



Islamabad POST

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PM Shehbaz says

Pakistan committed to enhance defence ties with Indonesia

The prime minister, in a meeting with Indonesian Defense Minister Lieutenant General (R) Syafrie Samsudin, who called on him here, said that Pakistan and Indonesia enjoyed a longstanding friendship rooted in shared cultural, religious and historical bonds

ANSAR M BHATTI / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday reiterated that Pakistan was committed to enhancing bilateral cooperation with Indonesia in all avenues, including economic, strategic, trade sectors, as well as in the field of defense and defense production.

The prime minister, in a meeting with Indonesian Defense Minister Lieutenant General (R) Syafrie Samsudin, who called on him here, said that Pakistan and Indonesia enjoyed a longstanding friendship rooted in shared cultural, religious and historical bonds supporting each other at international forums, according to a PM Office press release. Recalling his cordial meeting with the Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto on the sidelines of the G-8 summit in Cairo, Prime Minister Shehbaz conveyed

his best wishes to him. The meeting underscored the deep-rooted historical, brotherly and friendly bilateral relations between Pakistan and Indonesia. During the meeting, both sides emphasized the importance of enhancing multifaceted bilateral cooperation. The prime minister reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to explore and expand collaboration with Indonesia in joint ventures of investment in mutually beneficial projects. He also reviewed ongoing initiatives under the Pakistan-Indonesia Defense Cooperation Agreement and agreed to accelerate the implementation of projects in key areas of mutual interest. Lieutenant General (R) Syafrie Samsudin conveyed best wishes of the President of the Republic of Indonesia Prabowo Subianto for the prime minister and people of Pakistan. He reiterated Indonesia's desire to further strengthen defense ties with Pakistan and to explore possible areas for cooperation, especially in defense production.



ISLAMABAD: Indonesian Minister of Defence Lt. Gen. (R) Syafrie Samsudin called on Prime Minister Muhammad Sharif in Islamabad. – DNA

President, PM vow to work jointly

Senate polls in KP also came under discussion

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday reiterated their commitment to working together with each other for the country's sake. A statement issued by the Presidency said

PICTURE ON PAGE 2

the two held a meeting today at the President House. "The meeting involved discussions on the country's political, economic, and security situation. The state of law and

Continued on Page 06

Blasphemy cases IHC order govt to form commission

Court says commission must complete its proceedings within four months of formation

FIAZ CH.

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday directed the federal government to constitute a commission within 30 days to investigate blasphemy-related cases. Justice Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan issued the order while hearing petitions seeking

Continued on Page 06

Reserved seats

Lawmakers can't vote in KP Senate polls before oath

Electoral body urges KP governor to summon assembly session under Article 109 of Constitution

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Ahead of the upcoming Senate polls in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has informed the province's governor and chief minister that the notified members of the provincial assembly (MPAs) on the reserved seats cannot take part in the assembly session or vote in Senate polls, if not administered oath. ECP Secretary Omar Hamid Khan wrote letters to Governor Faisal Karim Kundi and Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur and urged that an assembly session be called immediately for oath-taking of the returned candidates to ensure the completion

Continued on Page 06

Over 50% KP residents not willing to join PTI protests

47% of respondents in Gallup Pakistan's survey favour CM Gandapur's replacement

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Days after Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) announced a fresh anti-government protest movement, set to peak by August 5, a survey carried out by Gallup Pakistan

Continued on Page 06

ECP disqualifies MNA Dasti

Dasti had repeatedly interrupted Asif, accusing the government of "toeing the establishment line"

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has disqualified MNA Jamshed Dasti after a reference was sent against him by National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq. The action was taken following Dasti's disruptive behavior during a speech by PML-N leader Khawaja Asif in the assembly. Dasti had repeatedly interrupted Asif, accusing the government of "toeing the establishment line." His remarks sparked controversy, prompting Speaker Sadiq to refer the

matter to the ECP for further action. The commission ruled that Dasti violated parliamentary norms, leading to his disqualification. Dasti, known for his outspoken stance, has faced similar issues in the past. His disqualification has stirred political debate, with critics calling it an attempt to silence opposition voices. Supporters of the ruling party, however, argue that maintaining decorum in the assembly is essential. Dasti can challenge the decision in court. Meanwhile, the move has intensified tensions between the government and opposition, raising concerns about political victimization. The development comes amid ongoing political instability in the country. – DNA

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Briefs

Indian Opp asks IOJK governor to step down

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: India's opposition parties have called for the governor of occupied Kashmir to resign with an apology to the people of the territory after he admitted to a "security failure" in the Pahalgal attack that killed 26 people. On April 22, 26 tourists were killed at a hill station in IoK Pahalgal. India has blamed Pakistan for the horrific attack, an accusation the latter denies. Islamabad has called for an international independent probe into the massacre. In an interview with the Times of India on Monday, IoK Lieutenant Governor and Bharatiya Janata Party leader Manoj Sinha said, "I take full responsibility for the incident, which was undoubtedly a security failure." In response to the admission, numerous Indian politicians slammed him for negligence and for his delay in taking accountability and called for his resignation.

SCO leaders converge in Beijing

Dar meets 'iron-clad brother' President Xi

Foreign minister also exchanges views with counterparts from Iran, Uzbekistan and Belarus on sidelines of CFM meeting



DNA

BEIJING: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar met Chinese President Xi Jinping as he represented Pakistan at the joint call of the Foreign Ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Member States in Beijing on Tuesday. "Delighted to meet earlier today with President Xi Jinping at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. Conveyed the warm greetings of the leadership, government and people of Pakistan," FM Dar said in a post on X.

Continued on Page 06

At SCO, Pakistan says committed to ceasefire

DNA

BEIJING: Pakistan has reiterated its commitment to maintaining the ceasefire with India but cautioned against normalising the arbitrary use of force, weeks after the two neighbours saw their worst conflict in decades.

Speaking at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Council of Foreign Ministers meeting in Tianjin, China, Dar said Pakistan remained fully committed to the regional ceasefire and a balanced security environment.

However, he cautioned that peace could not be achieved if coercion and aggression were allowed to become standard tools of statecraft. "Today, Pakistan remains steadfast in its commitment to the ceasefire and the cultivation of a stable regional equilibrium," Dar said. "But we cannot accept that the

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Jirga held to address security situation in Bajaur Agency

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: To address the recent wave of terrorism in the tribal district Bajaur, a high-level jirga was convened Tuesday at the Civil Secretariat. The gathering brought together senior officials from the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government, police, and security forces, alongside political leadership from Bajaur, tribal elders, and prominent religious scholars. The jirga was organized in response to a series of deadly terrorist attacks that have shaken Bajaur over the past two months, claiming numerous innocent lives. Among the notable martyrs were Maulana Khan Zeb, Assistant Commissioner of Nawagai Faisal Ismail, Tehsildar Abdul Wakeel, and several personnel from the security forces and police. This jirga continues a longstanding tradition of consultation between the

Continued on Page 06

New UK eVisas for Pak students and workers

Most main applicants travelling to the UK on study or work-related visas will no longer need a physical sticker visa in passports from today (15 July)

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The UK Government is replacing physical immigration documents for most student and worker visas with a digital proof of immigration status, an eVisa. An eVisa is an online record of a person's immigration permission in the UK, and any conditions which apply, which can be viewed by creating and accessing an online UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) account. eVisas are part of an enhanced border and immigration system that will not only make the visa process easier, but is more secure, digital and streamlined. eVisas are tried and tested, with millions of people already using them on select immigration routes. British High Commissioner, Jane Marriott CMG OBE, said: "These changes to the UK visa system will make it much simpler for students and workers to prove their identity and visa status. It also means applicants can hold onto their passports, saving them time." Updating from a physical document to an

eVisa does not affect anyone's immigration status or the conditions of their permission to enter or stay in the UK.

E-visas are being rolled out for the main applicants for:

- o Students, including short term study for 11 months
 - o Global Business Mobility routes (specifically, Senior or Specialist Worker, Graduate Trainee, UK Expansion Worker, Service Supplier, Secondment Worker)
 - o Global Talent
 - o International Sportsperson
 - o Skilled Worker (including Health and Care)
 - o Temporary Work routes (specifically, Charity Worker, Creative Worker, Government Authorised Exchange, International Agreement, and Religious work routes)
 - o Youth Mobility Scheme
- Holders can link their travel document (such as passport) to their UKVI account to facilitate straightforward international travel. People who have created a UKVI account will be able to use the view and prove service to prove their status securely with third parties, such as employers or landlords (in England). Applicants applying as a dependant, or as a main applicant for visas other than study or work, e.g. general visitor visas, will still need a physical sticker visa. Anyone with existing, in date, physical visa stickers do not need to take any action. This will eventually be rolled out to all visa routes meaning a more secure and streamlined process for all UK visa customers.

Sindh's RO water plant exposes deep corruption, dysfunction

Over 2,500 RO and UF plants installed across Sindh to provide clean drinking water, yet 70% remain dysfunctional. Billions squandered in fake tenders, ghost installations, and political patronage while citizens thirst

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: A massive corruption scandal has engulfed the Sindh government's much-publicized Reverse Osmosis (RO) water plant initiative, revealing decades of misuse of funds, political favoritism, fake tenders, and abysmal performance of over 2,500 RO and Ultra Filtration (UF) plants installed across the province. Despite spending over Rs 40 billion on the Drinking Water Hub (DWH) Project, the majority of RO plants lie abandoned, stripped for scrap, or never became operational. Originally launched to provide clean drinking water to desert and drought-prone districts like Tharparkar, Badin, and Mirpurkhas, the plan included 450 RO plants in Tharparkar, 18 in Karachi's District West, and 10 in each remaining district. The reports showing that only 101 out of 832 RO plants in Tharparkar are functional at a dismal 12% success rate. A Statewide Failure is countless. According to a 2025 report by the Public Health Engineering Department (PHE), out of 2,529 RO and UF plants, only a fraction are operational. While others like the Shaheed Benazirabad, 445 of 1,329 functional it's about 33%. In Jacobabad, 46% functionality. While including Sukkur 67%, Shikarpur: 88%, Jamshoro: 27%, Hyderabad: 69%, Tharparkar: 12%, Mirpurkhas: 98%

distinctional. Despite massive failures, the government has announced a fourth phase of installations and plans to implement a digital GPS-based monitoring system. However, critics and lawmakers argue this is "too little, too late" in the face of the scale of misappropriation. Audit Exposes Unthinkable Mismanagement. The Supreme Court Water Commission, audit reports, and media investigations have exposed: Rs 434 million wasted on reviving the non-functional Islamkot mega RO plant in Tharparkar. Plants awarded to a single politically-connected firm without proper tendering. Inflated unit costs (Rs 20-25 million per plant), despite lower market prices. Scrap machinery, lack of maintenance, and fake installations. Generators procured but never used, and hundreds of plants simply abandoned. Audit records also showing that Rs 97.865 billion in unproduced documents. Rs 32.122 billion in irregular hiring. While Rs 55.408 billion in procurement lapses and Rs 65+ billion in operational inefficiencies. The Sindh Finance Department alone is accused of Rs 66.556 billion in financial irregularities. Meanwhile, 31 inquiries by finance and agriculture departments, and 22 by departmental accounts committees, have resulted in delayed justice and zero accountability. Opposition lawmakers in the Sindh Assembly have repeatedly raised the alarm over the issue. MNA Nand Ku-

mar had also criticized that billions spent on 1,300+ RO plants have yielded no benefit to the public. Mithi RO plant, once hailed as Asia's largest, has never functioned. The Asia's largest capacity-wise RO plant at Missri Shah, Mithi, installed for Rs 300 million to supply 2 million gallons/day, was abruptly shut down due to unpaid salaries about a decade. Employees of Pak Oasis, the contractor for all 750 RO plants in Thar walked off after 4 months of non-payment. This Mithi plant, inaugurated by PPP co-chairman and former president Asif Ali Zardari. With a Rs 35 million operational budget blocked by the Sindh government, hundreds of solar-based RO systems now lie dormant. PAC (Public Accounts Committee) reviewed 1,383 audit paras in the past year, deferring 1,058 and recovering only Rs 16.22 billion, a fraction of the loss. In a last-ditch effort, the Sindh government introduced real-time digital dashboards for monitoring RO and UF plants. While GPS tracking and live dashboards are being rolled out, officials admit the revival of non-functional plants in low-performing districts like Tharparkar and Jamshoro is a top priority. But for millions of rural Sindh's citizens, who continue to walk miles for water or rely on contaminated sources, these reforms come after years of deception, negligence, and plunder.

Punjab, Egypt to collaborate on food safety

LAHORE: A high-level delegation led by Punjab's Minister for Agriculture, Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani, visited the headquarters of the National Food Safety Authority (NFSA) in Egypt, where both sides held detailed discussions on mutual interests, including food protection and food safety. The delegation included Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture Usama Khan Leghari, Secretary Agriculture Punjab Iftekhar Ali Sahoo, Directors General Agriculture Ch. Abdul Hameed and Naveed Asmat Kahlon, progressive farmer Hassan Raza, and other key officials. The delegation was warmly received by Chairman of Egypt's NFSA, Tarek El-Houby. Minister Kirmani briefed the Egyptian officials on the measures taken by Punjab government regarding food safety and also appreciated Egypt's successful model. Both parties agreed to promote bilateral cooperation in the field of food safety and expressed willingness for future collaboration through exchange of experiences, joint planning and long-term partnership. The minister remarked that, just like food security, food safety is equally important, as healthy food is essential for a healthy life. He added that the government of Punjab is fully committed to establishing a distinct status for the province in terms of food safety and is utilising all possible resources to achieve the goal.—APP

Arora assures to address Christian community social concerns

LAHORE) :Punjab Minister for Minorities Affairs Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora met with representatives of the local Christian community at his office on Tuesday to discuss a range of issues affecting the community. The meeting focused on social, civic, educational, and day-to-day challenges faced by Christian citizens in various localities. The minister gave a patient hearing to the concerns raised by community members and issued on-the-spot directives to the relevant departments for immediate resolution of certain complaints. He assured the delegation that the problems faced

by minority communities are being taken seriously and would be resolved on a priority basis, adding that negligence by officials in this regard will not be tolerated. Talking on the occasion, Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora said that under the leadership of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz, the provincial government is taking concrete steps to protect the rights and enhance the welfare of minority communities. He said that the Chief Minister has given clear directions to ensure equal opportunities for all citizens, regardless of religion, and to promote the inclusive socio-economic development of

Punjab. The minister also highlighted that the Department of Minorities Affairs is not only engaged in formulating policies for the uplift of minority communities but is also implementing practical initiatives. These include educational scholarships, employment quotas, renovation and maintenance of worship places, and a variety of other welfare and empowerment programs. The representatives of the Christian community expressed their gratitude to the Provincial Minister for his commitment and swift action on their concerns. They lauded his continued engagement and dedication to addressing community issues with sincerity and resolve.—APP

CDA's auction generates record Rs. 17.14b on first day

ISLAMABAD | Capital Development Authority (CDA) raised a record Rs. 17.14 billion on the first day of its three-day open auction of commercial plots at the Jinnah Convention Centre on Tuesday. Chairman CDA and Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Muhammad Ali Randhawa, personally oversaw the auction proceedings, ensuring transparency and fairness. The auction, which runs from July 15 to 17, marks a significant milestone for the authority, with six high-value plots sold on the opening day alone. The standout sale of the day was Plot No. 13 in Blue Area (G-8), which fetched approximately Rs. 7.24 billion. Plot No. 14 in the same area was auctioned for Rs. 4.16 billion, while Plot No. 12 garnered Rs. 3.60 billion. In Sector I-14, Plot No. 3-A was sold for nearly Rs. 749 million, Plot No. 3B for Rs. 709 million, and Plot No. 10A for Rs. 669 million. CDA officials noted that the total revenue generated on the first day exceeded the reserve prices by 33%—a clear sign of market enthusiasm. The auction was closely monitored by senior CDA officials, including Member Estate Talat Mahmood, Member Finance Tahir Naeem, Member Engineering Syed Nafasat Raza, and Member Planning Dr. Khalid Hafiz. A special committee led by Member Finance and comprising the DG Resource, DG Building Control, DG Law, and others was also formed to ensure transparency. "This is a historic achievement," said CDA Chairman Randhawa while addressing participants. "The strong participation of investors shows the trust they place in CDA's policies. We have worked day and night to bring Islamabad to this point, and we are just getting started." Randhawa emphasized that all auction activities followed strict merit-based procedures, with a strong focus on public interest. "Every rupee raised through this auction will go back into the city—for development, beautification, and better public services," he said. CDA has introduced several incentives to encourage greater investment. Buyers making lump-sum payments within one month will receive a 5% rebate, with an additional 5% rebate offered for payments made in US Dollars. To support investors, CDA organized an Investment Expo alongside the auction, where various departments—including Environment, Planning & Resource, MCI, and sports & Culture—set up information booths. A dedicated facilitation team was also deployed to assist investors throughout the process.—DNA

Irish envoys meet Naveed Qamar to strengthen ties

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of Ireland to Pakistan, Mary O'Neill, along with the Deputy Ambassador of Ireland, Declan Johnston, called on the Hon'ble MNA/Chairman Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue, Syed Naveed Qamar, today at the Parliament House in Islamabad. The meeting focused on areas of mutual interest between Pakistan and Ireland, with discussions centering on the bilateral relationship and ongoing efforts and collaborations, particularly in relation to the establishment of the Parliamentary Budget Office. Syed Naveed Qamar presented the Ambassador Mary O'Neill and Deputy Ambassador Declan Johnston with traditional shawls as souvenirs.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif called on President Asif Ali Zardari at Aiwan-e- Sadr.

Call for flood preparedness at Seminar

KARACHI: Floods and natural disasters cannot be completely prevented, but better preparedness and governance can significantly reduce their impact, said Engr Ehsan Leghari, Sindh's representative in the Indus River System Authority (IRSA), at a seminar held here on Tuesday. Speaking at the event organized by Metameta Research Netherlands in collaboration with the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Sindh, Leghari stressed the importance of learning to live with floods. "Floods are not just a result of climate change but also reflect the gaps in infrastructure, planning, and governance," he remarked. The seminar, held at a local hotel in Karachi, focused on lessons learned from the devastating 2022 floods and strategies to mitigate future disasters. Leghari pointed to multiple contributing factors behind the floods, including incomplete drainage projects such as the Left Bank Outfall Drain (LBOD) and Right Bank Outfall Drain (RBOD), weak barrage embankments, and rampant encroachments along canal banks. "The 2010 and 2022 floods exposed our vulnerabilities. Now is the time to devise a comprehensive preparedness strategy to minimize future losses," he said.—APP

UET approves new programmes, policy reforms

LAHORE: The 237th meeting of the Academic Council of the University of Engineering and Technology (UET), Lahore, was held under the chairmanship of Vice Chancellor Dr. Syed Shahid Munir, during which several new academic programmes were approved and key reforms in the admission policies for the year 2026 were also recommended. The meeting was attended by the deans of all faculties, the registrar, and academic and administrative heads of all departments. Vice Chancellor Dr. Shahid Munir expressed satisfaction over the addition of these new programmes and appreciated the support of the Academic Council

members. He emphasised that these initiatives are essential to harmonise the university's curriculum with contemporary industrial needs and global academic developments. "These programmes will equip students with specialised knowledge and practical skills, enabling them to better navigate emerging career opportunities," he said. Among the major approvals, BSc Software Engineering was approved based on recommendations from the Board of Faculty of Electrical Engineering, BSc Logistics and Supply Chain Management was introduced on the recommendation of the Board of Faculty of Civil Engineering, BSc Industrial Chemistry was approved as

per the recommendation of the Board of Faculty of Natural Sciences, Humanities, and Islamic Studies, BSc Remote Sensing and GIS was sanctioned following recommendations by the Board of Faculty of Earth Sciences and Engineering. The council also approved the establishment of a Center of Excellence, which will offer short-term courses of six-month duration at UET Lahore, designed to provide practical and industry-relevant training. Additionally, the council also passed several amendments to university policies, including revisions in fee refund, merit criteria, admission policy for international students, and scholarship schemes.—APP

Only 550 selected applicants for Hajj support staff

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Sardar Muhammad Yousaf on Tuesday said that out of a total of 38,297 applicants who applied through the National Testing Service (NTS), only 550 individuals were selected to serve during the annual pilgrimage. In response to a query regarding the recruitment process for Moavineen-e-Hujjaj (Hajj Assistants) for the year 2024, in the upper house, the minister said that the applicants included candidates from across the country and

various government departments. According to official figures, the 6,333 applicants applied for supervisory positions and field supporting staff roles. Of these, only 50 individuals were selected for supervisory roles while 500 were appointed as field supporting staff, bringing the final selection tally to 550. The minister clarified that the entire selection process was conducted through NTS, ensuring merit-based shortlisting. Responding to concerns raised during the session, Sardar Yousaf acknowl-

edged that although the specific complaint mentioned in the question was not included in the original query, any reported irregularities or shortcomings following the process would be addressed. He further assured that as the government formulates a new Hajj policy, measures will be taken to rectify any flaws in the previous selection process. "We welcome feedback and will incorporate necessary improvements in the upcoming policy to ensure better transparency and inclusivity," he stated.—APP

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Briefs

Commerce minister meets to UK official

ISLAMABAD: On Tuesday, Federal Minister for Commerce, Mr. Jam Kamal Khan met with Mohammad Faisal Yasin MP, UK Prime Minister's Trade Envoy to Pakistan, at the House of Commons today. High Commissioner Dr. Mohammad Faisal was also present. The Minister congratulated Muhammad Yasin on his appointment and appreciated his recent successful visit to Pakistan in June 2025, which laid the groundwork for stronger economic cooperation, said a release issued here on Tuesday. Both sides acknowledged the importance of leveraging longstanding ties to deepen trade and investment relations between Pakistan and the UK. The discussions highlighted the launch of the UK-Pakistan Trade and Investment Dialogue as a milestone in institutionalizing bilateral economic engagement. The Minister underscored the Dialogue's role in resolving market access challenges, facilitating investments, and boosting trade volumes under the UK's Developing Countries Trading Scheme (DCTS). The meeting emphasized the strategic role of the Pakistani diaspora in the UK in promoting business linkages and innovation. The Minister welcomed the establishment of the UK-Pakistan Business Advisory Council (UKPBAC) and encouraged coordinated outreach between diaspora entrepreneurs and chambers of commerce. Opportunities for collaboration were also identified in high-impact sectors such as renewable energy, ICT, agriculture, and higher education. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to building parliamentary linkages and exploring periodic exchanges to strengthen political and economic ties. This engagement reinforces Pakistan's commitment to forging mutually beneficial trade partnerships with the UK, setting the stage for inclusive and sustainable economic growth.—APP

IST launches green campus plantation drive

9ISLAMABAD: In a heartfelt initiative aimed at fostering environmental stewardship and promoting sustainable practices, the Institute of Space Technology (IST) inaugurated its Green Campus Plantation Drive today. The campaign was formally launched by Vice Chancellor Dr. Syed Najeeb Ahmad, who led the plantation ceremony alongside faculty members, administrative staff, and enthusiastic students. The event took place on IST's lush campus grounds, where participants planted dozens of saplings, symbolizing a collective step toward a cleaner, greener, and more climate-resilient future. The Vice Chancellor emphasized the importance of integrating eco-conscious actions into the university's academic and operational framework, stating that "the responsibility to combat climate change and environmental degradation lies with each of us and universities must lead by example." Highlighting the drive's long-term goals, Dr. Najeeb Ahmad said the initiative is not just a one-time event but part of IST's broader vision to become a sustainable and environmentally responsible academic institution.—APP

PODA and Family Health Clinic, Murree mark World Population Day

DNA

MURREE: In connection with World Population Day, Potohar Organization for Development Advocacy (PODA), in collaboration with the Family Health Clinic, THQ Murree, organized a workshop emphasizing the urgent need to end child marriage in order to empower youth to make informed decisions about their future, including when to start a family and how to determine family size. A significant number of Lady Health Supervisors, THQ staff, and Lady Health Workers affiliated with various Basic Health Units across the district attended the workshop. The session stressed the importance of empowering both girls and boys through access to education and opportunities for meaningful employment. World Population Day is observed annually on 11 July to raise awareness about population-related issues. The workshop was part of the 3-Year project "Reduce Early Marriages to Enhance Gender Equality," supported by the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Islamabad. PODA is implementing this project in 41 districts of Punjab. Representing PODA, Nabeela Aslam emphasized the need to advocate for a uniform minimum legal age of marriage for girls across the country, similar to the recent legal reform implemented in the Islamabad Capital Territory. She explained that raising the



legal age helps ensure girls can complete their education and acquire skills for a dignified life. She highlighted the contradiction that, while women are central to bringing future generations into the world, they are frequently denied access to accurate information and essential services related to their sexual and reproductive health. She also stressed the importance of better menstrual hygiene management, hydration, and personal cleanliness during menstruation to prevent serious

health issues such as urinary tract infections. During the workshop, it was found that the haemoglobin levels of participants varied significantly—eight to ten had levels below 9, around ten had levels above 10, and a few had levels above 12. These findings highlighted and emphasized the need for participants to prioritize their own health. The participants discussed how many women and girls lack access to the knowledge and resources needed to protect their reproductive health, includ-

ing basic menstrual hygiene. In some cases, girls stop drinking water during school or work hours to avoid using unhygienic toilets, leading to dehydration and an increased risk of urinary tract infections. If left untreated, these infections can result in serious health complications. Dr. Maryam Ali, Incharge of the Family Health Clinic, Murree highlighted the importance of equipping the younger generation with knowledge, resources, and opportunities to lead informed and practical lives.

She noted that girls who marry early face higher risks of early pregnancies, complications such as obstetric fistulas, and elevated maternal and neonatal mortality. The participants collectively expressed the view that Pakistan can only achieve sustainable progress through an empowered younger generation. However, they noted with concern that access to essential services and opportunities is rapidly shrinking due to the country's high population growth rate.

IRSA releases 294,200 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 294,200 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 334,400 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1528.00 feet which was 126.00 feet higher than the dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 219,300 cusecs and 193,000 cusecs, respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1185.35 feet, which was 135.35 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 23,100 cusecs and 9,200 cusecs, respectively.—APP

Kundi highlights need for political cooperation

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Kareem Kundi on Tuesday emphasized the need of political unity and cooperation among all parties for the smooth functioning of democratic processes in the province. Talking to a private news channel, he expressed hope that opposition parties would work together constructively in the upcoming elections. He pointed out the importance of ensuring fair representation and discouraging practices like horse trading, citing past examples of consensus-based seat sharing.—APP

Musadik reaffirms Pak commitment to inclusive carbon markets

"By investing in our readiness today, we are creating opportunities for sustainable economic growth, climate resilience, and global cooperation tomorrow," he said

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Dr. Musadik Malik, has reiterated Pakistan's firm commitment to developing a transparent, inclusive, and future-ready carbon market aligned with the global climate agenda. Speaking during a high-level meeting with the delegation of SPAR6C (Supporting Preparedness for Article 6 Cooperation), on Tuesday, Dr. Malik said that Pakistan is determined to strengthen its institutional and technical readiness to participate effectively in international carbon markets under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. "Pakistan is fully committed to building a carbon market that is not only environmentally sound but also economically empowering," the minister said. "We believe transparency, credibility, and inclusivity must be at the heart of this system — and we are taking the necessary steps to ensure this." He emphasized the importance of aligning national efforts with global best practices and deepening partnerships with both international collaborators and the domestic private sector. The collaboration with SPAR6C is a valuable opportunity to learn, adapt, and implement mechanisms that work for our economy, our climate goals, and our people," Dr. Malik noted. The Minister also highlighted the critical role of youth and academia in shaping Pakistan's carbon market future, particularly through the SPAR6C-sponsored student research program. "The expertise of our young professionals must be channeled into real-world solutions. This is not just a technical agenda—it's a development opportunity," Dr. Malik's remarks come at a time when Pakistan is intensifying efforts to access global climate finance, scale up low-carbon projects, and attract investment through international emissions trading systems. "By investing in our readiness today, we are creating opportunities for sustainable economic growth, climate resilience, and global cooperation tomorrow," he said.—DNA

Gwadar Scholar wins award

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Aidah Baloch, a promising PhD scholar from Gwadar who is currently studying at the Ocean University of China, brought laurels to Pakistan by winning the Outstanding Oral Presentation Award at the 2025 Summer School on Climate Change and Ocean Health held at Xiamen University. Competitive sessions at the event saw young researchers present innovative work on blue carbon sequestration, bioaccumulation of pollutants and environmental DNA technology. A total of 11 outstanding poster awards and 9 oral presentation awards were given to encourage students to pursue excellence in scientific research. Her winning presentation, titled "Assessment of the Fish Stock Status of the Spangled Emperor (Lethrinus nebulosus) Along the Coast of Balochistan, Pakistan", stood out among nearly 70 participants from top universities and research institutions across the mainland, Hong Kong and Taiwan of China. "This award is a dream come true and reflects the exceptional research environment China provides for international students," Aidah told Gwadar Pro elatedly. "As a Pakistani scholar studying marine sciences in China, I've had access to world-class facilities and mentorship that have transformed my research capabilities. This summer school at Xiamen University has particularly enhanced my understanding of cutting-edge approaches to marine conservation." The intensive 10-day program features lectures and workshops by leading experts on five key themes: global climate change, marine ecotoxicol-

ogy, ocean health and sustainability, environmentally innovative technologies and air-sea interactions. Participants also gained hands-on experience during a field trip to the Taiwan Straits Marine Ecosystem National Observation Station in Fujian, where they studied mangrove ecosystems and marine observation techniques. "My research on the Spangled Emperor fish stocks is particularly relevant for Balochistan's coastal communities who depend on these fisheries," Aidah explained. "The methodologies I've learned in China, especially in ecosystem monitoring and sustainable resource management, will be invaluable when I return to Pakistan. The summer school's focus on practical solutions to ocean health challenges has given me new perspectives to apply in my home region."

Ambassador Neziroglu recalled the harrowing night when Turkish citizens stood against tanks and bullets to defend their constitution, parliament, and democratic institutions. Recalling his own experience as the then-Secretary General of the Turkish Parliament, Ambassador Neziroglu revealed, "We were in session when the parliament was bombed. Allah saved us." The coup attempt, orchestrated by the Fetullah Terrorist Organization (FETO), claimed 253 lives and left over 2,000 wounded. "Their sacrifice is a sacred legacy that binds us together, wherever we may be

in the world," he added. He warned that FETO remains a sophisticated and insidious global threat, cloaked in civil society, education, and religion, yet driven by ulterior motives. "It is a cult-like, transnational criminal network - rarely seen in history - which continues to pose security risks not only to Türkiye but to any country it infiltrates." Ambassador Neziroglu expressed Türkiye's unwavering commitment to eliminating FETO's influence globally. Referring to the death of the group's US-based ring-leader last October, he stated, "His death without facing justice will not weaken our resolve."

Turkish embassy marks July 15 as testament to democratic resolve

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Türkiye to Pakistan, Dr. Irfan Neziroglu on Tuesday said the Turkish nation's unwavering resistance to the failed coup attempt of July 15, 2016, continues to stand as a beacon of democratic strength and unity. Addressing a solemn ceremony held here to mark Türkiye's Democracy and National Unity Day, the ambassador said, "July 15 was a night that began in darkness but ended in the dawn of unity, resistance, and the unshakable resolve of the Turkish people. Citizens of all backgrounds - men,



ering attended by Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan, Additional Secretary of Foreign Affairs Syed Ali Asad Gilani, and TRNC Ambassador Dilsad Senol,

SYSU signs MoU to undertake Coastal Belt Research Program

ISLAMABAD: In a major step to strengthen academic ties and promote collaborative research, the University of Gwadar (UG) and the School of International Relations at Sun Yat-sen University (SYSU), China, have signed an MoU to advance joint research and academic exchange, with a special focus on Area Studies and the Coastal Belt Research Program. The MoU, signed recently in Zhuhai, China, underscores a shared commitment to academic cooperation based on equality, mutual respect, and shared goals, Gwadar Pro reported on Tuesday. The agreement outlines collaboration in research, talent development, joint symposia, and knowledge sharing between the two institutions.—APP

inDrive launches Premium Rides

ISLAMABAD: inDrive, the country's largest mobility platform, has launched Premium-category Rides in major cities across Pakistan, offering passengers top-rated drivers and newer vehicles. The move signals the company's push to capture a growing market segment seeking high-end travel options. Now available in Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad, inDrive Premium promises a higher standard of service, featuring newer-model sedans and drivers with ratings of 4.8 or higher. Each vehicle enrolled in the Premium category undergoes additional inspections beyond the standard approval process to ensure a consistently smooth and safe ride. "inDrive is founded on the belief that everyone deserves the freedom to choose how they move, work, and earn. This principle guides every aspect of our platform," said Awais Saeed, Country Head of inDrive Pakistan. "With inDrive Premium, we are elevating the standard for travel while maintaining our commitment to fairness and freedom." The launch comes as Pakistan's urban centres witness rising demand for flexible mobility options that don't compromise on safety or service quality. Saeed added that inDrive sees the premium segment as a natural evolution for a platform built on fairness, trust, and user empowerment. While inDrive Premium caters to higher-end needs, the company emphasised that the core offering of flexibility in pricing remains unchanged. Passengers can negotiate their price and book premium vehicles on demand. This makes the category ideal for busy professionals, families, or anyone seeking extra comfort and convenience.—DNA

Pakistan moving forward

ISLAMABAD: State Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Khel Das Kohistani said on Tuesday that Pakistan is making progress under the current leadership, with a strong focus on governance and public service. Talking to a private news channel, he praised the ongoing development efforts in Punjab and at the federal level, highlighting improvements in the economy and public confidence. Kohistani stated that the government is committed to maintaining law and order and will respond firmly to any actions that disrupt public life. He emphasized that Pakistan's international image has improved and the country is on the path of stability. He also reiterated that the government's priority is to serve the people and address their everyday challenges.—APP

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The bitter truth about Pakistan’s sugar crisis

PAKISTAN is an agricultural country with vast fertile lands, a favorable climate, and a hardworking farming community. Yet, it is a national shame that despite being capable of producing enough sugar to meet domestic demand, the country repeatedly faces sugar shortages and is forced to import the commodity at exorbitant prices. The recent sugar crisis is not an isolated incident but part of a vicious cycle orchestrated by the powerful sugar mafia, which has long exploited both the system and the people. What is more alarming is that despite media exposés and public outcry, no meaningful action has been taken to hold the culprits accountable.

This is not the first time Pakistan has faced such a crisis. In the past, sugar mill owners—many of whom are influential politicians—first exported sugar to create an artificial shortage in the local market and then imported it back at higher rates, making windfall profits at the expense of the common man. Investigations and media reports have exposed these manipulations, yet no punitive measures were taken. The sugar inquiry report of 2020 revealed shocking details of corruption, tax evasion, and exploitation by mill owners, but the powerful lobby ensured that the findings were swept under the rug. Now, it seems the same playbook is being used again. The root of the problem lies in the fact that many sugar mill owners are also members of parliament or have close ties with those in power. This conflict of interest means that any legislation aimed at regulating the sugar industry or holding the mafia accountable is deliberately stalled. These influential figures ensure that policies remain in their favor, allowing them to manipulate supply, fix prices, and evade taxes with impunity. When those who make the laws are the same ones breaking them, how can justice prevail? For the poor, sugar is not just a commodity but one of the few affordable luxuries in their meager diet. However, with prices skyrocketing and shortages becoming frequent, even this basic necessity is slipping out of their reach. Inflation has already made life unbearable for low-income families, and the artificial sugar crisis only adds to their misery. The government’s failure to protect its citizens from such exploitation reflects a deep-seated malaise in governance, where the interests of a few elites override the welfare of millions.

The government must take bold steps to dismantle the sugar cartel’s control. This includes strict regulation of sugar exports and imports, transparent pricing mechanisms, and crackdowns on hoarding. Those involved in artificial shortages and price manipulation must be prosecuted, regardless of their political influence. The sugar inquiry report’s recommendations should be implemented without delay. Pakistan must invest in modernizing sugarcane farming, improving yield, and reducing production costs to ensure self-sufficiency. Citizens must hold their representatives accountable and demand an end to this exploitation. Pakistan’s recurring sugar crisis is a glaring example of how greed and political influence cripple the nation’s economy and burden its poorest citizens. If the government continues to turn a blind eye to the sugar mafia’s tactics, such crises will keep recurring, and the people will keep suffering.

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SAARC needs to be revitalized

THE South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), formed in 1985 with great promise, was envisioned as a platform for promoting peace, prosperity, and mutual development among the eight member states: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. Nearly four decades later, the organization remains largely dysfunctional, unable to deliver on its core objectives. Despite being home to nearly a quarter of the world’s population, SAARC has not even come close to becoming an effective regional bloc like the European Union or ASEAN. The reasons for this failure are both political and structural.

At the heart of SAARC’s ineffectiveness lies the enduring rivalry between India and Pakistan. Political hostility, repeated military stand-offs, and zero-sum diplomacy between the two nuclear neighbors have cast a long shadow over the organization. No SAARC summit has been held since 2014, with the 2016 summit in Islamabad indefinitely postponed following India’s boycott after the Uri attack. This bilateral antagonism consistently hijacks regional agendas and paralyzes progress on initiatives that require unanimity.

Unlike other regional blocs, SAARC lacks strong institutional mechanisms. Its decisions are made by consensus — a model that is difficult to sustain when member states have deep political divides. The absence of a dispute resolution framework further handicaps SAARC. While economic cooperation, people-to-people connectivity, and regional development are the goals on paper, the lack of trust between member states makes implementation virtually impossible.

Another reason behind SAARC’s failure is its narrow scope and minimal funding. The organization has failed to evolve into a robust institution with the capacity to execute projects independently. Most of its initiatives exist only on paper or in pilot stages. For instance, the SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) and its proposed successor, SAFTA (South Asian Free Trade Area), have not meaningfully increased intra-regional trade, which remains among the lowest in the world — less than 5% of total trade of member states.

Contrast this with ASEAN, where members, despite historical disputes, have prioritized economic interdependence and regional integration. In SAARC, by comparison, smaller nations are often caught between India and Pakistan’s rivalry, leading them to seek bilateral partnerships outside the SAARC framework — further weakening the organization. Moreover, China’s increasing influence in South Asia has led to geopolitical recalibrations. Countries like Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Maldives are forging closer economic ties with Beijing, making SAARC less relevant to their immediate priorities. India, too, has shifted its focus toward other regional groupings like BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation), where Pakistan is not a member and hence friction is lower. In conclusion, SAARC’s failure is not due to the lack of vision but the absence of political will and regional trust. Unless member states — especially India and Pakistan — choose cooperation over confrontation, SAARC will remain a dormant body.

Tragedy of expectations

Dr. Abdus Sattar Abbasi

The data which surprised me the most is about the perception of corruption in KPK about PTI’s current government. Report suggests that 52% of respondents believe that development funds have been misappropriated due to corruption while only 32% think they were used properly. It is indeed a huge mistrust on PTI’s government which should ring the alarm among PTI decision makers because at the end of the day what matters is the perception of people in the province about the integrity and transparency in managing public funds. It is because of this reason that 71% of respondents including 62% of PTI voters desired to have formal investigations...

JUST received a latest survey report from Gallup Pakistan about public opinion in KP, offering detailed assessment of governance in the province. The report took me back in time when we all expected a revolutionary change in the political system of the country particularly the governance through an emerging political party. Those who are in their 50s have witnessed unprecedented transformations in almost every sphere of life due to exceptional technological developments. It was not a novel phenomenon to observe a wave of change in the society. We all were expecting a revolution in the political, social and economic scenarios of the country. Some exciting slogans, such as “saaf chali shffaf chali”, means clear and transparent movement and “tabdili aa nai rahi tabdili aa gai ha” means change has happened, raised expectations of common man quite sky high. Historically we have never been among nations which uphold justice and transparency, at least in my memory. People found refuge in these thrilling jargons, hoping justice and accountability coupled with economic progress and reputation among nations. Architects and leaders of this political party exactly knew what people of Pakistan desire and they successfully exploited genuine expectations of the public.

There have been some unusual political events globally during the last decade starting from unsuccessful coup in Turkey on July 15, 2016, despite historic influence of the army in Turkish politics; followed by unexpected success of Donald Trump in 2017 and finally surprising premiership of Imran Khan in 2018. These developments suggested changing mindset of the voters to rely on new faces to solve their problems. Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Donald Trump survived shocks and running their presidential offices apparently with comfort. However, Imran Khan severely depends on the performance

of KP government for the comeback. But the report in hand suggests some serious challenges for PTI and Imran Khan both to seek public trust in coming times. The report is based on face-to-face interviews with 3,000 residents of KP, between February and March 2025 while the analysis and report writing was done in April-June 2025, means the last month. The findings reflect a population grappling with unmet expectations and discontent with governance, infrastructure, economic opportunities and accountability while PTI voters join the chorus of discontentment.

If we look at the data disinterestedly, it reveals widespread dissatisfaction with governance, economic performance, and public service delivery of PTI’s government. Report claims to have only 2 to 3% of margin of error at 95% confidence, which means we can depend on these findings to determine the performance of PTI in KPK where they are in the government for the last almost 11 years now. According to the report only 57% respondents reported that they did not witness any new road projects that were initiated in the last one year where as 63% expressed dissatisfaction with the public transport facilities, and 60% were not happy with general development projects under the current PTI government. It is surprising to notice disappointment of 51% PTI supporters on the development in their areas.

The data which surprised me the most is about the perception of corruption in KPK about PTI’s current government. Report suggests that 52% of respondents believe that development funds have been misappropriated due to corruption while only 32% think they were used properly. It is indeed a huge mistrust on PTI’s government which should ring the alarm among PTI decision makers because at the end of the day what matters is the perception of people in the province about the integrity and transparency in managing

public funds. It is because of this reason that 71% of respondents including 62% of PTI voters desired to have formal investigations into alleged corruption in mega projects during PTI’s rule. I was shocked to notice that 48% people in KPK believe that corruption in government departments has increased, and 40% feel it is more prevalent in KPK than in Punjab. It means people do monitor performance of other provinces and also have access to the information about the affairs of their neighbouring provinces. It would have been an excellent report if the agency would have included the comparison with all other provinces, anyhow it is still an eye-opener for the leaders of PTI that how quickly they are losing the public trust.

This most recent report contends that 59% respondents report rising unemployment, and 67% declare that the government has failed to create jobs or business opportunities. Staggering 73% respondents believe that it is only personal connections, not merit, that determines access to government jobs, which speaks volumes about the prevailing mistrust among the public in KPK. We learned from our early childhood that “aawaz-e-khalq ko naqare-e-Khuda samjho”, meaning thereby the public sentiment determines your fate. Therefore, it will be better for PTI leaders to focus on serving their people who brought them into the power because 60% of respondents believe that the KP government wasted time in protests and demonstrations rather than focusing on governance. Again this finding suggests that previous actions of KP government including long march and others are not looked upon favourably by KP residents. As a safe conclusion one can say that by and large PTI’s performance in their stronghold is not that enough, at least as for now, to help them secure next election whenever it happen as long as they focus their energies to serve the people of KPK with utmost honesty and determination.

President Pezeshkian’s Truth Bomb vs. Netanyahu’s War Machine

Qamar Bashir

Contrast this with Netanyahu’s doctrine: forever war, regional hegemony, and a theologically-rooted belief in Israel’s divine entitlement to land and dominance. Netanyahu, Pezeshkian implied, has long used deception — whether about Iran’s nuclear program, sleeper cells, or fabricated assassination attempts — to manipulate American sentiment and force Washington into conflicts that serve Israeli, not American, interests

IN a world suffocated by strategic deception and media filters, one conversation pierced through the fog. In a bold 28-minute interview with Tucker Carlson, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian delivered a message so clear, calm, and compelling that it shattered decades of crafted misperception about Iran’s foreign policy, nuclear ambition, and regional posture. In doing so, Pezeshkian positioned himself as the face of reason — while exposing the reckless belligerence of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, whose war-mongering agenda has long dictated U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East.

Pezeshkian began with humility and conviction: “We did not start this war and we do not want this war to continue in any way.” His words echoed the constitutional stance of Iran’s post-revolution leadership — defensive, not expansionist; committed to sovereignty, not conquest. He emphasized that his administration is built on the twin pillars of “national unity inside the country” and “peace and friendship with neighboring countries and the rest of the world.” This is not mere rhetoric. Pezeshkian substantiated this vision by recalling that Iran has “never invaded another country in 200 years.” At a time when regional militarism is disguised as security, this record is not only rare — it is disarming.

And yet, the president insisted: “We have never been after developing a nuclear bomb, not in the past, not presently, or in the future.” His reason was not strategic, but spiritual. “It is in contrast to the religious decree — the fatwa — issued by His Eminence, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran. It is religiously forbidden for us to go after a nuclear bomb.”

This declaration alone upends the central justification for Israeli and American hostility. Iran’s nuclear program — routinely monitored by the IAEA — was never about weaponization. But it was Israel, Pezeshkian revealed, that sabotaged peace: “We were in the middle of talks with the United States... and Israel torpedoed the negotiating table.” This act, far from being reactive, was strategic. Israel’s pre-emptive strike on Iran’s nuclear facilities was based not on verified intelligence, but a desire to kill diplomacy in its crib. “Unlawful attacks against our nuclear centers,” Pezeshkian said, “severely damaged our equipment. We can’t even verify what remains.” The IAEA, instead of condemning this violation of international law, issued a report

that further inflamed tensions — and emboldened Tel Aviv. Pezeshkian’s outrage was rooted in justice, not vengeance. When asked whether Iran would retaliate through proxy terror or sleeper cells, he responded with dignified defiance: “Have you ever seen an Iranian killing an American? Has any Iranian ever committed terrorism on your soil?” The answer, of course, is no. He clarified: “We don’t believe in sleeper cells. We don’t need them. We defend ourselves through diplomacy, and when forced, directly with our own hands.” This moral clarity extended to the often-misunderstood chant of “Death to America.” The president dismantled its literal interpretation: “It doesn’t mean death to American people or officials. It means death to crimes, bullying, and atrocities.” In other words, it is a political condemnation — not a genocidal threat.

But even as Pezeshkian appealed for understanding, he drew a hard line: “If war is imposed on Iran, we will defend ourselves to the last drop of blood.” Yet again, this is defense, not aggression. “We put our trust in God and in the resilience of our people. We don’t need help from anyone — not Russia, not China. Iran will stand alone if it must.” Contrast this with Netanyahu’s doctrine: forever war, regional hegemony, and a theologically-rooted belief in Israel’s divine entitlement to land and dominance. Netanyahu, Pezeshkian implied, has long used deception — whether about Iran’s nuclear program, sleeper cells, or fabricated assassination attempts — to manipulate American sentiment and force Washington into conflicts that serve Israeli, not American, interests. The consequences have been catastrophic — not only for Palestinians and Iranians, but for the very fabric of international law and order. Pezeshkian recounted the assassination of Iranian scientists, the murder of off-duty commanders, and the slaughter of children and pregnant women in Israeli airstrikes. “Just to kill one person, they demolish an entire building,” he said. “And they call this security?” Even more chilling was the attempted assassination of Pezeshkian himself. “Yes, they tried. But I’m not afraid to sacrifice my life for my country.” The irony? This act of terrorism — reportedly foiled by Iranian intelligence — was meant to prevent the very peace talks that could have stabilized the region.

Yet despite everything, Pezeshkian extended a remarkable offer: “We see no problem in re-entering negotiations with the United States.” He went further: “There is no limitation for U.S. investors to come to Iran — even now.” This invitation stands even as American sanctions, not Iranian policy, prevent such engagement. And so, we arrive at the defining choice: Two narratives now confront the conscience of the international community. One is Netanyahu’s

— driven by a supremacist ideology, a fabricated threat matrix, and a relentless drive toward regional domination. It is a doctrine of perpetual war, waged under the pretext of self-defense, while enacting wholesale slaughter in Gaza and the West Bank. Netanyahu has turned entire neighborhoods into rubble, hospitals into graves, and innocent civilians — including women and children — into nameless casualties of military “precision.” This isn’t security. It’s a slow-motion holocaust, unfolding with impunity.

The other narrative is Iran’s — a nation invoking religious fatwas against nuclear weapons, calling for diplomacy, and rejecting the logic of proxy terrorism and sleeper cells. Its leaders, from the Supreme Leader to the newly elected President Pezeshkian, argue not for conquest, but for sovereignty. Not for dominance, but dignity. Not for retaliation, but restraint. And yet, it is this very nation that remains under siege — economically, politically, and militarily.

Former French Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin once warned that “if peace is not restored in the Middle East, Europe and the United States will be held hostage by extremism.” That warning has come full circle.

But the ultimate irony — and tragedy — lies in the words of President Donald Trump himself, who in his campaign and inaugural promise declared that his would be a “government of common sense.” A government that would reject endless wars. That would put America First — not Tel Aviv first. That would protect innocent lives, not shield aggressors behind vetoes at the United Nations. That would respond not to genocidal allies, but to the cries of children dying beneath collapsed buildings in Gaza and Rafah.

Common sense dictates that when a nation turns refugee camps into graveyards, when it hunts down civilians with drones, when it assassinates scientists in their homes and bombs residential towers to kill one man — that nation is not defending itself. It is dismantling the very moral fabric of global civilization. And if America continues to partner with that behavior — if it continues to treat Netanyahu as a statesman instead of a war criminal — then the United States is not just complicit. It is corrupted. It is time for the American public, lawmakers, and leaders to make a choice grounded in facts — not fear; in law — not lobbying; in morality — not military-industrial deals. The truth is now on the table. Netanyahu’s war has been exposed. Pezeshkian’s peace has been declared. The next move belongs to Washington.

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

Briefs

lawmakers
can't vote in
KP Senate...

FROM PAGE 01
of the electoral college. He said the electoral body is under a constitutional obligation to conduct the Senate elections in KP for which date has been set for July 21. But he noted that the matter of administering the oath to returned candidates was still pending and delayed. Citing the SC constitutional bench's verdict, he stated that on July 2, 2025, a notification of successful candidates on reserved seats for women and non-Muslims was issued but these members have not yet been sworn in, so they cannot participate in the assembly session or vote. The ECP secretary pointed out that earlier, the KP Assembly speaker was requested on July 4 to administer oath to the members elected on reserved seats. The speaker informed that the assembly session is not currently underway; he cannot call a session. The ECP secretary maintained that according to Article 109 of the Constitution, the governor has the power to summon a session of the provincial assembly at his discretion. "In light of the above constitutional and legal imperatives, I have been directed by the Hon'ble ECP to request his Excellency, the Governor of KP, to exercise the powers conferred under Article 109 of the Constitution and to summon the session of the Provincial Assembly at the earliest to ensure administration of oath by the Speaker from the elected members on the reserved seats and for the conduct of Senate election in the province," reads the letter.

Over 50%
KP residents
not willing...

FROM PAGE 01
has revealed that overwhelming majority of residents in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) prefer working with the federal government over participating in protests. The News reported on Tuesday. The province-wide poll, conducted from February to March 2025, included 3,000 respondents. The survey reflects a nuanced sentiment: while a robust 85 per cent of KP residents back collaborative governance, nearly two-thirds believe that targeted protests can play a strategic role in effecting federal-level change. This duality reveals a populace that values development but remains politically engaged, reserving protest as a tool – not as a first instinct. With KP's new PTI-led government navigating its path, these findings reinforce public demand for effective governance, better services, and federal coordination, while still leaving space for dissent when deemed necessary.

Dar meets
'iron-clad
brother'...

FROM PAGE 01
"As iron-clad brothers and All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partners, we remain committed to deepening Pakistan-China enduring friendship and advancing shared regional goals," he added. The high-level interaction comes as the SCO Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) is convening in Beijing with representatives from Pakistan, China, Belarus, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in attendance. The CFM is the third-highest forum in the SCO format. It focuses on the issues of international relations, as well as foreign and security policies. The forum also approves the documents, including declarations and statements, etc, that are to be presented for the consideration of the Council of Heads of State as well as the decisions to be adopted by the CHS. Meanwhile, the Chinese president, welcoming the heads of delegations, underlined the salience of regional cooperation under the ambit of SCO, an organisation covering the Eurasian land mass and a large expanse of the world's population.

‘World’s oldest marathon runner’
dies aged 114 in road accident

Singh did not have a birth certificate but his family said he was born on April

DNA

NEW DELHI: India's Fauja Singh, believed to be the world's oldest distance runner, has died in a road accident aged 114, his biographer said Tuesday. Singh, an Indian-born British national, nicknamed the "Turbaned Tornado", died after being hit by a vehicle in Punjab state's Jalandhar district on Monday. "My Turbaned Tornado is no more," Fauja's biographer Khushwant Singh wrote on X. "He was struck by an unidentified vehicle... in his village, Bias, while crossing the road. Rest in peace, my dear Fauja." Singh did not have a birth certificate but his family said he was born on April 1, 1911. He ran full marathons (42 kilometre) till the age of 100. His last race was a 10-kilometre (six-mile) event at the 2013 Hong Kong Marathon when 101, where he finished in



one hour, 32 minutes and 28 seconds. He became an international sensation after taking up distance running at the ripe old

age of 89, after the death of his wife and one of his sons, inspired by seeing marathons on television. Although widely regarded as

the world's oldest marathon runner, he was not certified by Guinness World Records as he could not prove his age, saying that birth certificates did not exist when he was born under British colonial rule in 2011. Singh was a torchbearer for the Olympics at Athens 2004 and London 2012, and appeared in advertisements with sports stars such as David Beckham and Muhammad Ali. His strength and vitality were credited to a routine of farm walks and a diet including Indian sweet "laddu" packed with dry fruits and home-churned curd. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tribute on social media. "Fauja Singh was extraordinary because of his unique persona and the manner in which he inspired the youth of India on a very important topic of fitness," said Modi on X "He was an exceptional athlete with incredible determination. Pained by his passing away, My thoughts are with his family and countless admirers around the world."

Governor KP Unveils
Upcoming Initiatives
for Sports Promotion

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Faisal Karim Kundi, has unveiled a series of new initiatives aimed at promoting sports and empowering youth across the province, including the Governor KP Sports Awards and a new 'Adopt a Player' mobile application, designed to provide a platform for young talented players to shine and raise the country's name on the global stage. Speaking to the delegation of the Rawalpindi-Islamabad Sports Journalists Association (RISJA), led by its president Abubakar Bin Tallat, during a meeting at Governor House Peshawar, Governor Kundi announced that the First Governor KP Sports Awards will honor and recognize athletes from KP who have excelled at national and international levels. He stressed that acknowledging local talent is vital for inspiring the next generation of athletes.

In a significant technological step, the Governor also revealed plans for the launch of the 'Adopt a Player' mobile application, aimed at connecting emerging athletes with sponsors and supporters. "This app will enable businesses and individuals to directly sponsor young players, providing them with access to better training, equipment, and facilities," he said. Additionally, Governor Kundi announced that preparations are underway to launch professional Cricket and Football Leagues in KP, providing structured platforms for local talent to showcase their skills and progress towards national and international recognition. During the meeting, Governor Kundi expressed serious concern over the prolonged delay in the completion of Peshawar's iconic Arbab Niaz Cricket Stadium. He noted that despite the passage of considerable time, the development work remains incomplete, depriving the province's cricket enthusiasts of a modern sports facility.

Highlighting the passion for cricket and the abundance of raw talent in the region, the Governor remarked that while the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) successfully developed stadiums in Lahore, Karachi, and Rawalpindi in a short period, the provincial government has failed to complete Peshawar's stadium. "The passion for cricket and football in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is unmatched, but our infrastructure must reflect and support this enthusiasm," Governor Kundi stated. He reaffirmed his commitment to resolving the delays and ensuring timely completion of the stadium for the benefit of KP's youth. The RISJA delegation appreciated the Governor's proactive steps towards sports development and pledged full media support to promote these initiatives. The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to promoting sports and strengthening youth development across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa through joint efforts.

Pakistan army
dominate
Junior Table
Tennis C'ship

WAH CANTT: Pakistan Army emerged as the undisputed champions of the 30th Chairman POF Board National Junior Table Tennis Championship 2025, clinching top honors in multiple categories, including the U-19 Boys and Girls singles, U-15 Boys and Girls, as well as mixed doubles events. The championship, organized by the Islamabad Table Tennis Association in collaboration with the POF Sports Directorate, was held at the POF Sports Complex Gymnasium Hall in Wah Cantt.

In the highlight match of the event, Pakistan Army's Mohammad Ahmed claimed the U-19 Boys title by defeating Sindh's Mohammad Abbas in straight sets (11-6, 11-3, 11-9). Abbas appeared visibly nervous throughout the final, allowing Ahmed to secure an easy victory and the prestigious national title. In the U-19 Girls final, Army's Hanqa Hassan overpowered her teammate Hoor Fawad 3-1 to clinch the gold. U-15 Boys final also saw an all-Army clash, with Noor Khan defeating Abdul Mohammad 3-0 to emerge champion. – APP

Sweden's Soft
Hooligans push
better vibes at
Women's Euros

ZURICH: Swedish supporters' group the Soft Hooligans have brought their chants, drums and message of inclusion to Switzerland to support their national team at Euro 2025, to promote good vibes in the stands and better conditions for women's football. The idea for the Soft Hooligans came about in 2017 when Kajsa Aronsson, 61, and her daughter Estrid Kjellman, 29, attended the Women's Euros in the Netherlands. "It was just so incredibly dead. We shouted sometimes, we cheered, and people looked at us as if we were completely crazy," Kjellman told AFP.

"We joked that we were hooligans. And then we were like: 'But we're not like other hooligans, we're soft hooligans'," she added with a big smile. The young woman then created a Facebook group to spread their message. "In the beginning, there was no defined cheering section," Aronsson explained. "We had to build everything from scratch and get people to want to stand in the stands. Early on, it wasn't even that much fun to attend the games. You were on your own," Kjellman said. Eight years later, with the Women's Euros now underway in Switzerland, the atmosphere has changed significantly, the two women noted, sitting in front of a ski lift in an alpine landscape wearing caps with the slogans "More Women in Football" and "Soft Hooligans". "There are many more Swedes here. I think there's a big difference with the other teams too," said Kjellman. "In England, there were several matches where the opposing team basically had no supporters. Now I think most teams have some kind of organised supporter group," she added. A change they welcome enthusiastically. "We definitely cheer for Sweden the most. But then you support women's football and want there to be more atmosphere, better football, better conditions," said Kjellman. "The culture in the stands is also a big part of making it more and more interesting to go to women's football matches." – Agencies

India orders airlines
to check fuel switches
on Boeing jets

NEW DELHI: India has ordered its airlines to examine fuel switches on several Boeing models after they came under scrutiny following last month's crash of an Air India jet which killed 260 people. A preliminary report, issued by India's Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau on Saturday, found that the switches had flipped from run position to cutoff shortly after takeoff. The report 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 not. India's Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) issued the order Monday to investigate the locking feature on the fuel control switches of several Boeing models, including 787s and 737s. The order came after Boeing notified operators that the fuel switch locks on its jets were safe. But it was in line with a Special Airworthiness Information Bulletin (SAIB) issued by the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in 2018, which recommended inspection of the locks to ensure they could not be moved accidentally. Several Indian and international airlines have already begun their own inspections of fuel switches. "It has come to the notice of DGCA, that several operators – internationally as well as domestic – have initiated inspection on their aircraft fleet as per the SAIB," DGCA said in a statement. In view of the SAIB, all airline operators of the affected aircraft must complete the inspection by July 21, it added. The Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner was headed from Ahmedabad in western India to London when it crashed, killing all but one of the 242 people on board as well as 19 people on the ground. – Agencies

Over 1,000 athletes participate at IMMAF
Youth World Championships in Al Ain

"This year's championship has attracted record participation, reflecting the rapid development of the event and reinforcing its position as a global platform for preparing the future stars of MMA," Al Dhaheri said

ABU DHABI: The UAE Jiu-Jitsu and Mixed Martial Arts Federation is ramping up final preparations to host the sixth edition of the IMMAF Youth World Championships, which will take place in Al Ain from 21st to 27th July. More than 1,000 male and female athletes from 60 countries are set to compete, marking a record number of participants and highlighting the event's growing global profile. Leading countries taking part include reigning champions Ukraine, as well as the United Kingdom, Uzbekistan, the UAE, and Armenia. This year, the championship will be held in Al Ain for the first time, while the UAE continues its role as host for the fourth consecutive year. Participation has surged from 200 athletes in the third edition held in 2022 to over 1,000 this year. The sharp increase confirms the championship's rising popularity and the UAE's key role in transforming it into a preferred destination for young talent in mixed martial arts. Mohammed bin Dalmouj Al Dhaheri, Board Member of the UAE Jiu-Jitsu and Mixed Martial Arts Federation and Chairman of the MMA Committee, said that preparations are progressing according to a comprehensive plan cov-

ering all organisational, logistical, and technical aspects. The Federation is working closely with local and international partners to deliver an outstanding edition that reflects the UAE's reputation for hosting world-class sporting events.



"This year's championship has attracted record participation, reflecting the rapid development of the event and reinforcing its position as a global platform for preparing the future stars of MMA," Al Dhaheri said. Al Dhaheri added that the 2025 edition will offer a well-rounded experience for athletes, delegations, and spectators. Alongside the high-level competition, a range of cultural and entertainment programmes will help cement the championship's status as a leading international event and a meeting point for emerging talent. Meanwhile, the UAE National Team continues its preparations at a training camp in Thailand, focused on enhancing both physical and technical readiness. The camp aims to ensure the athletes deliver a strong performance that reflects the development of MMA in the UAE and positions them to compete for top honours at the championship. – Agencies

Japan provides grant aid for JDS to Pakistan

On this occasion, Ambassador AKAMATSU stated: The Government of Japan fully understands the importance of social and human capital development in Pakistan and believes among the key enablers is a responsive and accountable public administration

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Japan has extended grant aid worth approximately 379 million Japanese Yen for the implementation of the Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS) FY 2025 Program in Pakistan. A formal signing ceremony was held in Islamabad, where Notes Verbales were signed and exchanged between H.E. Mr. AKAMATSU Shuichi, the Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, and Dr. Kazim Niaz, Secretary, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Government of Pakistan. Additionally, a Grant Agreement outlining the implementation details of the project for fiscal year 2025 was signed between Mr. Naoaki MIYATA, Chief Representative of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in Pakistan, and Mr. Miran Mohiyuddin Soomro, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Economic Affairs. The JDS Program is part of Japan's commitment to strengthen the administrative capacities of the Government of Pakistan which was initiated in 2018. The program offers highly capable Pakistani government officers the opportunity to pursue Master's

and Ph.D. degrees at leading Japanese universities. These officers are selected from those involved in planning and implementing social and economic development policies. Through the JDS Program JICA has so far sent over hundred government officers to Japan, out of which nearly 70 scholars have successfully completed their



studies and returned to Pakistan, contributing their enhanced knowledge and skills to the country's development. The focus areas of study under this program include public administration and finance (Disciplines of Public Policy and Development Studies), Industrial Promotion and Investment Climate, Energy Policy and

Response to Climate Change and Agribusiness and Food Security.

On this occasion, Ambassador AKAMATSU stated: "The Government of Japan fully understands the importance of social and human capital development in Pakistan and believes among the key enablers is a responsive and accountable public administration. Building the capacity of young outstanding civil servants in various technical areas is thus imperative in strengthening public administration that can effectively address the multi-dimensional development challenges in this country."

Mr. Naoaki MIYATA, Chief Representative of JICA Pakistan Office, added:

"This program will make a significant contribution to human resource development in Pakistan. JDS fellows will acquire advanced knowledge and skills which will enhance their capacities in policy planning and implementation. We believe these individuals will play pivotal leadership roles within the Government of Pakistan, contributing to national development and the well-being of the people. Moreover, the JDS Program is a testament to the enduring partnership and friendship between Japan and Pakistan."

Jirga held
to address
security
situation...

FROM PAGE 01

government and Bajaur's tribal leadership, aimed at resolving issues through dialogue and consensus. Participants paid tribute to the martyrs and expressed deep sorrow and solidarity with their families. A collective prayer was also offered for the elevation of their ranks. The jirga acknowledged the significant sacrifices made by the people and elders of Bajaur in the pursuit of peace. Speakers emphasized the urgent need to strengthen cooperation between the public, the government, and law enforcement agencies. They stressed that future security measures must be taken with consideration for the well-being of the local population. Acting Chief Secretary and the Inspector General of Police reassured the jirga participants that the government is fully aware of public concerns and is committed to making the restoration of peace its top priority. They emphasized that joint efforts, mutual trust, and community engagement are essential to eliminate terrorist elements.

President,
PM vow to
work jointly

FROM PAGE 01

order in the country and measures against terrorism were also discussed. "The prime minister briefed the president on the government's measures to improve the economy. Both leaders reiterated their commitment to work together for the country's stability, development, and prosperity," the statement said. The meeting was also attended by Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal, Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and PM's Adviser on Political and Public Affairs Rana Sanaulah.

IHC order
govt to form
commission

FROM PAGE 01

the formation of an inquiry commission to examine how blasphemy laws are being implemented. Accepting the petitions, the court instructed that the commission must complete its proceedings within four months of formation. The IHC further ruled that if the commission requires more time to complete its task, it may approach the court for an extension. A report published by the government-run National Commission for Human Rights in October last year said there were 767 people, mostly young men, in jail awaiting trial over blasphemy allegations.

"This is a huge ray of hope and it's the first time that the families have felt heard," said lawyer Imaan Mazari, who represents the families of arrested men and women, of the court order. "Youngsters have been falsely roped into cases of such a sensitive nature that the stigma will last forever even if they are acquitted," she added. The Legal Commission on Blasphemy Pakistan (LCBP) is the most active of lawyers groups prosecuting young men in Pakistan.

At SCO,
Pakistan says
committed...

FROM PAGE 01

arbitrary use of force is normalised." The heaviest fighting in decades between Pakistan and India was sparked by an April 22 attack in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) that killed 26 people, most of them tourists. New Delhi blamed Pakistan for the attack, a charge denied by Islamabad. In response to India's cross-border strikes, Pakistan had launched Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos after downing six Indian Air Force jets, including three Rafales in response to Indian aggression. The two countries, following four days of armed conflict, agreed on a US-brokered ceasefire on May 10. During his address today, the foreign minister stressed that all disputes and differences must be resolved through dialogue and diplomacy, rather than conflict and confrontation.

Briefs

SECP makes
public Women
EquiSmart
Policy for
Consultation

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has issued the Draft Women EquiSmart Policy 2025-2028, its first comprehensive gender equality framework for regulated sectors, including capital markets, insurance, non-banking finance, and the corporate sector. The framework is now available on the SECP's website for public consultation, said a press release issued by the SECP on Tuesday. The draft framework reflects the SECP's strategic shift from fragmented diversity efforts to a structured, cohesive regulatory approach to gender inclusion, aligned with national priorities and global frameworks. Built around six core pillars—women's leadership on boards, gender-disaggregated reporting, women's entrepreneurship, gender-smart products, workplace inclusivity, and institutional capacity building—the policy outlines current practices, identifies existing gaps and provides actionable recommendations supported by timelines and key stakeholders. The SECP invites feedback from all stakeholders on the policy recommendations and action plan.—APP

Gold prices
dip by Rs 700
per tola

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat per tola gold decreased by Rs.700 and was traded at Rs.359,000 on Tuesday as compared to its sale at Rs. 359,700 on the last trading day, All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewelers Association reported. The prices of 10 grams of 24 karat also decreased by Rs600 to Rs.307,784 from Rs. 308,384 and for 10 grams of 22 Karat it went down by Rs.550 to Rs.282,145 from Rs. 282,695. The rates of per tola and ten gram silver decreased by Rs73 and Rs 62 to Rs.4,014 and Rs.3,441 respectively.—The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$7 to \$3,365 from \$3,372 whereas that of silver decreased by \$0.73 to \$38.30 from \$39.03, the Association reported.—APP

Rupee gains
05 paisa
against US
Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Tuesday appreciated by 05 paisa against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 284.66 against the previous day's closing of Rs 284.71. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs287.50 and Rs288, respectively. The price of the Euro decreased by 01 paisa to close at Rs 332.73 against the last day's closing of Rs 332.74, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen decreased by 01 paisa and closed at Rs 1.92, whereas a decline of Rs 1.22 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 382.79 compared to the previous day's closing of Rs 384.01. The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal decreased by 01 paisa each to close at Rs 77.50 and Rs 75.90, respectively.—APP

Divided EU weighs action
against Israel over Gaza war

Saar, speaking at a meeting in Brussels on Monday, was confident Israel would avoid further EU action. "I'm sure not any of them will be adopted by the EU member states," said the foreign minister. "There's no justification whatsoever

BRUSSELS: EU foreign ministers on Tuesday discussed options for action against Israel over the war in Gaza — but looked unlikely to agree on any. The bloc's foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas has put forward 10 potential steps after Israel was found to have breached a cooperation deal between the two sides on human rights grounds. The measures range from suspending the entire accord or curbing trade ties to sanc-

tioning Israeli ministers, imposing an arms embargo and halting visa-free travel. Despite growing anger over the devastation in Gaza, EU states remain divided over how to tackle Israel and diplomats say there appears to be no critical mass for any move. "I can't predict how the discussion will go," Kallas said, ahead of the foreign ministers' talks in Brussels. She said the main fo-

cus would likely be on how the EU could leverage improvements to the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. That comes after Kallas on Thursday announced a deal with Israel's Foreign Minister Gideon Saar, to open more entry points and allow in more food. Gaza's two million residents face dire humanitarian conditions as Israel has severely limited aid during its war with Palestinian militant group Hamas.

"We see some positive signs when it comes to border crossings to the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. That comes after Kallas on Thursday announced a deal with Israel's Foreign Minister Gideon Saar, to open more entry points and allow in more food. Gaza's two million residents face dire humanitarian conditions as Israel has severely limited aid during its war with Palestinian militant group Hamas.

on Monday, was confident Israel would avoid further EU action. "I'm sure not any of them will be adopted by the EU member states," said the foreign minister. "There's no justification whatsoever." While the EU appears unable to take further moves against Israel, just getting to this stage has been a considerable step. The bloc only agreed to review the cooperation deal after Israel relaunched military operations in Gaza fol-

lowing the collapse of a ceasefire in March. Until then deep divisions between countries backing Israel and those more favorable to the Palestinians had hamstrung any move. In a sign of that, Hungary looked likely to maintain a block on more sanctions on Israeli settlers in the West Bank despite French minister Jean-Noel Barrot making a fresh plea for action. The war was sparked by Hamas's October 7, 2023 attack on Isra-

el, which led to 1,219 deaths, most of them civilians, according to an AFP tally based on official figures. Of 251 people taken hostage by Hamas, 49 are still held in Gaza, including 27 the Israeli military says are dead. Hamas-run Gaza's health ministry says that at least 58,386 Palestinians, most of them civilians, have been killed in Israel's retaliatory campaign. The UN considers those figures reliable.—Agencies

Most missing
persons
found after
boat capsizes
in Indonesia

PADANG, INDONESIA: Most of the 11 people reported missing after a boat capsized off Indonesia's western island of Sumatra were rescued Tuesday, local authorities said, with some surviving by clinging on to pieces of the boat. Authorities had reported earlier Tuesday that 11 people were still missing after a boat carrying 18 capsized a day before, but rescue officials said 10 more were found. The vessel reportedly capsized around 11:00 am Monday as it sailed around the Mentawai islands, an archipelago off the west coast of Sumatra, the Mentawai search and rescue agency said. Rescuers are still searching for one person, and checking unconfirmed information they may have been sighted. "Seventeen (people) are confirmed safe," Mentawai search and rescue agency head Rudi, who like many Indonesians goes by one name, told AFP Tuesday. "We are still confirming for the one person. The team is heading to the location." Some of those rescued were wearing life jackets and some clung to pieces of the overturned boat, Rudi told reporters Tuesday.—APP

ICCI urges
further cuts
in power
tariffs

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) has urged the government to further reduce power tariffs in order to strengthen Pakistan's industrial competitiveness in global markets. It urged that high energy costs have long been a major barrier to productivity and growth in the country's industrial sector, said a press release issued here Tuesday. President Nasir Mansoor Qureshi, along with Senior Vice President Abdul Rehman Siddiqui and Vice President Nasir Mehmood Chaudhry, underscored the urgent need for a sustainable and industry-friendly energy policy, adding that without timely reforms, the private sector would continue to face serious challenges in expanding and competing internationally. Over the years, elevated electricity prices have drastically eroded industrial output and weakened our global market position, President Qureshi stated. "Now is the time to take bold, corrective measures to reverse this trend. The ICCI leadership stressed the importance of stable and predictable electricity rates not only for industries but also for households, calling on the government to work hand-in-hand with the business community to ensure long-term affordability and reliability in power supply. They maintained that acknowledging the private sector's concerns and addressing them through practical, effective solutions will help rejuvenate industrial activity, promote investment, and accelerate national economic progress. Reiterating ICCI's commitment to being a constructive partner, the Chamber's leadership assured full cooperation with the government in creating a conducive business environment that enables sustainable growth and enhances Pakistan's global economic standing.—APP



LONDON: At the historic House of Commons in London, Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kalam Khan presents a box of premium Pakistani mangoes to UK Prime Minister's Trade Envoy Mohammad Yasin MP as a gesture of goodwill and a symbol of Pakistan's rich agricultural heritage.

Tanveer chairs
meeting to ensure
sugar price
stabilization

ISLAMABAD: Minister for National Food Security & Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain on Tuesday said that the government is fully committed for providing relief to the public. He said that all possible measures are being taken to ensure the availability of sugar at affordable prices. He further emphasized that strict implementation of the retail price will be ensured and hoarding or profiteering will not be tolerated. He stated this while chairing a meeting with the Pakistan Sugar Mills Association (PSMA) to address the implementation of the government-notified ex-mill price of sugar and ensure its smooth availability in the market. The meeting was attended by the Chairman and senior members of PSMA, along with senior officials of the ministry. During the meeting, detailed deliberations were held on the enforcement of the ex-mill sugar price and steps needed to ensure immediate and uninterrupted supply of sugar across the country. The association appreciated the government's decision and assured its full cooperation in stabilizing prices. The Pakistan Sugar Mills Association agreed to supply sugar at the ex-mill price of Rs. 165 per kg. It was mutually agreed that the impact of the price reduction would start reflecting in the retail market within the next two to three days. Speaking on the occasion, Rana Tanveer Hussain further emphasized that strict implementation of the retail price will be ensured and hoarding or profiteering will not be tolerated. The Minister highlighted that an effective mechanism has been devised to curb artificial price hikes and ensure consistent supply. He reiterated that public interest remains the top priority of the government and that the ministry will continue to work in close coordination with the sugar industry to maintain price stability.—DNA

Japan's ruling
coalition
seen losing
upper house
majority

TOKYO: Japan's ruling coalition will likely lose its majority in the upper house election on July 20, the Asahi newspaper said on Tuesday, heightening the risk of political instability at a time the country struggles to strike a trade deal with the US. Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba's ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and its coalition partner Komeito will likely struggle to retain the 50 seats needed to defend its majority in the upper house of parliament, the Asahi said. The LDP will likely win just around 35 seats, the paper said. The LDP currently hold 52 seats. Asahi said its report was based on phone and Internet surveys conducted on voters July 13-14, as well as research nationwide by the newspaper's journalists. Ishiba's administration has seen approval ratings slide as the rising cost of living, including the soaring price of Japan's staple rice, hit households.—APP

SNGPL, RCCI discuss
key initiatives for
business community

Rawalpindi: A high-level delegation from Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) visited the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) to discuss key initiatives aimed at improving gas supply, infrastructure, and customer service for the business community in the region. During the visit, it was announced that a dedicated SNGPL Help Desk will be established at RCCI to facilitate the business community and provide real-time support and guidance. The delegation also shared that work has commenced on a major project to supply an additional 100 MMCFD (Million Cubic Feet per Day) of gas to Rawalpindi, which will help mitigate low gas pressure and load-shedding issues during the winter season. The officials confirmed that the segregation of gas supply lines for Rawalpindi and Islamabad has been successfully completed, improving distribution efficiency. Notably, SNGPL has significantly reduced its gas losses from 13% to 5%, and customer service delivery is being further enhanced. The SNGPL delegation included: Saqib Arbab, Deputy Managing Director (Operations), Faisal Iqbal, Deputy Managing Director (Services), Taj Ali Khan, Senior General Manager (Distribution North), and Masum Abrar, General Manager, Rawalpindi Region. The meeting was chaired by RCCI Acting President Khalid Farooq Qazi, with Group Leader Sohail Altaf and Vice President Fahad Barlas also in attendance. Members of the Executive Committee, representatives of the trader community, and other chamber members were present as well. SNGPL officials provided a comprehensive briefing on ongoing and upcoming projects aimed at addressing gas shortages, low pressure, and the issuance of domestic and commercial connections. To enhance transparency and communication, regular awareness sessions will be held for consumers. The delegation also revealed that SNGPL is undertaking a major upgrade of gas meters to monitor leakage, supply pressure, and improve overall efficiency. A new project has also been initiated to tackle issues such as pipeline deterioration, leakage, EVS meter malfunctions, and overbilling. Additionally, the SNGPL team announced plans to visit the Rawat Industrial Estate to conduct a survey and assess the feasibility of establishing a help desk there as well. During the meeting, RCCI members raised concerns regarding low pressure, delayed industrial connections, and service issues, to which the SNGPL officials assured timely resolution, improved coordination, and consistent stakeholder engagement moving forward.—DNA

Islamabad deserves share in NFC award

NASIR MANSOOR QURESHI



As Pakistan approaches the formulation of the 11th National Finance Commission (NFC) Award, a glaring constitutional omission continues to undermine the principles of equity and fiscal federalism: the capital city of Islamabad remains entirely excluded from the revenue-sharing mechanism of the NFC. Despite its status as

the administrative, political, and diplomatic epicenter of the country—and home to over 2.3 million residents—Islamabad receives no share from the divisible pool of federal taxes. This systemic exclusion has left the Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI) financially paralyzed, relying on ad hoc allocations and unsustainable land-based revenue to fulfill core civic responsibilities. The NFC Award, established under Article 160 of the Constitution, governs the distribution of federally collected taxes—such as income tax, sales tax on goods, federal excise duties, and customs duties—between the federation and the provinces. The 7th NFC Award, promulgated through President's Order No. 5 of 2010 (amended in 2015), remains in effect, allocating 57.5 percent of the net federal revenues to the provin-

ces, while the center retains 42.5 percent. Provincial shares are determined by a multi-indicator formula: population (82%), poverty and backwardness (10.3%), revenue generation (5%), and inverse population density (2.7%). Under this formula, Punjab receives 51.74%, Sindh 24.55%, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 14.62% (plus an additional 1% for war-on-terror expenses), and Balochistan 9.09%. In fiscal year 2025-26, these percentages translate into substantial sums: Punjab will receive Rs4.07 trillion, Sindh Rs2.04 trillion, KP Rs1.34 trillion, and Balochistan Rs743 billion. These allocations include adjustments for straight transfers, royalty shares, and additional grants. And yet, Islamabad—the face of the federation—receives nothing. The capital's development and maintenance are instead funded through discretionary federal budget lines and CDA's

land sales. For FY2024-25, CDA has projected receipts of Rs91 billion, nearly 40 percent of which are contingent upon plot auctions and leases. This model is inherently fragile. It compromises long-term urban planning, incentivizes arbitrary asset liquidation, and depletes public land holdings. Critical infrastructure projects such as the expansion of the Islamabad Expressway, the stalled mass transit systems, and the long-awaited Ghazi Barotha water supply scheme remain either underfunded or indefinitely delayed. Between 2016 and 2022, CDA transferred Rs43 billion to MCI to support essential services such as sanitation and street lighting. Shockingly, only Rs14 billion of this was reimbursed—forcing CDA to cover the deficit through its own revenues or federal bailouts. Meanwhile, Islamabad, unlike provincial capitals such

as Lahore and Karachi, cannot access NFC-backed provincial transfers. Its development priorities are buried within the federal Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP), where they must compete with nationwide interests and shifting political calculations. This chronic underfunding is not merely a budgetary oversight—it is a structural injustice. The capital city does not exist in a vacuum. It serves not only its own residents but also accommodates thousands of federal government employees, diplomats, visiting dignitaries, and international institutions. It is the symbolic and operational seat of the federation. To leave it fiscally orphaned is to weaken the federation itself. The remedy lies in Islamabad's formal and permanent inclusion in the NFC framework. At least five percent of the total divisible pool should be ear-

marked for the Islamabad Capital Territory and other federally administered areas. This would not be unprecedented: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa receives an additional 1% share for security-related expenditures, and a 3% share was previously proposed for the now-merged Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). Such allocations reflect the principle of differentiated needs—a principle that surely applies to the capital city. Time is of the essence. The 10th NFC will expire on July 23, 2025, without having produced an award. The last finalized NFC Award was issued in 2010. Since then, successive commissions have failed to achieve consensus and have operated under annual extensions. Recent IMF-recommended reforms toward a National Fiscal Pact have yielded only non-binding statements

with no legal enforceability. As the Finance Division begins consultations for the 11th NFC and provinces submit their technical nominations, this moment offers a critical opportunity to redress Islamabad's exclusion. A predictable, constitutionally embedded revenue stream is essential—not only for sound urban management, but for upholding the stature of the capital in the eyes of citizens and the world. A capital that serves the entire federation must not be left to fend for itself. Its future cannot hinge on bureaucratic discretion or the sale of its soil. The time has come to correct this foundational inequity. A capital without a share is a capital without a future. Let us ensure that Islamabad receives its due—within the NFC, and within the nation's vision for equitable growth. —The writer is the President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI)

Briefs

Heavy rains,
lightning
kill 6 KP

DNA

PESHAWAR: At least six people lost their lives in various districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) over the past 24 hours due to heavy rains and lightning strikes, according to a report released by the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA). The fatalities include a man, a woman, and four children, with incidents reported from Bajaur, Kohat, Malakand, and Khyber districts. One child was also injured, while three houses sustained partial damage due to the severe weather. The PDMA has directed local district administrations to provide immediate relief to affected families and ensure the best possible medical care for the injured. The authority warned that the monsoon rains are expected to continue until July 17, urging citizens and officials to take precautionary measures. Meanwhile, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has issued a fresh alert for potential flash floods in various regions of KP. The alert warns that continuous rainfall may cause rivers and streams to overflow, increasing the risk of flooding. The report further highlighted the possibility of urban flooding in cities and landslides in mountainous areas. Strong winds and hailstorms may also damage power infrastructure, the alert added.

Texas flood
death toll rises
to 131 as new
storms loom

TEXAS: The official tally of storm-related deaths across Texas rose to 131 as authorities warned of yet another round of heavy rains 10 days after a Hill Country flash flood that transformed Guadalupe River into a killer torrent. A National Weather Service flood watch forecasting heavy downpours of up to half a foot of rain was posted until Tuesday morning for a wide swath of central Texas extending from the Rio Grande east to San Antonio and Austin. Texas Governor Greg Abbott on Monday said storms had claimed at least 131 lives in Texas since 4th July, the bulk of those deaths in and around Kerrville, up from 120 reported on Friday. He said 97 people were still listed as missing in the greater Kerrville area, down from the 160-plus who authorities said were unaccounted for last week. — Agencies

PA speaker
'halts' action
against
Opp. MPs

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Punjab Assembly Speaker Malik Ahmad Khan has paused further action against 26 suspended opposition lawmakers — 10 of whom were also fined for disorderly conduct — government sources told Geo News on Tuesday. The PA speaker ordered the assembly's secretariat and government members to stop further proceedings against the 10 opposition lawmakers until the ongoing negotiations yield results, the sources revealed. Earlier this month, the speaker had filed the disqualification reference with ECP against 26 MPAs over ruckus, sloganeering, shouting and tearing of documents in the house during the budget session. The sources also said that the process of recovering fines and deducting their salaries to receive the penalty amount has also been put on hold. It is noteworthy to mention here that fines worth over Rs2 million had been imposed on the MPAs over alleged vandalism in the Punjab Assembly. Furthermore, no-confidence motions aimed at removing nine chairpersons of the committees belonging to the opposition have also been stopped.

Indonesian Minister lauds Pak
Army role in fight against terror

Minister of Defence of Indonesia appreciated the role of Pakistan Army in fight against terrorism and reaffirmed Indonesia's commitment to enhancing defence relations with Pakistan



DNA

RAWALPINDI: Lieutenant General Sjafrie Sjamsoeddin (Retd), Minister of Defence of Indonesia leading a delegation comprising representatives from various services and intelligence agencies called on the Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff at General Headquarters on Tuesday. During the meeting both sides exchanged views on bilateral defence collaboration, regional security dynamics and avenues to further strengthen military ties. The meeting underscored the longstanding friendship and cooperation between the two countries. Field Marshal highlighted the importance of mutual cooperation in maintaining peace and stability in the region. Minister of Defence of Indonesia appreciated the role of Pakistan Army in fight against terrorism and reaffirmed Indonesia's commitment to enhancing defence relations with Pakistan.

KSE-100 continues record-breaking
rally to cross 137,000 mark

Benchmark KSE-100 Index climbs to intraday high of 137,727.63 points

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The Pakistan Stock Exchange continued its record-breaking rally on Tuesday on positive investor sentiment, improved economic outlook and aggressive buying by local funds. The benchmark KSE-100 Index climbed to an intraday high of 137,727.63, gaining 1225.1 points, or 0.89%, while touching a low of 136,498.16. The equity market rally is driven by a surge in workers' remittances, robust auto sales, and improved foreign exchange reserves. Mohammad Sohail, the CEO of Topline Securities, said aggressive buying by local funds have resulted in index touching new all-time high of 137,000. "This recent rally is led by banking stocks as investors feel

that banks dividend payout will remain attractive," he added. "There seems to be consolidation post a super sharp rally but fundamentals remain intact for a bull rally. All eyes on earnings season now," said economist and expert AAH Soomro. 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. Additionally, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported that its foreign exchange reserves jumped by \$1.8 billion week-on-week to reach \$14.5 billion for the week ended July 4, marking a 39-month high.

With commercial bank reserves included, the country's total foreign reserves have now crossed the \$20 billion mark for the first time in three years. 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. A day earlier, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb hinted at the possibility of an interest rate cut, saying there is space for monetary easing but the final decision lies with the SBP. The SBP, in its last meeting, held the key policy rate steady at 11%, citing inflationary risks and external uncertainties triggered by the Iran-Israel conflict.

Pak digital growth
ADB highlights roadmap
for economic growth

Digital transformation holds the key for Pakistan to leap forward, adding that technologies like mobile banking and digital payments could significantly boost financial inclusion and entrepreneurship, particularly among underserved and rural populations

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's ambitious digital transformation agenda has the potential to redefine its economic and social trajectory, according to a recent report by the Asian Development Bank (ADB). "By harnessing digital technologies, the government can drive sustainable economic growth, increase the tax-to-gross domestic product (GDP) ratio, grow exports, boost foreign direct investment, enhance social services, and improve governance, all while reducing costs and increasing efficiency," the report "Pakistan's Digital Ecosystem A Diagnostic Report" says. The ADB emphasizes that Pakistan can bypass traditional stages of socioeconomic development by fully leveraging digital innovations. These technologies, it notes, are key to boosting GDP, increasing exports, attracting foreign investment, and enhancing service delivery — all while reducing public sector costs and improving efficiency. According to the report, digital transformation holds the key for Pakistan to leap forward, adding that technologies like mobile banking and digital payments could significantly boost financial inclusion and entrepreneurship, particularly among underserved and rural populations. The report also highlights the transformative impact of digitalization beyond the tech sector. In agriculture, manufacturing, and services, digital tools are enabling increased productivity and innovation. These shifts are not only creating new business opportunities but also generating jobs across the broader economy. — DNA

PIA's privatisation
likely to be finalized
in 2-3 months: source

EOIs submitted by four bidders
cleared by scrutiny committee
to proceed to due diligence

NEWS DESIK

ISLAMABAD: The federal government is aiming to finalise the privatisation of loss-making national carrier, Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), within next two to three months as the process is entering its advanced stages. The expressions of interest (EOIs) for the iconic Roosevelt Hotel in New York are set to be invited in August while the financial adviser for the hotel is finalising the transaction structure. So far, five parties have submitted the EOIs for the airline, with four cleared by the scrutiny committee to proceed to due diligence. These shortlisted bidders were granted access to PIA's financial accounts and operational data from today (Tuesday). Privatisation Commission Secretary Usman Bajwa briefed the National Assembly's Standing Committee on Privatisation, which was chaired by MNA Dr Farooq Sattar on Monday. The government aims to complete PIA's privatisation by the final quarter of 2025, but Bajwa stressed that no decision would be made until investors are fully satisfied. "The winning bidder will be required to expand PIA's fleet from the current 19 aircraft to at least 45," he said. The chairman of the panel and its members emphasised job security for PIA employees, calling for a three-to-five-year employment guarantee. "The well-being of the employees must remain a priority," he said. Bajwa reassured lawmakers that employee protection is being factored into the privatisation deal, noting that the airline's workforce has already been rationalised from 11,000 to 6,000.

Finance Minister briefs Moody's
on Pakistan's stabilizing economy

During the session, the Finance Minister apprised the Moody's team of the significant strides Pakistan has made in stabilizing its economy and laying the foundations for sustainable and inclusive growth

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, accompanied by Minister of State for Finance Bilal Azhar Kayani, Governor State Bank of Pakistan, and senior officials from the Finance Division, Revenue Division, and other relevant Ministries, held a virtual engagement with Moody's Rating Agency today at the Finance Division to provide an in-depth briefing on Pakistan's macroeconomic outlook, reform agenda, and financial stability. During the session, the Finance Minister apprised the Moody's team of the significant strides Pakistan has made in stabilizing its economy and laying the foundations for sustainable and inclusive growth. He underlined the successful completion of the final IMF review under the Stand-By Arrangement, including the disbursement of the second tranche and progress under the Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF), as key milestones that have restored confidence in Pakistan's economic management. The Minister highlighted a series of structural reforms undertaken by the government to anchor long-term stability. These included prudent fiscal measures in the recently announced budget, tariff and trade liberalization geared towards export-led growth, and concerted efforts to rationalize expenditure. The ongoing discussions with the United States on preferential tariff access were also noted as making encouraging headway.

The meeting further outlined Pakistan's re-engagement with global financial markets, including the successful arrangement of \$1 billion in commercial financing from the Middle Eastern region, plans for an inaugural Panda bond, and Pakistan's intent to explore the Eurobond and other international debt markets as credit ratings improve. Minister Aurangzeb and his team presented compelling evidence of macroeconomic recovery, including a sharp reduction in inflation, a cut in the policy rate, stabilization of the exchange rate, a current account surplus, and a surge in foreign exchange reserves—crossing \$14 billion by the end of June. Improvements in remittance inflows and export performance were also cited as signs of resilience and renewed investor confidence. The Moody's team was provided a comprehensive overview of Pakistan's reform journey, with a particular emphasis on improving the tax-to-GDP ratio through technology-driven tax administration reforms, digitization of systems, and robust enforcement measures. The Minister emphasized that under the direct oversight of the Prime Minister—who chairs regular meetings on tax reform—the government was implementing measures to expand the tax base, plug leakages, and enhance compliance. He noted that the Rs. 2 trillion revenue delta achieved this year had come through autonomous efforts, and the government was firmly committed to reaching a tax-to-GDP target of 13 to 13.5 percent in the next few years.

Court frees
man who
cursed CM
Punjab

DNA

LAHORE: A Lahore sessions court on Tuesday discharged an elderly man named Muhammad Sajid, involved in recently using inappropriate language against the Punjab chief minister in a viral video, in a case dating back to 2024. A few days ago, a video of Sajid riding a motorcycle in the rain went viral on social media, in which he could be heard using abusive language against the chief minister. A sessions court on Monday sought a reply from Johar Town police on a habeas corpus petition seeking his recovery. Sajid's son Muhammad Umar had filed the petition for the recovery of his father. According to the court order, a copy of which is available with Dawn.com, "No incriminating evidence is present against the accused person to be sent to judicial remand. "Hence, the request of the investigating officer (IO) has been turned down, the accused person is discharged from the instant case ... first information report, and the IO is ordered to release the person forthwith". The Lahore court discharged Sajid after he was nominated in a June 2024 case filed by the Green Town police station. Police subsequently released the senior citizen from handcuffs. Police had arrested the citizen on July 14, according to a request for his judicial remand and presented him in the Model Town court today. The accused's counsel, Advocate Noman Sarwar Dogar, argued that his client had been wrongfully nominated in the 2024 FIR by the police. The court observed in its order that all the facts and circumstances of the case create doubt in the police's version of events.

Journalists body
urges SC to
review Peca law

IFJ general secretary highlights issue
of legal harassment, defamation,
threats and arrests in letter to CJP

ISLAMABAD: The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) has requested the Supreme Court (SC) to review the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (Peca) legislation and issue necessary directions to the government to amend the Act in consultation with the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) and other relevant forums and media stakeholders. The IFJ, the world's largest organisation of journalists representing over 600,000 members in 142 countries, has expressed concern for journalists and media workers in Pakistan amid the current political, economic, social crisis, and newly legislated Prevention of Electronic Crimes (Amendment) Act (Peca). In a letter addressed to Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Yahya Afridi, IFJ General Secretary Anthony Bellanger has sought swift action to address this critical situation for Pakistan's media and protect press freedom as guaranteed in Article 19 of the country's Constitution.

Mohsin Naqvi meets
Iranian President

Says Iranian nation stood firm against aggression

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi held an important meeting with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian. During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, Pakistan-Iran relations, and bilateral cooperation were discussed in detail. Mohsin Naqvi congratulated President Pezeshkian on Iran's great victory in the war. Mohsin Naqvi stated that the Iranian Supreme Leader and the entire nation stood firmly against aggression. He added that the prudent leadership and excellent strategy of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei played a decisive role in the war, which is a source of pride for the Muslim Ummah. He said that Pakistan strongly condemned the attack on Iran at every forum, the Pakistani Parliament was the first to pass a resolution condemning the imposition of war on Iran and supported Iran's legitimate right to self-defense. — DNA

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