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Detailed News On Page-08

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Detailed News On Page-08



Tax rate can be adjusted, Aurangzeb

Detailed News On Page-01



Illegal migration'

Trilateral working group in the offing

Pakistan, Iran and Iraq to join hands; Interior Minister attend moot in Iran

CENTRELINE REPORT

TEHRAN: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Monday announced that he and his counterparts in Iran and Iraq will form a trilateral working group to prevent illegal migration under the guise of pilgrimage, Radio Pakistan reported. Earlier this month, the government, during a meeting, decided that under the new measures, the traditional Salar System for zaireen (pilgrims) will be abolished and replaced with a zaireen group organisers model. From 2026 onwards, pilgrims will only be allowed to travel under registered organisers. Speaking at a trilateral conference of the interior ministers of Pakistan, Iran, and Iraq in Tehran, Naqvi told journalists the conference agreed to take all possible measures to facilitate zaireen travelling to Iran and Iraq. "We had a great and good discussion," Naqvi said. "We will have a joint working group between the three countries so we can have better coordination. "The most important thing to acknowledge is that there are several million people who go to Iraq, and this is a big credit for the Iraqi interior ministry. Every year, they host them without flaw and every year it gets much better." According to Radio Pakistan, the working group, comprising representatives from all three countries would be established to streamline and support the process of travel for pilgrimages. During the trilateral conference, Naqvi said that the registration process for zaireen group organisers has already commenced. He said from January 1 next year, Pakistani zaireen will travel to Iraq exclusively under registered group organisers, rather than individually. "We will not be allowing any Pakistani to leave Iraq without zaireen group organisers," Naqvi said. "We will be registering people who are allowed to take the groups to Iraq and they are bound to

Continued on Page 06

Pak pilgrims will no longer individually travel to Iraq

Pakistan, Iran, Iraq will establish joint working group to facilitate safe, seamless travel for pilgrim

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: In a significant diplomatic development, the interior ministers of Pakistan, Iran, and Iraq convened in Tehran for a landmark trilateral conference aimed at enhancing facilitation for religious pilgrims travelling between the three countries. The conference concluded with a unanimous agreement to take all possible steps to support pilgrims visiting holy sites in Iran and Iraq. A joint working group will be established to oversee coordination and operational matters, ensuring safe and seamless travel for millions of pilgrims, particularly during major religious events such as Arbreen. Addressing the conference, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi expressed gratitude to Iranian Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni for organising the summit on Pakistan's request. He emphasised the importance of pilgrims and highlighted Pakistan's commitment to improving their experience. Naqvi announced major policy reforms, including

Continued on Page 06



TEHRAN: Pakistani Interior minister Mr. Mohsen Naqvi calls on President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Dr. Masood Pezeshkian in Tehran. – DNA

Govt clarifies Federal Constabulary not a police force: govt

Force's reorganisation aimed at improving tiers of command structure, says Commandant Riaz Nazir Gara

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has clarified that the newly-designated Federal Constabulary, previously Frontier Constabulary, should not be confused with being a federal police force and the transformation is only aimed at revamping the structure of the force. "No one should confuse that this is a federal police, its

Continued on Page 06

Interest rate cut possible: finance minister

FBR simplifies tax return form to help salaried, SME, small traders, says FinMin Aurangzeb

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The central bank has lowered the interest rate by 100 basis points (bps) to 11% on May 5. The central bank had cut the rate by 1,100 basis points since June from an all-time high of 22%. Speaking to journalists in Karachi today, Aurangzeb stated that

Continued on Page 06

Talks only solution

Govt slams PTI's new agitation drive

PM's aide Sanaullah says PTI seeking establishment's help to return to power

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: With the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) announcing yet another protest movement against the incumbent rulers, the government has slammed the former ruling party for seeking dialogue with the establishment instead of political forces, while terming its agitation drive as an attempt to destabilise the country. "From their media talk, it is evident that they only want to destabilise and undermine the stability achieved after Marka-e-Haq [Pakistan-India clashes] and the success in the government's efforts for economic revival," PM's Adviser on Political and Public Affairs Rana Sanaullah said while speaking on Geo News' programme "Geo Pakistan" on Monday. Sanaullah's remarks refer to

Continued on Page 06

ECP reserves verdict on distribution of reserved

Political parties including PML-N, JUI-F, and others present their arguments

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Monday reserved its verdict on pleas filed by PML-N, JUI-F and others on the allocation of reserved seats in the in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Assembly. A four-member bench of the ECP, headed by Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja, reserved the verdict after hearing arguments

Continued on Page 06

Illegal call centre Court remands five foreigners

Over 60 locals also worked at fraud-linked G-10 call centre, says NCCIA

DNA

ISLAMABAD: An Islamabad district and sessions court has granted two-day physical remand of five foreign nationals accused of operating an illegal call centre in the G-10 area of the capital. The suspects were presented in court by the National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA).

According to the NCCIA, the call centre was raided recently and found to be hosting a fraudulent online network, allegedly run by the five foreign individuals. More than 60 Pakistani nationals were also employed at the site. During the court proceedings, the prosecutor stated that the accused were part of an organised network involved in online scams through illegal websites. "Further interrogation of the suspects is necessary," the prosecutor told the court while seeking their physical remand. The court accepted the prosecution's plea and directed authorities to present the foreign nationals again on July 16. The NCCIA spokesperson confirmed that the suspects were arrested during a raid in G-10 and that action would also be taken against those who provided them with support and security within Pakistan.

Briefs

Avoiding trade curbs vital, India tells China

"It is now incumbent on us to address other aspects related to border, including de-escalation," says Jaishankar

NEWS DESK

BEIJING: India and China must resolve friction along their border, pull back troops and avoid "restrictive trade measures" to normalise their relationship, India's foreign minister told his Chinese counterpart in Beijing on Monday. India's Subrahmanyam Jaishankar met Wang Yi in Beijing during his first trip to the country since 2020, when a deadly border clash between their troops led to a four-year military stand-off and damaged ties until a thaw began in October, when they agreed to step back. "Good progress" made by the countries in the past nine months for normalisation of relations is a result of the resolution of friction along their border, Jaishankar told Wang.

Ishaq Dar arrives in Beijing

NEWS DESK

BEIJING: Deputy Prime Minister / Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar arrived in Beijing, China. He was received at the airport by Ambassador Ms Yu Hong, Department of Asian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of People's Republic of China and Pakistan's Ambassador to China, Khalil ur Rehman Hashmi, and senior officials from China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During his official visit, DPM/FM will lead Pakistan's delegation to the SCO Council of Foreign Ministers Meeting in Tianjin tomorrow, call on the President of China along with other SCO Foreign Ministers, and hold bilateral meetings with his counterparts from SCO member states.

Post-war scenario

Iran says 'no specific date' for US nuclear talks

Israel and Western nations accuse Iran of pursuing nuclear weapons, a charge Tehran has consistently denied

TEHRAN: Iran said Monday it had "no specific date" for a meeting with the United States on Tehran's nuclear programme, following a war with Israel that had derailed negotiations. "For now, no specific date, time or location has been determined regarding this matter," said foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei of plans for a meeting between Iran's top diplomat Abbas Araghchi and US envoy Steve Witkoff. Araghchi and Witkoff met starting in April, without concluding a deal after five rounds of talks that were the highest-level contact between their two countries since Washington in 2018 abandoned a landmark nuclear agreement. The Omani-mediated negotiations were halted as Israel launched surprise strikes on Iran's nuclear facilities on June 13, starting a 12-day war which the United States later joined. "We have been serious in diplomacy and the negotiation process, we entered with good faith, but as everyone witnessed, before the sixth round the Zionist regime, in coordination with the United States, committed military aggression against Iran," said Baqaei. Israel and Western nations accuse Iran of pursuing nuclear weapons, a charge Tehran has consistently denied. While it is the only non-nuclear power to enrich uranium to 60-percent purity, close to the level needed for a warhead, the UN's atomic energy watchdog has said it had no indication that Iran was working to weaponise its stockpiles. Israel's offensive last month, which it said was aimed at thwarting a nuclear threat from the Islamic republic, killed nuclear scientists and top-ranking military officers as well as hitting military, nuclear and other sites and residential areas. – Agencies

Pakistan-China relations: rebuilding trust

OPINION

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI



THE China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), once hailed as a game-changing strategic partnership between Pakistan and China, today stands at a crossroads. Once the cornerstone of regional connectivity, economic rejuvenation, and strategic collaboration, CPEC has suffered in recent years. These setbacks, many stemming from political decisions during the PTI government under Prime Minister Imran Khan, have left numerous projects suspended and cast an unfortunate shadow of suspicion over one of the most promising bilateral ventures in South Asia. As of now, several critical infrastructure and energy projects under the CPEC framework remain incomplete or have slowed to a crawl. Pakistan cannot afford to let CPEC – the symbol of Pakistan-China friendship – become a casualty of mistrust, mismanagement, or political point-scoring. It is imperative for the current government to take bold yet pragmatic steps to restore the confidence of our Chinese partners, revive the stalled projects, and reaffirm our commitment to a friendship that has stood the test of time. It is true that the PTI government had legitimate concerns regarding transparency and accountability in some of the early CPEC agreements. Ordering a comprehensive audit of all CPEC projects was presented as a move in the national interest, aimed at unearthing alleged corruption, ensuring fiscal responsibility, and safeguarding Pakistan's sovereign economic interests. There were indeed reports and indicators suggesting financial irregularities, mismanagement, and favoritism in contract awarding processes. In that context, calls for greater scrutiny were not entirely misplaced. However, what the PTI government underestimated – or failed to manage diplomatically – was the sensitivity of the matter for the Chinese side. The abruptness of the audit announcement, without proper prior consultation or confidence-building, led to a freeze in progress. The Chinese perceived the move not just as a bureaucratic exercise, but as a lack of trust in their intent and commitment. It disturbed the mutual respect that had characterized Pakistan-China relations for decades. To make matters worse, the political noise surrounding the allegations amplified the damage. The very narrative that CPEC was a hotbed of corruption spread across media channels and political platforms, creating an environment of suspicion and skepticism. Today, even the most well-intentioned project under the CPEC umbrella is viewed with a cautious, often mistrustful eye. This shift in public perception must be reversed – and urgently. Let us not forget that CPEC is not merely a portfolio of roads, energy plants, and special economic zones. It represents the deep strategic convergence between China and Pakistan. For China, it provides a crucial land-based route to the Arabian Sea through Gwadar,

helping it diversify its trade routes and reduce dependency on the Strait of Malacca. For Pakistan, it offers critical investment, infrastructure development, energy security, and job creation – all vital for a struggling economy. In times of war and peace, China has proven to be a friend of Pakistan. Be it diplomatic support at global forums, generous COVID-19 vaccine assistance, or unequivocal support during periods of heightened tensions with India, China has stood by Pakistan. The spirit of "iron brotherhood" is not a mere slogan – it is a lived reality. It is only appropriate that we now reciprocate with equal sensitivity and understanding, especially when it comes to preserving the long-term vision behind CPEC. While the damage from the PTI era cannot be undone entirely, it can certainly be managed with renewed political will and diplomacy. The current government must take the lead in engaging with the Chinese authorities to sort out the outstanding issues. Wherever irregularities were found, transparency should be restored through quiet diplomacy and corrective mechanisms – not through public scapegoating or political grandstanding. At the same time, Pakistan must ensure that new and ongoing CPEC projects are governed by improved transparency and accountability standards. This will not only reassure the Chinese investors but also regain public confidence in Pakistan. Institutions like the CPEC Authority need to be empowered, depoliticized, and staffed with capable professionals who understand both the Chinese perspective and Pakistan's development needs. China, too, must adapt to evolving ground realities in Pakistan. One of the persistent criticisms of Chinese involvement in Pakistan is the narrowness of their outreach. Chinese companies and institutions tend to work with the same group of local contractors, consultants, and intermediaries they partnered with during the initial phase of CPEC. While this may offer comfort and continuity, it risks alienating emerging players, particularly in an ever-evolving political and media landscape. It is also a concern that Chinese representatives avoid mainstream media or civil society engagement, possibly fearing that these forums may not echo their narrative. But this approach is counterproductive. Open engagement, rather than selective interaction, is the key to soft power. Chinese diplomats and companies must become more accessible – not just to government functionaries and handpicked stakeholders – but to business chambers, media professionals, academia, and the general public. China must realize that public perception matters. People need to see and hear from those who are working on the ground. Not only will this help dispel myths and counter anti-CPEC propaganda, but it will also forge deeper and more diverse friendships across Pakistani society. China has always been seen as a reliable friend by the people of Pakistan; it must now invest in engaging with them more proactively. The fear that mainstream media will not "toe the line" is based on a misunderstanding. Responsible journalism is not about blind allegiance, but about honest storytelling. By sharing accurate information, granting access to project

sites, and offering regular briefings, the Chinese stakeholders can help the media report facts – which in turn, will strengthen CPEC's credibility. It is time for the Chinese mission in Pakistan and their business partners to consider a communications overhaul. Employing trained public relations professionals, expanding media outreach, and holding periodic briefings with journalists and civil society will only work in their favor. The path forward lies not in reliving the mistakes of the past, but in paving the way for a new chapter of collaboration. Pakistan must reassure China that it remains fully committed to the original vision of CPEC. This includes addressing legacy issues in a mature manner, re-prioritizing stalled projects, and ensuring the security of Chinese nationals working in Pakistan. China, in return, must recognize that Pakistan's democratic and economic landscape has evolved. Partnering with a broader set of stakeholders, listening to local voices, and working through institutional channels rather than closed-door arrangements will make CPEC more resilient and widely accepted. Above all, the trust that was momentarily shaken must be rebuilt – not just between two governments, but between two peoples. CPEC is too important to be derailed by suspicion or shortsightedness. It is a symbol of a time-tested friendship, a blueprint for shared prosperity, and a foundation for regional peace. Both Pakistan and China must rise above the noise of past controversies and recommit themselves to the ideals that inspired CPEC in the first place.

Kundi for ensuring a dignified life for children with disabilities

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Monday said that ensuring a dignified life for children with disabilities is a shared responsibility of the entire society, adding without providing equal opportunities to special persons, a truly welfare-oriented society cannot be built. He expressed these views while addressing a wheelchair distribution ceremony organized by the Asghar Mohmand Foundation at the Governor House Peshawar. Governor Kundi attended the event as the chief guest. The ceremony was attended by Chairman Asghar Khan Mohmand, social workers, parents, children with disabilities, and people from various

walks of life. Welcoming the children and their families, the Governor distributed wheelchairs among eight children with disabilities. He praised the efforts of the Foundation and its team of volunteers, who, according to the chairman, are serving the community with a spirit of selflessness. In his speech, Governor Kundi lauded the foundation's efforts for raising awareness on rehabilitation, education, healthcare, and employment opportunities for differently-abled individuals. He highlighted that the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) has always taken practical steps to protect the rights of underprivileged segments of society. He cited key initiatives such

as the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP), Lady Health Workers program, reserved seats for women, and the establishment of the Women's Bank. He shared that around 10 million women are currently benefiting from BISP and reaffirmed that the Governor House remains open to people from all walks of life. He also announced that a special ceremony to honor outstanding athletes from the province with sports awards would be held soon. At the conclusion of the ceremony, Governor Kundi also distributed appreciation certificates to the Foundation's volunteers on behalf of the Governor House.—DNA

Sindh CM reviews progress on important projects

KARACHI :Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah conducted a comprehensive review of key ongoing infrastructure projects, including the New Link Road, Shahrah-e-Bhutto Expressway, and the Korangi Causeway Bridge near Qayyumabad, Korangi. The meeting held at the CM House, Murad Ali Shah directed the PPP Unit to open the New Link Road by July 25, 2025, and the Shahrah-e-Bhutto Expressway by December 2025. The meeting was attended by provincial ministers Sharjeel Memon, Nasir Shah, Saeed Ghani, PSCM Agha Wasif, Secretary Finance Fayaz Jatoi, Secretary Local Government Waseem Shamshad, Secretary Transport Asad Zamin, PD Shahrah-e-Bhutto Niaz Soomro, Project Engineer Khalid Masroor, and other relevant officials. The New Link Road project, aimed at connecting the National Highway (N-5) with Motorway M-9, is progressing, with a significant portion already completed. "The project is set to transform connectivity for freight and commuter traffic between Port Qasim, Karachi's industrial zones, and the broader national highway network," the CM said. The upgraded Link Road corridor is being developed into a four-lane dual carriageway, replacing the congested and underdeveloped existing routes that have long hampered industrial and commercial traffic in the area. Murad Shah said that once completed, the road will provide a direct and efficient link between the M-9 Motorway (Karachi-Hyderabad) and National Highway (N-5), greatly reducing travel time and easing the movement of cargo from Port Qasim to the motorway network and other key destinations across the province. The 22-kilometre New Link Road project is nearing completion, with significant progress on the new interchange at M9 (kilometre 34+740). This Rs. 3.53 billion project is being executed in collaboration with the National Highway Authority (NHA) and its concessionaire, FWO. The CM was told that the interchange construction is divided into three segments: Southbound, bridge over M9, and Northbound. Work on the Southbound segment is underway and expected to be completed by next month. At this, the CM directed the PPP unit to complete the work so that he could open it for traffic on July 25. He also said that once the new link road is opened the old link road would be closed. Construction on the bridge and Northbound sections began on April 24, 2025, and is progressing steadily. The Chief Minister directed the PPP unit to complete the entire interchange by the end of October 2025 to improve connectivity and traffic flow on the M9 motorway. Upon the opening of the New Link Road, the old Link Road will be closed to traffic.—DNA

Govt at the Helm of Pak's largest Cloud, AI transformation

ISLAMABAD: As one of Pakistan's most prominent conglomerates and international exporters, Gatronova is taking a bold step toward redefining global competitiveness through technology. Its strategic investment in digital transformation is not only set to revolutionize its operations but also elevate Pakistan's industrial image on the global stage. By enhancing operational agility, transparency, and efficiency, this move demonstrates the power of innovation in strengthening the country's presence in international markets. With more than 17,000 employees and 900+ processes, Gatronova has partnered with global technology leader SAP in a landmark move toward innovation and enterprise efficiency to initiate Pakistan's most ambitious digital transformation to date. Through the adoption of RISE with SAP, Gatronova is ushering in a new era of agility, efficiency, and real-time decision-making across its expansive industrial ecosystem. This transformation marks a significant milestone for Gatronova. By adopting SAP Cloud, our focus is to derive maximum output from AI by embedding intelligence into every business process, enabling faster decisions, greater automation, and deeper insights across the enterprise, said Rizwan Diwan, CEO, Novatex Limited. "The initiative is designed to enhance customer experience and position Gatronova as a future-ready enterprise in an increasingly competitive global landscape.—APP

Grand Peace Jirga in Bajaur highlights Pashtuns' unity, love for peace

DNA

PESHAWAR:Following directive of Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur, Special Assistant to the Chief Minister for Science and Information Technology, Dr. Shafqat Ayaz, termed the historic Peace Jirga held in Bajaur a powerful demonstration of the Pashtun nation's unity, awareness, and commitment to peace.

Dr. Shafqat Ayaz said Pashtun people are not only honourable and loyal, but a nation that cherishes

civilization, peace, education, and dreams of progress. Their history is full of sacrifices, love for knowledge, patriotism, and collective strength. The unity, patience, and peace-loving spirit shown by the people of Bajaur is truly commendable.

He stated that the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will no longer allow terrorists to impose themselves again. The Bajaur Peace Jirga has sent a clear message to the world: the Pashtun nation has rejected terrorism and firmly marching toward peace, education, and prosperity. Dr. Ayaz

further said that the provincial government deeply values the sacrifices and efforts for peace made by the people of Bajaur and the tribal districts. The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa stands firmly with its people and will defend their constitutional, political, and developmental rights on every forum. "The world must now understand: Pashtuns will remain silent no more — they want peace, they want education, they want progress — and they will never again accept the imposition of terrorism on their land."

CDA chief reviews Islamabad's upgradation, beautification projects

ISLAMABAD: An important meeting was held at the Capital Development Authority (CDA) headquarters under the chairmanship of Chairman CDA and Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Muhammad Ali Randhawa. The meeting was attended by senior officers including CDA Member Admin and Estate Talat Mahmood, Member Environment Esfandiyar Baloch, Member Finance Tahir Naeem, Member Planning Dr. Khalid Hafiz, Member Engineering Syed Nafasat Raza, Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon, DG Works, DG Resource, Chief Officer MCI, Deputy DG Enforcement, Director DMA and other senior officers. The meeting reviewed the progress of key development projects, including Shaheen Chowk, Kashmir Chowk, Faizabad Interchange, uplifting of Pakistan Secretariat, installation of street lights, improvement of the solid waste management system, establishment of Islamabad Model Jail, upgradation of police stations, establishment of a food street in Blue Area, construction of parking plazas, implementation of a cashless system in CDA, Safari Park, Theme Park, Cable Car, Ferris wheel, upgradation of 25 football and 25 cricket grounds, and installation of dancing fountains. Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa said that improving the living standards of Islamabad's residents is CDA's top priority. He stated that not only are major roads across the city being upgraded, but new roads and underpasses are also being constructed to resolve traffic issues. Additionally, CDA is actively working on the beautification of parks and the improvement of sports facilities. This includes the restoration of 25 football grounds, 25 cricket grounds, establishment of paddle courts and the upgradation of pedestrian bridges.—DNA

Girls in Peshawar celebrate Malala Day

PESHAWAR: Blue Veins, in collaboration with the Pakistan Education Champion Network (PECN), celebrated Malala Day by organizing a "Be Your Own Hero — Confidence & Leadership Workshop" for young girls in Peshawar. According to a press release issued here on Monday, Malala Day, observed globally on July 12, marks the birthday of Malala Yousafzai, the youngest Nobel Peace Prize laureate and a global symbol of the fight for girls' right to education.

This day serves as a powerful reminder of the 12 million girls in Pakistan who remain out of school due to poverty, harmful social norms, early mar-

riages, and the lack of safe and inclusive educational spaces. The workshop provided a safe, encouraging, and inspiring environment where young girls were guided to discover their inner strength, develop essential leadership skills, and build self-confidence through interactive discussions and role-plays. By learning to express themselves and share their dreams, the girls were empowered to think beyond traditional expectations and imagine a brighter, more independent future for themselves. Qamar Naseem, Malala Education Champion and member of the Pakistan Education Champion Network, emphasized the im-

portance of this day and the critical role of such initiatives in creating change. He said, "Malala Day symbolizes the courage and resilience of every girl striving for her right to education. Today's workshop is a step towards equipping our girls with the confidence and leadership skills they need to shape their own futures and uplift their communities. Empowering young girls to believe in themselves is one of the most powerful ways to ensure lasting social change, he added. At the end of the activity, participants spoke with media representatives and passionately shared their experiences.

They expressed how the workshop helped them realize their potential and motivated them to become stronger, more confident voices for change within their schools and communities. Many girls shared personal stories of overcoming challenges and expressed their hopes to continue advocating for other girls who face similar barriers. Fatima, a class 8 student and participant, shared her thoughts: "I learned that I can be my own hero and that my voice matters. I want to become a leader in my school and help other girls speak up for their rights. We should all support each other so no girl is left behind."

The participants demanded urgent action to address the high number of out-of-school girls in Pakistan. They called for safe, inclusive, and accessible schools in every community, more leadership opportunities for girls at both community and school levels, and supportive environments where girls can speak up without fear. They urged policymakers, teachers, and parents to prioritize girls' education, invest in confidence-building and leadership programs, and commit to ensuring that every girl has the chance to learn, lead, and live a life free from discrimination and fear.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting to discuss reforms in the FBR. — DNA

Teenager rescued after falling into well

KHANEWAL:A 16-year-old boy was safely rescued after he accidentally fell into a well while working near Chak No. 13/8-R here on Sunday. According to Rescue 1122 officials, the victim, identified as Mudassir, son of Ifkhar, slipped and fell into the well. Responding swiftly, Rescue 1122 teams launched an immediate operation and successfully pulled the boy out. The injured boy was given first aid on the spot and later shifted to Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Mian Channu for further treatment. Rescue operation in-charge Zaher Anjum supervised the entire rescue effort.—APP

Man held for bogus call to emergency helpline

SARGODHA: Sargodha district police have arrested an accused for making a bogus call to emergency helpline 15, said a police spokesman on Saturday. The action comes after a suspect, identified as Abdul Sattar, was arrested for making a false kidnapping call to the emergency line. The accused, Abdul Sattar, was apprehended by Satellite Town police for misusing the emergency helpline. A case has been registered against him for making a false call. District Police Officer (DPO) Muhammad Sohail Ashraf urged citizens to use the emergency helpline responsibly, emphasizing that a single false call can delay assistance to someone in genuine distress.—APP

IGP directs cops to assist in rain relief activities

LAHORE: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Punjab Dr Usman Anwar instructed officials to remain alert and actively participate in relief activities during the ongoing rainfall in various areas of Punjab, including Lahore. The IGP emphasised that officials should perform their duties with heightened vigilance in the rain-affected areas. Traffic wardens must ensure smooth flow of traffic on roads, while supervisory police officers should personally monitor relief efforts in the affected regions.—APP

ICT admin, NHA clear encroachments on Murree Road

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad district administration and the National Highway Authority (NHA) continued their joint operation against encroachments near Phulgran area along the Murree Road. The operation, supervised by the Assistant Commissioner Secretariat, saw the use of heavy machinery to demolish illegal constructions established on state land, said the spokesman of ICT administration here. Authorities launched the drive to clear government property from unauthorized occupation, which has been a concern for commuters and local residents due to the obstruction caused

in other parts of the district where encroachments have been reported. The operation was carried out with support from local police to ensure security and prevent any resistance from occupants. According to officials, the drive aims to restore public spaces and ensure that highways and surrounding areas remain clear of unauthorized structures. Residents of the area were also cautioned against future encroachments. The administration has stated that strict action will be taken against individuals or groups found involved in occupying government land or constructing without legal permission. — APP

Polio eradication efforts intensify with Big Catch-Up Round III

KOHAT: In a determined effort to eliminate polio, the 'Big Catch-Up Round III' anti-polio campaign was officially launched here at the District Health Office and District Emergency Operation Center (DEOC). The campaign was inaugurated by Deputy District Health Officer Dr Haroon Nasir Khattak, who administered the first drops of the polio vaccine to a child, symbolizing the start of the door-to-door immunization drive. Speaking on the occasion, Dr Khattak emphasized the collective responsibility of society in the fight against polio. "Complete eradication of this disease is only possible with the cooperation of every individual. Parents must ensure their children receive polio drops in every campaign," he said. The event was also attended by WHO Area Coordinator Dr Saifullah, who reaffirmed the organization's full support for Pakistan's polio eradication efforts. "This campaign is a crucial part of our broader strategy, and we stand with the Government of Pakistan in achieving a polio-free future," he stated. — APP

Simplified digital tax returns from today

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Bureau of Revenue (FBR) will launch simplified digital tax returns for salaried individuals starting July 15, as part of its broader tax reforms aimed at easing compliance and expanding the tax base. The development was shared during a high-level meeting chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday to review progress on the digitisation of the FBR, including the implementation of an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based assessment system and other structural reforms. According to the official briefing, salaried taxpayers will benefit the most from the new digital forms, which have been made concise, user-friendly, and available in Urdu.

ELECTRICITY THEFT (ZERO TOLERANCE FULL ENFORCEMENT)		
GEP CO GEP CO TENDER NOTICE TENDERS/PD/GSC/GEP CO/2025-26		
Sr.No.	Name of Work	
01/ 2025-26	Construction of Septic Tank at 132KV Grid Station Essa (Narowal).	
BOQ Cost (Rs.)	Tender Fee (Rs.)	Completion Period
1,651,789.00	1,000/- (Non-Refundable)	30- Days
02/ 2025-26	Shifting, Erection, Installation, Wiring, Testing & Commissioning of electrical equipment at 132KV Grid Station Tannery Zone Sialkot.	
BOQ Cost (Rs.)	Tender Fee (Rs.)	Completion Period
5,000,000.00	3,000/- (Non-Refundable)	90- Days
1. Procedures of Open Competitive Bidding: Single Stage Single envelope procedure as per PPRA rules will be adopted for tender process. The tender will be opened through E-Pads. Tender documents can be obtained from E-Pads/PPRA Website. The said tender notice will also be available on E-Pads, PPRA & GEP CO Website.		
2. Who can Participate? (i) Contractor who has valid PEC registration renewal for the year 2024-25 under code as mention below. (ii) Current Bank statement showing 15% balance amount of all works. (iii) In proof of experience the contractor is required to submit at most 02 No. valid work orders having cumulative cost equal to or more than 100% of BOQ amount along with work completion certificates obtained from work order issuing authority for executing for same nature of work during the last 05 years.		
Sr.	Tender No.	Registration in PEC category
01	01/2025-26	CE-10
02	02/2025-26	EE-04 & EE-05
3. From where tender Documents can be obtained? From the Office of the undersigned at 132 KV Grid Station Hafizabad Road Gujranwala near Awan Chowk, during working hours. Ph:# 055-3412141 Fax# 055-3412170.		
4. Earnest Money: (i) Original Bid Security in the shape of Bank Draft or a Bank Guarantee issued by a scheduled bank in Pakistan @ 2% of BOQ cost must be supplied along with bid. (ii) The successful bidder will have to submit @ 10% of the Contract Price as performance Security in the form of CDR or Bank Guarantee at the time of signing of Contract Agreement.		
5. Other Conditions: (i) The Contractors are required to attach their registration certificates (Active), issued from PRA for PST along with technical bid. (ii) In addition to experience the bidder has to submit documents/ company profile which prove that bidder has been involved in the Grid Station the last five years and has sound financial position. (iii) Cutting/ Overwriting is not allowed in tender documents. (iv) Tendered rates should be filled in figure as well as in words and tender should be signed as per general directions given in the tender documents.		
6. Note: The Department/Company reserves the rights to accept or reject the tender as per PPRA Rules. (No conditional tender will be accepted).		
7. Last Date/ Time of Submission Tenders: Bid should be submitted through E-Pads and manual bid also be submitted to the office of undersigned 30.07.2025 upto 11.00 A.M hours. (Tender will be opened as per PPRA rules).		
Office Address: 132 KV Grid Station Hafizabad Road Gujranwala near Awan Chowk, during working hours. Ph:# 055-3412141 Fax # 055-3412170 www.pdgscgepco@gmail.com PROJECT DIRECTOR (GSC) GEP CO, GUJRANWALA PID/L/11/25 Gujranwala Electric Power Company Limited		

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.....561116

Cantt Hospital...9270907-11

DHQ.....5556311-4

RGH.....9290301-7

Holy Family.....9290322-7

PIMS.....9261170-79

Polyclinic.....9218300-09

Shifa International 4603666



Departments

CDA.....9221334-43

CDA.....9208301-04

Met Office.....9250360-6

RDA.....5555864

TMA.....5770886

Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

New Indonesian envoy arrives in Islamabad

Over the years, the relations between Pakistan and Indonesia have transitioned from cordial to truly excellent, underpinned by mutual respect, shared values, and a commitment to regional peace and economic cooperation. The two countries enjoy close cultural, religious, and historical bonds, which have been further cemented through high-level diplomatic engagements and people-to-people contacts

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Mr. Chandra Warsenanto Sukotjo has officially assumed his responsibilities as the new Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to Pakistan, marking a fresh chapter in the already robust and growing relationship between the two brotherly countries. His arrival in Islamabad has been warmly welcomed by the diplomatic community, reflecting the deep-rooted and time-tested ties between Pakistan and Indonesia.

Over the years, the relations between Pakistan and Indonesia have transitioned from cordial to truly excellent, underpinned by mutual respect, shared values, and a commitment to regional peace and economic co-operation. The two countries enjoy close cultural, religious, and historical bonds, which have been further cemented through high-level diplomatic engagements and people-to-people contacts.

Particularly noteworthy is the significant diplomatic momentum gained during the tenures of previous Indonesian ambassadors, Mr. Iwan Suyudhie Amri and Mr. Adam Mulawarman Tugio. Ambassador Iwan Amri played a pivotal role in reinvigorating bilateral cooperation across multiple domains including trade, education, and culture. His tenure saw increased academic and cultural exchanges and the strengthening of the Indonesia-Pakistan Parliamentary Friendship Group. Ambassador Adam Tugio, who succeeded him, further elevated these ties by advocating greater economic diplomacy. He was instrumental in organizing high-level business forums, promoting trade between the two nations, and supporting collaboration in halal food, textiles, pharmaceuticals, and tourism. His efforts also strengthened interfaith and inter-cultural dialogue, bringing the peoples of both nations even closer.

Now, with Mr. Chandra at the helm, expectations are high that this upward trajectory will continue. He brings with him a wealth of experience and a dynamic approach to diplomacy, which many hope will further enhance bilateral cooperation in key areas such as trade, investment, education, and digital economy.

Indonesia and Pakistan also work closely in multilateral forums such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Developing-8 (D-8) to advance shared interests in the Muslim world and the Global South.

With mutual goodwill, expanding cooperation, and a shared vision for prosperity, the future of Pakistan-Indonesia relations looks brighter than ever. Ambassador Chandra's appointment comes at a time when both nations are seeking to diversify their international partnerships. His tenure is expected to open new avenues of collaboration and reaffirm the strong friendship that binds Jakarta and Islamabad.

Police's Ali Nawaz receives Hero's welcome

ISLAMABAD: Constable Ali Nawaz, a proud member of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police, returned home to a hero's welcome after securing a historic silver medal in the World Police Games 2025 held in the United States — the first-ever silver medal in Pakistan police history at the event.

Apolice spokesperson told APP on Monday that a large number of officers, including Additional Inspector General (AIG) Logistics Abdul Haq Umrani, warmly received the boxer at Islamabad International Airport, celebrating his remarkable achievement. He said Constable Ali Nawaz is currently serving in Islamabad Police and represented Pakistan at the international level with great distinction. He said the Inspector General of Islamabad Police, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, invited Ali Nawaz to his office to honor him for his extraordinary performance. He said, "Ali Nawaz has made the entire nation and the Islamabad Police proud by winning hearts through his dedication, courage, and talent." He said the IG Rizvi awarded Ali Nawaz a cash prize and an honorary shield in recognition of his contribution. IG said ICT Police stands fully behind Ali Nawaz and will continue to support him in future international competitions.—APP

FIA crack down on Illegal appointments

ISLAMABAD: The FIA Anti-Corruption Circle Islamabad has arrested two accused individuals involved in illegal recruitments and abuse of authority. The arrested suspects have been identified as Ghulam Muhammad Ali and Ikhlaz Malik. Ghulam Muhammad Ali previously served as the Chairman of PARC (Pakistan Agricultural Research Council), while Ikhlaz Malik held the position of Director Establishment at PARC. Both have been taken into custody on charges of unlawfully recruiting individuals and misusing their official powers. According to FIA officials, the accused illegally appointed 332 individuals against 164 sanctioned posts in PARC, significantly exceeding the authorized number of vacancies. Investigations have been formally initiated following their arrest. Raids are currently underway to apprehend other officials and personnel involved in the case. —APP

SSC exam results tomorrow

ISLAMABAD: The results of Secondary School Certificate (Part I & II) 1st Annual Examinations, 2025 of FBISE which was held in the months of March/April 2025 will be announced on tomorrow (Wednesday), the 16th July 2025 at 01:30 pm. To ensure students receive their results promptly, the board will send result updates via SMS to all candidates who provided their mobile numbers in their admission forms. Additionally, results will be accessible on the official FBISE website at www.fbise.edu.pk. For those opting to check via SMS, students can retrieve their results by sending an SMS in the following format to 5050.—APP

ISSI, Casa Asia sign MoU to strengthen Pakistan-Spain ties

ISLAMABAD | : The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Casa Asia — marking a vital step forward in strengthening closer collaboration between Pakistan and Spain, particularly in the academic, research and think-tanks domains. The MoU was signed by Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General, ISSI and Mr José Pintor, Director General, Casa Asia. The signing ceremony was attended by Ambassador José Antonio de Ory, Spain's Ambassador to Pakistan, and senior representatives from both institutions. The central element of the MoU is the commitment to organize joint events, including the "Pakistan-Spain Forum," which is aimed at strengthening ties in areas of mutual interest. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, in his remarks on the occasion, commended the leadership of Casa Asia as a formidable force in promoting intercultural dialogue and knowledge exchange. He also lauded the support and facilitation provided by the respective ambassadors of Pakistan and Spain in forging the institutional relationship. He highlighted the wide range of subjects for joint cooperation, including not only Pakistan-Spain relations but also engagement on broader regional and global developments such as the evolving global order, the role of Europe, and future security relations and architecture. He reaffirmed ISSI's commitment to developing intellectual and institutional synergies with Casa Asia, and working towards realisation of practical goals. José Pintor described the signing of the MoU as a significant milestone. He expressed appreciation for the support of both Embassies and emphasized the importance of pursuing a practical and result-oriented partnership that enhances mutual understanding and cooperation. "Pakistan is a very important country for us," he stated, adding that the initiative would contribute to increasing knowledge about Pakistan and deepening bilateral ties.Ambassador José Antonio de Ory expressed his satisfaction on the signing and reaffirmed the strong political and social relations between the two countries. Pakistan and Spain have excellent bilateral relations, and there is scope for further strengthening cooperation, especially in the areas of culture, arts, literature, and investment, he noted. He also praised Casa Asia and ISSI for working together to find new avenues of cooperation. The MoU reflects a shared commitment to promoting mutual understanding, dialogue, and enhancing people-to-people contacts between Pakistan and Spain, and more broadly, between academic and research commitments between Pakistan and Europe.—DNA

IIUI President, HEC Chairman discuss IIUI's ongoing reform steps

ISLAMABAD:President of the International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI), Prof. Dr. Ahmed Saad Alahmed, called on Chairman of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) and Rector IIUI, Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed to discuss key developments concerning the university's academic direction and institutional priorities. The meeting focused on ways to promote academic excellence, uphold merit, and revitalise IIUI's Islamic identity and institutional integrity. Both agreed that the upcoming meetings of the Selection Board and Departmental Promotion Committee (DPC) must remain top priorities, with a particular emphasis on transparency and fairness, said a press release issued here on Monday. The two dignitaries also discussed IIUI's ongoing reform measures, including the digitisation of administrative systems, enhanced student engagement, and efforts to strengthen faculty development programs. Both sides reiterated the importance of protecting and promoting IIUI's unique role as a centre of Islamic learning and contemporary scholarship—rooted in tradition, yet responsive to present-day academic and societal needs. It was agreed that the new leadership must work to ensure transparent, rule-based, and equitable decision-making. The President affirmed his resolve to help build a system that is institutionally strong and not vulnerable to manipulation or hijacking by vested interests. Prof. Dr. Ahmed Saad Alahmed also expressed his firm commitment to enhancing the university's research culture, fostering an environment conducive to innovation and scholarly inquiry. He emphasised that immediate attention would also be given to improving campus infrastructure and student facilities, recognising that a well-equipped and supportive physical environment is essential to the academic experience. Both the President and the Rector also agreed on the need to improve the university's financial sustainability. They discussed the importance of generating new streams of revenue, encouraging public-private partnerships, and attracting investment to strengthen IIUI's long-term institutional stability and autonomy. Chairman HEC appreciated the student-oriented approach of the IIUI President, noting that he had worked sincerely from day one to reduce the gap between students and the administration. He observed that such a proactive and reform-driven leadership style would contribute meaningfully not only to IIUI's academic resurgence but also to further strengthening Pakistan-Saudi educational relations. He reaffirmed HEC's full support for the university's academic and structural reforms, particularly in areas such as quality assurance, curriculum development, and merit-based faculty promotions.—APP

CJP for meaningful coordination to enhance justice delivery

ISLAMABAD: The Chief Justice of Pakistan Mr Justice Yahya Afridi has urged bar representatives to sensitize their respective bar associations about the ongoing developments and to proactively engage in judicial reform initiatives. He further directed that all support and facilities extended to the bar associations by the Federal Government must be streamlined and structured to avoid duplication and ensure better cost for money spent. The CJP, who is also the Chairman Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan (LJCP), said this while chairing a high-level meeting Monday at the Supreme Court Branch Registry, Quetta, to review institutional linkages between the Bar Associations of Baluchistan province and the Law

and Justice Commission of Pakistan in strengthening justice delivery. The Chief Justice also called upon provincial law departments to remain actively engaged with the Resident Additional Secretary of the Commission for timely and effective implementation of district-level projects . He noted with concern the lack of infrastructure, including inconsistent power supply and digital integration, in less developed districts, and stressed the need for targeted interventions in these areas. According to a press released issued here Monday, the meeting was attended by Mr. Justice Rozi Khan, Chief Justice, High Court of Balochistan, Registrar, High Court of Balochistan, Mian Muhammad Rauf

Atta, President SCBAP, Mr. Amanullah, Chairman Executive Committee, Balochistan Bar Council Quetta, Mr. Rahib Buledi, Vice Chairman Executive Committee Balochistan Bar Council, Mr. Yasin Azad, Chairman Executive Committee Pakistan Bar Council, Mr. Tahir Warraich Vice Chairman Executive Committee Pakistan Bar Council Quetta, Mr. Khalil Ahmed Panezai, Member, Balochistan Bar Council, Mr. Qasim Ali Gojizai, Chairman Education Committee, Balochistan Bar Council, and Mr Attatullah Khan Langov, President Balochistan High Court Bar Association, Representatives of Ministry of Law and Justice, Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan; Secretary Law department.—APP

JULY 2025

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Briefs

Pakistan exports goods worth \$2.38 billion to China in FY25

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan exported goods worth \$2.38 billion (\$2,375 million) to China during the fiscal year 2024-25, according to the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP), reflecting continued strong trade volumes between the two countries. In June FY 2024-25 alone, exports to China reached \$152 million, showing a slight increase of 1% compared to \$150 million in the same month last year, Gwadar Pro reported on Monday Pakistan's total exports for FY 2024-25 (July-June) were recorded at \$32.11 billion (\$32,106 million), reflecting a 4.67% year-on-year growth. During the same period, total imports stood at \$58.38 billion (\$58,380 million), resulting in a trade deficit of \$26.27 billion (\$26,274 million). China accounted for 7.4% of Pakistan's total exports. Pakistan's main exports to China include textiles and garments, knitwear, cotton yarn and fabric, minerals, rice, sesame seeds, chilies, pink salt, and seafood. Most of these are raw or semi-processed goods, though value-added products are gradually gaining traction. The growth in exports is partly attributed to the second phase of the China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement (CPFTA-II), which came into effect on January 1, 2020.—APP

Pakistan, China to establish Joint Research Centre

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a significant step toward scientific collaboration, the University of Sargodha (UoS), Pakistan, and Zaozhuang School of Technology (ZST), China, have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to establish a Joint Research Centre on Lithium Batteries at UoS. Recognizing the strategic importance of lithium battery technologies in advancing clean energy and mobility solutions, both institutions have agreed to collaborate across a broad spectrum of research and academic exchange. According to a report, carried by China Economic Net on Monday, the cooperation will focus on material science, energy storage systems, and related technologies. Under the IoC, UoS and ZST will facilitate the exchange of faculty and researchers, student training, joint supervision, and the organization of seminars and workshops. The partnership also envisions collaborative research, patent development, and the launch of academic programs to enhance capacity building in this critical field. A Joint Coordination Committee will be established to oversee the implementation of the cooperation framework. Comprising equal representation from both institutions, the committee will convene annually to assess progress and identify new areas of collaboration.

Al-Shifa expands free eye care services across GB

This partnership serves as a model of compassion and cooperation, illustrating how collaborative efforts can help bridge healthcare gaps in remote regions

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Al-Shifa Trust (AST), a renowned provider of eye care services in Pakistan, has partnered with the Independent Living Centre (ILC), a non-governmental organization dedicated to supporting individuals with disabilities in Gilgit-Baltistan, to expand access to free medical services in the region.

Under this collaboration, ILC, led by its CEO, Mr Amjad Nadeem, is facilitating the daily transport of 15 patients to Al-Shifa Eye Hospital in Gilgit, where they receive free eye examinations, diagnostics, medication, and surgical treatment. The initiative aims to improve eye health while promoting inclusivity and dignity for marginalized individuals. Following a recent meeting with senior AST officials, Mr. Nadeem praised the initiative and reaffirmed ILC's commitment to maintaining this daily patient flow. He emphasized that empowering children and adults with disabilities requires not only advocacy but tangible healthcare access.



Despite still being under construction, the Gilgit branch of Al-Shifa Trust is already offering vital services to the local population. Maj. Gen. (Retd) Rehmat Khan, President of Al-Shifa Trust, notes that the facility also serves patients with hearing and speech impairments, providing tailored

support and transportation. Eye care is led by Dr. Qaim Ali Khan and Dr. Lubna, who perform advanced procedures such as B-Scans and Biometry—completely free of charge.

Maj. Gen. (Retd) Khan noted that about 9 million people in Pakistan live with some form of vision im-

pairment, ranging from mild to permanent blindness. Blindness is more common in females than in males, and the burden of vision loss is projected to increase due to population growth and ageing unless further interventions are implemented. He informed that an estimated 85.5% of blindness

cases are avoidable, while Cataract remains the most significant cause. He added that nearly 80 per cent of patients across all AST hospitals, including those in Rawalpindi, Chakwal, Kohat, Sukkur, Muzaffarabad, and Gilgit, receive treatment at no cost. He added that a new branch in Lahore is under development and is expected to begin operations by 2027, further expanding the Trust's reach. He reaffirmed the Trust's mission to eliminate preventable blindness and reduce the burden of eye disease, particularly among underserved populations. "Thousands of poor patients have already expressed deep gratitude to the doctors and staff of Al-Shifa Gilgit," he said. "Their appreciation is a testament to our shared commitment to service." This partnership serves as a model of compassion and cooperation, illustrating how collaborative efforts can help bridge healthcare gaps in remote regions. It offers a renewed sense of hope for communities that have long lacked access to quality eye care.

Sugar cartel undermines Pakistan's economic foundations

ISLAMABAD: A prominent business leader has sounded the alarm over the unchecked influence of Pakistan's sugar mill lobby, which has been able to dictate state resources and agricultural policy-making, warning that its growing dominance poses a threat to the country's textile industry and broader economic stability. Shahid Rasheed Butt, former president of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), called for immediate action to curb a "mafia-like grip" on state resources and agricultural policy-making. Speaking to the business community, Mr. Butt highlighted a troubling trend. Fertile land once dedicated to cotton, the backbone of Pakistan's largest export industry, is being systematically diverted to sugarcane cultivation despite existing sugar surpluses. The shift carries severe economic consequences. Pakistan's textile sector, which accounts for 60 percent of national exports and employs millions, faces mounting pressure as cotton production declines and import dependence grows, straining the fragile trade balance. He noted that cotton growers struggle with shrinking acreage, erratic backing, and water shortages, but the sugar industry continues to expand through subsidies, guaranteed prices, and preferential access to irrigation. Data reveals the cotton production in 2024-25 plummeted to just 6.42 million bales, 41% below target, mainly due to a 22% decline in cultivated area as farmers switched crops. To fill the gap, Pakistan imported over 1.5 million bales of cotton and 1.25 million bales of yarn, thereby depleting its foreign exchange reserves. In 2024-25, sugar production soared to 5.77 million metric tons, with domestic inventories reaching nearly 4 million metric tons, more than enough to meet national needs. Yet, despite warnings, the government approved the export of over 765,000 metric tons of sugar, only to reverse course months later and authorise the import of up to 350,000 metric tons as local prices spiked to Rs200 per kilogram. This cycle of subsidised exports followed by expensive imports has left the masses frustrated. The business leader said this mismanagement stems from deliberate policy choices influenced by powerful lobbies rather than economic logic or national interest. Shahid Rasheed Butt warned that the implications of this mismanagement extend far beyond the agricultural sector. The unchecked influence of the sugar lobby could lead to irreversible damage to the textile industry. This not only threatens job losses but also reduces foreign exchange earnings, precisely when both are desperately needed. Mr. Butt's remarks have reignited the debate over the urgent need for structural reforms in the agricultural sector.—DNA

Around 336,999 Pakistanis proceed to abroad for employment

ISLAMABAD: Through the Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment (BUEO) an attached department of the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development from January 1 to June 30, around 336,999 Pakistanis have proceeded abroad for employment. The number of foreign job seekers are also increasing day by day due to the productive policies of the country as new ways of jobs opening for skilled and unskilled Pakistani workers. An official source of BEOE told APP, he said that since inception of the Bureau in the year 1971, more than 10 million emigrants have been provided overseas employment duly registered with the Bureau of Emigration & Overseas Employment. To a question, he said that during the year 2015, the highest number of Pakistanis (946,571) proceeded

abroad for the purpose of employment. He said that so far, 116,300 foreign jobs are available with BEOE. Overseas employment was playing a vital role in reducing the pressure of unemployment at home, besides being a major means of earning foreign exchange in the shape of overseas workers' remittances. Overseas employment is thus serving as the mainstay for the national economy, by providing much-needed financial outlay for debt servicing, import bills, alleviation of poverty, development projects and economic activities. Bureau, being a regulatory body, controls, regulates, facilitates and monitors the emigration process followed by the Overseas Employment Promoters (OEPs), in the private sector, besides 'direct employment', the mode adopted by the individuals, to seek foreign employment either through their own efforts or relatives

and friends living abroad. The foremost task of Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment encompass collection, compilation and tabulation of emigration data of all those Pakistanis who proceed abroad for employment purpose. In fact, the Bureau has been engaged in maintaining comprehensive statistical record of all the migrant workers since 1971, which provides basis for planning and policy formulation by the Economic Division and other interested government departments. He said that the main function of this body was to control and regulate emigration under the Emigration Ordinance, 1979 and promote Emigration of Pakistani Citizens. It was the function of the bureau to look after the interest and welfare of the emigrants and advise the Federal Government on emigration policies and procedures, Monitoring and supervision of Overseas Employment Promoters through 7 Protectorates of Emigrants Offices, Processing of Overseas Employment Promoters (OEP) Licences Pre-departure briefing to Emigrants.—APP

PESSI director visits RCCI

RAWALPINDI: Director of the Punjab Employees Social Security Institution (PESSI), Mr. Malik Farrukh Mumtaz, paid an official visit to the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI). He was accompanied by Deputy Director Mr. Munir Malik and Inspector Mr. Naeem Azizi. During the visit, Director Malik Farrukh Mumtaz shared that significant amendments have been made to the laws governing the collection of the Workers' Welfare Fund (WWF) and the Workers' Participation Fund (WPPF). As per the new regulations, the complete authority for collection of these funds has been transferred to PESSI. Consequently, all contributions and related payments will now be made directly to PESSI. He welcomed the Chamber's proposals regarding awareness sessions, registration processes, and contribution mechanisms, emphasizing the importance of stakeholder engagement. Acting President of RCCI, Mr. Khalid Farooq Qazi, welcomed the delegation and proposed measures to further strengthen the collaboration between the two institutions.—APP

NSU to host World Youth Skills Day 2025 celebration

ISLAMABAD: The National Skills University Islamabad will join the rest of the world in celebrating World Youth Skills Day 2025, with a special focus on "Youth Empowerment through AI and Digital Skills." According to the NSU, Ms. Wajia Qamar, Minister of State, Federal Ministry of Education and Professional Training, will be the Chief Guest for this high-profile national event. She will give the keynote address and participate in a symbolic walk highlighting the power of Artificial Intelligence and digital skills to transform lives. This event signifies an important milestone for the university and Pakistan's broader goal of preparing its youth for a digitally driven future. Ms. Wajia Qamar's participation demonstrates the federal government's strong commitment to integrating advanced technologies into skills education. Her interactions with students and faculty will provide insights into national efforts to develop inclusive, forward-thinking educational policies focused on youth development through innovation. At the heart of this celebration lies the dynamic transformation of the National Skills University Islamabad an institution that has rapidly risen to prominence as Pakistan's only federally chartered skills-focused university. With its main campus in the capital and the fast-developing Sarmad Tanveer Campus in Muridke, Sheikhupura, NSU is spearheading change through robust training programs in artificial intelligence, data science, cloud computing, digital fabrication, and emerging technologies. These programs are designed not only to meet international standards but also to equip Pakistani youth with the tools they need to thrive in the global knowledge economy. Much of this transformation can be credited to the vision and unwavering dedication of Prof. Dr. Muhammad Mukhtar, the university's Founding Vice Chancellor. Under his leadership, NSU has evolved from a neglected site into a vibrant, world-class institution that blends technical training with academic excellence. His efforts have created an ecosystem where innovation, industry collaboration, and student empowerment come together to redefine what skills education means in the 21st century.—DNA

ANF recovers over 65 kg drugs in 9 operations

ISLAMABAD: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting nine operations across the country managed to recover over 65.278 kg drugs, worth approximately Rs 9.829 million and arrested nine suspects including three women. According to an ANF Headquarters spokesperson, ANF in a crackdown against drug smugglers also targeted the supply to the educational institutions across various cities of the country. In an operation in Peshawar, three kg heroin was recovered from a vehicle intercepted near a college on University Road and a suspect was arrested. In another operation, a suspect was arrested near a university in Peshawar with 1.5 kg hashish. The arrested suspects confessed selling drugs to the students of educational institutions. In third operation, ANF recovered 1.378 kg crystal meth (Ice) at Faisalabad Airport which was hidden in a trolley bag of a Qatar bound passenger. The suspect was arrested during the operation. On Warsak Road, Peshawar, 1.8 kg hashish was recovered from Gujrat and Karachi bound parcels being sent via a courier office.—APP

China-funded water plant to feed drinking water to Gwadar residence

ISLAMABAD: Since Gwadar residents are desperately struggling for drinking water after water reservoirs went dry, China-funded 1.2 MGD desalination water plant is all set to provide 7 million to 8 million gallon potable water to local residents of Gwadar. In the wake of scanty rains, water reservoirs including Ankara Dam, Swad Dam, and Shadi Kaur Dam are currently without water. Balochistan government sealed the approval of the decision to purchase water from the 1.2 MGD desalination water plant last week on July 08. Government official told Gwadar Pro that a high-profile meeting played a pivotal role to make things happen when Gwadar Port Authority Chairman Noor ul Haq Baloch, Public Health Engineering Department secretary Imran Ghachki and Gwadar Development Authority (GDA) DG Saif Ullah Khaitran and Public Health Engineering Xen Engineer Momon Baloch put their heads together to figure out how to mitigate on-going water crisis in Gwadar.—APP



ISLAMABAD: People filling drinking water in their pots at filtration plants alongside a road, in the Federal Capital.

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Time for a new Islamic bloc

THE ongoing humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza has exposed the shocking impotence of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Arab League. Despite countless emergency meetings, strongly worded statements, and hollow declarations, these organizations have failed to take any meaningful action to stop the bloodshed or hold the aggressors accountable. Their inaction raises serious questions about their relevance and effectiveness in the Muslim world.

The OIC and the Arab League have become mere platforms for rhetoric, issuing condemnations that lead to no concrete steps. While innocent Palestinians continue to suffer under relentless violence, these organizations remain paralyzed by internal divisions and the influence of a few powerful members who prioritize their political and economic interests over Islamic solidarity. The recent emergency summits on Gaza have produced nothing but photo-ops and empty promises, proving once again that these bodies are incapable of delivering real solutions.

The OIC, which claims to represent 57 Muslim-majority nations, has been effectively hijacked by a handful of countries that dictate its agenda. Instead of being a unified voice for the Muslim Ummah, it has become a tool for geopolitical maneuvering. Similarly, the Arab League remains divided, with some member states normalizing relations with Israel while Palestinians endure occupation and bombardment. This hypocrisy undermines the credibility of these organizations and leaves the Muslim world without genuine leadership. Given the failure of the OIC and the Arab League, it is time for a new coalition of Muslim nations that can act decisively on critical issues like Palestine. Countries like Pakistan, Turkey, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Azerbaijan – which have consistently shown moral clarity on Gaza – should lead this bloc. Unlike the OIC, this alliance must be free from the dominance of a few powerful states and should prioritize justice, humanitarian intervention, and practical steps over mere statements.

This new bloc could start with a core group and later expand to include other nations willing to take a principled stand. The OIC and Arab League have proven to be ineffective institutions, held hostage by political compromises and external influences. The Muslim world cannot afford to wait for their empty gestures anymore. A new alliance, led by nations with the courage to act, must emerge to fill this leadership vacuum. If the existing bodies cannot fulfill their duty, then history will remember them as failed institutions, and the responsibility will shift to those willing to take real action for justice and liberation.

The uncertain future of TAPI

THE Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline project, once hailed as a game-changer for regional energy cooperation, remains stuck in limbo. Originally slated for completion by 2022, the project has faced repeated delays, primarily due to geopolitical tensions, security concerns in Afghanistan, and disagreements over India's participation. While Turkmenistan insists on keeping India in the deal, Pakistan has grown increasingly reluctant to allow its regional rival to benefit from the pipeline. With the TAPI dream fading, another regional connectivity project—the Pakistan-Uzbekistan rail link via Afghanistan—appears to be making progress, raising questions about whether TAPI will ever materialize.

The TAPI pipeline, designed to transport 33 billion cubic meters of natural gas annually from Turkmenistan's Galkynysh field to energy-starved South Asia, was envisioned as a win-win for all stakeholders. However, the project has been plagued by multiple roadblocks: Pakistan has long been skeptical of allowing India to become a key beneficiary of the pipeline, given the tense bilateral relations. While Turkmenistan and Afghanistan see India's participation as crucial for the project's financial viability, Pakistan fears energy dependence on a hostile neighbor. Recent statements from Pakistani officials suggest a growing push to exclude India, which could derail the entire initiative.

Even if political differences were resolved, the Taliban-controlled Afghanistan remains a major security risk. The previous Afghan government had pledged to protect the pipeline, but the current regime's ability to ensure safe transit is uncertain. Instability in the region makes financing and construction a risky proposition. The estimated cost of TAPI exceeds \$10 billion, and securing investment has been difficult due to the project's geopolitical risks. International investors remain hesitant, and without strong commitments from all parties, the pipeline may never break ground.

While TAPI flounders, another regional connectivity project—the Trans-Afghan Railway connecting Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Uzbekistan—is gaining traction. This rail link, expected to be operational much sooner than TAPI, promises to enhance trade and transit between Central and South Asia. Unlike TAPI, this project does not involve India, making it more politically palatable for Pakistan. The railway could serve as a model for regional cooperation without the complications of Indo-Pak rivalry. Turkmenistan, desperate to monetize its vast gas reserves, is unlikely to abandon India—a massive energy market—without a fight. However, if Pakistan remains adamant about excluding New Delhi, the project may need a drastic redesign. One possibility is scaling down TAPI to a Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan (TAP) pipeline, supplying gas only to Pakistan and Afghanistan. Yet, this would require alternative financing and buyers, as the original feasibility depended on India's demand. The TAPI pipeline, once a symbol of regional cooperation, now appears increasingly unviable due to geopolitical rifts and security challenges.

Zorhan Mamdani: The Painful Path to the New York Mayoralty

Qamar Bashir



This is where discipline is required. Mamdani must rise above these distractions and resist the temptation to respond to every provocation. His focus must remain on New York—the city's crumbling infrastructure, unaffordable rents, stagnant wages, and racial disparities in policing and healthcare. His promise lies not in foreign affairs, but in fixing failing subways, reducing gun violence, expanding after-school programs, and restoring dignity to the underserved.

The best rebuttal to hate is competence

ZORHAN Mamdani, the first South Asian, first Muslim, and first immigrant in serious contention for the mayorship of New York City, is no ordinary candidate. At just 38 years of age, with a radiant forehead, a disarming smile, and eyes that sparkle with conviction, he has become a symbol of possibility in a system long rigged against outsiders. Yet from the moment he clinched victory in the Democratic primary—stunning the political elite—his journey has been met with a resistance unparalleled in the annals of modern American municipal politics. Born in Kampala, Uganda, and raised in the U.S. from the age of seven, Mamdani personifies a generation molded by the American dream yet scarred by systemic exclusion. His ascent through the ranks of local politics was not accidental—it was forged in the fire of grassroots mobilization, tireless door-knocking, and fearless messaging grounded in the everyday struggles of working-class New Yorkers. He achieved the unthinkable when he defeated former Governor Andrew Cuomo in the Democratic primary—a titan of influence, wealth, and elite connections with roots that run all the way to Washington.

That upset victory sent shockwaves through both political parties. The Democratic establishment, accustomed to anointing successors, scrambled to contain the insurgency. The GOP, meanwhile, saw in Mamdani not merely a political opponent, but a threat to the status quo they've long defended. From the very next day, the attacks began—not measured critiques, but demonizations. President Donald Trump, in a now-viral clip alongside Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, dismissed Mamdani as a "lunatic communist." Netanyahu, with a chuckle, added, "He's mayor now?" The smirk wasn't just dismissive—it was chilling. The machinery of institutional power had been activated.

The backlash intensified rapidly. Jewish advocacy groups labeled him an anti-Semite for his pro-Palestinian stance and previous associations with slogans like "globalize the Intifada," despite his repeated clarifications that his critiques were of government policies, not religious communities. Right-wing media and conservative evangelicals branded him a "radical Islamic sympathizer." Threats escalated, targeting his safety, his citizenship, and his family. What began as political opposition devolved into personal vilification, an orchestrated campaign to break his spirit and discredit his legitimacy. In one televised appearance, Mamdani struggled to

hold back tears while reading aloud hateful messages sent to his loved ones. These weren't ordinary criticisms; they were dehumanizing attacks meant to remind him that, in the eyes of the power elite, his existence in public life was conditional, his dreams illegitimate. The vitriol implied a brutal truth—that a South Asian, Muslim immigrant may sweep floors or drive a cab in New York, but aspiring to lead it is a step too far. As the general election looms, the obstacles grow more daunting. His opponents are flush with millions in campaign cash, much of it from shadowy donors. Spoiler candidates have emerged overnight, designed to divide progressive votes. The city's convoluted electoral procedures create fertile ground for legal contestation, recounts, and administrative sabotage. There is even the looming threat of federal scrutiny—an extreme, but not unimaginable, tactic in today's charged political climate.

But through all this, Mamdani's base is only growing stronger. He has galvanized a diverse coalition: working mothers in the Bronx, Bangladeshi store-owners in Queens, idealistic youth in Brooklyn, and Harlem's reform elders. They see in him more than a candidate—they see a champion for those long ignored, a voice that echoes their frustrations, and a leader who walks beside them, not above them. However, with this support comes danger—the danger of being baited into battles not his to fight. Much of the controversy surrounding Mamdani's campaign has nothing to do with garbage collection, housing shortages, transit reform, or public safety—the issues that matter to New Yorkers. Instead, his critics have shifted focus to foreign policy questions irrelevant to the mayoral office: Will he visit Israel first? Does he support the Palestinian Intifada? Would he arrest Netanyahu or Modi if they visit the city? These are traps—not debates. They are lures designed to shift the narrative from potholes and public housing to geopolitics and ideological warfare, where Mamdani can be painted as divisive and dangerous.

This is where discipline is required. Mamdani must rise above these distractions and resist the temptation to respond to every provocation. His focus must remain on New York—the city's crumbling infrastructure, unaffordable rents, stagnant wages, and racial disparities in policing and healthcare. His promise lies not in foreign affairs, but in fixing failing subways, reducing gun violence, expanding after-school

programs, and restoring dignity to the underserved. The best rebuttal to hate is competence. And the best response to slander is service.

Still, even if he wins in November, the road ahead remains treacherous. Victory will be followed by a confirmation process with the city's Election Commission and a transition period where outgoing officials—some openly hostile—may seek to delay or undermine his authority. His formal assumption of office in January 2026 is not guaranteed until every bureaucratic hurdle is cleared. The system, with all its invisible levers, may yet try to disqualify him—not through ballots, but through bureaucracy.

This battle is no longer just about a mayor's office. It's about whether America truly believes in what it professes: liberty and justice for all. When an American citizen—who pays taxes, pledges allegiance, and serves his community—is treated as a suspect rather than a statesman, the nation must pause. When his ambition is questioned not on merit but on ethnicity, the illusion of inclusion stands exposed. Yet there is hope. At the street level, the cynicism of institutions meets the decency of people. Millions of New Yorkers see Mamdani not as a foreigner, but as one of their own—raised on city streets, shaped by its rhythms, and determined to heal its wounds. His campaign is not merely a political movement; it is a referendum on whether democracy still functions when tested.

If Zorhan Mamdani wins, it will be more than personal triumph. It will affirm that this nation can still defy its darker instincts. That a campaign built on subway fares, small donations, and sheer willpower can beat back dynasties, donors, and demagogues. But if he is denied his victory through media manipulation, electoral trickery, or manufactured scandal, it will be a stark indictment of the American promise—a sign that we have failed to rise above the narrowness of race, religion, and riches. Let sanity prevail. Let New York be guided not by fear, but by fairness. Let this beautiful country—with all its promise and all its pain—choose a path of justice, inclusion, and integrity. Because the world is watching. And Zorhan Mamdani's march may well be America's last great test.

— Press Secretary to the President (Rtd)

Former Press Minister, Embassy

of Pakistan to France

Former MD, SRBC

Macomb, Michigan, USA

BLA and Mukti Bahini: Two Names, One Agenda

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



Pakistan has consistently charged and presented evidence of RAW supporting the BLA, drawing parallels with RAW's involvement with the Mukti Bahini decades ago. The 2016 arrest of Kulbhushan Jadhav, an Indian naval officer, in Balochistan added weight to these claims. His confession outlined how Indian intelligence financed and supported Baloch militants to destabilize region

ALTHOUGH I was born four years after the Indo-Pak war of 1965, the stories I read and heard throughout my childhood spoke of a resolute Pakistan defeating India from all sides. That war was fought with valor and strategic brilliance. However, the battlefield was only the beginning. India, bruised yet unbroken, resorted to covert tactics after its defeat. It turned to a more insidious form of warfare—a proxy war that would, within a few years, dissociate the eastern wing of Pakistan apart and result in the creation of Bangladesh. History teaches us not to trust the intentions of an adversary whose very identity thrives on enmity.

After almost six decades, Pakistan once again found itself facing the same nefarious design, this time, on May 7, 2025, India committed aggression against Pakistan in the name of Operation Sindoor which forced India to hoist the white flag with the determined spirit of Operation Bunyan al-Marsus. This time too, defeat of India cunningly continued the proxy war, through stealth. The methods have not changed. Only the region. Where Bengali nationalism was once incited and armed, now Baloch nationalism is also being exploited with the same cunning. The agents are different in name but the same in function. The strategy of insurgency is familiar; fomenting ethnic division, creating distrust against the federation, and facilitating insurgency under the guise of independence.

This is no mere speculation. The statistics speak for themselves. According to the latest biannual data issued by the Home Department of Balochistan, terrorism has surged alarmingly. In just the first six months of this year, a staggering 501 terrorism-related incidents occurred across the province. These attacks resulted in the loss of 257 lives, including 133 security personnel, and left 492 injured—among them 238 security officials. Notably, the number of terrorist attacks rose by 45%, while the targeted killings of non-local settlers doubled, increasing by 100%.

In 14 separate attacks on settler individuals, 52 people were killed and 11 wounded solely because of their ethnicity or perceived affiliation. A total of 81 bombings, hand grenade assaults, IEDs, landmine explosions, and rocket attacks claimed 26 lives and injured 112 more. There were also 39 attacks directly targeting ordinary citizens, killing 11 and wounding 29. In one of the most horrifying inci-

dents, two separate attacks on trains during this period resulted in the deaths of 29 innocent passengers. Even humanitarian efforts were not spared—a polio worker was killed in a targeted attack. Moreover, nine assaults on mobile phone towers injured two and aimed to disrupt basic communication infrastructure.

These are not random acts of violence—they are the hallmarks of an orchestrated insurgency aimed at destabilizing Pakistan internally. The Mukti Bahini, the so-called "Liberation Army" of East Pakistan, was not merely a local movement of discontent. It was a well-orchestrated and externally funded insurgency. Trained and armed under India's Operation Jackpot, the Mukti Bahini specialized in guerrilla tactics—ambushes, sabotage, and coastal raids—that left the Pakistani military overstretched and disoriented. The role of India's Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) and Directorate of Naval Intelligence was no secret. Nor was the involvement of Israel, which clandestinely supplied arms in return for diplomatic favours. It was, in essence, an international campaign to dismember Pakistan. The political fuel came from the Awami League, whose leadership—particularly Sheikh Mujibur Rahman—had long been agitating for autonomy and, eventually, secession. Following Mujib's arrest in 1971, his loyalists formed a sub-faction, the Mujib Bahini, which played an even more direct role in the insurgency. In a startling moment of candour during his 2015 visit to Bangladesh, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi admitted India's decisive role in the events of 1971. His words—"We fought together, we sacrificed together, and we won together"—laid bare a historical truth that had long been whispered but seldom acknowledged so openly. That confession did not just echo through South Asia; it exposed a doctrine of interventionism that continues to haunt the region today. The parallels between the Mukti Bahini and the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) are too striking to ignore. The BLA, formed officially in the early 2000s but inspired by older Baloch separatist movements, mimics the same strategy of asymmetric warfare. The targets have changed—now it is Chinese nationals, infrastructure projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and Punjabi settlers—but the goal remains consistent; to fragment Pakistan by fomenting ethnic ha-

tred and sabotaging national integration. Their ideology cloaks itself in Baloch nationalism and secularism, yet it reeks of ethnic cleansing and calculated terrorism.

Pakistan has consistently charged and presented evidence of RAW supporting the BLA, drawing parallels with RAW's involvement with the Mukti Bahini decades ago. The 2016 arrest of Kulbhushan Jadhav, an Indian naval officer, in Balochistan added weight to these claims. His confession outlined how Indian intelligence financed and supported Baloch militants to destabilize the region. Reports have also surfaced about BLA operatives receiving medical treatment and logistical aid in India. Just as East Pakistan's insurgents were provided with training camps and safe havens in the past, today's separatists are reportedly granted covert sanctuaries.

What is most alarming is the violence against civilians. In the name of liberation, the BLA has repeatedly targeted non-Baloch communities, particularly Punjabis. Innocent laborers, engineers, and traders have been massacred for the sole reason of their ethnicity—an act that betrays the very idea of political resistance and exposes the ethnic hatred that lies at the core of the movement. CPEC, a project vital to Pakistan's economic future, has become a battlefield not just for geopolitical rivalries but for domestic terror, with Chinese workers being abducted and killed as a message to both Islamabad and Beijing.

It is easy to lay the blame solely on external actors, and while that blame is largely justified, we must also examine our own role in allowing such fissures to grow. Some state functionaries, through neglect or incompetence, may have allowed space for such insurgent sentiments to fester. Yet the ultimate cost has always been borne by Pakistan itself. It is our soil that bleeds, our citizens who suffer, and our unity that is threatened. In both 1971 and today, the enemy did not attack from across the border—it first entered the minds and hearts of our own people. This makes the challenge all the more profound. Pakistan cannot afford to ignore these warning signs, nor can it continue to treat them as isolated incidents. The battle is not merely for land; it is for the soul of the nation. Let history not repeat itself through our own silence or inaction. Let us remain vigilant, united, and wise to the lessons of our past. For if the price of liberty is eternal vigilance, then the cost of forgetfulness is national disintegration.

Briefs

Trilateral working group in the offing

FROM PAGE 01
bring back all the people who are going with them.” According to the interior minister, these groups will be responsible for ensuring the safe return of pilgrims travelling to Iraq. “Only individuals issued a special visa by the embassy will be permitted to travel independently,” he added. “The illegal issue that Iraq is facing, people who are overstaying there ... who have started working there, we need to stop this. I am totally against all those who are staying illegally.”

Pak pilgrims will no longer...

FROM PAGE 01
a new regulation effective January 1, 2026, under which Pakistani pilgrims will no longer be permitted to travel to Iraq individually. Instead, they must go under the supervision of registered group organisers, who will also be responsible for their return. Only those granted special visas by the Iraqi embassy will be exempt from this requirement.

Govt slams PTI's new agitation drive

FROM PAGE 01
the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur's presser a day earlier, where he termed the PTI's newly launched movement as a “do or die” initiative – set to peak by August 5 – which would determine the party's future course of action.

Among other objectives, the protest movement is aimed at securing the release of party founder Imran Khan, who will complete two years in jail on August 5. During yesterday's media talk while being flanked by Salman Akram Raja and other PTI leaders, CM Gandapur, who has previously led multiple marches towards Islamabad, said that former PM Khan was ready to negotiate but had said that talks could be held with “decision makers”. “Negotiate within 90 days and end the [prevailing] issues,” the politician remarked,” the firebrand politician said. However, Sanaullah is rather sceptical of the PTI's new anti-government drive and termed it as a mere “attempt to destabilise the country”. “If they remain peaceful, then it's fine [as] it's their democratic right [to protest]. But if they take the law into their own hands and attempt to destabilise the country – which has been their agenda from the beginning – then the law will take its due course,” he remarked today.

The senior Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) leaders' warning echoes his earlier remarks on Geo News' programme “Naya Pakistan” on Sunday, where he said that the PTI would be allowed to carry on with their protest if they remained peaceful and presented their point of view in a democratic way. “Wherever PTI seeks permission for a rally, the local administration will give it. If the local administration thinks that they will remain peaceful, then it can give permission,” he said while referring to Gandapur's remarks for holding a rally in Lahore. On the issue of talks, he said that the government wants to sit down and talk. However, he questioned the PTI's intention to hold dialogue while simultaneously engaging in a fresh protest movement. “If you want to talk, what is the need for this 90-day and August 5 [protest movement] and march towards Lahore?” he questioned. Furthermore, the politician today, when asked about possible relief for the PTI on “Geo Pakistan” today, Sanaullah said that how can the government provide any relief as the PTI – during their previous negotiations – had itself said that they would not discuss Khan's release as the ex-PM had said that he wanted to be acquitted on merit via court. “It's their [PTI's] own stance that they aren't ready to talk about [Imran] Khan's release. However, we can surely have parleys on the PTI's other demands.

Sinner-Alcaraz rivalry ‘a gift to our sport’

A packed Centre Court crowd were almost willing Alcaraz to find a way to force a deciding fifth set and keep an absorbing contest going

DNA

LONDON: The first person Jannik Sinner thanked in his speech after winning Wimbledon was Carlos Alcaraz. Speaking after the latest instalment of their captivating rivalry, Sinner said: “Carlos, thank you for the player you are. “It is so difficult to play you but we have a great relationship off the court. “Keep going, keep pushing, you are going to hold this trophy many times - you already have twice!” A packed Centre Court crowd were almost willing Alcaraz to find a way to force a deciding fifth set and keep an absorbing contest going. But world number one Sinner powered to the finish line to end Alcaraz's title defence. It was their first meeting in a Wimbledon final. It is unlikely to be their last. Sinner is the first player to beat Alcaraz in a Grand Slam final. Alcaraz was the first to beat Sinner. The pair have now won the past seven



Grand Slam titles, with Sinner taking four. They met for the first time in a major final at last month's French Open, with Alcaraz recovering from two sets and three championship points down to win an epic, before Sinner took this year's Wimbledon title. They are the first pair to contest the French Open and Wimbledon finals in the same year since Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal in 2008. There is little that separates the two in terms of the numbers. Sinner has won 20 titles to Alcaraz's 21. The Spaniard also has the edge in Grand Slams, with five to Sinner's four. Alcaraz still leads the head-to-head 8-5 - but Sinner has now snapped a five-match losing streak against the world number two. The Italian has also halted Alcaraz's winning run at 24 matches. Their trajectories have been similar. Over the past two seasons, Sinner has won 99 of his 110 matches and lifted 10 titles. Alcaraz has won 102 of his 121 matches and won nine trophies.

Australia stumble to 99-6 as Joseph leads West Indies fightback

KINGSTON: West Indies fought back on Sunday to reduce Australia to 99 for six in their second innings, a lead of 181, as the pink-ball Test at Sabina Park remained on a knife-edge at the close on day two. Australia extended their first-innings lead of 82 but were kept in check by the West Indies bowlers as the pink ball proved almost unplayable under floodlights in the final session for the second day in a row. Alzarri Joseph snared three wickets and Shamar Joseph two to keep their team in the game after their batters earlier collapsed to 143 all out in an eventful middle session. Shamar Joseph took his series haul to 20 victims with only Australia's Cameron Green preventing a complete capitulation by compiling an unbeaten 42. He will resume on the third day in the company of captain Pat Cummins, who is five not out. Shamar Joseph removed both openers – Sam Konstas for a duck and Usman Khawaja for 14 – to raise the West Indies' hopes. Then Alzarri Joseph ripped the heart out of the middle order, taking the prize wicket of Steve Smith (5) and also bagging Beau Webster (13) and Alex Carey (0). “We were looking for seven wickets tonight and got six, so we'll take

that,” said Shamar Joseph. “West Indies have always had that great legacy of fast bowling so this generation just wants to continue that tradition and do our best.” Despite his efforts, Joseph was mindful of Australia pulling themselves out of reach of the West Indies if their tail can extend the lead beyond 200. Earlier, a day after the visitors lost their last seven wickets for 68 runs to be dismissed for 225, the Caribbean side were marginally worse. The hosts lost their last seven wickets for 61 from 82.3 as Australia's array of seamers ran riot. Scott Boland, selected as a fourth seamer at the expense of veteran off-spinner Nathan Lyon, led the demolition with 3-34. Josh Hazlewood and Cummins claimed two wickets each in a performance that could have been even better had wicketkeeper Alex Carey not spilled two chances. Such was the discomfort of the home batsmen that they were incapable of making the most of those lapses. Poor shot selection contributed as did the needless runout of Justin Greaves who departed to Konstas's throw from the cover boundary after turning for a third run. – Agencies

Boos and applause for Trump at FIFA Club World Cup final

EAST RUTHERFORD: Donald Trump experienced the agony and the ecstasy of football on Sunday as he was booed at the final of the FIFA Club World Cup – even as he joined in some high-spirited celebrations with champions Chelsea. The US president was front and center as the winners took to the stage, grinning broadly in his red tie and clapping and jumping with the players as the jubilant Blues lifted the gleaming trophy, which he had presented to captain Reece James. But moments earlier, loud booing could be heard among cheers and applause as Trump walked onto the pitch for the presentation with FIFA president Gianni Infantino – before the music in the stadium was turned up. Earlier, the Republican billionaire was also applauded as he and First Lady Melania Trump arrived for the match at the MetLife stadium in New Jersey, just outside New York City. But when a jumbotron screen briefly showed Trump saluting to the US national anthem, yet more boos could be heard in the giant stadium, before the camera quickly cut away. The scorn did little to dampen the president's spirits as he handed out trophies to the star players including the Golden Ball for best player to Cole Palmer, followed by handshakes and medals to the defeated Paris Saint-Germain. He later called the crowd “tremendous.” “We had a great time,” he told reporters as he landed at Joint Base Andrews outside the US capital Washington after the match. The Republican's appearance at the game also came on the first anniversary of the assassination attempt that he survived at an election rally in Pennsylvania. Trump has made no secret of his desire to use this year's club championship and next year's 2026 World Cup as symbols of the “Golden Age of America” during his second term in the White House. Next year's World Cup, the final of which will be held at the same stadium, will coincide with the 250th anniversary of America's independence. – Agencies

BCB reveals ticket prices for T20I series against Pakistan

SPORTS DESK

DHAKA: The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has released the ticket prices for the upcoming three-match T20I series against Pakistan, scheduled to start on July 20 at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur. Ticket prices vary from Tk300 to Tk3,500, offering options for fans across different budgets. This time, the BCB has prioritised a digital-first approach for ticket distribution. Starting July 15, tickets will be available exclusively online through the official eTicket platform. Fans can select their preferred match date, gallery, block, and number of tickets before completing payment via card or digital wallet. Each registered account will be allowed to purchase a maximum of four tickets per match.

'Needle between England and India sets up Lord's classic'

LONDON: Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier, Sir Alex Ferguson's Manchester United and Arsene Wenger's Arsenal, Max Verstappen and Lewis Hamilton. The tension between England and India has not quite tipped over into bad blood - yet - but there is no doubt the needle between the two teams has sparked a Lord's classic. Handbags on the third evening fuelled a pulsating fourth day. Much of the third Test had meandered and drifted, only for a super Sunday to set up a potentially manic Monday. England need six wickets, India require 135 runs. The prize is a 2-1 lead with two Tests to play. This venue - part cricket ground, part museum - can be as raucous as any. Ask Australia wicketkeeper Alex Carey. – Agencies

Haseebullah Khan breaks silence on ‘moving to England’

Cricketer clarifies that he is in England only to fulfil cricket commitments

DNA

ISLAMABAD: DWicketkeeper-batter Haseebullah Khan has denied switching cricket allegiances from Pakistan to England, claiming via Instagram post that he plans on representing national side on an international stage for the foreseeable future. The response followed social media speculation that the cricketer had moved to England to pursue a future in English cricket. The social media post claimed Haseebullah had met with England Cricket Board (ECB) agents to discuss his future in cricket. Haseebullah Khan breaks silence on moving to England “I would like to inform you all that I have arrived in England in connection with my domestic county contract and sponsorship obligations,” he wrote on an Instagram story. Haseebullah said he had no intention of switching national teams. “I remain fully committed to representing my country, Pakistan, with utmost dedication and passion.” It is worth noting that the 22-year-old has represented Pakistan in three T20 Internationals, scoring 36 runs at an average of 12. The wicketkeeper-batter was part of the Quetta Gladiators in the 10th edition of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) but featured in only one match, in which he scored seven runs. In his overall T20 career, Haseebullah has played 35 matches, scoring 599 runs, including three half-centuries, at an average of 19.96 and a strike rate of 118.37.

Maresca hails ‘great triumph’ in winning Club World Cup

EAST RUTHERFORD: Chelsea coach Enzo Maresca insisted winning the Club World Cup meant as much as winning the Champions League after his side beat Paris Saint-Germain 3-0 in the final of the first edition of FIFA's new competition on Sunday. “I have the feeling that this competition is going to be as important, if not more important than, the Champions League,” said Maresca after adding the trophy to the UEFA Conference League title his team won in May.

Maresca only took over at Chelsea a year ago but was previously on the coaching staff under Pep Guardiola at Manchester City when they won the Champions League in 2023. “I was lucky to be on the coaching staff of a team that won the Champions League a few years ago, but this competition features the best teams in the world and I think we can value it on the same level,” said the Italian. “It is a great triumph for us and it will allow the Chelsea fans to have that on our shirt for the next four years, so it is a source of pride.” Maresca said he instructed his players to go out and take the game to PSG from the off – they went on to net all three goals in the first half with Cole Palmer netting a brace before Joao Pedro added his name to the scoresheet. “The message was to let them understand that we were here to win the game and I think in the first 10 minutes we showed



them that,” Maresca said. “That set the tone of the game, and then the quality of the players was also important.” England international Palmer was named player of the match after bagging a brace and setting up Joao Pedro's goal. The 23-year-old therefore lived up to his superstar billing – his face has appeared on billboards around New York advertising the tournament, alongside the likes of Real Madrid duo Kylian Mbappe and Vinicius Junior. “To score the goals was a great feeling, as was the way the team showed fire out there – the gaffer's game plan was spot on,” he said. “I just try to do my job every time I go onto the pitch and hopefully I will continue. “I have seen the billboards in Times Square and outside Madison Square Garden and it is obviously a nice feeling to be alongside those players,” he added. – Agencies

ECP reserves verdict on distribution of reserved

FROM PAGE 01

from all parties. During the hearing, lawyers from Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) and other parties appeared before the election body. On July 8, the PHC nullified the ECP's notification on the distribution of reserved seats for women and minorities in the KP Assembly. The court's two-page judgment came on a petition filed by the PMLN challenging the allocation. The court had directed the ECP to reallocate the seats after hearing all relevant parties within 10 days. The court also halted the oath-taking of lawmakers on these reserved seats until the ECP's final decision. Speaking to the media outside the ECP office in Islamabad, JUI-F leader and lawyer Kamran Murtaza said that all political parties presented their arguments before the commission during today's hearing. He said that PML-N demanded to get a greater share of reserved seats, particularly following the inclusion of independent candidate Tariq Awan into their ranks. “If independent candidates join a party after the legally defined period, the number of reserved seats allocated to that party would not increase,” said Murtaza while explaining the seat distribution formula.

Federal Constabulary not a police force: govt

FROM PAGE 01

Federal Constabulary. FC will remain FC,” Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry said at a presser alongside FC Commandant Riaz Nazir Gara on Monday. The minister's presser comes after President Asif Ali Zardari promulgated the Frontier Constabulary (Re-organisation) Ordinance, 2025 under Article 89 of the Constitution – officially transforming the Frontier Constabulary into “Federal Constabulary”. Before the reorganisation, the FC would be governed by the federal government under the Frontier Constabulary Act, 1915. Headquartered in Peshawar, the force was led by a senior police officer of BS-21 rank and could be deployed anywhere in Pakistan to for improved security and administration. Expanding on the presidential ordinance, Talal said that the move reflects the federal government's decision to restructure the FC. He clarified that the force would continue to work under the Centre and would operate like any other law enforcement agency in the country. “People will be recruited from all over Pakistan for FC. New wings will be created in FC according to the requirements of modern times.

Interest rate cut possible: finance...

FROM PAGE 01

the economy is now on a path to stability due to the removal of structural barriers. “The government's steps have begun yielding results, and economic indicators are improving,” he said. He highlighted that both local and foreign investors are now being engaged in efforts to boost economic growth. “Multinational companies repatriated \$2.3 billion in profit in the fiscal year ending June 30, a sign that issues like blocked profit repatriation and letters of credit have been resolved,” the finance minister noted. He stressed that banks must play a role in reviving ailing industrial units and should be active participants in the privatisation process. “We have asked commercial banks and the SBP how they plan to contribute to economic stability. Their role is vital,” Aurangzeb added, following a meeting with the central bank governor and heads of commercial banks. Aurangzeb clarified that the Federal Board of Revenue's (FBR) new enforcement powers are linked to sales tax, not income tax. He also announced the simplification of the tax return filing process for salaried individuals and small businesses. “An easy tax form is now available on the FBR website. It will also be offered to small traders and SMEs,” he said.



ISLAMABAD: Participants take part during 2nd Twin Cities Inter-School Boys Age-Group Swimming Championship 2025, at Sports Complex, in the Federal Capital. – DNA

Briefs

Gold price ups
by Rs1,600 per
tola

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat per tola gold increased by Rs.1,600 and was traded at Rs.359,700 on Monday as compared to its sale at Rs.358,100 on the last trading day, All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewelers Association reported. The prices of 10 grams of 24 karat also increased by Rs1,371 to Rs.308,384 from Rs. 307,013 and for 10 grams of 22 Karat it went up by Rs.1,257 to Rs.282,695 from Rs. 281,438. The rates of per tola and ten gram silver increased by Rs65 and Rs 55 to Rs.4,087 and Rs.3,503 respectively. The price of gold in the international market increased by \$16 to \$3,372 from \$3,356 whereas that of silver increased by \$0.65 to \$39.03 from \$38.38, the Association reported.—APP

Rupee sheds
26 paisa
against US
Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Monday depreciated by 26 paisa against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 284.71 against the previous day's closing of Rs 284.45.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs287.25 and Rs287.65, respectively. The price of the Euro increased by 35 paisa to close at Rs 332.74 against the last day's closing of Rs 332.39, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen remained unchanged and closed Rs 1.93, whereas a decrease of 96 paisa was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 384.01 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 384.97. The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 07 paisa each to close at Rs 77.51 and Rs 75.91 respectively.—APP

Wizz Air
to exit
Abu Dhabi
operations

LONDON: Low-cost carrier Wizz Air said on Monday it was quitting its Abu Dhabi operation after six years to focus on its main European market, citing geopolitical instability and limited market access. Wizz, which originally focused on central and eastern Europe but expanded into Britain, Italy and Austria, said in future it would concentrate on its much more profitable European business. Wizz said the geopolitical instability had led to repeated airspace closures around Abu Dhabi, hitting demand, while the impact of the hot environment in the Middle East had hurt engine efficiency, making it hard to operate its low-cost model. Failure to secure the flying rights for certain routes had also meant it was unable to grow in the region as it had hoped, the airline said. "They just couldn't make money out of the Middle East," Davy analyst Stephen Furlong said. Wizz said it will stop local flights from Sept. 1, 2025 and would be contacting customers regarding refunds.—APP

Police detain
8 people after
anti-migrant
clashes in
Spanish town

MADRID: Eight people have been detained by police in Spain in relation to violent clashes that erupted between far-right groups, local residents and migrants in a southeastern town over the weekend, officials said on Monday. Clashes in Torre-Pacheco in the Murcia region took place on Saturday night after an elderly resident was beaten up earlier in the week by unknown assailants, which led to a call by far-right groups to seek retribution on the area's large migrant community. The motivation for the initial attack was not clear. Among those detained were two people allegedly linked to the attack on the elderly man and several others in relation to the weekend clashes, Mariola Guevara, the central government's representative in Murcia, said Monday on X.—APP

Japan-funded project helps
restore flood-affected areas

FAO's response involved the distribution of seeds, fertilizers, and training to help families restart food production

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has concluded a critical emergency project that provided support to flood-affected farming and herding communities in Pakistan's Balochistan and Sindh provinces, made possible through generous funding from the Government of Japan. The FAO-led intervention, backed by a contribution of USD 6.48 million, focused on restoring food production, improving household nutrition, and building longer-term resilience in areas devastated by the unprecedented 2022 floods. Over 74,000 households—equivalent to more than 520,000 people—benefited from the initiative, which combined agricultural support with livestock protection and targeted assistance for female-headed families.

A project completion event was held at FAO premises in Islamabad on July 14 to highlight the key results and express appreciation for Japan's contribution. The event brought together Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, H.E. Mr. Akamatsu Shuichi, FAO Representative in Pakistan, Florence Rolle, and senior representatives from national and



provincial partners.

"The Government of Japan has always prioritized human security in its development cooperation," said Ambassador Akamatsu, adding, "This project reflects our commitment to helping the people of

Pakistan recover from the devastating floods and rebuild their lives through practical and sustainable agricultural support."

FAO's response involved the distribution of seeds, fertilizers, and training to help families restart

food production. Over 14,000 households received inputs for vegetable and field crop cultivation, while 1,500 hectares of agricultural land were rehabilitated. As a result, farming families were able to grow a wide range of crops, including

wheat, rice, maize, okra, brinjal, and tomatoes—improving food availability and income opportunities.

Support to livestock-owning families included the distribution of animal feed, mineral blocks, poultry, and small ruminants, along with the construction of animal shelters and a mass vaccination campaign that reached more than 629,000 animals, benefiting 35,000 households. Special focus was given to female-headed households, who received livestock and poultry packages along with training in animal care and poultry production to help diversify and stabilize their incomes. "This project made a real difference in the lives of rural communities that lost nearly everything to the floods," said Florence Rolle, FAO Representative in Pakistan. "With Japan's timely support, families not only regained their ability to produce food but also strengthened their resilience against future shocks." Implemented in close coordination with the Ministry of National Food Security and Research, disaster management authorities, and non-governmental partners, the project also helped enhance local knowledge of climate-smart practices, food security planning, and livestock management—laying the foundation for more resilient rural systems in the future.

CCP imposes Rs 1b in penalties
on cartels, deceptive advertisers

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) is imposing Rs1.007 billion penalties on businesses involved in anti-competitive practices across key sectors. The CCP issued 12 major orders during FY 2024-25, imposing penalties worth Rs1.007 billion on businesses involved in anti-competitive practices across key sectors, including fertilizers, poultry, automobiles, pharmaceuticals, real estate, food, hygiene products, paints, and education. The Commission has strengthened its enforcement arm and streamlined hearings by curbing unnecessary delays. This fast-track approach is helping CCP resolve cases swiftly and enforce the law more effectively. Out of the 12 orders issued, eight were related to deceptive marketing. Three orders involved cartelization and price fixing. One order was issued on the direction of the Lahore High Court to address the issue of CCP's jurisdiction in a case involving the deceptive and fraudulent use of a trademark under Section 10(2) of the Competition Act. In a landmark case, CCP fined six urea manufacturers and their trade group—Fertilizer Manufacturers of Pakistan Advisory Council (FMPAC)—a total of Rs375 million for price-fixing. Each company was fined Rs50 million; the association was fined Rs75 million. Another major penalty of Rs155 million was slapped on eight poultry hatcheries for fixing prices of day-old broiler chicks. In deceptive marketing cases, Kingdom Valley was fined Rs150 million for false claims about its housing project. Unilever and Friesland Campina Engro were fined Rs75 million each for marketing frozen desserts as ice cream. Unilever also faced an additional Rs60 million penalty for deceptive ads for Lifebuoy products. Al-Ghazi Tractors was fined Rs40 million for false fuel efficiency claims. Hyundai Nishat Motors received a Rs25 million fine for misleading ads about the Hyundai Tucson SUV. 3N Lifemed Pharmaceuticals was fined Rs20 million for using fake certification for dialysis machines. The fine was later reduced to Rs2 million by the Competition Appellate Tribunal (CAT). British Lyceum and Diamond Paints were fined Rs5 million each for publishing misleading advertisements. "Cartelization is a serious offence and will not be tolerated," warned CCP Chairman Dr. Kabir Sidhu. "Cartels harm economic growth, violate consumer rights, and deter new investment," he said. He further emphasized that association platforms must not be used for price collusion or to facilitate market abuse, which lea.—DNA

German doctor
goes on trial for
15 murders

BERLIN: A German doctor went on trial Monday accused of killing 15 patients with lethal injections and acting as "master of life and death" over those in his care. The 40-year-old palliative care specialist, named by German media as Johannes M., is alleged to have killed 12 women and three men between September 2021 and July 2024 while working in Berlin. The doctor is accused of injecting the victims, aged between 25 and 94, with deadly cocktails of sedatives and in some cases setting fire to their homes in a bid to cover up his crimes. The accused had "visited his patients under the pretext of providing medical care," prosecutor Philipp Meyhoefer said at the opening of the trial at the state court in Berlin. Johannes M. had organized "home visits, already with the intention of killing" and exploited his patients' trust in him as a doctor, Meyhoefer said. "He acted with disregard for life... and behaved as the master of life and death." A co-worker first raised the alarm over Johannes M. last July after becoming suspicious that so many of his patients had died in fires, according to Die Zeit newspaper. He was arrested in August, with prosecutors initially linking him to four deaths. But subsequent investigations uncovered a host of other suspicious cases, and in April prosecutors charged Johannes M. with 15 counts of murder. A further 96 cases were still being investigated, a prosecution spokesman said, including the death of Johannes M.'s mother-in-law. She had been suffering from cancer and mysteriously died the same weekend that Johannes M. and his wife went to visit her in Poland in early 2024, according to media reports. The suspect reportedly trained as a radiologist and a general practitioner before going on to specialize in palliative care.—DNA

Anger turns toward Washington in
West Bank town mourning two men
killed by settlers

AL-MAZRA' A ASH-SHARQIYA, West Bank: Frustration among Palestinians grew toward the United States on the other day as mourners packed the roads to a cemetery in the Israeli-occupied West Bank town of Al-Mazra' a Ash-Sharqiya for the burial of two men, one of them a Palestinian American, killed by settlers. Palestinian health authorities and witnesses said Sayfollah Musallet, 21, was beaten to death, and Hussein Al-Shalabi, 23, was shot in the chest by settlers during a confrontation on Friday night. Most of the small town's roughly 3,000 residents share family ties to the United States and many hold citizenship, including Musallet, who was killed weeks after flying to visit his mother in Al-Mazra' a Ash-Sharqiya, where he traveled most summers from Tampa, Florida. "There's no accountability," said his father Kamel Musallet, who flew from the United States to bury his son. "We demand the United States government do something about it ... I don't want his death to go in vain." Israeli killings of US citizens in the West Bank in recent years include those of Palestinian American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, Palestinian American teenager Omar Mohammad Rabea and Turkish American activist Aysenur Ezgi Eygi. A US State Department spokesperson said on Friday it was aware of the latest death, but that the department had no further comment "out of respect for the privacy of the family and loved ones" of the victim. Many family and community members said they expected more, including that the United States would spearhead an investigation into who was responsible. A US State Department spokesperson on Sunday referred questions on an investigation to the Israeli government and said it "has no higher priority than the safety and security of US citizens overseas." The Israeli military had earlier said Israel was probing the incident. It said confrontations between Palestinians and settlers broke out after Palestinians threw rocks at Israelis, lightly injuring them. Musallet's family said medics tried to reach him for three hours before his brother managed to carry him to an ambulance, but he died before reaching the hospital. Local resident Domi, 18, who has lived in Al-Mazra' a Ash-Sharqiya for the last four years after moving back from the United States, said fears had spread in the community since Friday and his parents had discussed sending him to the United States. "If people have sons like this they are going to want to send them back to America because it's just not safe for them," he said. He had mixed feelings about returning, saying he wanted to stay near his family's land, which they had farmed for generations, and that Washington should do more to protect Palestinians in the West Bank. "It's a kind of betrayal," he said. Settler violence in the West Bank has risen since the start of Israel's war against Palestinian militant group Hamas in Gaza in late 2023, according to rights groups. Dozens of Israelis have also been killed in Palestinian street attacks in recent years and the Israeli military has intensified raids across the West Bank. Around 700,000 Israeli settlers live among 2.7 million Palestinians in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, territories Israel captured from Jordan in the 1967 war. US President Donald Trump in January rescinded sanctions imposed by the former Biden administration on Israeli settler groups and individuals accused of being involved in violence against Palestinians in the West Bank. Malik, 18, who used to visit Musallet's ice-cream shop in Tampa and had returned to the West Bank for a few months' vacation, said his friend's death had made him question his sense of belonging.—APP

UK, Pakistan agree new
Business Advisory Council

Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal said, "The UK remains one of Pakistan's most important economic partners. This Dialogue lays the foundation for a more structured and forward-looking trade relationship

LONDON: Ministers from the UK and Pakistan have announced new measures to boost trade between the two countries, following the launch of the UK-Pakistan Trade Dialogue. As part of the Dialogue, ministers announced the creation of a new UK-Pakistan Business Advisory Council bringing together senior business leaders and government officials to facilitate high value trade and investment. The Council will provide strategic advice on policy reform, offer a confidential forum for engagement, and help promote commercial opportunities by addressing market access challenges and sharing best practices. Today's meeting was

co-chaired by the UK Minister for Trade Policy and Economic Security, Douglas Alexander, and Pakistan's Federal Minister of Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan. Both Ministers agreed to annual ministerial meetings to unlock growth opportunities, and support businesses and investors in the UK and Pakistan. UK Minister for Trade Policy and Economic Security Douglas Alexander said, "Today's Dialogue marks the next step in our long-standing relationship with Pakistan, taking our trading partnership to the next level and unlocking new opportunities for businesses in both our countries." "By deepening cooperation in key sectors like healthcare and dig-

ital technology – areas central to the UK's Industrial Strategy – we can drive growth, foster innovation, and create jobs." Pakistan's Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal said, "The UK remains one of Pakistan's most important economic partners. This Dialogue lays the foundation for a more structured and forward-looking trade relationship. By strengthening collaboration and aligning our priorities, we can expand bilateral trade, attract greater investment, and create sustainable economic opportunities that benefit both nations." The UK has also announced up to £200,000 to support Pakistan's aspirations to attract investment

from the UK. The funds will provide technical assistance for investor outreach, and support matchmaking between Pakistani investors and UK-based opportunities. This initiative reflects the UK's commitment to supporting Pakistan's ambitions to increase outbound investment and to strengthening the bilateral investment relationship. The Dialogue highlighted shared ambition to build on recent momentum, with bilateral trade increasing by 7.3% during the final quarter of last year. Bilateral trade is currently valued at £4.7 billion. Today's discussion focussed on key sectors including information technology and healthcare, two priority

areas under the UK's Industrial Strategy. The UK's Industrial Strategy presents a significant opportunity for businesses and investors. The UK is committed to making it easier, faster, and more predictable for international firms to operate in its market. This includes reforms in skills development, innovation, regulation, and planning – creating a more dynamic and open business environment. Through the alignment of the UK's Industrial Strategy and the UK – Pakistan Trade Dialogue, we are reaffirming our commitment to open and fair trade, and to deepening economic ties with key partners like Pakistan. —APP

Israel's
Netanyahu
aide faces
indictment
over Gaza
leak

JERUSALEM: An aide to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu faces indictment on security charges pending a hearing, Israel's attorney general said on Sunday, for allegedly leaking top secret military information during Israel's war in Gaza. Netanyahu's close adviser, Jonatan Urich, has denied any wrongdoing in the case which legal authorities began investigating in late 2024. The prime minister has described probes against Urich and other aides as a witch-hunt.

Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara said in a statement that Urich and another aide had extracted secret information from the Israeli military and leaked it to German newspaper Bild. Their intent, she said, was to shape public opinion of Netanyahu and influence the discourse about the slaying of six Israeli hostages by their Palestinian captors in Gaza in late August 2024. The hostages' deaths had sparked mass protests in Israel and outraged hostage families, who accused Netanyahu of torpedoing ceasefire talks that had faltered in the preceding weeks for political reasons.

Netanyahu vehemently denies this. He has repeatedly said that Hamas was to blame for the talks collapsing, while the militant group has said it was Israel's fault no deal had been reached. —APP

Turkiye's
Kurdish
region finds
it difficult to
accept peace
is at hand

HAKKARI, Turkiye: South-east Turkiye, where the army has battled Kurdish militants for decades, is not yet convinced that lasting peace is at hand. In a slickly managed ceremony recently held across the border in Iraq, members of the Kurdish rebel group PKK destroyed their weapons as part of a peace process underway with the Turkish state. But on the streets and in the tea houses of Hakkari, a Kurdish-majority town some 50 kilometers from the Iraqi border, few people express much hope that the deadly conflict is over. One tea drinker who was willing to speak asked not to be filmed. "We don't talk about it," he said. The conflict has caused 50,000 deaths among civilians and 2,000 among soldiers, according to Turkiye's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Mehmet Duman, a local, said: "The state must take a step" to match the symbolic operation to destroy PKK weapons in Iraq. "Turkiye has won," Erdogan said Saturday, a day after the PKK's symbolic destruction of weapons signaling the start of the disarmament process. —APP

Bangladesh's
child marriage
rate soars to
highest in S
Asia

DHAKA: The child marriage rate continues to rise since the COVID-19 pandemic, experts warn, as the latest UN data shows that more than half of Bangladeshi girls are married before reaching adulthood – the highest percentage in the whole of South Asia. Bangladesh has long had one of the world's highest rates of child marriage and, unlike other countries in the region, for the past few years has seen the situation worsening. According to the annual report of the UN Population Fund released last month, 51 percent of Bangladeshi girls are found to have been married before turning 18, the legal age for marriage. The rate was significantly lower at 29 percent in nearby Afghanistan, 23 percent in India, and 18 percent in Pakistan. "Among South Asian countries, we are in a poor position when it comes to child marriage rates, even though we perform better on some other gender-related indicators set by the UN," Rasheda K. Chowdhury, social activist and executive director of the Campaign for Popular Education, told Arab News. "Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the child marriage rate in the country was around 33 percent.—APP

Briefs

Pilot groups
reject human
error in Air
India crash

"Disservice to dignity of profession," says ICPA while censuring reckless insinuation of pilot suicide

NEWS DESK

NEW DELHI: Two major commercial pilots' associations have rejected claims human error caused an Air India crash that killed 260 people after a preliminary investigation report found the plane's engine fuel switches had been turned off.

The report, issued Saturday by India's Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB), did not offer any conclusions or apportion blame for the June 12 disaster, but indicated that one pilot asked the other why he cut off fuel, and the second pilot responded that he had no

No more detail about the cockpit dialogue between the pilots was revealed.

The Indian Commercial Pilots Association (ICPA) said it was "deeply disturbed by speculative narratives [...] particularly the reckless and unfounded insinuation of pilot suicide".

"There is absolutely no basis for such a claim at this stage," it said in a statement Sunday, adding, "it is deeply insensitive to the individuals and families involved". "To casually suggest pilot suicide without verified evidence is a gross violation of ethical reporting and a disservice to the dignity of the profession," it said.

Magnitude
6.7 quake
hits offshore
eastern
Indonesia

JAKARTA: A magnitude 6.7 earthquake struck Monday off eastern Indonesia, the US Geological Survey said, but a monitor said there was no tsunami threat.

The quake struck at 12:49 pm Western Indonesia time (0549 GMT) and its epicentre was at a depth of 66 kilometres (40 miles) around 177 kilometres west of the city of Tual in the eastern Maluku province, USGS said. The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center said there was no tsunami threat, and Indonesia's geophysics agency said in a social media post the quake "did not have the potential to cause a tsunami". There were no immediate reports of damage or casualties.

The vast archipelago nation experiences frequent earthquakes due to its position on the Pacific "Ring of Fire", an arc of intense seismic activity where tectonic plates collide that stretches from Japan through Southeast Asia and across the Pacific basin. A magnitude-6.2 quake that shook Sulawesi in January 2021 killed more than 100 people and left thousands homeless. In 2018, a magnitude-7.5 quake and subsequent tsunami in Palu on Sulawesi killed more than 2,200 people. — Agencies

Syria deploys
forces after
dozens killed

DAMASCUS: Syria deployed security forces Monday in the southern province of Sweida after at least 50 people were killed in clashes between Bedouin tribes and Druze fighters, a monitor said. The outbreak of sectarian violence underscores the challenges facing the administration of interim leader Ahmad al-Sharaa, whose Islamist forces overthrew president Bashar al-Assad in December, in a country reeling from 14 years of war. The latest fighting, which began Sunday, continued sporadically into Monday in several villages, said the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights war monitor and the Suwayda 24 news outlet.

The clashes reportedly erupted when a Druze vegetable vendor was seized by armed Bedouins on the main highway linking Sweida to Damascus. The incident triggered a series of retaliatory abductions by both sides. Suwayda 24 said those abducted were released Sunday night. — Agencies

PM expresses satisfaction
over PSX performance

The Prime Minister said providing a business-friendly environment in the country is our top priority. He said Pakistan is now on the path to economic growth after achieving economic stability

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has expressed satisfaction over Pakistan Stock Exchange crossing record 135,000 points. In a statement, he said the historic surge of stock market is a reflection of the business community's confidence in the Pakistani economy.

He said recent positive economic indicators are a testament to the correct direction of the government's policies.

The Prime Minister said providing a business-friendly environment in the country is our top priority. He said Pakistan is now on the path to economic growth after achieving economic stability. He said the government is working tirelessly for the development and the welfare of the people.

The equity market rallied on Monday as

investors responded to bullish macro signals, record inflows, and the onset of earnings season. The Pakistan Stock Exchange's (PSX) benchmark KSE-100 Index climbed to an intraday high of 136,140.87, gaining 1,841.11 points, or 1.37%, while touching a low of 134,937.43, reflecting an increase of 637.67 points, or 0.47%.

"Stocks trading at new all-time high amid speculations in the earnings season ahead of major earnings announcement this week. Thin inflation, surging exports, SOEs privatisation and surging global crude oil prices played catalyst role in bullish activity at PSX," said Arif Habib Commodities Managing Director and CEO Ahsan Mehanti.

Independent investment and economic analyst AAH Soomro added: "The rally continues on strong IMF endorsement and improvements in FX reserves. New investors pouring in after increased tax on fixed

income returns in the budget."

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed satisfaction over the KSE-100 Index crossing the 135,000-point milestone, terming it a reflection of growing confidence among investors and the business community. He said the recent rally and improving economic indicators demonstrate that the government's policies are moving in the right direction. The premier reiterated that ensuring a business-friendly environment remains a top priority, adding that the country has entered a phase of economic growth after stabilisation and the government is committed to national development and public welfare. Analysts anticipate continued positive sentiment this week, backed by record-breaking remittances, elevated foreign exchange reserves, and improved macroeconomic indicators.

Investor focus will likely remain on corporate earnings, the planned Panda bond issuance, and further developments on foreign funding and debt management.

Reinforcing investor confidence, International Monetary Fund (IMF) Resident Representative for Pakistan Mahir Binici said a day earlier that the country's performance under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) has been "strong so far". She added that early policy measures had helped restore macroeconomic stability and rebuild investor trust despite persistent external challenges. Pakistan received its highest-ever annual workers' remittances, totalling \$38.3 billion for FY25, up 27% year-on-year (YoY). June alone saw inflows of \$3.4 billion, an 8.0% increase compared to the same month last year. This inflow significantly strengthened the country's external position, lifting investor confidence.



ISLAMABAD: Mr. Shehryar Akbar Khan Ambassador of Pakistan (Desig) to Czech Republic called on Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf at Naval Headquarters. — DNA

Nawaz close aide slams govt
decision to import sugar

Fawad Hassan Fawad calls for probe into industry profiteering

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Former federal minister Fawad Hassan Fawad, has sharply criticised the government's decision to import 350,000 metric tonnes of sugar, questioning both its justification and the beneficiaries of the move.

In a series of posts on X (formerly Twitter), Fawad, who also served as principal secretary to the former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, said the decision to spend nearly \$300 million on sugar imports "in the name of controlling price for the common man" demands immediate review. He argued that the primary consumer of sugar is not the average citizen, but the food and beverage industry — the same group that had earlier profited from sugar exports and now stands to benefit again.

"You shouldn't be surprised," he wrote. "They were the very people who first got the export orders in the name of earning foreign exchange, and are now spend-

ing the same for themselves while making huge profits through price manipulation." His remarks come in the wake of the government's emergency sugar import plan announced last week, which waived all duties and taxes on the import of 350,000 tonnes in two phases.

The Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP) has been directed to execute the import, following a decision made by the Sugar Advisory Board on June 23 and approved by the federal cabinet on July 4. The Federal Board of Revenue has also slashed sales tax from 18% to 0.25% and waived the 3% VAT on up to 500,000 tonnes of white sugar imports till September 30, 2025. Fawad, who served as the federal minister during the interim setup in 2023, questioned why the government has chosen import over accountability. "Price control is a core government function, and failure to deliver on that front cannot justify further spending of precious foreign exchange. What's needed is a probe into the role of the sugar industry, traders, and middlemen behind the hike."

Solar policy shift

Govt eyes slashing
buyback rate to
one-third of tariff

Buyback rate will follow gross metering mechanism with no provision for net-metering

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: After imposing new taxes on solar panels, the authorities have worked out a new buyback rate for electricity generated by solar users, slashing it to one-third of the base tariff. Also, under the revised policy, the buyback rate will follow a gross metering mechanism with no provi-

sion for net-metering. "Whatsoever the base tariff is to be in future years, the buyback tariff will be one-third of that, and for FY26, the base tariff has been worked out by the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) at Rs34 per unit and its one third price stands at Rs11.33 per unit," a senior officials of the Power Division told the publication.

"This is how the electricity consumers who are to install the roof solar panels under new policy based on gross metering will now be able to sell their electricity to the system at Rs11.33 per unit," he added. However, this has been decided by the authorities involved in making the new policy after getting inputs from stakeholders on the direction of the prime minister. This may be further fine-tuned when the Power Division soon briefs the prime minister in the federal cabinet meeting on the salient features of the new policy. "The buyback tariff may increase to Rs13-14 per unit after the summary is put before the cabinet headed by the prime minister". Federal Minister Power Division, Sardar Awais Khan Leghari, at a presser on July 10, had said the new summary will have better terms for the reconsideration of the cabinet as consultative process has been completed as per the directions of the cabinet.

US will send Ukraine air
defence systems: Trump

"We will send them Patriots, which they desperately need," says US president

DNA

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump on Sunday said Washington would send Patriot air defence systems to Kyiv and hinted at new sanctions on Russia, once again voicing displeasure with Russian leader Vladimir Putin over Moscow's war in Ukraine. The US president's announcement of the much-needed weapons for Ukraine came after he earlier said he would make a "major statement... on Russia" on Monday. The announcement could come amid a diplomatic flurry set for Monday, with the US special envoy starting his latest trip to Ukraine and Trump set to meet with NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte in Washington. Moscow's offensive on Ukraine has lasted for more than three years, with attacks intensifying this summer and US-led negotiations so far yielding no results to end the fighting. "We will send them Patriots, which they desperately need," Trump said Sunday, without specifying how many

weapons he would send to Ukraine.

"I haven't agreed on the number yet, but they're going to have some because they do need protection," he told reporters at Joint Base Andrews, as he returned from watching the FIFA Club World Cup final in New Jersey.

The White House has U-turned from an announcement earlier this month that it would pause some arms deliveries to Kyiv, instead announcing a new deal which would involve NATO paying the United States for some of the weapons it sends to Ukraine. "We basically are going to send them various pieces of very sophisticated military and they're going to pay us 100% for them," Trump said. "It'll be business for us," he added.

Rutte's 10:00am (1400 GMT) Oval Office meeting will be closed to media, and he is slated to meet with Secretary of State Marco Rubio as well. Earlier this week, President Volodymyr Zelensky said Ukraine was "close to reaching a multi-level agreement on new Patriot systems and missiles for them." Trump also repeated that he was "disappointed" in Putin, as he grows increasingly exasperated with the Russian leader. "Putin really surprised a lot of people. He talks nice and then he bombs everybody in the evening," said the disgruntled Trump on Sunday. Last week, Trump accused Putin throwing "bullshit" at Washington on Ukraine — openly frustrated with the seeming impasse.

Why did actor
Humaira Asghar's
death go unnoticed?

Police to investigate apartment's management committee, watchman and neighbours

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The mystery surrounding the unnoticed death of actor-cum-model Humaira Asghar for several months has raised serious questions as police are examining all possible angles, including natural causes, accident, suicide, or foul play. The 32-year-old actor was found dead on July 8 in a flat in Defence Phase VI's Ittehad Commercial area, where she had been living alone for seven years.

Her body was discovered when a court-appointed bailiff arrived to enforce an eviction order over unpaid rent, following a case filed by the flat's owner. The post-mortem report prepared by Police Surgeon Summaiya Syed revealed that the body of the Pakistani actor was in an advanced stage of decomposition, with initial findings suggesting she had died eight to 10 months ago.

Speaking on Geo News' programme "Geo today," Karachi Inspector General Asad Raza said that a decomposing body between five to 40 days and during this time Humaira's neighbours were also not present in their flat. "The apartment next to the actors was vacant for quite some time," said DIG Raza. "[...] also, the bathroom window in the adjacent room of [Humaira's] flat was left open, which may have allowed the odour to escape outside," he added.

DIG Raza further said that Humaira frequently travelled between Karachi and Lahore, which may have led neighbours and the building management to assume she was away.

"It's possible people thought she had gone to Lahore again," DIG added. He also said the building's watchman did try calling Humaira Asghar three days after her suspected death, but received no response.

111 monsoon-
related
deaths in
Pakistan

PMD predicts another spell of heavy rains in central, upper parts of country from July 15 to 17

DNA

LAHORE: Monsoon rains in Pakistan have been linked to more than 110 deaths including dozens of children since they arrived in late June, according to government figures released Monday. Data from the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) between June 26 and July 14 showed that electrocution was the leading cause of fatalities, followed by flash floods. In late June, at least 13 tourists were swept to their deaths while sheltering from flash floods on a raised river bank.

In its latest report, the disaster agency said 111 people including 53 children have been killed, with the highest number of deaths in the most populous province of Punjab. The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has predicted heavy rains from July 15 to 17 as a low-pressure area (LPA) presently located over northwest Madhya Pradesh, India, is expected to affect Pakistan during the next 24 to 72 hours.

Crypto
plan gains
global
attention

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Crypto strategy has gained significance in the global economic landscape. Through its crypto policy, Pakistan is improving economic relations with global powers like the United States. Pakistan has involved global players like Binance founder Changpeng Zhao in its initiative.

Pakistan is now planning Bitcoin mining project.

By building a crypto reserve, Pakistan is preparing for the economy of the future. On the other hand, Modi's failed economic policies have become a barrier not only for crypto but also for other emerging technologies. In India, lack of clear regulations on crypto currencies has caused uncertainty among investors.

Modi government's flawed tax policies have burdened the crypto sector.

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