling threat of the polio virus

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: From May 26 to June 1, 2025, Pakistan has launched a nationwide polio vaccination campaign, targeting 45.4 million children under five. Over 400,000 dedicated front-line workers will go door-to-door across our cities, villages, and remote valleys to administer life-saving polio drops. This effort is a cornerstone of our mission to eradicate polio and secure a healthier future for our nation. I fully support my daughter and the First Lady, Aseefa Bhutto Zardari, whose tireless advocacy and efforts has galvanized our nation in this fight against Polio. Her call to unite parents, community

leaders, and youth reminds us that eradicating polio is our shared responsibility. Today, I also pay tribute to our brave polio workers, who risk their lives to reach every child, often in the face of grave danger. We also honour those polio workers and security officials who have made the ultimate sacrifice, losing their lives to cowardly attacks aimed at derailing our efforts to make Pakistan polio-free. I also condemn the attack on a polio team in Naushki, in which a police official lost his life, and offer my heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family. Their courage and sacrifice inspire us all to save our children from this crippling disease. Since the 1990s,

we have made remarkable progress as Pakistan has reduced polio cases by over 99% through relentless vaccination drives, robust surveillance, and the courage of our health workers. Yet, the battle is not over. The 2024 surge in cases, particularly in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, signals that we must intensify our efforts. We must protect our polio workers as well as dispell myths about the polio vaccine. Remote areas and mobile populations remain hard to reach, requiring innovative tools to ensure no child is missed. Above all, we must sustain high vaccination coverage to fully eliminate this virus. Today, we reiterate our commitment that we

will not rest until polio is fully eradicated. We have the tools, the will, and the support of our global partners to make this vision a reality. I call on parents to open their doors to vaccinators, ensuring every child receives the life-saving polio drops. I urge teachers, religious leaders, and community elders to champion this noble cause, dispelling myths and building trust. I appeal to the media to amplify the truth: the polio vaccine is safe, effective, and our best weapon. I am confident that together, we can make Pakistan polio-free. Let us seize this moment to vaccinate every child and protect our people from the crippling threat of the polio virus.

FGEHA’s F-12, G-12 housing scheme under re-evaluation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) F-12 and G-12 housing scheme, which was launched on August 27, 2023, is currently under re-evaluation. The scheme, which attracted a strong response, is currently under technical, financial and legal re-evaluation, as directed by the Executive Board in its 30th meeting held on November 30, 2023. According to the official

document, A fresh advertisement to be placed in newspapers indicating new cost, conditions and quota and existing applicants may be given and option for refund. The scheme initially offered plots in five sizes: 500, 356, 272, 200, and 139 square yards. Quotas were reserved for federal government employees, retirees, employees of autonomous bodies, journalists, and disabled persons. For the first time, separate quotas for the general public and overseas Pakistanis were also introduced. A total of 29,042 applications were received

under the general public quota, while 11,179 overseas Pakistanis applied. FGEHA spokesperson stated that M/S NESPAK, the consulting firm appointed for the project, was currently working on the layout plan (LOP) and the assessment of built-up properties (BUPs). Following the completion of this process, land acquisition and budget estimation would be carried out. The finalized budget would be presented to the Ministry of Housing and Works for approval. Upon approval, the allotment process would begin for registered

members as well as applicants from the general public and overseas Pakistanis quotas. The spokesperson revealed that between 5,000 to 6,000 plots would be allocated. Priority would be given to remaining registered members from the F-14 scheme and those who got registered with FGEHA. While the last date for applying under the general public and overseas Pakistanis quotas was October 10, 2023. The spokesperson added that the formal launch of the F-12 and G-12 scheme was expected soon.

Syedaal congratulates Dr. Hafiz

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Chairman Senate Syedaal Khan on Tuesday extended warm congratulations to former Senator Dr. Hafiz Abdul Karim on his election as the Ameer of Jamiat Ahle-Hadees Pakistan, lauding his extensive experience and service to national politics. In a congratulatory message, the Deputy Chairman described Dr. Abdul Karim as a seasoned politician and an astute parliamentarian who has rendered commendable contributions to legislative affairs and national issues, particularly during his tenure in the Upper House. Expressing confidence in Dr. Karim’s leadership, Syedaal Khan said that under his stewardship, Jamiat Ahle-Hadees Pakistan would grow stronger as a political and religious organisation and contribute positively to the broader national discourse.—APP

Death anniversary of actress Rani observed

ISLAMABAD: The 32nd death anniversary of renowned film actress Nasira Begum, known as Rani, observed on Tuesday. She was born as Nasira Sarfraz in Lahore in 1946. Rani became one of Lollywood’s top actresses during the 1960s and 70s. She earned fame for her powerful performances in hit films such as Anjuman, Devar Bhabhi, and Umrao Jan Ada. She is known for her expressive acting and screen presence. Rani ruled both Urdu and Punjabi cinema. She was honored with several awards during her career, including Nigar Awards for Best Actress for the film ‘Mera Ghar, Meri Jannat’ in 1968. She also won another Nigar Award for best actress for her role in the film ‘Sona Chandi’ in 1986. Rani died of cancer on this day in 1993 in Lahore.

NAB, FIA asked to take action against irregularities

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) has uncovered serious irregularities in its financial records, leading to substantial financial losses to the state exchequer. Director General RDA, Kinza Murtaza, revealed that preliminary findings linked the accused Director Administration and Finance (Retired), former Deputy Director Finance (late) and Assistant Director Finance RDA (Retired), and others to these discrepancies. The DG RDA emphasising the need for financial redress said the recovery of embezzled funds remains possible within the legal framework of the estate and properties. She cited several legal provisions that enable such actions, including Section C-33 of the National Accountability Ordinance 1999 (Recovery of money), Sections 12 and 15 of the NAB Ordinance (Freezing and seizure of property), Section 50 of the Code of Civil Procedure 1908 (Recovery from the estate of a deceased) and Order XXII Rule 4 of the CPC (Action against legal heirs after death). The DG RDA had formally sent letters to the National Accountability Authority (NAB) Rawalpindi, Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), and the Anti-Corruption Establishment Rawalpindi, urging swift recovery of public funds and stern legal action against those involved. Kinza reiterated her commitment to transparency and accountability and added that eradicating corruption and safeguarding the general public’s assets was RDA’s top priority.—APP

Huawei launches mandatory ICT courses for students

The FDE emphasized the significance of this initiative in preparing students for a rapidly digitalizing world and enhancing Pakistan’s IT education infrastructure

ISLAMABAD: In a significant step toward digital education reform, Huawei Pakistan, in collaboration with the Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training (MoFE&PT), has rolled out a wide-ranging ICT training program for students from Grade 6 to 10 across Islamabad Model Schools and Colleges. The initiative is part of the Prime Minister’s nationwide digital transformation campaign. The program, overseen by the Federal Directorate of Education (FDE), aims to train over 300,000 students, with special focus on regions including Islamabad, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Alongside student training, the project includes a “Train the Trainer” component and the formulation of a comprehensive digital roadmap for educational institutions. According to an official notification issued by the FDE, all heads of institutions have been directed to ensure 100% registration of students from Grades 6 to 10 by May 27. Students are required to register through the Huawei Talent platform and must possess unique email IDs and phone numbers to complete the process. The foundational course titled “AI Basics” — a one-hour module — has been made mandatory for all students before the commencement of the summer vacations. Subsequent courses will cover a wide array of emerging technologies such as 5G, IoT, cloud computing, data analysis, and network security, scheduled across various months for different grade levels. The FDE emphasized the significance of this initiative in preparing students for a rapidly digitalizing world and enhancing Pakistan’s IT education infrastructure. Students who complete the modules will receive official course completion certificates, boosting their credentials in the digital tech arena.—DNA

RMM Summer Camp and Maple learning club

Get ready for a fun-filled summer at Red Maple Montessori! Our Summer Camp and Maple Learning Club are designed to provide a unique experience for your child.

Summer Camp

Join us for a month of exciting activities, including:

- Camping and outdoor adventures
- Pool parties and games
- Library time and story sessions
- Arts and crafts

Maple Learning Club

Reinforce your child’s learning with our subject-specific program, focusing on:

- Maths
- English
- Urdu

Registration Details
To enroll your child, contact us at the phone number below or visit our school.

Don’t miss this opportunity to give your child a head start!



Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti
Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 06 Issue: 28

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-8488394 / 051-2261960

Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad

Pakistan Hockey desperately needs structural reforms

ONCE the pride of the nation and a symbol of sporting excellence, Pakistan hockey now stands at the brink of collapse. With a rich legacy that includes three Olympic gold medals and four World Cup titles, the current state of our national sport is nothing short of tragic. The recent performances of the national team have been disappointing, not due to a lack of talent or passion, but due to chronic neglect, outdated systems, and an alarming absence of support. Unlike cricketers who enjoy star status, generous contracts, and corporate endorsements, our national hockey players are treated like second-class athletes. Most players do not even have full-time jobs or career security, despite representing the country on international platforms. Many live in financial uncertainty, without a stable income or post-retirement plans. The daily allowance provided to them is pitiful, barely enough to cover basic needs. This is not only demoralizing but disgraceful. The conditions during national training camps further reflect this institutional apathy. Players are housed in below-average accommodations with minimal amenities. There are no proper recovery facilities, no specialized fitness equipment, and shockingly, even clean drinking water is a luxury. Players rely on tap water during training—a basic health risk that should be unacceptable at any level of professional sport. Adding to the woes is the politicization of hockey's administrative structure. Infighting, favoritism, and mismanagement have become the norm in the Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF). Rather than focusing on player development and grassroots promotion, the leadership has been preoccupied with power struggles and self-preservation. Young talent is often overlooked due to lack of connections, while coaching staff and support personnel are rarely appointed on merit. The Prime Minister of Pakistan, who is also the patron-in-chief of the PHF, must now take notice and act decisively. The time for ceremonial statements is over. Pakistan hockey needs immediate and sweeping reforms. A dedicated task force should be established to assess the shortcomings and present a roadmap for revival—starting with better financial packages for players, proper accommodation, nutrition, modern training facilities, and a merit-based selection process. Moreover, corporate sponsorships and media support must be encouraged to bring financial stability and visibility to the sport. Hockey academies and school-level competitions must be revived to build a strong pipeline of young talent. Pakistan's hockey players still carry the fire and patriotism to restore past glory, but without proper support, their passion alone is not enough. If action is not taken now, we risk losing not just matches—but an entire generation of hockey.



The future of SAARC amidst India-Pakistan tensions

THE South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was envisioned as a platform for regional integration, economic collaboration, and diplomatic engagement among South Asian nations. However, its effectiveness has been repeatedly undermined by geopolitical tensions, particularly between India and Pakistan. As the two nuclear-armed neighbors continue to grapple with longstanding disputes, the future of SAARC remains uncertain. SAARC has been largely inactive for the past decade, with no summit held since 2014. The organization has struggled to function due to deep-rooted political conflicts, particularly between India and Pakistan. The cancellation of the 2016 Islamabad summit following the Uri attack exemplifies how bilateral tensions have paralyzed the regional body¹. While other member states have expressed interest in reviving SAARC, the India-Pakistan rivalry remains the primary obstacle. India has increasingly prioritized alternative regional frameworks such as BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) over SAARC. New Delhi views SAARC as ineffective due to Pakistan's involvement, preferring to engage with South Asian nations through bilateral and sub-regional initiatives. This shift has further diminished SAARC's relevance and raised questions about its future viability. Despite India's reluctance, Pakistan continues to advocate for SAARC's revival, emphasizing its potential for economic cooperation and conflict resolution. Islamabad argues that SAARC remains the only platform that brings together all South Asian nations, making it indispensable for regional stability. However, without India's participation, SAARC's ability to function effectively remains doubtful. The recent escalation in India-Pakistan tensions, particularly following the Pahalgam attack, has further complicated SAARC's prospects. India has accused Pakistan of harboring terrorist elements, while Pakistan has called for an impartial investigation². These hostilities make diplomatic engagement within SAARC increasingly difficult, as mutual distrust prevents meaningful cooperation. For SAARC to regain relevance, both India and Pakistan must recognize the benefits of regional collaboration. Economic integration, trade facilitation, and joint efforts to combat climate change could serve as common ground for engagement. Additionally, backchannel diplomacy and third-party mediation may help ease tensions, creating space for SAARC's revival. The future of SAARC remains precarious, largely dependent on the trajectory of India-Pakistan relations. While Pakistan continues to push for its revival, India's strategic shift away from SAARC suggests that the organization may remain dormant. Unless both nations find a way to reconcile their differences, SAARC risks becoming an obsolete entity, overshadowed by alternative regional alliances.

Nuclear Deterrence and National Dignity: The Legacy of 28 May

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



India's five nuclear tests on May 11 and 13, 1998 at Pokhran, in blatant defiance of international expectations, were not only a challenge to regional stability but a direct threat to Pakistan's existence. This was not an ordinary adversary flexing its might. It was a historical rival that had already waged wars in 1947, 1965, and 1971, and maintained an enduring animosity since Partition

THE 28th of May 1998 stands as a solemn yet proud landmark in the annals of Pakistan's history—a day when the nation, in response to regional provocations and the overt display of aggression by its eastern neighbour, chose to proclaim its sovereign right to self-defence through the demonstration of nuclear capability. Chagai's hills echoed not merely with the thunder of nuclear tests but with the resolve of a people determined never to be subdued. It was a declaration that Pakistan would maintain strategic balance in South Asia, uphold its territorial integrity, and pursue peace from a position of strength. The world beheld a nation that had been tested time and again, now entering the nuclear club with dignity, under the firm leadership of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, and with the undying spirit of Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan and countless anonymous contributors to its nuclear programme. India's five nuclear tests on May 11 and 13, 1998 at Pokhran, in blatant defiance of international expectations, were not only a challenge to regional stability but a direct threat to Pakistan's existence. This was not an ordinary adversary flexing its might. It was a historical rival that had already waged wars in 1947, 1965, and 1971, and maintained an enduring animosity since Partition. Pakistan, faced with a decision of existential proportions, could either capitulate to global pressure or assert its sovereign right to self-defence. History bears witness that it chose the latter—wisely, bravely, and resolutely. The Holy Qur'an guides us: "And prepare against them whatever you are able of power and of steeds of war by which you may terrify the enemy of Allah and your enemy..." (Surah Al-Anfal, 8:60). This Divine injunction plac-

es upon every Muslim state a sacred duty to maintain deterrence against hostile forces. The leadership of Pakistan fulfilled this responsibility in letter and spirit, acting with wisdom and patience in the face of enormous international pressure. The road to nuclear capability was not paved overnight. It began decades earlier, most crucially after the 1974 Indian nuclear explosion euphemistically termed a "peaceful nuclear test." Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's call to action, famously stating, "We will eat grass, even go hungry, but we will get one of our own," set the course. Under the guidance of patriotic scientists like Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan and institutions like the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC), relentless efforts ensued, despite international sanctions and espionage threats. By 1998, Pakistan had achieved the technological capability to deter any nuclear adventurism. When India dared to test, Pakistan responded with Chagai-I and Chagai-II on May 28 and May 30, respectively. The tests were not acts of aggression, but rather of restraint and responsibility, aimed at restoring strategic balance in South Asia. Nearly three decades later, on 7 May 2025, Pakistan was once again thrust into a moment of existential assertion. In what has come to be described as a manufactured yet perilous one-day war, the people and the armed forces of Pakistan responded with unity, valour, and an unyielding sense of purpose. Just as the nuclear tests of 1998 had secured Pakistan's external deterrence, the events of 2025 reaffirmed the nation's internal cohesion and operational readiness. Though provoked under the shadows of global intrigue, Pakistan emerged with honour, bearing its wounds with pride and saluting its mar-

tyrs with reverence. The spirit of Chagai lived on—not in uranium and plutonium alone—but in the hearts of those who defended the motherland with blood and resolve. Thus, the linkage between these two dates is etched in Pakistan's collective memory as chapters of defiance, sacrifice, and unwavering national dignity. The importance of strong defense is also emphasized in the sayings of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). He said, "Tie your camel and trust in Allah" (Tirmidhi). This Hadith beautifully encapsulates the philosophy that while ultimate trust is placed in Allah, it is also imperative to adopt worldly means for security and survival. Pakistan did precisely that by fortifying its defenses through nuclear deterrence. Pakistan must also guard against the illusion that nuclear arms are a panacea for all threats. Hybrid warfare, cyber-attacks, economic subversion, and internal discord are new battlefields. As the Holy Qur'an reminds us, "Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves." (Surah Ar-Ra'd, 13:11). A strong missile or a mighty bomb cannot compensate for a divided society or a failing economy. On the 28th of May each year, we salute our scientists, soldiers, statesmen, and all those silent hands who toiled in secrecy and sacrificed for the motherland. Let this day not just be a celebration of explosions, but of resolve—a reminder that Pakistan, when united and determined, can stand its ground against any global tide. May Allah protect Pakistan and guide its leaders to act always with justice, wisdom, and fear of Him. "O you who believe, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah..." (Surah An-Nisa, 4:135). Let this resolve shape our future, just as it shaped our past.

Trump's TAKE IT DOWN Act: Not enough to end sexual exploitation

Qamar Bashir



This is the landscape in which the TAKE IT DOWN Act was introduced. The Act, passed in December 2024 and signed into law by Trump on 19th of May 2025 was championed by First Lady Melania Trump aimed at criminalizing the distribution of non-consensual intimate images, including deepfakes, and requires platforms to remove such content within 48 hours of notification

THE global crisis of sexual exploitation did not happen by chance. It was the direct consequence of a single legal decision: the June 21, 1973 ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Miller v. California*, which legalized the distribution and marketing of adult content under the guise of free speech. This decision unleashed a monster that grew unchecked, embedding itself into cultures, economies, and digital landscapes worldwide. Today, we are living with the consequences of that decision, and unless the root cause is reversed, no legal reform, including the recently passed TAKE IT DOWN Act, will be enough to stop the damage. The pornography industry is not a small fringe sector—it is a global behemoth. Estimates put its annual revenue between \$97 billion and \$100 billion. In the United States alone, the industry contributes between \$12 and \$20 billion to the economy. In California, over 50,000 individuals work in the porn sector, from performers to production crews. This industry thrives on the exploitation of women, children, and marginalized communities—turning human intimacy into a commodity for mass consumption. The online adult entertainment market, valued at \$76 billion in 2024, is projected to exceed \$118 billion by 2030. Cable and satellite providers also profit enormously, retaining up to 80% of pay-per-view revenues from adult content. And this is not a phenomenon confined to the United States. The ripple effects of America's legal precedent have spread worldwide, creating industries of sexual exploitation in vulnerable countries. Thailand: Once known for its cultural heritage, Thailand has become a global hub for sex tourism. Thousands of women and children, often trafficked, are trapped in an industry catering to foreign demand, particularly from Western countries. Philippines: The country faces an epidemic of online sexual exploitation of children (OSEC). Tens of thousands of minors are coerced into performing explicit acts in front of webcams, with paying customers predominantly in the U.S. and Europe. The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) reported over 30,000 cases of OSEC in a single year. India: With weak enforcement and a booming digital market, India is grappling with millions of cases of non-consensual intimate images, sextortion, and revenge porn. Victims, predominantly women,

face lifelong stigma and psychological trauma. Pakistan: The impact of legalized pornography has been profound. The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority reported that approximately 20 million Pakistanis attempt to access pornographic websites daily, despite government bans. In 2023, the NGO Sahil documented 4,253 cases of child abuse, with over half involving sexual abuse. Additionally, the U.S. State Department's 2024 Trafficking in Persons Report identified 20,809 sex trafficking victims in Pakistan, including 921 children. Africa: Trafficking networks in Nigeria, South Africa, and other regions have expanded, with victims—especially minors—coerced into sex work. Human trafficking for sexual exploitation is now one of the fastest-growing criminal enterprises across the continent. Europe: The European Union reported over 10,000 victims of human trafficking in a single year, with the majority subjected to sexual exploitation. Eastern Europe, in particular, has become a pipeline for trafficking women into Western markets. United States: Despite its legal protections, the U.S. is far from immune. The National Human Trafficking Hotline identified 15,299 victims in 2022, with 5,572 cases involving sex trafficking. The FBI has flagged an alarming rise in cases of child exploitation linked to online pornography. Globally, the University of Edinburgh estimates that over 300 million children are victims of online sexual exploitation and abuse annually. In the UK alone, reports of AI-generated child sexual abuse material surged by 380% in a single year. These statistics are not just numbers—they are lives shattered, futures stolen, and human dignity erased. This is the landscape in which the TAKE IT DOWN Act was introduced. The Act, passed in December 2024 and signed into law by Trump on 19th of May 2025 was championed by First Lady Melania Trump aimed at criminalizing the distribution of non-consensual intimate images, including deepfakes, and requires platforms to remove such content within 48 hours of notification. It is a necessary step, but let us be honest—it is not enough. The law addresses the symptoms of the problem, not its cause. The real issue is that the legal framework created by *Miller v. California* remains intact. As long as pornography—whether consensual, adult, or otherwise—is legal-

ly protected and commercially distributed, the monster will continue to thrive. The victims, especially in poorer nations, will not have the resources, knowledge, or legal access to seek redress. They will remain trapped in a system that profits from their suffering. It is not practical to expect millions of exploited individuals across the globe to navigate complex legal systems to have their images removed. Laws like the TAKE IT DOWN Act are reactive; they respond after the harm is done. By then, the damage—psychological, reputational, and financial—is irreversible. What is needed is a complete reversal of the 1973 decision. Pornography, in all its forms—whether adult, consensual, or otherwise—must be outlawed. This is not about censorship or prudery; it is about common sense and basic human decency. It is about dismantling an industry that profits from the exploitation of the vulnerable, the normalization of deviance, and the destruction of societal values. The numbers speak for themselves. The global sex trade, fueled by legalized pornography, is estimated to involve over 25 million people, with children—both girls and boys—making up a significant portion of the exploited. Human trafficking for sexual purposes alone is a \$99 billion industry. These figures represent not just economic damage but a moral failure on a global scale. The TAKE IT DOWN Act is a step in the right direction, but unless we confront the root cause—the legal and commercial normalization of pornography—the exploitation will continue. The world must learn from America's mistake, not repeat it. It is time for countries to outlaw pornography entirely, dismantle the legal frameworks that protect it, and take decisive action to protect their citizens—especially the most vulnerable. This is not a call for censorship; it is a call for sanity. A call to protect the fundamental dignity of the human person, to stop treating bodies as commodities, and to halt an industry that has done untold harm. The TAKE IT DOWN Act has opened the door. Now, the world must walk through it and finish the job.

Press Secretary to the President (Rtd)
Former Press Minister at the
Embassy of Pakistan to France
Former MD, SRBC
Macomb, Michigan, USA

Briefs

Policeman protecting polio workers martyred

FROM PAGE 01

conspiracy to derail the campaign and spread panic. Rind further said that operations against terrorists would be intensified, vowing to bring the culprits to justice swiftly. President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif condemned the attack in strong terms and expressed heartfelt condolences to the family of the martyred police official. President Zardari said that the war against polio was not over and reiterated Pakistan's commitment to eradicating the disease. "We will not rest until polio is completely eliminated," he declared. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that attacking a team working to safeguard children's future was absolutely unacceptable. "Those trying to derail the polio campaign will be dealt with firmly," he warned. In Pakistan and neighbouring Afghanistan — the only countries where polio remains endemic — militants have for decades targeted vaccination teams and their security escorts. Over the past decade, hundreds of police officers and health workers have been killed by militants. Polio, a highly infectious virus mainly affecting children under five, can result in lifelong paralysis but is easily prevented by the oral administration of a few drops of a vaccine. Pakistan recorded a surge in polio cases last year, with 74 infections reported, compared to just six in 2023. Meanwhile, nine have been reported in 2025 so far. In April, two Levies personnel were martyred in Mastung's Kali Teri area in Balochistan when unidentified assailants opened fire on a polio team's security detail.

Islamabad hits back at Modi's...

FROM PAGE 01

not only for its content but for the dangerous precedent it sets in a region already burdened by volatility. We regret the continued erosion of maturity and decorum in Indian statecraft," Foreign Office spokesperson Shafqat Ali Khan said in a statement. He said that such statements blatantly violated the fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter, which obliged member states to resolve disputes peacefully and to refrain from the threat or use of force against the sovereignty or political independence of other states. "Pakistan views these remarks as a reckless provocation, intended to distract from the ongoing human rights abuses and demographic engineering in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir." He said that Pakistan's record as a leading contributor to UN peacekeeping and its consistent cooperation in global counter-terrorism efforts spoke louder than any hostile soundbite. If extremism is indeed a concern for the Indian government, it would do well to turn inward — toward the alarming rise of majoritarianism, religious intolerance, and the systematic disenfranchisement of minorities under the increasingly brutal Hindutva ideology, the spokesperson added.

World Bank warns Pak rising...

FROM PAGE 01

to just over 10% of GDP in 2024, down from more than 15% in the 1990s — one of the lowest shares in the region and among middle-income economies. In the report titled 'From Inward to Outward: Pakistan's Shift Towards Export-led Growth', the World Bank said the slide reflects worsening constraints on businesses, compounded by recent policy shifts towards higher tariffs. World Bank warns Pakistan's rising tariffs stifling exports "Pakistan's tariff structure — characterised by high average protection rates, cascading import duties, and ad hoc exemptions — has become a barrier to export-led growth," the report said, noting that tariff rates have risen steadily since reaching their lowest levels in the early 2000s.

RISJA elects new office bearers amid unity and trust

ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: In a unanimous decision, the Rawalpindi Islamabad Sports Journalists Association (RISJA) has elected new office bearers to lead the organization for its next term. All positions were filled unopposed, reflecting the trust and unity among RISJA's 59 members. The electoral process was overseen by the Chairman of the Election Committee, Shahryar Khan along with Asim Jilani and Rana Farhan Aslam as members, who officially announced the results. Abubakar Bin Tallat, an emerging sports journalist, was elected President, while Syed Arslan Shirazi and Nasir Abbas Naqvi were elected as General Secretary and Finance Secretary, respectively. Other elected office bearers include Zulfiqar Bag (Senior Vice President), Aqeel Anjum and Asghar Ali Mubarak (Vice Presidents), Hafiz Ubaid ur Rehman and Asim Riaz (Joint Secretaries), Nasir Abbas Naqvi (Treasurer). The Executive Body of RISJA (R) was also constituted, comprising Faheem Anwar Khan, Afzal Javed, Zahid Farooq Malik, Nasir Aslam Raja, Zeeshan Qayyum, Sohail

DNA



ISLAMABAD: Newly-elected members of the Rawalpindi-Islamabad Sports Journalists Association posing for a group photo with President Press Club Azhar Jatoti, Founder RISJA Abul Mohi Shah, Chairman Shakil Awan, Sheharyar, Nasir Aslam Raja, Faheem Anwar and others. Abu Bakar was elected as the President while Arslan Shirazi was elected as the Secretary General. Zulfiqar Baig Senior Vice President, Nasir Naqvi Finance Secretary. Aqeel Anjum Asghar Mubarak Vice Presidents, Obaid ur Rehman, Asim Riaz Joint Secretaries. 59 members supported the panel. - DNA

Raja, Arfa Feroz Zaki, Kiran Khan, Awais Abbasi, and Farhan Jafri. Veteran sports journalists Abdul Mohi Shah and Malik Shakeel Awan will serve as Patron and Chair-

man, respectively. Speaking on the occasion, President Abubakar Bin Tallat and Secretary Arslan Shirazi thanked members for their confidence and pledged to

uphold RISJA's values. They emphasized the association's commitment to regular professional activities and advocacy for the rights of genuine sports journal-

ists. Meanwhile, President of the National Press Club (NPC) Azhar Jatoti, Secretary Shiraz Gerdazi, Finance Secretary Waqar Abbasi, RIUJ President Tariq

Virk and others congratulated the newly elected body, expressing hope that it will continue to serve the journalist community with dedication. Established in 1986,

RISJA remains the only registered body in Rawalpindi and Islamabad devoted to the development of sports journalism and the welfare of sports journalists.

Romanian President vows major reforms, calls for national unity

He said Romania faces a budget deficit because the state spends more than it can afford. Dan stressed the need for a stable government and fiscal reforms to protect financial stability and attract investment

BUCHAREST: Romania's new President Nicusor Dan said at his swearing-in ceremony in parliament that the country needs major changes within the law, promising to listen to the people and work with society. Dan thanked Romanians, at home and abroad for their interest in the country's future and urged them to keep pushing for reforms in state institutions. He said Romania faces a budget deficit because the state spends more than it can afford. Dan stressed the need for a stable government and fiscal reforms to protect financial stability and attract investment. The president called on all political parties

to work together for Romania's future, focusing on national interest, not politics. He outlined key reforms: cutting bureaucracy, digitalizing public services, improving civil service promotion, and reforming local administration and elections. On the economy, Dan said Romania must fight tax evasion, manage state companies better, support agriculture, simplify access to European funds, and create a good environment for investors. In healthcare, he wants digital records, better balance between care levels, more addiction treatment centers, and incentives for rural doctors. For education, Dan

called for better pay for teachers, encouraging critical thinking, linking education to jobs, investing in early childhood and preventing dropouts. He stressed judicial reforms to speed up cases, focus on major corruption, and improve magistrate promotions. Environmental reforms include improving authorization processes, expanding enforcement, reforming forestry management, and better urban planning and waste management. In culture, Dan plans a national program to increase access and support contemporary Romanian culture and heritage. He also

wants to simplify pensions, reform social benefits, develop community social services and long-term care, support women's access to work, and fight domestic violence. On foreign policy, Dan highlighted strengthening ties with the USA, NATO, and the EU, reducing energy and tech dependencies, boosting defense spending, and supporting Moldova's European path. He also promised better support for Romanians abroad, improving consular services, promoting Romanian language teaching, and ensuring diaspora representation in Parliament. - Agencies

Attaullah Tarar congratulates RISJA newly elected body

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Attaullah Tarar, congratulated RISJA's newly elected President Abu Bakar bin Talat, General Secretary Syed Arslan Shirazi, Finance Secretary Nasir Abbas Naqvi, and other office bearers. He also extended his congratulations to Zulfiqar Baig on being elected Senior Vice President, Aqeel Anjum and Asghar Ali Mubarak as Vice Presidents, and Hafiz Abdul Rehman and Asim Riaz as Joint Secretaries. "The government firmly believes in free, responsible, and constructive journalism," said Attaullah Tarar, adding that RISJA is an active and vibrant journalistic organization. Tarar highlighted that RISJA plays a key role in promoting sports journalism and protecting the rights of journalists. "The government is well aware of the challenges faced by journalists and is taking serious steps to address them," stated the Federal Minister. He conveyed his best wishes to the new RISJA leadership and expressed hope that the new team will fulfill the trust of the journalist community through their professional capabilities.

Imran's sister offers 'give and take' formula

FROM PAGE 01

Speaking to the media outside the Islamabad High Court, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur launched a scathing attack on the federal government, judiciary, and political opponents. He strongly opposed the 26th Constitutional Amendment, calling it "unacceptable." "We were against it and will throw it in the dustbin," he said. Gandapur claimed that the February 8 general elections were rigged, saying that "traitors conspired together to steal the elections". He announced that the next hearing of the case has been scheduled for June 5, just before Eid. "We will reveal during the hearing how the laws of Pakistan are being manipulated," he said. "They think nothing will happen, but our movement will continue," he added. Reiterating his loyalty to Khan Gandapur said: "We were, are, and will remain with the PTI founder. He is fighting a war for us and for our children." Defending the PTI founder, Gandapur said: "There is no case against him, yet an innocent man is in jail." He also pointed out that the PTI-led government in KP is operating under the founder's guidance.

Not going to take Pakistan lightly, says Bangladesh coach

"Everyone is saying Pakistan hasn't been playing well, but Pakistan is still Pakistan," says Phil Simmons

DNA

LAHORE: Bangladesh head coach Phil Simmons said that they would not take Pakistan lightly despite their recent inconsistent performance as they have the ability to beat any team. Speaking to media in Lahore, Phil Simmons remains hopeful of a strong showing against Pakistan in the upcoming series, despite the absence of several key players from his squad. He expressed confidence in his team's ability to deliver quality cricket. "This is a good opportunity for us to play competitive cricket," Simmons said. "Pakistan is a dangerous side, and we are not going to take them lightly." While acknowledging recent inconsistent performances by Pakistan, the former West Indies cricketer emphasised the host team's inherent strength. "Everyone is saying Pakistan hasn't been playing well, but Pakistan is still Pakistan — they have the ability to beat anyone," he noted. The 62-year-old also pointed out that players with experience in the Pakistan Super League (PSL) have shared valuable insights into local conditions. "Some of our players have featured in the PSL, and they've provided helpful information about the conditions here," he added. The absence of senior players, Simmons said, opens the door for younger talent to step up. "When senior players are unavailable, it creates opportunities for youngsters. Often, one of them turns out to be a great find," he said. "Mustafizur Rahman is an important player for us, and unfortunately, he won't be part of this series." Despite the setback, Simmons maintained a positive outlook. "We will miss our key players, but we are determined to put up a strong performance with the current squad," he said. Reflecting on his past experiences, Simmons shared his fondness for Pakistan.

Nepali 'Everest Man' breaks own record with 31st summit

KATHMANDU: A 55-year-old Nepali climber dubbed the "Everest Man" reached the peak of the world's highest mountain for a record 31st time on Tuesday, more than three decades after his first summit. "Massive congratulations to the legendary Kami Rita Sherpa on his 31st successful ascent of Everest — the highest number of ascents by anyone in history," said a statement from expedition organisers, Seven Summit Treks. "Kami Rita Sherpa needs no introduction. He is not just a national climbing hero, but a global symbol of Everest itself," it added. Sherpa first stood on the top of Mount Everest in 1994 when working for a commercial expedition. He has climbed Everest almost every year since, guiding clients. Sherpa, speaking a year ago after he had climbed the 8,849-metre (29,032-foot) peak for the 29th and 30th times, said that he was "just working" and did not plan on setting records. "I am glad for the record, but records are eventually broken," he told AFP in May 2024. "I am more happy that my climbs help Nepal be recognised in the world." Seven Summit Treks said he completed the climb on Tuesday as the leader of the Indian army team,

adding that he "not only reached the summit himself, but also led and guided the last remaining members of the team to the top". The achievement comes as the spring climbing season nears its end. More than 500 climbers and their guides have already reached the summit of Everest since the route opened, taking advantage of brief spells of good weather, according to Nepal's tourism department. The season has so far recorded the fewest number of deaths on Everest in recent years. Two climbers, a Filipino and an Indian, have died on its high camps. Nepal has issued more than 1,100 permits for mountaineers this season, including 458 for Everest, earning more than \$5 million in royalties. The country is home to eight of the world's 10 highest peaks and welcomes hundreds of adventurers each spring, when temperatures are warmer and winds typically calmer. Earlier this month British climber Kenton Cool, 51, successfully climbed Everest for the 19th time, extending his own record for the most summits by a non-Nepali. Tourist ministry official Himal Gautam, director of its mountaineering and adventure section, said Sherpa's achievement reflected on the country's wider efforts. - Agencies

Sinner kicks off French Open campaign with straight-sets win

PARIS: World number one Jannik Sinner showed his battling qualities to progress through the first round of the French Open on Monday with a 6-4, 6-3, 7-5 win over home hope Arthur Rinderknech. The 23-year-old Italian showed some signs of rustiness as he claimed victory in two hours 15 minutes in just his seventh match back since returning from a three-month doping suspension. Sinner made his comeback at the Italian Open earlier in May, reaching the final before losing in straight sets to reigning Roland Garros champion Carlos Alcaraz. After receiving a warm reception in Rome on his return from suspension, Sinner

was cheered by the Parisian crowd when his name was announced. The majority home support vocally backed Frenchman Rinderknech when play started on Court Philippe Chatrier, but Sinner silenced the stadium by clinically converting two of the three break points he manufactured in the first two sets to take control of the match. The three-time Grand Slam winner looked to be cruising until world number 75 Rinderknech ignited centre court by racing into a 4-0 lead in the third set. But Sinner showed his sangfroid to wipe out the double break and level the third set at 5-5, before claiming the next two games to book his spot in the second round. "He (Rinderknech) played very well in the third set and... I knew if it got to 5-0 it's going to be very difficult," said Sinner of his comeback in the decisive set. Sinner will next face retiring French tennis icon Richard Gasquet, after the 38-year-old earlier beat compatriot Terence Atmane in four sets. "Of course the next match is going to be very special," added Sinner during his on-court interview. "I know you're going to support him (Gasquet), it's OK, I know that... I'm just happy to share a court with him." - Agencies

Cristiano Ronaldo leaving Al-Nassr soon?

Cristiano Ronaldo says chapter of Saudi Pro League club over

DNA

RIYADH: Cristiano Ronaldo indicated on Monday that he could leave Al Nassr after declaring that a "chapter is over" hours after the Saudi Pro League finished. The 40-year-old Portuguese forward joined Al Nassr in 2022 from Manchester United and his contract with the Saudi club ends this summer. A special transfer window runs from June 1-10 to allow the 32 clubs involved in the Club World Cup to sign players. Al-Nassr aren't at the Club World Cup unlike fellow Saudi side Al Hilal. FIFA president Gianni Infantino last week said "there are discussions" over the former United, Real Madrid, Juventus and Sporting Lisbon star playing at the enlarged tournament in the United States starting



on June 14. "This chapter is over," Ronaldo cryptically said on social media with a photo of him in an Al Nassr shirt. "The story? Still being written. Grateful to all." Al Nassr lost in the semi-finals of the Asian Champions League last month to Japan's Kawasaki Frontale and finished third in the Saudi Pro League. Ronaldo was the league's top goal scorer on 24. Last year, the five-time Ballon d'Or winner said he could end his career with Al Nassr. Ronaldo's great rival Lionel Messi will play at the Club World Cup with Inter Miami. During a recent interview with YouTuber and streamer IShowSpeed, Infantino said: "And Ronaldo might play for one of the teams as well at the Club World Cup." "There are discussions with some clubs, so if any club is watching and is interested in hiring Ronaldo for the Club World Cup... who knows, who knows."

Briefs

PSX turns bullish, gains 111 points

ISLAMABAD: The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bullish trend on Tuesday, gaining 111.79 points, a positive change of 0.09 percent, closing at 118,332.91 points as compared to 118,221.12 points on the last trading day.

A total of 690,389,276 shares were traded during the day as compared to 635,535,311 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 23.828 billion against Rs 18.576 billion on the last trading day. As many as 459 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 211 of them recorded gains and 210 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 38 companies remained unchanged. The three top trading companies were K-Electric Limited with 267,623,259 shares at Rs 5.89 per share, WorldCall Telecom with 31,561,718 shares at Rs 1.30 per share and PTCL with 20,008,328 shares at Rs 24.28 per share.—APP

Rupee sheds 12 paise against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Tuesday depreciated by 12 paise against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 282.17 against the previous day's closing of Rs 282.05. 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 284.30, respectively. The price of the Euro decreased by Rs 1.18 to close at Rs 320.16 against the last day's closing of Rs 321.34, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen came down by 01 paise and closed at Rs1.96, whereas a decrease of Rs 0.87 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 381.83 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 382.70. The exchange rates of the mirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 03 paise each to close at Rs 76.82 and Rs 75.23, respectively.—APP

Gold price decreases Rs 3,600 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat per tola gold witnessed a decrease of Rs.3,600 on Tuesday and was sold at Rs.347,900 against its sale at Rs. 351,500 on the previous trading day. All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewelers Association reported. The prices of 10 grams of 24 karat also decreased by Rs.3,086 to Rs.298,268 from Rs. 301,354 whereas the price of 10 grams of 22 Karat came down by Rs.2,829 to Rs.273,422 from Rs. 276,251. The rates of per tola silver and ten gram declined by Rs.60 and Rs52 and were traded at Rs.3,448 and Rs.2,956 respectively.—APP

OGRA rolls out E-licensing system to facilitate oil & gas industry

ISLAMABAD: The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) has launched a new e-licensing system aimed at modernising and streamlining the licensing process for Pakistan's oil and gas industry. This digital initiative marks a significant move towards improved regulatory efficiency and digital transformation in the energy sector. Developed in collaboration with the National IT Board (NITB), the new platform enables fully digitised licensing across all industry segments, including Gas, LNG, CNG, LPG, refineries, and oil. The initiative is designed to simplify and accelerate the process of obtaining or renewing licenses, offering enhanced transparency and efficiency for businesses operating in the midstream and downstream energy markets.—APP

Aurangzeb review progress on outcome-based financing initiatives

The task force highlighted that the SIF Framework is a strategic blueprint aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), aiming to blend financial returns with measurable social outcomes

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Tuesday chaired a high-level meeting to review the progress on outcome-based funding initiatives recommended by the committee on Social Impact Finance, a body constituted by the Prime Minister to spearhead innovative and inclusive financial solutions in Pakistan. The meeting brought together senior representatives from Pakistan's financial sector, including commercial banks, development finance institutions (DFIs), regulators, and investment experts, who form the core of the MOF-led Task Force, said a news release. The session marked a follow-up to the recently concluded two-day impact financing workshop and training, held in the federal capital and organized by the Ministry of Finance in collaboration with Karandaaz Pakistan and the Pakistan Banks Association (PBA) under the theme 'From Value to Vision: Financing with Purpose from Pakistan's Financial Sector'. The workshop, inaugurated by Muhammad Aurangzeb, covered key topics such as strategic intent in financing, impact governance, portfolio-level impact design, outcomes at exit, and independent validation. Through interactive case studies,

peer-learning engagements, and scenario-based exercises, participants developed actionable strate-

oped with experts from health, poverty alleviation, and skills development sectors under the aegis of

validated outcomes, OBF seeks to enhance transparency, accountability, and efficiency across Pakistan's



gies to embed impact into financial decision-making processes. During today's review session, the task force presented detailed findings and recommendations focused on steering the financial sector towards sustainable, inclusive, and impact-driven innovation. Central to the discussions was the Social Impact Financing (SIF) framework, a comprehensive model co-devel-

oped with experts from health, poverty alleviation, and skills development sectors under the aegis of validated outcomes, OBF seeks to enhance transparency, accountability, and efficiency across Pakistan's

development finance architecture. This model has the potential to unlock both private and philanthropic capital, directly address delivery challenges, and ensure smarter targeting of resources. Five prototype OBF initiatives were showcased to the Minister, including graduation of ultra-poor, female-headed households out of poverty within five years, enhanced income gener-

ation for farmers through agronomic support, financial inclusion and poverty alleviation via agri-warehousing, social impact financing in the healthcare sector, and human capital development through skills training and employment-linked education. The task force highlighted that the SIF Framework is a strategic blueprint aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), aiming to blend financial returns with measurable social outcomes. It recommends the creation of innovative financial instruments, de-risking solutions, and incentive mechanisms to attract long-term private sector participation in development. In his remarks, the minister expressed appreciation for the Task Force's collaborative efforts and emphasized the critical role of private capital in catalyzing macroeconomic transformation. He noted the interconnected nature of healthcare and wellbeing with all six priority development pillars, and underscored human capital development as central to the country's sustainable growth agenda.

He also stressed the need for upskilling and re-tooling of the workforce to meet emerging industry demands, suggesting closer integration between economic activity and vocational training.—

SAPM forms committee to address industry challenges

He concluded by assuring full government support to the tile manufacturing sector and reaffirmed the government's commitment to the broader development of the local industrial base

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Industries and Production Haroon Akhtar Khan on Tuesday announced the formation of a committee to address key industry challenges. In this regard, SAPM held a high level meeting with the All Pakistan Ceramic Tiles Manufacturers Association (APCTMA), said a news release. A joint committee comprising members of the Tiles Manufacturers Association and the Engineering Development Board (EDB) established.

The committee has been tasked to present a progress report by Thursday. The meeting was attended by representatives from 10 Pakistani manufacturers and 4 Chinese manufacturers. The key issues discussed included the tariff policy, customs duties, exports and imports, and the need for tariff protection for the local ceramic tiles industry. Haroon Akhtar appreciated the role played by the tiles industry in Pakistan's industrial development. "I am fully aware of the challenges faced by tile manufacturers and I will personally advocate for your

cause," he added. SAPM directed the tile manufacturers to submit a detailed report outlining the specific reasons why higher protection is necessary for the industry. He further instructed that the report must quantify cost disadvantages as a percentage of total production costs. "The government under Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is committed to supporting and revitalizing the industrial sector," SAPM emphasized. "We are strongly defending the case for industries, including tiles, in the National Tariff Policy Board." Haroon reiterated his vision to

see Pakistani manufacturers become regionally competitive and assured that Chinese manufacturers, as partners and friends, will continue to receive full support. "No industry will be allowed to shut down," he affirmed. "Revival of industries is our vision, and we are formulating long-term policies to ensure sustainable growth." He concluded by assuring full government support to the tile manufacturing sector and reaffirmed the government's commitment to the broader development of the local industrial base.

Naqvi receives warm reception in Mashhad

MASHHAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi arrived in Mashhad as part of his visit to Iran. He



was accorded a warm reception on his arrival at Mashhad International Airport, Governor General of Khorasan, Gholam Hossein Mozaffari welcomed him. Mohsin Naqvi paid respects at the shrine of Hazrat Imam Reza (A.S.), visited various parts of the shrine, He also offered nawafil and made special prayers. He prayed for peace, security, prosperity, and regional stability. He expressed the gratitude to the Iranian government for their arrangements for Pakistani pilgrims. He highlighted that Pakistan and Iran will sit together in order to ensure further measures to facilities the Zaireen.—DNA

SAPM forms committee to address industry challenges

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Industries and Production Haroon Akhtar Khan on Tuesday announced the formation of a committee to address key industry challenges. In this regard, SAPM held a high level meeting with the All Pakistan Ceramic Tiles Manufacturers Association (APCTMA), said a news release. A joint committee comprising members of the Tiles Manufacturers Association and the Engineering Development Board (EDB) established. The committee has been tasked to present a progress report by Thursday. The meeting was attended by representatives from 10 Pakistani manufacturers and 4 Chinese manufacturers. The key issues discussed included the tariff policy, customs duties, exports and imports, and the need for tariff protection for the local ceramic tiles industry. Haroon Akhtar appreciated the role played by the tiles industry in Pakistan's industrial development. "I am fully aware of the challenges faced by tile manufacturers and I will personally advocate for your cause," he added. SAPM directed the tile manufacturers to submit a detailed report outlining the specific reasons why higher protection is necessary for the industry. He further instructed that the report must quantify cost disadvantages as a percentage of total production costs. "The government under Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is committed to supporting and revitalizing the industrial sector," SAPM emphasized. "We are strongly defending the case for industries, including tiles, in the National Tariff Policy Board." Haroon reiterated his vision to see Pakistani manufacturers become regionally competitive and assured that Chinese manufacturers, as partners and friends, will continue to receive full support. No industry will be allowed to shut down," he affirmed. "Revival of industries is our vision, and we are formulating long-term policies to ensure sustainable growth.—APP



Tehran: Iranian Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni seeing off Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif at Mehrabad Airport, Tehran.

Syria, Israel in direct talks focused on security

DAMASCUS: Israel and Syria are in direct contact and have in recent weeks held face-to-face meetings aimed at calming tensions and preventing conflict in the border region between the two longtime foes, five people familiar with the matter said. The contacts mark a significant development in ties between states that have been on opposite sides of conflict in the Middle East for decades, as the US encourages the new Islamist rulers in Damascus to establish relations with Israel and Israel eases its bombardment of Syria. They also build on back-channel talks via intermediaries since Islamist rebels Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham toppled Syrian strongman Bashar Assad in December, said two Syrian and two Western sources, as well as a regional intelligence source familiar with the matter. The sources spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the subject for two nations with no

official ties and a history of enmity. The direct talks and their scope have not been previously reported. On the Syrian side, the sources said contacts have been led by senior security official Ahmad Al-Dalati, who was appointed governor of the province of Quneitra, which borders the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, after the fall of Assad. Earlier this week, Dalati was also put in charge of security in the southern province of Sweida, home to Syria's Druze minority. Reuters could not determine who participated on Israel's side, though two of the sources said they were security officials. Three of the sources said there had been several rounds of in-person meetings in the border region, including in territory controlled by Israel. Israel's foreign ministry and Syrian officials did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Earlier this month, Syrian interim president Ahmed Al-Sharaa confirmed in-

direct talks with Israel that he said were aimed at calming tensions, a striking admission that followed a Reuters report that the UAE was mediating such talks. Israel has occupied the Syrian Golan Heights since the 1967 Arab-Israeli war and took more territory in the aftermath of Assad's ouster in December, citing lingering concerns over the extremist past of the country's new rulers. It has also waged a campaign of aerial bombardment that destroyed much of the country's military infrastructure, while at the same time lobbying Washington to keep the country weak and decentralized. But the bombing and the criticism have subsided in recent weeks. On May 14, a meeting between US President Donald Trump and Sharaa in Riyadh upended decades of US Syria policy, and signalled to Israel's right-wing government that it should work to reach understandings with Sharaa. The regional intelligence source described Trump's engagement

with Sharaa as a pivotal part of a realignment in US policy that upset Israel's post-Assad strategy of exploiting Syria's fragmentation. The relative calm in May has also seen a reduction in tensions around Sweida, which saw days of bloody clashes between Druze armed factions, some of which enjoy Israeli backing, and Sunni Muslim fighters last month. Amid the violence, Israel had launched a series of airstrikes, including one just outside the presidential palace overlooking Damascus, which it framed as a warning over threats against the Druze, an offshoot of Islam with adherents in Syria, Lebanon and Israel. While the direct talks are currently focused on joint security, such as preventing conflict and reducing Israeli incursions into Syrian border villages, two of the sources said they may help pave the way for broader political understandings. "For now, they are about peace, as in the absence of war, rather than normalization," said the person familiar with backchannel talks. Trump indi-

cated after meeting Sharaa that the Syrian leader was willing to eventually normalize ties with Israel, while adding that it would take some time. Sharaa has not commented on the statement, saying instead that he supported a return to the terms of a 1974 ceasefire agreement that created a UN buffer zone in the Golan Heights. Syria's new rulers have made repeated efforts to show they pose no threat to Israel, meeting representatives of the Jewish community in Damascus and abroad and detaining two senior members of Palestinian Islamic Jihad, which participated in the October 7, 2023 Hamas-led attack on Israel. A letter sent by Syria's foreign ministry to the US State Department last month, seen by Reuters, said "we will not allow Syria to become a source of threat to any party, including Israel." More recently, Syria's leadership has shown goodwill by approving the handover of a trove of long-dead Israeli master spy Eli Cohen's belongings.—DNA

Belarus, China launch new media platform

MINSK: The Belarusian Union of Journalists and the Gansu Daily newspaper, China have agreed to actively utilize modern information exchange tools and have launched a new media platform for this purpose.

This agreement was reached during a meeting between Chairman of the Belarusian Union of Journalists Andrei Krivosheyev, a delegation of Belarusian media representatives and the Gansu Daily newspaper in Lanzhou, Gansu Province of China, BeiTA reported. Belarusian journalists explored the diverse activities of Gansu Daily, engaging in constructive discussions with their Chinese counterparts. Attending the meeting were also representatives from China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, local government officials, media representatives from Gansu Province, and Vice President of the All-China Journalists Association Li Xiaojun. The director general of the Gansu Daily newspaper and the chairman of the Belarusian Union of Journalists expressed keen interest in further strengthening information cooperation within the framework of the all-weather and all-round Belarus-China strategic partnership.—APP

Zong inaugurates customer service center

ISLAMABAD: Zong, Pakistan's leading technology innovation company, has inaugurated its newly relocated and upgraded Customer Service Centre (CSC) in Rawalpindi. The move highlights Zong's customer-first commitment and expands its nationwide footprint, said a news release. Strategically located in the heart of Rawalpindi, CSC is designed to deliver an enhanced and seamless customer experience. The facility boasts modern infrastructure, digital self-service kiosks, a high-value customer lounge, and a dedicated counter for senior citizens; reflecting Zong's commitment to accessibility, convenience, and care for all customer segments. The new center is equipped with cutting-edge tools and staffed by highly trained professionals to provide fast, efficient, and personalized services. This state-of-the-art facility raises service standards while reinforcing Zong's focus on operational excellence and brand visibility in key urban centers. The inauguration ceremony was led by Zong's senior leadership, including Faheem Durrani, Regional General Manager (North), Tauseef ur Rehman, Director Sales and Distribution; Mr. Sajid Munir, Director Marketing and Farrukh Khurshid, Director OAS, alongside local stakeholders.—APP

Iraq sues Kurdistan region over US gas contracts

BAGHDAD: Iraq's federal authorities have filed a complaint against the autonomous Kurdistan region for signing gas contracts with two US companies, two officials told AFP on Tuesday. Oil exports have been a major point of tension between Baghdad and Irbil, with a major pipeline through Turkiye shut since 2023 over legal disputes and technical issues. Regional prime minister Masrour Barzani announced the signing of two major energy deals valued at "tens of billions of US dollars" during a visit to Washington in May. Iraq's oil ministry immediately slammed the agreements, saying it constitutes a "clear breach of Iraqi law" and that all oil and gas development must go through the federal government. An Iraqi government official, who requested anonymity to speak on the matter, told AFP that a lawsuit had been filed before Baghdad's Al-Karkh commercial court. A Kurdish official confirmed the complaint, saying it called for "the cancellation of the contracts." The agreement with Western Zagros involves the development of the Tophkana block.—APP

Briefs

Deputy
Chairman
Senate visits
Terracotta
Army Museum

ISLAMABAD: The Deputy Chairman of the Senate of Pakistan, Syedaal Khan Nasar, accompanied by a high-level parliamentary delegation, visited the world-renowned Terracotta Army Museum in Xi'an, China. According to a news release received here on Tuesday, the visit was aimed at reinforcing the deep-rooted cultural and historical relations between Pakistan and China, further enhancing the time-tested friendship and strategic cooperation between the two nations. The delegation received a warm welcome from Chinese officials and museum representatives, who provided a comprehensive tour of the museum. The guests were briefed on the historical significance of the Qin Dynasty and the world-famous Terracotta Warriors, which are considered one of the most significant archaeological discoveries of the 20th century. During the visit, Deputy Chairman Syedaal Khan expressed profound admiration for China's historical legacy preserved in Xi'an. He underscored the pivotal role of cultural diplomacy in building bridges of understanding and goodwill between nations. "The Terracotta Army is not only a symbol of China's ancient glory but also a reminder of our shared commitment to safeguarding world heritage and fostering people-to-people connections," he remarked. The Deputy Chairman reiterated Pakistan's strong commitment to promoting cultural exchanges and mutual respect, noting that both countries share a rich civilizational history and a vision for peaceful cooperation. — APP

Extension
in Afghan
nationals' visas:
4-member
gang busted

RAWALPINDI: A four-member gang of Afghan nationals has been busted from Khayaban-e-Sir Syed for preparing fake documents, including visas, for their countrymen to extend their stay in Pakistan. According to the first information report lodged by the Pirwadhai Police on Sunday (May 25), the arrested accused include Ahmad Shah, Muhammad Zubair, Abul Fazal and Alizadeh. Forged documents including fake visa stickers and 25 residence permits and Afghan passports, along with laptops and a colour printer, were recovered from their possession. A Pirwadhai Police team on a tipoff raided their office situated at a plaza in Khayaban-e-Sir Syed and caught all the four accused with forged documents. Using the PDF editor, the accused used to extend the date of expired visas and then got printed their stickers. The accused Abul Fazal worked as a computer editor, while Alizadeh used to trap Afghan nationals who wanted extension in their visa dates. The accused used to charge Rs 10,000 for extending visa expiry date through forgery. The accused were booked under the provisions of fraud, cheating and forgery. — APP

Field Marshal Asim Munir
visits Iranian military HQs

COAS alongside the Prime Minister of Pakistan earlier met with H.E Ayatollah Syed Ali Hosseini Khamenei, Supreme Leader of Iran and H.E Masoud Pezeshkian, President of Iran



DNA

RAWALPINDI: Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS) of Pakistan, visited General Staff Headquarters, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran. COAS held meeting with Major General Mohammad Bagheri, Chief of General Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces. The two military leaders engaged in discussions on the evolving regional security landscape, with particular focus on strengthening bilateral defence ties. Key areas of mutual interest included enhancing military-to-military cooperation, improving security mechanisms along the shared border, and exploring avenues for transforming the border regions into zones of trade and economic connectivity, thereby contributing to regional stability and prosperity. Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir was accorded a warm welcome upon his arrival, including a ceremonial guard of honour presented by a well-turned-out contingent of the Iranian Armed Forces. COAS alongside the Prime Minister of Pakistan earlier met with H.E Ayatollah Syed Ali Hosseini Khamenei, Supreme Leader of Iran and H.E Masoud Pezeshkian, President of Iran. COAS is on an official visit to Türkiye, Iran and Azerbaijan along with the Prime Minister's delegation visiting the three friendly countries.

Massive global data breach
Pakistanis asked to
'change all passwords'

Google, Microsoft, Apple,
Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat
affected in data breach

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's National Cyber Emergency Response Team (NCERT) has urged citizens to change their social media passwords after a major global data leak exposed 184 million unique account credentials. In an advisory issued on Monday, the body said that the breach exposed usernames, passwords, emails, and associated URLs tied to services from Google, Microsoft, Apple, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, as well as government portals, banking institutions, and healthcare platforms worldwide. The leaked database is believed to have been compiled using infostealer malware — malicious software that extracts sensitive information from compromised systems. This data, the advisory mentioned, was stored in plain text and left completely unprotected, with no encryption or password safeguarding. The body said that immediate

action is recommended to mitigate associated risks and to secure systems potentially impacted by this breach. Successful exploitation of the leaked credentials may result in:

1. Credential stuffing attacks — automated login attempts across services using reused credentials
2. Account takeovers — unauthorised access to user accounts and personal services.
3. Identity theft and fraud — theft of digital identity for committing scams or impersonation.
4. Ransomware deployment and espionage — targeted attacks on individuals and enterprises.
5. Government and critical sector compromise — unauthorised access to sensitive government systems.
6. Targeted phishing and social engineering — tailored scams using personal communication history.

The NCERT advisory highlights the severe implications of this breach, which appears to be a dump of information-stealing malware. The compromised database was found to be publicly hosted, lacking any authentication controls, making it easily accessible to anyone with an internet connection. The database included sensitive login information for major platforms, enterprises, government agencies, and financial institutions.

Memoir reveals Gen Kayani's role
in facilitating Musharraf's removal

MONITORING REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Asif Ali Zardari compelled Gen Pervez Musharraf to resign after securing the consent of his successor, Gen Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, reveals Farhatullah Babar in his memoir. The book also uncovers how pressure was mounted for the restoration of Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry through the deployment of the Triple One Brigade outside the presidency. Titled The Zardari Presidency, the book offers Babar's firsthand account of events he witnessed as spokesperson to President Zardari during his first term (2008–2013). Regarding Musharraf's removal, Zardari gauged Kayani's reaction to the potential ousting of Musharraf, to which Kayani did not object and even suggested Aftab Shaban Mirani as the next president. Zardari

then instructed his trusted party members to move resolutions in provincial assemblies demanding Musharraf's impeachment and conveyed a message through Maj Gen (ret'd) Mahmud Ali Durrani, urging Musharraf to resign or face impeachment. Initially dismissive, Musharraf eventually resigned weeks later. The book reveals that Nawaz Sharif also aspired to the presidency during the PML-N and PPP alliance. In an informal conversation, Sharif remarked to Zardari, "My party thinks that I should become the President." Zardari replied with a laugh, "My party also thinks that I should become the President." The discussion ended there. Divided into eight sections, the book's fourth part delves into Zardari's confrontation with the judiciary. According to Babar, neither Benazir Bhutto nor Zardari held favourable views of Justice Chaudhry, whom Zardari believed operated under the guise of independence while serving other interests.

ADB breaks new ground
with surging private
sector operations

ISLAMABAD: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) committed a record 58 private sector transactions in 2024—up 45% from the previous year, with \$2.6 billion of financing, according to its 2024 Private Sector Operations Report on Development Effectiveness. The total volume of commitments, including programs, projects, and cofinancing reached an unprecedented \$8 billion, underscoring ADB's growing role in driving private sector-led development and innovation across Asia and the Pacific. Long-term cofinancing with private partners reached \$3.6 billion in 2024—\$3.4 billion from project cofinancing, \$0.2 billion from long-term cofinancing from the Microfinance Program, and \$7.4 million from ADB Ventures. An additional \$2.1 billion cofinancing was provided for the Office of Markets Development and Public-Private Partnership. This translates to \$2.60 in cofinancing for every \$1 of ADB financing. To further bolster its cofinancing, ADB

partnered with the Government of Canada to create the Canadian Climate and Nature Fund for Private Sector in Asia—a trust fund to finance climate-focused private sector projects. "These impressive results demonstrate how ADB's agile and innovative private sector approach is helping developing countries navigate an evolving policy environment and manage economic risks," said ADB Vice-President for Market Solutions Bhargav Dasgupta, said ADB press release received here Tuesday. "ADB will continue to sharpen its focus on removing barriers to private sector development and delivering innovative solutions that deepen markets and drive inclusive growth," Dasgupta added. From projects committed in 2024, expected results will deliver 8,694 gigawatt-hours of power; 164,475 people trained and 1 million micro, small, and medium-sized businesses supported; 564,525 tons of agricultural products produced; water provided to 10,000 households; and 10 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent of greenhouse gas emissions reduced annually. ADB's active portfolio of private sector projects has delivered benefits to 44.3 million micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises—42.3 million owned or led by women—and about 8.7 million farmers. Current operations have created jobs for 826,784 workers—145,629 of them female. — DNA

Pak extends deadline for PIA bid to June 19

Senior official of the Privatisation Commission says all other terms remain unchanged

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has granted prospective investors more time to prepare their bids for the privatisation of Pakistan International Airlines Corporation Limited (PIACL), extending the deadline for submitting Expressions of Interest (EoI) until June 19. This 15-day extension from the original June 3 deadline aims to facilitate broader participation in one of the nation's most significant divestment initiatives in recent memory. The government is offering a controlling stake, ranging from 51% to 100% equity in PIACL, alongside full management control. When asked about the reason for the extension, the official said it was due to Eid ul Adha. This move comes as the government pushes

ahead with plans to privatise the loss-making national carrier in a bid to cut the fiscal deficit, fix inefficient state-run enterprises, and attract foreign investment. The process is part of reforms agreed with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF).



To make the deal more attractive, Islamabad has introduced new incentives, including GST exemptions on new aircraft and shifting PIA's debt off its balance sheet. These changes aim to present PIA with a "net-zero balance sheet" to potential buyers. A revised price benchmark for the deal may also be set soon. The current plan offers a simplified and cleaner transaction compared to an earlier failed attempt, which offered 60% of shares with an optional 15% top-up. Back then, PIA's negative equity of Rs45 billion and 18% GST on aircraft were key roadblocks. With the IMF's approval, those liabilities are now absorbed by the government, making the deal more appealing. EY Consulting LLC is advising the Privatisation Commission on the sale. The government hopes to wrap up the process within the current calendar year.

Car ploughs
into fans at
Liverpool
parade

"We would ask people not to speculate on the circumstances surrounding tonight's incident," say police

NEWS DESK

LONDON: A car ploughed into a crowd of Liverpool fans during a parade celebrating their side's Premier League soccer title on Monday, hospitalising 27 people, with two seriously injured, but police said they did not believe the incident was terrorism-related. Police said they had arrested a "53-year-old white British man from the Liverpool area," whom they believed to be the driver of the vehicle which struck a large group of supporters who were celebrating in the city in northwest England. Twenty people were treated at the scene. Ambulance officials said of the 27 taken to hospital, four were children. One child and one adult were in a serious condition. Four people trapped under the vehicle had to be released by firefighters. Videos on social media showed people thrown into the air as the car rammed into spectators. When the car stopped, angry fans converged on it and began smashing the windows as police officers intervened to prevent them from reaching the driver.

Bangladesh
top court
acquits
Islamist leader

DHAKA: Bangladesh's top court on Tuesday overturned a conviction against a key leader of the country's main Islamist party, who had been on death row since being sentenced under the regime ousted last year. A.T.M. Azharul Islam, from the Jamaat-e-Islami party, and who has been in custody since 2012, was acquitted of crimes against humanity by the Supreme Court, which ordered his release. Islam was among six senior political leaders convicted during the tenure of Sheikh Hasina, whose 15-year-long autocratic rule as prime minister ended in August 2024 when a student-led revolt forced her to flee. Islam's lawyer Shishir Monir said he was "fortunate" because the five other senior political leaders who had been convicted — four from Jamaat-e-Islami, and another from key Bangladesh National Party (BNP) — had already been hanged. — APP

**General Practice**
HOSPITAL

We Are **OPEN**

General Practice Hospital is a state-of-the-art healthcare facility offering comprehensive medical services to the community. Our hospital is equipped with advanced diagnostic and treatment modalities, including specialized OPD clinics, an urgent care unit, a modern radiology unit, well-equipped IPD rooms, operation theatres, an on-site laboratory for precise diagnostics, dialysis services, and comfortable inpatient wards. We are dedicated to providing quality, easily accessible, and patient-centred healthcare in a welcoming and professional environment.















Empathy & Caring for everyone

We know that seeking medical care can be overwhelming, but you're not alone. With empathy at the heart of our care, we listen, understand, and support you every step of the way. In our clean, premium environment, you'll feel safe, valued, and truly cared for. Book your appointment today and experience healthcare with compassion.

FOR APPOINTMENT ☎ +92 33 47 47 01

📍 Paktown Tower 2, New Blue Area, Islamabad 🌐 www.generalpractice.com.pk 📱 [generalpracticeislamabad](https://www.facebook.com/generalpracticeislamabad) ☎ +92 51 6160 474 | +92 51 6161 474