



Islamabad POST

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Iranian foreign Minister says no point in talks now

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Relations with Pakistan further cemented: envoy

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US attack on Iran is a war crime: Mushahid

Detailed News On Page-01



TIT-FOR-TAT

Iran launches fresh wave of strikes after US attacks

40 Khyber-Shikan 3rd Generation missiles fire on Israel, say Pasdaraan-e-Inqilab: US warns Iran against escalation but Tehran vows "firm and decisive" response to aggression, says it reserves right of defence

CENTRELINE REPORT

TEHRAN: Iran launched massive strikes on Sunday after US attacked nuclear sites in Iran. Iran claims no harm was caused to the nuclear sites after the attacks. In the Iranian attack on Israel massive destruction was reported.

Earlier, President Donald Trump on Sunday said US air strikes had "completely and totally obliterated" Iran's main nuclear enrichment facilities, and warned of more attacks to come if Tehran does not seek peace. In a televised address to the nation from the White House after the United States joined Israel's air campaign against Tehran, Trump called the US attacks a "spectacular military success."

Trump had earlier stunned the world by announcing on social media that US aircraft had struck Iran's Fordow nuclear enrichment plant, plus the Natanz and Isfahan facilities. But the fresh US military entanglement comes despite Trump's promises to avoid another "forever war" in the Middle East — Iran has vowed to retaliate against US forces in the region if Washington got involved. "Iran's key nuclear enrichment facilities have been completely and totally obliterated."

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UN watchdog says no increase in radiation

NEWS DESK

TEL AVIV: The International Atomic Energy Agency said Sunday that there has been "no increase in off-site radiation levels" after US airstrikes on Iranian nuclear sites. The UN nuclear watchdog sent the message via the social platform X on Sunday. "The IAEA can confirm that no increase in off-site radiation levels has been reported as of this time," it said. The "IAEA will provide further assessments on situation in Iran as more information becomes available." Iran media reports 'massive' blast in Bushehr province, home to nuclear reactor

Meanwhile Iranian media reported that a "massive explosion was heard" on Sunday in Bushehr province, home to Iran's only nuclear power plant,

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TEL AVIV: A view of destroyed buildings in Tel Aviv after Iran attacked various Israeli installations on Sunday. — Agencies

DG ISPR No individual or group can declare jihad

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Inter-Services Public Relations Director General (DG ISPR) Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry has said that only the state can declare jihad, stressing that "no individual or group has this authority". Lt Gen Chaudhry said this while interacting with members of various religious and social circles during an event in Karachi on Sunday. The statement has come over a month following a days-long military engagement between Pakistan and India. Since the military conflict, officers of Pakistan's armed forces have held a spree of meetings with people belonging to different walks of life.

US attack a war crime: Mushahid

Sayed alleged that the "Israeli Lobby" influenced the decision

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Prominent Pakistani politician and Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed has strongly condemned recent American attacks on Iran's nuclear facilities, labeling them as "willful aggression and a war crime." In a fiery post on social media platform X (formerly Twitter), Sayed compared the strikes to the 2003 Iraq War, accusing the U.S. of acting on false pretenses. Sayed alleged that the "Israeli Lobby" influenced the decision, criticizing former U.S. President

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Rejects use of its territory for attacks

Pakistan reaffirms neutral stance on Israel-Iran conflict

Islamabad made it clear that it will not be dragged into any external wars, bloc politics, or military confrontations involving other nations. Pakistan's longstanding policy emphasizes non-interference and neutrality in global conflicts

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistani government on Sunday categorically stated that it would not permit the United States to use its airspace, land, or naval territory for any military action against Iran. The announcement came amid escalating tensions in the Middle East following recent airstrikes on Iranian nuclear facilities. Pakistan strongly condemned the alleged U.S. airstrikes on Iranian nuclear installations on the night of June 21-22. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a formal statement denouncing the attack and reiterating Islamabad's commitment to regional stability. "Pakistan believes in the peaceful

Continued on Page 06

US prepared in case Iran retaliates, says VP Vance

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: Vice President J D Vance claimed on Sunday that the US has pushed Iran's nuclear programme back by a very long time and said that it is prepared in case of any retaliation by Iran. "Trump did not take this action lightly but it gives a chance to reset ties and talks with Iran," Vance said, speaking on NBC's "Meet the Press with Kristen Welker."

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Briefs

IMF has nixed 25% rebate for teachers

FBR proposes holding period of 12 months for availing concessionary tax regime on invest

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has rejected FBR proposal to allow 25% tax rebates to teachers and researchers in the budget 2025-26. In the Finance Bill 2025-26, the FBR proposed a holding period of 12 months for availing the concessionary tax regime on investments made in Special Convertible Rupee Accounts (SCRA). The National Assembly Standing Committee on Finance met under the chairmanship of Syed Naveed Qamar at the Parliament House on Saturday. While reviewing of Finance Bill, the chairman argued that the condition of a "holding period" would discourage investment in the SCRA.

'Pak-India ceasefire hinged on dialogue'

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Former foreign minister and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari has said that Islamabad agreed to a ceasefire with New Delhi last month on the understanding that the US will support a broader diplomatic process to address long-standing issues. "At a time when the Pakistani Army believed that we had a military upper hand in the conflict, we agreed to a ceasefire because we believed there was a commitment from the United States that we'd go on to have a dialogue in a neutral location on all friction points," he said

President Pezeshkian says

Iran appreciates Pakistan role on Israel-Iran issue

Telephone Conversation between Prime Minister & President of Iran



ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif held a telephone conversation with the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, H.E. Masoud Pezeshkian, this afternoon. The Prime Minister conveyed Pakistan's condemnation of the U.S. attacks, which followed Israel's unprovoked and unjustified aggression over the past eight days. He reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering solidarity with the brotherly people and Government of Iran, while expressing heartfelt

condolences on the loss of precious lives and prayed for the swift recovery of the injured. The Prime Minister expressed concerns that the U.S. strikes had targeted facilities that were under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). These attacks constituted a serious violation of international law and the IAEA Statute. While noting Iran's right to self-defence, as enshrined under Article 51 of the UN Charter, the Prime Minister stressed upon the need to immediately return to dialogue and diplomacy as the only viable path forward. He also called for urgent collective efforts to de-escalate the situation. The Prime Minister reiterated Pakistan's readiness to play a constructive role in this context. President Pezeshkian conveyed his deep appreciation for Pakistan's support to Iran. He thanked the Prime Minister, the Government and people of Pakistan, including the military leadership, for standing in solidarity with the people and Government of Iran. The two leaders emphasized on the need and urgency of forging unity among the Ummah at this critical juncture. The two leaders agreed to remain in close contact.

Bombing Iran: Trump gambles on force over diplomacy: experts

With President Donald Trump's order of strikes on Iran's nuclear sites, the United States — like Israel, which encouraged him — has brought the conflict into the open

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON: For nearly a half-century the United States has squabbled with Iran's Islamic Republic but the conflict has largely been left in the shadows, with US policymakers believing, often reluctantly, that diplomacy was preferable. With President Donald Trump's order of strikes on Iran's nuclear sites, the United States — like Israel, which encouraged him — has brought the conflict into the open, and the consequences may not be clear for some time to come. "We will only know if it succeeded if we can get through the next three to five years without the Iranian regime acquiring nuclear weapons, which they now have compelling reasons to want," said Kenneth Pollack, a former CIA analyst and supporter of the 2003 Iraq war who is now vice president for policy at the Middle East Institute. US intelligence had not concluded that Iran was building a nuclear bomb, with Tehran's sensitive atomic work largely seen as a means of leverage, and Iran can be presumed to have taken precautions in anticipation of strikes.

Continued on Page 06

Reactions on US attacks on Iran

WASHINGTON: The United States carried out attacks on three nuclear sites in Iran on Sunday, joining Israel's bombing campaign after days of speculation over US involvement in the conflict. "Iran's key nuclear enrichment facilities have been completely and totally obliterated. Iran, the bully of the Middle East, must now make peace," Trump said in a televised address to the nation from the White House after the strikes. Here is a roundup of the key reactions: - Iran: 'Everlasting consequences'. Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on Sunday condemned the US attacks as "outrageous" and said his country has a right to defend its sovereignty. "The events this morning are outrageous and will have everlasting consequences," he posted on X, adding that the attacks were "lawless and criminal" behavior.

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Camel milk holds promise for human health

MULTAN: Camel milk, rich in nutrients and medicinal properties, can play a crucial role in boosting both public health and national exports.

Speaking to APP, Dr Jams-haid Akhtar, deputy director highlighted camel milk contains insulin-like proteins, making it highly beneficial for diabetic patients. Camel milk is also widely used in the manufacturing of beauty products due to its natural healing and moisturizing properties, he added.

“Camel milk is a powerful natural remedy. It not only helps control diabetes but also has growing demand in the cosmetics industry,” he said.

World Camel Day, celebrated annually on June 22, aims to raise awareness about the importance of camels, especially in arid and semi-arid regions.

Dr Jamshaid maintained that the date June 22 was selected because it marked the hottest and longest day of the year which is a symbolic reminder of the camel's ability to survive in extreme heat and harsh conditions “Camels are not just animals of the desert – they are lifelines,” he remarked. “Their ability to withstand extreme temperatures and scarcity of water makes them perfectly suited for our climate. The breeds found in Pakistan are among the best in the world.” Dr Jamshaid urged livestock farmers to focus on efficient camel rearing and to explore the economic potential of camel-based products such as milk, meat, and bones. He stressed that increased production and value addition of these items could help Pakistan earn significant foreign exchange. “By promoting camel products locally and internationally, we can give country a distinct identity in the livestock sector,” he said. He further explained the camels have long served as a symbol of endurance, strength, and cultural heritage, especially in desert communities. In addition to their traditional roles in transportation and food security, their ecological adaptation and usefulness in modern industries make them an asset worth investing in. Dr Jamshaid praised the efforts of local farmers and encouraged them to adopt scientific practices to enhance productivity.—APP

Minister inaugurates Honorary Consul for Austria in Sindh

The Honorary Consulate in Karachi celebrated 70 years of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Austria



NAZIR SIYAL/DNA

KARACHI: The Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan attended the inauguration of the Honorary Consulate of Austria along with the celebration of 70 years of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Austria hosted by Dr. Hussain Islam Honorary Consul for the Republic of Austria in Sindh and Balochistan on Friday. In an inaugural first consul r presence in Pakistan's southern region, with the intent to cater to the needs of Sindh and Ba-

lochistan, both key provinces in Pakistan's economic and industrial landscape, Federal Minister Jam Kamal Khan embraced this occasion. Attending the event as the Chief Guest, the Minister expressed his beauty over the auspicious occasion. He extended his utmost gratitude to Mrs. Andrea Wicke the Ambassador for Austria in Pakistan, and Dr. Hussain Islam for extending the honour. “The consulate will play an important role in extending Pakistan's economic and future trade with Austria. With a jurisdiction over both Sindh

and Balochistan, this diplomatic initiative will be very lucrative for the bilateral relations for both countries,” expressed Mr. Jam Kamal.

While addressing the business community attendees in the audience, he discussed the issue of tariff rationalisation that is being undertaken by the Federal Government for the first time. He expressed that this initiative by the Prime Minister would enable commerce activity within the country as well as with all their trade and diplomatic partners.



The Federal Minister Jam Kamal Khan concluded his address by thanking the Ambassador, for her vision and continued efforts to bring Pakistan and Austria together. He expressed his confidence

in witnessing greater co-operation across trade, education, tourism, climate technology, and other vital areas.

The inaugural event was attended by Mrs. Andrea Wicke, Ambassador of the

Republic of Austria, Dr. Hussain Islam Honorary Consul for the Republic of Austria in Sindh and Balochistan, Bishop of Karachi, Patron and Chief of Pakistan Sikh Council along with several esteemed personalities.

Kundi accuses KP govt of clinging to power

PESHAWAR Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Sunday accused the provincial government of being unwilling to give up power at any cost, claiming that the current administration sees Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur as a “golden goose” and is merely bluffing about dissolving the provincial assembly. Speaking to a delegation of journalists from Dera Ismail Khan, led by senior journalists Muhammad Irfan Mughal and Saeedullah Marwat, Governor Kundi said that the KP government is desperate to pass its budget, even if it means using indirect means. He added that despite the Chief Minister's threats, meeting Imran Khan is not an option for the government, and it will find excuses to ensure the budget gets approved. He warned that the possibility of an emergency in the province could not be ruled out, and predicted that Gandapur would resort to any tactic necessary to retain power. During the meeting, which

included journalists Muhammad Rehman, Naveed Sultan, M. Salahuddin, Ahmad Mughal, Abdullah Jan, Hammad, Nusrat, Adil Waqar and others, regional issues and public grievances were discussed in detail. The Governor expressed concern over the deteriorating security situation in the province and criticized the provincial government's lack of interest. He said that the survey for the Dera Ismail Khan International Airport is in progress, and the Lift Canal project has entered the re-tendering phase under Wapda, with phased planning underway Addressing the issue of load shedding, Governor Kundi said the power outages in Dera Ismail Khan are unbearable. He rejected Wapda's justification regarding low recoveries and pressure from Islamabad, saying that the public should be given control over feeders and that load shedding should be proportionate to recovery rates Highlighting the injustice stemming from the 1991 water agreement,

he said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has not received its due water share and urged the federal government to grant the province its rightful share. He also demanded that the provincial government take control of local electricity distribution companies (DISCOs). The Governor revealed that 14,000 out of 24,000 Wapda posts in the province remain vacant, exacerbating the electricity crisis. He criticized the excessive load shedding and low voltage, calling it a form of cruelty, especially amid the ongoing heatwave in the region. He announced plans to hold another meeting with Wapda officials in the coming days to resolve the crisis and suggested that power management would improve significantly if the province were given control over electricity. Governor Kundi also alleged that Wapda staff are complicit in electricity theft and emphasized the need to address the injustices faced by the local population regarding the Yarik Toll Plaza on the Indus Highway.—DNA

Heat wave People advised to stay indoors

BAHAWALPUR: Health expert have advised people to spend more daytime at home to save themselves from bad effects of the heat wave.

Very hot weather and a heat wave have been continuing in Bahawalpur for last several days which has made people sick, with an increasing number of patient visiting hospitals. Talking to APP, health expert, Dr. Naeem Akhtar said that a number of people had been reported to be suffering from diseases caused by the heat wave. He advised people to stay indoors and take cold water besides taking bath with cold water. Dr. Akhtar said that several patients suffering from high blood pressure, headache, nausea and other diseases were brought at hospital after they were affected by the heat wave. He also emphasized the need to keep children at home, especially in daytime, besides saving them from sunlight.—APP

Water crisis in Pindi to end soon: Abrar

RAWALPINDI: Chairman of the National Assembly's Standing Committee on Cabinet Secretariat Malik Abrar Ahmed has said that the water crisis in Rawalpindi would end soon with the completion of new dams and projects to conserve rainwater. Millions of gallons of water would be available daily with the construction of underground water tanks in the cantonment and city areas, he said while talking to a delegation of Rawalpindi Restaurants, Caterers, Sweets, and Bakers Association, led by its President Muhammad Farooq Chaudhry here at his office, according to PML-N news release on Sunday. Malik Abrar Ahmed, whose also Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Rawalpindi Division President, said work was underway on the construction of new Daducha and Chahan dams Pakistan tourism packages Similarly, he added, water capacity in Rawal and Khanpur dams was also being increased. He said in the summer every year, the residents of Rawalpindi and Chaklala cantonments, which fall in his National Assembly constituency, faced severe shortage due to lack of water storage facilities. That was the reason that priority was being given to the release of allocated funds for the timely completion of underground tanks projects to ensure abund-

dant water supply to the people during the hot season, he added. Malik Abrar said the underground projects, which would also help conserve rainwater, were in the final stages. The construction of underground water tanks at Bhata Chowk with a storage capacity of 200,000 gallons per day and Gomalmandi with 100,000 gallons per day storing capacity was progressing rapidly. Likewise, he said, projects were in progress in Naseerabad, Barf Khana Chowk, Ghaziabad, Afshan Colony, Tench Bhatta, Tahli Mohri and Wards 7, 8, 9 and 10 of Chaklala Cantonment, each designed to store 50,000 gallons per day. He said the traders of Rawalpindi had played an important role in the revival of the country's economy and assured the delegation all the problems faced by traders in the food business would be resolved on priority. The delegation also including Association's senior vice presidents Chaudhry Zahid Mahmood, Chaudhry Muhammad Imtiaz and Huzafa Ansar, Deputy General Secretary Hashim Ijaz Butt, vice presidents Sardar Ijaz, Velayat, Qadeer Abbasi, Chaudhry Shahroz, Sheikh Muhammad Irfan and Sardar Saleem Sher Zaman, executive members Raja Abid Mahmood and Chaudhry Khalid Mahmood and Muhammad Shahroz.—DNA

Muharram security arrangements reviewed

LAHORE: The district administration, under the leadership of Deputy Commissioner Syed Musa Raza, has intensified preparations to ensure foolproof security and maintain law and order during the holy month of Muharram ul Haram, particularly on Ashura. In a meeting held at Nader Hall, DC Syed Musa Raza and DIG Operations Faisal Kamran jointly reviewed detailed security and administrative arrangements for central processions and majalis. The meeting was attended by Chief Officer Metropolitan Corporation Lahore Shahid Abbas Kathia, Additional Deputy Commissioner (Headquarters) Muhammad Jafar Chaudhry, and representatives of various departments, along with members of the Peace Committee. The Peace Committee reaffirmed its commitment to fostering interfaith harmony, tolerance, and unity, and pledged active support in identifying and countering any elements that may disrupt communal peace. Participants acknowledged the visible field presence of Assistant Commissioners across the city and praised their proactive role in overseeing road patch-up work, installation of streetlights, and ensuring overall route clearance. DC Syed Musa Raza assured that cleanliness and infrastructure improvements along all designated procession routes are being prioritised, with strict deadlines for completion well before Ashura. DIG Operations Faisal Kamran emphasised the strategic importance of the Peace Committee, referring to its members as the “enforcement force” of the district administration.—APP

Arslan glowing tribute to late Benazir Bhutto

SUKKUR: Spokesperson for Sindh Government and Mayor of Sukkur, Barrister Arslan Sheikh on Sunday paid glowing tribute to the late Benazir Bhutto on her death anniversary, emphasizing her unparalleled contributions to democracy, peace, and national development Speaking the event, Mayor Sukkur described Ms Bhutto as a beacon of hope and resilience, who dedicated her life to the cause of democratic governance and the welfare of the people. “Her relentless struggle against dictatorship paved the way for power to be transferred back to the public representatives, setting the nation firmly on the democratic path,” he said. Drawing on his extensive experience of 36 years in Parliament and 50 years in politics, he asserted that democracy remains the cornerstone of national security, peace, and prosperity.—APP

Court Notice

In the court of Medum Faiza Riaz Judge Family Court Kharian
Title: Shamsa parveen etc. Versus Sajjawar Naeem

Notice to:
Sajjawar Naeem S/o. Malik Bashir Ahmad cast Awan R/o. Aach Tehsil Kharian District Gujrat.
Suit for Dower, Maintenance, and Living Expenses
Whereas in the above mentioned case it has been proved to the satisfaction of the court that the above mentioned defendants are not served in ordinary way. It is therefore proclaimed under order 5 rule 20 CPC that if the said defendants will not appear personally or through a duly authorized agent or pleader in court at 8 AM on 28-06-2025, otherwise case will be decided ex parte.

Clean water necessary for healthy life

PESHAWAR: As the early morning sun casts a golden hue over Peshawar's dusty roads, the 40-year-old rickshaw driver from Lala Kala village loads six large tanks of clean drinking water from Chamkani, hauling them back home for his extended family of 15. For many might be taking it as a burden, but Abdul Waheed had been beginning his day with this practice for the past three years, to provide clean drinking water for his family as a necessity of life. “My brother died of cardiac arrest in 2022, and I took it upon myself to provide clean water for both of our families,” Waheed shared, wiping beads of sweat trailing down his face. “Our local water has turned toxic. And it is not just about thirst anymore but about our survival.” Waheed is not alone in this struggle. Thousands of residents from Peshawar's peripheral villages including Tarnab, Akbarpura, Taru, Amankot, Khuderaiz, Babay Jadeed, Tarkha, Korvi and Khushmaqam face similar struggles daily in sizzling heat. Contaminated water is resulting in diseases like cholera, hepatitis A and diarrhea in areas where untreated human and industrial waste and agricultural runoff seep into groundwater supplies and water courses. The 2022 floods dealt a lasting blow to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's water systems, altering water tables and contaminating wells. Today, nearly 90% of Peshawar's population reportedly relies on unfiltered water, exposing them to a range of serious health risks. Even in affluent urban areas like Hayatabad and University Town, clean water is hard to come by. Despite paying municipal taxes, many residents resort to purchasing water from private tankers due to outdated infrastructure and rusted pipelines—some of which haven't been replaced in decades. In 2020, KP passed the Water Act to regulate water management and resource allocation. But according to experts, the lack of an operational Water Resources Regulatory Authority and red tapism have hindered its enforcement. “Clean drinking water has emerged as a major crisis in Peshawar these days,” said Dr. Naeemur Rehman Khattak, former Chairman Economics Department at University of Peshawar. “Despite legislation, poor implementation and weak institutional capacity in KP have turned availability of clean water a daily life challenge.” Citing declining rainfall, over-extraction by car wash centers, and poor planning as compounding factors, he said, “we've seen Pakistan's per capita water availability falling from 5,260 cubic meters in 1951 to barely 1,000 today. This is water scarcity, plain and simple. Amidst this grim scenario where clean drinking water and overall per capita water availability continues to be a challenge, he said new water storage and energy projects are now offering a glimmer of hope for people. Construction on the Mohmand Dam, one of the largest hydropower projects in Pakistan, is well underway. This 213 meters high dam to be completed by 2027-28 is poised to store 1.29 million acre-feet water, irrigate 18,233 acres of new land and support 160,000 acres of existing farmland. Critically, it will provide 300 million gallons of clean drinking water per day to Peshawar, a game-changer for the city's residents. “This dam would not just provide water and power—it will protect districts like Charsadda and Nowshera from floods. It is a lifeline,” said Engr Zahoor, Director at WAPDA.—DNA

Iran-Israel conflict could have implications for Pakistan: Masood

MUZAFFARABAD: Former President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and senior diplomat Sardar Masood Khan has warned that the escalating Iran-Israel conflict could have grave and far-reaching implications for Pakistan's national security and stability. In a series of media interviews, Khan expressed deep concern over the widening scope of hostilities between Iran and Israel, cautioning that a prolonged war could trigger a new wave of refugee influx into Pakistan, similar to the aftermath of the Afghan conflict “If the war drags on, there is a strong possibility of a mass exodus of Iranian refugees towards Pakistan,” he stated, noting

that such a scenario would strain Pakistan's resources and social fabric. Khan emphasized that a potentially more dangerous outcome would be the weakening of the Pakistan-Iran border, making it vulnerable to exploitation by anti-state elements. “Groups backed by hostile foreign powers, especially India—such as BLA, BLF, and other proxies—could infiltrate into Pakistan unchecked, posing a serious threat to our internal security,” he warned. Touching on the strategic motives behind Israel's military actions, Khan pointed out that Tel Aviv has made targeting Iran's nuclear infrastructure. “Israel has already attacked nuclear facilities in Natanz, Isfa-

han, Fordow, and other key locations where uranium enrichment and missile programs are believed to be based,” he said. “They claim to have neutralized nearly 40 percent of Iran's air defense systems.” Khan asserted that Israel is pressuring the United States to either intervene directly in the conflict or allow Israel to use tactical nuclear strikes that, according to them, would limit radioactive fallout to underground areas,” he explained. “However, experts warn such assumptions are dangerously naive, and the consequences of a nuclear strike—di-

rect or indirect—would be catastrophic not only for the region but globally, including for Israel itself.” On the international response, Khan noted that while Russia and China have offered diplomatic and moral support to Iran, Tehran has not formally requested military assistance. “Russian President Vladimir Putin even offered to mediate between the two nations, a proposal accepted by Iran but reportedly dismissed by Israel,” he revealed. “Nonetheless, Iran maintains strong defense ties with both Russia and China, and remains a critical partner in China's Belt and Road Initiative.” Regarding diplomatic efforts to de-escalate tensions, Khan ac-

knowledgeed that the United States has set a 15-day window to decide on its level of involvement. “This pause has intensified backchannel diplomacy. The British Foreign Secretary has held high-level meetings in Washington, and even President Trump's close advisors are urging restraint,” he said.

“Still, military deployments by the U.S. in Europe, the Middle East, and particularly at Diego Garcia, suggest that war preparations are well underway.”

Khan concluded by urging vigilance, saying that while diplomacy is ongoing, the intensification of military operations casts doubt over the success of peace efforts.—DNA

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

JUNE

June 02/Itlay National/ Independence Day

June 04/Finland Armed Forces Day

June 06/Sweden National Day

June 10/Portugal Portugal Day (National Day)

June 10/Jordan Arab Revolution& Army Day

June 11/United kingdom Birthday of Her Majesty The Queen Elizabeth

June 12/Philippines Independence Day

June 12/Russian Federation Day of Sovereignty of the Russian Federation (National Day)

June 13/Zambia Armed Forces day

June 17/Iceland National Day

June 18/Seychells National Day

June 25/Croatia National Day

June 25/Mozambique National Day

June 26/Azerbaijan Army Day

Turkish Airlines.....8494949

Emergency

Rescue (Police).....15

Bomb Disposal.....15

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

Emergency Ambulance.1122

& Rescue Services.4451122

Motorway Police...9266044

Motorway Police.9270601-20

Women Police Stations Islamabad.....9222596

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Hospitals

CMH.....5611111

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Cantt Hospital...9270907-11

DHQ.....5556311-4

RGH.....9290301-7

Holy Family.....9290322-7

PIMS.....9261170-79

Polyclinic.....9218300-09

Shifa International 4603666

Departments

CDA.....9221334-43

CDA.....9208301-04

Met Office.....9250360-6

RDA.....5555864

TMA.....5770886

Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Islamabad’s vanishing trees deepen heat crisis

As Islamabad continues to expand, experts and residents alike are calling for smarter urban forestry strategies. Planting native, climate-adapted trees is not just about comfort, it’s about survival, in the face of escalating climate change and global warming

ISLAMABAD: As Islamabad faces yet another punishing heatwave with “feels like” temperatures soaring to 50°C, the city’s shrinking tree cover is turning entire sectors into heat traps. In neighborhoods where mature trees still stand, residents find some refuge from the scorching sun—but in many areas, the absence of shade is making life unbearable. The capital’s changing climate is no longer a warning—it’s a lived reality, demanding urgent action from both the civic authorities and the citizens. In areas like F-6 and parts of E-7, mature trees—such as neem, peepal, bohar, and amaltas—do more than beautify the streets. They lower temperatures, allow for breezes, and make it possible for residents to sit outdoors even during scorching afternoons. But the situation changes dramatically in places like G-6, G-7, G-13, and G-14. Here, tree cover is sparse or consists of younger trees that provide minimal cooling. “The streets feel like ovens,” said Kamran Khan, a G-6 resident. “The sun burns from above, and the heat radiates from below. There’s no escape.” Islamabad urgently needs thousands of new trees—especially in rapidly urbanizing sectors like G-13, G-14, the H-sectors, and Bhara Kahu. But not just any trees—the city needs native, climate-resilient species that provide real shade and cooling benefits. “Trees are no longer a luxury—they’re a necessity,” said Noreen, a resident of G-7. “If we want to survive these summers, we need shade, not just more concrete.” One major misstep has been the widespread planting of safeda (eucalyptus) trees. Though they grow quickly, these trees are now criticized for consuming vast amounts of groundwater, providing little shade, and leaving the ground warmer. “It might grow fast, but it gives back very little,” wrote one concerned citizen on Facebook. “We need trees that help the environment, not just fill space.” Environmental expert Nasir Ali Panhwar warns of worsening urban heat island effects in fast-growing cities like Islamabad. He stresses the importance of nature-based solutions, including extensive tree plantation and green infrastructure like green roofs and vertical gardens. “These not only cool urban areas but also restore biodiversity and improve air quality,” he explained. The climate threat is growing, compounded by rapid urbanization and unchecked population growth. According to Global Forest Watch, Pakistan lost 5.35 thousand hectares of tree cover to fires and 4.19 thousand hectares to other causes between 2001 and 2024. Alarmingly, in just one week, from June 8 to June 15, 2025, 2,587 fire alerts were recorded across the country. This marks a steep rise compared to previous years. Under the leadership of Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa, the Capital Development Authority (CDA) has launched an ambitious tree-planting campaign, aiming to plant one million trees during the Spring and Monsoon seasons of 2025. But experts caution that planting alone isn’t enough, it’s about planting the right trees in the right places. Naseer Memon, a leading voice on climate change and urban planning, paints a grim picture: “Our cities are fast becoming mini-hells. Green belts are disappearing, replaced by unchecked infrastructure. Vehicular emissions and overuse of air conditioning are creating hot islands across urban Pakistan.” Memon calls for aggressive social forestry measures, enforced by building control agencies. “Every new structure should be mandated to plant and nurture trees until they reach maturity,” he said. “Cosmetic plantation drives won’t solve the problem. Trees are a nature-based solution to improving microclimates in cities exposed to severe and frequent heatwaves.” When Islamabad was established in the late 1960s, it was planned as a green city surrounded by forests, with nearly two-thirds of its land covered by trees. Over the decades, rapid urban growth and development have reduced this tree cover dramatically. Today, less than one-third of the city’s original forest area remains, making the loss of greenery a visible and urgent challenge for the capital’s climate and livability. As Islamabad continues to expand, experts and residents alike are calling for smarter urban forestry strategies. Planting native, climate-adapted trees is not just about comfort, it’s about survival, in the face of escalating climate change and global warming.—DNA

Botanical Garden set to revolutionize research

ISLAMABAD: Vice Chancellor of Muhammad Nawaz Sharif University of Agriculture, Multan Sunday remarked that the Botanical Garden would play a crucial role as a center for research, education, and community outreach, aimed at raising awareness about the impact of human activities on the environment. While speaking to PTV, the Vice Chancellor of MNS-UAM elaborated on the significance of the newly inaugurated Botanical Garden, emphasizing its role as a transformative initiative for the university and the wider community. He explained that the garden is designed to serve as a multidisciplinary hub for research, education, and hands-on learning. “The Botanical Garden is more than just a collection of plants,” said the Vice Chancellor. “It is a living laboratory where our students, researchers and even the local community can explore the complexities of sustainable agriculture, environmental conservation and biodiversity, he said.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Labourers sit with their handcarts, waiting for customers to hire them for shifting grocery items at the weekly bazaar in H-9 Sector.

IFA destroys over 1,000 kg substandard ketchup, seals unit

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Food Authority (IFA) has conducted an operation at ketchup production unit located on Lehrtar Road and over 1,000 kilograms of substandard ketchup was destroyed after discovering expired ingredients, safety violations, and unhygienic conditions. Talking to APP, Deputy Director Operations of IFA, Dr Tahira Siddique said that the factory, located in the Tarlai area of Islamabad, was raided by the food authority teams following repeated warnings and non-compliance with food safety regulations. She said that the unit was storing pulp at room temperature without following proper storage standards. The inspection team also found several expired food items on the premises. Dr. Tahira Siddique said the ketchup was being produced using low-quality materials. During the inspection, the team could not find any certification for the chemicals used in the production of various food items. She further revealed that the workers at the unit were not wearing uniforms and had ignored standard safety procedures. The factory floor was found in an unsanitary condition. Standing water was observed, and food products were stored directly on the floor, violating hygiene rules. During the operation, 150 kilograms of expired pulp and 10 kilograms of trisodium citrate were confiscated and destroyed. A total of 1,000 kilograms of substandard ketchup was also disposed of. The food authority officials confirmed that the factory was sealed to prevent further production and distribution of unsafe food products. The action was part of IFA’s ongoing efforts to monitor food safety standards in the federal capital and ensure compliance from local manufacturers. Authorities have warned other factories and food units to follow proper regulations or face similar action.—APP

Grand search, combing operation conducted in Bani Gala area

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police on Sunday conducted a grand search and combing operation in various areas falling under the jurisdiction of Bani Gala Police Station, Rural Zone. An official told that the operation was carried out under the supervision of SP Rural Zone and aimed at curbing criminal activities in the area. He said female police personnel also participated in the operation, while police teams were briefed beforehand about the objectives and strategy. He said a total of 75 households and 53 individuals were checked during the operation, while 43 motorcycles and 07 vehicles were also inspected. He said the operation was part of a broader strategy to eliminate crime from the region. He said the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi had issued special instructions to conduct grand search operations across the district to ensure the safety of citizens. He urged the public to cooperate with police during security checks and report any suspicious activity. “The safety of the public is our top priority,” he added.—APP

Arrest warrants issued for ICT DC over missed court orders

ISLAMABAD: A legal dispute involving the freezing of properties of Banking Society has taken a new turn after a court issued arrest warrants for the Islamabad Deputy Commissioner (DC) Irfan Nawaz Memon. The warrants were reportedly issued after a revenue officer failed to appear in court despite being informed of a previous order concerning property seizures linked to a banking society case. According to details, the court issued arrest warrants for the Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Islamabad after directions regarding property freezing in a 2024 case were not implemented in full. The issue dates back to September 30, 2024, when a court ordered the freezing of properties connected to the Bankers Society. These properties were located in Islamabad, Rawalpindi, and Haripur. On March 26, 2025, the court directed the Deputy Commissioners of the three districts to act as receivers of the identified properties. The formal orders were sent to the DCs of Islamabad, Rawalpindi, and Haripur, giving them the legal authority to take control of the assets in their respective jurisdictions. However, sources said that during a court hearing held in June, the revenue officer responsible for handling the Islamabad part of the case did not appear, reportedly due to illness. The court was officially informed about the officer’s health condition and his inability to attend the proceedings. Despite the explanation, the court responded by issuing arrest warrants for the DC Islamabad, holding the office accountable for the revenue officer’s absence. The sources further explained that in revenue-related matters, the DC Islamabad holds the same administrative rank as the Commissioners of Rawalpindi and Hazara divisions. In Rawalpindi and Haripur, the court’s orders were directly addressed to the respective DCs, while in Islamabad, the instructions were received by the Commissioner Revenue. Sources added that just like the DCs in the other districts, in Islamabad the responsibility for implementing such orders rests with the concerned Collector Revenue, not necessarily the DC himself. In the next hearing, a Naib Tehsildar (sub-divisional revenue officer) is expected to submit a report to the court, providing an update on the implementation status of the property freezing directive and any progress made in assigning control to government officials. The court’s decision to escalate the matter to issuing warrants signals the seriousness of the delay in implementing the order. Further action is expected after the court reviews the Naib Tehsildar’s report in the upcoming hearing. —DNA

FGEHA’s auction garners overwhelming response

ISLAMABAD: Federal Government Employees Housing Authority’s (FGEHA) two-day grand auction of commercial plots in Sectors G-13 and G-14 drew an overwhelming response in Islamabad, with the event taking place in at Hotel ‘Aura Grande’, Sector E-11. A great number of Investors, developers and business entities were in attendance to seize this rare opportunity to invest in prime commercial locations. This exceptional auction was a golden investment. The commercial plots offered in this auction included four commercial in Bazaar No.5, Sector G-13/3, Two Commercial plots in Bazaar No.6, G-13/3, Five commercial plots in Bazaar No.1, Sector G-14/3, Five commercial plots in Bazaar No.1, G-14/2, Seven commercial plots in G-14 Markaz, One mixed-use apartment plot in Sector G-13/4. A total of seven valuable commercial plots were sold out over the two days of auction, generating a collective revenue of over PKR 3.5 billion. This auction set an example as a significant milestone in the history of the FGEHA. In an exclusive interview with APP, Assistant Director of revenue wing in FGEHA Syed Muhammad Israr said that the total land of commercial plots in Sectors G-13, G-14 offered in this auction was 14,632 square yards. Commercial plots of three categories including Class-III commercial plots in G-13, G-14, mixed-used commercial plots and G-14 Markaz commercial plots were presented for auction over the two days. He shared that Class-III commercial plots were popular among the other categories and investors were more interested in buying plots of this category which is why six Class-III commercial plots were sold out while one G-14 Markaz commercial plot was sold out in two days. Muhammad Israr informed that total 27 brochures were sold out and 19 tokens were issued during the two-day auction. He expressed satisfaction over the overwhelming response by the investors and said that invest have shown trust on FGEHA. He further shared that the revenue generated through this auction would be spend in the developments projects and maintenance of these two sectors.—DNA

Benazir Hunarmand Program Where empowerment begins and dependency ends

ISLAMABAD: For over a decade, the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) has served as Pakistan’s largest social protection intervention, offering crucial relief to families living below the poverty line. Established as a legacy of Shaheed Mohatma Benazir Bhutto, BISP was envisioned as a pro-poor, people-first model designed to provide dignity and support during economic hardship. With a portfolio that includes Benazir Kafalat, Benazir Taleemi Wazaif, Benazir Undergraduate Scholarships, Benazir Nashonuma, etc., the programme addresses multiple dimensions of deprivation. But now, BISP has embarked on a transformational shift—moving from support to self-reliance with the launch of the Benazir Hunarmand Programme (BHP). The initiative was launched on June 21, on the occasion of Shaheed Mohatma Benazir Bhutto’ birth anniversary, as a structured skills development programme focused on building the capacity of its beneficiaries through market-relevant, competency-based training. The goal is to equip families of BISP beneficiaries with the practical skills they need to secure sustainable livelihoods. “BISP is no longer just about financial support. With the Benazir Hunarmand Programme, we are enabling people to stand on their own feet with dignity and direction,” Senator Rubina Khalid, Chairperson BISP said. She emphasized BISP’s deep commitment to the long-term uplift of its beneficiaries, saying: “We are not only helping ease their lives but also working to enhance their livelihoods and increase their income. We understand that acquiring valuable skills leads to better opportunities and higher incomes. What sets us apart is our focus on not just offering training, but ensuring that the trained youth are fully equipped and employable in the job market.—DNA

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Briefs

Textile
bodies seek
urgent action
on proposals

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Hosiery Manufacturers & Exporters Association (PHMA) and the Pakistan Readymade Garments Manufacturers & Exporters Association (PRGMEA) have jointly urged the government to consider and implement the textile industry's key budget proposals through the FBR's Budget Anomaly Committee.

The demand came during a post-budget joint meeting of both associations, which was attended by PHMA Chairman Abdul Hameed, PHMA former chairmen Naseer Butt and Shehzad Azam Khan, PRGMEA Chairman Dr. Ayyazuddin, and PRGMEA former chairmen Ijaz Khokhar and Sohail Afzal Sheikh. It was clarified that these are proposals from the textile export sector currently being submitted to the committee for review. The participants stressed that the government must not only examine these industry recommendations through the Anomaly Committee process but also implement the committee's final report once compiled.

While addressing the meeting, PHMA Chairman Abdul Hameed pointed out that Pakistan's value-added textile, apparel, bedwear, home textile, and towel sectors contribute over \$11 billion in annual exports and provide livelihoods to millions. He expressed concern over the replacement of the simplified Final Tax Regime (FTR) with the more complex Normal Tax Regime (NTR), which now subjects exporters to both a 1% minimum tax and a 1% advance tax on export proceeds—regardless of actual profit. PHMA former chairman Naseer Butt, while speaking at the meeting, said that this dual taxation is counterproductive for an already distressed export sector. He warned that many SMEs are operating on thin margins and may be forced to close down if this policy is not reversed immediately.—APP

'Pakistan
strengthening
friendly
relations
worldwide'

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Board of Investment, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh, remarked on Sunday that Pakistan is focused on building stronger international relations, stressing that China is Pakistan's time-tested and devoted ally, with a connection as profound and everlasting as the oceans, and it will only become more resilient in the years ahead. Talking to a local news channel, Federal Minister for Board of Investment, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh expressed that Pakistan's friendship with China is deeply rooted in mutual trust and respect. He emphasized that the bond between the two nations has stood the test of time, built on shared interests, economic cooperation and strong diplomatic ties.

He highlighted that this friendship is not only significant at a governmental level but also resonates with the people of both countries, fostering a sense of unity and collaboration.—APP

Gwadar team visits Zhengzhou to explore agri sector coop

Their first stop was the Zhengzhou Garden Expo's state-of-the-art tissue culture laboratory and nursery base, where they gained firsthand experience of China's advanced plant propagation techniques and nursery management systems

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A 10-member high-level agricultural delegation from Gwadar concluded a five-day productive visit to Zhengzhou, China's Henan Province from June 16-20, marking a step forward in enhancing Pakistan-China cooperation in agriculture, education and ecological development.

The delegation, comprising agricultural experts and enterprise representatives, engaged in extensive knowledge-sharing and explored numerous collabora-

tion opportunities during their packed itinerary, Gwadar Pro reported on Sunday. Their first stop was the Zhengzhou Garden Expo's state-of-the-art tissue culture laboratory and nursery base, where they gained firsthand experience of China's advanced plant propagation techniques and nursery management systems. Educational cooperation formed another key focus area, with visits to primary and secondary schools in Zhengzhou Airport Economy Zone to discuss potential student and faculty exchanges. The delegation showed

particular interest in China's successful model of integrating ecological farming concepts into school curricula. At the Henan Academy of Sciences, the delegation held detailed technical discussions with researchers at the Laser Manufacturing Research Institute about potential applications of laser technology on Gwadar's agricultural sector. A subsequent visit to Zhongmu County's garlic planting base provided valuable insights into high-yield cultivation methods and post-harvest processing techniques that could be repli-

cated in Gwadar.

A major milestone was achieved at Henan Agricultural University with the signing of a landmark Sino-Pak Scientific and Technological Cooperation Agreement focusing on the introduction and comprehensive utilization of Paulownia and other plants. The agreement paves the way for joint research initiatives and technology transfer between the two sides. The visit also included cultural components, with the delegation experiencing China's rich heritage at the world-famous Shaolin Temple. Business net-

working opportunities were explored during the meeting with Yulin Holding, where potential investment projects were discussed. Experts believe such exchanges under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) framework will significantly contribute to Gwadar's development as an agricultural hub and enhance food security in the region.

Owais Mir, a member of the delegation, expressed optimism about implementing the knowledge gained during this visit to boost Gwadar's agricultural productivity and exports.



KHANPUR: A stunning view of the Mosque along the Taxila Rawalpindi Road in City.

Chinese company to
train Pakistani scientists

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Beijing Genomics Institute (BGI) is set to establish structured collaboration frameworks aimed at promoting training programs for young scientists and researchers from Pakistan.

The Institute has also expressed its commitment to providing technological support to improve health infrastructure and diagnostics, Gwadar Pro reported

on Saturday.

During his visit to BGI's headquarters in Shenzhen, China, Qaiser Nawab, Chairman of the Belt and Road Initiative for Sustainable Development (BRISD), explored opportunities for cooperation in health, biotechnology, and scientific capacity building between the two countries.

During the visit, Nawab was warmly received by Mao Zhixia, Senior Official at BGI and head of South Asia affairs. Mao provided a compre-

hensive overview of BGI's evolution—from its modest beginnings to becoming the world's largest genomics research institution.

He highlighted BGI's groundbreaking work in gene sequencing, health diagnostics, precision medicine, and pandemic response. Both sides held in-depth discussions on the future of global health innovation and expressed strong interest in forging closer partnerships.

Nawab emphasized BRISD's commitment to

inclusive and sustainable development through science and technology, particularly by empowering young scientists in the Global South.

The meeting concluded with mutual interest in establishing formal cooperation frameworks to support training initiatives for young researchers from Pakistan and other BRI countries, as well as in extending technological assistance to enhance health systems in developing regions.

Munir–Trump
engagement
redefines relations

ISLAMABAD: President of Pakistan Business Network Omar Butt said on Saturday that the recent meeting between Field Marshal Asim Munir and US President Donald Trump has had a profoundly positive impact on Pakistan and the broader South Asian region.

He stated that the meeting, which has garnered attention from key international observers, is being viewed as a significant step toward revitalizing Pakistan-US relations and opening new avenues for regional stability and cooperation. Omar Butt, speaking to the business community, underscored the critical timing of this meeting. It came at a time when Pakistan and its neighbouring countries are grappling with serious challenges, including economic pressures, security threats, and geopolitical tensions, making the meeting all the more significant. Field Marshal Asim Munir, with his balanced and visionary leadership, transformed what could have been a ceremonial exchange into a strategic diplomatic development. His effective conveyance of Pakistan's position on peace, progress, and sovereignty elicited a notably positive response from the US President, instilling hope for future cooperation. During the interaction, a range of essential topics were discussed, including trade agreements, counter-terrorism strategies, the situation in Afghanistan, and collaboration in the fields of energy and infrastructure. Both leaders agreed that fostering economic partnerships and building trust is essential for long-term peace and stability in the region. In this context, Pakistan's role was acknowledged as central and constructive. Omar Butt emphasized that the implications of this meeting extend far beyond diplomatic symbolism. On the one hand, it strengthens Pakistan's narrative on the global stage. At the same time, it prompts a re-evaluation within American political circles of how they perceive and engage with Pakistan. There is growing recognition of Pakistan's strategic relevance and the maturity of its leadership under Field Marshal Munir. He further noted that Asim Munir's strategic acumen and increasingly proactive diplomatic posture are being widely appreciated both within the country and internationally. These developments present Pakistan as a responsible, reliable, and effective player in the international system. The message emerging from this engagement is clear that Pakistan is not isolated. Instead, it is eager to build partnerships based on mutual respect and shared interests.

Omar Butt stated that this meeting is likely to yield several long-term benefits. It not only enhances Pakistan's credibility but also sets the stage for constructive bilateral engagements in the future. Field Marshal Asim Munir's commitment to national defense, regional peace, and inclusive development continues to elevate Pakistan's influence globally, positioning the country as a forward-looking and engaged state in a rapidly changing world. He emphasized that such high-level diplomatic engagements are crucial for restoring investor confidence and enhancing Pakistan's economic outlook. This meeting can pave the way for renewed foreign investment, enhanced trade opportunities, and stronger institutional ties between the two nations.—DNA

Twin cities savor sweetness
as mangoes take center stage

ISLAMABAD: The twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi revelled in the sweet bliss of mangoes, aptly hailed as the "King of Fruits," as the juicy delights brought joy to residents of all ages. In local markets, vibrant displays of mangoes greet shoppers, with vendors showcasing everything from the renowned Chaunsa, Sindhri, and Anwar Ratol to the prized Langra, Fajli, and Dusehri, every popular variety is readily available. Mango enthusiasts can relish the sweetness of Chaunsa, the tanginess of Sindhri, or explore other unique flavors, making the twin cities a haven for mango connoisseurs. Sara Ali, a mango enthusiast from Islamabad said "Mangoes are a summertime staple for us as there's nothing like biting into a ripe, juicy Chaunsa on a hot summer day." She commented that Mangoes are more than just a fruit and they are a part of our culture adding that every one look forward to the season all year round. For many residents, mangoes evoke memories of childhood summers spent savoring the fruit under the shade of trees. The variety of mangoes available has also sparked a sense of adventure among consumers. A resident of Rawalpindi said "I love trying different types of mangoes as last week, I had Sindhri, and this week, I am trying Anwar Ratol. Each variety has its own unique taste."

Mangoes are her favorite summer treat and she love trying different varieties and the vendor's mangoes are always fresh, and the prices are reasonable, she told. "I am stocking up on mangoes for the week. They're perfect for snacking, smoothies, or desserts," she commented. As people enjoy the mango season, vendors are working hard to meet the demand. Muhammad Ali, a fruit vendor in Islamabad's F-6 market shared that "We are importing mangoes from the best orchards in Sindh and Punjab to ensure top quality and flavor.—DNA

SSP Usman
reviews heinous
crime cases,
vows swift
justice

ISLAMABAD: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Investigation Islamabad, Muhammad Usman Tariq Butt chaired a meeting on Sunday to review the progress of investigations into robberies and other serious crimes. An official told APP that the meeting was attended by investigating officers, focused on ensuring effective investigations to secure convictions and deliver justice to citizens.

During the meeting, SSP Usman emphasized that thorough investigations play a vital role in ensuring criminals receive appropriate punishments while safeguarding citizens' rights. SSP Usman urged officers to complement traditional investigation methods with advanced technologies to enhance policing standards.

The SSP Usman reviewed ongoing cases of heinous crimes and issued directives to improve the quality of investigations. Additionally, underperforming officers faced penalties, while those demonstrating exemplary performance were rewarded with commendation certificates and cash prizes. SSP Usman instructed officers to conclude pending cases on merit and submit strong, evidence-based challans to the relevant courts. He stressed the importance of obtaining maximum convictions for offenders to effectively deter crime.—APP

Pakistan's
truth-centered
narrative
gaining global
support

ISLAMABAD: PPP Senator Rubina Qaim Khani Sunday commended Chairman Bilawal Bhutto for his diplomatic efforts to unveil India's agenda, stressing that the Modi government has failed to back its negative propaganda, and Pakistan's truth-centered narrative is receiving increasing global support, debunking India's unfounded claims.

While in a fresh conversation with a local news channel, PPP Senator Qaim Khani highlighted the significant diplomatic efforts of Chairman Bilawal Bhutto, stating that his tireless work, along with the diplomatic delegates under his leadership, has been crucial in exposing India's false narrative and reshaping global perceptions.

She emphasized that the team's coordinated efforts have successfully countered India's baseless allegations and showcased Pakistan's commitment to truth and justice on the international stage.

She further admired the historic visit of the Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir to America, stating that it marks a significant moment in strengthening Pakistan's diplomatic ties.—APP

Secretary
acknowledges
pilgrims'
cooperation

ISLAMABAD: Secretary for Religious Affairs, Dr. Syed Ata ur Rehman, Sunday expressed gratitude to Pakistani pilgrims for their successful Hajj this year, acknowledging their adherence to Saudi regulations and reaffirmed the government's dedication to enhancing the Hajj process through early preparations, stricter selection criteria and improved coordination among all involved parties.

In a recent radio program, he recognized the efforts of the welfare staff in Makkah during Hajj, highlighting their dedication and hard work.

He also emphasized the crucial need for timely training and clear instructions for 'Nazimeen' (group leaders) to ensure they are fully equipped and prepared to assist and guide pilgrims effectively throughout the journey. Dr. Ata ur Rehman also revealed that the government will implement more thorough and specialized selection processes for welfare and health staff in the future. He pointed out that support staff should be fully knowledgeable about Mina's geography and future assessments will incorporate this criterion to boost the quality of assistance provided to pilgrims.—APP

ICCI stresses globally
accredited training

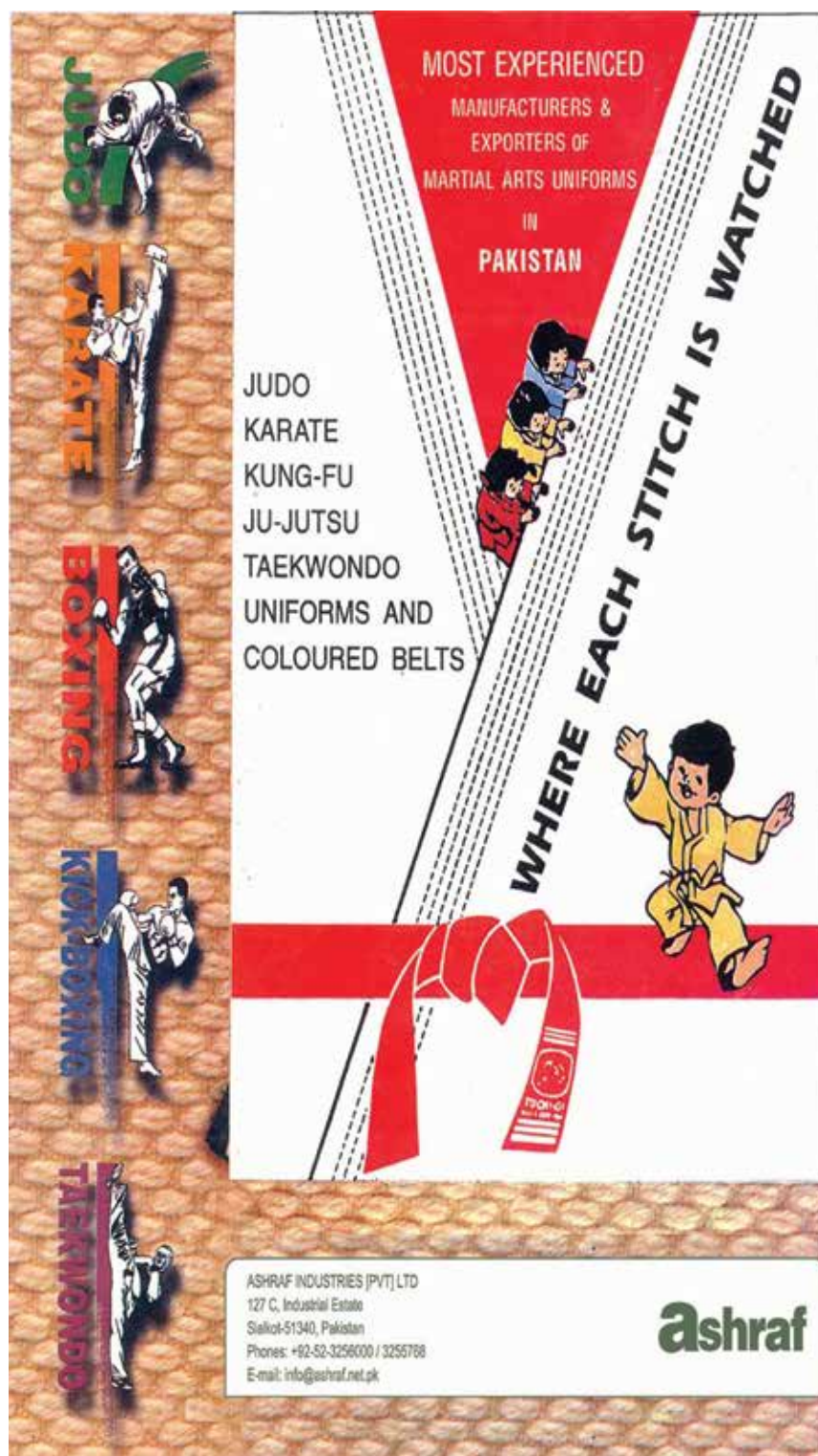
DNA

ISLAMABAD: Nasir Mansoor Qureshi, President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), has emphasised the urgent need for globally accredited vocational and technical training programs to enhance Pakistan's skilled workforce to increase its demand in international markets. Talking to a delegation of visiting business leaders at the Chamber House on Saturday, Nasir Mansoor Qureshi underlined the importance of aligning all vo-

national and technical training initiatives across the country with international standards. He said this alignment is vital for enhancing the global employability of Pakistan's youth and unlocking new avenues for foreign remittances. He noted that by ensuring internationally recognized quality in training institutions, Pakistan can open up greater overseas opportunities for its young population, thereby contributing significantly to the national economy through an increase in foreign exchange inflows. The ICCI President appreciated the

efforts of the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) and the Prime Minister's initiative to bring all public sector training programs under a unified regulatory framework. He welcomed the move to standardize curricula as a meaningful step toward producing a competitive and competent workforce. Highlighting the importance of a skilled youth population for the country's economic progress, Qureshi said, "A fully trained and internationally competitive workforce can not only uplift our economic indicators but also place

Pakistan firmly on the road to sustainable development." He further stated that ICCI is fully committed to playing its part in this national goal. "We aim to promote entrepreneurship and support startups by strengthening collaboration with academic institutions, fostering innovation, and preparing youth to meet global market demands," he added. The ICCI President reiterated that empowering youth with internationally accepted skills is a critical investment for ensuring long-term economic resilience and prosperity for Pakistan.



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Pakistan's diplomatic efforts overshadowed by global conflicts

THE recent diplomatic tour by Pakistan's delegation, led by former Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, across Europe and America was aimed at presenting Pakistan's stance on regional tensions, particularly highlighting what it terms as Indian aggression. The delegation claims success in convincing the international community of its viewpoint, yet the timing of the visit—coinciding with the escalating Israel-Iran conflict—meant that global attention remained largely diverted. While Pakistan sought to spotlight Kashmir and bilateral disputes with India, the world's focus was elsewhere, raising questions about the effectiveness of such diplomatic missions in an increasingly distracted geopolitical landscape. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's assertion that Pakistan effectively "unmasked" India's actions may resonate domestically, but the reality is that such high-profile tours often yield limited tangible outcomes. India, too, has been actively engaging with foreign capitals, countering Pakistan's narrative. This back-and-forth diplomacy, while necessary for both nations to present their cases, ultimately does little to resolve the core issues. The Kashmir dispute, cross-border tensions, and historical mistrust cannot be settled in international forums alone—they require direct, sustained dialogue between Islamabad and New Delhi. The overshadowing of Pakistan's diplomatic efforts by the Israel-Iran conflict underscores a harsh truth: in a world preoccupied with multiple crises, the South Asian rivalry is no longer a top priority for global powers. The West remains more concerned with Middle Eastern instability, the Ukraine war, and great-power competition than with mediating between India and Pakistan. This is not to say that Pakistan's concerns are insignificant, but rather that the international community's bandwidth for South Asia's disputes is limited unless they escalate into a full-blown crisis. Moreover, the parallel diplomatic campaigns by India and Pakistan risk becoming exercises in futility. No amount of lobbying in foreign capitals can substitute for bilateral engagement. History has shown that breakthroughs in Indo-Pak relations—however fleeting—have come through direct talks, not through third-party interventions. The Shimla Agreement, the Lahore Declaration, and even the short-lived ceasefire of 2021 were the result of back-channel and Track-II diplomacy, not international pressure. Pakistan and India must recognize that while presenting their cases globally has symbolic value, the real solution lies in sustained dialogue. The world may offer rhetorical support or occasional mediation, but the responsibility to mend ties rests solely on the two nations. The Kashmir issue, terrorism concerns, and trade disputes will remain unresolved unless both sides move beyond point-scoring diplomacy and engage in substantive negotiations.



The transformative potential of Uzbekistan-Pakistan rail links

THE recent commitment by Pakistan and Uzbekistan to enhance connectivity through rail links via Afghanistan marks a significant step toward regional economic integration. Such infrastructure projects have the potential to unlock vast trade opportunities, spur economic growth, and foster deeper people-to-people ties between Central and South Asia. With both nations already taking concrete steps—such as initiating direct flights—the proposed rail corridor could be a game-changer, transforming not just bilateral relations but also the broader regional economic landscape. Central Asia, rich in natural resources and energy, has long sought efficient trade routes to access global markets. Pakistan, with its strategic location and Gwadar Port, offers a viable gateway. A rail link connecting Uzbekistan to Pakistan through Afghanistan would drastically reduce transportation costs and time, making regional trade more competitive. Uzbekistan exports cotton, textiles, and minerals, while Pakistan can supply agricultural goods, pharmaceuticals, and manufactured products. Enhanced connectivity would allow both nations to diversify their trade portfolios and integrate into larger supply chains, benefiting industries on both sides. Moreover, this rail link would complement the existing China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), extending its reach into Central Asia. By linking Tashkent to Karachi via Peshawar, the corridor could become a vital artery for Eurasian trade, attracting investment and boosting economic activity across the region. Beyond commerce, improved rail connectivity would facilitate cultural and educational exchanges. Central Asia and Pakistan share deep historical and civilizational ties, from the Silk Road to the spread of Islamic scholarship. Easier travel would encourage tourism, academic collaboration, and cultural interactions, fostering mutual understanding. Pilgrims, students, and entrepreneurs would benefit from seamless movement, helping to build lasting relationships beyond government-level engagements. The biggest obstacle to this vision remains Afghanistan's stability. Security concerns and political uncertainties have long hindered transnational infrastructure projects. However, with the Taliban expressing support for regional connectivity, there is cautious optimism. Both Pakistan and Uzbekistan must engage with Afghan authorities to ensure the safe and efficient operation of the rail link. Additionally, international backing—particularly from China and Russia, which have vested interests in Eurasian connectivity—could provide the necessary impetus. The recent introduction of direct flights between Tashkent and Islamabad demonstrates both nations' seriousness in deepening ties. The next logical step is to translate this commitment into tangible rail infrastructure. Multilateral platforms like the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) should be leveraged to garner broader support.

Pakistan's Diplomatic Gambit: A nobel bid for Donald Trump

Qamar Bashir



Despite these criticisms, Trump's ability to stall a potential war between India and Pakistan gives him a strong talking point in the context of Nobel nominations. It adds weight to his self-characterization as a statesman who, even if unconventional, gets results. Whether the Nobel Committee shares that view is far from certain. Historically, the committee has favored leaders whose efforts culminate in formal agreements, institutional reforms, or significant steps toward disarmament—criteria that Trump has yet to meet fully. There is, of course, a deeply political dimension to Pakistan's nomination

PAKISTAN has announced its decision to nominate former U.S. President Donald Trump for the 2026 Nobel Peace Prize, citing his critical role in brokering a ceasefire between India and Pakistan during their recent four-day conflict. According to Islamabad, Trump's diplomatic intervention prevented what could have been a devastating war between two nuclear-armed nations, whose combined population nears 1.7 billion people. The risk of escalation was not merely regional—it threatened global catastrophe. A full-blown nuclear exchange between India and Pakistan would have killed millions instantly, left countless more suffering from radiation poisoning, and potentially polluted vast areas of the planet with radioactive fallout. In the eyes of Pakistani leadership, the ceasefire was not a result of bilateral understanding alone, but rather the outcome of behind-the-scenes pressure from Washington, led by Trump himself. His influence, they argue, tipped the strategic balance in Pakistan's favor. The fact that India has not made a similar nomination, nor endorsed Pakistan's proposal, suggests New Delhi may have been compelled by external pressure to agree to de-escalation—an arm-twisting it now hesitates to acknowledge. Pakistan, by contrast, sees Trump's role as decisive, crediting him for giving diplomacy a chance and stabilizing one of the world's most volatile flashpoints. For Trump, this marks yet another moment where he seeks to define himself as a peacemaker. Since returning to office, he has claimed involvement in a range of peace efforts, including attempting to defuse tensions between Russia and Ukraine, proposing controversial solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and more recently, trying to mediate between Israel and Iran as hostilities in the Middle East escalate. In each of these cases, Trump has framed himself as a man of peace rather than war, a statesman who prefers deals over destruction. However, the Nobel Peace Prize is governed by very specific criteria outlined in Alfred Nobel's will. The prize is intended for those who have, in the preceding year, contributed most to fostering fraternity between nations, advancing disarmament or the abolition of standing armies, or organizing peace congresses. While Pakistan's government is qualified to make the nomination, the question remains whether Trump's actions align sufficiently with these core requirements. Trump's role in halting the India-Pakistan conflict

may well qualify under the category of fostering fraternity between nations, at least in the narrow sense of preventing immediate escalation. However, critics argue that his interventions tend to be tactical rather than structural. The ceasefire, while significant, did not involve formal peace talks, demilitarization, or the establishment of long-term conflict-resolution mechanisms. It was a pause in hostilities, not a transformation of the underlying tensions. Similarly, his other diplomatic efforts have often lacked follow-through, institutions, or treaties that would make peace durable. Still, Trump's posture as a peacemaker has found fresh ground in the Middle East. As the war between Israel and Iran escalated in June 2025, Trump initiated a series of back-channel efforts to contain the conflict. He publicly called for calm, pressured both sides to explore negotiation, and sought Turkish mediation to open discreet dialogue with Iranian officials. Though Tehran initially refused to participate unless Israel halted its bombing campaign, Trump remained hopeful that diplomacy could still win the day. At the G7 summit, he reiterated his plea for restraint, urging both parties to "make a deal" and avoid dragging the region into a full-scale war.

Unlike many past U.S. presidents, Trump has taken a nuanced stance on NATO, pushing European allies to shoulder more financial responsibility. His reduced emphasis on U.S. military interventionism is consistent with his larger strategy of avoiding entanglements while leveraging diplomatic pressure. Whether this is pragmatism or isolationism is open to debate, but Pakistan clearly sees in Trump a leader who intervenes only when strategic interests and peace align. Yet Trump's foreign policy record is fraught with contradictions. While positioning himself as a man of peace in one region, he has actively emboldened militarism and expansionism in others. His unwavering support for Israel, despite the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza and the West Bank, has been widely condemned. His administration's backing of Israeli military operations—framed by many as acts of genocide against Palestinians—has undermined his peace credentials. Furthermore, his support for Israel's continued assault on Iran and refusal to condemn aggressive preemptive strikes has placed the United States squarely on one side of an increasingly dangerous regional war. Beyond the Middle East, Trump's assertions to

annex Canada as the 51st state, his plan to re-brand the Gulf of Mexico under American identity, his proposal to take over Greenland from Denmark, and his ambitions to militarize and control the Panama Canal and adjacent lake regions signal an aggressive geopolitical posture. These positions paint him not as a global peacemaker but as an opportunistic expansionist, eager to rewrite borders and extend American dominance through threats, deals, or force. Despite these criticisms, Trump's ability to stall a potential war between India and Pakistan gives him a strong talking point in the context of Nobel nominations. It adds weight to his self-characterization as a statesman who, even if unconventional, gets results. Whether the Nobel Committee shares that view is far from certain. Historically, the committee has favored leaders whose efforts culminate in formal agreements, institutional reforms, or significant steps toward disarmament—criteria that Trump has yet to meet fully. There is, of course, a deeply political dimension to Pakistan's nomination. By recognizing Trump in this way, Islamabad gains soft power leverage and potentially earns goodwill from one of the most powerful and polarizing leaders on the global stage. In contrast, India—smarting from what many see as a military setback—has remained diplomatically muted. Its reluctance to echo Pakistan's praise of Trump may be born out of resentment or embarrassment. By moving first, Pakistan has repositioned itself as a diplomatic ally to the United States under Trump's leadership, while casting India in a defensive, unresponsive role.

In conclusion, Pakistan's nomination of Donald Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize is both a diplomatic strategy and a symbolic gesture. It serves to highlight Trump's influence in regional stability and underscores Pakistan's gratitude for averting a disastrous conflict. While the nomination is procedurally sound, whether it gains traction with the Nobel Committee depends on how they interpret Trump's peace initiatives. If short-term conflict prevention is deemed sufficient, Trump could emerge as a serious contender. If the bar remains high—demanding enduring peace through institutions, disarmament, and treaties—then his efforts may fall short. Regardless of the outcome, the move places Pakistan on Trump's radar and subtly shifts the narrative of South Asia's security calculus in Islamabad's favor.

Nominating the wrong man at the worst time

Abdul Waheed Waheed

Trump remains a polarizing figure internationally, with a legacy in South Asia deeply entangled in transactional diplomacy and broken promises. To nominate him now, in the wake of the Israel-Gaza atrocities, escalating U.S.-Iran tensions, and Trump's own mounting legal and political controversies, is not just bad diplomacy; it is disastrously timed, further isolating Pakistan from both moral credibility and regional relevance

POLITICS may often be transactional, strategic, and cold. It calculates in currencies of power and speaks in the sterile language of interests. But our perception, what we remember, what we judge, is rooted in conscience. It lives in the moral weight of human suffering. It hears the screams buried beneath rubble, sees the broken bodies of children, and refuses to forget what politics wants us to ignore. We may not control the strategies of states or the closed-door deals of empires, but we reserve the right to judge. To name violence when it is masked as diplomacy. To expose cruelty when it is celebrated as strength. And we reserve the right to speak when justice is mocked by those who claim its name. To propose the nomination of Donald Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize is not just a moral error, it is an obscene betrayal. It is to reduce a once-sacred recognition of peace into a transactional prize for brute power. Trump is not a man of silence or neutrality. He did not merely look away from Israel's mass slaughter of civilians in Gaza, but actively endorsed it. He justified the bombings of hospitals, apartment blocks, and refugee camps. He offered Israel unconditional support, regardless of the death toll. Under his leadership, U.S. military aid surged, UN ceasefire resolutions were vetoed, and American

power was used to shield and enable a campaign that many now recognize as genocide. On Iran, Trump crossed every red line of diplomacy. His language was not the rhetoric of de-escalation or negotiation. It was the rhetoric of annihilation. He openly threatened the Iranian people, called for the evacuation of Tehran, and urged regime surrender under the looming shadow of destruction. These are not the acts of a peacemaker. They are the brutal footprints of a global warmonger, someone who normalized ethnic cleansing, empowered occupation, and weaponized fear. And now, the world has seen Trump's direct hand in war. Under his presidency, the United States has launched full-scale military strikes on Iran, bombing nuclear facilities at Fordow, Natanz, and Isfahan. Trump confirmed the operations himself, calling them a "success," and bringing the United States into open participation in the Iran-Israel war. This is formal, declared war with rising civilian and military casualties on both sides, and the region inching toward collapse. Pakistan's decision to propose Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize was not only diplomatically immature but deeply discrediting. At a moment when the Muslim world watches Gaza's children buried under rubble and Iranian cities under

siege and strikes, Islamabad chose low level of over principle. There were other, wiser paths, economic engagement, regional diplomacy, strategic restraint, but instead it chose to applaud the very hand that fuels war and chaos.

To nominate Trump is to mock the suffering of Gaza's children, to legitimize the destruction of Palestinian lives and homes, to silence the agony of displaced families, and to erase the moral boundary that once separated peace from brutality. If such conduct is considered worthy of a peace prize, then one must ask: What would be the signs of a world-class butcher? At a time when the world watches with concern the rise of authoritarian populism, growing instability in the Middle East, and renewed scrutiny of past U.S. foreign policies, Islamabad's move feels less like a principled gesture and more like a desperate plea for favor. Trump remains a polarizing figure internationally, with a legacy in South Asia deeply entangled in transactional diplomacy and broken promises. To nominate him now, in the wake of the Israel-Gaza atrocities, escalating U.S.-Iran tensions, and Trump's own mounting legal and political controversies, is not just bad diplomacy; it is disastrously timed, further isolating Pakistan from both moral credibility and regional relevance.

Briefs

Iran launches fresh wave of strikes after US attacks

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Iran [...] must now make peace,” said Trump. “If they do not, future attacks will be far greater, and a lot easier,” added Trump, who was flanked by Vice President JD Vance, Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth and Secretary of State Marco Rubio for his address on Saturday evening for US audience. British Prime Minister Keir Starmer urged Iran to return to the negotiating table and said that stability in the region remained a priority, according to a statement from Downing Street on Sunday, following US strikes on Iran’s three main nuclear sites.

“Iran’s nuclear programme is a grave threat to international security. Iran can never be allowed to develop a nuclear weapon and the US has taken action to alleviate that threat,” Starmer said in the statement.

UN watchdog says no increase...

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hours after the US bombed nuclear sites across the country. Shargh newspaper reported the blast, while the Fars news agency said two locations in the city were attacked by Israel. Iranian news agencies also reported strikes in Yazd province. The UN’s nuclear watchdog warned the day before that striking the Bushehr plant would trigger “a very high release of radioactivity”.

Bombing Iran: Trump gambles...

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Trita Parsi, an outspoken critic of military action, said Trump “has now made it more likely that Iran will be a nuclear weapons state in the next five to 10 years.” “We should be careful not to confuse tactical success with strategic success,” said Parsi, executive vice president of the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft. “The Iraq war was also successful in the first few weeks, but President Bush’s declaration of ‘Mission Accomplished’ did not age well,” he said.

US prepared in case Iran retaliates...

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He added that the US intelligence motivated the Trump administration to act against Iran. “Its not true that Trump’s actions were beyond his presidential authority,” said Vance. “Will now work to permanently dismantle Iran’s nuclear program over the coming years.” Vance clarified the US does not want a regime change in Iran and “have no interest in boots on the ground as Trump has said”.

US attack a war crime...

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Donald Trump for engaging in “deception” and betraying his pledge to avoid new military conflicts. He suggested that the attacks were politically motivated rather than based on legitimate security concerns. The remarks come amid heightened tensions between the U.S. and Iran, with Washington justifying the strikes as preemptive measures against nuclear proliferation. However, critics like Sayed argue that such actions risk escalating regional instability and violate international law. Iran has yet to issue an official response to the alleged attacks, but hardliners within the country are expected to demand retaliation. Meanwhile, global leaders are calling for restraint, fearing another Middle East crisis. Sayed, a vocal advocate for Muslim world solidarity, has long criticized U.S. foreign policy, particularly its alignment with Israel. His latest statement is likely to resonate with anti-Western factions in Pakistan and beyond.

Inter Milan bounce back to beat Urawa Reds as Carboni stars

Carboni who had not featured for Inter in over two years, then appeared in 92nd minute to give Italians victory

DNA

SEATTLE: Inter Milan came from behind to beat Japan’s Urawa Reds 2-1 at the Club World Cup on Saturday, thanks to a late winning goal from Valentin Carboni. The young Argentine scored deep into stoppage time to seal the victory, after Lautaro Martinez had earlier brought Inter level. Ryoma Watanabe scored an early opener for Urawa Reds, who were backed by a noisy contingent of their supporters at Lumen Field in Seattle. But captain Lautaro Martinez, who had netted Inter’s equaliser in their 1-1 draw with Monterrey of Mexico in their first match at the tournament, repeated the feat to level the match with 12 minutes remaining. Carboni, the 20-year-old Argentine who had not featured for Inter in over two years, then appeared in the 92nd minute to give the Italians victory. “Our opponents play with their hearts and to counter that as a team we need to play with more pride, be humble and know how to suffer,” Martinez told broadcaster DAZN after Inter were made to work hard for the win. The result leaves Cristian Chivu’s team in a strong position to qualify for the last 16, while a second defeat in as many matches means



Urawa Reds are eliminated. “Our emotion is very bad after this game. We are out of the tournament so now we can only fight in the last game to achieve our one and only win,” said their Polish coach Maciej Skorza. Winners of the Asian Champions League in 2023, Urawa Reds were looking to bounce back from a 3-1 loss against River Plate in their opening game, and they took the lead in the 11th minute. Takuro Kaneko created the goal with a strong run down the right before his low cross was swept in first-time by Watanabe. Martinez struck the crossbar with a header for Inter shortly after, and it looked as though the UEFA Champions League runners-up might suffer a shock defeat when Henrikh Mkhitaryan missed the target from a good position in the second half.

But Inter got the equaliser in the 78th minute when a Nicolo Barella corner from the left was deftly turned in by Martinez, who scored with an overhead kick as he fell backwards. The stage was then set for Carboni, who had not played a competitive match since early October after sustaining a serious knee injury while on loan at Marseille. He was on hand to sidefoot into the net after a Petar Susic shot struck teammate Francesco Esposito and the ball broke to Carboni inside the area.

South Korea counts on shipbuilding to ease US tariff woes

SEOUL: Asia’s fourth-largest economy, South Korea, is facing gruelling tariffs by US President Donald Trump, but its shipbuilding industry could prove a useful bargaining chip. Already hit by sector levies on steel and car exports, Seoul is laser-focused on negotiations over a 25 percent country-specific tariff that has been suspended until July 8. - Why shipbuilding? - In the 1970s, South Korea’s military leader president Park Chung-hee accelerated the country’s heavy industry, designating sectors such as steel and shipbuilding “strategically important” and rolling out state subsidies. At the same time, POSCO was founded – now one of the world’s largest steel producers – and conglomerate Hyundai built its shipyard in southeastern Ulsan, which started to grow rapidly. European rivals struggled to keep pace. Sweden’s Kockums Shipyard filed for bankruptcy

in 1987 – and in a symbolic shift of global shipbuilding power, Hyundai acquired its 140-metre (460-foot) Goliath crane for one dollar. It now towers over southern Ulsan. In the 1990s and 2000s, South Korean shipbuilders such as Hyundai Heavy Industries and Samsung Heavy Industries ramped up investment in research and development, backed by generous government subsidies. The country secured a competitive edge in high-value-added vessels, including LNG carriers, very large crude carriers, and offshore platforms. , South Korea ranks as the world’s second-largest shipbuilding nation, trailing only behind China. South Korea’s exports hit a record high in 2024, with analysts pointing to shipbuilding as one of the key drivers. The sector accounted for nearly four percent of total exports and grew by almost 20 percent from the previ-

ous year – reaching \$25.6 billion. Shipbuilding directly employs around 120,000 workers – roughly one percent of the country’s total workforce – with indirect employment significantly higher in industrial hubs like Ulsan. Industry data shows so far this year, new orders have exceeded 13 trillion won (\$9.4 billion). In March, Hanwha Ocean secured a landmark \$1.6 billion contract to build LNG carriers for Taiwan’s Evergreen Marine, one of the largest single orders in the sector this year. Trump has showed “significant interest in South Korea-US shipbuilding cooperation,” said South Korea’s trade, industry and energy minister Ahn Duk-geun in April. Like the Europeans, the US shipbuilding industry has lagged behind South Korea and China, and as a result, the sector is seen as a “highly important bargaining chip in trade negotiations,” he added. – APP

PMYP kicks off Cricket Talent Hunt trials nationwide from June 26

ISLAMABAD: The Prime Minister Youth Program (PMYP) is set to launch its highly anticipated cricket talent hunt trials on June 26, marking a significant step towards identifying and nurturing young cricketing talent across the country. The Cricket Talent Hunt Program represents a major milestone in the government’s initiative to foster youth empowerment through sports, complemented by education, employment, and digital opportunities. The trials aim to scout for exceptional young cricketers who can represent Pakistan on the international stage. According to an official, in collaboration with Lahore Qalandars, talented youngsters will get the opportunity to showcase their skills and compete for coveted spots in top-tier teams. The trials will be conducted in various cities, providing a platform for aspiring cricketers from diverse backgrounds to demonstrate their abilities. – APP

Olympic chief Kirsty Coventry’s steeliness honed by hard knocks

PARIS: First impressions can be deceptive but Kirsty Coventry showed that behind a sunny disposition she will have the mettle to deal with the trickiest of people and situations when she succeeds Thomas Bach as president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on Monday. Looming large on the horizon of the 41-year-old Zimbabwean – the first woman and African to occupy the post of the most powerful single figure in sport – is US President Donald Trump. With Los Angeles hosting the 2028 Olympics, Trump will feature often on Coventry’s agenda. Trump has not been shy in giving public dressing downs to world leaders – notably Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and his South African counterpart Cyril Ramaphosa. Judging by Coventry’s initial response, after a crushing first-round victory in the presidential election in March, she may have Trump’s measure. “I have been dealing with, let’s say, difficult men in high positions since I was 20 years old,” she said, adding “communication will be key.” Unlike Trump, though, Coventry embraces the word failure, for it helped forge her stellar career. “Everything’s scary. Embrace that. You have to fail,” Coventry told the swimming team at her American alma mater Auburn University last year. “I’ve learned the best lessons by failing, and I have failed at many things. Life has a really good way of humbling you.” At the same time that steely resolve comes to the surface when winning is at stake. “I was banned from playing card games with the family, because they didn’t like to deal with me when I lost,” she said. A glance at Coventry’s CV suggests failure in her life has been relative. Coventry, who had the Olympic rings tattooed on a leg after her first Games in 2000, is a two-time Olympic gold medalist and she has contributed seven of Zimbabwe’s overall Games medals tally of eight. She has accrued domestic political experience, as she was Zimbabwe’s Minister for Youth, Sport, Arts and Recreation from 2019 to this year. – APP

Spain Crushes Ireland 9-1 in Pro League Hockey

DNA

IN a stunning display of skill, Spain demolished Ireland 9-1 in the ongoing FIH Pro League hockey tournament, showcasing their attacking prowess. The match, held TODAY, saw Spain dominate from the start, leaving Ireland struggling to keep up. Meanwhile, Belgium delivered another strong performance, defeating India 6-0 in a one-sided contest. The Pro League fixtures, set to continue until June 29, have seen intense competition among the world’s top hockey nations. Belgium’s commanding win over India reinforces their position as a strong contender for the title. India, usually a formidable side, failed to counter Belgium’s relentless attacks, raising concerns ahead of their next matches. In another development, New Zealand has secured a spot in the Pro League after defeating Pakistan in the Nations Cup 2025, held in Malaysia. The Kiwis’ victory ensures their participation in the next edition of the elite tournament, while Pakistan faces a setback in their quest for higher-tier competition. Fans are eagerly watching the remaining Pro League matches, with teams battling for crucial ranking points ahead of major international events. The tournament has already delivered thrilling encounters, and with just a week left, the race for the top spots remains wide open.

Pak reach Asian Volleyball Nations Cup semis after beating Indonesia

KARACHI: Pakistan secured a spot in the semifinals of the 2025 Asian Volleyball Nations Cup after a hard-fought victory against Indonesia in the quarterfinals. After dropping the first set, Pakistan staged a strong comeback, winning three consecutive sets to seal the match 3-1. The final scores were 20-25, 25-21, 25-20, and 25-17. Despite Indonesia’s early dominance in the opening set, Pakistan took control of the match with a resilient performance. Indonesia led in attack points with 56 compared to Pakistan’s 50, but Pakistan’s defence proved decisive, registering 16 block points against Indonesia’s 7. Statistically, Pakistan’s efficiency proved decisive. – Agencies

Kashmiri leaders condemn Indian troops

ISLAMABAD: Kashmiri leaders on Sunday condemned the Indian government’s handling of the Sindoore operation, slamming the deployment of 70,000 troops for the Amarnath Yatra as an act of military aggression and accusing New Delhi of using the pilgrimage as a cover to further militarize the region, warning that it could lead to increased human rights violations. Talking to PTV News channel, Shamim Shawl, a senior Kashmiri leader and a prominent voice in the region, criticized the Indian government’s actions, describing it as a clear sign of insecurity. He condemned the excessive deployment of security forces, labeling it as an unnecessary show of force that only serves to further alienate the people of Kashmir. Shawl argued that such militarization heightens tension and distrust, exacerbating the already fragile situation in the region. She warned that this heavy-handed approach was bound to provoke more unrest and deepen the divide between Kashmiris and New Delhi. She condemned the use of the word “Sindoor” for the operation, calling it a direct insult to women, as it carried deeply offensive connotations. She emphasized that such terminology was not only disrespectful but also a deliberate at-

tempt to undermine the dignity of Kashmiri women. Furthermore, she pointed out that the operation had failed miserably, exposing India’s true intentions and its inability to maintain control over the region without resorting to such aggressive measures. Another Kashmiri leader, Abdul Hameed Lon, also launched a scathing attack, stating that after its defeat by Pakistan, the Indian government should feel ashamed of its actions in Kashmir. He emphasized that the excessive military presence, which outnumbered the local Kashmiri population, is a clear reflection of the government’s insecurity. Lon also highlighted that during the recent Hajj pilgrimage, no Kashmiri was able to travel without being accompanied by military personnel, further proving the extent of militarization in the region and the government’s ongoing efforts to stifle Kashmiri freedom. Both Kashmiri leaders asserted that India must come to terms with the fact that Kashmiris will never be a part of India, regardless of the measures it takes. The leaders emphasized that no amount of military presence, coercion or political manipulation will ever change the fundamental reality of Kashmir’s distinct identity and its people’s unwavering desire for self-determination. – DNA

Reactions on US attacks on Iran

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“In accordance with the UN Charter and its provisions allowing a legitimate response in self-defense, Iran reserves all options to defend its sovereignty, interest, and people,” the foreign minister said.

Iran’s atomic energy organization also called the US attacks “a barbaric act that violates international law.” “The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran assures the great nation of Iran... it will not let the path of development of this national industry (nuclear), which is the result of the blood of nuclear martyrs, be stopped,” it said in a statement published by state media.

- Hamas: ‘Brutal aggression’ - Palestinian militant group Hamas condemned the “blatant US aggression against the territory and sovereignty of the Islamic Republic of Iran.”

“This brutal aggression is a dangerous escalation,” Hamas said, calling the attack “a flagrant violation of international law, and a direct threat to international peace and security.” - UN: ‘Dangerous escalation’ - UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called the strikes a “dangerous escalation in a region already on the edge.”

“At this perilous hour, it is critical to avoid a spiral of chaos,” Guterres said in a statement. “There is no military solution. The only path forward is diplomacy. The only hope is peace.”

- Democrats: ‘Unilateral military action’ - The top Democrat in the US House of Representatives accused Trump of pushing the United States toward war.

“President Trump misled the country about his intentions, failed to seek congressional authorization for the use of military force and risks American entanglement in a potentially disastrous war in the Middle East,” Congressman Hakeem Jeffries said in a statement. “Donald Trump shoulders complete and total responsibility for any adverse consequences that flow from his unilateral military action.”

Pakistan reaffirms neutral stance on Israel-Iran Conflict

FROM PAGE 01

resolution of conflicts and opposes any act of aggression that threatens global peace,” the statement read. The government urged all parties to exercise restraint and engage in dialogue to prevent further escalation. Unwavering Support for Iran Against Israeli Aggression Pakistan has consistently condemned Israeli military actions against Iran on multiple international platforms, including the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Officials have emphasized full political, moral, and diplomatic support for Tehran in the face of what they describe as “Israeli aggression.” “Pakistan stands with Iran in its legitimate right to self-defense,” a Foreign Office spokesperson said. “We call on the international community to hold Israel accountable for its destabilizing actions in the region.” Islamabad made it clear that it will not be dragged into any external wars, bloc politics, or military confrontations involving other nations. Pakistan’s long-standing policy emphasizes non-interference and neutrality in global conflicts.

“Our focus remains on safeguarding our sovereignty and territorial integrity,” a senior government official stated. “Pakistan will not allow itself to become a battleground for proxy wars.” Pakistan has maintained active diplomatic engagement with all stakeholders to de-escalate tensions. Officials have held discussions with regional and global powers, advocating for sustainable peace through dialogue. “The only viable solution to any conflict is negotiation and mutual understanding,” the Foreign Office emphasized. “All parties must prioritize diplomacy over military action to avoid further instability.”

Utopia and fragile democracy at Art Basel fair

The monumental works section features an 85-metre-long installation entitled “The Voyage – A March To Utopia”

BASEL: This year’s Art Basel, the world’s top contemporary art fair, paints a portrait of a troubled planet, with works embodying the relentless pursuit of happiness and the fragility of democracies. The four-day event in the northern Swiss border city of Basel, which closes on Sunday, features more than 280 galleries presenting works by around 4,000 artists. The monumental works section features an 85-metre-long installation entitled “The Voyage – A March To Utopia”. Created by the studio of Dutch artist Joep van Lieshout, it features 80 large sculptures forming a procession of absurd objects, where “everybody walks in the same direction... on their way to a happy place”, the artist told AFP. The journey begins with a team of oxen, followed by all means of getting to that better world, including a walking stick, a cart, a toilet on wheels, a wheelchair and a mobile surgical theatre for those struggling to keep up. Next come objects representing everything the convoy is carrying, followed by sculptures of ghosts symbolising those who didn’t make it to the end. It ends with machines set to destroy the

road behind them, so that “there’s no going back”, the artist explained. A stone’s throw away, Spanish artist Jaume Plensa presents a work composed of 21 aluminium doors engraved with the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. Entitled “Forgotten Dreams”, it invites viewers to contemplate collective aspirations and



not forget the horrors of the past. Vietnam-born Danish artist Danh Vo has installed a huge US flag made from hundreds of logs and 13 steel stars, referencing the first version of the flag from 1777. Reconstructed at Art Basel, “In God We Trust” was first created in 2020, during the presidential election campaign between Donald Trump and Joe Biden. The logs were removed one by one and

burned in fireplaces, gradually causing the flag to disappear. The work serves as an allegory of the fragility of US democracy. Art Basel is above all a commercial event, where artists and galleries come to meet wealthy collectors. But the fair is also very popular with art lovers who come for the simple pleasure of browsing the works on show.

Its “Unlimited” section brings together monumental pieces intended for museums and major collections. It includes recent as well as older works, including a performance created in 1991 by Felix Gonzalez-Torres, a US artist from Cuba who died of AIDS in 1996. Called “Untitled” (Go-Go Dancing Platform), it features a man dressed in silver shorts dancing on a podium for a few minutes, twice a day. “It’s an interesting moment to revisit it,” said the “Unlimited” section’s curator, Giovanni Carmine, recalling that the artist created the performance shortly after the death of his partner from AIDS, “in a context that was also very reactionary”. Gonzalez-Torres responded with “a very political gesture” with a performance that is “a celebration of life”. – Agencies

Briefs

Thai PM claims she has coalition support after resignation calls

BANGKOK: Thailand's prime minister, seeking to fend off calls for her resignation, said on Sunday all coalition partners have pledged support for her government, which she said would seek to maintain political stability to address threats to national security. Paetongtarn Shinawatra has faced criticism for her perceived mishandling of a border row with Cambodia, including over a phone call with the country's former leader, Hun Sen, the audio of which was leaked on Wednesday. After the initial leak, Hun Sen released the full audio, in which Paetongtarn appeared to kowtow before the veteran Cambodian politician and to denigrate a senior Thai military commander – crossing red lines for her critics and some former allies. A major coalition partner, the Bhumjaithai Party, quit the ruling alliance soon after the leak, overshadowing Paetongtarn's premiership and a parliamentary majority cobbled together by her Pheu Thai party. "The country must move forward. Thailand must unite and push policies to solve problems for the people," Paetongtarn, the daughter of influential former premier Thaksin Shinawatra, posted on X after a meeting with coalition partners, including the United Thai Nation party. Prior to the post, the UTN had looked set to demand her resignation in return for backing the ruling coalition. The government and the country's influential military share a common position, to back democratic principles and follow the provisions of the constitution, said the 38-year-old leader, a political neophyte who was appointed prime minister last year. —APP

How many hostages are left in Gaza?

GAZA STRIP: Israel said Sunday that it has recovered the bodies of three more hostages taken in Hamas' Oct. 7 attack that ignited the ongoing 20-month war in the Gaza Strip. The Israeli military identified them as Yonatan Samerano, 21; Ofra Keidar, 70; and Shay Levinson, 19. All three were killed during the initial attack and their bodies were taken into Gaza. Kobi Samerano said in a Facebook post that his son's remains were returned on what would have been Yonatan's 23rd birthday. The military did not provide details about the operation. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel is committed to returning the remaining hostages even as it wages a new military campaign against Iran. Hamas-led militants killed some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and took 251 hostages in the Oct. 7 attack. More than 55,000 Palestinians in Gaza, mostly women and children, have been killed in the ensuing conflict, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. The ministry doesn't distinguish between civilians and combatants.

Toll in lynching of Nigeria wedding guests rises to 12

JOS: The number of people killed after a mob stormed a bus carrying Muslim wedding guests in central Nigeria's volatile Plateau state has risen to 12, according to the Nigerian presidency. The dead include the groom's father and brother, it said. President Bola Tinubu has condemned the killings, the latest attack to hit the region where tensions are high after a series of bloody attacks in recent days, with ethnic Fulani nomadic Muslim herders suspected of killing dozens of people in Plateau's Mangu local government area. Police, survivors and local organizations said around 30 people on a bus to a wedding lost their way, stopped to ask for directions, and were accosted by an irate mob. —APP

What we know about US bombing of Iran nuclear sites

Trump says Fordow nuclear site was hit with "full payload of bombs"

DNA

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates: President Donald Trump has said US forces attacked three Iranian nuclear and military sites, further upping the stakes in the Israel-Iran war. Trump said the strikes, which he described as "very successful," had hit the Natanz, Fordo and Isfahan sites, with Fordo being the primary target. Iran's state-run IRNA news agency confirmed there were attacks early Sunday at Iran's Fordo, Isfahan and Natanz nuclear sites. IRNA quoted Akbar Salehi, Isfahan's deputy governor in charge of security affairs, saying there had been attacks around Isfahan and Natanz. He did not elaborate. Another official confirmed an attack targeting Iran's underground Fordo nuclear site. Israel launched a surprise barrage of attacks on sites in Iran on June 13, which Israeli officials said was necessary to head off what they claimed was an imminent threat that Iran would build nuclear bombs. Iran, which has long insisted its nuclear program is peaceful, has retaliated with a series of missile and drone strikes in

Israel, while Israel has continued to strike sites in Iran. The US and Iran had been in talks that could have resulted in the US lifting some of its crushing economic sanctions on Iran in exchange for Tehran drastically limiting or ending its enrichment of uranium. Until Saturday, Washington had helped shoot down Iranian strikes on Israel but had not launched direct attacks on Iran. Here's a look at the sites Trump said the US struck and their importance to Iran's nuclear program. Natanz enrichment facility Iran's nuclear facility at Natanz, located some 220 kilometers (135 miles) southeast of Tehran, is the country's main enrichment site and had already been targeted by Israeli airstrikes. Uranium had been enriched to up to 60 percent purity at the site – a mildly radioactive level but a short step away from weapons grade – before Israel destroyed the aboveground part of the facility, according to the UN's nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency. Another part of the facility on Iran's Central Plateau is underground to defend against potential air

strikes. It operates multiple cascades, or groups of centrifuges working together to more quickly enrich uranium. The IAEA has said it believes that most if not all of these centrifuges were destroyed by an Israeli strike that cut off power to the site. The IAEA said those strikes caused contamination only at the site itself, not the surrounding area. Iran also is burrowing into the Kūh-e Kolang Gaz Lā, or Pickax Mountain, which is just beyond Natanz's southern fencing. Natanz has been targeted by the Stuxnet virus, believed to be an Israeli and American creation, which destroyed Iranian centrifuges. Two separate attacks, attributed to Israel, also have struck the facility. Iran's nuclear facility at Fordo is located some 100 kilometers (60 miles) southwest of Tehran. It also hosts centrifuge cascades, but isn't as big as Natanz. Its construction began at least in 2007, according to the IAEA, although Iran only informed the UN nuclear watchdog about the facility in 2009 after the US and allied Western intelligence agencies became aware of its existence. Buried

under a mountain and protected by anti-aircraft batteries, Fordo appears designed to withstand airstrikes. Military experts have said it could likely only be targeted by "bunker buster" bombs – a term for bombs that are designed to penetrate deep below the surface before exploding – such as the latest GBU-57 A/B Massive Ordnance Penetrator bomb in the American arsenal. The roughly 30,000 pound (13,600 kilogram) precision-guided bomb is designed to attack deeply buried and hardened bunkers and tunnels. The US has only configured and programed its B-2 Spirit stealth bomber to deliver that bomb, according to the Air Force. The B-2 is only flown by the Air Force, and is produced by Northrop Grumman, meaning that Washington would have to be involved in such an operation. The facility in Isfahan, some 350 kilometers (215 miles) southeast of Tehran, employs thousands of nuclear scientists. It also is home to three Chinese research reactors and laboratories associated with the coun-

try's atomic program. Israel has struck buildings at the Isfahan nuclear site, among them a uranium conversion facility. The IAEA said there has been no sign of increased radiation at the site. Iran has several other sites in its nuclear program that were not announced as targets in the US strikes. Iran's only commercial nuclear power plant is in Bushehr on the Arabian Gulf, some 750 kilometers (465 miles) south of Tehran. Iran is building two other reactors like it at the site. Bushehr is fueled by uranium produced in Russia, not Iran, and is monitored by the IAEA. The Arak heavy water reactor is 250 kilometers (155 miles) southwest of Tehran. Heavy water helps cool nuclear reactors, but it produces plutonium as a by-product that can potentially be used in nuclear weapons. Iran had agreed under its 2015 nuclear deal with world powers to redesign the facility to relieve proliferation concerns. The Tehran Research Reactor is at the headquarters of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, the civilian body overseeing the country's atomic program. It initially required highly enriched uranium but was later retrofitted to use low-enriched uranium over proliferation concerns.

Pope urges int'l diplomacy to prevent 'irreparable abyss'

VATICAN CITY: Pope Leo on Sunday said the international community must strive to avoid war that risks opening an "irreparable abyss," and that diplomacy should take the place of conflict. US forces struck Iran's three main nuclear sites overnight, joining an Israeli assault in a major new escalation of conflict in the Middle East as Tehran vowed to defend itself. "Every member of the international community has a moral responsibility: to stop the tragedy of war before it becomes an irreparable abyss," Pope Leo said during his weekly prayer with pilgrims. "No armed victory can compensate for the pain of mothers, the fear of children, the stolen future. Let diplomacy silence the weapons, let nations chart their future with peace efforts, not with violence and bloody conflicts," he added. "In this dramatic scenario, which includes Israel and Palestine, the daily suffering of the population, especially in Gaza and other territories, risks being forgotten, where the need for adequate humanitarian support is becoming increasingly urgent," Pope Leo said. —APP

Investors brace for oil price spike

NEW YORK: A US attack on Iranian nuclear sites could lead to a knee-jerk reaction in global markets when they reopen, sending oil prices higher and triggering a rush to safety, investors said, as they assessed how the latest escalation of tensions would ripple through the global economy. The attack, which was announced by President Donald Trump on social media site Truth Social, deepens US involvement in the Middle East conflict. That was the question going into the weekend, when investors were mulling a host of different market scenarios. In the immediate aftermath of the announcement, they expected the US involvement was likely to cause a selloff in equities and a possible bid for the dollar and other safe-haven assets when trading begins, but also said much uncertainty about the course of the conflict remained. Trump called the attack "a spectacular military success" in a televised address to the nation and said Iran's "ke nuclear enrichment facilities have been completely and totally obliterated." He said the US military could go after other targets in Iran if the country did not agree to peace. "I think the markets are going to be initially alarmed, and I think oil will open higher," said Mark Spindel, chief investment officer at Potomac River Capital. "We don't have any damage assessment and that will take some time. Even though he has described this as 'done,' we're engaged. What comes next?" Spindel said.

Air France eyes daily Paris-Riyadh flights

RIYADH: Air France is planning to operate daily flights between Paris and Riyadh, a senior airline official told Ara News in an exclusive interview. The announcement follows the launch of the carrier's first direct route between Paris-Charles de Gaulle and King Khalid International Airport. Stefan Gumuseli, the airline's general manager for India and the Middle East, outlined the importance of the new route for the Air France-KLM Group and said it reflects the airline's ambition to reestablish its presence in the Saudi market. The decision comes in response to growing demand from travelers and investors eager to access the Kingdom's expanding economic opportunities. The new route marks a strategic step for Air France as it expands operations in the region and aligns with the growing connectivity between Europe and Saudi Arabia. Talking to Arab News, Gumuseli said: "We're starting with three weekly flights in mid-June, then gradually increasing to five. Our first major goal



Istanbul: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, met with the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan, Murat Nurtleu, on the sidelines of the 51st OIC.

Saudi Arabia surpasses 116m tourists

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia welcomed 116 million tourists in 2024, exceeding its annual visitor target for the second year in a row, the official data showed. According to the Ministry of Tourism's latest annual statistical report, the figure includes 29.7 million inbound tourists, an 8 percent increase year on year, and 86.2 million domestic trips, up 5 percent from 2023. The milestone reflects the continued acceleration of the Kingdom's Vision 2030 strategy, which positions tourism as a central driver of economic diversification. After surpassing its original 100 million visitor goal six years ahead of schedule in 2023, Saudi Arabia has revised its ambitions upward, now aiming to attract 150 million tourists annually by 2030. This figure is split between 70 million international and 80 million domestic visitors. In a post on X, Minister of Tourism Ahmed Al-Khateeb said: "The 2024 Annual Statistical Report showcases the sector's remarkable growth and its role in enabling Saudi Vision2030, a record performance achieved with the support and guidance of the Kingdom's visionary leadership." Total tourism spending in 2024 hit SR283.8 billion (\$75.6 billion), with inbound tourists contributing SR168.5 billion, up 19 percent from 2023, while domestic tourist expenditure reached SR115.3 billion, a 1 percent rise. —APP

Saudi dentists bring new expertise home

SEOUL: When Mohammed Al-Keshan left Makkah to study at South Korea's top university, he found himself not just 8,000 km away from home, but also in a place where everything seemed different from what he was used to. Al-Keshan was already 32 when he started his dentistry residency at Seoul National University in 2017. He neither knew the language nor culture – and at that time, there were not many other students in Saudi Arabia with the experience of pursuing medicine in South Korea. "Then, there was loneliness and homesickness. The courses were more intense (than in Saudi Arabia), and it took me about two to three months to adapt," he told Arab News. "It is not easy to learn at this age and to adapt to the culture. But the Korean people are very kind and smart. They gave me a lot of advice and were very helpful." Al-Keshan became one of the pioneers in a growing medical exchange program under the Saudi and Korean ministries of health that places a special focus on dental sciences. The Seoul National University School of Dentistry, where he was enrolled, is ranked among the world's 30 best dental schools. After completing his residency in 2021 and receiving certification from the Saudi board, he returned to South Korea in 2024 to pursue further professional development at a special facility that his school runs: the Seoul Dental Hospital for the Disabled. While in other countries dental care for people with disabilities is usually part of general dental care or is provided at specialized departments within broader hospitals, the South Korean hospital is the only dedicated dental hospital in the world exclusively for patients with disabilities. "Saudi Arabia does not have a whole dental hospital that is dedicated to special needs care like the one at SNU. So, I would like to coordinate with the Ministry of Health to create one when I go back to Saudi Arabia," Al-Keshan said. —DNA

Gulf visitor spending to hit \$224bn by2034

RIYADH: Visitor spending in Gulf Cooperation Council nations is projected to reach \$223.7 billion by 2034, driven by economic diversification, mega-projects, infrastructure upgrades, and relaxed visa policies, new data showed. According to the GCC Statistical Center, as reported by Emirates News Agency – WAM, inbound visitor spending is expected to contribute 13.4 percent to the region's total exports – underscoring tourism's growing role in Gulf economies seeking to reduce dependence on oil. This comes as GCC countries, led by Saudi Arabia, ramp up efforts to diversify their economies by investing in tourism. Central to Saudi Vision 2030 is a goal to raise tourism's share of gross domestic product from 3 to 10 percent and attract 150 million annual visits, with mega-projects like NEOM spearheading the shift. —APP

Ukraine army chief vows to expand strikes on Russia

KYIV: Ukraine's top military commander vowed to increase the "scale and depth" of strikes on Russia in remarks made public Sunday, saying Kyiv would not sit idly by while Moscow prolonged its three-year invasion. Diplomatic efforts to end the war have stalled in recent weeks. The last direct meeting between the two sides was almost three weeks ago and no follow-up talks have been scheduled. Russian attacks on Ukraine have killed dozens of people during the interim, including in the Ukrainian capital Kyiv, according to officials. "We will not just sit in defense. Because this brings nothing and eventually leads to the fact that we still retreat, lose people and territories," Ukrainian commander-in-chief Oleksandr Syrsky told reporters including AFP. Syrsky said Ukraine would continue its strikes on Russian military targets, which he said had proved "effective." "Of course, we will continue. We will increase the scale and depth," he said. Ukraine has launched retaliatory strikes on Russia throughout the war, targeting energy and military infrastructure sometimes hundreds of kilometers from the front line. Kyiv says the strikes are a fair response to deadly Russian attacks on Ukrainian infrastructure and civilians. In wide-ranging remarks, Syrsky also conceded that Russia had some advantages in drone warfare, particularly in making fiber-optic drones that are tethered and difficult to jam. "Here, unfortunately, they have an advantage in both the number and range of their use," he said. He also claimed that Ukraine still held 90 square kilometers (35 square miles) of territory in Russia's Kursk region, where Kyiv launched an audacious cross-border incursion last August. "These are our pre-emptive actions in response to a possible enemy offensive," he said. Russia said in April that it had gained full control of the Kursk region and denies that Kyiv has a presence there. Moscow occupies around a fifth of Ukraine and claims to have annexed four Ukrainian regions as its own since launching its invasion in 2022 – in addition to Crimea, which it captured in 2014. Kyiv has accused Moscow of deliberately sabotaging a peace deal to prolong its full-scale offensive on the country and to seize more territory. The Russian army said Sunday that it had captured the village of Petrivske in Ukraine's northeast Kharkiv region. Russian forces also fired at least 47 drones and three missiles at Ukraine between late Saturday and early Sunday, the Ukrainian air force said. At least two people were killed in the attacks on Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region, including a 17-year-old boy, the region's governor said. —DNA

Huawei embracing AI revolution, striding towards intelligent era

Shanghai, China: China Unicom Beijing will work with Huawei to upgrade 5 G-A network infrastructure, push network evolution from "connection pipes" to "intelligent platforms," and converge ICT innovations At Mobile World Congress (MWC) Shanghai 2025, Yang Lifan, Deputy General Manager of China Unicom Beijing, delivered a speech titled "Are We Ready for AI?" and jointly released Smart Operation Network 2.0 with Huawei at the 5 G-A Industry Roundtable. The speech highlighted the unprecedented growth of data driven by artificial intelligence (AI), which is making communications networks smarter and more automated. China Unicom Beijing will work with Huawei to upgrade 5 G-A network infrastructure, push network evolution from "connection pipes" to "intelligent platforms," and converge ICT innovations. In the mobile AI era, innovative applications like hu-

man-level interactions, autonomous driving, and industrial Internet of Things (IIoT) are flourishing. This has resulted in explosive traffic growth and the need for higher uplink speeds. For example, cloud-based AI training and high-definition (HD) video upload typically require an uplink bandwidth of more than 20 Mbps. Live network traffic is expected to surge to five times the current level. Then, China Unicom Beijing's networks will face uplink bottlenecks if only mid-band resources are used, which will compromise the AI service user experience. A professional data model by China Unicom Beijing and Huawei predicts that 2025 will be the tipping point. China Unicom Beijing and Huawei have deployed the world's first 3D smart 5 G-A network across Beijing. The network will tackle the challenges of the AI era and enable ubiquitous 5 G-A across both air and ground. The two companies have also piloted the world's first 1:1 3D network

ing based on high- and mid-band coordination, which enables seamless 5 G-A user experience. This network verifies the feasibility of high-band networking. China Unicom Beijing is leading the transition from single-band networks to a layered communications system, with high bands for network capacity, mid-bands for continuous coverage, and low bands and space-air-ground coordination for wide-area coverage. This system will strengthen the foundation for seamless interconnections for all manner of applications. The key to this network is the coordination of high, mid, low, and other bands for low-altitude and satellite communications. Conventional networks struggle with network parameters and troubleshooting and are heavily reliant on manual operations. China Unicom Beijing and Huawei are using AI to enable automated and unattended network operations, which is be-

coming the industry norm. The two companies are working to achieve automation across all network settings by 2026, covering site deployment, maintenance, optimization, and complaint handling. China Unicom Beijing and Huawei have launched a digital twin system for high-speed rail that makes passenger services fully visualized. The system transforms sensing from the line grid level to the passenger level to enable insights for each passenger in seconds. User experience is significantly enhanced by automatic demarcation and locating of all signals, which shortens fault response to within 10 seconds and fault self-healing to within 30 minutes. Moreover, universal intelligent service processing units (UISPs) are used to accurately identify and analyze user services. This enables service-oriented dynamic experience assurance and significantly improves 5 G-A operational efficiency and ser-

vice quality. Yang said: "Future networks will feature space-air-ground and spectrum coordination, and their O&M will be dynamic and automated with the help of AI agents. Instead of passively reacting, operators should proactively embrace cutting-edge technology to make communications networks truly intelligent." David Li, Vice President of Huawei Wireless Network Product Line, remarked: "To explore new connection spaces and unlock new business value, 5 G-A networks should fulfill the diverse needs of different applications, user groups, and services. Prioritising experience-centred networks, we will continue to enable technological innovations in high uplink, low latency, and smart operations to facilitate the implementation of China Unicom Beijing's space-air-ground integrated smart network strategy, to deliver more than fast experiences to users in Beijing." The commercial adoption of 5 G-Advanced is accelerating in 2025. —APP

Briefs

Belarus
frees jailed
opposition
leader

WARSAW: Belarus freed top opposition figure Sergei Tikhanovsky and more than a dozen other political prisoners Saturday following an appeal from the White House, Minsk said, a sign of warming ties between Washington and Belarus-ally Moscow. The release came just hours after US special envoy Keith Kellogg met Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko in Minsk, the highest-profile visit of a US official to the authoritarian state in years. Tikhanovsky's wife Svetlana Tikhanovskaya, who took the mantle of the opposition movement after her husband's jailing, thanked US President Donald Trump directly for brokering the deal. European politicians and members of Belarus's exiled opposition also welcomed the news. "This is fantastic news and a powerful symbol of hope for all the political prisoners suffering under the brutal Lukashenka regime," European Union chief Ursula von der Leyen said on X. "Europe continues to call for their immediate release," she added. Poland's Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski expressed his "sincerest joy", while Latvian President Edgars Rinkevics called Tikhanovsky's freedom a "much awaited and long overdue moment". Germany's Foreign Minister Johann Wadepuhl welcomed Tikhanovsky's release as "fantastically good news", in a post to X. — Agencies

US embassy
staff left
Iraq due to
'regional
tensions'

BAGHDAD: More personnel from the United States diplomatic mission departed Iraq over the weekend as part of ongoing efforts to reduce embassy staffing amid "regional tensions", a US official said Sunday after Washington attacked Iranian nuclear sites. "As part of our ongoing effort to streamline operations, additional personnel departed Iraq on June 21 and 22," the US official told AFP. The departures were a continuation of a process that started last week "out of an abundance of caution and due to heightened regional tensions", he added. The embassy and the consulate remain operational. Earlier on Sunday, Washington joined Israel's war with Tehran as President Donald Trump announced US strikes on Iran's main nuclear sites. Fears are growing in Iraq over a possible intervention by armed factions, who have threatened Washington's interests in the region if it were to join Israel in its war against Iran. — APP

Iran's
Paris-based
opposition
head says time
for Khamenei
to go

NEWS DESK

PARIS: Maryam Rajavi, head of the Paris-based opposition National Council of Resistance of Iran said on Sunday that Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei was responsible for the nuclear program that had now "gone up in smoke" and needed to go. "Now Khamenei must go. The Iranian people welcome the end of the war and seek peace and freedom," she said in a statement, following unprecedented US strikes that President Donald Trump said had "obliterated" its key nuclear facilities. "Khamenei is responsible for an unpatriotic project that, in addition to costing countless lives, has cost the Iranian people at least \$2 trillion—and now, it has all gone up in smoke."

Ambassador of Uzbekistan talks to daily Islamabad POST
Uzbekistan and Pakistan strategic
partnership deepens, says envoy

EXCLUSIVE

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: In an exclusive interview with Islamabad POST and Centreline magazine, His Excellency Alisher Tukhtaev, Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Pakistan, emphasized the deep-rooted cultural, historical, and religious bonds between Uzbekistan and Pakistan. He highlighted the shared heritage of the two nations, which has laid a strong foundation for enhanced cooperation in tourism, agriculture, and strategic diplomacy. The first part of the interview was published in this newspaper on June 11, 2025. The ambassador's remarks underscored Uzbekistan's commitment to strengthening bilateral relations with Pakistan, focusing on economic collaboration, people-to-people exchanges, and regional connectivity. Ambassador Tukhtaev noted that both Uzbekistan and Pakistan are home to some of the most revered Islamic scholars, architects, and cultural landmarks, making them ideal destinations for spiritual and heritage tourism. "Uzbekistan and Pakistan share a unique cultural and historical heritage, which holds great significance not only for our peoples but also for the entire Muslim world," he said. "The fact that both countries are the birthplace of outstanding Islamic scholars, architects, and cultural figures provides a strong foundation for the development of spiritual and cultural tourism." In recent years, there has been a surge in Pakistani tourists visiting Uzbekistan, particularly the historic cities of Bukhara, Samarkand, Tashkent, and Khiva—renowned for their stunning Islamic architecture and rich history. Similarly, Uzbek travelers are increasingly drawn to Pakistan's cultural hubs, including Lahore, Karachi, and Taxila. To facilitate travel, Uzbekistan has simplified visa procedures for Pakistani citizens starting September 2024. Additionally, direct flights between Tashkent and Lahore operate twice a week, and Tashkent-Islamabad once a week with discussions underway to expand air connectivity to other cities. The ambassador also revealed plans for joint ziyorat (pilgrimage) tourism initiatives, including guided tours to holy sites. Both nations are exploring the creation of cultural and historical routes tracing the footsteps of great Muslim scholars and leaders. "We are considering the creation of cultural and tourist routes tracing the footsteps of our great ancestors and Muslim scholars," he said. "We are also working on programs for tourist exchanges, participation in exhibitions, festivals, and fairs." The Uzbek Embassy in Pakistan is actively promoting tourism through information campaigns, exhibitions, and collabora-



tions with Pakistani tour operators. "We are confident that the activation of tourism will not only contribute to economic cooperation but also strengthen the friendship and mutual understanding between our peoples," Ambassador Tukhtaev added. Agriculture remains a cornerstone of both Uzbekistan's and Pakistan's economies, contributing significantly to employment, food security, and exports. Given their similar climatic conditions, the two countries have immense potential for collaboration in agri-tech, irrigation, and crop production. The ambassador outlined several initiatives aimed at boosting agricultural cooperation: • Joint ventures in agro-processing – Enhancing value addition for crops such as cotton, fruits, and grains. • Modern irrigation techniques – Introducing drip irrigation and water-efficient farming methods. • Seed production and logistics – Sharing expertise in high-yield seed varieties and cold storage solutions. • Digital agriculture – Leveraging technology for precision farming and data-driven agriculture. "Uzbekistan is interested in joint production of agricultural machinery, technologies for product storage and processing, as well as learning from Pakistan's experience in growing certain crops, including rice and vegetables," the ambassador stated. To facilitate knowledge sharing, both nations plan to organize joint agro-forums, exhibitions, and academic exchanges between agricultural universities and research institutes.

"In the long term, we aim to create a platform for the systematic exchange of best practices, specialist training, and the promotion of sustainable agriculture," he said. Such collaborations are expected to enhance food security in the region while boosting rural economies in both countries. As Uzbekistan's top envoy to Pakistan, Ambassador Tukhtaev outlined his key priorities for strengthening bilateral ties in the coming years. Economic collaboration remains a top priority, with a focus on: • Increasing bilateral trade volume. • Implementing large-scale infrastructure projects, including the Uzbekistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan (UAP) railway, which will enhance regional connectivity. • Establishing logistics hubs to facilitate trade between Central and South Asia. "We aim to expand the volume of bilateral trade, implement large-scale investment and infrastructure projects, and enhance business contacts between the entrepreneurs of the two countries," he said. The ambassador emphasized the importance of high-level diplomatic engagements, including: • Regular visits by government and parliamentary delegations. • Enhanced cooperation within international organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Given regional security challenges, both nations are committed to: • Counterterrorism efforts. • Combating extremism and transnational crime. • Intelligence-sharing and joint training programs. "We continue the dialogue and exchange of experience on issues of regional stability, combating terrorism, extremism, and transnational crime," he stated. People-to-people connections remain vital for long-term friendship. Key initiatives include: • Student exchange programs between Uzbek and Pakistani universities. • Cultural festivals showcasing music, art, and cuisine. • Youth engagement programs to foster mutual understanding. "It is crucial for our peoples, especially the youth, to get to know each other better—this is the foundation for strong friendship and sustainable interaction," the ambassador remarked. Ambassador Tukhtaev expressed optimism about the future of Uzbekistan-Pakistan relations, citing strong political will and public support. "I am confident that with the support of the leadership of Uzbekistan and Pakistan, and thanks to the friendly sentiments between our peoples, we will be able to elevate bilateral relations to a qualitatively new level," he concluded. As both nations move forward, the focus remains on enhancing connectivity, boosting trade, and fostering cultural exchanges—ensuring a prosperous and mutually beneficial partnership for years to come.

Russia condemns United
States attack on Iran

The consequences of this action, including potential radioactive effects, have yet to be determined. However, it is already evident that a dangerous escalation is underway, one that threatens to further destabilise security both in the region and globally

MOSCOW: Russia resolutely condemns the United States' strikes on several nuclear facilities in the Islamic Republic of Iran, carried out in the early hours of June 22, following recent attacks by Israel. This reckless decision to launch missile and aerial strikes on the territory of a sovereign state, regardless of the justifications offered, constitutes a blatant violation of international law, the UN Charter, and relevant resolutions by the UN Security Council, which has consistently and unequivocally deemed such actions unacceptable. Particularly concerning is the fact that the strikes were executed by a permanent member of the UN Security Council. The consequences of this action, including potential radioactive effects, have yet to be determined. However, it is already evident that a dangerous escalation is underway,

one that threatens to further destabilise security both in the region and globally. This has drastically increased the likelihood of a larger conflict in the Middle East, a region already plagued by numerous crises. The attacks on Iranian nuclear facilities have dealt a substantial blow to the global non-proliferation regime built around the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which raises particular concerns. They have significantly undermined both the credibility of the NPT and the integrity of the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) monitoring and verification mechanisms that underpin it. We expect the IAEA leadership to respond promptly, professionally, and transparently, avoiding vague language or efforts to hide behind political 'equidistance.' An unbiased and objective report from the Director General is required, to be submitted for consideration at the Agency's upcoming special session. Obviously, the UN Security Council must take a firm stance as well. Confrontational and destabilising actions taken by the United States and Israel must be collectively rejected. We call for an immediate end to aggression and for stepping up efforts to bring the situation back onto a peaceful, diplomatic track. — DNA

Surging travel
in Europe
spikes concerns

FOREIGN DESK

MADRID: Suitcases rattle against cobblestones. Selfie-snappers jostle for the same shot. Ice cream shops are everywhere. Europe has been called the world's museum, but its record numbers of visitors have also made it ground zero for concerns about overtourism. Last year, 747 million international travelers visited the continent, far outnumbering any other region in the world, according to the UN's World Tourism Barometer. Southern and Western Europe welcomed more than 70 percent of them. As the growing tide of travelers strains housing, water and the most Instagrammable hotspots

in the region, protests and measures to lessen the effects of overtourism have proliferated. Here's a look at the issue in some of Europe's most visited destinations. What's causing overtourism. Among factors driving the record numbers are cheap flights, social media, the ease of travel planning using artificial intelligence and what UN tourism officials call a strong economic outlook for many rich countries that send tourists despite some geopolitical and economic tensions. Citizens of countries like the US, Japan, China and the UK generate the most international trips, especially to popular destinations, such as Barcelona in Spain and Venice in Italy. They swarm these places seasonally, creating uneven demand for housing and resources such as water. Despite popular backlash against the crowds, some tourism officials believe they can be managed with the right infrastructure in place. Italy's Tourism Minister Daniela Santanchè said she thinks tourism flows at crowded sites such as Florence's Uffizi Galleries that house some of the world's most famous artworks could be better managed with AI, with tourists able to buy their tickets when they book their travel, even months in advance, to prevent surges.

Tens of thousands join
pro-Palestinian marches

Thousands also gathered outside a French trade fair near Paris attended by Israeli defence firms, calling for an end to war profiteering and Israel's offensive in Gaza

LONDON: Tens of thousands of pro-Palestinian protesters marched in European cities calling for an end to the war in Gaza, hours before President Donald Trump said the US military had attacked three Iranian nuclear sites Sunday. In London, AFP journalists saw tens of thousands of protesters, who waved Palestinian flags as they marched through the British capital clad in keffiyeh scarves. In Berlin, more than 10,000 people gathered in the centre of the city in support of Gaza, according to police figures. And in the Swiss capital Bern, march organisers estimated that 20,000 people rallied in front of the national parliament, urging the government to back a ceasefire. Thousands also gathered outside a French trade fair near Paris attended by Israeli defence firms, calling for an end to war profiteering and Israel's offensive in Gaza. There have been monthly protests in the British capital since the start of the 20-month-long war between Israel and Hamas, which has ravaged Gaza. This Saturday, protesters there carried signs including "Stop arming Israel" and "No war on Iran" as they marched in the sweltering heat. "It's important to remember that people are suffering in Gaza. I fear all the focus will be on Iran now," said 34-year-old Harry Baker. "I don't have great love for the Iranian regime, but we

are now in a dangerous situation," he said, adding that this was his third pro-Palestinian protest. Saturday's marches came after Trump announced on social media that the US military had carried out a "very successful attack" on three Iranian nuclear sites. The US president added that after the strikes Iran "must now agree to end this war". Tehran had said Saturday that more than 400 people had been killed in Iran since Israel launched strikes last week claiming its arch-foe was close to acquiring a nuclear weapon — which Iran denies. Some 25 people have been killed in Israel, according to official figures. One marcher in London, a 31-year-old Iranian student who did not want to share her name, told AFP she had family in Iran and was "scared". "I'm worried about my country. I know the regime is not good but it's still my country," she said. Gaza is suffering from famine-like conditions according to UN agencies in the region following an Israeli aid blockade. Gaza's civil defence agency has reported that hundreds have been killed by Israeli forces while trying to reach the US- and Israeli-backed aid distribution sites. "People need to keep their eyes on Gaza. That's where the genocide is happening," said 60-year-old protester Nicky Marcus. — Agencies

Pakistan slams
India's IWT stance

MONITORING DESK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Saturday strongly condemned Indian Home Minister Amit Shah's assertion that the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) "will never be restored," calling it a blatant breach of international law and a dangerous precedent. "The statement reflects a brazen disregard for the sanctity of international agreements," Foreign Office Spokesperson Shafqat Ali Khan said in a statement issued in response to Shah's comments. India put into "abeyance" its participation in the 1960 treaty, which governs the usage of the Indus river system, after 26 civilians in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) were killed in what Delhi described as an act of terror. The treaty guaranteed water access for 80% of Pakistan's farms through three rivers originating in India. Pakistan has denied involvement in the incident, but the accord remains dormant despite a ceasefire agreed upon by the two nuclear-armed neighbours last month following their worst fighting in decades. Speaking to the Times of India, the Indian home minister said that India will never restore the Indus Waters Treaty with Islamabad, and the water flowing to Pakistan will be diverted for internal use. "We will take water that was flowing to Pakistan to Rajasthan by constructing a canal. Pakistan will be starved of water that it has been getting unjustifiably," said Shah, referring to the northwestern Indian state. "The Indus Waters Treaty is not a political arrangement, but an international treaty with no provision for unilateral action," said the FO spokesperson. "India's illegal announcement to hold the treaty in abeyance constitutes a clear violation of international law, the provisions of the treaty itself, and the fundamental principles governing inter-state relations."

