



Tuesday, July 01, 2025

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Chinese FM in Europe to explore closer relations

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World Bank appoints new Courtney head

Detailed News On Page-08

Azhar Mehmood made Red ball Acting coach

Detailed News On Page-06



Dar vows to defend sovereignty

Pak slams India's 'water terrorism'

Defence Minister Khawaja Asif says Indian Prime Minister Modi's political days are numbered



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar speaks at the ISSI. – DNA

ANSAR M BHATTI / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said on Monday that India was attempting to weaponise water against Pakistan, vowing that Islamabad would not allow any infringement on its sovereignty or territorial integrity. Speaking at an event marking the 52nd anniversary of the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), Dar said India was trying to hold 240 million Pakistanis hostage through what he described as "water terrorism" – a reference to New Delhi's holding in abeyance of the Indus Waters Treaty. "India cannot impose its will on Pakistan and must reconsider its policies," the deputy prime minister said. He warned that India's actions, including any attempt to suspend the Indus Waters Treaty unilaterally, would be unacceptable and counterproductive. Dar accused India of aggression under the pretext of a false-flag operation, referring to the Pulwama incident, and asserted that Pakistan had responded effectively and immediately at the time. He stressed that Pakistan remains committed to defending its sovereignty and will not allow its rights under international agreements to be compromised. "India wants to use water

Pakistan welcomes Court of Arbitration

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a Supplemental Award announced on 27 June 2025, the Court of Arbitration hearing the Pakistan-India dispute over Kishenganga and Ratle hydroelectric projects has found that its competence remains intact, and that it has a continuing responsibility to advance these proceedings in a timely, efficient, and fair manner. The Court of Arbitration decided to announce this Supplemental Award in the wake of India's illegal and unilateral announcement to hold the Indus Waters Treaty in abeyance. Pakistan welcomes this Supplemental Award. The Award vindicates Pakistan's position that the Indus Waters Treaty remains valid and operational, and that India has no right to take a unilateral action about it. We urge India to immediately resume the normal functioning of the Indus Waters Treaty, and fulfil its treaty obligations, wholly and faithfully.

as a weapon, but Pakistan stands firm in protecting its interests," he said. The foreign minister also reiterated Pakistan's principled stance on Kashmir, calling it a globally recognised dispute. "A peaceful resolution of the Kashmir issue is essential for stability in the region," he said, while accusing India of gross violations of international law. Dar welcomed the recent ceasefire between Iran and Israel, reaffirming Pakistan's consistent support for Tehran's legal position. He also urged that Iran's nuclear issue be resolved through dialogue. Commenting on the situation in Gaza,

Continued on Page 06

Easing of tensions

PTI urges govt to engage in meaningful dialogue

Dialogue should not be used to create "false" sense of normalcy, says Shibli Faraz

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf senior leader Senator Shibli Faraz on Monday urged the PML-N-led coalition government in the Centre to move beyond statements and engage in meaningful dialogues to ease political tensions in the country. His remarks came in response to the government's renewed offer of dialogue to the former ruling party last week. Adviser to the Prime Minister on Political and Public Affairs Rana Sanaullah had said that the government remained open and willing to hold dialogue on all political matters with the opposition. Speaking to journalists on June 26 after meeting opposition members, Sanaullah stated that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had extended a clear and open invitation to the opposition from the floor of the House, expressing readiness for dialogue. "The PM even offered to meet in the speaker's chamber if the opposition wasn't comfortable meeting him directly," he added. The PML-N leader was of the view that democracy moves forward through dialogue.

Continued on Page 06

PTI-SIC urges SC to release 'order of the court'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), an ally of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), on Monday urged the Supreme Court to issue a written order in the reserved seats case bearing the signatures of all 12 honourable judges of the apex court bench. The development came days after the SC's Constitutional Bench accepted review petitions by the majority of 7 to 5 judges and ruled that the Imran Khan-founded party was not entitled to seats reserved for women and minorities in the national and provincial assemblies. On June 27, the verdict was announced by a 10-member bench

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Iran envoy appreciates Pakistan's unwavering support amid conflict

Says "Pakistan's government, people, and media stood firmly with us. Pakistan extended full support at international forums including the UN Security Council and IAEA Board of Governors. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defence of Pakistan offered complete cooperation"



CENTRELINE REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan, Dr. Raza Amiri Moghaddam, on Monday commended Pakistan's proactive and unwavering support for Iran during the recent escalation in the re-

gion. Speaking to a private news channel, the envoy said Pakistan played the most prominent role among all the brotherly nations, and the Iranian people deeply respect and value this support. He said, "Pakistan's government, people, and media stood firmly with us. Pakistan extended full support at international forums including the UN Security Council and IAEA Board of Governors. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defence of Pakistan offered complete cooperation." In contrast, India offered no support to Iran during the conflict, the ambassador said, suggesting that India remains under U.S. influence and maintains close ties with Israel. Dr. Amiri appreciated the

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chairing a high-level meeting regarding promotion of tourism in Pakistan. – DNA

Punjab Govt decision to discontinue Health Card

Azma Bukhari says card not discontinued

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: The Punjab government's recent decision to discontinue the Punjab Health Card scheme has sparked widespread criticism, with opposition parties and citizens condemning the move as "anti-people."

Editorial on Page 5

The initiative, which provided free healthcare services to millions, was hailed as a lifeline for the middle and lower-income groups, enabling them to access quality medical

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Iran seeks guarantee of no more attacks

DNA

PARIS: Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Majid Takht-Ravanchi has said that the US must assure that it would not carry out further attacks if it wants Tehran to resume negotiations. Al Jazeera reported citing the BBC. Speaking to the BBC, Takht-Ravanchi said that Washington had communicated via media that it wanted to come back to the table for talks.

Continued on Page 06

Better late than never

PM for taking practical steps to promote tourism

Says due to snow-covered mountains, forests, rivers, plains, deserts, and other natural assets in the northern areas, our country is in no way less than any other nation when it comes to tourism

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday directed the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) to take immediate practical steps to promote tourism in the country. "Public and private sectors should work together to facilitate international tourists' travel to Pakistan's tourist destinations," the prime minister issued directions while chairing a meeting held here to review promotion of tourism sector in the country. The prime minister said special measures should be taken to boost

Continued on Page 06

PM directs making Islamabad pilot smart city

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Shaza Fatima Khawaja, said on Monday that Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has directed the transformation of Islamabad into a

Continued on Page 06

Dr. Aafia case in US

IHC seeks reasons from govt for not becoming party

Court says this is a constitutional court and it cannot be happening that one comes and says what the decision is but does not give the reasons

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Monday sought reasons from federal government for not becoming a party in the US court in the Dr. Aafia Siddiqui

case. It directed the Additional Attorney General to explain the reasons for the government's decision on next hearing. Justice Sardar Ijaz Ishaq, hearing the case, remarked that when the government or

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

Rawalpindi put on high alert amid monsoon

FAISAL SHEIKH

RAWALPINDI: Commissioner Rawalpindi, Engineer Aamir Khattak, has directed all Deputy Commissioners to expedite preparations for the upcoming monsoon season and potential flooding, following instructions from Chief Minister Punjab for adopting proactive measures and making emergency contingency plans. The directive came as the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) forecasts 20-25% above-normal rainfall across Punjab, with northeastern divisions expecting 40-60% heavier rainfall. Fluctuations in Chenab river water levels due to water released from India's Salal Dam has further heighten flood risks.

Inflation expected to remain in range of 3 to 4 per cent

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The finance ministry, in its monthly economic outlook report on Monday, said that the consumer price index (CPI) inflation was expected to remain in the range of 3 to 4 per cent in June. Last month, depicting a cautious outlook towards growth in Large-Scale Manufacturing (LSM), the Ministry of Finance (MoF) had presented a rising trajectory for inflation during May and June. The year-on-year consumer inflation rate in May was the highest since December, indicating a rebound in inflation after months of slowdown. According to data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the CPI inflation had stood at 3.46pc in May 2025 as compared to the previous year.

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July 01/Singapore Armed Forces Day

July 01 / Canada National Day

July 01/Somalia Independence Day

July 04/USA Independence Day

July 05/Algeria Independence Day

July 09/Argentine Independence Day

July 09/Mongolia Revolution Day

July 14/France National Day

July 15/Brunei Sultan's Birthday

July 21/Belgium National Day

July 20/TRNC Independence Day

July 23/Egypt National Day

July 26/Cuba National Day

July 26/Liberia National Day

July 30/Morocco National Day

Serena Hotel.....111 133 133

Marriott.....051- 2826121

Monal.....0334-5421812

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

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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.....9261170-29

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

Mohsin reviews Muharram security arrangements of Central Imambargah

Authorities have reiterated their commitment to ensuring a peaceful and secure environment for all religious activities during the holy month.

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, accompanied by Minister of State Talal Chaudhry, visited the Central Imambargah Asna Ashari in Sector G-6, Islamabad, to review security and administrative arrangements for Muharram-ul-Haram. During the visit, the Interior Minister inspected the security protocols put in place to ensure the safety of mourners. He met with the administrators of the Imambargah, who expressed satisfaction over the ongoing arrangements and coordination with security agencies. Mohsin Naqvi said that a comprehensive and integrated security plan has been devised for Muharram across the country. He emphasized that strict surveillance and monitoring of miscreants is being carried out, and that the security alert level has been raised to thwart any potential threats from "cowardly enemies." Naqvi also announced that approval has been granted for the deployment of army personnel in Azad Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, and all provinces to assist the civil administration during Muharram. "The army will remain present to support local authorities in maintaining peace and order," he stated. The Interior Minister was briefed on the arrangements by DIG Islamabad Police, while Federal Secretary for Interior Khurram Agha and SSP Shoaib were also present during the visit. Authorities have reiterated their commitment to ensuring a peaceful and secure environment for all religious activities during the holy month.—APP

Early preparedness key to disaster mitigation

ISLAMABAD:National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Chairman Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik stated on Monday that early preparedness and timely alerts are crucial for effective disaster mitigation and highlighted that the adverse effects of natural disasters can be significantly lessened through coordinated efforts, increased public awareness and strong readiness measures. NDMA Chairman cautioned that due to climate change, Pakistan is likely to experience above-average rainfall this monsoon season. Expressing concern over Pakistan's heightened vulnerability to disasters amid the growing impacts of global climate change, Chairman urged the public to strictly adhere to safety guidelines and precautionary measures issued by relevant authorities and district administrations to minimize potential risks. He noted that the combination of intense precipitation and rapidly melting glaciers could lead to significant flooding in rivers and streams across the northern regions, emphasizing the urgency of proactive preparedness. He advised recreational visitors to stay alert around rivers and streams, as sudden surges in water flow during the monsoon could pose significant hazards. The Chairman emphasized the importance of the public strictly following safety protocols and precautionary measures issued by the relevant authorities and district administrations. He also urged district and provincial administrations in vulnerable areas to implement timely actions to mitigate potential risks. Additionally, he stressed that district authorities should manage public movement at tourist hotspots in accordance with their capacity limits. Citizens are especially warned to stay away from waterways, rivers, and streams during the monsoon season, and to remain vigilant while engaging in recreational activities. The Chairman of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has urged the public to stay informed and adopt precautionary measures by utilizing guidance provided through the NDMA Disaster Alert App. The Chairman stated that the Authority, in close coordination with provincial and district administrations, is actively engaged in efforts to reduce potential risks and enhance preparedness. He emphasized that NDMA plays a pivotal role in providing timely early warnings to all relevant agencies to ensure swift response to potential emergencies. Highlighting the capacity of the organization, the Chairman noted that the NDMA's National Emergencies Operation Center is equipped to issue alerts as early as six to eight months in advance, enabling stakeholders to take informed and timely action. The NDMA Chairman emphasized the importance of proactive coordination with all concerned agencies to address potential weather-related threats. He reiterated that timely communication by NDMA ensures that relevant institutions remain informed and ready to respond effectively to emerging situations. Underscoring the role of preparedness, the Chairman urged all agencies to align their emergency response plans with NDMA's alerts. He expressed profound grief over the tragic loss of lives caused by flooding in Swat, offering heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families.—DNA

Experts urge tree planting ahead of monsoon

DNA

ISLAMABAD :As the monsoon season draws near, environmental experts are calling on citizens to play a crucial role in mitigating the effects of hot weather by planting trees. The monsoon season, which brings much-needed rain to the region, also presents an ideal opportunity for planting trees. The moist soil and ample water supply create a perfect environment for saplings to grow. Experts say that by planting trees now, citizens can help to re-

duce the urban heat island effect, improve air quality, and create a more sustainable environment. According to Dr. Maria, a renowned environmental scientist, "Planting trees is one of the most effective ways to combat rising temperatures and create a cooler climate". She commented that trees provide shade, absorb carbon dioxide, and release oxygen, making them a natural solution to the urban heat island effect. She said the benefits of planting trees are numerous adding that not only do trees provide shade and cool the air,

but they also help to reduce air pollution, support biodiversity, and enhance the aesthetic appeal of our cities. Experts estimate that if every household in the city planted just one tree, it would make a significant difference to the environment. Another environmental expert Dr Muneer said "It's a small step that can have a big impact,by working together, we can create a cooler, more sustainable climate for future generations." Every tree counts, and every effort makes a difference noting that let's work together to create a

greener, cooler future for ourselves and for generations to come,he stated. He further told that the monsoon season is an ideal time for planting trees and other vegetation. He added that the ample rainfall and moist soil create a perfect environment for saplings to grow, reducing the need for frequent watering and increasing their chances of survival. "By planting during the monsoon season, we can give our trees a strong start, helping them to thrive and provide numerous benefits for the environment and our communities," he said. Spokesperson from the CDA nursery Muhammad Ismail said the government has also launched initiatives to encourage citizens to plant trees. He said "We are providing free saplings and technical support to residents who want to plant trees".

ISSI reaffirms role in shaping Pakistan's foreign policy

ISLAMABAD :The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) celebrated its 52nd anniversary on Monday, marking over five decades of contributions to policy research and strategic thought. The event was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar as chief guest, alongside Foreign Secretary Ambassador Anna Baloch, diplomats, academics, think-tank representatives, and media professionals, said a press release. The ceremony served as both a commemoration of ISSI's legacy since its establishment in 1973 and a reaffirmation of its continued commitment to support national policymaking through informed research and analysis. In his keynote address, Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar outlined Pakistan's foreign policy amid shifting global dynamics, stressing the importance of proactive diplomacy in navigating international challenges. He addressed a broad range of foreign policy priorities in the context of emerging global and regional trends. Director General ISSI Ambassador So-

hail Mahmood, in his opening remarks, thanked the Deputy Prime Minister for attending and acknowledged the collective efforts of Pakistan's political and military leadership, diplomats, civil society, media, and youth in defending national interests, particularly in response to recent tensions with India. He noted that Pakistan's principled and fact-based narrative had prevailed on the global stage, reaffirming the country's rising geostrategic salience. Ambassador Mahmood underscored the importance of sustained vigilance in the face of potential regional threats, while also advocating for continued efforts toward political stability, internal security, and economic progress. He called for adaptive and forward-looking diplomacy to address evolving challenges and seize new opportunities for Pakistan. Highlighting the evolving role of think tanks, he emphasized ISSI's growing contribution in supporting policy formulation. Over the past year, the Institute held more than 165 events, published over 180 issue briefs, and hosted inter-

national dialogues on themes ranging from the global order and major power dynamics to CPEC, climate change, critical emerging technologies, and the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. With nearly 100 institutional partnerships and active engagement with youth and global counterparts, he stressed that the ISSI has strengthened its research-policy bridge role and deepened national and international outreach. Pakistan food delivery services He announced the release of five new books piloted by ISSI's Centres and reaffirmed the Institute's continued commitment to producing actionable insights, supporting Pakistan's foreign policy, and serving as a trusted platform for informed policy discourse. During the event, the ISSI presented its seven latest publications to the Deputy PM/Foreign Minister, including: Pakistan-China Relations: Connecting at the People's Level by the China-Pakistan Study Centre; The Kashmir Question in a Changing World: Beyond August 2019 by the India Study Centre; A New Era of Uncertainty:—DNA

ITP deploys 500+ officers for Muharram traffic plan: CTO

ISLAMABAD: Over 500 traffic police officers will be deployed across the federal capital to ensure smooth vehicular flow during Muharram processions, Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Captain (R) Syed Zeeshan Haider announced on Monday while chairing a high-level meeting to review traffic arrangements. A public relations officer told APP that the meeting was attended by SP Traffic and zonal DSPs, where detailed plans were finalized to maintain uninterrupted traffic movement throughout Muharram-ul-Haram. CTO Zeeshan said that the zonal DSPs have been issued special directives to implement exceptional traffic management strategies during all processions and gatherings. CTO said alternative routes must be provided well in advance to divert traffic smoothly and avoid congestion around procession areas. CTO Zeeshan said citizens should strictly avoid illegal parking near procession routes and use designated parking areas for the safety and convenience of all. He said strict action will be taken against those found obstructing traffic or parking unlawfully, especially in sensitive zones.

Gilani pays tribute to lawmakers for their commitment to democracy

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani has paid tribute to elected representatives around the world for their commitment to democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and public service. In a special message issued on International Day of Parliamentarism he said that parliament is the cornerstone of any democratic society and the true voice of the people's aspirations. "An empowered, transparent, and accountable parliament not only ensures national development, prosperity, and stability, but also upholds constitutional principles and democratic traditions," he said. Highlighting the vital role of Pakistan's Upper House, he noted that the Senate, as a symbol of the Federation.—APP

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Briefs

Nasir for stronger govt-business collaboration for eco growth

ISLAMABAD: Nasir Mansoor Qureshi, President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), has called upon the government to foster stronger collaboration with the business community, particularly with the leadership of Chambers, to create an enabling environment for businesses by addressing the existing bottlenecks hampering economic progress.

Speaking to a delegation of visiting business leaders at the ICCI on Monday, he emphasized that long-term planning and consistent economic policies are vital to achieving the overarching goal of a stable and robust economy. He underscored the importance of broadening the tax base, ensuring the availability of electricity at affordable rates, increasing foreign direct investment (FDI), and expanding access to international capital markets to stimulate industrial and economic activity.

He further noted that the country must move away from excessive reliance on commercial debt and instead priorities the sustainable economic reforms and the growth of productive sectors. "Investor confidence can only be restored through policy consistency, transparency, and structural reforms," Qureshi stated, adding that Pakistan has the potential to emerge as a regional hub for trade and investment through focused economic diplomacy.—APP

PM directs making Islamabad pilot smart city: Shaza

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Shaza Fatima Khawaja, said on Monday that Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has directed the transformation of Islamabad into a pilot smart city under an integrated strategy using emerging technologies. In a statement, the minister outlined several key initiatives of the Ministry of IT aimed at expanding digital connectivity and improving access to education and healthcare through technology. She revealed that the Ministry has already funded fiber optic connectivity to all public schools, Basic Health Units (BHUs), and healthcare centers in Islamabad. "Within the next six to eight months, all hospitals, schools, and police stations in the capital will be fully fiberized," she stated. Free public Wi-Fi will also be made available at specific locations, including metro bus stations and other public spaces, through public-private partnerships, she added.—APP

Envoy Dr. Jemal discusses bilateral ties with Defence Secretary

The Ambassador also underscored Ethiopia's strategic regional position, its vital contributions to peace and security in the area, and its leading role in fostering regional integration

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Jemal Beker Abdula, Special Envoy and Ambassador Extraordinary of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, was called on the Honorable Defence Secretary of Pakistan, Lt. Gen (R) Muhammad Ali H(M) to discuss bilateral and multilateral cooperation between the two countries. Both sides reviewed the existing bilateral relationship, expressing mutual commitment to further strengthening these ties. During the meeting, the Ambassador briefed the Defence Secretary about the significant political, social, and legal reforms that have transformed Ethiopia under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed. He emphasized the renewed momentum in bilateral relations due to the establishment of the Ethiopian Embassy in Islamabad and the commencement of Ethiopian Airlines' operations in Pakistan.

The Ambassador also underscored Ethiopia's strategic regional position, its vital contributions to peace and security in the area, and its leading role in fostering regional integration. The Defence Secretary commended the homegrown economic reforms undertaken by Ethiopia to achieve sustainable growth. He reiterated Pakistan's unwavering



commitment to enhance its relations with African nations, including Ethiopia.

The Defence Secretary assured the Ambassador of his full support in advancing

bilateral cooperation between the two countries.

Military and diplomatic setbacks have shaken Modi

ISLAMABAD: The Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, the President of the Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, the President of All Karachi Industrial Alliance, the Chairman of the FPCCI Advisory Board, and the President and former provincial minister, Mian Zahid Hussain, said on Monday that Indian PM Narendra Modi and his team is under intense mental stress after facing repeated military and diplomatic failures. He stated that the collapse of India's false narrative, its deteriorating internal political situation, serious human rights violations, and atrocities against minorities, including the Kashmiri Muslims and Dalits, have drawn open criticism from several European nations and international human rights organizations, further damaging India's global standing. Speaking to the business community, the veteran business leader stated that the Modi government, in an attempt to garner cheap popularity and divert global attention from internal crises such as the farmers' movement and rising inflation, is preparing for another attack on Pakistan. A new false flag operation could be staged to justify this aggression. According to a recent UN report, more than 3,600 political arrests were made in India in 2024, highlighting the severity of its internal conditions. Mian Zahid Hussain warned that if India launches another attack on Pakistan, the response will be so severe that the world will forget the Israel-Iran and Russia-Ukraine conflicts. He said that attempts to increase ratings without capability will cost both Modi and India dearly. He emphasized that the morale and training of Pakistan's armed forces are not only high but, according to the 2023 Global Firepower Report, Pakistan's military ranks as the ninth-largest and one of the most organized in the world. Mian Zahid Hussain added that the recent speech by Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir has made it clear that Pakistan is at a decisive stage in its war against terrorism, and India aims to sabotage this progress. In recent years, India has attempted two military incursions, both of which were repelled entirely by Pakistan, which proved Pakistan's military capability and caused significant international embarrassment for India. He further stated that global powers must not remain silent. If India turns South Asia into a battlefield, the consequences will be felt worldwide, affecting not only humanitarian but also economic and geopolitical aspects. South Asia houses 25 percent of the world's population, and a conflict between two nuclear powers in this region would pose an unimaginable threat to global peace. He demanded that the Kashmir dispute be resolved immediately, and violations of the Indus Waters Treaty must be stopped, as lasting peace can only be achieved through a just political solution. He said that the recent 18 percent increase in Pakistan's defense budget is a clear indication that we are not willing to compromise on our security.—DNA



ISLAMABAD: MNA Chaudhry Usman Ali called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday.—DNA

MoHR strengthens regional role

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR) continues to demonstrate its commitment to both national and regional human rights advancement through strategic collaborations and forward-looking initiatives, said Secretary Ministry of Human Rights Abdul Khaliq Shaikh here on Monday. Talking to App, he said that with a focus on building a resilient human rights framework, MoHR's active participation in South Asian and international platforms is playing a vital role in fostering regional cooperation and reform. One of the ministry's significant achievements is the development and implementation of Pakistan's National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights, making it the first country in South Asia to introduce such a plan. This landmark initiative underscores Pakistan's commitment to aligning corporate practices with human rights standards and sets a precedent for other nations in the region, he added. In addition to domestic efforts, the MoHR continues to engage with key international partners, including the European Union, which has provided robust support in areas such as legal reforms, protection of minority rights, and institutional development. This cooperation reflects a shared commitment to upholding universal human rights principles, he added. Amid regional political complexities and ongoing human rights challenges, the MoHR's proactive role is seen as a step toward greater regional integration and collective action on human rights concerns.—APP

China-Pak partnership offers 610 scholarships for 2025 autumn semester

ISLAMABAD: A China-Pakistan technical education centre has announced 610 scholarships for Pakistani students for the autumn 2025 semester to study for one year in China, officials said. The scholarships are part of the Chinese Culture and Technical Education (CCTE) program offered by the China-Pakistan TVET-Industrial Centre of Excellence (CPTICE). CPTICE was established under an agreement between Chinese education technology company TANG International Education Group and Pakistan's National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) to integrate academic and industrial training between the two countries, Gwadar Pro reported on Monday. Students enrolled in diploma and degree programs at 16 Pakistani institutes and universities will be eligible to study the final year of their programs in China. The scholarships cover fields including artificial intelligence, big data, modern agriculture, food security, hydraulic engineering, intelligent mining, nursing, and mechatronics. The scholarships will

be distributed in a manner that institutions with higher enrolment will get more seats to fully utilise the quota approved for Pakistan by the collaborating Chinese institutions, Mansoor ul Hassan Siddiqui, TANG International's country head in Pakistan, told Gwadar Pro. Last week, 18 students returned to Pakistan after completing the final year of a three-year diploma in advanced construction technology at Huanggang Polytechnic College in Hubei province.—DNA

KP govt bypasses merit, appoints chief engineer in C&W

The political context of this appointment raises suspicions of favoritism or political interference, as the decision appears to contravene established protocols for promotions and appointments in the public sector

MUMTAZ AHMED BHATTI



The principles of meritocracy and adherence to established rules and regulations form the backbone of any transparent and efficient governance system. In the context of public administration, these principles ensure fairness, promote accountability, and foster trust between the government and its citizens. When these principles are violated, the consequences ripple across institutions, leading to inefficiencies, loss of public trust, and compromised service delivery. A glaring example of such a violation has been reported in the Communication and Works (C&W) Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Pakistan, where a significant

breach of merit occurred in the appointment of a Chief Engineer in Dera Ismail Khan (DI Khan). The case involves the appointment of Mushtaq Ahmed, a Superintendent Engineer ranked tenth on the merit list, as Chief Engineer in DI Khan, bypassing nine more senior engineers of Basic Pay Scale (BPS) 20 and BS 19 grades. This decision, reportedly made in violation of established rules, raises critical questions about transparency, accountability, and the rule of law in KP's governance structure. Lack of action from higher authorities, including the Chief Minister and Chief Secretary, amplifies concerns about systemic corruption and negligence. Such violations not only undermine meritocracy but also erode public trust, compromise the quality of development projects, and hamper the Communication and Works Department in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is responsible for overseeing critical infrastructure projects, including roads, bridges, and public buildings. The appointment of senior officials, such as Chief Engineers, is a high-stakes decision that directly impacts the quality and efficiency of these projects. According to reports, Mushtaq Ahmed, a

Superintending Engineer ranked tenth on the merit list for junior posts, was appointed as Chief Engineer in DI Khan, a position typically reserved for more senior and qualified candidates. This appointment ignored nine senior engineers of BPS 20 grade on the Chief Engineer merit list and nine BS 19 Superintending Engineers, who were higher in seniority and merit. The violation is particularly significant because DI Khan is the home constituency of KP's Chief Minister, Ali Amin Gandapur. The political context of this appointment raises suspicions of favoritism or political interference, as the decision appears to contravene established protocols for promotions and appointments in the public sector. Authentic sources have further revealed that this is not an isolated incident but part of a broader pattern of non-compliance with rules in the C&W Department, where appointments to various posts have been made without adhering to merit-based criteria. Meritocracy is a cornerstone of effective governance, ensuring that individuals are appointed to positions based on their qualifications, experience, and performance. The violation in the C&W Department

undermines this principle in several ways. By appointing a less senior and lower-ranked individual over nine more qualified candidates, the department has demonstrated a blatant disregard for established merit criteria. This not only demoralizes senior engineers but also sets a dangerous precedent for future appointments. Public institutions rely on trust and credibility to function effectively. When appointments are made in violation of merit, it signals a lack of transparency and fairness, eroding the institution's credibility in the eyes of both employees and the public. Senior engineers who were bypassed for the Chief Engineer position are reportedly disheartened. This loss of morale can lead to decreased productivity, disengagement, and a lack of motivation to perform at their best, further compromising the department's effectiveness. The merit violation in the C&W Department is not an isolated incident but a symptom of broader systemic issues within KP's governance structure. Several factors contribute to this problem. The fact that such a significant violation occurred without immediate action from higher authorities, including the

Chief Minister and Chief Secretary, suggests a lack of effective oversight mechanisms. This raises questions about the accountability of those responsible for approving and implementing such decisions. The appointment's connection to the Chief Minister's constituency hints at possible political interference. In many developing countries, including Pakistan, political patronage often influences public sector appointments, undermining meritocracy and fostering nepotism. Weak Institutional Frameworks: The absence of robust checks and balances within the C&W Department has allowed rule violations to go unchecked. This points to the need for stronger institutional frameworks to ensure compliance with merit-based hiring and promotion practices. The merit violation in the C&W Department has far-reaching consequences for the quality and execution of development projects in KP. The appointment of a less qualified individual as Chief Engineer raises concerns about the technical expertise and leadership required to oversee complex infrastructure projects. Reports indicate that development projects in KP are not being constructed according to

set standards, and material laboratory tests are not being conducted as required. This compromises the structural integrity and longevity of public infrastructure, posing risks to public safety and wasting taxpayer money. Roads and bridges constructed without proper oversight or adherence to quality standards are more likely to deteriorate quickly, requiring costly repairs and maintenance. This not only strains the provincial budget but also undermines the government's ability to deliver essential services to its citizens. The lack of action from the Chief Minister and Chief Secretary of KP is a critical aspect of this issue. There are two possible scenarios: either they were unaware of the merit violation, which indicates a failure of communication and oversight, or they were aware but chose not to act, which suggests complicity or negligence. Both scenarios are deeply troubling. If the violation was hidden from the Chief Minister and Chief Secretary, it points to a breakdown in the flow of information within the government. Senior officials have a responsibility to ensure that they are informed of sig-

nificant decisions, particularly those that violate established protocols. On the other hand, if they were aware and failed to act, it constitutes a betrayal of public trust and an injustice to the people of KP. In either case, the lack of accountability at the highest levels of government is a matter of grave concern. Given the scale of the violation and the inaction of higher authorities, the Peshawar High Court has been called upon to take suo motu notice of the issue. Suo motu jurisdiction allows the court to act on its own initiative in cases of public interest, particularly when fundamental rights or the rule of law are at stake. In this case, the court's intervention is essential for several reasons. By investigating the appointment of Mushtaq Ahmed and holding those responsible accountable, the court can send a strong message that merit violations will not be tolerated. The court can identify and penalize individuals involved in preparing, approving, and ignoring the merit violation, thereby reinforcing the principle of accountability.

Punjab government discontinuation of health card

ACCORDING to Khawja Salman Rafiq, the Punjab govt has decided to discontinue health card in the government hospitals of Punjab. While the Punjab Information Minister Azma Bukhari said that no such decision has been made. In any case, the Punjab government's decision to abolish the Sehat Sahulat (Health Card) Program would be nothing short of a betrayal of the poor and vulnerable. This program, launched by the previous PTI government, was a lifeline for millions of underprivileged families, providing them with free healthcare coverage of up to Rs. 1 million per family per year. However, since the current Punjab government took over, the program has been systematically weakened—first by reducing the coverage amount from Rs. 1 million to Rs. 700,000, then to Rs. 400,000, and now, shockingly, by scrapping it altogether. This move will leave thousands of patients, especially those suffering from cancer, heart disease, kidney failure, and other critical illnesses, in utter despair. Many were in the middle of their treatments, relying on the health card to cover their medical expenses, only to be abruptly informed that the service has been discontinued. Reports indicate that on June 30, numerous patients who were due for surgeries or chemotherapy in government hospitals received phone calls telling them that the health card was no longer valid. They were given a cruel choice: either arrange the money themselves or wait indefinitely—an impossible demand for those already struggling to make ends meet. The Punjab government, led by Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, claims to stand with the poor, yet this decision exposes a stark disconnect between rhetoric and reality. The Sehat Sahulat Program was one of the most successful social welfare initiatives in Pakistan's history, benefiting over 10 million families in Punjab alone. It ensured that even the poorest could access quality healthcare without falling into crippling debt. By dismantling it, the government has effectively denied healthcare to the most vulnerable segments of society. Patients battling life-threatening diseases cannot afford delays or financial barriers. Many will be forced to abandon treatment, leading to preventable deaths. If the Punjab government truly cares about the poor, it should strengthen, not destroy, a program that directly aids them. Economic Burden on Families – Without the health card, families will be pushed into poverty due to catastrophic medical expenses. This abrupt withdrawal would erode public confidence in government health initiatives. The Punjab government must urgently reverse this decision, if any, and restore the Sehat Sahulat Program in its original form. If there are concerns about misuse or financial constraints, reforms can be introduced—but scrapping the program altogether is unjustifiable and inhumane.

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Pakistan takes a major step towards a Crypto revolution

IN a historic and unprecedented move, Pakistan has officially entered the global digital economy with the announcement of its first state-backed Bitcoin Reserve, a bold step that signifies the country's serious commitment to integrating blockchain and cryptocurrency into its financial future. The groundbreaking announcement was made by Bilal Bin Saqib, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Blockchain and Cryptocurrency and CEO of the Pakistan Crypto Council (PCC), during the prestigious Bitcoin Vegas 2025 conference. According to sources, this moment marks a transformative shift in Pakistan's approach to digital assets and financial innovation. In a surprising diplomatic highlight, Bin Saqib extended special thanks to U.S. President Donald Trump, acknowledging his contributions to global crypto adoption and his behind-the-scenes efforts to help ease recent tensions between India and Pakistan. The event was also attended by U.S. Vice President JD Vance, Eric Trump, and Donald Trump Jr., underscoring the high-level international interest in Pakistan's digital finance ambitions. Bin Saqib highlighted Pakistan's strong foundation in the digital economy, revealing that the country now hosts over 40 million cryptocurrency wallets. This positions Pakistan among the world's most active digital finance participants, thanks largely to its massive freelance economy, rising digital literacy, and growing youth population. These factors, he noted, create the ideal conditions for the country to embrace a blockchain-driven future. One of the central initiatives unveiled during the event was the creation of a National Bitcoin Wallet—a digital infrastructure designed to store state-held crypto assets securely. This step reflects Pakistan's ambition to integrate digital currencies into its sovereign financial framework, making it one of the few countries in the region to take such a forward-looking measure. To support the technical backbone of this initiative, the Pakistani government has allocated 2,000 megawatts of surplus electricity for use in Bitcoin mining and AI-powered data centers. These facilities will not only cater to local tech enterprises but also invite foreign blockchain companies and independent miners to establish operations within Pakistan. This massive infrastructure move is expected to create thousands of jobs, boost foreign investment, and position Pakistan as a regional leader in blockchain computing. In line with these developments, Pakistan also announced the establishment of the Pakistan Digital Assets Authority—a regulatory institution responsible for overseeing all blockchain-based financial systems. The Authority will enforce transparency, provide legal protections, and offer clear regulatory guidelines to both local and international stakeholders. These sweeping reforms signal a paradigm shift in Pakistan's digital economic strategy. No longer content to remain on the sidelines, the country is now actively pursuing a leadership role in the global crypto landscape. With a clear vision, strong policy direction, and infrastructure investment, Pakistan's crypto revolution has officially begun.

Trump's "Big, Beautiful Bill": A Legislative Breakdown

Qamar Bashir



Trump labeled Mamdani a “communist lunatic,” but the new mayor’s confident, smiling response reflected something deeper: a generational shift that even presidential authority cannot reverse. Mamdani has pledged to arrest Netanyahu if he ever visits New York—citing the International Criminal Court’s genocide charges—and has blasted Modi’s Gujarat massacre record. These bold declarations indicate just how much the grassroots of American politics is diverging from the executive narrative. Back in Washington, Trump’s bill faces another challenge: gutting of essential safety nets

IT is one of the greatest ironies of the American political system that the President of the United States wields near-unchecked power on the international stage—able to bomb foreign nations, greenlight wars, broker ceasefires, and tip the global balance of power without even consulting Congress. Yet, when it comes to domestic policymaking—specifically, delivering on economic promises like tax reform or welfare restructuring—the same president often appears as powerless as a ceremonial figurehead. President Donald J. Trump now faces this paradox head-on as his much-hyped “Big Beautiful Bill” stalls in the U.S. Senate. This sprawling legislative package—central to his campaign and populist economic vision—was supposed to be signed into law on July 4, 2025. But despite controlling the White House and a slim Senate majority, Trump faces intense resistance not from Democrats alone, but from inside his own party. The bill, estimated at nearly \$4 trillion, was introduced as a sweeping effort to reduce taxes, boost consumer income, strengthen border security, and overhaul federal entitlement spending. It includes generous income tax exemptions for military, veterans, police, and firefighters, as well as deductions on tips (\$25,000) and overtime pay (\$12,500) through 2028, part of Trump’s promise to “put more money in the hands of working Americans.” But where would this money come from? Trump’s answer: tariffs. By taxing foreign imports, the bill aims to fund domestic tax cuts and infrastructure investments. In theory, it’s a bold nationalist formula: tax the world, enrich America. But critics—many of them conservative—say this strategy is deeply flawed. One of the most vocal critics is Elon Musk, once Trump’s trusted ally and now his most formidable tech-world adversary. In a firestorm of posts on X, Musk slammed the bill as “insane,” “destructive,” and “political suicide,” arguing that it favors outdated industries at the cost of clean energy and future innovation. “It puts America in the fast lane to debt slavery,” Musk warned, pointing to projections that the bill will inflate the national deficit by \$2.8 trillion by 2034, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office. Musk’s criticism cuts deep because it reflects growing unease within

Trump’s own base. A recent NBC News poll shows that 40% of Republican voters now view reducing the national debt as their top priority, while a majority believe existing spending on programs like Medicaid must be preserved. These concerns have led GOP Senators like Rand Paul, Thom Tillis, Lisa Murkowski, and Susan Collins to express opposition to various provisions of the bill—ranging from Medicaid cuts and the debt ceiling hike to restrictions on Planned Parenthood funding. And therein lies Trump’s domestic dilemma: while the international stage presents him as a unilateral powerhouse—stopping wars in Pakistan and India, halting Iranian retaliation after the bombing of the Fordow nuclear facility, or reshaping global alliances—he finds himself cornered and constrained in the democratic trenches of Capitol Hill. Even elements of Trump’s own “America First” coalition are rebelling. Farmers and agribusinesses recently forced the administration to roll back immigration-related work restrictions on undocumented workers in agriculture. Without these migrants, they warned, the entire U.S. food supply chain would collapse, bringing economic shockwaves across rural America and driving food prices through the roof. This public pressure forced Trump to carve out exceptions—a rare reversal that underscores how little space even the President has when facing economic realities and political mobilization. Simultaneously, America’s political diversity is rising in ways Trump did not anticipate. The election of Zohran Mamdani—a young, South Asian, progressive voice—as Mayor of New York City marks a cultural and political counterpoint to Trumpism. A vocal critic of Israeli aggression in Gaza and a staunch advocate for Palestinian rights, Mamdani represents a rising class of elected officials who openly oppose Trump’s policies—from tax cuts for the rich to full-throated support for Netanyahu’s war machine. Trump labeled Mamdani a “communist lunatic,” but the new mayor’s confident, smiling response reflected something deeper: a generational shift that even presidential authority cannot reverse. Mamdani has pledged to arrest Netanyahu if he ever visits New York—citing the International Criminal Court’s genocide charges—and has blasted Modi’s

Gujarat massacre record. These bold declarations indicate just how much the grassroots of American politics is diverging from the executive narrative. Back in Washington, Trump’s bill faces another challenge: the gutting of essential safety nets. Proposed Medicaid cuts, totaling hundreds of billions, would strike at the very heart of American welfare—affecting the elderly, disabled, veterans, and low-income families. The Senate Parliamentarian has already ruled against parts of the bill that tried to remove funding for gender-affirming care and limit coverage for undocumented immigrants. But the damage to public perception has been done. And what about Social Security? While Trump promised to make its payouts tax-free, the bill also tightens eligibility and introduces new scrutiny provisions, leaving many fearing future erosion of benefits. This comes at a time when 67 million Americans—across class, race, and party lines—depend on Social Security as their financial lifeline. Ironically, Trump’s economic record gives him some legitimacy. Inflation, which soared to nearly 8% under President Biden, has now stabilized at 2.4%–2.6% under Trump’s second term. That’s no small feat. However, if the price for that stabilization is a massive increase in the deficit, reduced healthcare access, and shrinking consumer protections, the political costs could outweigh the economic gains. This complex reality is what Trump now faces: he campaigned on a promise to “raise incomes, cut taxes, and build America.” But the mechanisms to fulfill that promise—tariffs, spending cuts, and partisan loyalty—are faltering. He is now encountering what every president eventually faces: domestic politics is far messier than foreign policy. The President may yet pull off a miracle and get the bill passed—perhaps with revisions, compromises, or brute-force pressure. But the real question is: what kind of America will emerge from this legislative gamble? One that is economically revitalized? Or one that is politically fractured, strategically weakened, and fiscally unbalanced? Only time—and the Senate—will tell. – Press Secretary to the President (Rtd) Former Press Minister, Embassy of Pakistan to France Former MD, SRBC | Macomb, Michigan, USA

AUKUS under Review

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



Despite the far-reaching implications of this agreement, the current U.S. administration has signaled its intent to re-evaluate the pact, in terms of both its strategic utility and the degree to which it adheres to American defense priorities. According to a senior U.S. defense official, the review is being conducted to ensure that “this initiative of the previous administration...

AUKUS, a landmark security agreement valued at approximately £176 billion (US\$239 billion; A\$368 billion), entails the transfer of nuclear-powered submarine capabilities to Australia—a significant development given that, aside from the United Kingdom, no other nation has previously been granted access to the United States’ nuclear propulsion technology. The arrangement is widely interpreted as a strategic countermeasure to the growing assertiveness of the People’s Republic of China in the Indo-Pacific region. Initially, the United States is expected to provide Australia with three second-hand Virginia-class submarines, with an option for two additional vessels, followed by the collaborative design and construction of a new class of nuclear-powered submarines incorporating technologies from all three-partner nations. Despite the far-reaching implications of this agreement, the current U.S. administration has signaled its intent to re-evaluate the pact, in terms of both its strategic utility and the degree to which it adheres to American defense priorities. According to a senior U.S. defense official, the review is being conducted to ensure that “this initiative of the previous administration is aligned with the President’s America First agenda,” emphasizing operational readiness, the optimization of military resources, and equitable contributions from allies. This review is being spearheaded by Elbridge Colby, a prominent defense strategist who has previously expressed skepticism regarding the advisability of transferring such advanced capabilities to allies at a time when U.S. military assets are already under considerable strain. The review emerges amidst growing pressure from the U.S. for its allies to increase their defense expenditures. The Biden administration has urged partner nations to allocate

no less than 3% of their gross domestic product (GDP) to defense. While the United Kingdom has committed to reaching 2.5% of GDP by 2028 and aims to hit 3% in the subsequent parliamentary term, Australia’s defense budgetary commitments remain below Washington’s expectations. Despite Canberra’s assurances of increased spending, it has yet to pledge alignment with the 3.5% target advocated by U.S. defense officials. Australian Defense Minister Richard Marles has sought to downplay concerns arising from the review, expressing confidence that the agreement will proceed as planned. In remarks to local media, Marles reaffirmed the strategic necessity of a long-range submarine capability for Australia, particularly given the country’s geographic positioning within the Indo-Pacific theater. He emphasized the importance of adhering to the existing blueprint, noting the political and strategic complexities that emerged following the cancellation of a prior submarine agreement with France in favor of AUKUS. From the Australian perspective, the acquisition of nuclear-powered submarines represents a transformative enhancement of its military capabilities. These platforms will allow the Australian Defense Force to project power over significantly greater distances and durations than is currently possible with its diesel-powered fleet. Furthermore, the pact enhances Australia’s capacity for strategic deterrence and grants access to elite defense technologies components often described in U.S. defense circles as the “crown jewels” of national security assets. The review also draws attention to broader strategic concerns, particularly regarding the alignment of operational doctrines among the trilateral partners. Dr. Jennifer Kavanagh, a defense analyst at the American think tank Defense Priorities, has highlighted two

core issues underpinning the U.S. reassessment: first, the existing constraints on America’s own submarine production capabilities, and second, the uncertainty surrounding how Australia would deploy these assets in the event of a regional conflict, notably one involving Taiwan. As such, the review may consider revising the partnership’s focus from direct submarine transfers toward broader technological cooperation in long-range strike capabilities. Both Australia and the United Kingdom have characterized the review as a routine and expected development under a new U.S. administration. Official statements from both governments have emphasized continuity and mutual commitment to the strategic partnership. A UK defense spokesperson reaffirmed that AUKUS constitutes one of the most strategically consequential partnerships in recent decades, underscoring its significance for maintaining peace and stability in both the Indo-Pacific and Euro-Atlantic regions. Notably, any substantive shift in the AUKUS framework such as a delay or diminution in the transfer of nuclear propulsion technology would have considerable geopolitical ramifications. A U.S. withdrawal or significant recalibration of the agreement would likely be met with approbation from Beijing, which has consistently condemned AUKUS as a destabilizing force and a potential catalyst for a regional arms race. For China, the pact symbolizes the consolidation of a military bloc aimed explicitly at containing its rise. From a broader geopolitical perspective, the review could lead to sustained or enhanced cooperation and help reinforce deeper technological and strategic collaboration among the countries. Conversely, any retreat from the pact could undermine perceptions of U.S. reliability among its allies and embolden adversarial actors in an increasingly contested Indo-Pacific security environment.

Briefs

Pak slams India's 'water terrorism'

FROM PAGE 01
the foreign minister condemned the ongoing humanitarian crisis, expressing deep concern over atrocities being committed in the besieged Palestinian enclave. "Pakistan is seriously concerned about the deteriorating situation in the Middle East," he added. Defence Minister Khawaja Asif, in said the ruling from the Court of Arbitration is "very clear" and leaves no room for unilateral decisions by either Pakistan or India under the Indus Waters Treaty. He stated that the verdict makes it evident that neither party can make any move that undermines the foundational basis of the treaty. "We had anticipated India would resort to intransigence," he said, adding that following India's defeat in the arbitration, it has become increasingly difficult for Prime Minister Narendra Modi to accept such decisions.

Iran envoy appreciates Pakistan's...

FROM PAGE 01
Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) for its stronger-than-usual condemnation of the Israeli attacks, acknowledging improved performance compared to past. He also praised the roles of the Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), stating that "they all supported us." He clarified that Iran's response was defensive, as the aggression originated from Israel. The war started because of their provocations. Any future ceasefire depends on their actions. The losses they suffered may deter them from reigniting conflict soon, but if they feel they can win, they will not hesitate to start war again." Highlighting global diplomatic relations, the ambassador thanked China and Russia for backing Iran at the UN, alongside Pakistan, Algeria, and Türkiye.

PM for taking practical...

FROM PAGE 01
domestic tourism and encourage local tourists to visit recreational sites and planning should be done for long-term investment in the tourism sector. He said vast potential existed to earn foreign exchange reserves by promoting tourism in the country. "Allah Almighty has blessed the country with natural resources and timeless beauty," he said adding that due to snow-covered mountains, forests, rivers, plains, deserts, and other natural assets in the northern areas, our country is in no way less than any other nation when it comes to tourism. The prime minister further instructed that Pakistan should be introduced abroad as a tourism brand.

PM directs making...

FROM PAGE 01
pilot smart city under an integrated strategy using emerging technologies. In a statement, the minister outlined several key initiatives of the Ministry of IT aimed at expanding digital connectivity and improving access to education and healthcare through technology. She revealed that the Ministry has already funded fiber optic connectivity to all public schools, Basic Health Units (BHUs), and healthcare centers in Islamabad. "Within the next six to eight months, all hospitals, schools, and police stations in the capital will be fully fiberized," she stated.

PTI-SIC urges SC...

FROM PAGE 01
headed by Justice Aminuddin Khan. Initially the constitutional bench was constituted for hearing of the review petitions by 13 judges of the court, but two of them — Justice Ayesha A Malik and Justice Aqeel Ahmed Abbasi — on the first date of hearing, dismissed all review petitions, the short order noted down.

Rising Stars Hockey Club Vs Lawrence College



ISLAMABAD: Rising Stars Hockey Club's One-Day Visit to Lawrence College Murree, on the kind invitation of Malik Zaman, Sports Incharge of Lawrence College Murree. Rising Stars Hockey Club Islamabad paid a memorable one-day visit to the prestigious institution. An exciting friendly hockey match was played with the talented young team of Lawrence College, followed by a tour of the college's historic and scenic campus. — DNA

Pogacar seeks century as Tour de France returns

"Pogacar is like the one in a million, but you can't count Vingegaard out. That's what's making cycling so exciting right now," said LeMond, who won the Tour de France in 1986, 1989 and 1990

PARIS: The Tour de France embarks on Saturday with superstar Tadej Pogacar's hunger for wins sharing top billing with the magnificent 3,338-kilometre route in the first edition since 2020 not to venture abroad. After starts in Florence, Bilbao and Copenhagen, cycling's most prestigious race returns to its roots with an old school itinerary favouring climbers. "We decided to bring the Tour home, it was high time after all the foreign starts," said race director Christian Prudhomme. Every inch of this year's 21-day course is on French soil, for the first time since the pandemic-delayed edition, with most of the country placed on a heatmap alert in the week leading up to the race. Temperatures in the south of France topped 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit) on Sunday, with large swathes of the country bracing for similar conditions in the coming days. The heatmap is expected to subside by the end of the week, but riders will still be tested to their limits over the peaks and plains

of France lauded in cycling folklore as "the world's most beautiful stadium". "Great settings for great heroes," said Prudhomme, a former TV executive who has transformed the race into a global extravaganza broadcast in 190 countries. For 21 days this July, the daily doings of this most arduous of sporting struggles provides the drumbeat of summer, with armchair tourists and cycling fanatics alike tuning in around the world. Team UAE's Pogacar starts as red-hot favourite with fans and bookmakers alike, and he can silence any remaining doubters by beating arch-rival Jonas Vingegaard of Visma. American former champion Greg LeMond told AFP in a recent interview it would be a close call. "Pogacar is like the one in a million, but you can't count Vingegaard out. That's what's making cycling so exciting right now," said LeMond, who won the Tour de France in 1986, 1989 and 1990. Glimpses of Pogacar and Vingegaard going head-to-head on the Alpine slopes or

along the panoramic roads of the French Riviera provide tension, drama and sporting rivalry as enthralling as any involving the old-time legends. Ready to attack at the slightest provocation, the 26-year-old Pogacar has 21 chances to add to his jaw-dropping 99 professional wins. Vingegaard tends to focus on a single-mission strategy, awaiting one big moment to spring a deeply considered killer move at a meticulously chosen spot. Vingegaard's Visma team boss Grischmann confirmed this week he believed in the plan he has made for the Tour de France. "We think we can get the best possible result." The pair have won the past five editions of the Tour de France between them and should be increasingly in the spotlight as the race advances. A total of 184 riders from 23 teams will gather in Lille for the Grand Depart, with local authorities preparing for a massive influx of fans from nearby cycling-mad Belgium. And aggressive, hotly contested

battles for the right to the overall leader's yellow jersey are expected in the opening stages, as are huge roadside crowds of several hundred thousand each day. Belgian star Remco Evenepoel will be well supported as the first week takes in the north coast at Dunkirk and Caen, scenes of ferocious fighting in World War II, before shifting to another cycling heartland in Brittany with its verdant, rolling roads. The volcanoes of the Puy de Dome present the first mountains as late as stage 10, with two more colossal climb days in the Pyrenees before the blockbuster final week in the Alps. But before any dash towards the eventual finish line on the Champs-Elysees there is one final twist. A last-minute addition to the 2025 route is a nod to the 2024 Olympic Games road race, which drew vast crowds to the old Parisian neighbourhood of Montmartre. On the final day a cauldron of noise up the narrow cobbled climb to the Sacre-Coeur Basilica provides one final obstacle, after which the winner will be crowned. — Agencies

Pakistan outclass Japan to extend winning streak

Chairman of the Pakistan Netball Federation, Mudassar Arain, President Sameen Malik, and Secretary General Muhammad Riaz congratulated the team on their impressive win over Japan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan continued their dominant run in the Asian Youth Girls Netball Championship 2025, defeating Japan by a convincing margin of 79-39 in their fourth group match at the Jeonju Hwasan Gymnasium, Jeonju-si, South Korea on Monday. According to information received here, the Pakistani team maintained control throughout the match, ending each quarter with a strong lead: **1st Quarter: Pakistan 16 – Japan 9**
2nd Quarter: Pakistan 39 – Japan 17
3rd Quarter: Pakistan 60 – Japan 26
4th Quarter: Pakistan 79 – Japan 39
Players Leya Raza Shah, Alisha Naveed, Haleema, Sarina Hussain, Jasmine Farooq, Farah Rasheed, Amani, Parisa, Sumayya Ahmed and Alina played exceptional roles in securing the victory. Chairman of the Pakistan Netball Federation, Mudassar Arain, President Sameen Malik, and Secretary General Muhammad Riaz congratulated the team on their impressive win over Japan. With four consecutive victories, Pakistan now lead Pool-B with 8 points. The team will face Maldives in their final group match on Tuesday (July 1). A total of eleven teams are competing in the championship, which has been divided into two groups. Group-A comprises Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Hong Kong, and India. Group-B includes Pakistan, Chinese Taipei, Japan, Korea, Maldives, and Saudi Arabia. The Asian Youth Girls Netball Championship 2025 is being held from June 27 to July 4 under the auspices of the Asian Netball Federation. — APP

PCB appoints Azhar as red-ball acting head-coach

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Monday appointed Azhar Mahmood as the red-ball acting head-coach of Pakistan Men's team. According to a PCB hand-out, the former Pakistan all-rounder will serve in this role until the conclusion of his current contract. A seasoned cricketing mind, Azhar Mahmood steps into the role with an impressive portfolio of experience. Having served as the assistant head coach of the national side, Azhar has long been a pivotal part of the team's strategic core. His deep knowledge of the game, combined with hands-on international exposure and proven success in the English county circuit, make him exceptionally well-suited for this position. His red-ball pedigree was underscored by two County Championship titles—an achievement that speaks volumes about his leadership, tactical acumen and unwavering commitment to excellence. — Agencies

Vinicius rallying as Mbappe eyes Real Madrid return

Mbappe missed all three group games and also had to go to hospital after suffering acute gastroenteritis, but has been training normally for several days. The Spanish coach believes the duo can play together, even though they had teething problems after the French forward arrived, occupying similar spaces

MIAMI: One of the factors behind Real Madrid finishing the season without a major trophy was key attacker Vinicius Junior's drastic dip in form. From competing for the Ballon d'Or as Los Blancos won the Champions League and La Liga in the 2023-24 campaign, the Brazilian played well within himself as Madrid ended Carlo Ancelotti's reign second best to Catalan rivals Barcelona. New coach Xabi Alonso was delighted to see the Brazilian winger shine brightly as Real Madrid set up Tuesday's Club World Cup last-16 clash against Juventus. If the 24-year-old is at his devastating best, along with Kylian Mbappe's impending return following a stomach bug, Madrid have the firepower they need to win the competition. Vinicius struck and created a goal for Fede Valverde with a backheel assist in the 3-0 win over Salzburg which helped Madrid

seal top spot in Group H and avoid Manchester City, who have been the strongest side thus far in the United States. "I'm very happy because Vini, like any forward, needed that goal," said Alonso. Vinicius is in a contract tussle with Real Madrid over a new deal, with the Brazilian currently on the books until 2027. "I hope I can stay here for many years. I've always said it's the club of my life," said Vinicius earlier this week. "I'm very happy with the coach and all the staff, and I hope I can stay here." Madrid need the forward to click with last summer's marquee arrival Mbappe, without sacrificing the team's defensive stability. Los Blancos face Juventus in Orlando hoping to reach the quarter-finals and may be boosted by the return of superstar striker Mbappe, who could link up with Vinicius for the first time under Alonso. Mbappe missed all three group games and also had to go to hospital after suffering acute gastroenteritis, but has been training normally for several days. The Spanish coach believes the duo can play together, even though they had teething problems after the French forward arrived, occupying similar spaces. Mbappe eventually found top form and finished the season with 43 goals across all competitions, while Vinicius netted 22 times without getting close to his very best level. "They can do it, Vini from the outside, Kylian from the inside... it's not mutually exclusive, things can work, there's individual quality, but we need the team to function," explained Alonso. — Agencies

Sadia Gul grabs junior squash tile

In the women's event, former national champion Sadia Gul defeated Sindh's Damia Khan in a one-sided match, winning 3-0 (11-8, 12-5, 11-6). The 27-year-old Sadia Gul, wife of former national champion Farhan Zaman and mother of one daughter, made a strong comeback after a four-year hiatus from international play

DNA

ISLAMABAD: After 4 years International Player Sadia Gul Wins Women's Title at National Junior & Women's Squash Championship; Hudaifah Shahid Claims Boys U-15, Fahad Khan Takes Boys U-13, and Aban Khan Secures Boys U-9 Event. The closing ceremony of the National Junior & Women's Squash Championship was held in Karachi, with U.S. Consul

General Scott Arbogast as the chief guest. The championship, organized by the Sindh Squash Association at the PSF Jahangir Khan Squash Complex with the support of the Pakistan American Business Council, featured a prize pool of PKR 800,000. In the women's event, former national champion Sadia Gul defeated Sindh's Damia Khan in a one-sided match, winning 3-0 (11-8, 12-5, 11-6).

The 27-year-old Sadia Gul, wife of former national champion Farhan Zaman and mother of one daughter, made a strong comeback after a four-year hiatus from international play. In the Boys U-15 final, Sindh's third-seeded Hudaifah Shahid overcame a tough challenge from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Danish Sikandar, winning 3-2. The Boys U-13 title was claimed by Sindh's top-seeded Rahim Victor, who defeated KP's Fahad

Khan 3-1. Meanwhile, Aban Khan secured the Boys U-9 event by defeating Mohammad Bin Naseem 3-1. Over 200 players from across the country, including departments like WAP-DA and Army, participated in the championship. The closing ceremony was attended by squash legend Jahangir Khan, Sindh Squash Association President Adnan Asad, and other officials. The chief guest distributed prizes among the winners.



PTI urges govt to engage...

FROM PAGE 01
Reacting to the olive branch extended by the PM, the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate said: "If the government is serious, it must go beyond statements and engage in sincere dialogue."

Iran seeks guarantee of no more..

FROM PAGE 01
Insisting on the enrichment of uranium, the minister said: "The level of that can be discussed, the capacity can be discussed, but to say that you should not have enrichment, you should have zero enrichment, and if you do not agree, we will bomb you — that is the law of the jungle."

IHC seeks reasons from govt...

FROM PAGE 01
the Attorney General takes a decision, there are reasons for it. Justice Sardar Ijaz Ishaq Khan of the Islamabad High Court heard the petition of Dr. Fawzia Siddiqui regarding the return of Dr. Aafia Siddiqui. During the hearing, the petitioner, lawyer Imran Shafiq, Additional Attorney General and other officials appeared in the court. The Additional Attorney General told the court that the government has decided not to provide legal assistance and become a party in the Aafia Siddiqui case in the US. Justice Sardar Ijaz Ishaq asked the Additional Attorney General why this decision was made and what are the reasons for it? To which the Additional Attorney General said that this is the decision taken by the government.

Punjab Govt decision...

FROM PAGE 01
treatment without financial burden. Critics argue that scrapping the program will deprive thousands of families of essential healthcare services, forcing them to bear expensive medical costs. Many beneficiaries have expressed anger, stating that the health card was a crucial support system during medical emergencies. Opposition leaders have slammed the government, accusing it of neglecting public welfare.

Court Notice

In the Court of Shamas Hsnain Khan Sial Additional District Judge Rawalpindi. Suit for Recovery of Amount of Rs.221,342. Sui Northern Gas versus Muhammad Sarfraz resident of House No. 340 Kalyal Adyala Road Behind Awan CNG Rawalpindi. Whereas respondent cannot be served in ordinary manner so you are inform to attend the Court personal through counsel or attorney on 08-07-2025 at 8 am to avoid ex-parte proceedings.

Briefs

Rupee sheds 4 paisa against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Friday depreciated by 04 paisa against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 283.76 against the previous day's closing of Rs 283.72. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 285.35 and Rs 286.15 respectively. Pakistan tourism packages The price of the Euro increased by 06 paisa to close at Rs 332.65 against the last day's closing of Rs 332.59, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen increased by 01 paisa and closed at Rs1.97, whereas a decrease of Rs1.08 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 388.85 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 389.93. The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal went up by 01 and 02 paisa to close at Rs 77.26 and Rs 75.66 respectively.—APP

Gold price ups by Rs 800 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat per tola gold increased by Rs.800 and was traded at Rs.350,200 on Monday as compared to its sale at Rs. 349,400 on the last trading day, All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewelers Association reported. Pakistan food delivery service The prices of 10 grams of 24 karat also increased by Rs686 to Rs.300,240 from Rs.299,554 and for 10 grams of 22 Karat it went up by Rs.629 to Rs.275,230 from Rs. 274,601 The rates of per tola and ten gram silver remain constant at Rs.3,782 and Rs.3,242 respectively. The price of gold in the international market increased by \$8 to \$3,282 from \$3,274, whereas that of silver remained unchanged at \$35.98, the Association reported.—APP

PSX witnesses bullish trend, gains 1,248 points

ISLAMABAD: The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bullish trend on Monday, gaining 1,248.25, a positive change of 1.00 percent, closing at 125,627.31 points as compared to 124,379.07 points on the last trading day. A total of 124,379.07 shares were traded during the day as compared to 773,409,701 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 35,238 billion against Rs 37,567 billion on the last trading day. As many as 481 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 297 of them recorded gains and 152 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 32 companies remained unchanged. The three top trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 139,889,252 shares at Rs 1.58 per share, Kohinoor Spinning with 96,374,761 shares at Rs 6.50 per share and TPL Properties with 51,664,036 shares at Rs 9.97 per share.—APP

Rice valued at \$3.203b exported in 11 months

ISLAMABAD :Over 5.544 million metric tons of rice valued at \$3.203 billion were exported during the 11 months of the current financial year, as compared to the exports of 5.5593 million metric tons worth of \$3.628 billion of the corresponding period of the last year. During the period from July-May, 2024-25, the rice exports decreased by 11.71 per cent as compared to the exports of the same period of the last year, according to the data of the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. However, the exports of Basmati Rice grew by 1.03 per cent as 761,702 metric tons of the above-mentioned commodity, worth \$781.934 million, were exported as compared to the exports of 679,100 metric tons valued at \$773.984 million in the same period of the last year. In the last 11 months of the current financial year, the country earned \$2.441 billion by exporting about 4.783 million tons of rice.—APP

UN chief urges aid surge in world of climate chaos

A blistering heatwave that is scorching southern Europe welcomed the delegates to the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, an example of the extreme weather that scientists say human-driven climate change is fuelling

Seville, Spain: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres urged the world to “rev up the engine of development” at an aid conference in Spain on Monday at a time when US-led cuts are jeopardising the fight against poverty and climate change. Dozens of world leaders and more than 4,000 representatives from businesses, civil society and financial institutions are gathering in the city of Seville for the June 30-July 3 conference to seek fresh impetus for the crisis-hit aid sector. But the United States is snubbing the biggest such talks in a decade, underlining the erosion of international co-operation on combating hunger, disease and climate change. Guterres told delegates at the opening of the conference that two-thirds of United Nations sustainable development goals set for 2030 were “lagging” and

more than \$4.0 trillion of annual investment would be needed to achieve them. US President Donald Trump's gutting of his country's development agency, USAID, is the standout example. But Germany, Britain and France are also making cuts while they boost spending in areas such as defence. International charity Oxfam says the cuts to development aid are the largest since 1960. More than 800 million people live on less than \$3.0 a day, according to the World Bank, with rising extreme poverty affecting sub-Saharan Africa in particular. Disruption to global trade from Trump's tariffs and ongoing conflicts in the Middle East and Ukraine have dealt further blows to the diplomatic cohesion necessary for concentrating efforts on helping countries escape poverty. The

crisis meant children going unvaccinated, girls dropping out of school and families suffering hunger, said Guterres. He urged the international community to “change course” and “repair and rev up the engine of development to accelerate investment” in “a world shaken by inequalities, climate chaos and raging conflicts”. A blistering heatwave that is scorching southern Europe welcomed the delegates to the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, an example of the extreme weather that scientists say human-driven climate change is fuelling. Kenya's William Ruto, Senegalese President Bassirou Diomaye Faye, Ecuador's Daniel Noboa, Angolan leader Joao Lourenco and Sudanese army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan were among prominent Global South leaders in Seville. Among the key topics up for dis-

cussion is reforming international finance to help poorer countries shrug off a growing debt burden that inhibits their capacity to achieve progress in health and education. The total external debt of the group of least developed countries has more than tripled in 15 years, according to UN data. Critics have singled out US-based bulwarks of the post-World War II international financial system, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, for reform to improve their representation of the Global South. Painstaking talks in New York in June produced a common declaration to be adopted in Seville that only went ahead after the United States walked out. The document reaffirms commitment to the UN development goals such as eliminating poverty and hunger, promoting gender equality, reforming tax

systems and international financial institutions. The text also calls on development banks to triple their lending capacity, urges lenders to ensure predictable finance for essential social spending and for more cooperation against tax evasion. Coalitions of countries will seek to spearhead initiatives in addition to the so-called “Seville Commitment”, which is not legally binding. But campaigners have criticised the text for lacking ambition and have rung alarm bells about rising global inequality. Hundreds of demonstrators braved the sizzling heat in Seville on Sunday to demand change in international tax, debt and aid policies. “Global South countries will never be able to decide how they want to do development if they are bound to the new colonial debt,” protester Ilan Henzler, 28, told AFP.



ISLAMABAD]: A delegation of Fiji National University presented souvenir to the Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Industries and Production Haroon Akhtar Khan.

Pakistan elected UNIDO president first time ever

ISLAMABAD: The Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN, Ambassador Kamran Akhtar, has been elected as President of the 53rd session of the Industrial Development Board. This is the first time Pakistan has been honoured with this prestigious position. The Director General of UNIDO, while congratulating Ambassador Kamran Akhtar, praised Pakistan's commitment and contribution to the organization. Ambassador Kamran Akhtar, in his statement, thanked all UNIDO Member States for their trust and expressed his commitment towards further enhancing the Organization's role in industrial development, particularly in developing countries, LDCs, and SIDS. The election manifests the trust reposed in Pakistan by the UNIDO Member States. Like all Vienna-based international organizations, Pakistan maintains an active diplomatic profile at UNIDO and remains committed to the organization's core mandate, which is inclusive and sustainable Industrial Development. Pakistan has one of the largest portfolios with UNIDO, with several ongoing and planned projects worth over Euro 350 million. UNIDO has, inter alia, supported Pakistan's textile, leather, fisheries, food safety, climate action, and renewable energy sectors. Moreover, Projects like PAIDAR and PAFaid have helped in poverty alleviation, job creation, and the sustainable growth of rural communities. This year, Pakistan expects to launch a new cycle of its Country Partnership Program with UNIDO, along with several projects in myriad sectors.—DNA

China defends diplomats after Taiwan VP car ramming claims

BEIJING: China defended its diplomats on Monday after Taiwan accused Beijing's embassy staff of planning to ram its vice president's car during an official visit to Europe. “Chinese diplomats overseas always respect their host country's laws and regulations,” Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said. Taiwan's top China policy body, the Mainland Affairs Council (MAC), said on Friday that Hsiao Bikhim's motorcade was surveilled and followed in a ploy to be rammed during a visit to the Czech Republic in March 2024. Czech military intelligence spokesman Jan Pejsek told AFP on Sunday that Hsiao was targeted by “persons legalized in diplomatic positions at the Chinese Embassy in Prague.” He said they tailed her and sought information about Hsiao's program and meetings with Czech officials.—DNA

CDA's One-Window Facilitation Center facility widely lauded

ISLAMABAD: In line with the direction of Chairman CDA, Chief Commissioner Islamabad and DG Civil Defense Muhammad Ali Randhawa, and under the supervision of CDA Member Estate Talat Mehmood and Member Finance Tahir Naeem, the citizens have not only appreciated CDA but have also expressed thanks to Chairman CDA for making excellent arrangements at One-Window Facilitation Center for the timely recovery of outstanding dues. The citizens of Islamabad visiting the One-Window Facilitation Center praised the special measures and efficient systems implemented on the instructions of Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa, including digitization and cashless payment facilities. They also commended CDA's modern digital system, transparent procedures, and the professional competence of the staff, stating that these measures have made the payment process extremely simple and transparent for the citizens. On this occasion, the citizens witnessed the extended operational hours and citizen-friendly system at the One-Window Facilitation Center, implemented on the directives of the Chairman CDA, have significantly helped them in clearing their pending dues on time. They lauded the efforts of the CDA Chairman and expressed hope that such initiatives would continue in the future to prioritize citizens' convenience and service delivery. On the direction of the Chairman CDA, the CDA One-Window Facilitation Center remained open from 9 AM to 12 midnight on June 30, 2025, to facilitate citizens in clearing all their pending dues, including property charges, development charges, water charges, remaining installments for commercial/residential plots, transfer fees and other related charges. The CDA has informed that action will be taken against those citizens who have failed to clear their dues till mid night of June 30, 2025, which may include heavy fines, cancellation of property allotments/leases, and property auctions. Furthermore, the names of defaulters will be published in newspapers as per law, which could damage their reputation and image due to their own fault as per law. The CDA has urged citizens to clear all their dues at the CDA One-Window Facilitation Center before 12 midnight on June 30, 2024 in order to avoid any legal consequences. For further details, citizens may contact CDA Headquarters and relevant offices for further assistance.—DNA

Call for human-centric CPEC to setup Balochistan as gateway to growth

ISLAMABAD: Leading experts, diplomats, and policymakers unanimously urged on Monday to embrace a shift toward human-centered, integrated development for Balochistan under Phase-II of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) to establish the latter as gateway to sustainable growth and development. The Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) under its Monday Seminar Series organized a high-level policy seminar titled “Balochistan's Gateway to Sustainable Development: Market Opportunities and Investment Pathways under CPEC” moderated by Engineer Ubaid-Ur-Rehman Zia, Head of SDPI's Energy Unit, said a press release. Opening the session, Dr. Hassan Daud Butt, Senior Advisor, Energy China and former project director CPEC, emphasized that “Gwadar is not just a port, it's Pakistan's gateway to Eurasia.” Highlighting Balochistan's untapped economic potential, he pointed out the province accounts for 44% of Pakistan's landmass and 40% of the country's livestock, while also possessing one of the largest wind energy corridors in South Asia. By 2050, Balochistan's population is expected to grow to 24 million, further amplifying the urgency for sustainable development planning, he added. Pakistan travel guides He noted that Chinese and Kazakh investors have shown interest in Balochistan's rail infrastructure, with Kazakhstan alone willing to invest \$500 million. “Projects like ML-1 and the establishment of an oil city in Gwadar are long-term, but

we need sustainable growth along the coast immediately,” said Dr. Hassan Butt, adding that Gwadar is strategically positioned to become a petrochemical and industrial base. Ambassador Jauhar Saleem, President of the Institute of Regional Studies, noted that Balochistan holds one of the largest reserves of critical earth minerals—making it pivotal to global supply chains. “Pakistan can become a \$40 billion transit economy by 2035 if Gwadar is developed effectively,” he remarked, also calling attention to Balochistan's agricultural strengths including high-value fruits and vast livestock reserves. However, he strongly criticized governance inefficiencies, corruption, and lack of basic amenities in Balochistan, urging a re-evaluation of CPEC to ensure it benefits local communities. “Without focusing on vocational training, technology transfer, and grassroots engagement, CPEC will fail to deliver,” he warned. Ahad Nazir, Head of Policy at SDPI, stressed that without institutional reform, CPEC's connectivity gains won't translate into development. “Balochistan is mineral-rich but human-poor. Policy inconsistency, lack of coordination, and political interference are key barriers,” he said. He outlined five strategic levers including the establishment of an Investment Facilitation Unit and agro-business clusters. He also cited international models, like Chile's royalty reinvestment in mineral-rich regions, as pathways Balochistan could follow. Nazir also cautioned that public distrust, water scarcity,

and security gaps pose risks to investor confidence. Dr. Faiz Kakar, former provincial minister for Health, and Environment pointed out that despite ambitious plans, not a single motorway under CPEC runs through Balochistan. While Gwadar boasts a new international airport, major SEZs remain underdeveloped due to bureaucratic deadlock. “Chinese firms have proposed \$2 billion investments, but demand a unified and streamlined one-window operation,” he said, stressing the need for urbanization and climate resilience planning. Renowned anthropologist Dr. Quratulain Bakhteari, Founder and Director, Institute for Development Studies and Practice (IDSP) raised a unique cultural lens to the debate, cautioning that reducing Balochistan to minerals and trade ignores its people. “Business and trade do not unite nations—people do. Development must be rooted in the community,” she urged. In his closing remarks, Ambassador Saleem appreciated the “diverse, timely, and out-of-the-box” perspectives shared at the seminar. He underscored the importance of cultural understanding, community participation, and policy consistency to realize Balochistan's role as a true gateway to regional development. He concluded that Balochistan's future under CPEC must go beyond infrastructure to invest in its people, environment, and institutional capacity.—DNA

Chemical blast leaves 8 killed, 26 injured in India

NEW DELHI: At least eight people were killed and 26 others injured, some seriously, on Monday in a reactor blast inside a chemical factory in the southern Indian state of Telangana, police said. The blast took place in the Pashamylaram industrial area of Patancheru, Sangareddy district, about 48 km northwest of Hyderabad, the capital city of Telangana. Police suspect the death toll may increase, given the critical condition of some of the injured. Reports said around 150 workers were present inside the factory at the time of the blast. Preliminary investigations carried out by the police revealed that a reactor exploded during routine operations at the factory, triggering a massive fire and thus prompting emergency response teams to rush to the site. Television images showed columns of thick black smoke rising from the factory. Senior police official V Satyanaryana told the media the firefighters were trying hard to bring the blaze under control.—APP

French PM set to survive no-confidence motion but fate in balance

PARIS: France's Prime Minister Francois Bayrou is set to survive a no confidence vote this week but his future still hangs by a thread after barely half a year in the post. Centrist veteran Bayrou was named as premier by President Emmanuel Macron in December with a mission to bring stability following months of chaos in the wake of last summer's legislative elections. The snap polls, which took place over two rounds in June and July 2024, were called by the president in a bid to regain the political initiative but his gamble backfired with the far-right of Marine Le Pen emerging as the largest party and pro-Macron forces losing all control of parliament. Bayrou to be ejected by parliament in a vote of no confidence it would leave Macron seeking his seventh prime minister and cast a heavy shadow over the remaining two years of his presidential mandate. There would also be pressure on Macron to again call legislative elections, which he legally can soon do once a year has passed since the last polls. Following the collapse of talks on pension reform, France's Socialist Party (PS) has filed a motion of no confidence against Bayrou's government that is to be debated on Tuesday. “We hope that Francois Bayrou will no longer be Prime Minister and that there will be real change, that there will be someone at the Matignon who can talk to us,” PS leader Olivier Faure told LCI, referring to the premier's office and residence in Paris. Bayrou on Sunday definitely dismissed the no confidence motion as a “joke”, telling RTL the censure had only been put forward by the PS “to show that it is in the opposition”.—APP

Israelis attack soldiers in occupied West Bank

JERUSALEM: Israeli civilians assaulted security forces and vandalized military vehicles and a security installation outside an army base overnight in the occupied West Bank, the military said on Monday. According to Israeli media, settlers targeted the commander of the Binyamin Regional Brigade base in the central West Bank, calling him a “traitor.” The officer was among troops attacked on Friday night as they tried to stop settlers entering a closed military zone near the Palestinian village of Kafr Malik. Six civilians were arrested following the clashes. “Dozens of Israeli civilians gathered at the entrance” of the brigade's base on Sunday evening, the military said in a statement Monday. “The gathering became violent and some of the civilians at the scene attacked the security forces, sprayed pepper spray at them, and vandalized military vehicles,” it added.—APP

Briefs

FM of China
visits Europe
pitching
closer ties

Beijing, European bloc must "keep world peaceful, stable, safeguard multilateralism," says Chinese FM spox

DNA

BEIJING: China's top diplomat heads to Europe on Monday for a visit which Beijing said will highlight ties as an "anchor of stability" in a world in turmoil. Wang Yi's tour will take him to the European Union's headquarters in Brussels as well as France and Germany as China seeks to improve relations with the bloc as a counterweight to superpower rival the United States. But deep frictions remain over the economy – including a yawning trade deficit of \$357.1 billion between China and the EU – and Beijing's close ties with Russia despite Moscow's war in Ukraine. "The world is undergoing an accelerated evolution of a century-old change, with unilateralism, protectionism and bullying behaviour becoming rampant," Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Guo Jiakun said on Friday – a thinly veiled swipe against the United States under President Donald Trump. In that context, Guo said, Beijing and the European bloc must "keep the world peaceful and stable, safeguard multilateralism, free trade, international rules, fairness and justice, and act firmly as anchors of stability and constructive forces in a volatile world". Wang will meet with his EU counterpart, Kaja Kallas, at the bloc's headquarters in Brussels for "high-level strategic dialogue".

Putin wants
Ukraine's
'capitulation'

FRANKFURT: Russian President Vladimir Putin wants Ukraine to surrender, Germany's top diplomat said on Monday as he visited Kyiv after weeks of stepped-up Russian bombardments of the country. Amid stalled peace talks to end the more than three-year war, "Putin is not ceding on any of his maximalist demands – he doesn't want negotiations, he wants a capitulation," German Foreign Minister Johann Wadepuhl said as he arrived in the Ukrainian capital on an unannounced visit. "Ukraine's freedom and liberty is the most important task of our foreign and security policy," Wadepuhl said in a statement released by his ministry. Russia is "betting on a weakening of our support" and "wants conquest and submission at any cost – even at the cost of hundreds of thousands of additional lives", he said. – APP

Finance
Minister
departs
for Spain

DNA

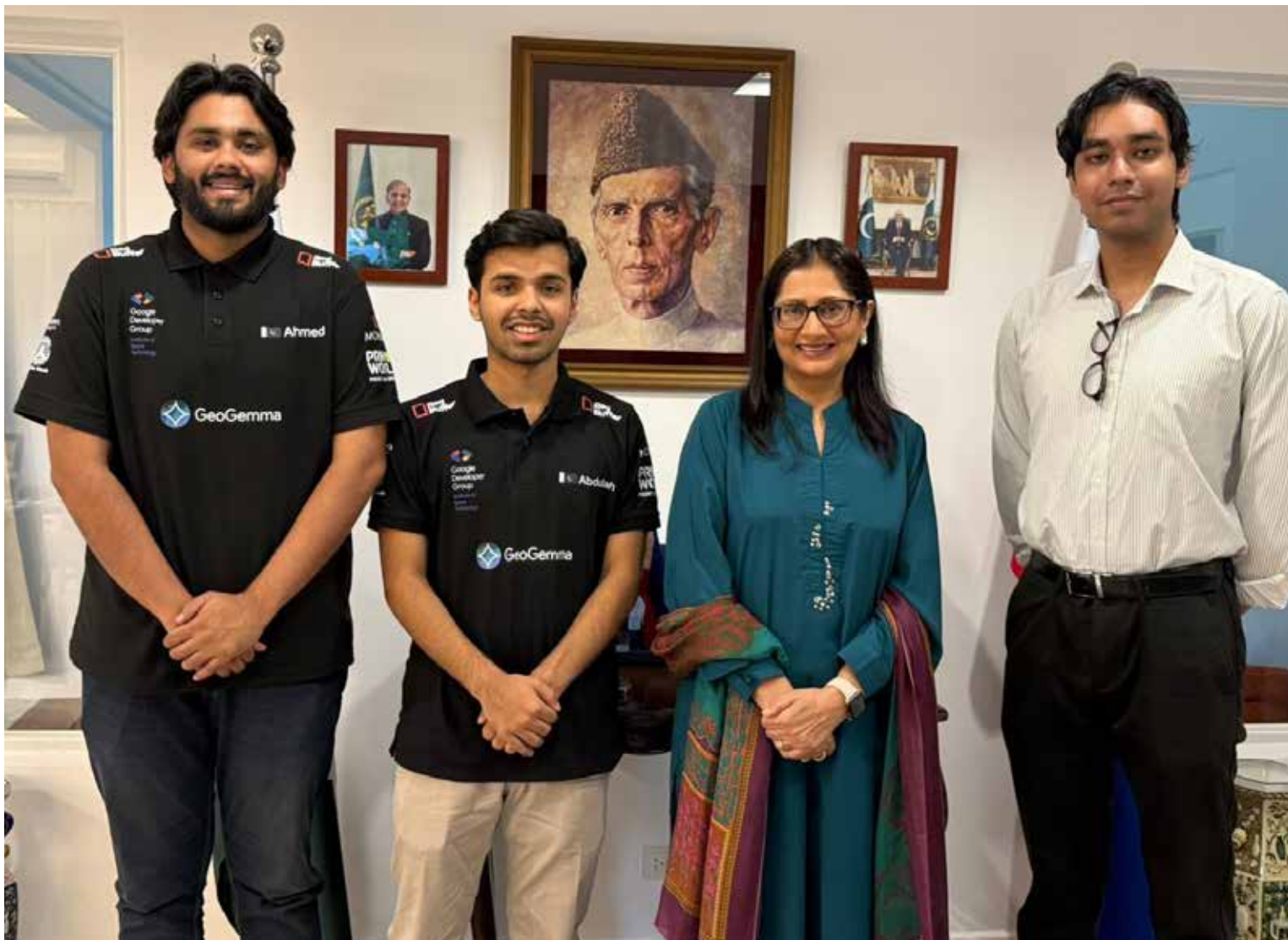
ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, departed from Islamabad on Monday for Seville, Spain, to participate in the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4), being held from July 1 to 3, 2025. The high-level global conference will bring together leaders, policymakers, and international development experts to explore innovative and sustainable financing strategies to accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly for developing and emerging economies, according to press release issued by finance ministry. During the visit, the Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb will represent Pakistan in the main conference sessions and a range of high-level side events. On July 1, he will co-chair the Multi-Stakeholder Roundtable on "Leveraging Private Business and Finance," and deliver a keynote address at the International Business Forum Policy Dialogue on "Accelerating EMDEs Investment: The Role of Credit Ratings."

Pak students earn global acclaim
at 2025 APAC solution challenge

In celebration of their achievements, Pakistan's Ambassador to the Philippines, Dr. Asima Rabbani, hosted both teams at her official residence. Congratulating them on their success, she remarked, "You represent the bright future of Pakistan

DNA

MANILA: The Embassy of Pakistan in Manila is proud to announce that a student team from Pakistan have achieved prestigious honors at the 2025 Asia-Pacific (APAC) Solution Challenge—a premier global tech competition supported by Google and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Out of more than 750 teams representing 12 countries across the Asia-Pacific region, Team GeoGemma from the Institute of Space Technology (IST), Islamabad, was awarded the Best AI Use Award. The competition's Top 10 finalists included teams from South Korea, Japan, Singapore, the Philippines, and Indonesia. GeoGemma's groundbreaking solution leverages satellite imagery and artificial intelligence through the Gemini API to deliver early warning alerts and risk assessments for disaster-prone areas. Their system holds life-saving potential by using geospatial technology. The team—comprised of Ahmed Iqbal, Hanzila Bin Younas, Khalil Ur Rehman, and Abdullah Asif—was commended for its innovative use of geospatial technology in disaster preparedness. Team i+1 from NUCES FAST also made Pakistan proud by securing a spot among the Top 10 finalists. Their AI-powered document classifier, also developed with Gemini tools, aims to make complex texts more accessible for neurodivergent individuals, promoting inclusivity and access to knowledge. In celebration of their achievements, Pakistan's Ambassador to the Philippines, Dr. Asima Rabbani, hosted both teams at her official residence. Congratulating them on their success, she remarked, "You represent the bright future of Pakistan. Your innovation, determination, and global recognition are a source of pride for the entire nation." She also commended the role of academic mentors, institutions, and competition organizers, emphasizing that such accomplishments signal Pakistan's growing potential in the global AI and innovation ecosystem. "These victories serve as powerful inspiration for aspiring technologists across Pakistan," she added. "They also demonstrate how Pakistani youth are contributing solutions to some of the world's most pressing challenges, including disaster preparedness and accessibility."



MANILA: Pakistan Ambassador to Philippines, Dr. Asima Rabbani, hosted Pakistani students from GeoGemma team of the Institute of Space Technology (IST) who were the winners of prestigious Asia Pacific Solutions, supported by Google and the Asian Development Bank. – DNA

Pakistan to assume UNSC's
presidency for July today

Ambassador Asim Iftikhar, who will preside over the Council meetings on key global issues in July, said he was fully aware of complex geo-political scenario, growing instability and threats to international peace and security, marked by rising conflicts and deepening humanitarian crises

DNA

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan is set to assume the presidency of the United Nations Security Council for the month of July 2025 on Tuesday, with Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad pledging to uphold multilateralism and international law while steering the 15-member body's work. "Pakistan's Presidency will be transparent, inclusive, and responsive," the Pakistani envoy told APP correspondent at the UN, as he prepare to face the challenges ahead. The presidency of the Security Council – the world body's power centre – is part of Pakistan's two-year term as a non-permanent member of the UNSC, which began in January 2025. The presidency rotates monthly among its 15 members, in alphabetical order. Pakistan's earlier terms on the Council were in 2012-13, 2003-04, 1993-94, 1983-84, 1976-77, 1968-69 and 1952-53. Ambassador Asim Iftikhar, who will preside over the Council meetings on key global issues in July, said he was fully aware of complex geo-political scenario, growing instability and threats to international peace and security, marked by rising conflicts and deepening humanitarian crises. During this July presidency, Pakistan is scheduled to

host two high-level signature events on multilateralism and peaceful settlement of disputes, and on UN-OIC cooperation. These topics, he said, were reflective of shared priorities – multilateralism, preventive diplomacy and cooperation with regional organizations in promoting international peace and security. At the same time, the focus will remain on key global issues, including the situation in the Middle East and developments in Africa, Europe, Asia, and Latin America. Ambassador Asim Iftikhar has already met with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and briefed him on the Council's programme of work in July. "As a country that has consistently advocated for dialogue and diplomacy, Pakistan brings a principled and balanced perspective to the Security Council's work shaped by its own experience, and longstanding contribution to UN's peacekeeping and peace-building efforts," the Pakistani envoy said in the interview. "We look forward to working with all Council members for collective, timely action by the Council in line with its primary responsibility under the Charter and expectations of broader UN membership," he added. Pakistan was elected as a non-permanent member with overwhelming support of the UN membership, securing 182 votes out of 193.

WB appoints new
Country Director
for Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: The World Bank (WB) has appointed Ms. Bolormaa Amgaabazar the new World Bank Country Director for Pakistan effective from July 1. According to WB press release Ms Amgaabazar is succeeding Najy Benhassine in this role. "I am delighted to be appointed the World Bank's new Country Director for Pakistan," said Ms. Amgaabazar. "The World Bank and Pakistan have a long-standing partnership that has benefited millions of people over generations. I look forward to deepening our engagement with the federal and provincial governments, local institutions, civil society, the private sector, development partners, and other stakeholders." Ms. Amgaabazar, a Mongolian national,

has over two decades of international development experience. She joined the World Bank in 2004 and has worked in the East Asia and Pacific, Africa, and Eastern Europe and Central Asia regions. She has also held managerial responsibilities in the Bank's country offices in Kyrgyz Republic and, most recently, in Indonesia and Timor-Leste. Prior to joining the Bank, Ms Amgaabazar worked in international development in Mongolia, Indonesia and Timor-Leste. "We will continue to support Pakistan to address some of its most acute development challenges including child stunting, learning poverty, its exceptional exposure to the impacts of climate change, and the sustainability of its energy sector," added Ms. Amgaabazar. – DNA

Tax exemptions for Army
Welfare Trust, others
included in Finance Bill

List of tax immunity also features SC Diامر Bhasha, Mohmand Dams Fund and Fauji Foundation

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Days after the parliament approved Finance Bill 2025-26 for the upcoming fiscal year, it has come to light that the government has incorporated over 50 tax exemptions, including to pension of a former president and his widow, Karandaaz Pakistan, Army Welfare Trust and others, The News reported on Monday. The Finance Bill 2025-26 is set to be converted into an Act with the assent of the President of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari today. The Federal Bureau of Revenue (FBR) had placed a regulatory framework with the provision of tax credits to charitable organisations, and non-profit organisations (NPOs), but now facilitated them more by granting tax exemptions. The Bill approved by parliament has added to the list of those organisations which enjoyed tax exemptions. It included tax exemption on pension of a former president and his widow, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) and SBP Banking Services Corporation, FBR Foundation, Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, Pakistan Water and Power Development Authority established under the Pakistan Water and Power Development Authority Act, 1958 (WP Act XXXI of 1958) and includes Pakistan Agricultural Research Council, corporatised entities of Pakistan Water and Power Development Authority from the date of their creation up to the date of completion of the process of corporatisation i.e., till the tariff is notified, Prime Minister's Special Relief Fund for victims of terrorism, Chief Minister's (Punjab) Relief Fund for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) of NWFP, National Disaster Risk Management Fund, Supreme Court – Diامر Bhasha and Mohmand Dams – Fund.

The tax exemption will also apply to the Prime Minister's COVID-19 Pandemic Relief Fund-2020, National Endowment Scholarship for Talent (NEST), Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan, Privatisation Commission of Pakistan, Fauji Foundation, Audit Oversight Board, SC Water Conservation Account, Balochistan Education Endowment Fund (BEEF), Army Welfare Trust, Public Private Partnership Authority for tax year 2022 and subsequent four tax years, the Prime Minister's Relief Fund for Flood, Earthquake and other Calamities with effect on and from the 5th August, 2022, Export-Import Bank of Pakistan. Furthermore, the relaxation on tax also includes the Deposit Protection Corporation established under sub-section (I) of section 3 of Deposit Protection Corporation Act, 2016 (XXXVII of 2016), Wapda First Sukuk Company Limited, Pakistan Domestic Sukuk Company Ltd, Wapda on issuance of twenty billion rupees TFC's/SUKUK certificates for consideration of Diامر Bhasha Dam Projects, Wapda Second Sukuk Company Limited, Pakistan International Sukuk Company Limited, Second Pakistan International Sukuk Company Limited, Third Pakistan International Sukuk Company Limited, Islamic Naya Pakistan Certificates Company Limited (IN-PCC), Pakistan Mortgage Refinance Company Limited, the Pakistan Global Sukuk Programme Company Limited, Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto Institute of Trauma, Karachi, National Memorial Bab-e-Pakistan Trust, Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund, National Rural Support Programme, Karandaaz Pakistan from Tax Year 2015 onwards, the Institutions of the Aga Khan Development Network (Pakistan) as contained in Schedule 1 of the Accord and Protocol, dated November 13, 1994, executed between the government of Pakistan and the Agha Khan Development Network.

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