



Islamabad POST

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UN chief warns of cycle of retaliation after US bombs Iran

Detailed News On Page-08

Pak slams US strikes on Iran's nuclear sites

Detailed News On Page-08



Budget 2025-26 balanced, Friendly says Aurangzeb

Detailed News On Page-08



NSC meeting

Pak slams aggression against Iran

Reiterating Pakistan's principled stance, the NSC emphasized the urgent need for de-escalation and the resolution of disputes through dialogue and diplomacy in accordance with the UN Charter

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The National Security Committee (NSC), chaired by Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, convened to deliberate on the escalating regional tensions following Israel's military aggression against Iran. The Committee strongly condemned Israel's reckless acts of aggression, which have dangerously heightened tensions in an already volatile region. It noted with regret that these attacks coincided with a period of constructive negotiations between Iran and the United States, undermining diplomatic efforts aimed at regional stability. The NSC reaffirmed Iran's inherent right to self-defense, as enshrined in the United Nations Charter. Expressing deep sorrow over the loss of innocent lives, the Committee extended heartfelt condolences to the Government and people of Iran and prayed for the swift recovery of those injured. The NSC voiced grave concern over Israel's targeted attacks on Iranian nuclear facilities in Fordow, Natanz, and Isfahan on 22 June, which constitute a clear violation of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) resolutions, international law, and the UN Charter. Such actions risk further destabilizing the region and must be unequivocally rejected by the international community. Reiterating Pakistan's principled stance, the NSC emphasized the urgent need for de-escalation and the resolution of disputes through dialogue and

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Iran's supreme leader asks Putin to do more

NEWS DESK

TEHRAN: Iran's supreme leader sent his foreign minister to Moscow on Monday to ask President Vladimir Putin for more help from Russia after the biggest US military action against the Islamic Republic since the 1979 revolution over the weekend. US President Donald Trump and Israel have publicly speculated about killing Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and about regime change, a step Russia fears could sink the Middle East into the abyss. While Putin has condemned the Israeli strikes, he has yet to comment on the US attacks on Iranian nuclear sites though he last week called for calm and offered Moscow's services as a mediator over the nuclear programme. A senior source told Reuters that Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi was due to deliver a letter from Khamenei to Putin, seeking the latter's support.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs National Security Committee meeting in Islamabad on 23 June, 2025. - DNA

Ishaq Dar to visit UAE

ABID RAZA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar Visit to UAE for 12th Session of Pakistan-UAE Joint Ministerial Commission Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister of Pakistan Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar will lead Pakistan delegation to the 12th session of Pakistan-UAE Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC), scheduled in Abu Dhabi on 24 June 2025. The JMC serves as the highest institutionalized platform for bilateral cooperation between Pakistan and the UAE. The upcoming session will take forward the agenda of deepening strategic, economic and development cooperation between the two brotherly countries. Pakistan delegation, led by DPM/FM, will comprise secretaries and senior officials from key ministries

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Pakistan, Uzbekistan vow to boost bilateral ties

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Uzbekistan have reaffirmed the resolve to transform their longstanding diplomatic ties into robust economic and industrial partnerships. The commitment was expressed during meeting between Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Pakistan Alisher Tukhtaev and Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Industries and Production Haroon Akhtar Khan in Islamabad today (Monday). The meeting emphasized collaboration in public

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NA speech

'There'll be no one left when they come for us'

Bilawal demands end to Israeli aggression

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Former foreign minister and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, citing the world's silence on Israeli aggression against neighbouring Iran, has warned that "if we don't speak out for Iranians, there will be no one left when they come for us." "First, they came for the Palestinians, but the world did not speak out because they weren't Palestinian. Then they came for the Lebanese, but we did not speak out because we were not Lebanese. And then they came for the Yemenis, but we did not speak out because we're not from Yemen," Bilawal said while speaking during a National Assembly session on Monday. "Now, they've come for Iran. If we do not speak out, there will be no one left when they come for us. The Israeli regime's aggression across the region must be stopped," he added while warning that ever-expanding war being purported by Is-

rael's genocidal had the potential to "drag every towards World War III". The former FM's remarks — a reference to Pastor Martin Niemöller's poem First They Came — come against the backdrop of an exponential increase in the Middle East turmoil due to Israel's attack on Iran — a situation further exacerbated by the US strikes on Tehran's nuclear facilities. The PPP chief has led Pakistan's diplomatic offensive, which saw the high-level diplomatic delegation visiting the US and Europe, after last month's armed conflict with India following New Delhi's cross-border strikes after an attack in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir's (IIOJK) Pahalgam. In retaliation, Pakistan launched Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos and downed six IAF fighter jets, including three Rafales, and dozens of drones. After at least 87 hours, the war between the two nuclear-armed nations ended on May 10 with a ceasefire agreement brokered by the US.

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Briefs

Pakistan condemns Church attack in Syria

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Strongly Condemns Terrorist Attack on Church in Damascus. Pakistan strongly condemns the heinous suicide bombing at the Mar Elias Church in the Dweila neighbourhood of Damascus, Syria, on 22 June 2025, which resulted in the loss of precious lives and left many injured. We express our heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims and pray for the speedy recovery of the injured. Pakistan stands in full solidarity with the brotherly people of Syria in this hour of grief, and reaffirms its strong support for efforts aimed at achieving lasting peace and stability in the country.

Air space ban for Indian planes extended

ABID RAZA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has extended its airspace ban for all Indian-registered and Indian-operated aircraft, including military planes, for another month, until 5:00am local time on July 24, the Pakistan Airports Authority said in a statement on Monday. According to a new NOTAM (Notice to Airmen), the restriction bars Indian commercial airlines, India-registered aircraft, and military flights from entering Pakistani airspace. Pakistan closed its air space for Indian airlines in a tit-for-tat move after New Delhi suspended critical Indus Water Treaty amid heightened bilateral tensions following the deadly Pahalgam attack in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

Iranian FM meets Putin

Russia slams US strikes on Tehran

This ... unprovoked aggression against Iran has no basis whatsoever and no justification whatsoever



CENTRELINE REPORT

MOSCOW: The Russian president on Monday condemned the US-Israel strikes on Tehran as he hosted Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi in Moscow. Furthermore, he said they are trying to help the Iranian people. "This ... unprovoked aggression against Iran has no basis whatsoever and no justification whatsoever." Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said on Monday that Iran has the full right to self-defence and called the strategic

partnership between Moscow and Tehran "unbreakable", state news agencies reported. Meanwhile, A fact-finding mission mandated by the United Nations said that some of Israel's strikes on Iran may have broken international humanitarian law, citing the killing of civilians in an apartment block and three aid workers in the capital Tehran. "Among those killed in Tehran were dozens of residents of an

apartment complex and three humanitarian workers from the Iranian Red Cross, while damaged sites included a clinic for children with autism and a hospital in Kermanshah," the investigative body said in a statement to journalists. "This, and the reported lack of effective advance warning by Israel, which may affect the population's ability to reach safety, raise serious concerns in relation to the principles of proportionality, distinction, and precaution under international humanitarian law."

Donald Trump monitors situation

US bases in Qatar, other Gulf states attacked

Iran also attacked US bases in Kuwait, Iraq and Bahrn also. The Iranian military has named the operation as 'Annunciation of Victory'

DNA

DOHA: In a major escalation, Iran has reportedly launched a missile strike targeting US military installations in Qatar, according to Israeli government sources. Eyewitnesses in Doha reported hearing a "massive explosion," with local authorities on high alert. Iran also attacked US bases in Kuwait, Iraq and Bahrn also. The Iranian military has named the operation as 'Annunciation of Victory'. The Israeli intelligence officials stated that Iran fired at least six ballistic missiles toward American bases in Qatar, though the extent of damage and casualties remains unclear. This attack comes just days after Tehran vowed to retaliate against US interests across the region, following recent American airstrikes on Iranian-linked targets. Qatari officials have not yet issued an official statement, but security forces have cordoned off areas near the alleged impact zones. The US military has not confirmed the attack, though sources indicate emergency protocols have been activated at Al Udeid Air Base—the largest

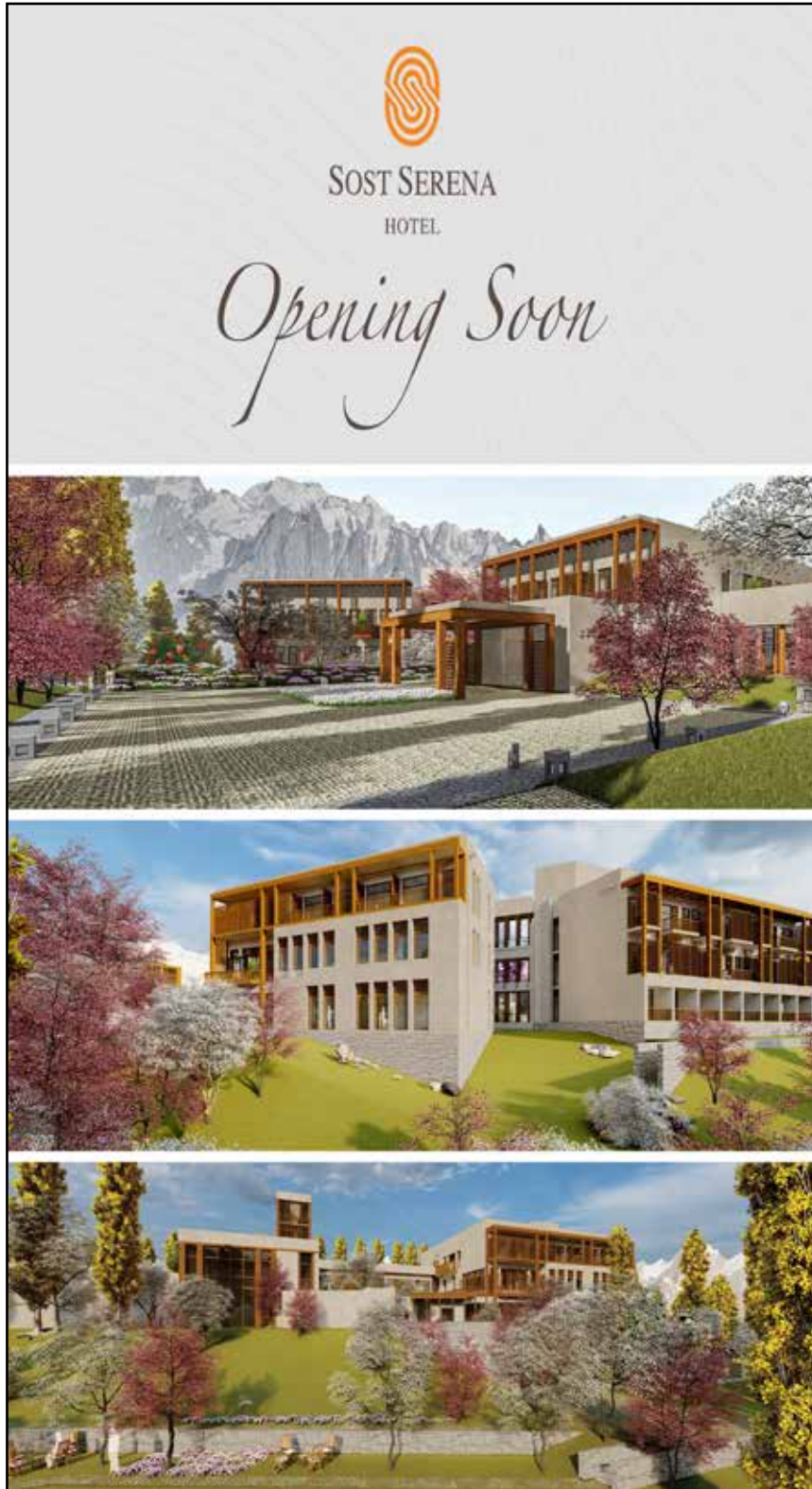
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Israel army says carried out strikes on military targets

APP

JERUSALEM: The Israeli army said it carried out strikes on Iranian military targets, including missile launch and storage sites, on Sunday. "Approximately 20 (Israeli airforce) fighter jets conducted intelligence-based strikes using over 30 munitions on military targets in Iran," the Israeli army said in a statement posted to Telegram. The attacks were carried out on "storage and missile launching infrastructure sites", as well as "military satellites and radar sites", it added. It came after the United States carried out massive air strikes that Washington said had

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Kundi concerned over dismissal of Social Welfare Deptt employees

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Monday expressed deep concern over the termination of employees from the Social Welfare Department and the closure of drug rehabilitation centers operated under the department. Calling the move regrettable, Governor Kundi criticized the provincial government for taking away jobs instead of creating employment opportunities. "Shutting down institutions instead of improving their performance is not the right course of action," he said. He emphasized that employees working in the rehabilitation centers for drug addicts should be provided with alternative employment. "On one hand, jobs are being sold, while on the other, existing employees are being rendered jobless," he added. The Governor reiterated that the Pakistan Peoples Party and the Governor House stand in solidarity with the affected employees of the Social Welfare Department. —APP

Robbers busted, stolen gold recovered

PESHAWAR: A notorious gang involved in a high-profile robbery in Sikanar Town area of Paharipora, here, has been apprehended by police. According to SP Faqirabad on Monday, the gang was responsible for a robbery that took place on April 19 at the residence of a senior political figure. The gang stole 27 tolas of gold from the house of PML-N leader Khadim Ali Yusufzai. His son is an employee in the office of the Deputy Chairman Senate. The robbery was committed during the absence of the family. During the investigation, the police recovered not only the stolen gold but also 7.5 million rupees, which the gang had received after selling the gold. One of the main suspects, identified as Shah Raza, is a resident of Swat. SP Faqirabad revealed that the accused used to check for locked houses and break in afterward. —APP

Khudian Khas to have varsity

KASUR: Speaker, Punjab Assembly, Malik Muhammad Ahmed Khan on Monday said a vocational university was being established in Khudian Khas and Rs 10 billion had been allocated in that regard. The speaker said latest vocational education would imparted to the student in the university including science, technology and engineering. He said this while inaugurating Rehmat hospital in Khudian. Minister of State, Malik Rasheed Ahmed Khan was present on the occasion. The speaker said the people of the area would be able to get latest medical facilities in the hospital. The speaker announced that motorway would be established in the area soon, adding steps had been taken to establish Boys degree College in the area. The state minister said that the PML-N led government was taking practical measures to provide latest medical facilities to people at their doorsteps. —APP



GUJRAT : President FPCCI Atif Ikram Sheikh, addressing the inaugural ceremony of a well-known pharmacy and superstore chain's new branch. Patron-in-Chief UBG, S.M. Tanveer, Group Leader Gujrat Chamber, Haji Nasir, Secretary General UBG, Zafar Bakhtawari, Member UBG Central Core Committee, Ahsan Bakhtawari, President Gujrat Chamber, Muhammad Muneer Peshawari, Group Leader Sargodha Chamber, Amir Atta Bajwa, Senior Vice Chairman UBG, Momin Ali Malik, Former President Islamabad Chamber of Small Traders and Small Industries, Malik Nadeem; Vice President FPCCI, Tariq Khan Jadon and others present on stage.—DNA

FPCCI committed to resolve problems of business community

"I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Bakhtawari family who have transformed this venture into a national brand: Atif Ikram

DNA

GUJRAT: President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI), Atif Ikram Sheikh, stated that the FPCCI is actively raising its voice to resolve all issues faced by the business community and is playing a role in policymaking in consultation with traders. He was speaking at the inauguration

ceremony of a new branch of a renowned pharmacy and superstore in Gujrat. He said that the business community is the backbone of the national economy. Institutions like this superstore chain, which have invested during difficult times, deserve appreciation. "I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Bakhtawari family who have transformed this venture into a national brand. On the recommendation of Ahsan Bakhtawari, the Federation will take up all issues related to customs and retailers with the FBR tomorrow, in a meeting with all stakeholders, to find a lasting solution." UBG Patron-in-Chief S.M. Tanveer said that visionary businessmen like Zafar Bakhtawari and Ahsan Bakhtawari are the pride of UBG. "Their leadership, service, and patriotism are exemplary. The Gujrat branch of their organization is on

par with the most modern stores. It is heartening to see that world-class facilities are being provided in our country. Zafar Bakhtawari was a close associate of my late father, and his services are unforgettable. We will continue to raise our voice for traders' rights on every platform." Gujrat Chamber Group Leader Haji Nasir said that institutions like this, when they come to a city, do not just become part of the market but also help uplift the standard of living. "We are thankful to Ahsan Bakhtawari for choosing Gujrat for this project. We will extend full cooperation at the chamber level." Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that S.M. Tanveer and Atif Ikram Sheikh should take notice of raids on retailers and arrange a meeting of the Islamabad Retailers Association with the Member Customs and Chairman FBR to find a permanent solution to

this critical issue. "Several brands, including ours, have invested in the country despite tough economic conditions, and it is the state's responsibility to protect them. Pakistan is everything to us, and we have full confidence in our armed forces to ensure peace and stability." He added that this Gujrat store will introduce a new standard with modern facilities, trained staff, and excellent service standards. "Customer trust is our real strength, and we will never disappoint them." The ceremony was attended by Waqar Bakhtawari, Abid Bakhtawari, Haris Bakhtawari, FPCCI Vice President Tariq Jadon, Jawad Kazmi, Malik Nadeem, Khalid Chaudhry, Saifur Rehman, Rauf Mukhtar, Asad Aziz, Kareem Aziz Malik, Malik Suhail Hussain, Kashif Naeem Khokhar, and others.

Sindh adopts climate-smart agriculture

ISLAMABAD: With Sindh facing escalating climate disasters, government officials, scientists, and humanitarian organizations Monday called for an urgent shift toward climate-smart agriculture (CSA) to protect food security and livelihoods in the province during the Provincial Conference on Climate Change and Disaster Resilience. The conference, organized by CESVI Pakistan in collaboration with Welthungerhilfe (WHH), FRDP, PDMA Sindh, and academic institutions under the ECHO-funded BRAND Project, highlighted Sindh's growing climate vulnerabilities and presented actionable solutions. The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) delivered a sobering assessment, warning that rising temperatures, unpredictable rainfall patterns, and worsening water scarcity threaten to devastate Sindh's agriculture-dependent communities. The Chief Meteorologist stated that extreme heatwaves, erratic monsoons, and prolonged droughts are becoming more frequent, each amplifying disaster risks for the province's vulnerable populations. The conference unveiled groundbreaking research titled "Climate-Smart Agriculture as a Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy in Vulnerable Regions of Sindh," which demonstrated concrete success stories from across the province. The multi-district study revealed that farmers adopting drought-resistant crops, efficient irrigation systems, and soil conservation techniques maintained 30% higher yields despite extreme weather conditions. Aisha Jamshed, Country Director of WHH, emphasized that these findings represent more than theoretical solutions, stating that real-world applications are already proving effective in the field. She stressed that scaling up these practices is critical to preventing mass hunger and displacement in the region. Shayan Shah, Director of PDMA Sindh, acknowledged the urgency of the situation, declaring that Sindh cannot afford delays in implementing climate resilience measures. Officials from the Sindh Environment & Climate Change Department pledged to accelerate the adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices, particularly in flood and drought-prone areas. The conference highlighted the disproportionate impact on small farmers who comprise 80% of Sindh's agricultural sector, women, and coastal communities who face heightened risks due to limited resources. Discussions also addressed how corporate water exploitation exacerbates shortages, calling for stricter regulations to ensure equitable water distribution.—DNA

Progress only possible through quality education: PM AJK

MUZAFFARABAD: Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has said that the dream of real development could be materialised only through the improvement of the education system. He expressed these views while talking to a high level delegation that called him here on Monday. Led by Minister for Higher Education Azad Kashmir Zafar Iqbal Malik, the delegation was comprised of Secretary Higher Education

Chaudhry Muhammad Tayyab, President Azad Kashmir college teachers Association (ACTA) Azad Tariq Saleem, Senior Vice President ACTA Dr. Zafar Iqbal, General Secretary ACTA Chaudhry Abdul Rahim and others. Speaking on the occasion, the Prime Minister said that steps were being taken to improve the quality of education in colleges across Azad Kashmir. He, however, maintained that the real change in the region could be achieved

through a combination of hard work, planning and consistency. Lauding the teachers' significant role in nation building, the PM said that the quality of education hinges on teachers' dedication and their commitment to the national cause. Reiterating his government's commitment to provide the best educational facilities to the citizens, the PM said, "If the quality of education improves, things can improve automatically". He said that promotion of

modern technology was the need of the hour. He suggested that teachers' organizations, intellectuals and educationists must form an effective forum to bring reforms in the education system, which was appreciated by the representatives of the ACTA present in the meeting. The PM assured the visiting delegation that the government was keen to solve the problems of the faculty in colleges. He said that education has been given priority in the budget. He stated that shortcomings in the system have been eliminated and things were moving in the right direction. He said that the fruits of the exemplary measures taken by the coalition government have now started reaching the ordinary people.—APP

Efforts afoot to ensure peaceful Muharram: Salman

DERA GHAZI KHAN: Punjab Minister for Health and Chairman Cabinet Committee on Law and Order Khawaja Salman Rafiq said on Monday that extraordinary security measures were being put in place across Punjab to ensure peaceful observance of Muharram ul Haram. The minister, leading the cabinet committee on law and order as its chairman, made these observations while presiding over a meeting with officials of divisional and district administration and police of DG Khan besides heads of different departments here. Commissioner Ashfaq Ahmad Chaudhry and Regional Police Officer (RPO)

informed that total 1360 processions and 4658 Majalis would be held across DG Khan division from first to 10th of Muharram ul Haram and all arrangements have been finalized to provide security cover. Security plan would also cover over 5000 Masajid, 581 Imambargah, and 2484 Madaris. They further informed that help from Pakistan Army and Rangers has also been sought to throw an impenetrable security blanket over DG Khan division. Pakistan travel guides DPOs and deputy commissioners of Layyah, DG Khan, Kot Addu, Muzaffargarh, and Rajanpur districts also gave briefing to

the cabinet committee. Khawaja Salman Rafiq appealed all schools of thought to play their active role and ensure the code of conduct issued by the home department is honoured and followed in letter and spirit. The minister heaped praise on Ulema from all schools of thought, adding that all the peace committees were active and playing a positive role. Punjab Home secretary Ahmad Javed Qazi said that central control room was receiving reports from all the districts, adding that officials would remain deployed till the conclusion of all processions and Majalis.—DNA

Ashrafi condemns attempts to divide Muslims, stresses unity

LAHORE: Pakistan Ulama Council (PUC) Chairman Hafiz Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi has strongly condemned all attempts to divide the Muslim Ummah and warned that no greater oppression exists than efforts aimed at sowing discord among Muslims. Pakistan real estate listings Talking to the media at Town Hall on Monday, along with other religious leaders, police and administration officials, he emphasized that in today's complex global landscape, the unity of Muslims is not just a religious necessity but a strategic imperative. He remarked that in the Iran-Israel conflict, there are only two sides, one represents the Muslims, and the other

is led by Netanyahu. While seated beside Allama Rai Zafar, a fellow religious scholar with whom he shares a long history of advocacy for harmony and unity, Ashrafi reflected on the struggle for unity that has spanned decades. "We have grown old while talking about Muslim unity. There was a time when speaking about religious harmony would invite a bullet, today, one may still face a punch for saying it. Yet, we never stopped then, and we will not stop now," he declared. He called on scholars and clerics to play their role in spreading awareness and educating the public on the values of unity, mutual respect, and lawful religious expression. In a firm and

unequivocal statement on foreign policy, Ashrafi declared that the government of Pakistan and the people of Pakistan hold a united stance regarding Iran. He said that whether it is Israel or the United States, any military aggression against Iran is categorically unacceptable. Referring to the recent statement issued by Pakistan's Foreign Office, Ashrafi stated that this was not just a diplomatic position, but a reflection of the collective conscience of the Muslim world. "This is not merely a government issue, this is the concern of the entire Muslim Ummah. It is not about politics, it is about Islam," he asserted. Ashrafi lamented the brutal killing of Muslims around

the world, citing the death of over 60,000 innocent Muslims, including children, women, and the elderly, within the last two years. He condemned the global silence in the face of this oppression and denounced the aggressors who, without accountability, continue to unleash violence upon Muslim populations. He emphasized that such barbarism cannot be tolerated and that it is the duty of every Muslim to stand against it. He also pointed to past incidents where Pakistan faced hostile actions, implying that certain attacks were carried out using foreign-made weaponry. "The weapons used against us were not made in India,"

he noted, suggesting involvement of broader international elements. Despite this, Ashrafi praised the bravery and resilience of Pakistan's armed forces, describing them as the shield of the nation who stood firm and repelled aggression. Pakistan real estate listings He referred to verses from the Holy Qur'an about the Battle of Badr, saying that past victories came not from weapons or numbers, but from faith and sincerity. "Our leaders prayed at tahajjud seeking Allah's help, and Allah granted us a clear victory," he said. He urged Muslims to return to their faith, as true strength comes from Allah, not worldly power.—APP

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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

Rawalpindi.....9270601-20



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115

PIA Flight Info.....114


PIA Cargo.....9280979

Railway Inquiry.....117

Railway Exchange9270831-5

WASA Rawalpindi.....5555489

CAA.....9281092



Hospitals

CMH.....5611111

MH.....561116

Cantt Hospital...9270907-11

DHQ.....5556311-4


RGH.....9290301-7

Holy Family.....9290322-7

PIMS.....9261170-79

Polyclinic.....9218300-09

Shifa International 4603666



Departments

CDA.....9221334-43

CDA.....9208301-04

Met Office.....9250360-6

MDA.....5555864

TMA.....5770886

Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

UK trade envoy visits Pakistan to boost trade

The UK Trade Envoy to Pakistan, Mohammad Yasin MP, has begun a 3-day visit to Karachi and Islamabad to encourage investment and long-term economic co-operation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The visit follows the UK's launch of its Growth Mission and Modern Industrial Strategy. Invest 2035 sets out a ten-year plan to provide certainty and stability for businesses in high growth sectors such as clean energy, digital technologies, life sciences and advanced manufacturing.

Over 200 British companies are operating in Pakistan, with the top five contributing around one percent of Pakistan's GDP. The UK is Pakistan's largest European trading partner and top source of foreign direct investment. Mohammad Yasin MP, UK Trade Envoy to Pakistan, said: The UK and Pakistan already enjoy deep commercial ties, but there is much more we can achieve together. It is a place close to my heart, and I have seen over many years the enormous potential to help both our countries prosper. During my visit, I look forward to supporting efforts that unlock new opportunities and drive growth."

Mr Yasin will meet senior government stakeholders including Jawad Paul, Secretary for Commerce, and Minister Chaudhry Salik Hussain, Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis. He will also meet business leaders to strengthen trade and encourage investment.

Mr Yasin's visit will help pave the way for the UK-Pakistan Trade Dialogue, due to launch later this year. The Dialogue will offer a platform to grow exports, increase investment flows, address business environment concerns and identify opportunities for greater market access.



RAWALPINDI: Traffic police official removing wrongly parked vehicle on Murree Road with the help of lifter.

Ulema, religious leaders unanimously adopt code of conduct

ISLAMABAD: In a bid to ensure peace, sectarian harmony, and national unity during the sacred month of Muharram 1447 AH, a high-level consultative meeting of prominent religious scholars and spiritual leaders from Islamabad and Rawalpindi was held on Monday at the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony. The meeting was chaired by Federal Minister Sardar Muhammad Yousaf, who emphasized the vital role of religious scholars in maintaining peace during Muharram, as witnessed in previous years. Speaking to the participants, the minister said a comprehensive joint strategy has been formulated in consultation with Ulema and Mashaikh to promote sectarian tolerance, brotherhood, and inter-sect unity across the country. He stressed the importance of conducting similar coordination meetings at provincial and district levels to strengthen this approach nationwide. "There is an urgent need for unity and consensus among scholars from all schools of thought to safeguard the spirit of inter-sect harmony and address the evolving national and global challenges," the minister said. Federal Minister Sardar Muhammad Yousaf announced a unified code of conduct, which includes the following key points: all religious schools of thought will make sincere efforts to foster love, tolerance, and mutual understanding; reverence will be maintained for the sacred personalities of all sects, avoiding any form of disrespect or derogatory remarks; scholars, preachers, and writers will adopt balance and restraint in their speeches and writings, refraining from any provocative content that may hurt others' sentiments; sectarian disputes will be resolved through consultation, understanding, and serious dialogue; no derogatory remarks will be made from public platforms against opposing sects; full respect will be shown to the Mothers of the Believers (RA), Companions of the Prophet (RA), Ahl al-Bayt (RA), saints, Tabiun, and all elders of the Ummah, none will be subjected to criticism or insult; and any hateful or inflammatory material harming sectarian or interfaith harmony, especially on social media, should be reported through the following official platforms - FIA Cyber Crime, PTA Complaint Portal, Helpline: 0800-55055 and Police Helpline: 15; all religious scholars will remain united on national, religious, and public matters and Ulema and preachers are encouraged to highlight the sacrifices of the Kashmiri and Palestinian people in the context of Karbala and speak out against Israeli aggression and global injustices. In addition, the federal government also appealed to provincial administrations to replicate such meetings at their respective levels to ensure an atmosphere of peace and harmony throughout the country during Muharram. —DNA

Workshop on building inclusive and resilient youth communities

ISLAMABAD: The University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (UAJK) proudly hosted a two-day Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop on Monday, aimed at "Advancing Inclusive and Resilient Youth Communities through Preventing Violent Extremism." The workshop was organized by the Paigham-e-Pakistan Center for Peace, Reconciliation and Reconstruction Studies, Islamic Research Institute (IRI), International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI) in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA), the European Union, and the Prime Minister's Youth Programme, said a press release. The opening ceremony was inaugurated by Prof. Dr. Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, Director General, IRI, who delivered a thought-provoking keynote address. He emphasized the pressing need to empower Pakistan's youth through civic education, critical thinking, and responsible digital behavior to counter growing challenges such as radicalization, misinformation, and identity crises. Throughout the workshop, the participants comprising youth leaders, university faculty, and student representatives engaged in structured training modules led by Dr. Rustam Khan, Deputy Director and Project Manager at IRI. The interactive sessions included group activities, scenario-building exercises, and personal storytelling.—APP

Empowering women a must for economic uplift

DNA

LAHORE: Women empowerment is of immense significance in the global economy, including Pakistan, as it has far-reaching implications on various aspects of economic growth, development, and sustainability. Pakistan travel guides Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) Chief Executive Officer Mian Kashif Ashfaq stated this while addressing a summer internship orientation programme 2025 organised under the aegis of Chenone Interiors here on Monday. The CEO was of the view that ensuring empowered and equal opportunities to women, can lead to several positive outcomes which benefit not only women but also society and the overall economy. He said gender equality and women's empowerment were strongly associated with increased economic growth and productivity. "If given access to economic opportunities, the women can contribute effectively to the labour force; driving innovation and entrepreneurship; and increasing the overall output and productivity of a country," he remarked. Kashif Ashfaq said empowering women in the workplace and promoting gender diversity fosters a more inclusive and creative work environment. Diverse teams are more likely to generate innovative solutions and adapt to changing market demands, leading to enhanced business performance and competitiveness, he added. On the occasion, the company's General Manager (Interiors) Ms Maria Tauqir said, by empowering women, societies tap into a previously underutilized talent pool while skill development programmes targeting women can help unlock their potential and expertise, contributing to a more skilled and capable workforce. He said empowering women economically can lift families and communities out of poverty. She stressed the need for actively engaging women in decision-making processes and giving them access to resources and opportunities, so that the societies become more peaceful and cohesive.

Pervaiz slams opposition for disrupting Bilawal's speech

ISLAMABAD: Former National Assembly Speaker and senior PPP leader Raja Pervaiz Ashraf on Monday criticized the opposition for disrupting Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's speech, saying such actions damage the dignity of Parliament and distract from important budget discussions. Speaking during the debate on Senate recommendations for the federal budget, he said that budget sessions allow lawmakers to speak on a range of issues — including constituency matters and political views — without interruption. However, he added that problems arise when members use the floor for personal attacks or target political opponents. Raja Pervaiz praised Bilawal's speech, calling it "comprehensive, patriotic, and thoughtful." He said it reflected the vision of a national leader who had represented Pakistan on the world stage, despite not holding a government post. Pakistan real estate listings

"The entire world saw how Bilawal Bhutto defended Pakistan internationally," he said. "If the opposition asks what benefit that brought, I say — ask the 250 million Pakistanis who take pride in how Bilawal represented them. Criticizing the opposition further, he said, "Their issue isn't with Bilawal's speech — they're frustrated because his achievements highlight their own shortcomings." Meanwhile, senior PPP leader Syed Naveed Qamar clarified the process of including Senate recommendations in the federal budget. He explained that while the Senate debates the Finance Bill, it does not vote on it. Its input is advisory and is reviewed by relevant committees and departments. He said the Operations Committee, along with other departments, examined the Senate's suggestions line by line. "We included as much as we could within the financial and legal limits," he said.—APP

PUC issues Paigham-e-Pakistan to ensure peace during Muharram

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Ulema Council issued Paigham-e-Pakistan Code of Conduct to ensure peace, law and order during the month of Muharram-ul-Haram with the coordination of leading scholars of all the religious sects of the country. In the chair of Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, Chairman Pakistan Ulema Council, President International Interfaith Harmony Council, the leadership of different religious sects issued Paigham-e-Pakistan Code of Conduct. The Ulema Mashaykh from all the religious sections of the country agreed to follow the code of conduct to ensure peace and religious harmony during the month of Muharram-ul-Haram. The religious scholars said that any individual violating the code of conduct will not be supported at any forum. With the coordination and support of Ulema-Mashaykh of different religious sections of the country, Paigham-e-Pakistan Code of Conduct was issued here in the chair of Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi. The meeting was attended by leading Ulemas Mashayakh of the country including Allama Arif Wahidi, Pir Naqeebur Rehman, Sahibzada Hassan Hasibur Rehman, Maulana Nauman Hashir, Allama Tahirul Hassan, Maulana Abu Bakar Sabri, Maulana Munir Rehman, Qari Mubashar Raheemi, Maulans Tahir Aqeel Awan, Maulans Aziz Ur Rehman Mahavia, Maulans Matloob Mahar, Maulana Qasim Sangi and others. The meeting vehemently condemned Israeli aggression against Iran adding that Israel and its allied forces working for the conspiracy of Greater Israel adding that Iran is Pakistan's neighboring Muslim country and Iran has the right as per International Laws to protect itself. The meeting noted that Islamic world has adopted a solid stance in the leadership of Saudi Arabia and the position of Pakistan on Iran situation is according to the wish of the people of Pakistan. The meeting announced to assure Iranian people and the government of Iran full support of Pakistan and it's people. The meeting also lauds the efforts on part of Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Russia for making efforts to conclude the war. The meeting also demanded of China, Russia, United Nations, European Union and OIC to play their respective role for the rights of the people of Palestine. The world community should play its responsible role against the conspiracies of India and Israel. The meeting also issued Code of Conduct to ensure peace, harmony and law and order in the country during the month of Muharram-ul-Haram.—DNA

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Briefs

QAA
holds two
workshops

ISLAMABAD: Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) of the Higher Education Commission has organised two capacity-building workshops at Aga Khan University, Karachi. According to official sources, the workshops brought together Directors of Quality Enhancement Cells from all public & private universities across Sindh and Balochistan. The events were part of QAA's national initiative to implement the new Quality Assurance Framework (PSG-2023), review progress on QAA targets assigned to degree-awarding institutions, and enhance understanding of revised HEC-QAD policies. These sessions followed earlier successful engagements in Punjab, Islamabad, GB, and AJK. Both programs concluded with certificate distribution, a guided tour of AKU's quality practices, and a collective reaffirmation to strengthen the quality assurance landscape in Pakistan. —APP

Cement exports
increase 21.60%
to \$287.946m

ISLAMABAD: The exports of cement witnessed an increase of 21.60 percent during the eleven months of the fiscal year 2024-25, as against the exports of the corresponding period of last year. The cement exports from the country were recorded at US \$287.946 million during July-May (2024-25) against the exports of US \$236.797 million during July-May (2023-24), according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). In terms of quantity, the cement export also rose by 29.67 percent from 6,183,181 metric tons to 8,017,978 metric tons, the data revealed. Meanwhile, year-on-year basis, the cement exports witnessed an increase of 6.15 percent during the month of May 2025 as compared to the same month of last year. The exports of cement from the country during May 2025 were recorded at US \$34.236 million against the exports of US \$32.251 million in May 2024. On a month-on-month basis, cement exports also surged by 44.80 percent during May 2025 when compared to the exports of US \$23.644 million in April 2025, the PBS data revealed. It is pertinent to mention here that the overall exports from the country increased by 5.15 percent during the first eleven months of the current fiscal year as compared to the corresponding months of last year. —APP

IRSA releases
268,391
cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Monday released 268,391 cusecs water from various rim stations with an inflow of 349,159 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1461.52 feet which was 59.52 feet higher than the dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 212,400 cusecs and 153,500 cusecs, respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1170.95 feet, which was 120.95 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 38,035 cusecs and 16,167 cusecs, respectively. —APP

Court Notice

In the Court of Naeem Shahbaz Senior Civil Judge (Family Division) Jhelum) suit For Dissolution of Marriage Basis of Khulah Case title: Haniza BB etc vs Kashif Jilil son of Muhammad Fazil resident of Badu Tehsil and District Jhelum (Presently Residing abroad) . As there is not possible to call the defendant through Summons in the instant suit so through proclamation in Newspaper, you are directed to appear in the court on 04.07.2025 at 08:00AM., otherwise ex-parte proceedings will be initiated.



ISLAMABAD: Tourist enjoying chair lift at Dino Valley in the Federal Capital, Dino Valley, a dinosaur-themed park near Islamabad, Pakistan, offers an exciting adventure for families and kids, Located about an hour's drive from Islamabad.

Korea-Pak technical collaboration gains momentum

In addition to senior faculty members and administrative staff from the University, a four-member delegation from Tongwon University, Republic of Korea, visited NSU to explore potential academic and training partnerships in various technology domains

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: To strengthen Pakistan's technical and vocational education landscape, a high-profile Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signing ceremony was held on Monday at the National Skills University Islamabad (NSU), presided over by Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui. The event marks a significant chapter in Pakistan's pursuit of technology-integrated skills development, fostering international collaboration in vocational and professional training. In addition to senior faculty members and administrative staff from the University, a four-member delegation from Tongwon University, Republic of Korea, visited NSU to explore potential academic and training partnerships in various technology domains. The Korean delegation emphasized the importance of Korean language proficiency as a prerequisite for education in Korea, underscoring that Pakistani students who meet this requirement could benefit from Korea's 'earn and

learn' model. This model, which combines vocational training with work opportunities, has garnered success and popularity in several countries, providing students with practical experience and a source of income while they study. In his address, Federal Minister Dr. Siddiqui expressed appreciation for the Korean delegation's interest in Pakistan and welcomed further engagements in skills development. "The Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training is fully committed to advancing technology-oriented training, especially in fields aligned with the fourth industrial revolution," he said. "We recognize the role of international partnerships in helping Pakistan's youth tap into global job markets while acquiring world-class competencies." The Minister also reaffirmed the government's commitment to enhancing cooperation with institutions such as NAVTTC (National Vocational and Technical Training Commission) and other development partners. These institutions play a crucial role in the development and implementation of vocational training programs, and their collaboration with NSU

and Tongwon University will further strengthen the vocational education landscape in Pakistan. His presence at the ceremony, in the capacity of Pro-Chancellor of NSU, was hailed as a historic moment by Prof. Dr. Muhammad Mukhtar, Vice Chancellor of NSU. This is a defining occasion for NSU," said Prof. Mukhtar. "The Pro-Chancellor himself presiding over today's session reflects the government's genuine interest in uplifting the technical and vocational training sector in Pakistan." Prof. Mukhtar also highlighted the university's ongoing progress, particularly the growing footprint of NSU through its sub-campus in Muridke, which aims to cater to the underserved youth of Punjab by offering industry-relevant certifications and degrees. Prof. Mukhtar also praised the Federal Minister's initiative of establishing the eagerly awaited National Skills University Islamabad Campus in Karachi. The collaboration with Tongwon University could serve as a template for how transnational educational partnerships can help reshape Pakistan's skills education infrastructure. Korea's longstanding expertise in

smart manufacturing, automation, electronics, and renewable energy technologies may prove vital in preparing Pakistani youth for high-demand global sectors. Moreover, the introduction of Korean language proficiency programs tied to opportunities abroad represents an innovative approach to labor mobility and global employability. If implemented systematically, it could significantly diversify Pakistan's expatriate workforce, which currently relies heavily on the Middle East for employment. This diversification could not only provide more opportunities for Pakistani workers but also strengthen Pakistan's ties with other regions, contributing to the country's global presence and influence. The Korean delegation also expressed their readiness to establish six Korean language centers under the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training. This initiative holds the promise of enhancing the global employability of Pakistani students, opening up new avenues for their career growth and contributing to the diversification of Pakistan's expatriate workforce. Since its

inception, NSU has emerged as Pakistan's first public sector skills university, offering both degree and skills programs in fields such as mechatronics, construction technology, and medical laboratory sciences. With the launch of the Muridke campus and increased engagement from international partners, NSU is positioning itself as a hub for future-ready education. The university's focus aligns with Pakistan Vision 2025, which emphasizes human capital development, innovation, and entrepreneurship. By merging traditional education with hands-on training and global exposure, NSU is crafting a blueprint for other institutions across the country. The Pro-Chancellor of the National Skills University Islamabad, Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, in his concluding remarks, emphasized that the government sees skills education not merely as an academic endeavour but as a national economic strategy. He assured continued ministry support for institutions like NSU, especially in expanding global pathways for Pakistani youth.

ANF arrests 6 smugglers with over 26 kg of drugs

RAWALPINDI: The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF), conducting nine operations across the country, recovered as many as 26.437 kilograms of drugs worth more than Rs 4.249 million and arrested six suspects, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman on Monday. He informed that 500 grams of opium were recovered from the possession of an accused near a University area, Islamabad. In another operation, 330 grams of hashish and 13 grams of ice were recovered from the possession of an accused near Punjab Chowk, Mansehra. The arrested accused confessed to selling drugs to students of educational institutions. As many as 864 grams of heroin and clonazepam capsules were recovered from the luggage of a passenger going to Dubai at Allama Iqbal International Airport. Similarly, 95 grams of ice-filled capsules were recovered from the stomach of a passenger going to Doha at Bacha Khan International Airport. As many as 50 capsules weighing 360 grams of ice were recovered from the stomach of a passenger going to Dubai at Islamabad International Airport. —APP

AIOU launches 2-Year Associate Degree Programs

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has taken another significant step towards the promotion of education by announcing the launch of 2-year Associate Degree Programs in 17 new disciplines. These programs will be available for admission from July 1, for the Fall 2025 semester. The primary objective of these programs is to provide students with quality education and connect them to better professional opportunities. Subjects in the social sciences will be offered under the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) system, enabling students

living in remote areas to access education. On the other hand, six programs in the field of science will be delivered through traditional face-to-face teaching methods, with special emphasis on laboratory work and practical training. For admission into ODL programs, candidates must have completed FA or an equivalent qualification while science subjects require FSC or an equivalent qualification. The new Associate Degree Programs will include: Business Administration, Economics, Library and Information Sciences, Sociology, English, Gender and Women's

Studies, Mass Communication, Urdu, Education, History, Pakistan Studies, Chemistry, Human Nutrition and Dietetics, Environmental Sciences, Physics, Mathematics and Statistics. According to the Director of Admissions, Syed Ziaul-Hasnain Nagvi, a key feature of these Associate Degree Programs is that graduates will be eligible for direct admission into the fifth semester of the four-year BS program. This not only saves students valuable time but also provides them with a golden opportunity for academic and professional advancement. —DNA

PM lauds diplomatic delegation

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday met with Minister for Climate Change Dr. Musadik Malik at the PM House, where matters related to the government climate policies and recent diplomatic efforts were discussed. During the meeting, Dr. Musadik Malik briefed the prime minister about the engagements of the diplomatic delegation. The prime minister paid tribute to Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and other members of the delegation for successfully exposing India's recent unprovoked military and water aggression before the world, and for their successful diplomatic tour of the United States and Europe. —APP

Pak exports to China surge

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's rice exports to China witnessed a remarkable 121% year-on-year increase in the first five months of 2025, signaling deeper trade ties and stronger agricultural cooperation under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), said Ghulam Qadir, Trade and Investment Counsellor at the Pakistani Embassy in China. Ghulam Qadir told China Economic Net that, as per data from the General Administration of Customs of China, from January to May 2025, Pakistan exported rice worth \$32.076 million to China, a significant leap

from \$14.53 million in the same period of 2024. The key driver of this growth was semi- or wholly-milled rice (commodity code 10063020), which alone accounted for \$26.68 million and 60,769 metric tons in volume. He attributes the surge to improved quality standards, competitive pricing, and the effectiveness of recent trade facilitation mechanisms, including tariff reductions and streamlined inspection procedures. Pakistan's long-grain varieties, especially Super Basmati and IRRI-6, have gained popularity among Chinese importers for their aroma, elongation, and adaptability in Chinese culinary applications. Muhammad

Ahsan, CEO of Al Falah Rice International, suggested that when compared to domestic Chinese rice varieties, Pakistani rice generally offers a higher milling yield rate of 68-70%, which is on par with, or slightly above, China's average of 66-68%, particularly in the case of hybrid japonica. This higher yield adds cost-efficiency for processors and enhances shelf presentation for retailers. He further said that data indicate that Pakistani rice in China is predominantly utilized in the retail market, especially among urban middle-class consumers seeking premium South Asian rice varieties. However, a growing portion—estimated at 30-35%—is also being absorbed by the food

processing industry, especially in ready-to-eat meals and instant rice dishes aimed at convenience-driven consumers. "Chinese importers are increasingly viewing Pakistan not only as a consistent supplier but also as a strategic partner for grain diversification, especially amid regional climatic uncertainties and price fluctuations in traditional sourcing countries," he added. Analysts believe that as bilateral agricultural cooperation deepens, stakeholders from both nations anticipate further integration in seed R&D, post-harvest technologies, and traceability systems—essential for sustaining this momentum and ensuring resilience in food security in the region.

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Pakistan’s recommendation for Trump’s Nobel Prize is premature

PAKISTAN'S recent recommendation that former U.S. President Donald Trump be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his supposed role in de-escalating tensions between India and Pakistan is not only premature but also deeply problematic. While Islamabad may credit Trump for his statements during the 2019 Pulwama-Balakot crisis, there is no concrete evidence that he played a decisive role in averting war. Moreover, Trump's foreign policy record—marked by unconditional support for Israel's brutal oppression of Palestinians and reckless aggression against Iran—makes him an unsuitable candidate for such a prestigious honor.

Pakistan's Foreign Minister has argued that Trump's "mediation" helped prevent further escalation between the two nuclear-armed neighbors after the Balakot airstrikes. However, no credible reports or official records confirm that Trump actively intervened to defuse tensions. India has consistently rejected third-party mediation in its disputes with Pakistan, making such claims dubious. Even if Trump made statements urging restraint, attributing the de-escalation solely to him ignores the behind-the-scenes diplomacy and regional stakeholders' efforts. The Nobel Committee requires demonstrable achievements for the Peace Prize—vague assertions do not suffice.

More disturbingly, Trump's tenure saw unprecedented U.S. support for Israel's violent policies against Palestinians. He recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital, emboldening further illegal settlements and annexations. His so-called "Peace Plan" was a blatant endorsement of apartheid, denying Palestinians their basic rights. Under his watch, Israel enjoyed unchecked aggression, including the 2018 Gaza protests massacre, where over 200 unarmed civilians were killed. Even now, as Gaza endures relentless bombardment and starvation under Netanyahu's far-right government, Trump's rhetoric continues to justify Israel's brutality. His recent statements praising Israel's assault as "a very good job" further disqualify him from any peace accolade. The Nobel Peace Prize cannot be awarded to someone who cheers on the slaughter of civilians.

Trump's reckless policies also escalated tensions with Iran. His withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA) and the assassination of General Qasem Soleimani brought the region to the brink of war. Recently, Israel's attack on Iran's consulate in Damascus—an act that was undoubtedly greenlit by Washington. Trump's maximalist approach to Iran has only fueled instability, making the Middle East more volatile. US attack on Iranian nuclear sites on June 23, 2025 is yet another violation of the international law committed by the super power spearheaded by Donald Trump. The Nobel Peace Prize is not a political tool to curry favor with powerful nations; it must honor genuine peacemakers. Trump's legacy is one of division, militarism, and disregard for human rights. Pakistan's recommendation, whether driven by diplomatic expediency or misplaced gratitude, lacks merit.

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OIC’s Istanbul meeting – more rhetoric, little action

THE recent meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in Istanbul was yet another display of hollow declarations rather than decisive action. While Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan delivered a fiery speech, condemning Israel's atrocities in Gaza and Iran, the gathering failed to produce any concrete plan to address the crises facing the Muslim world. The OIC foreign ministers repeated the same tired statements—expressing "deep concern," calling for "unity," and urging "international intervention"—but offered no real solutions. If this is the best the Muslim world's collective leadership can do, then the OIC risks becoming irrelevant in the face of escalating oppression and geopolitical turmoil.

President Erdoğan's speech was undoubtedly powerful, as he rightly slammed Israel's genocide in Gaza and its recent aggression against Iran. He called for Muslim unity, warning that division only serves the interests of the West. However, speeches alone do not save lives. The OIC has held multiple emergency meetings since October 7, yet Gaza remains under brutal siege, with over 45,000 Palestinians killed and millions displaced. Similarly, after Israel's attack on the Iranian consulate in Damascus, the OIC issued condemnations—but what next? If the organization cannot even enforce economic boycotts or coordinate military support for besieged nations, then what is its purpose?

The closed-door meeting of OIC foreign ministers was particularly disappointing. Instead of presenting a unified stance on the Iran-Israel confrontation, the bloc merely recycled generic calls for "restraint" and "dialogue." There was no discussion of collective defense mechanisms, no proposal for joint sanctions against Israel, and no plan to counter Western pressure. Iran, a key OIC member, faces constant threats from Israel and the U.S., yet the organization did not even commit to a concrete diplomatic or economic response. If the OIC cannot stand firmly behind its own members, how can it expect to influence global politics?

Some argue that merely holding this meeting was an achievement, given the immense pressure the OIC faces from the U.S. and its allies. True, many Muslim-majority nations are economically and militarily dependent on the West, making bold moves difficult. But if dependency means perpetual inaction, then the OIC is admitting its own impotence. The Arab and Muslim world possesses vast resources—oil, strategic geography, and a population of over 1.8 billion. Yet, instead of leveraging this power, the OIC remains a platform for empty statements. Compare this to the swift, unified Western response whenever one of their allies is threatened. When Russia invaded Ukraine, NATO and the EU mobilized billions in aid, weapons, and sanctions within days. Meanwhile, the OIC cannot even agree on a unified trade boycott of Israel, let alone meaningful intervention for Gaza. The Istanbul meeting has proven once again that the OIC is long on rhetoric and short on action.

US in - Peace out

Dr M Ali Hamza



The 2003 invasion against Iraq, based on fabricated weapons of mass destruction claims violated the UN Charter’s prohibition on aggressive war. The subsequent occupation saw systematic violations including the Abu Ghraib torture scandal: violating the Convention Against Torture, and indiscriminate airstrikes causing massive civilian casualties. The war displaced millions and destabilized the entire region, creating conditions for ISIS to rise

NO congress permission to engage with Iran, but US intervention in bilateral war is not unprecedented. Strikes of Trump’s Government on Iranian’s so called nuclear facilities and supporting Israel narrative aligns with US historical personality. The history records have evidences where over the past fifty years, the United States has engaged in several military interventions that have been widely criticized as illegitimate, destructive to global peace, and in violation of international law. These actions have often resulted in catastrophic humanitarian consequences, destabilized regions, and undermined the very international legal framework that the US helped to establish.

US involvement in Vietnam War peaked in the late 1960s with massive bombing campaigns: Operation Rolling Thunder, and ground troop deployments reaching 500,000 by 1968. The war violated fundamental principles of the UN Charter regarding the prohibition of aggressive war. The extensive use of chemical weapons like Agent Orange, which contaminated vast areas and caused generational health problems, constituted clear violations of the Geneva Protocol. The My Lai massacre and other atrocities represented grave breaches of international humanitarian law regarding civilian protection. But that’s not it. The 2003 invasion against Iraq, based on fabricated weapons of mass destruction claims violated the UN Charter’s prohibition on aggressive war. The subsequent occupation saw systematic violations including the Abu Ghraib torture scandal: violating the Convention Against Torture, and indiscriminate airstrikes causing massive civilian casualties. The war displaced millions and destabilized

the entire region, creating conditions for ISIS to rise. Still, it’s not it. The US has repeatedly orchestrated regime changes, violating sovereignty principles, from the 1973 Chile coup to 1980s Central America interventions supporting contra rebels in Nicaragua. These operations often involved training and funding forces committing human rights abuses, violating international law regarding non-intervention. Who does not know that the post 9/11 global war on terror saw numerous violations including: extraordinary rendition programs: i) violating the Convention Against Torture, ii) indefinite detention at Guantanamo: violating Geneva Conventions, iii) drone strikes causing disproportionate civilian casualties in Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia. The 2017 Raqqa offensive killed over 1,600 civilians through indiscriminate bombing, violating principles of distinction and proportionality. These interventions have consistently undermined international legal norms while failing to achieve stated objectives, instead creating power vacuums, humanitarian crises, and long-term instability. As UN Secretary-General Guterres noted, such actions represent failures to uphold commitments to protect civilians and maintain peace. The legacy includes millions displaced, entire regions destabilized, and the erosion of the rules-based international order. Let’s get to recent past few years. The world has witnessed catastrophic humanitarian crises in Gaza, the West Bank, and beyond, driven by Israeli military operations backed by unwavering US political and military support. The toll on civilian life, infrastructure, and basic survival has been staggering, with violations of international law widely docu-

mented. Since October 2023, Israeli attacks have killed over 50,144 Palestinians in Gaza, including 15,613 children. By mid-2025, estimates suggest the total exceeds 55,000, with thousands more buried under rubble. Unbelievably 1.9 million people: 85% of Gaza’s population, are internally displaced, many forced into Rafah before it too was besieged. Around 90% of homes damaged or destroyed, Hospitals, schools, and UN shelters repeatedly bombed, with 72 hospitals targeted, leaving only 10% of medical facilities functional, and 96% of water is undrinkable due to destroyed sanitation systems. But that’s not it. Reports tell that 91% of Gazans face acute hunger, with Israel blocking aid trucks despite 20,000+ tons of food waiting at borders. In June 2025, Israeli tank fire killed 50+ Palestinians waiting for flour in Khan Younis. The Biden and Trump administrations suspended funding to UNRWA, Gaza’s primary aid agency, based on unproven allegations, worsening famine conditions, and a topping to it, the US approved \$3 billion in offensive weapons military aid to Israel, with an additional \$20 billion approved in 2025, bypassing Congress. Regarding it, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) found “plausible genocide” in Gaza, yet US vetoed ceasefire resolutions and ignored ICJ. The data reveals a pattern of systematic violence enabled or supported by US, with civilians paying the highest price. From mass graves to engineered famine, these actions underscore the urgent need for accountability and an end of military aid to Israel. As the UN warns, “even war has rules” rules repeatedly broken with impunity. Thus, whenever US is in, the peace is out.

The Iran War: US and Israel face global and domestic backlash

Qamar Bashir



Domestically both Israel and USA are faced with severe public backlash. Ironically, as Israel claims to be acting in the interest of Jewish security, many Jews around the world now feel that jews are more safe in rest of the world than in Israel. A prominent Jewish leader in the UK declared recently that he had always felt safe in Britain, but now views Israel as one of the most dangerous places on Earth for Jews

ON June 13, 2025, the world witnessed a dangerous escalation in the Middle East when Israel launched an unprovoked and unilateral strike on Iran, using its advanced F-35 stealth aircraft to bomb high-profile military and civilian targets in Tehran. The attack claimed the lives of senior Iranian commanders, nuclear scientists, professors, and innocent civilians—including women, children, and the elderly. The justification? A vague and baseless accusation that Iran was imminently developing a nuclear weapon. However, that claim collapsed swiftly. In a decisive response, the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) clarified that the attack bore no relation to any IAEA findings. He categorically stated that Iran had not violated its obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and that there was no evidence of uranium enrichment reaching weapons-grade levels or any sign of Iran building a nuclear bomb. While acknowledging transparency issues, he emphasized they were not extraordinary when compared to inspections in other countries. The IAEA ultimately declared the Israeli assault a political decision devoid of nuclear justification.

This revelation stripped away the mask. Israel's motive was never disarmament—it was strategic domination. By dismantling Iran's infrastructure and decapitating its command structure, Israel aims to replicate Gaza's plight: a nation crippled, isolated, and humiliated. With unwavering backing from President Donald Trump, Israel seeks to erase Iran as a regional counterbalance once and for all. President Trump's role has been duplicitous. His public messaging fluctuates between boasts of "winning with Israel" and threats demanding Iran's surrender within two weeks—or face annihilation. This erratic behavior is a textbook case of psychological warfare, meant to sow confusion and pressure Iran's leadership into submission. Yet no article, of the UN Charter, no principle of international law, and no precedent in diplomacy legitimizes one sovereign nation threatening another with total destruction unless it complies. Trump's threats are not merely provocative—they are imperial commands cloaked in strategic language, a stark violation of international norms.

In stark contrast, the European Union has opted for diplomacy. The UK, France, and Germany have engaged in discussions with Iran's Foreign Minister, seeking a peaceful exit from the crisis. Iran, however, has drawn a firm red

line: negotiations are off the table until Israel halts its aggression. Until then, Tehran vows to defend its sovereignty, dignity, and freedom with full force. This divergence in response reflects a broader shift—power is no longer concentrated in Washington alone. New centers of global influence are emerging, and not all are aligned with U.S. militarism. Russia, long a traditional ally of Iran, has opted for neutrality. Preoccupied with its prolonged war in Ukraine—a conflict sustained by NATO and U.S. support—Moscow cited the absence of any formal military pact with Iran as the reason for abstaining. This silence is significant: even Russia refuses to be dragged into a conflict ignited by Tel Aviv and fanned by Washington. Meanwhile, China is executing a more calculated strategy. From Iraq to Libya, Syria to Afghanistan, Beijing has observed that every U.S.-led war depletes American economic, political, and military capital. The more America bleeds, the more China surges. Beijing's neutrality is not weakness—it is strategic wisdom. Let Washington entangle itself in yet another endless war while China accelerates its rise as a global superpower.

In this unfolding geopolitical drama, China quietly emerges as the silent victor—building trade alliances, fostering diplomacy, and projecting power without firing a single shot. In a significant yet understated development, President Trump held a closed-door meeting with Pakistan's Army Chief, Field Marshal Asim Munir, bypassing civilian leadership. While the official statement was vague and devoid of substance, the timing speaks volumes. With the conflict expected to escalate, the U.S. may seek Pakistani cooperation—covertly or overtly—for ground operations in the region. Though deeply unpopular among Pakistanis, such decisions often lie with military and intelligence agencies, not public will. This potential alignment poses grave risks for Pakistan, as any role against Iran could invite retaliatory strikes on major Pakistani cities. In this context, it is Pakistan—not just the U.S.—that must tread with extreme caution.

Domestically both Israel and USA are faced with severe public backlash. Ironically, as Israel claims to be acting in the interest of Jewish security, many Jews around the world now feel that jews are more safe in rest of the world than in Israel. A prominent Jewish leader in the UK declared recently that he had always felt safe in Britain, but now views Israel as one of the most dangerous places on Earth for

Jews. Across American social media platforms—from X to Facebook to TikTok—citizens are loudly protesting the use of their tax dollars and military lives for what they perceive as an Israeli war, not an American one. There is no congressional consensus, no popular mandate, no NATO support, and no UN resolution. This war is unauthorized, unmandated, and unsupported.

Europe too has shown restraint. Its citizens are weary of endless wars waged under U.S. pressure and driven by Israeli regional ambitions. Governments across the continent are resisting involvement, recognizing the immense human, economic, and moral costs of yet another Middle Eastern quagmire. As the fog of war thickens, one truth becomes undeniable: Israel and the United States are isolated. Trump's reckless foreign policy has alienated Canada, fractured Europe, weakened U.S. credibility at the UN, and emboldened adversaries. Meanwhile, China remains the calm observer—watching America deplete itself in yet another unwinnable military adventure.

In a world where legitimacy hinges on law, consensus, and multilateral cooperation, this war has none. It is an illegal act of aggression, risking widespread destabilization across the Middle East and further eroding America's standing on the global stage. Let us hope against hope that sanity might still prevail. History is replete with lessons—lessons the United States seems determined to ignore. It invaded Afghanistan in 2001 to overthrow the Taliban and impose its own governance. After two decades of war, trillions of dollars spent, and thousands of lives lost, the U.S. withdrew—only to hand the reins back to the same Taliban it once ousted, departing in humiliation and disgrace.

If the U.S. and Israel now place their boots on Iranian soil, the result will be no different. Even after years—perhaps centuries—of warfare, the endgame will be the same: the Islamic Revolutionary Government will remain. The only difference will be the price paid. America and Israel will have lost more than just a war—they will have squandered legitimacy, global respect, and whatever moral authority they still possess. And with each such misadventure, they grow weaker, while those they sought to destroy grow more resilient.

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

Briefs

Pak slams aggression against Iran

FROM PAGE 01
diplomacy in accordance with the UN Charter. The Committee underscored the importance of upholding international humanitarian and human rights laws to prevent further suffering. Pakistan remains committed to playing a constructive role in fostering regional peace and stability. The NSC endorsed continued engagement with all relevant parties to support diplomatic initiatives aimed at reducing tensions and promoting lasting peace. The Committee called upon the international community, particularly the United Nations and major powers, to take immediate steps to prevent further escalation and facilitate a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

‘There’ll be no one left when they...

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‘Pakistan will go to war’ Bilawal said Pakistan had achieved military, narrative, and diplomatic success against India through the blessings of Allah. “A cheap copy of [Israeli PM] Netanyahu” exists in the region, he said, referring to India. “We defeated India on the battlefield, in diplomacy, and in the war of narratives,” he claimed. The PPP chief added that his delegation had presented Pakistan’s stance and narrative internationally, and “wherever we went, the cheap copy’s team, followed.” “We had already won the war,” Bilawal said, emphasising that Pakistan’s narrative – that regional instability is not in the interest of the people of either Pakistan or India – had found global traction.

Ishaq Dar to visit UAE

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including Economic Affairs, Commerce, Energy, Maritime Affairs and Interior. The UAE side will be led by HH Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, along with high-level representation from relevant Emirati institutions. The session will review progress across multiple domains of bilateral cooperation and explore new avenues for collaboration in trade, investment, energy, infrastructure development and IT. A number of legal instruments are expected to be finalized during the session to institutionalize sectoral cooperation. The session will provide an important opportunity for both sides to align their economic priorities and unlock the potential of enhancing scope of mutually beneficial partnership.

Pakistan, Uzbekistan...

FROM PAGE 01
procurement and joint ventures in Special Economic Zones and discussed prospects for industrial cooperation in e-commerce. Both sides underscored the importance of boosting food and agricultural exports. The Uzbek envoy invited Pakistani digital companies to explore opportunities in Uzbekistan. He conveyed his gratitude to the Pakistani leadership for its continued support and cooperation and called for deepening engagement in agriculture, pharmaceuticals, energy, and food processing. The Ambassador said the Uzbekistan-Pakistan Business Forum is scheduled to be held in Karachi on Wednesday, to enhance Business to Business engagement between two countries. He also expressed a strong interest in hosting a “Made in Pakistan” Exhibition in Uzbekistan to showcase Pakistani products and strengthen trade connectivity. The Special Assistant reaffirmed Pakistan’s commitment to enhance bilateral relations with Uzbekistan and boost investment and industrial cooperation in the country. He highlighted the Prime Minister’s goal of increasing bilateral trade between Pakistan and Uzbekistan to two billions dollars and said efforts in this regard are underway at all levels.

Pakistan Celebrates World Olympic Day

The Pakistan Olympic Association continues to observe Olympic Day annually, reinforcing its commitment to the Olympic Movement and the promotion of healthy, active lifestyles and inclusivity through sport

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan marked World Olympic Day 2025 with a vibrant and spirited celebration at Rawal Lake, reflecting the nation’s strong commitment to the Olympic values of unity, excellence, and friendship. Under the umbrella of the Pakistan Olympic Association (POA), the event was hosted by the Islamabad Olympic Association (IOA). The celebration was attended by prominent Olympians including Sadaf Siddiqui, Ahmad Ali, and Liaquat Ali; IOA Secretary General and Chairman of the Pakistan Rowing Federation Rizwan ul Haq Razi; Army Sports Directorate officials Major Irfan Younis and Major Naveed; as well as national athletes, children, and guests from diverse walks of life. To mark the occasion, a walk and a lively “fun run” were held, with enthusiastic participation from children. A specially designed Olympic-themed cake, featuring the iconic Olympic rings, was also cut to commemorate the day. Celebrated globally on June 23 each year, Olympic Day honors the founding of the modern Olympic Games, first held in Paris in 1894. It serves as a worldwide reminder of the Olympic ideals and encourages the promotion of sports, physical fitness, and unity through inclusive community engagement. Across Pakistan, thousands participated in a variety of activities organized to celebrate the day, including fun runs, cultural performances, exhibitions, music events, tree plantation drives, beach clean-up campaigns, and educational seminars. The Pakistan Olympic Association continues to observe Olympic Day annually, reinforcing its commitment to the Olympic Movement and the promotion of healthy, active lifestyles and inclusivity through sport.



Man City demolish Al Ain to reach Club World Cup last 16

ATLANTA: Manchester City booked their place in the Club World Cup last 16 with an emphatic 6-0 rout of Al Ain in Atlanta on Sunday. In a match dubbed the “Abu derby”, with City owner and United Arab Emirates vice-president Sheikh Mansour’s side facing off against that of his elder sibling, Sheikh Mohamed, president of Al Ain and also the country, the Premier League side showed no brotherly love. Ilkay Gundogan put City ahead before starlet Claudio Echeverri netted his first goal for the club with a free-kick and Erlend Haaland slotted in the third with a penalty. In the second half Gundogan struck again, Oscar Bobb rolled in the fifth and Rayan Cherki grabbed his first City goal as they pulled level with Juventus on six points at the top of Group G. The result also confirmed Juve’s place in the next round. “Now we

have to see whether we’ll be first or second in the group,” said City coach Pep Guardiola. “We played a little bit better than the first game, especially in the second half.” Guardiola said on the eve of the game his squad needed trimming and that was reflected in his decision to rotate his entire starting line-up from the opening win over Wydad Casablanca. In came superstar striker Haaland, new arrival Rayan Ait-Nouri, and exciting prospect Echeverri, among others. Serbian coach Vladimir Ivic’s Al Ain were crushed 5-0 by Juventus in their opening fixture and the 10-time Premier League champions offered another unforgiving challenge. After a disjointed opening, City took the lead in the ninth minute in fortuitous fashion, with Gundogan’s chip towards Haaland at the back post floating into the net of its own accord.

Al Ain had a good chance to pull level when the dawdling Nico Gonzalez had his pocket picked and the UAE side sprang forward, but Nassim Chadli’s effort was superbly tipped wide by Stefan Ortega. City’s 19-year-old Argentine attacker Echeverri, on his first start for the club, doubled their lead after 27 minutes with a perfect free-kick that swerved around the outside of the wall and left goalkeeper Khalid Eisa rooted to the spot. With the Mercedes-Benz Stadium mostly full apart from the top ring of seats, fans began sending a Mexican wave around the ground. It came to a standstill when Bernardo Silva’s corner was headed against the post by Josko Gvardiol, before starting back up. Haaland rolled a shot narrowly wide when he might have scored the third after a one-two with Silva sent

him galloping through. The Norwegian hitman eventually got his goal in first-half stoppage time after Manuel Akanji was hauled to the ground by Ramy Rabia and City were awarded a penalty following a VAR review. Haaland sent Eisa the wrong way with a low spot-kick for his first goal of the tournament. Haaland should have scored again after the hour mark but Eisa denied him with a good double save. Instead it was Gundogan who got his second, with a well-taken dinked finish. The midfielder has recently been linked with a move to Galatasaray, but Guardiola said Saturday he is still counting on the 34-year-old in the United States. Substitute Oscar Bobb showed fleet footwork before rolling in the fifth at the near post before Cherki sealed the win. Signed from Lyon ahead of the tournament. – Agencies

Madrid coach says Rudiger complained of racist insult

CHARLOTTE: Real Madrid coach Xabi Alonso said his defender Antonio Rudiger had complained of a racist incident at the end of Sunday’s 3-1 Club World Cup win over Mexican side Pachuca. Rudiger was visibly angered following an exchange of words with Pachuca’s Gustavo Cabral after the final whistle and spoke to Brazilian referee Ramon Abatti Abel. Cabral denied he had racially abused the German centre-back. Asked about the incident in the post-match press conference, Alonso said: “Toni told us something, we support Toni and we will see what happens. “I think the FIFA protocol has been activated to investigate, but if it has happened, all measures should be taken and we support Antonio because it’s something unacceptable. “In football there is no tolerance for this, and if it happened, then measures should be taken. This is what Antonio has told us and we believe him. It’s being investigated now,” he said. Cabral, 39, spoke after the game and said his words had been misinterpreted by Rudiger. The Argentine said he had called the defender a “coward”, with the Spanish phrase he used similar to another which is linked to racist abuse. “The referee made the racism sign but I was telling him the same thing the whole time – (coward),” said Cabral. Pachuca coach Jaime Lozano was also asked about the incident but said he was unaware of what had happened. “I just found out from you, you are letting me know, we did not talk about it in the dressing room, I haven’t spoken to Cabral about this, I cannot give you an explanation about it because this is the first (I have heard of) this news,” he said. “It cannot be justified at all but I will talk to him, I’ve known him for a little while and and I have never heard of something like that with Pachuca players. – Agencies

Thunder beat injury-hit Pacers in game seven to win NBA title

OKLAHOMA: The Oklahoma City Thunder crowned a dazzling season with an NBA title on Sunday, pulling away relentlessly in the second half to beat the injury-hit Indiana Pacers 103-91 in game seven of the NBA Finals. Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 29 points and handed out 12 assists and the Thunder’s swarming defense finally proved to much for a Pacers team that lost talisman Tyrese Haliburton to a leg injury just seven minutes into the contest. The underdog Pacers hung tough and held a 48-47 lead at halftime, but the Thunder out-scored them 34-20 in the third quarter and pushed the lead to as many as 22 points in the fourth. “It doesn’t feel real, so many hours, so many moments, so many emotions, so many nights of disbelief,” Gilgeous-Alexander said, his voice breaking “It’s crazy to know that we’re all here. “But this group worked for it, this group put in the hours and we deserved this.” Gilgeous-Alexander put himself among some of the game’s greats as he earned Finals Most Valuable Player honors to go with his regular-season MVP and scoring title along with his first championship. Jalen Williams scored 15 of his 20 points in the second half and Chet Holmgren added 18 points, eight rebounds, a steal and five of the Thunder’s eight blocked shots. – Agencies

Islamabad Padel association convenes executive committee meeting

The Chairman added that currently padel seems to be a sport for ‘elites’ it should be promoted and developed in such a way that it should be accessible for all classes of the society

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Padel Association (IPA) successfully held its first Executive Committee meeting today in Islamabad to discuss strategic developments, future events and the overall promotion of padel in the region. The meeting was chaired by the Chairman of the Association Mubeen Arif Jutt and Presided by the President Sohaib Hassan and attended by senior office-bearers including the Vice President Amin Ul Hafeez, Women Vice President Sahiba Anwar, General Secretary Abdul Jabbar and Treasurer Fahad Ali. Meeting started with the recitation of the holy Quran followed introduction of the newly elected members and welcome address by the President. Key items on the agenda included the discussion on the

structuring of the association, finalization of upcoming tournament schedules, infrastructure challenges in the twin cities, establishment of local committees, activity calendar and collaboration opportunities with local and international entities to encourage padel in the city. In his opening remarks, the President of the Association highlighted the rapid growth of padel in Pakistan, especially among youth in the capital and emphasized the need to enhance the sport’s visibility and access at all levels. He thanked Pakistan Padel Federation for ensuring merit in formation of body in Islamabad region. The Chairman added that currently padel seems to be a sport for ‘elites’ it should be promoted and developed in such a way that it should be accessible for all classes of the society. Only then we will be able to bring out the true talent in this sport for our country. Speaking after the meeting, General Secretary Abdul Jabbar said, “This session marks an important step in our mission to establish Islamabad as a national hub for padel. The Executive Committee is committed to building a sustainable and inclusive framework for the game’s future.” – DNA

Jonathan set for Dior debut at Paris Fashion Week

Anthony Vaccarello’s new collection will be revealed Tuesday, just hours before Pharrell Williams presents his latest designs for Louis Vuitton

PARIS: Men’s Fashion Week returns to Paris on Tuesday with heightened anticipation as Jonathan Anderson shows his first creations for Dior and Saint Laurent rejoins the official calendar. Following a flurry of artistic director changes, the spring-summer 2026 menswear season reflects the industry’s instability: Milan scaled back its programme and London pulled out entirely. But Paris is doubling down with a packed edition. “The calendar is quite dense and there’s a very good balance between creativity, business, independent labels, large groups and new talent,” Alice Feillard, men’s buying director at Galeries Lafayette, the landmark Paris department store, told AFP. Around 70 labels are set to showcase their collections through 30

presentations and 40 runway shows between June 24 and 29. The most eagerly awaited show is Dior Homme on Friday, marking the debut of Northern Irish designer Anderson, who was appointed head of Dior womenswear in early June just weeks after joining Dior Homme, replacing Maria Grazia Chiuri. He becomes the first designer since Christian Dior to oversee both the men’s and women’s lines as well as haute couture at the flagship house, part of the LVMH group. Following the appointment of Franco-Belgian Matthieu Blazy at Chanel last December, Anderson’s move is one of the most notable shake-ups in recent fashion industry reshuffles. The 40-year-old is widely seen as a fashion prodigy, having trans-



formed the storied Spanish house Loewe into a global powerhouse. But Loewe will be one of the major absentees from Fashion Week, pending the debut of Jack McCollough and Lazaro Hernandez, appointed to succeed Anderson.

Also drawing attention will be Julian Klausner’s first menswear show for Dries Van Noten, set for Wednesday. Appointed in December to succeed the founder Dries Van Noten, who retired last year, the Belgian designer had al-

ready made an impression in March with his first women’s collection. Another highlight is the return of Saint Laurent, which last took part in Men’s Fashion Week in Paris in January 2023. Anthony Vaccarello’s new collection will be revealed Tuesday, just hours before Pharrell Williams presents his latest designs for Louis Vuitton. Historic houses such as Hermes, Kenzo and Issey Miyake will also feature, alongside AMI, Comme des Garçons, Egonlab, Rick Owens and Willy Chavarria, who is returning after his first Paris show in January. Also noteworthy are the returns of British designers Wales Bonner and Craig Green, and the Paris debut of rising Indian label Kartik Research. Jacquemus, which made a

comeback in January, will close the week with the final show. Men’s Fashion Week will be followed by Haute Couture Week from July 7 to 10, also marked by major artistic leadership changes. Dior will not participate because Anderson preferred to unveil his first couture collection in January 2026. Jean Paul Gaultier will also be absent, with his new creative director, Duran Lantink, set to debut at the women’s fashion week in October. Balenciaga will present the designer Demna’s final collection before his departure for Gucci, while Glenn Martens will make his debut at Maison Margiela. Elsewhere, American designer Michael Rider will reveal his first Celine collection on July 6 in a co-ed show. – Agencies

Israel army says carried out strikes on military targets

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destroyed Tehran’s nuclear program, though some officials cautioned that the extent of the damage was unclear. Israel also struck several parts of northwest Iran on Sunday, Iranian media reported, as fighting between the arch enemies raged. At least three people were killed on Sunday after an Israeli strike hit an ambulance in central Iran. United Nations chief Antonio Guterres warned against yet “another cycle of destruction” and retaliation following the US strikes on Iran’s nuclear facilities, which he said marked a “perilous turn” in region.

US bases in Qatar, other Gulf states attacked

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American military facility in the region. Iran had previously warned of “direct strikes” on US assets in response to Washington’s aggressive posture. If confirmed, this attack marks the first time Tehran has directly targeted American bases in Qatar, signaling a dangerous shift from proxy warfare to open confrontation. The strike raises fears of a wider conflict, particularly as Russia strengthens its alliance with Iran, supplying advanced weaponry. Neighboring Gulf states, including Saudi Arabia and the UAE, are closely monitoring the situation, fearing spillover effects. The United Nations has yet to react, but with the US likely to consider a forceful response, the risk of a full-blown regional war is growing. The international community watches anxiously as the Middle East teeters on the edge of a new, unpredictable crisis. President Trump is said to be monitoring the situation closely. The US response is expected in which the US President will announce his future course of action. Eye witnesses in Qatar told that some of the missiles were destroyed in the air while some of them struck their targets. US bases in Saudi Arabia were also put on high alert to deal with any possible attack from Iran.

Bangladesh probe commission on Hasina-era

“Alarming, this culture of impunity continues even after the regime change on August 5, 2024,” says commission

DNA

DHAKA: Bangladesh government-appointed commission investigating hundreds of disappearances by the security forces under ousted premier Sheikh Hasina on Monday warned that the same “culture of impunity” continues. The Commission of Inquiry into Enforced Disappearances is probing abuses during the rule of Hasina, whose government was accused of widespread human rights abuses. That includes the extrajudicial killing of hundreds of political opponents and the unlawful abduction and disappearance of hundreds more. The commission was established by interim leader, Nobel Peace Prize winner Muhammad Yunus, 84, who is facing intense political pressure as parties jostle for power ahead of elections expected early next year. Bangladesh has a long history of military coups and the army retains a powerful role. “Enforced disappearances in Bangladesh were not isolated acts of wrongdoing, but the result of a politicised institutional machinery that condoned, normalised, and often rewarded such crimes,” the commission said, in a section of a report released by the interim government on Monday. “Alarming, this culture of impunity continues even after the regime change on August 5, 2024”. The commission has verified more than 250 cases of enforced disappearances spanning the 15 years that Hasina’s Awami League was in power.

Briefs

West African leaders admit security woes mounting in region

ABUJA: Leaders from the west African bloc ECOWAS on Sunday admitted during talks in the Nigerian capital that the region was in trouble, facing mounting unrest and political instability. Our region is at the crossroads," said Sierra Leone's Julius Maada Bio as he took over the rotating chairmanship of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) from Nigeria's Bola Tinubu. West Africa is "facing serious challenges, some long-standing, others new and evolving", he said. They included "insecurity in the Sahel and coastal states, terrorism, political instability, illicit arms flow and transnational organised crimes". It was time to "overhaul our collective security architecture" including intelligence-sharing and rapid response, he added. "The democratic space is under strain in parts of our region - the constitutional order has been disrupted." Coups and attempted putschs have rocked nearly half of the original ECOWAS member states in the last decade, straining relations between neighbours. Three junta-led countries - Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger - quit the bloc earlier this year, setting up their own alliances. Militants exploiting fraying ties between regional countries are gaining ground in the Sahel and Lake Chad region. They have recently intensified offensives in the Sahel region, staging bloody raids in Mali, incursions into major cities in Burkina Faso and inflicting heavy army losses in Niger. Summit host Nigeria has also witnessed a spike in attacks in recent weeks, targeting both villagers and military bases. In his speech, outgoing ECOWAS chair Tinubu spoke of the "stark and consistent challenges that continue to impede our aspirations... violent extremism and other cross-border crimes that have continued to widen and intensify." —APP

Germany urges Iran to 'immediately' resume negotiations with US

BERLIN: German Chancellor Friedrich Merz on Sunday called for a swift return to diplomacy after the US struck three nuclear sites in Iran overnight, his spokesman said. Iran must "immediately enter into negotiations with the US and Israel and to find a diplomatic solution to the conflict", Merz said, according to his spokesman Stefan Kornelius. The German government believes "large parts of Iran's nuclear programme have been damaged by the airstrikes", Kornelius said. The US strikes came after Israel launched large-scale attacks on Iran on June 13 targeting its missile and nuclear facilities, as well as military leaders and security services. Iran's uranium enrichment has for decades caused tension with the West and Israel, which fear the drive is aimed at making an atomic bomb, a charge denied by Tehran. German Foreign Minister Johann Wadepuhl on Sunday said "no one thinks it's a good thing to keep fighting" and Berlin will "keep doing everything we can to make sure we get serious negotiations going". "Everyone knows there has to be a negotiated solution. I think everyone's ready for that," he told the ARD broadcaster. While France has expressed "concern" over the US strikes, German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius said Washington had "taken on a responsibility in the region" in response to a "concrete threat". "What is important here is that a major threat has been eliminated, and I can only repeat that this is good news for the Middle East, but also for Europe," he told ARD. Chancellor Merz last week expressed strong support for Israel's campaigning against Iran, describing it as "the dirty work Israel is doing for all of us". —APP

'Dangerous escalation': World reacts to US strikes on Iran

"Iran's key nuclear enrichment facilities have been completely and totally obliterated. Iran, the bully of the Middle East, must now make peace,"

PARIS :The United States struck three nuclear sites in Iran on Sunday, joining Israel's bombing campaign after days of speculation over Washington's 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," US President Donald Trump said after the strikes. Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi condemned the US attacks as "outrageous" and said his country had the right to defend its sovereignty. "The events this morning are outrageous and will have everlasting consequences," he posted on social media, calling the attacks "lawless and criminal" behaviour. Araghchi later said the United States and Israel crossed "a very big red line" with the attacks, and said he would head to Moscow later Sunday for talks with President Vladimir Putin.

The European Union's top diplomat Kaja Kallas called for de-escalation and a return to negotiations. "I urge all sides to step back, return

to the negotiating table and prevent further escalation," Kallas wrote on X, adding that Iran must not be allowed to develop a nuclear weapon and that EU foreign ministers would discuss the situation on Monday. Russia "strongly condemned" the bombings, calling them "irresponsible" and a "gross violation of international law". "A dangerous escalation has begun, fraught with further undermining of regional and global security," the Russian foreign ministry added. Ukraine's foreign ministry said the strikes were justified to prevent Tehran from developing nuclear weapons, praising them as a "clear signal". "Ukraine is convinced that Iran's nuclear programme must be stopped so that it never again poses a threat to the countries of the Middle East or any other state," it said.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called the strikes a "dangerous escalation in a region already on the edge". "There is no military solution. The only path forward is diplomacy. The only hope is peace," Guterres said in a statement.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation warned that the strikes could lead to "heightened tensions and threaten regional security, peace, and stability". It called for "de-escalation and self-restraint, and for resorting to dialogue and returning to negotiations and peaceful means." UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer called on Iran to "return to the negotiating table and reach a diplomatic solution to end this crisis". "Iran can never be allowed to develop a nuclear weapon and the US has taken action to alleviate that threat," Starmer said on X, adding that "stability in the region is a priority". French President Emmanuel Macron called a meeting of the country's defence council, with his office saying he had spoken with the leaders of Saudi Arabia and Oman.

France is urging "all parties to exercise restraint to avoid any escalation that could lead to an extension of the conflict", Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot posted on X. China's foreign ministry said it "strongly condemns" the US strikes, warning that they "escalate tensions in

the Middle East". "China calls on all parties to the conflict, especially Israel, to cease fire as soon as possible," the ministry said. North Korea also condemned the US strikes, calling it a violation of the United Nations charter and blaming the tension in the Middle East on the "reckless valor of Israel". "The Democratic People's Republic of Korea strongly denounces the attack on Iran by the US, which severely violated the UN Charter with respect for sovereignty," said a spokesperson of the North's foreign ministry, according to a statement carried by the state news agency.

Pope Leo XIV said that "humanity is crying out for peace" and called for an end to all wars. "Each member of the international community has the moral responsibility to end the tragedy of war before it becomes an irreparable chasm," Leo said during his weekly Angelus prayer at the Vatican. Saudi Arabia expressed "great concern" after the strikes on its neighbour, the "sisterly Islamic Republic of Iran".

"The Kingdom underscores the need to exert all possible efforts to exercise restraint, de-escalation, and avoid further escalation," the foreign ministry posted on X. Pakistan, the only nuclear-armed Muslim country and a longtime Washington ally, said the US attacks "violate all norms of international law". "We are gravely concerned at the possible further escalation of tensions in the region," Pakistan's foreign ministry said, adding that Iran had the "right to defend itself under the UN Charter". 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". Yemen's Huthi rebel government, which is backed by Iran, condemned the US attacks and expressed solidarity with the Iranian people. "The Trump administration's reckless aggression... is a blatant declaration of war against the brotherly Iranian people. We declare our full support for the brotherly Iranian people," it said. —Agencies

Gold price decreases by Rs 300 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat per tola gold decreased by Rs.300 and was traded at Rs.358,165 on Monday as compared to its sale at Rs.358,465 on the last trading day. All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewelers Association reported.

The prices of 10 grams of 24 karat also decreased by Rs.257 to Rs.307,068 from Rs.307,325 and for 10 grams of 22 Karat it came down by Rs.235 to Rs.281,489 from Rs. 281,724. The rates of per tola and ten gram silver increased by Rs.14 and Rs.12 to Rs.3,799 and Rs.3,257 respectively. The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$3 to \$3,366 from \$3,369, whereas that of silver went up by \$0.14 to \$36.15, the Association reported. —APP

Macron warns against 'uncontrolled escalation' in Mideast

PARIS, June 23 (AFP/APP): French President Emmanuel Macron on Sunday warned against an "uncontrolled escalation" in the Middle East after the United States joined Israel's campaign against Tehran's atomic programme by bombing Iranian nuclear sites. "No strictly military response can produce the desired effects," Macron told a defence council meeting in Paris. "The resumption of diplomatic and technical discussions is the only way to achieve the goal we all seek, which is to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons," he added. The French leader however, did not directly condemn the unprecedented US intervention. After a scheduled visit to Norway on Monday, Macron is on Tuesday due to go to the Netherlands on Tuesday for a NATO summit, which US President Donald Trump is also set to attend. In a joint statement with his German and British counterparts, Macron called on Iran "not to take any further action that could destabilise the region" in response to the strikes. Earlier the French leader had urged Tehran to de-escalate and "exercise the utmost restraint" after the strikes in a call with his Iranian counterpart Masoud Pezeshkian. —APP

Recovery of outstanding agriculture loans ordered

PESHAWAR: Commissioner Mardan Division, Nisar Ahmad on Monday directed revenue officers to develop a comprehensive strategy, in consultation with Agricultural Development Bank (ADB) officials, for the recovery of outstanding agricultural loans. He issued these directives while presiding over a meeting regarding recoveries of agriculture loans extended by the Agricultural Development Bank (ZTBL). —APP



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding promotion of Cashless Economy and Digitization. — DNA

Australia backs US strikes on Iran nuclear sites

Australia's security strategy is deeply entwined with its relationship with long-time ally the United States

SYDNEY: Australia backs the US air strikes on Iran's nuclear facilities but wants to avert a spiral into "full-scale war" in the Middle East, the government said Monday. "The world has long agreed that Iran cannot be allowed to get a nuclear weapon, and we support action to prevent that. That is what this is," Prime Minister Anthony Albanese told a news conference. "We don't want escalation and a full-scale war. We continue to call for dialogue and for diplomacy." The prime minister stressed that the US attacks had targeted sites specific to Iran's nuclear program. "Australia called upon Iran to come to the table and abandon any nuclear weapons program," Albanese said. "Iran didn't come to the table, just as it has repeatedly failed to comply with its international obligations. We urge Iran not to take any further action that could destabilise the region." Asked if Canberra had been advised in advance of the military operation, he said only that it was a "unilateral" action of the United States. Australia's conservative opposition has also supported the US strikes, though the smaller Greens Party has condemned them as a "blatant breach of international law". Australia's security strategy is deeply entwined with its relationship with long-time ally the United States. —DNA

Rupee sheds 16 paise against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Monday depreciated by 16 paise against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 283.86 against the previous day's closing of Rs 283.70. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 283.25 and Rs 285.5 respectively. The price of the Euro decreased by Rs0.28 to close at Rs 326.40 against the last day's closing of Rs 326.68, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen came down by 03 paise and closed at Rs1.92, whereas a decrease of Rs 0.86 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 381.44 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 382.30. The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 04 and 06 paise to close at Rs 77.29 and Rs 75.65. —APP

CDNS attains Rs 1.5t savings target by last quarter of FY

ISLAMABAD: The Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has accomplished a target of Rs 1.5 trillion in fresh bonds and attained 90.91 percent of the annual target for the ongoing last quarter of the current fiscal year, from July 1 to June 15, 2024-25. The senior official of CDNS told APP on Monday that the CDNS has set an annual target of Rs 1650 billion for the current Fiscal Year, 2024-25, which will promote the country's saving culture. Similarly, the CDNS has set a target of Rs140 billion in investments in Islamic finance for the Current Fiscal Year, which will lead to the growth of the Islamic economy in the country. Replying to a question, he said that the CDNS has realized a target of Rs1.742 trillion in fresh bonds and exceeded 100 per cent of the annual target in the last fiscal year 2023-24, from July 1 to June 30. National Savings has set an annual target of Rs1.7 trillion for the year 2023-24; it is encouraging that this year, "We surpassed the 100 per cent of the annual target." The CDNS surpassed the annual target and achieved the target of Rs 1.6 trillion in fresh bonds in the previous fiscal year 2022-23, he said. He said it was an Rs 200 billion additional annual target than the target of Rs 1300 billion for the previous financial year 2021-22. The CDNS has set a revised saving target of Rs 1.4 trillion for the financial year (2021-22), which will promote a savings culture in the country, he said, adding that given the current market trend in the country, the ambitious target had been set to further improve the savings culture. The official said that work was being done on institutional reforms in CDNS and new reforms and innovations were being introduced. At this time, Automated Teller Machine (ATM) has also been introduced in CDNS, which will provide enough facilities to the users," he added. The official said that the directorate had set a target of Rs 75 billion for the new financial year 2023-24 for Islamic finance bonds. —DNA

Social media and agenda setting – a wakeup call

IMRAN GHAZNAVI



IN recent years, Pakistan has become a battleground for an unprecedented influence of social media on policy and governance. What once started as a platform for connectivity has now morphed into a powerful tool, infiltrating public discourse, shaping collective mindsets, and ultimately driving public opinion. The extent to which this influence has grown is staggering, and its impact on national policymaking is undeniable. What was once the domain of seasoned diplomats, politicians, and strategists has

now become a space dominated by algorithms, tweets, and viral trends. The question at the heart of this national dilemma is: who truly controls the narrative? It's a question that transcends politics and delves deep into the fabric of society. The strategist—whether behind a computer screen or within the corridors of power—has learned to manipulate this system with astounding precision. In Pakistan, where public sentiment can often shift quickly, these strategists ensure that those who fail to toe the line are met with harsh criticism, public shaming, and, in some cases, virtual ostracism. The tools of this trade are not new. Spin doctors and political operators have existed for as long as there has been politics. But social media has changed the playing field. What was once a slow-moving tide of opinion can now be shifted overnight with a well-placed hashtag or a coordinated online campaign. And this is where the fear begins. Fear is not just the byproduct of political or ideological criticism—it has been

carefully engineered. There is an undeniable power that comes with controlling the narrative, and for those who wield it in Pakistan's complex social media environment, the stakes are high. Anyone not in alignment with a prevailing agenda is at risk. In a country where freedom of expression is already precarious, social media has become a double-edged sword. It has given voice to the voiceless, but it has also amplified those voices in ways that sometimes lead to reckless damage. Consider the countless examples of individuals or organizations that have dared to speak against popular opinion, only to find themselves at the center of a digital firestorm. These aren't isolated incidents. Public figures, journalists, and even regular citizens are all subject to the whims of online outrage. And this outrage doesn't just live in cyberspace. It manifests in real-world consequences: careers are destroyed, reputations are sullied, and in extreme cases, physical safety is threatened. This national dilemma goes beyond mere political discourse. It

extends into the psychological impact on those caught in its crosshairs. The culture of online harassment and intimidation has created an atmosphere of fear, pushing many into silence or forcing them to conform to the dominant narrative, regardless of whether they agree with it. In Pakistan, where conformity can be seen as a path of least resistance, the consequences of stepping out of line can be dire. This begs the question: where is the solution? How do we, as a nation, address this increasing encroachment of social media into policymaking and public opinion? The answer isn't simple, but the first step lies in acknowledging the seriousness of the problem. Too often, we dismiss the impact of online criticism as "just internet chatter." But when that chatter becomes the primary driver of public discourse, it must be taken seriously. The most alarming aspect of this shift is the powerlessness many feel in response to it. The average citizen, even policymakers themselves, often seem helpless against the torrent of digital noise. But this helplessness is a construct, carefully curated by those who benefit

from it. The fear that has taken root is real, but it is not insurmountable. There is a way forward. For those who feel caught in this web of online outrage, the solution is not to retreat or give in. Now, more than ever, there is a need for critical thinking. The kneejerk reactions that social media platforms encourage are dangerous, especially when it comes to matters of national policy. Instead of reacting to every online trend or controversy, there must be a deliberate pause. Think, reflect, and, perhaps most importantly, seek the advice of professionals who understand the nuances of policy and media strategy. Pakistan has navigated complex social and political challenges before. This dilemma, while new in its form, is no different. The key is to approach it professionally, with the support of those who are well-versed in managing both public perception and policy. This does not mean pandering to online outrage, but rather, managing it effectively. Just because social media is loud doesn't mean it is right. The challenge for policymakers and citizens alike is to separate the noise from the substance.

There is hope. As we've seen in the past, Pakistan is resilient. The solution lies in recognizing that the tools used to shape public opinion can also be used to shift it towards constructive dialogue. It requires a concerted effort, not just from government bodies, but from civil society, media professionals, and citizens themselves. The power of social media can be harnessed for good, but only if we approach it with caution, critical thinking, and professional insight. This national dilemma will not resolve itself overnight. But by taking a step back, reflecting on the long-term implications of this digital age, and engaging the right professionals, there is a path forward. Pakistan has faced greater challenges in the past, and with a measured, thoughtful approach, this too can be managed. Let us not give in to fear but rise above it, embracing the power of genuine dialogue and professional wisdom. *The writer is a senior reputation management and crises communication professional and can be reached at ig-haznavi@gmail.com*

Briefs

France says
aircraft to fly
nationals
out of Israel

PARIS: France is to send military A400M aircraft to Israel to fly any of its citizens who wish to leave out to Cyprus, the foreign and defence ministries announced on Sunday. The flights will be carried out subject to Israel's clearance and will supplement the chartered civilian flights already operating, the ministries added. France has some 250,000 of its citizens in Israel, of whom 100,00 are registered on consular lists. A crisis team at the foreign ministry has received more than 4,500 phone calls over the last week. Earlier Sunday, 160 French nationals most of them vulnerable or in urgent situations were flown back to Paris from Jordan accompanied by a ministry doctor. More flights will follow, said the ministry. – Agencies

North Korea
condemns
US strikes
on Iran

SEOUL: North Korea condemned on Monday US strikes on Iran, calling it a violation of the United Nations charter and blaming the tension in the Middle East on the "reckless valor of Israel". It marks nuclear-armed North Korea's first commentary on the US strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities over the weekend. "The Democratic People's Republic of Korea strongly denounces the attack on Iran by the US which severely violated the UN Charter with respect for sovereignty," said a spokesperson of the North's foreign ministry, according to a statement carried by the state news agency. The ongoing regional tension was an "inevitable product brought by the reckless valor of Israel", the unnamed spokesperson added, claiming the Jewish state "has promoted its unilateral interests through ceaseless war moves and territorial expansion". Washington said Sunday its strikes "devastated" Iran's nuclear programme, but has insisted it is not seeking to topple the government in the Islamic Republic. "Monumental Damage was done to all Nuclear sites in Iran, as shown by satellite images. Obliteration is an accurate term!" US President Donald Trump wrote on social media, without sharing the images he was referencing. North Korea is believed to possess dozens of nuclear warheads and various delivery systems as it faces off against South Korea and its key ally, the United States, which maintains around 30,000 troops on the peninsula. – APP

Dutch host
NATO during
political crisis

THE HAGUE: For a small country like the Netherlands, organising a NATO summit is a big endeavour at the best of times. The government collapsing three weeks beforehand has not exactly made life easier. With whole districts and key roads blocked for weeks, and schools and businesses closed, the usually serene seaside city of The Hague has certainly felt the force of the impending summit. To much grumbling, even some cycle lanes have been shut down, usually unthinkable in the land of bikes. Dozens of trees have also been uprooted to make way for the temporary buildings housing the thousands of delegates and journalists attending the summit. For the Netherlands, welcoming 32 world leaders including US President Donald Trump is quite simply the biggest event it has ever hosted in terms of security. The country is deploying some 27,000 police officers, around half its total force. And all of this while Dutch politics is still reeling from far-right leader Geert Wilders's withdrawal from the government in a row over immigration. The sudden departure of Wilders and his far-right Freedom Party brought down a shaky coalition, with fresh elections now slated for October 29. – APP



ISLAMABAD: Nicolas Galey, French Ambassador to Pakistan, welcomed 7 French teachers to Pakistan who will receive a scholarship to attend a month of French language teaching training at CAVILAM, a high-level institution located in Vichy (central France). These 7 teachers, 3 of whom will discover France for the first time 1st time, will depart on July 4th from Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad. – DNA

At UN: Pak slams US strikes
on Iran's nuclear sites

"These attacks set a dangerous precedent and pose a grave threat to the safety and security of populations across the region - and indeed, the world," Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, permanent representative of Pakistan, told the UN Security Council

DNA

UNITED NATIONS: Expressing alarm at the escalating tensions in the Middle East, Pakistan Sunday condemned the US strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities, saying that targeting the IAEA-safeguarded facilities constitutes a clear breach of international law. "These attacks set a dangerous precedent and pose a grave threat to the safety and security of populations across the region - and indeed, the world," Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, permanent representative of Pakistan, told the UN Security Council, which debated the new, dangerous turn in the Middle East situation as Russia, China and Pakistan proposed the 15-member body adopt a resolution calling for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire in the region. Pakistan, he said, stands in solidarity with the government and brotherly people of Iran during this challenging time. "As the body entrusted with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council must act urgently and decisively," the Pakistani envoy emphasized. In this regard, he said the members' collective responsibility is to: – Unequivocally reject and condemn the attacks against the Islamic Republic of Iran since 13 June 2025, being in clear contravention of international law and the UN Charter; – Denounce the attacks on IAEA-safeguarded

ed nuclear facilities, which violate Security Council and IAEA resolutions, as well as international humanitarian law; – Reaffirm the obligation to protect civilian lives and property on both sides; – Call for an immediate cessation of hostilities and a complete ceasefire, and, – promote urgent recourse to dialogue and diplomacy, consistent with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, to find a peaceful and lasting resolution to the Iranian nuclear issue. In pursuit of these objectives, Ambassador Asim Iftikhar said Pakistan had joined China and Russia in circulating a draft resolution. Among other things, this resolution calls for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire; urges all parties to refrain from further escalation; demands the urgent protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure; and supports a diplomatic path forward on the Iranian nuclear issue that is acceptable to all parties. "We sincerely hope that the draft resolution will receive the Council's support, enabling it to respond with unity and resolve - urgently and effectively - in line with the gravity of the situation," he said. Pakistan, he added, stands ready to engage constructively with all Council members in this regard. From the outset, the ambassador told delegates that Pakistan had adopted a principled position on these developments: strongly and unambiguously condemning the Israeli aggression, ex-

pressed solidarity and full support for Iran's inherent and legitimate right of self-defence in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations, denounced the unlawful Israeli unilateral strikes on IAEA-safeguarded Iranian nuclear facilities, called for bringing an end to this aggression, advocated cessation of hostilities and for reverting to dialogue and diplomacy for a peaceful, lasting settle-

ment of the Iranian nuclear issue.

"The Middle East - already burdened by prolonged instability - history of Israeli illegal occupation and continued denial of the Palestinian right to self-determination and statehood, cannot absorb another crisis," Ambassador Asim Iftikhar said. "We must act now to prevent the situation from spiraling further out of control," he said.

UN chief warns of cycle of
retaliation after US bombs Iran

"We have a window of opportunity to return to dialogue and diplomacy. If that window closes, violence and destruction could reach unthinkable levels and the global non-proliferation regime as we know it could crumble and fall"

UNITED NATIONS: United Nations chief Antonio Guterres warned Sunday against yet "another cycle of destruction" and retaliation following the US strikes on Iran's nuclear facilities, which he said marked a "perilous turn" in the region. "I have repeatedly condemned any military escalation in the Middle East," the secretary-general told an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council. "The people of the

region cannot endure another cycle of destruction. And yet, we now risk descending into a rathole of retaliation after retaliation." Rafael Grossi, director of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), also called for restraint as he voiced fears over "potential widening" of the conflict. "We have a window of opportunity to return to dialogue and diplomacy. If that window closes, violence and destruc-

tion could reach unthinkable levels and the global non-proliferation regime as we know it could crumble and fall," Grossi said. Speaking to the Security Council by video link, he said there were visible craters at Iran's key Fordo nuclear facility, "indicating the use by the United States of America of ground-penetrating munitions." But Grossi noted that no one had been able to assess the underground damage at Fordo. He added that "armed attacks on nuclear facilities should never take place and could result in radioactive releases with grave consequences within and beyond the boundaries of the State which has been attacked." – APP

Ukraine says
'massive' drone
attack on Kyiv

KYIV: Ukraine said Monday "another massive attack" on Kyiv by Russian drones was underway, a day after the country's top military commander vowed to increase the "scale and depth" of strikes on Russia. Diplomatic efforts to end the three-year war have stalled, with the last direct meeting between the two sides almost three weeks ago and no follow-up talks scheduled. "Another massive attack on the capital. Possibly, several waves of enemy drones," said a statement from Tymur Tkachenko, head of Kyiv's military administration. Two people were hospitalised in the Solomianski district, said Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko, and two others were injured near a metro station in the Sviatochinski district, Tkachenko later said. AFP journalists in Kyiv heard the buzzing of a drone flying over the city centre and explosions, as well as gunfire. They saw around 10 people sheltering in the basement of a residential building in central Kyiv waiting for the attack to end, most of them scrolling their phones for news. The latest strikes came after Ukrainian commander-in-chief Oleksandr Syrsky vowed to intensify strikes on Russia. "We will not just sit in defence. Because this brings nothing

and eventually leads to the fact that we still retreat, lose people and territories," he 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 kilometres from the front line. Kyiv says the strikes are a fair response to deadly Russian attacks on Ukrainian infrastructure and civilians. At least four people were killed in an overnight Russian strike on an apartment building in the eastern Ukrainian city of Kramatorsk, while a strike on a Ukrainian army training ground later in the day killed three others, officials said. In wide-ranging remarks, Syrsky conceded that Russia had some advantages in drone warfare, particularly in making fibre-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 kilometres (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. Russia 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. – Agencies

Budget 2025-26 balanced,
friendly, says Aurangzeb

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb said on Monday that the budget for fiscal year 2025-26 was a balanced plan focused on providing public relief, promoting industry, curbing government expenditures, enhancing revenues, and ensuring fair tax enforcement—all aimed at fostering sustainable growth and driving an export-led economy. While concluding debate on the general discussion on Budget, the minister announced many tax and relief measures that were incorporated in the budget after suggestions by finance committees of both National Assembly and Senate. He said, the government was committed to economic stability amid regional uncertainty. Aurangzeb said the government announced a major relief for the salaried class, saying that the income tax rate for those earning upto Rs3.2 million were reduce as it was cut from proposed 2.5 percent to 1 percent for those earning between Rs0.6 million and Rs1.2 million annually. He clarified that no tax will be imposed on

pension commutation or gratuity, adding that only individuals receiving pensions above Rs10 million will be taxed, while those over 75 years of age are fully exempt. On the solar energy front, the minister clarified that the earlier proposed 18 percent sales tax on imported solar panel components has been reduced to 10 percent and will apply only to 46 percent of imported items, hence would result in only a 4.6% increase in the price of imported solar panels. He also condemned opportunistic hoarding and artificial price hikes by some market players ahead of the new tax's enforcement, warning that strict legal action will be taken in coordination with provincial governments. "Such manipulation and hoarding are condemnable. The government will take strict action under the law against those who exploit public needs," he said. The Minister said that, under Prime Minister's special directives, the powers of the FBR to arrest individuals have been strictly regulated. In cases involving Rs50 million or more, the FBR cannot arrest anyone without a court warrant, and only under specific conditions—such as deliberate evasion after three notices, an attempt to abscond, or formal referral for prosecution.

PTI seeks
return to
decision-
making table

Imran-founded party condemns US strikes on Iran, calls on govt to hold APC on regional situation with ex-PM's participation

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Criticising the recent US airstrikes targeting Iran's nuclear sites, PTI has called on the incumbent government to urgently hold an all-parties conference (APC) to address the rapidly worsening regional tensions and to develop a unified stance on Israel's aggressive actions.

The ongoing conflict in the Middle East witnessed a dangerous escalation after the US said it had "obliterated" Iran's key nuclear sites to prevent it from allegedly developing nukes, joining Israel in the biggest Western military action against the Islamic Republic since its 1979 revolution. Amid the escalating crisis, PTI Information Secretary Waqas Akram also demanded the immediate release of Imran Khan, stressing that he should be included in key national decision-making processes concerning Israel's unprovoked aggression against Iran and the ensuing US military actions.

He contended that Tel Aviv was pushing the entire region to the brink of a devastating war. He also expressed alarm that the regional situation was fast changing and the government's "ostrich-like" approach could prove disastrous. In a statement, he said the flames of the war had already reached Pakistan's doorstep and underlined that Pakistan can undoubtedly weather the storm, just as it did against India.



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