



Wednesday, July 09, 2025

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Afghanistan is becoming hub of TTP: Iftikhar

Detailed News On Page-08

Government to Promote Sports, says Atta Tarar

Detailed News On Page-06



Alcaarez faces Norrie in Wimbledon

Detailed News On Page-06



Trump 'optimistic'

Qatar says 'we will need time' for Gaza accord

Israel opposes an independent Palestinian state

CENTRELINE REPORT

WASHINGTON: Qatar has called for more time to finalize a Gaza ceasefire deal, urging all parties to show restraint and patience as negotiations enter a critical phase. A senior Qatari official, speaking to international media, said, "We are working tirelessly with all stakeholders. A sustainable ceasefire cannot be rushed—it must be just and lasting." Meanwhile, U.S. President Donald Trump has reportedly re-engaged with Middle East diplomacy, holding back-channel talks with regional figures to push for an immediate ceasefire. "We cannot allow more innocent lives to be lost," Trump said in a brief statement. At the same time, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has arrived in Washington for high-level talks with the Biden administration. The visit is seen as crucial amid growing international pressure on Israel to halt its ongoing military operations in Gaza, which have drawn condemnation for their humanitarian toll. While some progress has been made, diplomats caution that key differences remain—particularly over prisoner exchanges and guarantees for long-term security.

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Netanyahu nominates Trump for Nobel prize

DNA

WASHINGTON: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Monday he has nominated Donald Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize, presenting the US president with a letter he sent to the prize committee. The move comes as Israel continues its onslaught on Gaza, which has so far killed 57,523 Palestinians. Last year, the UN-backed International Criminal Court (ICC) issued arrest warrants for Netanyahu, citing allegations of war crimes and crimes against humanity. The court said he, along with ex-defence minister Yoav Gallant, "intentionally and knowingly deprived the civilian population in Gaza of objects indispensable to their survival", including food, water, medicine, fuel, and electricity.

Continued on Page 06

PM says automation of FBR priority

Custom Clearance and Risk Management System resulted in over 92% improvement in performance, PM told

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has stressed that reforms in the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) were among the government's top priorities, and the new technology-based modern system would bring ease in doing business and provide convenience to taxpayers, The News reported. "By automating the tax system, we are making it more transparent and effective," PM Shehbaz said while chairing a meeting concerning FBR where he was informed that for the first time in Pakistan's history, an artificial intelligence (AI)-based Custom Clearance and Risk Management System (RMS) has been introduced. "During the initial testing of the new system, over 92% improved performance was observed," the meeting was told. The briefing also highlighted not only there was 83%

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari administers oath to newly-appointed Chief Justice of Islamabad High Court Justice Sarfraz Dogar. – DNA

President Zardari says

Govt can't function without PPP support

PPP Secretary General Nayyar Bukhari clarifies PPP not joining federal cabinet

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Secretary General Nayyar Hussain Bukhari on Tuesday categorically rebuked the rumours circulating regarding President Asif Ali Zardari's future as the country's head of state and said that the government could not function without the party's support. "The government cannot function without the support of the PPP. There is no truth to the speculations against President Zardari," said Bukhari. The clarification comes amidst reports suggesting President Zardari's removal from office and that another constitutional amendment was in the offing. The said rumours began circulating

Continued on Page 06

Justice Dogar sworn in as CJ IHC

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday administered oath of the office of Chief Justice Islamabad High Court to Justice Sardar Muhammad Sarfraz Dogar, in an oath-taking ceremony, held at Aiwan e Sadr. The ceremony was attended by judges of the high court, Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani, Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz, ministers, parliamentarians, representatives and

Continued on Page 06

Persecution of women

ICC seeks arrest of Taliban leaders

Alleged crimes were committed between August 15, 2021 and continued until at least January 20, 2025

NEWS DESK

THE HAGUE: The International Criminal Court (ICC) on Tuesday issued arrest warrants for senior Taliban leaders in Afghanistan over the persecution of women, a crime against humanity. ICC judges said in a statement there were "reasonable grounds" to suspect Supreme Leader Hai-

batullah Akhundzada and chief justice Abdul Hakim Haqqani "have committed... the crime against humanity of persecution... on gender grounds." "While the Taliban have imposed certain rules and prohibitions on the population as a whole, they have specifically targeted girls and women by reason of their gender, depriving them of fundamental

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

Heavy rains expected in next 2 days

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The NDMA issued fresh alerts for flash flooding and glacial lake outbursts in the northern and northwestern provinces of Gilgit-Baltistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, citing "a significant rise in temperatures and...an upcoming weather system." The PMD on Tuesday issued an alert for heavy rainfall in several parts of the country, including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, northeast Punjab, Azad Kashmir and parts of Balochistan, for the next two days. Monsoon rains fall across the region from June to September, offering respite from the summer heat. They are crucial to replenishing water supplies and agriculture, and therefore the livelihoods of millions of farmers and food security. However, they also wreak havoc by triggering deadly floods, landslides and displacement, particularly in vulnerable, poorly drained, or densely populated areas. At least 19 people lost their lives in Balochistan, KP, and the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi due to rain-related incidents in the past two days. An alert by the National Emergencies Operation Centre (NEOC) about a possible flood-like situation in various parts of the country has prompted Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to order the NDMA to be prepared to deal with potential emergencies.

Turkish defence minister arrives

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Minister of National Defence of Türkiye has arrived in Islamabad on an official visit. He was warmly received by Additional Secretary (West Asia), Ambassador Syed Ali Asad Gillani. During his official visit to Pakistan, key matters of mutual interest will be discussed. The visit highlights the close brotherly ties between Pakistan and Türkiye, founded on shared values, mutual respect, and a long history of friendship.

Show moral courage

PTI urges JUI-F to refuse reserved seats

Reserved seats only PTI's right but have been put up for "auction", says Barrister Saif

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: Adviser to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief minister on Information Barrister Muhammad Saif has urged Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman to show moral courage and refuse to accept the reserved seats. "If the opposition parties have even the slightest moral courage, they will refuse to take reserved seats which are only PTI's right but have been put up for 'auction'," said Saif. "Fazlur Rehman should also show moral courage like [ANP's] Amir Haider Hoti," the KP CM's aide said while welcoming the latter's statement regarding not accepting the reserved seats. His remarks refer to the Supreme Court's

June 27 verdict, which declared the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) ineligible for the reserved seats, after which the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) restored five reserved seats for women in the National Assembly from KP. The electoral body also reinstated 21 reserved seats for women in the KP Assembly of which eight were allocated to JUI-F, six to Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), and five to the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP). The ECP has also announced a revised schedule for Senate elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, setting July 21 as the new polling date. Apart from the issue of senate elections, the reserved seats also hold importance with regards to

Continued on Page 06

'Anti-state content' 27 prominent YouTube channels blocked in Pakistan

YouTube channels allegedly involved in spreading material in violation of Peca and other relevant laws

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: A local court in the federal capital on Tuesday ordered the blocking of 27 prominent YouTube channels for allegedly sharing content deemed anti-state. The order was issued by Islamabad's Judicial Magistrate Abbas Shah on the request of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA). According to the court order, the FIA's Cyber Crime Wing initiated an inquiry into the matter on June 2, 2025. During the course of the investigation, the agency identified multiple YouTube channels allegedly involved in uploading and spreading material in violation of the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (Peca) and other relevant laws. The court noted: "In the light of facts explained and evidence presented by the enquiry officer, this court is convinced that the subject matter constitutes offences punishable under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act and Penal Laws of Pakistan." The court said it was satisfied with the evidence submitted by the FIA and permitted legal action in accordance with the law. As per the written order, the head or officer in-charge of the security department or custodian of records of Google LLC (YouTube) has been directed to block or remove access to the 27 identified YouTube channels. The directive was issued on FIA's plea filed under Section 94 of the Criminal Procedure Code. It may be noted that the contentious Prevention of Electronic Crimes (Peca) (Amendment) Bill 2025 was signed into a law in January, with new definitions, the establishment of regulatory and investigative bodies, and stricter penalties for disseminating "false" information. According to the Peca 2025, any person "aggrieved by fake and false information" can approach the authority for removal or blocking access to such information and the authority would issue orders no later than 24 hours on the request. The legislation was met with strong opposition from the rival parties of the ruling coalition as well as journalists and media bodies under the umbrella of the Joint Action Committee (JAC). A report released by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) also underscored serious flaws in the Peca (Amendment) Act 2025 and called for the law to be repealed entirely without accepting any coercive application of the law's previous iterations from 2016 and 2023.

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SLAMABAD: The Pakistan Stock Exchange's (PSX) benchmark KSE-100 Index gained 33.04 points, on Tuesday, a positive change of 0.02 percent, closing at 133,403.19 points against 133,370.15 points last trading day.

A total of 1,206,524,901 shares were traded during the day as compared to 919,907,440 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 42.028 billion against Rs 45.311 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 480 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 217 of them recorded gains and 231 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 32 companies remained unchanged. The three top trading companies were TPL Properties with 96,716,252 shares at Rs 10.72 per share, WorldCalc with 64,365,959 shares at Rs 1.60 per share and Hascol Petrol with 47,695,588 shares at Rs 11.33 per share.—APP

has been taken against staff involved in exam malpractice or paper leaks. Among the innovative measures is the launch of an Education Card designed to serve as a single, integrated platform for students to access free textbooks, scholarships, stipends, and other benefits. To ensure the long-term financial sustainability of this initiative, he said an endowment fund has been established. The province will also provide students with free school bags, stationery, and necessary educational materials. Scholarships such as ETEA, Stori Da Pakhtunkhwa, and Rehmat-ul-Alameen will continue to support deserving students. _APP



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National Days and Armed Forces Days

JULY

July 01/Japan Self Defence Day

July 01/Singapore Armed Forces Day

July 01 / Canada National Day

July 01/Somalia Independence Day

July 04/USA Independence Day

July 05/Algeria Independence Day

July 09/Argentine Independence Day

July 09/Mongolia Revolution Day

July 14/France National Day

July 15/Brunei Sultan's Birthday

July 21/Belgium National Day

July 20/TRNC Independence Day

July 23/Egypt National Day

July 26/Cuba National Day

July 26/Liberia National Day

July 30/Morocco National Day

Serena Hotel.....111 133 133

Marriott.....051- 2826121

Monal.....0334-5421812

Turkish Airlines.....8494949

Emergency

Rescue (Police).....15

Bomb Disposal.....15

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

Emergency Ambulance.1122

& Rescue Services.4451122

Motorway Police...9266044

Motorway Police.9270601-20

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.....5611116

Cantt Hospital...9270907-11

DHQ.....5556311-4

RGH.....9290301-7

Holy Family.....9290322-7

PIMS.....9261170-79

Polyclinic.....9218300-09

Shifa International 4603666

Departments

CDA.....9221334-43

CDA.....9208301-04

Met Office.....9250360-6

RDA.....5555864

TMA.....5770886

Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding matters pertaining to the Agriculture sector.— DNA

Three held in G-10 for breeding dengue larvae

Officials say that failure to follow dengue SOPs will not be tolerated and legal action will be taken wherever necessary. The campaign will remain active throughout the high-risk season to ensure public health safety and keep the city dengue-free

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration teams took action in G-10 Markaz after discovering mosquito larvae at multiple sites during an inspection and arrested three violators. The spokesman of ICT administration said that the Assistant Commissioner (AC) Shalimar carried out an anti-dengue inspection in the G-10 commercial area and found violations of standard operating procedures (SOPs) related to dengue prevention. During the visit, dengue larvae were detected at several locations, leading to the arrest of three individuals responsible for the premises where the violations occurred. According to officials, the inspection was part of a routine check aimed at identifying dengue breeding spots in high-risk areas. The arrested individuals

were taken into custody for failing to follow preventive guidelines, which contributed to the presence of mosquito larvae in their respective premises. The AC said the district administration had repeatedly advised businesses and property owners to follow dengue SOPs, especially during the monsoon season. These include removing stagnant water, regularly checking rooftops and open containers, and maintaining hygiene in basements and storerooms. Despite these warnings, certain locations in G-10 Markaz were found in violation, with water accumulation and unhygienic conditions that led to larvae breeding. The three individuals arrested were handed over to the local police for further legal action under the applicable public

health regulations. Officials added that warnings had already been issued in the area earlier, and teams from the health department had conducted awareness campaigns. Still, the lack of compliance led to a targeted operation by the AC and his team. The AC Shalimar said that inspections will continue in commercial and residential areas of the zone to prevent any potential dengue outbreak. He urged citizens and business owners to play their part in stopping the spread of the disease by ensuring all preventive measures are taken at their properties. The district administration also warned that strict action will be taken against those ignoring SOPs and putting public health at risk. Surveillance teams have been directed to submit daily reports and conduct follow-ups in previously identified hotspots. In recent weeks, Islamabad has seen an increase in inspections across various sectors to control the risk of dengue. Areas with dense population, construction sites, tire shops, and underground parking spaces are under particular focus. The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration has called on all citizens to immediately report stagnant water or suspected breeding sites to their nearest union council office or helpline. The administration says public involvement is key in controlling the disease. Officials say that failure to follow dengue SOPs will not be tolerated and legal action will be taken wherever necessary. The campaign will remain active throughout the high-risk season to ensure public health safety and keep the city dengue-free.—APP

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CDA sets new standard with record uplift projects

ISLAMABAD: A recent survey by Piyass International Human Rights has found overwhelming public and expert support for the Capital Development Authority's (CDA) performance regarding development projects in federal capital Islamabad. The survey praised CDA's leadership under Chairman CDA, Chief Commissioner Islamabad, and Director General Civil Defence Muhammad Ali Randhawa for delivering development, said a press release issued here on Tuesday. The survey collected responses from over 10,000 participants, including business leaders, economists, educationists, real estate professionals, construction industry representatives, and the general public. The findings reflected strong confidence in the current leadership and appreciated the efforts of the CDA in completing several major development projects in the city and suburban areas using its limited resources. Among the projects highlighted were the construction and repair of roads, new underpasses, signal-free corridors, sector development, installation of streetlights, conversion to energy-efficient lighting, beautification of link roads and other beautification projects. According to engineers and urban planning specialists, CDA's development model has become a benchmark for effective, transparent, and sustainable urban planning. They described the authority's strategy as not only practical but also a potential template for similar initiatives across the country. On this occasion, Chairman Piyass International Human Rights Rana Imran Latif said that the authority has delivered visible results within a limited budget. He also lauded CDA for ensuring transparency, self-reliance, and planning in development works which reflects a responsible use of public funds and sets a new standard for governance. He further added that the recent developmental changes in Islamabad will not only improve the quality of life for residents but also serve as a national example of how public institutions can achieve progress through integrity, planning, and financial discipline.—APP

PIDE debunks poverty explosion

ISLAMABAD: Amid the flood of headlines claiming a sharp rise in poverty in Pakistan, the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) has stepped forward to clarify the situation with its latest report, "The Poverty Illusion: When Numbers Distort Reality." The findings challenge the widely circulated narrative of a nationwide poverty explosion, revealing that the rise in poverty statistics is primarily due to global metric recalibration rather than a sudden economic collapse, said a news release. In response to sensational poverty headlines, Dr. Nadeem Javaid, Vice Chancellor of PIDE and Member of the Planning Commission of Pakistan, stated, "Policymaking must be grounded in facts, not fear. These revised figures reflect changes in how poverty is measured globally, not a dramatic decline in the livelihoods of Pakistanis." The report, authored by Dr. Nasir Iqbal, PIDE's Registrar and Associate Professor, critically examines the World Bank's revised global

poverty lines. The new \$4.20 per day threshold, which replaced the former \$3.20, has led to an increase in poverty statistics from 39.8% to 44.7%. However, Dr. Iqbal points out that more than 80% of this increase is the result of shifting global poverty benchmarks, not a collapse in household conditions. Inflation and other factors account for just 18% of the increase. Key insights from PIDE's analysis include the strength of the informal economy, which supports over 60% of Pakistan's workforce, absorbing economic shocks and offering resilience during crises. Social protection programs such as the Ehsaas Program and the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) have played significant roles in mitigating poverty. Additionally, remittances from overseas Pakistanis continue to provide vital support, cushioning households and bolstering the economy during times of distress. Even amidst major economic shocks like the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2022 floods, PIDE estimates the poverty rate in

2025 to be between 23% and 25%, with food-based poverty pegged at just 6.2%, signaling consistent, long-term improvement. In light of these findings, PIDE has proposed a series of actions to address poverty with a data-driven approach. These include reinstating the Household Integrated Economic Survey (HIES) to update data, refining BISP to link cash transfers with measurable outcomes like education, employment, and asset growth, and developing a National Poverty Reduction Strategy integrated with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to ensure inclusive economic reforms. Additionally, PIDE calls for leveraging the informal economy through the creation of Village Economic Zones (VEZs) to boost rural employment and productivity via local value chains and agri-tech innovations. VC PIDE emphasized, "This is not a time for panic, but for rational, evidence-based policymaking that can turn perceived crises into opportunities for structural economic reform."—APP

ICT admin holds five in F-7 for street begging

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration acted on complaints from residents and launched a crackdown against street begging in Islamabad's F-7 sector and arrested five professional beggars. The spokesman of ICT administration said, on citizens' request, Assistant Commissioner (AC) City conducted an operation in Sector F-7 of the federal capital. The action was taken in response to multiple reports by residents who had raised concerns about the rising number of beggars in the area. During the operation, five individuals were found begging in public spaces, including busy intersections and near commercial areas. Authorities said the individuals were taken into custody and shifted to the nearest police station for further legal action. Officials from the district administration confirmed that the campaign aimed to discourage street begging and ensure public spaces remain accessible and secure for all residents. The operation was part of the city-wide efforts to maintain order in public areas and address complaints from citizens regarding the persistent presence of beggars in residential and commercial zones. The Assistant Commissioner City said that such operations would continue in different sectors of Islamabad based on residents' feedback. He added that the district administration was working in coordination with local police to take timely action wherever similar issues were reported. He further stated that the detained individuals would be dealt with under relevant sections of the law.—APP

ously identified hotspots. In recent weeks, Islamabad has seen an increase in inspections across various sectors to control the risk of dengue. Areas with dense population, construction sites, tire shops, and underground parking spaces are under particular focus. The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration has called on all citizens to immediately report stagnant water or suspected breeding sites to their nearest union council office or helpline. The administration says public involvement is key in controlling the disease. Officials say that failure to follow dengue SOPs will not be tolerated and legal action will be taken wherever necessary. The campaign will remain active throughout the high-risk season to ensure public health safety and keep the city dengue-free.—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: Shahida Parveen, Ghala Abbas, son of Ghulam Sarwar, resident of Shmali Mohalla, Kala Gujran Tehsil and District Jhelum. (Currently residing in 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 10.07.2025 at 08:00 AM., otherwise ex-parte proceedings will be initiated.

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Briefs

Pakistani officials head to China for hydropower training

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Officials of WAPDA and Descon Engineering Ltd. embarked on a transformative journey to China for hydropower operations training at the prestigious Shandong College of Water Conservancy. The initiative was organised by Chinese companies, UNI Int'l and ITMC, Yasser Shakoor, Director Operations and Business Development at UNI Int'l said. "The update pertains to the Kurram Tangi Dam project, which has now reached completion. As part of the post-completion phase, engineers associated with the project have been nominated for hydropower training in China, aimed at enhancing operational capacities", Yasser Shakoor told Gwadarpo. The initiative marks a significant step towards capacity building and international cooperation in hydropower sector. The training aims to enhance technical expertise and foster deeper collaboration between Chinese and Pakistani stakeholders in hydropower development, according to the UNI Int'l's Director. The Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) is a government agency responsible for developing water and hydropower resources. —APP

CCP devises enforcement policy measures

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has devised the enforcement policy measure for targeting cartels and deceptive marketing practices to maintain transparency and fairness. To ensure fair business practices in markets, the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) undertook robust enforcement measures in FY 2024-25, targeting cartelization, abuse of dominant position, and deceptive marketing practices, according to data issued by the CCP here. The Commission initiated 24 new inquiries—11 related to cartelization and 13 concerning deceptive marketing practices. It successfully concluded 14 investigations, which were forwarded for the adjudication process. The sectors under scrutiny included e-commerce, telecommunications, aviation, steel, transport, edible ghee and cooking oil, pharmaceuticals, construction, commodities, and education. The Cartel and Trade Abuse Department of the CCP, in its efforts to curb cartelization and market manipulation, initiated 11 new inquiries across various sectors, including e-commerce, telecommunications, aviation, steel, transport, edible ghee, cooking oil, and gas. In addition, 10 ongoing inquiries from previous periods were also under investigation. The department successfully concluded 9 inquiries, which were subsequently forwarded for adjudication. A key case involved ten steel structure suppliers allegedly engaged in bid rigging in tenders issued by power distribution companies (DISCOs). Another major case focused on two leading flat steel manufacturers accused of price fixing. —APP

NAVTTTC embarks on skill development venture

These programs are not only equipping the youth with market-relevant skills but are also empowering women in traditionally male-dominated trades said Gulmina Bilal Ahmad, Chairperson NAVTTTC

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a transformative effort to reshape the technical and vocational education landscape, Pakistan's National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) has launched multiple initiatives inspired by China's successful models. These programs are not only equipping the youth with market-relevant skills but are also empowering women in traditionally male-dominated trades said Gulmina Bilal Ahmad, Chairperson NAVTTTC. In an exclusive interview with China Economic

Net, Gulmina Bilal Ahmad, Chairperson of the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) emphasized, is on empowering youth - especially women - through inclusive, research-based, and sustainable skill development initiatives. "Traditionally male-dominated trades like plumbing, mobile repair, carpentry, and electrical work are now part of our women-only training programs," the Chairperson revealed. "Last year, we launched this as a pilot initiative under the Prime Minister's special directive, and it is now a regular feature in NAVTTTC's programming." She noted

that high-tech IT training and several other modern skilling programs have been modeled after successful practices in China. "We studied the Chinese system, adapted their model, and asked ourselves: how can we apply this to Pakistan's unique needs?" Responding to a question on funding and long-term sustainability, the Chairperson clarified: "The main challenge is not a lack of resources, but rather the efficient and strategic use of those resources. We are committed to making data-driven decisions based on district-level needs and labor market demands." NAVTTTC

has developed an online platform which provides real-time data on training institutions across the country. "From Sanghar to Dalbandin, you can now see how many co-education institutes exist in a district, what their teacher qualifications are, and whether they are operating at full capacity," she explained. The Chairperson credited Prime Minister's personal interest in the success of Pakistan's skilling agenda as a driving force behind its effectiveness and nationwide reach. "His vision is to ensure maximum impact, functionality, and long-term relevance."

When asked about future cooperation with China, she concluded: "China is more than a partner—it is a brother who generously shares its development experience with us. The responsibility now lies with us to localize those models and implement them with purpose." "It is worth noting that she is currently in China at the invitation of Tang International Education Group, where she recently attended a ceremony for eight Pakistani female students who completed technical and vocational training. Additionally, a new batch of sixteen female students has been enrolled."

Govt to cut container dwell time by 70% at ports: Junaid



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry chairing high-level meeting held at the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) headquarters.

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry has announced the establishment of a high-level committee tasked with developing concrete measures to reduce container dwell time at ports by up to 70 percent. The decision was made during a high-level meeting held at the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) headquarters. The session was chaired by the Federal Minister and attended by FBR Chairman Rashid Mahmood Langrial, alongside senior officials and technical representatives from the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, FBR, Customs, and Karachi Port Trust (KPT). The committee will be headed by Additional Secretary of Ministry of Maritime Affairs, Umer Zafar Sheikh, and will include representatives from all key stakeholders—Karachi Port Trust, Pakistan Customs, terminal operators, FBR, and other relevant ministries and departments. Addressing the participants, the minister stated that the dwell time of containers at port terminals will be reduced by up to 70%, cutting it down from one week to just two days following the directives of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. The committee has been tasked with identifying concrete steps to remove procedural hurdles and streamline cargo clearance processes. It will present a comprehensive set of recommendations within ten days. The minister further announced the establishment of a monitoring room at the Ministry of Maritime Affairs to oversee the movement and timing of container handling. A dedicated team will manage the entire monitoring process. "Drones and AI technology will also be deployed to monitor vessel docking operations through to the container's exit from the terminal," he added. Minister Junaid Chaudhry emphasized that reducing dwell time is not merely an administrative change, but a strategic move to enhance port efficiency, lower logistics costs, and strengthen Pakistan's standing in the regional trade and logistics landscape. He also pointed out that persistent delays in container release have imposed additional costs on importers and exporters, diminishing the competitiveness of Pakistani ports. Through this initiative, the government aims to reduce port congestion, facilitate smoother goods movement, and ensure that the maritime logistics sector plays a strong role in advancing national economic goals, the minister added.

‘Abdul Sattar Edhi’ remembered

ISLAMABAD: Abdul Sattar Edhi, Pakistan's most revered humanitarian was remembered on Tuesday (July 8) on his ninth death anniversary, as media platforms reflected on his profound impact and enduring legacy. A report said that Abdul Sattar Edhi's legacy continues to inspire generations, with his foundation still actively serving the poor and vulnerable across Pakistan. Known for establishing the world's largest volunteer ambulance network, Edhi also set up shelters, orphanages, and clinics nationwide, earning him both national and international recognition, said a report with a local news channel. The report highlighted that despite limited resources, Edhi's unwavering commitment to humanity transformed countless lives, making him a symbol of compassion and selflessness. Born on February 28, 1928, in Gujarat prior to the partition of the subcontinent, Edhi laid the foundations of his welfare work in Pakistan in 1951. Over the decades, he built what would become the world's largest volunteer-run ambulance network. —APP

Pak's regional exports increase 1% during Jul-May

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's exports to the seven regional countries increased by 1 per cent during the first eleven months of the current fiscal year (2024-25) compared to the corresponding months of last year. The country's exports to the regional countries including Afghanistan, China, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, and the Maldives account for a small amount of \$4.085 billion, which is 13.75 per cent of

Pakistan's overall exports of \$29.690 billion during July-May (2024-25), State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported. China tops the list of countries in terms of Pakistan's exports to its neighbouring, leaving behind other countries such as Bangladesh and Afghanistan. Pakistan carried out its border trade with farther neighbour Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, and Maldives. Pakistan's exports to China witnessed a

decrease of 11.19 per cent from \$2556.126 million last year to \$2270.032 million this year whereas exports to Afghanistan surged to \$723.442 million from \$511.627 million. The country's exports to Bangladesh also increased by 21.45 per cent to \$728.303 million this year from \$599.650 million whereas exports to Sri Lanka decreased to \$352.371 million from \$363.362. The exports to Nepal dipped to \$2.323 million from \$2.552 million in the previous year. Pakistan exports to Maldives increased by 2 per cent to \$8.588 million from \$8.419 million while exports to India decreased to \$0.405 million from \$3.428 million, it added. —APP

British High Commission empowers Pakistani media

DNA

ISLAMABAD: As Pakistan grapples with deadly monsoon floods and a projected \$1.2 trillion cost of climate inaction, the British High Commission has launched a nationwide climate journalism training initiative to empower media professionals to drive awareness and action. The training will spotlight the crucial role journalists play in encouraging climate action. Journalists can spotlight climate change solutions, encourage climate action, and can help their readers and viewers to understand how climate change affects them. Deputy Director of

Communications and Public Diplomacy, Sneha Lala, said: The cost of inaction on climate change in Pakistan is \$1.2 trillion by 2050. Within that figure is countless lives lost, countless numbers of people pushed into poverty, and countless livelihoods lost. It can be a bleak picture, but climate journalism is at the heart of showing us that there is another option. Climate journalism can incentivise action, spotlight solutions, and create change. I look forward to seeing the stories journalists go on to produce. Having delivered trainings to the Express Group (Express Tribune, Express News and Daily Express), Geo News, Daily

Jang, The News, The Nation and Nawa-e-Waqt in Islamabad, the High Commission will now travel to Lahore and Karachi, to continue their training programme. British High Commission will be joined by a number of Chevening alumni, who honed their climate expertise through the prestigious scholarship where they studied a master's qualification in the UK. This includes Syed Muhammad Abubakar, Environmental Journalist and PhD Scholar at George Mason University, U.S.; Hamid Naqi Khan, Director General WWF Pakistan; and Sana Munir, Director of Local Government Audit. They will also be joined by Muhammad Talal, senior

sub-editor of Samaa digital, and Muhammad Asim Siddique, General Manager Samaa digital, both alumni of the High Commission's Chevening climate mentorship programme. They have been supported by Adil Shahzeb, who has shared his insights on integrating climate stories into Dawn's primetime show, 'Live with Adil Shahzeb'. Leo Hickman, editor and director of the Carbon Brief, is supporting the training programme. The High Commission will run a competition for all training participants. Journalists will submit their best climate story, and the winner will receive mentorship from Hickman.

ITP books 112 FIRs, seizes 1,500+ vehicles

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) impounded over 1,500 vehicles, issued 2,700+ challans for illegal parking, and registered 112 FIRs during a recent special enforcement campaign launched to curb violations under a zero-tolerance policy. An official told on Tuesday that 1,119 motorcycles and 412 vehicles were shifted to police stations during the campaign for serious traffic rule violations, including driving without valid documents and endangering public safety. He said ITP also utilized drone technology to monitor traffic flow and road violations, which led to fines against 48 drivers caught committing various offenses. He said 845 motorists were fined for lane violations, 76 for driving without a license, 11 for triple riding, and 23 underage drivers were penalized during the campaign. He said wrong-way driving resulted in 923 challans, while 1,007 riders were fined for not wearing helmets, and 2,766 tickets were issued for illegal parking. Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Captain (R) Syed Zeeshan Haider, directed officers to continue strict enforcement without discrimination and maintain the zero-tolerance approach to ensure discipline on roads. "No one should be allowed to drive without a valid license," CTO said, urging citizens to cooperate with traffic personnel for safe and smooth commuting across the city. —APP

‘Loneliness’ kills quietly but relentlessly

ISLAMABAD: Psychiatrist Tuesday issued a grave warning that loneliness has emerged as a silent global health crisis, now responsible for over 871,000 deaths annually equivalent to nearly 100 lives lost every hour and disproportionately affecting the elderly and youth populations. Speaking at a program with a local news channel, a renowned Psychiatrist Prof Dr Muhammad Iqbal Afridi highlighted that despite living in an era of unprecedented digital connectivity, millions are silently suffering in emotional isolation. He emphasized the urgent need for nations to prioritize social connection and mental health to address this growing public health issue. He stated, "Loneliness is no longer just an emotional state; it is a serious public health concern that can lead to depression, heart disease, substance abuse and even suicide. Unfortunately, it is spreading rapidly in both developed and developing countries. —APP

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The United Nations: A toothless tiger

THE United Nations (UN) was founded in 1945 with the noble aim of maintaining international peace and security. Yet, nearly eight decades later, the organization stands as a shadow of its original vision—paralyzed by geopolitical rivalries, held hostage by veto-wielding powers, and rendered increasingly irrelevant in resolving the world's most pressing conflicts. From the Israel-Iran tensions to the Gaza crisis, the Kashmir dispute, and the endless infighting in Africa, the UN has failed to act as an effective mediator. The Secretary-General, instead of being a moral authority, has been reduced to a helpless figurehead whose pleas for peace are ignored by warring nations and powerful Security Council members alike. If the UN can no longer fulfill its primary mandate, then it is time to ask: What is its purpose?

The fundamental problem with the UN lies in its structure. The Security Council's five permanent members (P5)—the United States, Russia, China, France, and the United Kingdom—hold veto power, allowing any one of them to block resolutions that threaten their interests. This has turned the UN into a battleground for great power politics rather than a platform for conflict resolution.

The ongoing humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza is a glaring example of the UN's impotence. Despite overwhelming global condemnation of Israel's military actions, the US has repeatedly vetoed ceasefire resolutions, shielding its ally from accountability. The Secretary-General's appeals for restraint are dismissed, and UN agencies like UNRWA are defunded and demonized. If the UN cannot even enforce its own humanitarian principles when a nuclear-armed state flouts international law, then what good is it?

The recent exchange of missile strikes between Israel and Iran further exposed the UN's irrelevance. Rather than mediating de-escalation, the Security Council remained deadlocked, with Western powers backing Israel and Russia and China refusing to take a strong stance. The Secretary-General's calls for restraint were ignored, proving that the UN has no real authority when major powers are involved. The Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan has been on the UN agenda since 1948, yet no meaningful progress has been made. India dismisses UN resolutions as outdated, while Pakistan uses them for rhetorical leverage. The UN's failure to enforce its own mandates has left Kashmiris trapped in a cycle of violence and repression. If the organization cannot even facilitate dialogue after 75 years, why does it still pretend to care?



From Sudan to the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia to the Sahel, Africa remains a hotbed of conflict. The UN's peacekeeping missions (MONUSCO, MINUSMA, etc.) have been criticized for inefficiency, corruption, and even complicity in abuses. The Security Council pays lip service to African crises but refuses to authorize robust interventions when they do not align with Western or Russian interests.

The current Secretary-General, António Guterres, has become a symbol of the UN's impotence. His statements on Gaza, Ukraine, and other conflicts are met with indifference. When he invoked Article 99 of the UN Charter to force attention on Gaza, the Security Council barely reacted. If the UN's top diplomat cannot influence world events, why does the position still exist?

Guterres should have resigned long ago—not out of cowardice, but as a moral statement. By staying, he legitimizes a broken system. A resignation would force the world to confront the UN's failures. But like the organization he leads, he seems content with symbolic gestures rather than real change.

The harsh truth is that the UN is no longer a neutral arbiter—it is a tool of the P5, especially the US. Washington uses the UN to sanction its enemies (Iran, North Korea, Venezuela) while shielding its allies (Israel, Saudi Arabia). Russia and China do the same, vetoing resolutions on Syria and Myanmar. The General Assembly's votes are non-binding, and the International Court of Justice's rulings are ignored when inconvenient (e.g., US sanctions on Nicaragua, Israel's occupation of Palestine). For smaller nations, the UN provides a platform to voice grievances, but that is all. For the powerful, it is a stage to perform diplomacy while acting unilaterally behind the scenes. The UN's agencies (WHO, UNICEF, UNHCR) still do vital humanitarian work, but its political role is fading. The UN has two options: radical reform or dignified dissolution.

Abolish the Veto: The P5's veto power is the root of the UN's paralysis. Either remove it or expand permanent membership to include Africa, Latin America, and more Asian representation.

Empower the General Assembly: Make its resolutions binding, at least on non-security issues. Strengthen the Secretary-General's Role: Give the office real enforcement powers, not just moral pleas.

Alternative Alliances: If reform is impossible, nations should consider regional blocs (AU, ASEAN, OIC) as alternative peacekeeping bodies. If none of this happens, the UN will continue its slow decline into irrelevance—a talking shop for diplomats while bombs fall on Gaza, Kashmir, and Sudan. The Secretary-General should either demand real change or step aside. The world no longer has time for empty gestures. The choice is clear: The UN must reclaim its purpose or admit it has none.

How BeiDou won the wars for Pak and Iran

Qamar Bashir



Iran's success also exposed something deeper: the shifting architecture of global power is no longer grounded only in physical assets or economic might, but in digital control. Navigation satellites—once the domain of scientific curiosity—are now the silent arbiters of battlefield supremacy and economic resilience. Satellite time synchronization controls everything from stock exchanges and ATM networks to flight corridors and power grids. Without reliable satellite signals, entire national systems collapse. And for decades, America held the keys. Now, China holds a second set

IN two recent wars that nearly tipped the world into a full-scale global conflict—one between Pakistan and India, and the other between Iran and Israel—a new determinant of military dominance emerged. In both cases, countries under pressure, Pakistan and Iran, not only stood their ground but struck deep into enemy territory with astonishing precision and devastating impact. Pakistan, in a five-day war with a much larger adversary, crippled India's air force and destroyed strategic installations inside India. Similarly, in a 12-day war with Israel, Iran destroyed numerous high-end Israeli military, economic, and strategic assets, ultimately forcing Israel to beg for a ceasefire. The common denominator in these unlikely victories? Both nations abandoned reliance on the U.S.-controlled GPS and instead used China's BeiDou satellite navigation system. This was not merely a technical switch, but a strategic shift that defined the outcome of both conflicts. Had they used the U.S. GPS, which Washington has the power to degrade or deny at will, these nations would have stood little chance of success.

There is growing speculation that this was also a calculated downgrading of the GPS system by the U.S. for India and Israel, to teach a geopolitical lesson to India—whose regional ambitions and anti-U.S. posturing were becoming problematic—and to Israel, whose growing influence over American politics and dominance in the Middle East were starting to challenge U.S. primacy. In both wars, the side relying on BeiDou emerged victorious. This silent yet transformative transition from American to Chinese satellite guidance marks a game-changing shift in global warfare and digital sovereignty. Without access to BeiDou, Iran's ability to hit critical Israeli targets with such devastating effect would have been close to impossible. Had Iran relied on U.S. GPS, it would have been vulnerable to jamming, signal scrambling, and location degradation—methods long used by the Pentagon to retain navigational supremacy in conflicts from Iraq to Kosovo. But BeiDou changed that equation. It gave Iran independence. It gave Iran accuracy. And it gave Iran the capacity to strike in ways that stunned Israeli defenses and shook the strategic confidence of its Western allies.

Until recently, the United States maintained unchallenged dominion over satellite-based navigation. Its GPS system, launched in 1978 and globally operational since 1995, was the invisible backbone of the

modern world—from military command centers to Uber rides. GPS offered civilian accuracy of around five meters and classified military accuracy within centimeters. Its 31-satellite constellation blanketed the Earth, making it indispensable not only for warfare but for commerce, transportation, communication, and finance. Over 160 countries still rely on it. But reliance breeds vulnerability.

China, observing this vulnerability, took a different path. In the early 2000s, following several episodes in which Chinese military maneuvers were exposed to potential disruption via U.S. GPS control, Beijing began rapidly constructing its own alternative: the BeiDou Navigation Satellite System. By 2020, BeiDou achieved full global operational capability. Today, it features over 45 active satellites and provides coverage that matches GPS worldwide—while delivering superior accuracy across Asia and the Middle East, where Iran happens to sit.

But BeiDou is not merely a mirror of GPS—it is in many respects an enhancement. Its civilian precision ranges from 2.5 to 5 meters, and its dual-frequency capability, now standard across its receivers, ensures better resilience against jamming. Where GPS's most advanced services are reserved for GPS-III satellites and American military clients, BeiDou distributes its capabilities more widely to allies and commercial users. That shift is not just technical—it is geopolitical. Iran's use of BeiDou in the Israel conflict demonstrates exactly why China built it in the first place: to break America's monopoly on digital positioning and to offer its partners an independent alternative. Iran's military had long feared that in any conflict scenario, reliance on U.S. GPS could turn into a fatal liability.

Iran's success also exposed something deeper: the shifting architecture of global power is no longer grounded only in physical assets or economic might, but in digital control. Navigation satellites—once the domain of scientific curiosity—are now the silent arbiters of battlefield supremacy and economic resilience. Satellite time synchronization controls everything from stock exchanges and ATM networks to flight corridors and power grids. Without reliable satellite signals, entire national systems collapse. And for decades, America held the keys. Now, China holds a second set. And countries are lining up to accept them. More than 150 countries have now integrated BeiDou into their telecommunications, transporta-

tion, defense, and financial systems. Many of these nations are members of or partners to China's Belt and Road Initiative. Their digital highways, ports, drones, farming machinery, and even bank servers are beginning to pulse to the rhythm of Chinese satellites. In Africa, smart tractors powered by BeiDou now harvest with sub-meter precision. In Central Asia, freight trains synchronize their transcontinental journeys using Chinese space-time signals. In Southeast Asia, civilian air routes increasingly rely on BeiDou for real-time tracking. In Latin America and the Middle East, military clients are exploring Chinese receivers to replace their dependency on GPS. This diffusion of navigational power is part of a larger Chinese strategy—not merely to match the United States, but to build a parallel system that renders American hegemony optional. China's push toward multipolarity isn't just visible in trade routes or military drills—it is written in the stars. BeiDou is one pillar of this architecture. Others include China's lead in 5G infrastructure, its rollout of the Digital Yuan, its investment in artificial intelligence and quantum computing, and its ambitious space exploration agenda.

Beijing has understood what few others fully appreciate: that a superpower in the 21st century is not defined solely by its GDP or missile count, but by its ability to offer sovereign alternatives to global systems of control. BeiDou is exactly that—a sovereign alternative. It allows nations to chart their own course, free from the threat of digital sabotage or external command. In doing so, it shifts alliances not only through diplomacy or ideology but through circuitry and signal.

The clash between Iran and Israel revealed many things—military capability, political alliances, intelligence gaps—but above all, it revealed the arrival of a new digital order. It showed that China's technology is no longer confined to factories or export catalogues. It is now embedded in warfare, embedded in sovereignty, and embedded in the most critical decisions a nation can make. With BeiDou, China did not just launch satellites. It launched influence, independence, and irreversible momentum.

And in doing so, it may have quietly changed the future of conflict—and the future of control.

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

The sound of silence

Amina Ghafoor



This experience was a powerful and painful reminder of why gender equity remains such a critical and urgent issue in our society, particularly in professional environments. In sectors like engineering and technology, where women remain significantly underrepresented, such experiences can be especially disheartening. They echo the early challenges many...

RECENTLY attended a professional development event that brought together a diverse group of attendees and women from various industries and backgrounds. At first glance, the gathering appeared to reflect progress: inclusion, diversity, and collaboration. However, what unfolded during the session left me disheartened and frustrated. It served as a reminder that while there is a visible respect for women in professional spaces, true inclusivity especially in practice still has a long way to go. Unfortunately, the session was poorly planned. Although women were present in the audience, every activity, example, and interaction seemed designed exclusively with men in mind. From the outset, it was clear that no consideration had been given to creating an inclusive environment. As a woman in attendance, I felt not only excluded but deeply uncomfortable. The discomfort did not stem from being in the minority a familiar experience for many women in male-dominated fields like engineering but from the blatant disregard for gender sensitivity.

Throughout the session, patriarchal jokes were made, often at the expense of women. These were neither harmless nor humorous; they were offensive, tone-deaf, and entirely inappropriate for a professional setting. Even more disturbing was the casual manner in which they were delivered—and the laughter that followed from most of the male participants. The few women present—accomplished, experienced professionals—were visibly uneasy, their confidence evidently shaken. Some made efforts to engage, but gradually withdrew as the environment failed to foster equal participation. A handful of men noticed the imbalance and attempted to advocate for fairness and respect, but the dominant group, which appeared unwilling to examine its own behavior, quickly dismissed them directly or indirectly.

This experience was a powerful and painful reminder of why gender equity remains such a critical and urgent issue in our society, particularly in professional environments. In sectors like engineering and technology, where women remain significantly underrepresented, such experiences can be especially disheartening. They echo the early challenges many women face in their careers: often being the only woman in the room, constantly needing to prove their

capabilities, working twice as hard for recognition, and confronting biases rooted not in merit, but in gender.

There is often hope that things are moving in the right direction that professional spaces are becoming more inclusive and equitable. Many individuals do actively foster such environments by mentoring young women, advocating for diversity, and ensuring all voices are heard and respected, regardless of gender. Yet, experiences like this serve as sobering reminders that progress is not as widespread as it may appear. The attitudes encountered are not isolated; they remain deeply embedded in professional culture.

What is most disheartening is realizing that many young women entering the workforce today continue to face the same challenges that previous generations encountered. Despite some areas of progress, the underlying structures of bias and inequality remain largely intact. This persistent reality is not only disappointing it is deeply discouraging. We must understand that the gender gap cannot be closed through token gestures or one-time diversity initiatives. It requires sustained, systemic change. The first step toward that change is acknowledging the problem. Too often, concerns about gender bias are dismissed as exaggerated or irrelevant. But those of us who experience it know the reality all too well. In societies like ours, where patriarchal norms are deeply entrenched, the burden of change cannot fall solely on women's shoulders. Men especially those in leadership positions must become active participants in the movement toward gender equity. They must be willing to listen, to learn, and to challenge the behaviors and mindsets that perpetuate inequality.

Achieving gender equity is not just a matter of social justice it is an economic imperative. In a country grappling with economic instability, the exclusion of women from key industries and leadership roles is not only unjust but also inefficient. We cannot afford to overlook the contributions of half our population. When women are empowered to participate fully in the economy, societies thrive. Yet with the current slow pace of gender awareness and inclusivity, we are hindering our own development.

It is time to move beyond surface-level solutions and commit to deep, meaningful change. Gender awareness and sensitivity must be integrated across all sectors especially

education, industry, and policy. Gender studies should be made a compulsory subject from school through university, just like religious studies. Early education plays a crucial role in shaping mindsets. Teaching children to value all genders equally helps lay the foundation for a society that not only upholds equality in principle but actively practices inclusivity and equity in everyday and professional life.

Beyond awareness, professional environments must turn intention into action by creating spaces where women are not only present but are genuinely included and supported. In fields like engineering and IT where gender disparities remain stark proactive measures are essential. Creating safe, inclusive, and equitable work environments, where all voices are heard and respected, should not be a mere policy statement it must become a cultural standard embedded in daily practice. Of course, it is important to recognize that progress is being made. There are individuals and organizations actively working to close the gender gap, sometimes at great personal and professional cost. These trailblazers both women and men are our hope. Their efforts, though they may seem small in the grand scheme, matter. They create ripples that can eventually lead to waves of transformative change. And so, while this recent experience was disappointing, it also strengthened my resolve. I am reminded of why we must continue to speak up, even when it is uncomfortable. Why we must challenge the status quo, even when it resists. And why we must support one another—especially women just beginning their professional journeys.

One can hope for a future where no woman walks into a room and feels invisible, unheard, or out of place. A future where no young professional is made to question her abilities, diminish her presence, or conform to a space never designed to include her. A future where workplaces are not only diverse in numbers but inclusive in culture where leadership reflects the richness of different perspectives, and where policies are not performative but truly transformative. A future where respect, opportunity, and equity are not demands, but values inherently upheld. Those days are coming but only if we continue working toward them. Change doesn't just happen. We build it together.

— **The writer is Manager Sales Technical & Commercial-BEE, MSPM**

Briefs

Qatar says
'we will need
time' for...

FROM PAGE 01
As global calls for peace intensify, all eyes are now on Washington, Doha, and Tel Aviv in hopes that a breakthrough can be achieved in the coming days. Meanwhile, Israel and Hamas did not achieve a breakthrough in their latest round of indirect talks on Tuesday in Doha for a Gaza ceasefire, a Palestinian official said. "No breakthrough has been achieved so far, and the negotiations are ongoing," the source close to the negotiations told AFP on the third day of talks aiming to bring an end to more than 21 months of war in the Palestinian territory.

PTI urges
JUI-F to
refuse...

FROM PAGE 01
the future of the CM Ali Amin Gandapur-led KP government which in recent times might face the threat of a possible no confidence motion — a prospect that might pose serious threat to the PTI as the opposition is just 20 seats away from tipping the balance of power in the provincial assembly. The KP Assembly has a total strength of 145, but at the moment, there are 115 elected members. Of the remaining 30, 26 seats are reserved for women and four for minorities. The JUI-F had seven elected members, received 10 women and two minority seats, taking its total to 19. The PML-N, which started with six elected members, got nine reserved seats and now stands at 15. Meanwhile, PPP has risen from four to 11 seats after being allocated six women and one minority seat.

Govt can't
function
without...

FROM PAGE 01
after the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) obtained a simple majority in the National Assembly after the reinstatement of reserved seats by the Election Commission of Pakistan following the top court's Constitutional Bench verdict. It also handed the ruling alliance a two-thirds majority in the lower house, as its strength rose from 218 to 235 members. Expanding on President Zardari's rumoured removal, Bukhari said that those behind such speculations had no understanding of the Constitution and law. The PPP secretary general further clarified that the party was not joining the federal cabinet. The PPP leader's rebuttal echoes the statement made by the PML-N's Senator Irfan Siddiqui who has firmly denied reports suggesting any proposal to replace the president. "No such suggestion is under consideration at any level," Senator Siddiqui said while speaking on a private television channel.

PM says
automation
of FBR...

FROM PAGE 01
more goods declarations (GD) determined for tax collection, but goods clearance through the green channel also increased two-and-a-half times. Expressing his views on the occasion, the prime minister said that due to reduced human intervention, the system would be more efficient, saving both time and money. The PM ordered to make the new system integrated and sustainable and commended the officers and staff who worked on the development of the new risk management system. Furthermore, the huddle was informed that under the new system, estimation of cost and nature of goods during import and export would be conducted by AI and BOTs — a software programme that can execute commands, reply to messages, or perform routine tasks. The new risk management system, based on modern technology, will continuously improve through automation using machine learning, along with the movement of goods, meeting was told.

Tarar praises sports journalists
as pillars of sporting spirit

The minister made these remarks while addressing a ceremony held in connection with World Sports Journalists Day and the Oath-Taking Ceremony of the Rawalpindi-Islamabad Sports Journalists Association (RISJA)

ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah Tarar, has lauded the role of sports journalists as the backbone of Pakistan's sporting culture, calling them true ambassadors of the nation on the global stage. He praised their tireless efforts in promoting sports and assured that the government will extend its full support to amplify their work and visibility. The minister made these remarks while addressing a ceremony held in connection with World Sports Journalists Day and the Oath-Taking Ceremony of the Rawalpindi-Islamabad Sports Journalists Association (RISJA). The event, organized with the support of Serena Hotels, was attended by an esteemed lineup of guests including CEO Serena Hotels Aziz Boolani, Olympian Shahbaz Senior, Olympian Sadaf Siddiqui, boxer Usman Wazeer, PFUJ President Afzal Butt, National Press Club Secretary Nayyar Ali, Finance Secretary Waqar Abbasi, senior journalist Aliya Rasheed, and office-bearers from various sports bodies, associations and media organizations. Tarar highlighted that sports journalists have been a source of hope and recognition for countless athletes, helping them rise to national and international prominence. "Without sports journalists, the



public's interest in competitions would have diminished. Their contribution to promoting sports is truly commendable," he said. He further acknowledged their role in showcasing talent, fostering

sportsmanship, and energizing the spirit of healthy competition across the country. "I salute the sports journalists of Pakistan," he added. "Our international sporting achievements

owe much to their dedication. Whatever support is required—from coverage to promotion—the government will provide it. We are committed to going the extra mile to stand with them."

Thanking Serena Hotels for hosting the event, the minister appreciated its ongoing contribution to sports through the Sports Diplomacy initiative. He emphasized that such public-private collaborations are vital for strengthening Pakistan's sports infrastructure and global visibility. Speaking on the occasion, Aziz Boolani, CEO of Serena Hotels, underlined the importance of nurturing sports and youth talent in Pakistan. "Our athletes are immensely gifted, and they deserve our full backing to raise Pakistan's flag high globally," he said.

Reiterating Serena's long-term commitment to sports, Boolani added, "Through our Sports Diplomacy initiative, we will continue to support all forms of sports by providing platforms for both athletes and journalists." During the ceremony, Minister Attaullah Tarar also administered the oath to RISJA's newly elected office-bearers. PFUJ President Afzal Butt, NPC Secretary Nayyar Ali, RISJA President Abu Bakar bin Talat, Patron Abdul Mohi Shah, and Chairman Shakeel Awan also addressed the gathering, highlighting the vital role of sports journalism in promoting a positive image of Pakistan.

Injured Shadab and Rauf
out of Pakistan's squad

KARACHI: Pakistan on Tuesday left out injured allrounder Shadab Khan and fast bowler Haris Rauf from the fitness-hit squad for the Twenty20 international series in Bangladesh this month. Shadab, vice captain of the team during their 3-0 home win over Bangladesh last month, has undergone a shoulder operation and is recuperating in England. Rauf injured his hamstring during a T20 League game in the United States on Sunday while another pacer, Hasan Ali, is out due to his commitment in county cricket in England. Pakistan continues to leave out former captains Babar Azam and Moham-

mad Rizwan, and spearhead Shaheen Shah Afridi as selectors said they want to try some new players in the build up to the World Cup. India and Sri Lanka will co-host the Twenty20 World Cup in February-March next year. Azam and Rizwan were last part of the T20I squad in South Africa last year, while Shaheen featured on the New Zealand tour in March this year. Salman Agha will lead the side in Bangladesh where the matches will be played in Dhaka on July 20, 22 and 24. Also left out are pacers Naseem Shah and Mohammad Wasim who both continue to

regain full fitness after injuries. It left the selectors to choose uncapped pacers in 31-year-old Salman Mirza and Ahmed Daniyal, 28, who both performed well in the Pakistan Super League this year. Spinning allrounder Mohammad Nawaz returns to the squad after last playing for Pakistan in January 2024. Squad: Salman Agha (captain), Abrar Ahmed, Ahmed Daniyal, Faheem Ashraf, Fakhar Zaman, Hasan Nawaz, Hussain Talat, Khushdil Shah, Abbas Afridi, Mohammad Haris, Mohammad Nawaz, Sahibzada Farhan, Saim Ayub, Salman Mirza, Sufiyan Muqeem. — Agencies

Sinner wins
Wimbledon
reprieve

LONDON: Jannik Sinner progressed to the Wimbledon quarter-finals on Monday after a tearful Grigor Dimitrov pulled out injured while in total control of the match while Novak Djokovic survived a scare. World number one Sinner and seven-time champion Djokovic remain on course for a mouthwatering semi-final clash but the top seed's match on Centre Court was overshadowed by Dimitrov's heartbreak. The Italian was starting at the exit door trailing 3-6, 5-7, 2-2 before the Bulgarian 19th seed pulled up holding his right pectoral muscle and was unable to continue. Sinner rushed to his aid but his 34-year-old opponent was barely able to wave to acknowledge the crowd's warm ovation. — Agencies

PM appoints
Qatari princess as
brand ambassador

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday appointed Qatari mountaineer and royal family member Sheikhha Asma Al Thani as the brand ambassador for Pakistan's mountains and tourism after she recently successfully summited Nanga Parbat, the ninth-highest mountain on Earth located in Gilgit-Baltistan region. Known as the "Killer Mountain," the 8,126-metre-high peak is considered one of the world's most dangerous climbs due to its severe weather conditions and rough terrain. In a post on X, the premier felicitated Sheikhha Asma on the achievement. "I am pleased to appoint Her Highness Sheikhha Asma Al Thani as the Brand Ambassador for Pakistan's mountains and tourism. "My heartfelt felicitations to Her Highness on her recent feat of scaling Nanga Parbat. It is truly inspiring," he wrote. "Her achievement sends a powerful message of courage and determination, and stands as a testament to the enduring friendship between Pakistan and Qatar," he added. In a post on Instagram, Sheikhha Asma described the relentless challenges she faced on her route to the summit and the emotional toll of the ascent.

Netanyahu
nominates
Trump for...

FROM PAGE 01

"He's forging peace as we speak, in one country, in one region after the other," Netanyahu said at a dinner with Trump at the White House.

Justice
Dogar sworn
in as CJ IHC

FROM PAGE 01

members of lawyers' bodies and legal fraternity, law officers, lawyers and mediapersons. Earlier, Justice Dogar has been performing as Acting CJ of IHC.

ICC seeks
arrest of
Taliban...

FROM PAGE 01

rights and freedoms," the court said. The court said the alleged crimes had been committed between 15 August 2021, when the Taliban seized power, and continued until at least January 20, 2025. The Taliban had "severely deprived" girls and women of the rights to education, privacy and family life and the freedoms of movement, expression, thought, conscience and religion, ICC judges said. "In addition, other persons were targeted because certain expressions of sexuality and/or gender identity were regarded as inconsistent with the Taliban's policy on gender." The ICC, based in The Hague, was set up to rule on the world's worst crimes, such as war crimes and crimes against humanity. It has no police force of its own and relies on its member states to carry out its arrest warrants, with mixed results. In theory, this means that anyone subject to an ICC arrest warrant cannot travel to a member state for fear of being detained.

Dozens
missing...

FROM PAGE 01

the river in the preceding 24 hours. At least 18 people are missing in Nepal while China's official Xinhua news agency said 11 people were unaccounted for on the Chinese side of the mountainous border region. In Nepal, the missing included six Chinese workers and three police personnel, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA) said on X. It added that eight electric cars were also washed away and a small hydroelectric plant was damaged in the flood. Trade between Nepal and China was disrupted because of the bridge's destruction, officials said. The missing Chinese nationals were working at the Inland Container Depot being constructed with Chinese assistance about 80 km north of the capital Kathmandu, said Arjun Paul, a senior administrative official of Rasuwa district.

PCB announces
15-member squad for
Bangladesh T20I tour

DNA

LAHORE: The Men's National Selection Committee of Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Tuesday announced a 15-member squad for the three-match T20I series against Bangladesh. Salman Ali Agha-led squad is due to play a three-match T20Is series against Bangladesh from 20 to 24 July at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Dhaka. Following is the squad and team management for the Bangladesh T20Is: Salman Ali Agha (captain), Abrar Ahmed, Ahmed Daniyal, Faheem Ashraf, Fakhar Zaman, Hassan Nawaz, Hussain Talat, Khushdil Shah, Mohammad Abbas Afridi, Mohammad Haris (wk), Mohammad Nawaz, Sahibzada Farhan (wk), Saim Ayub, Salman Mirza and Sufyan Moqim Naved Akram Cheema (manager), Mike Hesson (head coach), Ashley Noffke (bowling coach), Muhammad Hanif Malik (batting Coach), Shane McDermott (fielding Coach), Cliffe Deacon (physiotherapist), Grant Luden (strength and conditioning coach). The PCB, in its press release, stated that the squad for the white-ball series against West Indies will be announced in due course.

Mbappe, PSG set for
Club World Cup reunion

EAST Rutherford, United States, July 8 (AFP/APP): Kylian Mbappe will come up against Paris Saint-Germain for the first time since leaving the French club a year ago as Xabi Alonso's Real Madrid revolution gets its biggest test yet in Wednesday's Club World Cup semi-final. Mbappe should be remembered as a PSG legend, having spent seven prolific campaigns there and eventually departing as their all-time top scorer with 256 goals in 308 games. But his legacy was a little tainted by the manner of his departure, the sense among many that for the last half of his time in Paris he was just waiting for the right moment to move to Madrid, the club he had dreamed of representing as a young boy. PSG, under their Qatari president Nasser al-Khelaifi, were not happy with the way in which Mbappe chose to run down his contract in order to sign for Real in 2024, denying them a transfer fee. — Agencies

Alcaraz faces Norrie test at Wimbledon,
Sabalenka eyes semi-finals

LONDON: Defending champion Carlos Alcaraz faces Britain's Cameron Norrie in the Wimbledon quarter-finals on Tuesday, while world number one Aryna Sabalenka can move a step closer to her maiden All England Club crown. Alcaraz has not had it all his own way at this year's Wimbledon but he has stepped up a gear when it matters most. The world number two has dropped four sets during his run to the last eight before raising his level to keep his title defence alive. Alcaraz is aiming to join an elite group of men who have won the tournament in three straight years in the Open era — Bjorn Borg, Pete Sampras, Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic. But the Spaniard knows large sections of the Centre Court crowd will be behind world number 61 Norrie, who reached the Wimbledon semi-finals in 2022. "He's going to use the crowd to his advantage," said Alcaraz, who is on a career-best 22-match winning streak. "I have to be really strong mentally and focused to play good tennis if I want to beat him."



Alcaraz has won 33 of his 36 Tour-level matches on grass. The five-time Grand Slam winner's last defeat at Wimbledon came against Jannik Sinner in the fourth round in 2022. Alcaraz headed to Ibiza to relax after winning the French Open in June and Norrie followed in his opponent's footsteps in a bid to emulate his success. "I was telling my team, let's see if the Carlos method can work because he went to Ibiza and he won Wimby," said the last British man left in the singles

tournament. "When you come to the court fresh, and you've had a few days on the beach or a few days in the sun relaxing, you feel ready to compete again." Sabalenka looks unstoppable as she chases a fourth Grand Slam title and her first at Wimbledon. The Belarusian, who has never been past the Wimbledon semi-finals, has yet to drop a set as she prepares to take on 37-year-old Laura Siegemund, ranked a lowly 104th in the world. Sabalenka, who lost in the Australian and French Open finals this year, is the only one of top six women's seeds still standing after a tournament of shocks. "We all dream the same, holding the trophy, that winning moment," said Sabalenka. "It's always been my dream. I mean, I haven't achieved it yet. I had a lot of disappointments here." Siegemund, who has lost both of her previous matches against her opponent, is under no illusions about the task facing her in her second Grand Slam quarter-final. "She's one of the greatest players that we have and one of the most aggressive also. — Agencies

Relentless Spain reach
Euro 2025 quarters

"We knew they would try to sit back and hold us off at the beginning, we could have been better, sure, but you need to adapt during the game. We managed to do that and create good opportunities," Tome told reporters

THUN: Spain reached the quarter-finals of Women's Euro 2025 on Monday after the world champions' hammered Belgium 6-2 while Italy were held to a 1-1 draw with Portugal. A brace from the magnificent Alexia Putellas and further goals from Irene Paredes, Esther Gonzalez, Mariona Caldentey and Claudia Pinega gave Group B leaders Spain a

second thumping win. Montse Tome's team will win the group if they avoid defeat to Italy, who are two points behind La Roja in second after being denied qualification late on by third-placed Portugal, on Friday.

Few would bet on Spain failing to secure first place after two blistering performances in which they have netted 11 times. "We knew they would try to sit back and hold us off at the beginning, we could have been better, sure, but you need to adapt during the game. We managed to do that and create good opportunities," Tome told reporters.

"We have to improve but we did what we planned to do." Belgium, who twice levelled through Justine Vanhaevermaet and Hannah Eurlings, are close to going home after eventually being blown away by relentless waves of attacking football. — Agencies

AFC, United Nations partner to advance
sustainable development

KUALA LUMPUR: The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) and the United Nations' Football for the Goals (FFTG) initiative reaffirmed their shared commitment to leveraging on the power of football to drive social development across Asia with an increasing number of football stakeholders who are formally aligned with the FFTG's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) platform. The Football Association of Indonesia, the Chinese Football Association and the Philippine Football Federation have become the latest applicants, bringing the total number of AFC Member Associations (MAs) and Regional Associations (RAs) currently under review to 20. Meanwhile, the Football Association of Thailand, Football Association of Brunei Darussalam, Tajikistan Football Federation and Football Association

of the Maldives have joined the eight existing members. Through FFTG, football organisations commit to promoting the SDGs by adopting responsible business practices, championing social inclusion, and aligning communications with sustainable development messaging. Membership is voluntary, non-binding, and without financial obligation, making it an accessible and strategic platform for the AFC's 47 MAs and five RAs. "We are encouraged by the growing engagement of both our MAs and RAs with the FFTG initiative. This movement signals the significant rise in awareness of football's unique role in creating inclusive, equitable, and resilient communities across Asia," said Vahid Kardany, Secretary to the AFC Dream Asia Foundation and the AFC Deputy General Sec-

retary - Member Associations. The AFC Dream Asia Foundation Conference 2025 will be held on 15th October 2025, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in collaboration with the UN FFTG Secretariat. The event will convene football stakeholders, UN agencies, NGOs, and civil society to exchange knowledge and strengthen collaboration in leveraging football for sustainable development. Kardany added that the AFC Dream Asia Foundation, in collaboration with FFTG, is playing a key enabling role in helping football governing bodies across Asia participate in this movement. Rather than joining as a member, the foundation acts as a continental facilitator, guiding and supporting MAs and RAs to apply and align with FFTG's core principles. This coordinated engagement signals the foundation's commitment to glob-

al-local alignment in advancing the SDGs through football. Robert Skinner, Chief of Partnerships and Global Engagement in the UN's Department of Global Communications, said, "When football and the United Nations stand together, we send a powerful message: the SDGs are everyone's game, and every goal counts. Football for the Goals is proud of our collaboration with the AFC for the upcoming AFC Dream Asia Foundation Conference, a significant opportunity to advance football's role for sustainable development in the region." Football for the Goals is a United Nations platform launched to harness the power of football in advancing the SDGs. It engages clubs, leagues, federations, and players to raise awareness, foster partnerships, and take measurable action for people and the planet. — Agencies

Briefs

Libya
authorities
intercept over
100 migrants
off coast

TRIPOLI: Libyan authorities on Monday said they had intercepted 113 migrants off the country's coast and recovered three bodies in separate operations over three days. The bodies of three "illegal migrants of African nationalities" were discovered on a beach in Misrata, some 200 kilometers (125 miles) east of Tripoli, the Ministry of Interior said. Also on Monday, security forces on a speedboat intercepted 54 migrants off Garabulli, 50 kilometers east of the capital Tripoli, the ministry added. They were brought back to the capital's port and handed over to the competent authorities, it said. The day before, "as part of a plan to intensify maritime patrols during the summer," 20 migrants "of various nationalities" were rescued off Zawiya, 45 kilometers west of Tripoli, the ministry said Sunday. On Saturday, 39 migrants were intercepted off the eastern coast of Tripoli, the ministry reported, without providing further details about where they were found or their point of departure. Libya has been gripped by unrest since the 2011 overthrow and killing of longtime ruler Muammar Qaddafi in a NATO-backed uprising.—APP

Israel eyes
deeper eco ties
with India

JERUSALEM: Israel and India are finalizing an investment protection agreement and expect to sign it in the coming months, Israel's Finance Ministry said on Tuesday. Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich and the ministry's chief economist Shmuel Abramzon discussed the issue, which it did not elaborate on, and other economic matters with Indian Ambassador to Israel J.P. Singh. "Deepening economic ties with India is one of the goals I have set," Smotrich said after the meeting in Jerusalem, calling India a "true friend of Israel." An investment protection agreement is a treaty in which countries aim to reduce the perceived risk of investing in each other, such as by offering protections against unfair treatment or removing restrictions on transferring capital and profits. India, the ministry noted, has become in recent years one of Israel's most important trade partners globally and especially in Asia, and the volume of trade and investments between the two countries is expected to increase sharply in the coming years in light of their strengthening diplomatic and security relations.

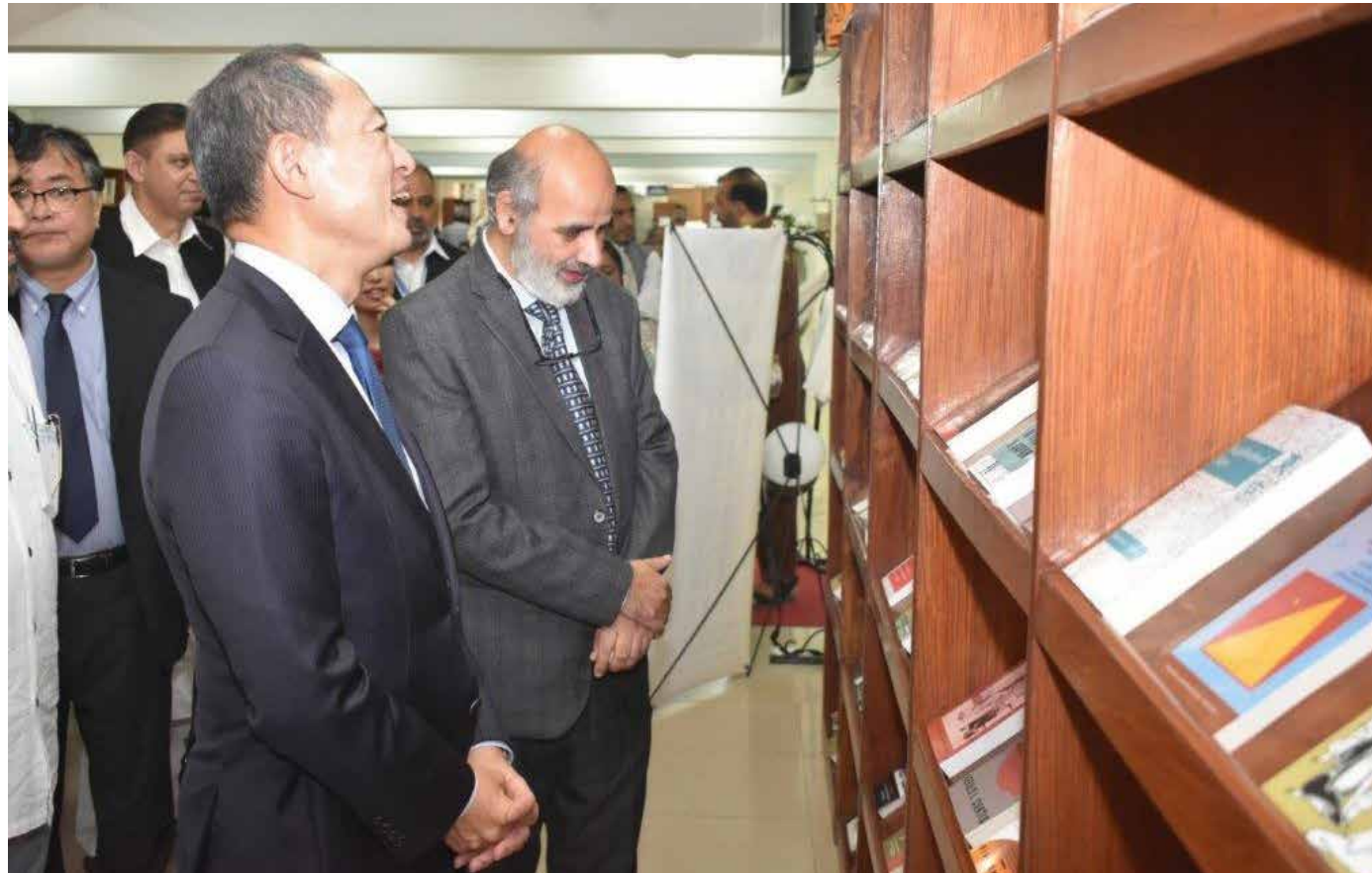
Indian villagers
beat five
to death for
'witchcraft'

NEW DELHI: Indian villagers beat a family of five to death and dumped their corpses in a lake accusing them of "practicing witchcraft" after the death of a boy, police said Tuesday. Three people have been arrested and have confessed to the crime, police in the northern state of Bihar said in a statement. Three women — including a 75-year-old — were among those murdered. The main accused believed that his son's recent death was caused by one of those killed, and blamed "him and his family of practicing witchcraft," the statement said. "After beating the victims to death, the perpetrators loaded the bodies onto a tractor and dumped them in a pond," police said. The murderers and victims all belonged to India's Oraon tribe in Bihar, India's poorest state and a mainly Hindu region of at least 130 million people. Despite campaigns against superstition, belief in witchcraft remains widespread in rural areas across India, especially in isolated tribal communities. Some states, including Bihar, have introduced laws to try to curb crimes against people accused of witchcraft and superstition. Women have often been branded witches and targeted, but the killing of the family of five stands out as a particularly heinous recent example.—APP

Japan donates 166 books to COMSATS
Abbottabad under cultural project

The Ambassador, while appreciating the role played by COMSATS University in the academic development of Pakistani youth stated that Japan and the COMSATS University are a valued partner in these endeavors through educational and cultural exchanges

ABBOTTABAD :The Embassy of Japan in Pakistan, in collaboration with the Nippon Foundation, has donated a collection of 166 books related to Japan to the COMSATS University Islamabad (CUI), Abbottabad Campus as a part of the "Read Japan Project" aimed at fostering a deeper understanding of Japan's rich culture, politics and economics through books. AKAMATSU Shuichi, the Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, on behalf of the Nippon Foundation, presented the books to Prof. Dr. Shahid Khattak, Director, COMSATS University Abbottabad Campus at a ceremony held on Tuesday July 8 at the campus premises. The 166 carefully selected books in English language cover a diverse array of topics related to Japan such as history, politics, economy, security, philosophy, literature, art and culture. Ambassador AKAMATSU while speaking on the occasion, extended his congratulations to the students and teachers for receiving this valuable gift from the Nippon Foundation. He expressed the hope that these books will serve as a valuable resource for students, faculty, researchers and intellectuals in their academic pursuits by inspiring new ideas, deepening knowledge, and sparking their interest in exploring Japan further. "The gift of books from the Nippon Foundation today are in fact the bridges of knowledge and friendship between Japan and Pa-



kistan", said the Ambassador. The Ambassador, while appreciating the role played by COMSATS University in the academic development of Pakistani youth stated that Japan and the COMSATS University are a valued partner in these endeavors through educa-

tional and cultural exchanges. In his remarks, Prof. Dr. Shahid Khattak, Director, COMSATS University Abbottabad Campus expressed his sincere gratitude to the Nippon Foundation and the Embassy of Japan for their generous gift of books, and hoped

that the students will use this opportunity to learn about Japan that will pave the way for further strengthening the Japan-Pakistan relations. The deans attended the donation ceremony and expressed the importance they place on this event and on strengthening rela-

tions with Japan. The "READ JAPAN PROJECT" was initiated by the Nippon Foundation in 2008 to promote the understanding of Japan through the donation of Japan related books in English to universities and libraries around the world.

Long term reforms
imperative for prosperous
Pakistan : Nasir

MANSOOR QURESHI

ISLAMABAD: Nasir Mansoor Quraishi, President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), has emphasized that Pakistan's aspiration to become a trillion-dollar economy can only be realized by ensuring industrial competitiveness, streamlining the cost of doing business, and adopting consistent long-term economic policies. In a statement issued here on Tuesday, the ICCI President stated that Ease of Doing Business (EODB) remains a cornerstone for driving industrial productivity and fostering

sustainable growth. "The goal of Pakistan becoming a trillion-dollar economy is achievable, but it hinges on robust industrial competitiveness supported by sound, forward-looking economic strategies," he remarked. He underscored the urgency of reducing the cost of doing business in order to enhance the global competitiveness of local industries. "If Pakistan wants to expand its exports and position domestic brands as influential players in the international market, it must prioritize lowering input costs and eliminating bureaucratic hurdles for businesses," he added. Highlighting key sectors

with high growth potential, the ICCI President pointed out that pharmaceuticals, information technology (IT), and textiles could become engines of economic transformation. If properly incentivized and supported they could lead the country towards substantial foreign exchange earnings and job creation," he said. He further called upon the government to simplify the tax system, making it more transparent and business-friendly, while also ensuring that energy prices remain competitive to empower industrial growth. "High energy tariffs are stifling industry. There is a dire need to

align energy costs with regional competitors," he cautioned. Quraishi also urged for the full-scale implementation of the One Window Operation across all sectors to remove red tape and promote foreign direct investment (FDI). "The entire economic ecosystem must be digitized and integrated to attract global investors and foster trust within the business community," he maintained. The ICCI President reiterated that with the right reforms, investment climate, and strategic focus, Pakistan has all the ingredients to emerge as a trillion-dollar economy in the coming decades

CCP facilitates \$50m
in FDI through M&A
approvals

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) approved a total of 69 mergers and acquisition (M&A) transactions during the fiscal year 2024-25, facilitating foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows of approximately \$50 million. These transactions spanned diverse sectors including food, finance, logistics, aerospace, media and e-commerce, underscoring CCP's critical role in promoting fair competition and enhancing investor confidence in Pakistan's economy, said a press release issued here on Tuesday. Prominent FDI transactions included a joint venture between NLC and DP World Logistics FZE, facilitated by SIFC, and the acquisition of Wemsol by Bazaar Technologies in the e-commerce sector. In agribusiness, Italy's Euricom S P A acquired 50% of Fatima Euricom Rice Mills. The media sector saw Berkeley Square Holding BV acquire 50% stakes in Ogilvy and Mather, Mindshare, and Soho Square Pakistan. Additionally, Saudi firm Wakeb Data Company acquired an 80% stake in drone technology company Woot Tech. In addition to foreign investment transactions, CCP approved 64 domestic M&A deals across sectors such as retail, services, logistics, energy, food, and manufacturing. Sector-wise, 25 transactions occurred in industrial and manufacturing, 14 in energy and power, 13 in services, 11 in financial services, five in consumer goods and retail, and one in real estate. Major domestic transactions included Asyad Holding's acquisition of 77.42% shares in Shell Pakistan via UAE-based Wafi Energy, marking a key move in the energy sector.—APP

Bangladesh's garment
industry eyeing GCC
growth

DHAKA: Bangladesh's ready-made garment industry is seeing growing demand in Saudi Arabia, industry leaders say, as they look to the Kingdom as a key market for expansion in the Gulf region. The garment sector is a key driver of the Bangladeshi economy. The country is one of the largest garment exporters in the world, second only to China. The industry accounts for more than 80 percent of Bangladesh's total foreign sales revenue. The newest data from the Export Promotion Bureau shows that garment exports to Saudi Arabia were valued at \$152 million in the fiscal year 2024-25, up by 7.3 percent year-on-year. The upward trend reflects growing interest from Saudi buyers in Bangladesh apparel, particularly items such as T-shirts and jeans, according to Akhter Hossain Apurbo, vice president of the Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association. "We have strong potential for increasing exports to the GCC region, with Saudi Arabia and the UAE being the most significant markets," he told Arab News. Major European brands with retail outlets in Saudi Arabia place orders with Bangladeshi producers who deliver products directly to Saudi ports. "We export to wholesale buyers and later on retailers sell these goods across the region," Apurbo said. "Mostly Saudi locals are buying these Bangladeshi-made garments.—APP

The EU presidency says Europe
must rearm within 5 years

BRUSSELS: Russia could pose a credible security threat to the European Union by the end of the decade and defense industries in Europe and Ukraine must be ramped up within five years in preparation, Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen warned on Tuesday. In a speech to the European Parliament marking the launch of Denmark's six-month term as holder of the EU presidency, Frederiksen lamented that "cutting our defense spending in the past 30 years was a huge mistake." European officials have warned that President Vladimir Putin could soon try to test NATO's Article 5 security guarantee — the pledge that an attack on any one ally would be met with a collective response from all 32. Most of the allies are EU countries. Russia has been accused of acts of sabotage, cyberattacks and fake news campaigns — largely to weaken European support for Ukraine — and while Europe is not at war, it is not at peace either, NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte has said. "Strengthening Europe's defense industry is an absolute top priority, and we have to be able to defend ourselves by 2030 at the latest," Frederiksen told EU lawmakers in Strasbourg, France. "Never, ever should we allow Europe to be put in a position again where we cannot defend ourselves." Many European leaders insist they have heard the Trump administration's warning that American security priorities now lie elsewhere — in the Middle East and the Indo-Pacific — but Europe's effort to arm is moving only slowly. When NATO's ambitions are not enough At a key summit last month, NATO leaders endorsed a statement saying: "Allies commit to invest 5% of GDP annually on core defense requirements as well as defense- and security-related spending by 2035 to ensure our individual and collective obligations." That historic pledge will require them to spend tens of billions of euros (dollars) more over the coming decade, not five years. Spain — NATO's lowest spender with 1.28% of GDP last year — quickly branded the target "unreasonable." Belgium has cast doubt over whether it will make the grade. Slovenia is considering a referendum. Heavyweights France and Italy are mired in economic woes and will struggle to get there too. Money spent on military support to Ukraine can now be included in NATO's defense calculations, but even that will not hike the EU's military spend by much. The EU's Readiness 2030 plan With the threat of Russian aggression in mind, the EU's executive branch has come up with a security plan. It hinges on a 150-billion-euro (\$176 billion) loan program that member countries, Ukraine and outsiders like Britain could dip into. It aims to fill gaps that the U.S. might leave. Spending priorities for joint purchase include air and missile defense systems, artillery, ammunition, drones, equipment for use in cyber and electronic warfare, and "strategic enablers" like air-to-air refueling and transport.—APP

CDA chief, Bulgaria envoy discuss
matters of mutual interest

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ms. Irena Gancheva, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Bulgaria to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, called on Muhammad Ali Randhawa, Chairman CDA, Chief Commissioner Islamabad, and DG Civil Defence at CDA Headquarters. The meeting held in a very cordial atmosphere in which matters of mutual interest, with particular emphasis on fostering institutional cooperation and strengthening bilateral engagement. Ms. Irena Gancheva appreciated CDA's significant initiatives and efforts under the leadership of Muhammad Ali Randhawa, Chairman CDA,



Chief Commissioner Islamabad, and DG Civil Defence, in maintaining the capital's development, beautification, and environmental sustainability. Chairman CDA said that CDA is committed to make Islamabad more developed and beautiful. H.E. Ms. Irena Ganchevs, Ambassador of Bulgaria appreciated CDA's tremendous efforts for development, beautification and planting of environment friendly trees. At the conclusion of the meeting, Muhammad Ali Randhawa reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to strengthening the mutual relationship with the Republic of Bulgaria while the ambassador of Bulgaria also assured her full support in advancing the collaboration and conveyed Bulgaria's willingness to work closely with CDA.

Four dead in
fire at Cairo
telecomms
hub

CAIRO: At least four people were killed and 27 injured in a fire at a major telecomms center in Egypt's capital that caused widespread disruptions, the health ministry said on Tuesday. Internet and phone connections were still heavily disrupted in Cairo on Tuesday, with the Egyptian stock exchange suspending operations. Flights into and out of the capital had also been affected by the fire, which began on Monday evening, although by the following morning the civil aviation ministry said all flights had resumed following delays caused by the blaze. Gas and electricity outages were also reported on Monday by Cairo governor Ibrahim Saber. "Civil defense forces recovered four bodies from the scene of the incident," the health ministry said in a statement. The authorities are yet to announce a cause for the fire, nor has any information been given about the 27 injured. Local media reported that the fire at the Ramses Exchange, the former communications ministry headquarters, was extinguished on Monday night.—APP

Jordanian
helicopters
continue to
help Syria

LONDON: Jordanian air forces continue to assist authorities in Syria's coastal region to combat wildfires, which have damaged more than 10,000 hectares of land over six days. Jordan was one of the first countries to dispatch help to the Syrian Arab Republic, alongside Lebanon and Türkiye, all neighboring countries. The UN also deployed teams to assist Syria, while on Tuesday, Damascus sought support from the EU to combat the fires. The wildfires in Latakia's Jabal Turkman region were sparked by a combination of unexploded ordnance from the country's civil war as well as high temperatures and drought. Jordan sent two Black Hawk helicopters with firefighting crews and equipment. The Jordanian mission is working to prevent the further expansion of fires and mitigate the impact on local communities and ecosystems, Petra reported. The wildfires have been difficult to contain due to rugged terrain, dense vegetation, landmines, unexploded ordnance and high winds, which have further complicated response efforts, authorities said.

The decision to help Syria demonstrates Jordan's commitment to providing humanitarian support and responding to regional crises, Petra added.—APP

Kurdish PKK
militants to
begin handing
over arms
in Iraq

ANKARA: Militant fighters of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) will begin handing over weapons in groups in the northern Iraqi city of Sulaymaniyah on Friday as part of a peace process with Türkiye, Turkish broadcaster NTV reported on Tuesday. The PKK — locked in a bloody conflict with the Turkish state for more than four decades — decided in May to disband and end its struggle, following a public call from the group's jailed leader Abdullah Ocalan in February. NTV said, without citing sources, that Ocalan would send a video message to the PKK's base in northern Iraq's mountainous Qandil region to call for a mechanism for the disarmament process. It would be the first video featuring his face and voice since his jailing in 1999. The whole process is expected to take around two to five months, NTV said, adding that militants who hand in weapons will stay in Iraq and halt any PKK activities. On Monday, a delegation from the pro-Kurdish DEM party — Türkiye's third-biggest party, which played a key role facilitating the disarmament decision — met with Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan in Ankara to discuss the process. NTV earlier reported that Ibrahim Kalin, the head of Türkiye's MIT intelligence agency, would travel to Baghdad on Tuesday for talks with Iraqi officials to discuss the weapons handover.—APP

Briefs

Government approves import of 500,000 MT sugar

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Tuesday chaired a committee meeting to assess the sugar situation in the country and evaluate import requirements. The committee approved the import of up to 500,000 metric tons of sugar to ensure a stable supply and maintain affordable prices nationwide. The deputy PM underscored the government's commitment to price stability and safeguarding consumer interests. The meeting was attended by the Minister for Food, S&PM Tariq Bajwa, the Secretary Ministry of Food, senior officials from the Ministry of Industries and Production, and industry representatives. — APP

Govt can't provide residence to all residents

Sindh senior minister says SBCA has begun demolition near collapsed Lyari building

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Sindh senior minister Sharjeel Inam Memon on Tuesday said it was not possible for the government to provide housing to all residents of fragile buildings across the province, citing limited resources and the scale of the problem. Speaking on Geo News' morning programme "Geo Pakistan", Memon stated that there were 740 buildings in Sindh declared unsafe, of which 51 are extremely dangerous. He said that 11 of those extremely hazardous structures had been vacated so far. Memon explained that while it was not feasible to house all occupants, the government could offer temporary accommodation to some families within available resources, as it had done previously for flood victims and Covid-19 patients.

Bulgaria to adopt euro in 2026

BRUSSELS: EU ministers are set to give the final green light on Tuesday for Bulgaria to adopt the euro on January 1, 2026, when the country would become the single currency area's 21st member. The European Commission last month said the EU's poorest country had fulfilled the strict conditions to adopt the euro, while the European Central Bank (ECB) also gave a positive opinion. Bulgaria's switch from the lev to the euro next year will come 19 years after the country of 6.4 million people joined the European Union. Today is truly an important day for Bulgaria. — APP



ISLAMABAD: ASEAN Heads of Missions in Pakistan including Myanmar, Brunei Darussalam, Vietnam, Thailand, Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia called on the Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar ahead of his participation in the 32nd ARF Ministerial Meeting later this week. They reaffirmed the importance of Pakistan's partnership with ASEAN and its member states. — DNA

Crackdown against Hawala, counterfeit medicine ordered

The Interior Minister stressed that counterfeit medicine trade is completely unacceptable and that those involved must be dealt with iron hands, as their rightful place is jail

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi visited FIA Karachi Zone and chaired a high-level meeting. He ordered an effective crackdown against the Hawala-Hundi mafia and emphasized action against major hands involved in it,

without yielding to any pressure.

Interior Minister also directed action against agents sending beggars abroad, stating that the beggar mafia is tarnishing Pakistan's image and indiscriminate action against them is necessary. He instructed the arrest of absconding agents with the help of other provinces and to ensure the arrest of deported beggars.

The Interior Minister stressed that

counterfeit medicine trade is completely unacceptable and that those involved must be dealt with iron hands, as their rightful place is jail. Mohsin Naqvi also ordered strong action against non-custom products and directed strict legal action against passengers attempting to take more than 5,000 dollars abroad.

Director Karachi Zone Nauman Siddiq

briefed Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on the FIA Karachi Zone's performance and ongoing issues. The meeting was attended by Additional DG FIA South Mujahid Akbar Khan, Director FIA Karachi Zone Nauman Siddiq, Deputy Director Anti-Money Laundering, Deputy Director Immigration, Deputy Director Anti-Corruption, all Assistant Directors, and officials from FIA South.

Punjab bans mobile phone use by hospital staff

Notification says decision aims to ensure uninterrupted emergency response, improve quality of patient care

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: The Punjab government has imposed a ban on the use of mobile phones by hospital staff below BPS-18 grade during duty hours in all public sector hospitals across the province, instructing the introduction of a pager system for emergency communications. According to two circulars issued on July 7, 2025, by the Specialised Healthcare and Medical Education Department, the decision aims to ensure uninterrupted emergency response and improve the quality of patient care in public healthcare facilities. The first circular states that the use of pagers is being made mandatory across all public healthcare institutions to enhance rapid communication during high-risk situations. "Pagers help to ensure that critical alerts — such as Code Blue and Code Red — are promptly received and responded to," it reads. All hospitals under the department's jurisdiction have been instructed to ensure strict compliance. Meanwhile, the second directive bans the use of mobile phones during duty hours by all hospital staff below 18 grade in emergencies, ICUs, NICUs, and operation theatres. Exceptions will apply to senior administrative officers such as Medical Superintendents, Additional and Deputy Medical Superintendents, Senior Registrars, and Directors. The directive warns that the frequent and unnecessary use of mobile phones was disrupting patient care and hospital operations. Medical superintendents and heads of departments have been tasked with enforcing the ban, monitoring staff behaviour, and submitting compliance reports within three days. In addition, the circulars stress the need to ensure a robust and responsive emergency care system and mandate adherence to SOPs by nursing students, particularly in procedures such as IV injections. The directives have been circulated to all public sector medical universities, colleges, specialised institutes, and teaching hospitals in Punjab.

Fin Minister reviews progress on rightsizing reforms

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, here on Tuesday chaired a key meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Rightsizing, reviewing strategic reforms across key ministries aimed at improving institutional efficiency, streamlining government structures, and advancing the FBR transformation agenda. The meeting was attended by Minister for Power Sardar Awaiz Ahmad Khan Leghari and senior officials from the relevant Ministries and Divisions, according to press release issued by finance ministry. The Committee was given a detailed presentation by the Power Division on the Power Planning and Monitoring Company, outlining its institutional background, strategic functions, key achievements, progress on high-impact functions, and future plans. The presentation focused on enhancing the role of PPMC as a technical backbone for planning and performance monitoring in the power sector, with particular emphasis on evidence-based forecasting, system efficiency, and sectoral coordination. A preliminary presentation was also made by the Law Division on its scope of work, performance benchmarks, ongoing rightsizing initiatives, and their broader implications for public policy and service delivery. The presentation included a comprehensive overview of the Division's attached departments and proposed

measures to improve institutional efficiency, eliminate functional overlaps, and achieve better outcomes through leaner administrative structures. Subsequently, the Cabinet Committee considered a set of recommendations submitted by the Sub-Committee on Rightsizing, chaired by Salman Ahmad, Ambassador-at-Large, pertaining to the organizational framework of the Revenue Division. The proposals outlined a broad approach to institutional reform aimed at enhancing structural efficiency, optimizing human resource deployment, and strengthening alignment with overarching national objectives. Emphasis was placed on promoting a results-oriented governance model through improved performance management systems and the adoption of accountability mechanisms to support more effective and responsive public service delivery.

The Finance Minister underscored that the FBR stands at the core of Pakistan's fiscal architecture. He said, the government was committed to implementing the FBR transformation plan approved by the Prime Minister, with a view to raising the tax-to-GDP ratio and transforming FBR into a modern, efficient, and accountable revenue authority that is essential to fiscal sustainability. The Minister also stressed the importance of embedding performance-driven human resource practices across the organization to ensure that every rupee of public expenditure translates into measurable improvements in tax collection, compliance, and service delivery.

Pakistan condoles death of 12 Turkish soldiers in Iraq methane gas incident

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Tuesday expressed condolences over the martyrdom of 12 Turkish soldiers after they were exposed to methane gas during a search operation in northern Iraq. "We are deeply saddened to learn that 12 Turkish soldiers were martyred, after be-

ing exposed to methane gas during a search mission in the Claw-Lock Operation zone," Foreign Office spokesperson Shafqat Ali Khan said in a statement. He prayed for Allah's mercy upon the martyrs and expressed deepest condolences to the bereaved families. The spokesperson also reiterated that Pakistan stood in firm solidarity with brotherly Turkiye in this moment of grief. According to the Turkish state-run Anadolu news agency, 12 soldiers died after being exposed to methane gas during a search operation in northern Iraq. The soldiers were carrying out a sweep operation in a cave at an altitude of 2,795 feet used by militants of the outlawed PKK terror group in the Operation Claw-Lock zone when the incident occurred on Sunday. — DNA

E-commerce, local markets struggle to meet demand for 'Rain gear'

ISLAMABAD: As the relentless monsoon showers continue to drench the city, demand for raincoats and rain cover shoes has shot up, with shops and e-commerce platforms struggling to keep up with the growing number of people seeking reliable protection from the rain.

A local news broadcast reported a surge in demand for rain gear in prominent markets throughout Rawalpindi, Islamabad, Peshawar, Karachi and Lahore where places such as Anarkali Bazaar and Liberty Market are struggling to keep items in stock as raincoats and shoe covers sell out within hours. To cater to rising demand, shops and online platforms are offering raincoats in a variety of sizes and styles suitable for men, women, and even children, report added. From lightweight ponchos to full-length "langri" coats that provide extra coverage, the choices are expanding rapidly. Many raincoats now come with added features such as hoods, zip-up fronts, and reflective strips for safety, said seller. "I ride a bike every day, and without a long raincoat and shoe covers, it's impossible to reach the office dry," said a motorcyclist from Rawalpindi. "These langri coats are a must they cover almost everything, even while riding." Shoe covers ranging from reusable silicone types to durable zip-up waterproof options are also gaining popularity, especially among office-goers and bikers who want to protect their footwear from muddy, rain-soaked roads, seller added. — APP

Four dead, 3 injured in house fire

Four people pulled out of the burning house succumb to their injuries

DNA

PESHAWAR: A tragic fire broke out in a residential unit located in the midst of the congested Kochi Bazaar area of Peshawar in the wee hours of Tuesday, claiming the lives of four people and injuring three others.

Rescue 1122 officials said that firefighters initially pulled three individuals from the burning house alive and rushed them to hospital in critical condition. However, all three succumbed to their injuries. Later, another man was taken to the hospital, who also could not survive his burns. Meanwhile, three others who were rescued received treatment at a hospital's burns ward. The blaze, which also affected the power supply in Kochi Bazaar and the nearby Chowk Nasir Khan areas, was eventually brought under control after a prolonged effort involving six fire vehicles and 40 personnel. Rescue 1122 said that two of their firefighters also fainted during the operation due to intense heat and smoke. The narrow alleyways in the area made firefighting efforts extremely difficult.

'TTP a global threat'

'Afghanistan becoming breeding ground for terror'

Ambassador Asim Iftikhar highlights credible evidence of collaboration between TTP and other terrorist groups

NEW YORK: In light of recent attacks by Afghanistan-based terrorists, Pakistan has urged the United Nations to prevent the war-torn country from becoming a hub for terror, while terming TTP a global and regional threat. "We must ensure that Afghanistan does not become a breeding ground for terrorists that threatens not only its neighbours, but the region and beyond," Pakistan's Permanent Ambassador to the UN Asim Iftikhar Ahmad said while addressing a UN General Assembly's plenary session on the situation in Afghanistan. The ambassador's remarks echo Pakistan's repeated stance against the use of Afghan soil by terrorist outfits to carry out attacks. Last week, the security forces eliminated at least 30 Indian-backed terrorists trying to infiltrate through the Pakistan-Afghanistan border in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa's North Waziristan district. Pakistan has witnessed a surge in cross-border terror incidents since Taliban rulers returned to Afghanistan in 2021, particularly in the bordering provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. Country saw a slight uptick in militant attacks in May 2025, even as heightened military tensions with neighbouring India failed to trigger a significant escalation in violence from extremist groups. A day earlier, the two countries held the inaugural round of the additional secretary-level mechanism between the foreign ministries in Islamabad, with the two sides covering key areas of bilateral interest, including trade and transit cooperation, security, and connectivity. Both sides recognised terrorism as a serious threat to regional peace and security. During the huddle, the Pakistani side emphasised the need for concrete actions against terrorist groups operating on Afghan soil, noting that such groups undermine Pakistan's security and hinder regional development. Expanding on the terror threat posed by groups from Afghanistan, Ambassador Iftikhar said that terrorism emanating from Afghanistan was a serious threat to the neighbouring countries, particularly Pakistan. —DNA



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