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Floods: PM assures all out support to political leaders

Detailed News On Page-08

US Judge Frank Caprio dies at 88

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British Prime Minister extends condolences

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CPEC- 2 launch on the anvil

China committed to development of Pakistan: Wang Yi

Pakistan, China Hold 6th Strategic Dialogue; Pledge to Deepen Cooperation Under CPEC 2.0

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi held the 6th Round of Pakistan-China Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue in Islamabad on Thursday. The two sides comprehensively reviewed the entire spectrum of Pakistan-China relations and exchanged views on important regional and global developments. Key areas of discussion included the next phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC 2.0), trade and economic ties, multilateral cooperation, and enhancing people-to-people exchanges. Both leaders reaffirmed that the All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership between Pakistan and China is not only vital for regional peace and stability but also essential for the progress and prosperity of the two countries. Deputy Prime Minister Dar underscored Pakistan's strong commitment to advancing cooperation with China, particularly in the areas of infrastructure development, industrialization, and connectivity under CPEC's upgraded phase. He said CPEC continues to play a transformative role in Pakistan's socio-economic development.

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Foreign Minister of China meets PM Shehbaz

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, Mr. Wang Yi, who is on an official visit to Pakistan, called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif at the Prime Minister House, earlier this evening. The Prime Minister was assisted by Deputy Prime Minister & Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Chief of the Army Staff Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir and senior members of the Cabinet. While welcoming the Foreign Minister, the Prime Minister expressed deep appreciation for the leadership, government and the people of China, for their steadfast support to Pakistan in safeguarding its sovereignty, territorial integrity, and national development. Reaffirming Pakistan's unwavering support for China on its core issues, he reiterated Pakistan's commitment to further deepen its All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership with China, as envisioned by the leadership and aspired by the peoples of the two countries. The Prime Minister lauded President Xi Jinping's visionary leadership and his role in strengthening the ironclad friendship between Pakistan and China. While recalling his most cordial and productive meeting with President Xi during his visit to Beijing last year, the Prime Minister stated that he was greatly looking forward to his upcoming visit to Tianjin and Beijing, where he would participate in

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ISLAMABAD: Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, Mr. Wang Yi called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif at the Prime Minister House. – DNA

5-year travel ban on Pakistanis deported from foreign countries

Policy targets citizens deported for crimes or other "undesirable" activities

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The government has introduced a new policy imposing a five-year overseas travel ban on Pakistanis deported from foreign countries, The News reported on Thursday. According to Interior Ministry sources, the restriction will apply to individuals sent back due to criminal offences or other "undesirable" activities,

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One killed in firecracker warehouse blast

DNA

KARACHI: At least one person was killed 34 others sustained injuries on Thursday after a powerful blast ripped through a shop beside a firecracker warehouse on MA Jinnah Road, leading to a massive blaze and intermittent explosions in the area. The sheer intensity of the blast also damaged nearby vehicles and shattered windows of surrounding buildings, filling the area with heavy smoke drifting towards the Lines Area. The ground-plus-two building housed medical equipment shops in addition to the firecracker warehouse.

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Relief for PTI

Supreme Court accepts Imran bail in 8 cases

The verdict comes after the Lahore High Court (LHC) had earlier rejected his pleas for bail, citing the seriousness of charges related to violent attacks on state institutions and military installations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a major relief for Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), the Supreme Court of Pakistan on Thursday accepted bail petitions of former prime minister Imran Khan in 8 separate cases linked to the May 9 riots. The verdict comes after the Lahore High Court (LHC) had earlier rejected his pleas for bail, citing the seriousness of charges related to violent attacks on state institutions and military installations. The cases stem from the violent protests that erupted on May 9, 2023, following Imran Khan's arrest in the Al-Qadir Trust corruption case. Enraged PTI workers stormed sensitive buildings, including the Lahore Corps Commander's residence,

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'Bail does not mean that Khan is acquitted'

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar has said that bail granted to the PTI founder chairman does not equate to acquittal. In a video statement today, he emphasized that the trial against the PTI founder chairman is still ongoing. He said the entire nation witnessed his involvement in orchestrating the events of May 9, which aimed to destabilize

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Briefs

British PM extends condolences

DNA

ISLAMABAD: British Prime Minister Keir Starmer has extended his heartfelt condolences over the tragic loss of lives and property caused by the recent monsoon and flooding in Pakistan. In a letter addressed to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, he expressed deep sorrow over the unfortunate circumstances and the widespread devastation resulting from the disaster. The British PM conveyed his sincere sympathies to all those affected, noting that the situation is particularly distressing for many families of Pakistani origin residing in the United Kingdom. He affirmed that the entire British nation stands in solidarity with the people of Pakistan during this difficult time. PM Starmer also paid tribute to the emergency responders and volunteers who are working tirelessly under extremely challenging conditions.

Aleema Khan son abducted: PTI

DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Salman Akram Raja on Thursday claimed that the Lahore home of Aleema Khan, sister of imprisoned PTI founder Imran Khan, was raided by men in plain clothes. He alleged that her son, Shahrez, was abducted during the operation, while family members were harassed and domestic staff assaulted. The statement came just hours after the Supreme Court granted bail to Imran Khan in eight cases linked to the May 9, 2023 unrest. The three-member bench, headed by Chief Justice Yahya Afridi, approved relief for Khan, ruling that observations in bail matters are interim and should not prejudice trial proceedings.

Justice Mansoor, Justice Muneeb say

JCP not proper forum to hear 26th Amend

The two judges said that at a time when no question was more important for the apex court, the required consensus – which could only be achieved in a manner consistent with the law and the practice of the court by holding a Full Court Meeting – could not emerge



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Supreme Court's Justice Mansoor Ali Shah and Justice Munib Akhtar have held that the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) is not the appropriate forum for deliberation regarding the constitution of a full court for hearing petitions challenging the 26th Constitutional Amendment. Both senior judges clarified their stance through a detailed letter regarding the background of why a full court was not formed

on the issue of the 26th Amendment. "We informally made strenuous efforts that a Full Court meeting be called, either by way of the Court sitting as such on the judicial side or at least convening on the administrative side to hear petitions challenging the 26th Amendment," read the letter. The two judges said that at a time when no question was more important for the apex court, the required consensus – which could only be achieved in a manner consistent with the law and the practice of the court by holding a Full Court Meeting – could not emerge. The result, inter alia, was that the apex court was unable to develop an institutional response. "The process could not be substituted by the CJP informally meeting the judges individually, all the more so when the other members of the Committee (i.e., the undersigned)

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Field Marshal did not talk about anybody's pardon



DG ISPR says perpetrators and facilitators of the May 9 incidents must be brought to justice in accordance with the law. Expressing regret, he said that even a senior journalist had demonstrated such irresponsibility

NEWS DESK

RAWALPINDI: Director General Inter-Services Public Relations (DG ISPR) Lt Gen Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry on Thursday clarified that the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Field Marshal Asim Munir has not given any interview to any journalist. He termed Suhail Warraich's action inappropriate and described it as an effort of self-promotion and personal gain. Talking to journalists, the DG ISPR said the article by Suhail Warraich, which is currently being discussed, pertains to an event in Brussels where hundreds of people took photographs. "Neither PTI nor any apology came under discussion," he said. He said that the perpetrators and facilitators of the May 9 incidents must be brought to justice in accordance with the law. Expressing regret, he said that even a senior journalist had demonstrated such irresponsibility. The DG ISPR said that Pakistan is capable of changing the destiny of the entire region, which is why it continues to face repeated attacks. Travel packages to Pakistan Terming the youth as a great asset of Pakistan, he urged them to understand the legacy and history of their ideo-




logical state and to recognize their strength. "The day they realize their power, no extremist or proxy will be able to frighten them," he added. He said India believed that by supporting its terrorist proxies and facilitators, it could discredit the Pakistan Army through an attack. However, everything unfolded contrary to India's nefarious designs, he observed. Pakistan and its armed forces gave a befitting response to India and its proxies, he asserted. He recounted how some believed that India, with its military machine worth billions of dollars, would easily defeat Pakistan. There were even suggestions that India and its proxies—including Fitna al-Khawarij and Fitna Hindustan—should attack Pakistan simultaneously. However, he said, the entire world witnessed how Pakistan faced the enemy on both fronts. The DG ISPR said that the decision made by all political parties in 2014 to dismantle the "illegal spectrum" to eliminate terrorism from Pakistan has not been fully implemented. Travel packages to Pakistan "When illegal Afghan residents involved in crimes are to be deported, certain political and criminal elements within our own country begin to create problems," he said.




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KP compensation package for flood victims

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government on Thursday has announced compensation package for flood victims of the province.

The package announced by KP Cabinet includes approval of Rs. 2 million compensation for families of those who died in the floods and Rs. 500,000 for the injured, Rs. 1 billion for PDMA under the "Food Stamp" scheme to provide Rs. 15,000 per affected family and special martyr's package for the crew killed in a helicopter crash during Bajaur air relief operations.

Approval of a Rs. 180.3 million special package for police martyrs' families and injured personnel, Rs. 20 billion supplementary grant to complete ongoing development schemes and restore damaged infrastructure and intra-sectoral re-appropriation to improve financial management and efficient use of resources. The package also includes approval of Rs. 62.3 million grant for holding Seerat conferences across the province during the month of Rabi-ul-Awwal, exemption of Peshawar High Court from release policy and full access to the SAP system. Approval of Rs. 20 million financial assistance for medical treatment of former MPA Shaukat Yousafzai, transfer of two kanals of land for establishing Rescue 1122 station in Tehsil Barang, District Bajaur, Rs. 1.38 billion project for construction of Kambar Bypass Road (4.5 km) in District Lower Dir, amendments in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Right to Public Services Act 2014, appointment of Chief Commissioner for Right to

Public Services Commission and nomination of two members for the Workers Welfare Board. These decisions were taken during the 37th meeting of the Provincial Cabinet held on Wednesday night in Peshawar under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Khan Gandapur. Key decisions were made regarding the recent flood situation, provincial development goals, and other administrative matters. The meeting was attended by cabinet members, additional chief secretaries, the senior member of the Board of Revenue, administrative secretaries, and the Advocate General of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The session began with the recitation of the Holy Quran, followed by prayers and Fatiha for those who lost their lives in the floods. A detailed briefing was then given on flood-related damages, relief efforts, and rehabilitation activities. It was informed that the rescue phase has been completed in the first stage, although the search for missing persons continues. Speaking at the meeting, Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur praised the timely and efficient response of the district administration, rescue teams, and all concerned departments and institutions during the flood emergency. He stated that all institutions deserve appreciation for their excellent performance. He assured that compensation payments to the families of the deceased and the injured are ongoing and no affected person will be left out. The Chief Minister directed immediate activation of healthcare centers in the affected areas and ensured availa-

bility of essential medicines. He also instructed the deployment of mobile hospitals and preemptive measures to prevent the outbreak of diseases. Additional directives included the provision of fodder for livestock and steps to protect animals from disease. The Chief Minister ordered a special campaign for the complete cleaning of affected areas and swift restoration of drinking water tube wells. He also called for accelerating the rehabilitation of all connecting roads. He stated that data on property damage is being collected. Homes destroyed by the floods will be rebuilt, and compensation will also be provided for livestock losses and affected businesses. He emphasized that the provincial government is fully capable of restoring the livelihoods of its people. Further, the Chief Minister directed the deployment of more officers in flood-affected districts to expedite relief and rehabilitation work. He mentioned that philanthropists are reaching out to the government to support victims, and a special account has been opened to ensure donations are delivered transparently to the rightful recipients. The provincial government has allocated five billion rupees for relief and rehabilitation in affected areas. Additional Chief Secretary for Home and Tribal Affairs, Abid Majeed, briefed the cabinet that rescue operations are ongoing in flood-hit districts with senior officials present on-site. He provided updates on human casualties, destroyed infrastructure, and aid provided to victims.—APP

Tree plantation drive launched in Kalat

QUETTA :In a bold step toward combating climate change and enhancing environmental sustainability, the Balochistan government has ramped up its province-wide tree plantation campaign. Acting on the special directives of Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti, the Forest Department has approved an ambitious plan to plant millions of trees across Balochistan. As part of this initiative, the District Administration Kalat, in collaboration with the Forest Department, hosted a tree plantation event titled "One Daughter, One Tree" at the Government Girls Degree College Kalat. The campaign aims to promote environmental stewardship while symbolizing the nurturing role of daughters in society.

The event drew participation from key officials and community members, including Additional Deputy Commissioner Shah Nawaz Baloch, Divisional Forest Officer Ali Akbar Bangulzai, College Principal Saqiba Imam, DC Office Focal Person Babu Abdul Salam Menged, SDO Wildlife Sher Ahmed, Range Forest Officer Habib Lehri, and Deputy Ranger Nazir Ahmed Nichari, along with faculty and students.—APP

Major folk festival announced

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson of the National Assembly Standing Committee on National Heritage and Culture, Syeda Nosheen Iftikhar was briefed on Thursday about the performance and ongoing initiatives of the institutions working under the Ministry of National Heritage and Culture Division. Presiding over her first meeting as the newly appointed Chairperson, Syeda Nosheen Iftikhar was joined by Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Aurangzeb Khan Khichi, Secretary Asad Rehman Gillani, and heads of attached organizations. Representatives from Karachi

and Lahore participated via video link. The committee was informed that a major folk festival will be held at Lok Virsa in the second week of November to engage youth and promote Pakistan's rich cultural heritage. Executive Director Lok Virsa, Dr. Waqas, emphasized that such events are crucial in connecting the younger generation with their cultural roots. It was also highlighted that Pakistani artists are being showcased abroad and national pavilions are being set up at international exhibitions to project a positive image of Pakistan. At a recent exhibition in Qatar, Pakistani artists received wide appreciation.

The Chairperson suggested linking schoolchildren with arts and literature, a proposal welcomed by the minister. Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL) Chairperson Dr. Najeeba Arif briefed the committee on PAL's literary publications, multilingual journals, and programs for youth engagement despite financial challenges. The committee also reviewed initiatives to promote Iqbal Studies. Recalling Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's allocation of Rs. 100,000 in 1948 for the promotion of Allama Iqbal's philosophy, the federal minister underscored the importance of acquainting youth with Iqbal's vision.—APP

Danyal leads anti-dengue campaign

RAWALPINDI: Barrister Danyal Chaudhary, Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting conducted an extensive inspection of dengue prevention efforts across various areas of the city on Thursday. He led 'Make Rawalpindi Dengue-Free Campaign', during which he examined the proactive measures and interacted with the people. Accompanied by health officers, he visited Jhanda Chichi, Chaklala Scheme-III and Shah Khalid Colony to assess measures aimed at reducing the spread of dengue. The inspection covered various locations including institutions, graveyards, shops, and residential localities. Areas found with significant dengue larvae presence were immediately sealed to prevent further breeding. Barrister Danyal directed sanitation teams to intensify cleaning operations and ensure effective waste management. Speaking during the visit, he urged residents to actively cooperate with health workers in the fight against dengue. "This is a collective battle," Danyal emphasized urging the public to maintain cleanliness and eliminate stagnant water to prevent the spread of the virus. The parliamentarian underscored the importance of community participation and robust sanitation measures to protect the city from dengue outbreaks. "Health officials and local authorities remain committed to ongoing vigilance and public awareness efforts to ensure a dengue-free Rawalpindi", he said. Earlier, The district administration of Rawalpindi has ordered stronger measures to tackle dengue surge as the authority has shown displeasure over the poor performance. During a routine but important review meeting regarding dengue measures, the Deputy Commissioner, Dr. Hassan Waqar Cheema directed the CEO Health to take strict actions against the officials found negligent in discharging their responsibilities. He further directed the health officials for effective measures. Co-chaired by Dr. Hassan Waqar Cheema and MNA Tahira Aurangzeb, the meeting was attended by Senator Nasir Mahmood Butt, MPAs Raja Saghir Ahmad, Tahseen Fawad, former Mayor Sardar Naseem Ahmad, Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Culture Punjab Shazia Rizwan.—APP

Commodore Sohail takes over as Commander Central Punjab

DNA

LAHORE: Commodore Sohail Ahmad Azmie assumed command as Commander Central Punjab (COMCEP). The Change of Command ceremony was held at Naval Complex Walton, Lahore, where Rear Admiral Jawad Ahmed handed over command to the newly appointed Commander. Commodore Sohail Ahmad Azmie was commissioned in Operations Branch of Pakistan Navy in 1996. He has a distinguished career, holding a wide range of command and staff appointments. His key appointments include Directing Staff at PN War College, Commanding Officer of PNS NASR, Commander AUXMIN - 9 Squadron, Commandant Pakistan Naval Academy, Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Operational Plans), Commander Combined Task Force 151 at HQ Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) Bahrain and Deputy Commandant & Chief Instructor at Pakistan Navy War College. The Commodore is an alumnus of Pakistan Navy War College Lahore and National Defence University Islamabad. In recognition of his meritorious services, he has been awarded the

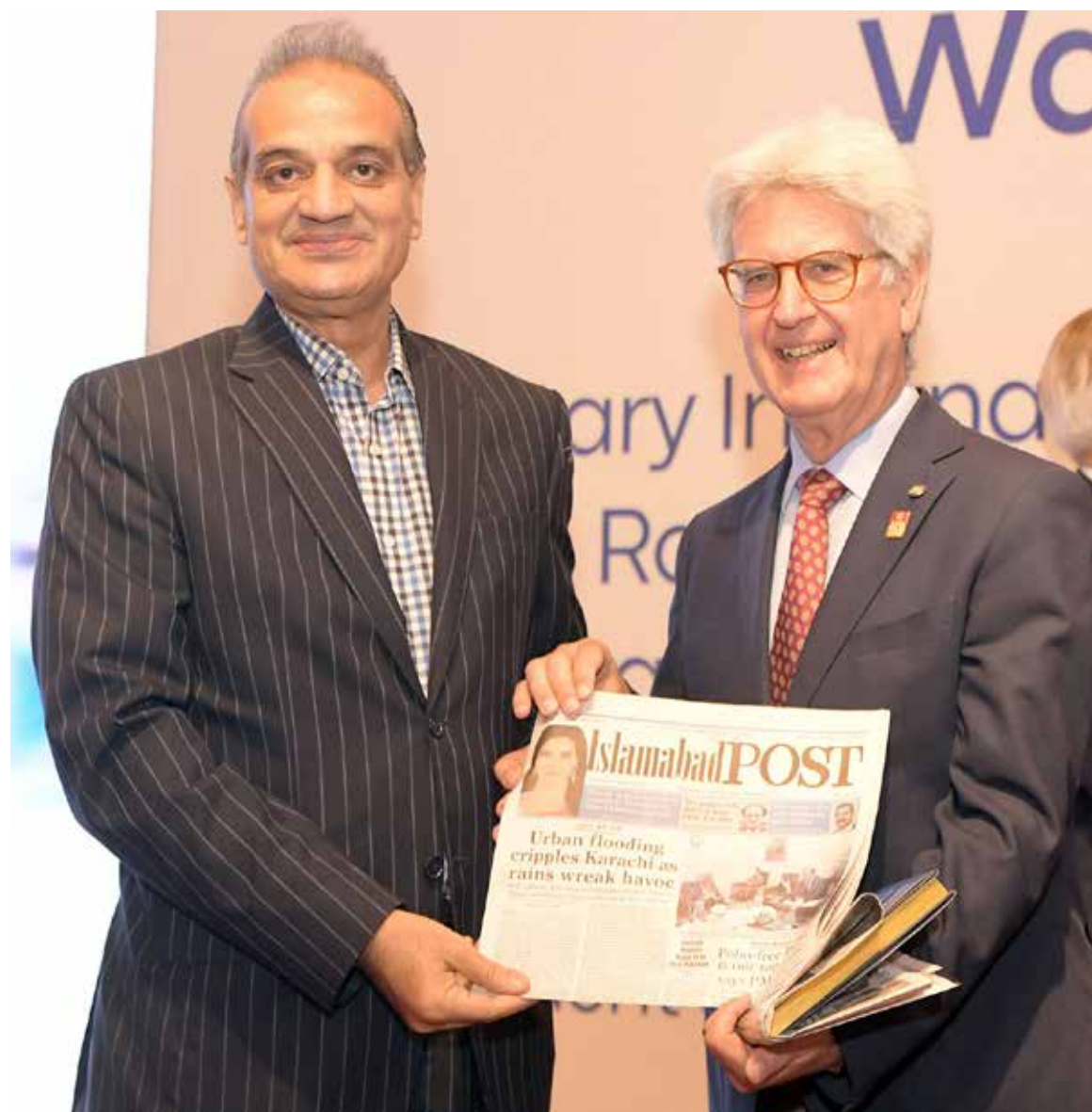


Sitara-e-Imtiaz (Military). During the Change of Command ceremony, Commodore Sohail Ahmad Azmie was presented with a Guard

of Honour and introduced to the Staff Officers of Headquarters COMCEP and Pakistan Navy War College. Commander Central

Punjab exercises authority over all Pakistan Navy units from Bahawalpur to Wazirabad and is also the Commandant of Pakistan Navy

War College, Lahore. The ceremony was attended by Pakistan Navy officers, CPOs, sailors, and civilian personnel.



ISLAMABAD: Editor Daily Islamabad POST Ansar Mahmood Bhatti presenting a copy of daily Islamabad POST to Rotary International President Francisco Azzaro. The issue carried two-page report on his Pakistan visit.—DNA

Power outages at Pumping Stations disrupt water supply

KARACHI: The spokesperson of the Karachi Water and Sewerage Corporation (KWSC) said that despite the ongoing rainfall situation in the city, repeated power breakdowns at several key installations by K-Electric have severely disrupted water supply operations. In a statement, the spokesperson informed that major pumping stations, including Dhabeji, Pipri, and Hub, were facing continuous electricity breakdowns, causing a serious disruption in water supply across the city.

According to the spokesperson, several distribution pumping stations are also facing constant power outages, with many of them shut down due to cable faults. As a result, the feeders supplying power to these critical pumping stations remain affected.—APP

Murad launches special technology zone

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Thursday declared the signing of landmark agreements for Education City as a "historic milestone" for the province and Pakistan, paving the way for the establishment of the country's largest Special Technology Zone (STZ), alongside major foreign investments in renewable energy and energy storage solutions.

The signing ceremony, held at CM House, was attended by Energy Ministers Syed Nasir Shah, Chairman Education City Board Dr Asim Hussain, Special Assistant to CM Syed Qasim Naveed, PSCM Agha Wasif, Chairman STZA Azfra Manzoor, Secretary Investment Khuram Shahzad, PD Education City Abrar Ahmad, Jo Hanns Dieter Trutschler, Chairman Board / Verwaltungsrats Präsiden Meeco AG/ meeco holding, Axel Kaiser, M/s Meeco AG/ Meeco holding and others.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, the chief minister said the 435-acre Special Technology Zone at Education City, will be the first of its kind under the Sindh government,

designed to become a hub of innovation, entrepreneurship, and knowledge-driven economic growth.

The first agreement was signed between the Education City Project and the Special Technology Zones Authority (STZA), Cabinet Division, Government of Pakistan. Under this Zone Development Agreement, the project will advance under a transparent framework, covering master planning, financing, construction, operations, and governance. The initiative will also digitally integrate Education City with STZA's central e-portal to streamline licensing, regulatory approvals, and investor facilitation.

The second set of agreements brought global clean energy leader M/s Meeco AG of Switzerland on board as a strategic partner. M/s Meeco will establish a renewable energy plant based on wind, solar, and battery storage technologies to power Education City. Electricity will be supplied at \$ 0.11/kWh for the first 10 years, competitive with existing providers, along with a 4 per cent royalty for Education City. The tariff will decline after the first decade, making the project highly sustainable and investor-friendly.

In addition, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed with M/s Meeco to establish a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility for advanced energy storage solutions within Education City STZ. Backed by an estimated 100 million in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), the facility will produce energy storage modules for domestic use and export to international markets. The project is expected to create over 1,000 direct and indirect jobs, foster technology transfer, and strengthen Pakistan's role in the global clean energy supply chain.

Calling Education City, a vision for Pakistan's future, Murad Shah said the integration of education, technology, renewable energy, and advanced manufacturing will create an ecosystem driving sustainable growth and global competitiveness. He credited Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's leadership for making innovation and inclusion central to Sindh's development agenda. "I want Education City to be not just the pride of Sindh but a shining example of Pakistan's progress in the world," CM concluded, thanking STZA, Meeco AG, and all stakeholders for their partnership.—APP

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

- AUGUST
- Aug 01/China
Armed Forces Day
- Aug 01/Switzerland
National Day
- Aug 01/Lebanon
Armed Forces Day
- Aug 01 /Syria
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Water Tank

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Pak, Poland discuss employment opportunities, bilateral coop

Pakistan, Poland Strengthen Cooperation to Boost Employment Opportunities and Bilateral Trade GrowthPakistani cultural souvenirs

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Chaudhry Salik Hussain met with the Polish Ambassador to Pakistan, Mr. Maciej Pisarski. The discussion focused on bilateral relations and proposals to provide employment opportunities for Pakistanis in Poland. Federal Minister Chaudhry Salik Hussain stated that over the past year Pakistan exported products worth USD 450 million to Poland in the sectors of textiles, leather, and sports. The Polish ambassador expressed condolences for the loss of life and property due to recent floods in various areas of Pakistan. He also indicated that there are employment opportunities for Pakistanis in Poland, and that stringent measures have been taken to curb illegal immigration. Poland's Foreign Minister will visit Pakistan in October, during which several Memoranda of Understanding (MoU's) are expected to be signed. Federal Minister Chaudhry Salik Hussain noted that in one year, 742,000 Pakistanis went abroad for employment, and that Pakistan ranks fourth worldwide in exporting its workforce. He reiterated that strong actions have been taken to prevent illegal immigration. Pilot projects with Korea and Japan to provide employment for Pakistanis are progressing successfully. During the meeting, both sides agreed to enhance cooperation to provide employment opportunities for Pakistanis in Poland.



Ayaz pays homage to civilians, security forces

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Thursday said that the International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism serves as a solemn occasion to honour the innocent civilians and valiant security personnel who have laid down their lives in the fight against terrorism. In his message, the Speaker paid heartfelt tribute to the martyrs, law enforcement agencies and frontline defenders whose sacrifices have fortified the nation's resolve to uphold peace and security. He said the pain and suffering of families affected by terrorism remain deeply etched in the national conscience. Highlighting Pakistan's two-decade-long struggle against terrorism, the Speaker noted that over 80,000 civilians, military personnel, and law enforcement officers have embraced martyrdom. He added that many political and religious leaders have also fallen victim to the scourge, underscoring its indiscriminate nature. The prolonged conflict, he said, has inflicted economic losses worth billions of dollars, severely impacting national development and public welfare. The Speaker stated that India-backed terrorists continue to hatch conspiracies aimed at sabotaging peace and progress in Pakistan. Despite these hostile designs, he affirmed, the Pakistani nation has consistently responded with courage, resilience, and unity. He lauded the unparalleled sacrifices of the country's security forces and law enforcement agencies, noting that initiatives under the National Action Plan, along with counter-terrorism narratives and socio-economic reforms, have significantly weakened extremist networks. Reiterating unwavering solidarity with the families of terror victims, the Speaker said the sacrifices of the martyrs will forever remain a proud chapter in the nation's history. He pledged that the fight against terrorism will continue until the last terrorist is eliminated. Calling terrorism a global challenge, the Speaker emphasized the need for unified international efforts to eradicate it. He said sustainable peace can only be achieved through collective resolve and cooperation among nations. Expressing concern over the plight of oppressed communities, the Speaker said the people of Palestine and occupied Kashmir continue to suffer under terrorism. He described the ongoing Israeli aggression in Palestine as a grave test of global conscience, with thousands falling victim to targeted violence.—dna

Nasir for national action plan to tackle climate challenge

Expresses grief over loss of human lives and infrastructure by rains, cloudbursts, floods & landslides

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The leadership of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) has expressed profound grief and sorrow over the tragic loss of human lives and massive damage to infrastructure caused by floods, landslides, and other climate-induced disasters in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Gilgit-Baltistan. They also conveyed solidarity with the rain-affected families of Karachi ICCI President Nasir Mansoor Qureshi, Senior Vice President Abdul Rehman Siddiqui, and Vice President Nasir Mehmood Chaudhry, in a joint statement, said that Pakistan is among the most climate-vulnerable countries in

the world, and the recent tragedies in KP and GB are a stark warning that urgent action is required to address the impacts of climate change. The ICCI leadership stressed that the government should allocate sufficient resources to strengthen disaster preparedness and resilience in vulnerable regions. They emphasized the need for greater investment in early warning systems, disaster management infrastructure, water resource management, and reforestation campaigns to reduce future risks and safeguard lives and livelihoods. President Nasir Mansoor Qureshi further highlighted that climate change is not merely a humanitarian challenge but also a serious threat to Pakistan's economy, agriculture, and business sector. He

urged the government to actively engage the private sector, civil society, and international partners in shaping and implementing a comprehensive national climate action plan at both federal and provincial levels. Calling for long-term reforms, ICCI President stressed the importance of promoting renewable energy, sustainable urban planning, and climate-resilient infrastructure. "Protecting our people and economy from the devastating effects of climate change must remain a top priority for the government," he maintained. The Chamber assured its full cooperation with the government and relevant stakeholders in all initiatives aimed at addressing climate challenges, building resilience, and ensuring a greener and safer future for Pakistan.

Busniess community striving hard for their rights: Bakhtwari



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Secretary General of UBG, Zafar Bakhtawari, said that the trader community of Islamabad has always been a shining example of sacrifice, hard work, and unity. For years, the representatives of the business community have struggled for the resolution of their issues and for the rights of their fellow traders, and this very struggle has given a new identity to the markets and commercial centers of Islamabad. He was addressing a dinner hosted at his residence in honor of representatives of the trader community. The dinner was attended by:

Chamber & Small Trade, Malik Nadeem Kakakzai; Hasan Iqbal Gardez; President Milk Association, Muzaffar Hashmi; Khalid Chaudhry; Rao Faisal; Adnan Mukhtar; Zarif Ahmed Khan; Raja Humayun Sarwar; and many others. Zafar Bakhtawari said that today he had brought together those representatives of Islamabad's business community who, for years, have been making sacrifices for traders. Their struggle and services will always be remembered. He said he has also taught his children the values of public service, social interaction, respect, and goodwill towards others. He added that through hard work he created his own brand and introduced a new shopping culture in Islamabad. "Feeding people is the easiest way to win hearts. My wife has played a vital role in my successes, and the good upbringing of our children is also due to her. It is important to acknowledge the role of one's life partner. Everyone must begin their own self-reform first. Honesty in business turns you into a brand. If business is conducted with integrity, future generations will also reap its benefits." President All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tajir, Ajmal Baloch, said that the unity, hard work, and struggle of the trader community will always be remembered.

Women Lawyers' delegation visits Mohtasib secretariat

ISLAMABAD: A representative delegation from S&S Law Associates, Pakistan's first All Women Law Firm headed by Ms. Sibah Farooq, Advocate visited the Wafaqi Mohtasib Secretariat here Thursday as part of the latter's civil society initiative. The delegation was briefed in detail on the working of the various sections and departments of the Secretariat by their respective heads and also paid a courtesy call on the Wafaqi Mohtasib, Mr. Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi. It was informed that the Wafaqi Mohtasib's Office was the premier institution of administrative accountability in the country mandated to address and rectify maladministration of the federal government agencies. Following the success of the Wafaqi Mohtasib's institution, being the first in the country of its kind, in providing free and expeditious administrative justice to the general public, the concept has been replicated in areas like Banking, Taxation, Insurance and Protection of Women against Harassment at the Work Place, it was told. The delegation was further informed that last year, a record number of complaints amounting to 226,373 had been received, out of which as many as 223,198 had been addressed satisfactorily. As regards the current year, the delegation was informed that more than 150,000 have been received so far and if we go by the projections made for the current year, this figure may cross 250,000 mark. Later, the delegation also visited the Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA) Secretariat located in the Wafaqi Mohtasib's Building and attended a detailed briefing on the Association. It was told that the organization came into being in 1996 mainly due to the efforts of the Wafaqi Mohtasib who has also held its Presidentship most of the time. Presently, the Wafaqi Mohtasib (Federal Ombudsman), Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi, is the current President of the Association. The delegation highly commended the efforts of Wafaqi Mohtasib's institution in addressing maladministration and checking administrative inefficiencies of the public sector organizations as well as making efforts for good governance in the country, terming the office's performance as being remarkable and worth emulating for all.—APP

CDA, Ethiopian Embassy launch 'Plant Fraternity' campaign



ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority hosted a high-level delegation from Ethiopia at the Fatima Jinnah Park, F-9 Islamabad to plant seedlings of Ethio-Pakistan Fraternity to foster friendly and brotherly relations between the two countries. The launch of "Plant Fraternity" was a joint collaboration between the Ethiopian Embassy Islamabad, Capital Development Authority (CDA) and the Human Resource Development Network of Pakistan. A large number of youth took part in the planation ceremony which marked the launch of the "Plant Fraternity" initiative of the Government of Ethiopia, in Islamabad. Addressing the launching ceremony, the Ambassador said Pakistan is facing severe climate changes despite being the least contributor to the carbon emissions. He said the Government of Ethiopia has sent its delegation to Pakistan to support Pakistan's fight against the climate change. "The "Plant Fraternity" initiative is a gift from our government under which we would like to share the successful experiences of the Green Legacy Programme of our Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed, with Pakistan," the Ambassador remarked. Under the Green Legacy Initiative, the Ambassador said Ethiopia has planted more than 41.2 billion seedlings in last six years that has addressed land degradation, deforestation, food insecurity, unemployment and poverty. H.E. Awais Tarar, Director General Environment of CDA, lauded the "Plant Fraternity" initiative taken by the Ethiopian Embassy for strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries. He said the CDA is making concerted efforts to enhance afforestation and forestation in Islamabad by launching plantation campaigns with massive community engagement. Ms. Robeela Bangash, Chief Executive Officer HRDN, stressed on the critical role of the youth in climate actions, urging them to fully participate in plantation drives, essential for averting adverse impacts of climate changes. — DNA

DIG vows crackdown on criminals, orders strict tenant verification

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Muhammad Jawad Tariq on Thursday chaired a high-level meeting on crime prevention and directed strict measures to ensure the safety of citizens. A police spokesperson told APP that the meeting was attended by SSP Counter Terrorism Department (CTD), Zonal SPs, SP Dolphin, SP CTD, and other senior police officers. The DIG emphasized that complete bio-data, character verification, and registration of non-local tenants must be ensured at all costs. DIG Tariq directed the immediate arrest of proclaimed offenders and record-holders involved in heinous crimes, adding that patrolling should be made more effective and purposeful with officers visibly present in the field. A comprehensive crackdown against active criminal gangs was ordered, while indiscriminate action would also be taken against those involved in illegal weapons, brandishing of arms, and drug trafficking, the spokesperson said. DIG Tariq stressed that all available resources should be utilized to combat crime and search operations across the capital must continue without interruption. He reaffirmed that the protection of citizens' lives and property remains the top priority of the ICT Police.APP

Pak-Romania Business Council meets with Muqam

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan-Romania Business Council (PRBC), on Thursday met with Engineer Amir Muqam, Federal Minister of Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit Baltistan and States & Frontier Regions aiming to strengthen bilateral trade relations between Pakistan and Romania. The meeting members led by Atif Farooqi, Advisor and COO Pakistan Romania Business Council, and Asad ur Rehman Khan, Group MD of Oceanic Group. The discussions focused on exploring opportunities for trade enhancement and economic cooperation between the two nations and expressed their commitment to fostering a robust business relationship and identifying areas of mutual interest. In addition to trade discussions, the PRBC officials also pledged to engage the business community in contributing to the relief efforts for the recent flood-affected areas in KPK and the Northern areas. The council will work to mobilize resources and support to help alleviate the suffering of those affected by the disaster.—APP

Briefs

Ecology, Green Development of great importance for Pakistan: Experts

ISLAMABAD: "The importance of ecology and green development to Pakistan cannot be overemphasized," said Prof. Abid Ali, from Shenyang Normal University while talking to China Economic Net (CEN). A remarkable chapter in China-Pakistan academic and research cooperation has been written by the Pakistani scientist and educator, who has dedicated over a decade to building bridges between the two nations. Dr. Abid Ali, currently serving as Professor and International Coordinator at the College of Life Sciences, Shenyang Normal University (SYNU), is a leading a historic initiative that will bring 20 Pakistani students, from the University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF), Women University Multan (WUM), and Baha-uddin Zakariya University (BZU) Multan, to China for a fully funded three-month Summer Training Camp on Ecology and Green Development, scheduled from September 16 to December 14, 2025. This milestone is the latest achievement in Prof Ali's journey, which began with his PhD at the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS) in 2010. Since then, he has served in various academic, research and leadership roles in both China and Pakistan, most notably as Tenured Associate Professor at the University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) from March 2016.—APP

NHA announces open auction for toll plazas on key highways

ISLAMABAD: The National Highway Authority (NHA), has officially announced an open auction for the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) contracts of 21 toll plazas across the national highways. This auction is for the period ending June 30, 2026, and will be conducted under the supervision of the Finance Wing (Revenue Directorate) of the NHA, said a notification issued on other day. The interested bidders, including individuals, firms, and companies are invited to participate in the process, subject to meeting specific eligibility criteria. These include holding a valid NTN certificate as an active taxpayer, having no outstanding dues (installments or taxes), and not being black-listed or under arbitration proceedings with any government agency. The list of toll plazas up for auction includes key locations such as Mityari (N-5), Ahmedpur East (N-5), Tarhada (N-130), Shaheed Benazir Bridge, and Sangani (ETTM) M-15. Each site carries a specified Earnest Money and Net Reserve Price per month, ranging from Rs. 478,500 to over Rs. 46 million.—APP

Chairman Senate inaugurates Murree Sparkletts plant

The state-of-the-art facility, imported from China, has the capacity to purify 20,000 liters of water per hour, ensuring clean and safe drinking water while boosting industrial growth and local employment

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani inaugurated the Murree Sparkletts Water Filling Plant at the Hattar Industrial Estate in District Haripur on the invitation of Member National Assembly (MNA) Mr. Isphanyar Bhandara. He was accompanied by Senators Rana Mehmood ul Hassan and Talha Mehmood at the ceremony, which marked an important step toward strengthening industrial infrastructure and meeting the growing demand for safe drinking water in the region. The newly established state-of-the-art facility has been imported from China and is designed to purify 20,000 liters of water per hour. The plant will not only provide clean and safe bottled water to consumers but also contribute significantly to industrial growth and local job creation in Haripur district and adjoining areas. Speaking at the occasion, Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani commended the initiative, noting that access to safe drinking water remains one of Pakistan's pressing challenges. He said projects like the Murree Sparkletts plant represent an investment in both public health and economic development. "Ensuring clean water is not only a social responsibility but also a necessity for sustainable growth. This project will create new opportunities for employment and will set a benchmark for industrial expansion in the area," he said.

MNA Isphanyar Bhandara, who extended the invitation for the inauguration, highlighted the importance of private sector-led development. He said the plant will generate direct and indirect employment for the local population, while also encouraging further industrial investment in Haripur. "Our goal is to balance industrial growth with social welfare, and



this project is a reflection of that commitment," he remarked. The inauguration of the Murree Sparkletts Water Filling Plant is expected to encourage

further industrial activity in the Hattar Industrial Estate, a key hub for manufacturing and production in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Observers noted that the

project not only fulfills consumer demand for purified water but also symbolizes a growing trend of industrial modernization in Pakistan.

Chinese Company uses AI to reclaim millions of acres

ISLAMABAD: Facing the global challenge of desertification, M-Grass Ecology Group, China's leading grass seed technology company, has launched an ecological restoration solution centered on smart equipment and innovative seed technologies. The company's self-developed seed rope sowing robots, customized seed products, and intelligent management systems are poised to offer sustainable restoration methods for countries along the Belt and Road, including Central Asia and the Middle East. China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Thursday. Seed ropes and Beidou navigation for precise desert restoration. Chen Ruijue, Vice President of M-Grass, says manual efforts simply can't keep up in vast, sparsely populated, and remote areas with limited connectivity. Using Beidou satellite navigation and AI algorithms, the company developed intelligent sowing equipment capable of planning its own paths. "Through remote sensing and visual recognition, the system can automatically identify areas with sparse vegetation and adjust sowing accordingly, greatly improving efficiency and reducing costs," Chen explained. M-Grass is the only publicly listed grass seed company in China and ranks fourth globally for innovation in the sector. It has restored nearly 5.45 million acres of degraded grasslands, deserts, and saline-alkali lands. Beyond seed ropes, the company has developed seed packets, seed blocks, and other customized products, creating a scalable, mechanized, and intelligent restoration system. Desertification remains a critical concern worldwide. In Pakistan, for example, deserts cover roughly 118,000 square kilometers, nearly 15% of the country. Chen also revealed that M-Grass established an overseas division in March this year to expand international operations. The company is actively participating in the China-Mongolia-Russia economic corridor and targeting Central Asia, the Middle East, and other regions. "Our goal is to export the 'eco-package'—including technology systems, product standards, and smart equipment—to regions in need of ecological restoration, contributing to global sustainable development," Chen said. M-Grass's integrated system has already been applied on a large scale to degraded grasslands, saline-alkali lands, and lightly to moderately sandy soils, providing technological support for challenging environments, including high-altitude and arid regions.—DNA

Teaching college at Pak-China Friendship Hospital in the pipeline

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Teaching college at Pak-China Friendship Hospital, Gwadar is in the pipeline, according to Gwadar Pro. The Gwadar Port Authority (GPA) Chairman Noor ul Haq Baloch has formally forwarded a proposal to the Chinese government to upgrade the status of the China-aided Hospital into a teaching hospital with allied facilities under CPEC phase II. The proposal reveals that the next phase of Pak-China Friendship Hospital will include teaching hospital, nursing training centre, medical

blocks, medical college, central laboratory, and other allied facilities. Given the details of the proposal, teaching hospital and the other allied facilities at Pak-China Friendship hospital Gwadar will have an estimated cost of around \$100 million. It will combine medical education, research, and patient care in a dynamic environment where the next generation of medical providers will be trained. In China-Pakistan Friendship Teaching Hospital, practitioners-in-training will gain experience in a real patient-care environment where they will be under the direct supervision of practicing physicians. Other medical professionals who

may participate in training programs at the teaching hospital will include nursing students, physician assistant students, and physical therapy students. "At a teaching hospital patients have the advantage of being cared for by physicians at various levels. It will also have research programs so that newer techniques, medications and other treatments can be available for patients in Gwadar," a GPA official told Gwadar Pro. Under CPEC Phase I, the state-of-the-art Pak-China Friendship Hospital was completed in May 2024 with financing from the Chinese government.

Businesses hail tax policy reforms as historic step

ISLAMABAD: The business community has responded with optimism to the government's decision to strip the Federal Board of Revenue of its tax policy formulation powers, with industry leaders describing the move as a pivotal reform that could reshape the country's economic trajectory. The transfer of policy responsibilities to the Ministry of Finance represents a fundamental shift from revenue-driven taxation toward growth-oriented fiscal planning, according to prominent business figures who have long advocated for such structural changes. Former Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Shahid Rasheed Butt characterised the reform as addressing decades of policy inconsistency that had deterred both domestic and international investment. "Pakistan's economy has repeatedly suffered because collection targets rather than growth incentives drove tax policy," he observed, emphasising that the new arrangement would provide much-needed clarity for investors. The business leader highlighted the finance minister's commitment to designing the next budget on principles of economic value creation, describing this approach as essential for developing a fairer and more sustainable tax base. Shahid Rasheed Butt argued that the shift would help Pakistan move away from ad hoc policy adjustments. The proposed relief measures for the corporate sector and salaried class have drawn particular praise from industry representatives, who note that both groups have shouldered disproportionate tax burdens in recent years. Mr. Butt emphasized that reducing pressure on these segments would not only provide operational breathing space for businesses but also offer relief to the inflation-squeezed middle class.—DNA

IRSA releases 361,900 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Thursday released 361,900 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 422,900 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, Tarbela Dam has attained its maximum conservation level of 1550.00 feet which was 148.00 feet higher than the dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 268,300 cusecs and 238,900 cusecs, respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1217.45 feet, which was 167.45 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 38,600 cusecs and 7,000 cusecs, respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 319,400, 479,700, 417,700 and 315,400 cusecs, respectively.—APP

Rotary Club Pakistan corporate hosts grand reception

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Rotary Club Pakistan Corporate organized a prestigious reception in honor of the visiting Rotary International delegation, led by Rotary International President Francisco Azzaro, Trustee Chair of The Rotary Foundation Holger Knaack, and International PolioPlus Committee Chair Mike McGovern. In his address, President Azzaro, along with members of the delegation, lauded the Government of Pakistan's commitment and progress in the eradication of polio, acknowledging the country's remarkable efforts in partnership with Rotary. Past Trustee Aziz Memon highlighted the on-ground challenges of polio eradication and paid tribute to the resilience and dedication of frontline polio workers serving in difficult circumstances. Justice (R) Farrukh Irfan Khan, President of Rotary Club Pakistan Corporate, reaffirmed the Club's resolve to serve communities in need. Imran Ghaznavi, Founder of the Club, urged the corporate sector to play an active role in sustainable community service and to join hands with Rotary in its humanitarian initiatives. The evening's Chief Guest, Senator Syed Sarmad Ali, emphasized Pakistan's strategic

importance in today's global and regional context. He described Pakistan as a resilient nation with immense potential and as an emerging hub for global tourism. The event was attended by the

Italian Ambassador to Pakistan is Marilina Armellini, Mr Shahzad Malik President ICMA, Ms Ayla Majid, the global president of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), prominent

corporate sector leaders and senior journalists, who appreciated Rotary Club Pakistan Corporate's efforts in establishing a platform that brings together business leadership for impactful service to communities.



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The United Nations: A toothless tiger

THE United Nations (UN) was founded in 1945 with the noble aim of maintaining international peace and security. Yet, nearly eight decades later, the organization stands as a shadow of its original vision—paralyzed by geopolitical rivalries, held hostage by veto-wielding powers, and rendered increasingly irrelevant in resolving the world’s most pressing conflicts. From the Israel-Iran tensions to the Gaza crisis, the Kashmir dispute, and the endless infighting in Africa, the UN has failed to act as an effective mediator. The Secretary-General, instead of being a moral authority, has been reduced to a helpless figurehead whose pleas for peace are ignored by warring nations and powerful Security Council members alike. If the UN can no longer fulfill its primary mandate, then it is time to ask: What is its purpose? The fundamental problem with the UN lies in its structure. The Security Council’s five permanent members (P5)—the United States, Russia, China, France, and the United Kingdom—hold veto power, allowing any one of them to block resolutions that threaten their interests. This has turned the UN into a battleground for great power politics rather than a platform for conflict resolution. The ongoing humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza is a glaring example of the UN’s impotence. Despite overwhelming global condemnation of Israel’s military actions, the US has repeatedly vetoed ceasefire resolutions, shielding its ally from accountability. The Secretary-General’s appeals for restraint are dismissed, and UN agencies like UNRWA are defunded and demonized. If the UN cannot even enforce its own humanitarian principles when a nuclear-armed state flouts international law, then what good is it? The recent exchange of missile strikes between Israel and Iran further exposed the UN’s irrelevance. Rather than mediating de-escalation, the Security Council remained deadlocked, with Western powers backing Israel and Russia and China refusing to take a strong stance. The Secretary-General’s calls for restraint were ignored, proving that the UN has no real authority when major powers are involved. The Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan has been on the UN agenda since 1948, yet no meaningful progress has been made. India dismisses UN resolutions as outdated, while Pakistan uses them for rhetorical leverage. The UN’s failure to enforce its own mandates has left Kashmiris trapped in a cycle of violence and repression. If the organization

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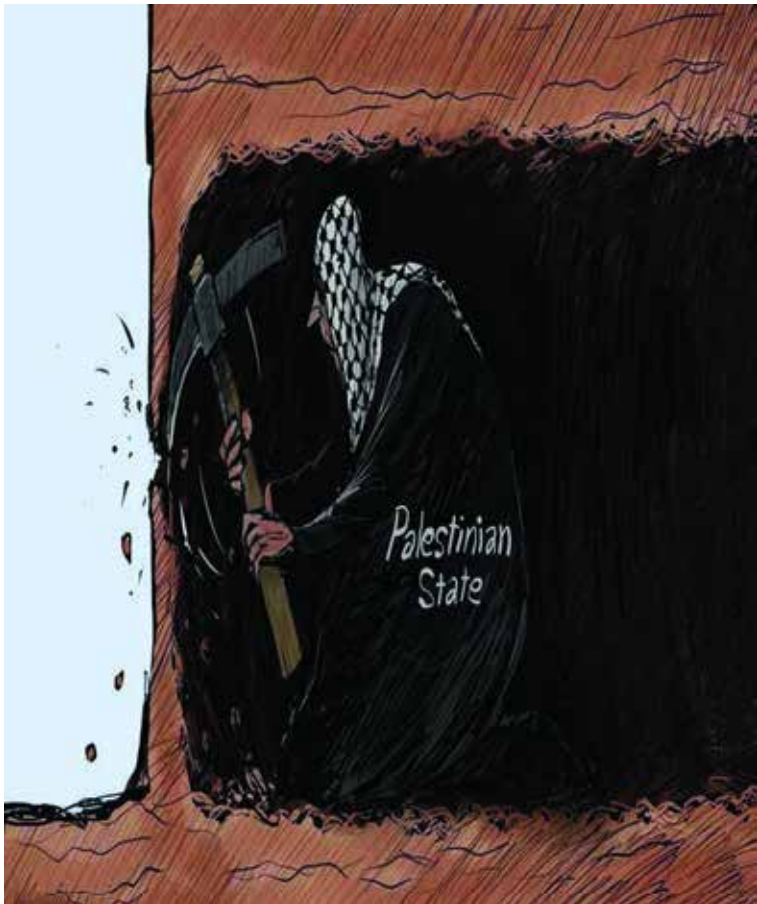
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cannot even facilitate dialogue after 75 years, why does it still pretend to care? From Sudan to the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia to the Sahel, Africa remains a hotbed of conflict. The UN’s peacekeeping missions (MONUSCO, MINUSMA, etc.) have been criticized for inefficiency, corruption, and even complicity in abuses. The Security Council pays lip service to African crises but refuses to authorize robust interventions when they do not align with Western or Russian interests. The current Secretary-General, António Guterres, has become a symbol of the UN’s impotence. His statements on Gaza, Ukraine, and other conflicts are met with indifference. When he invoked Article 99 of the UN Charter to force attention on Gaza, the Security Council barely reacted. If the UN’s top diplomat cannot influence world events, why does the position still exist? Guterres should have resigned long ago—not out of cowardice, but as a moral statement. By staying, he legitimizes a broken system. A resignation would force the world to confront the UN’s failures. But like the organization he leads, he seems content with symbolic gestures rather than real change. The harsh truth is that the UN is no longer a neutral arbiter—it is a tool of the P5, especially the US. Washington uses the UN to sanction its enemies (Iran, North Korea, Venezuela) while shielding its allies (Israel, Saudi Arabia). Russia and China do the same, vetoing resolutions on Syria and Myanmar. The General Assembly’s votes are non-binding, and the International Court of Justice’s rulings are ignored when inconvenient (e.g., US sanctions on Nicaragua, Israel’s occupation of Palestine). For smaller nations, the UN provides a platform to voice grievances, but that is all. For the powerful, it is a stage to perform diplomacy while acting unilaterally behind the scenes. The UN’s agencies (WHO, UNICEF, UNHCR) still do vital humanitarian work, but its political role is fading. The UN has two options: radical reform or dignified dissolution. Abolish the Veto: The P5’s veto power is the root of the UN’s paralysis. Either remove it or expand permanent membership to include Africa, Latin America, and more Asian representation. Empower the General Assembly: Make its resolutions binding, at least on non-security issues. Strengthen the Secretary-General’s Role: Give the office real enforcement powers, not just moral pleas. Alternative Alliances: If reform is impossible, nations should consider regional blocs (AU, ASEAN, OIC) as alternative peacekeeping bodies. If none of this happens, the UN will continue its slow decline into irrelevance—a talking shop for diplomats while bombs fall on Gaza, Kashmir, and Sudan. The Secretary-General should either demand real change or step aside. The world no longer has time for empty gestures. The choice is clear: The UN must reclaim its purpose or admit it has none.

Climate resilience is a strategic investment in future growth

Pepukaye Bardouille & Mahmoud Mohieldin

First, EMDEs must quantify acute and chronic climate and nature risks. A better understanding of the potential macroeconomic effects can help guide assessments of the financing required to reduce those risks. The paper offers a new typology to help categorize investments by risk type and sector, which would streamline the process. Once policymakers have identified which investments are needed, they must assess their impact on the economy’s growth trajectory. Spending on resilience measures can reduce future losses from climate disasters, boost productivity, and raise incomes

FOR emerging markets and developing economies, or EMDEs, investing in resilience is not a luxury; it is an imperative. Climate disasters and ecological degradation are impeding their economic prospects and straining their finances. Perhaps more importantly, these shocks are exacerbating unsustainable debt burdens at a time when donor countries are slashing development aid, making it harder for EMDEs to finance investments in climate adaptation. Over the past two decades, the 74 economies comprising the Climate Vulnerable Forum and the Vulnerable Group of Twenty have suffered more than \$525 billion in losses – equivalent to roughly 20 percent of their collective gross domestic product – due to climate shocks. This includes acute disasters like floods, hurricanes, and droughts, as well as slower-moving events such as desertification and coastal erosion. Meanwhile, the degradation of natural ecosystems through deforestation and biodiversity loss has aggravated food and water insecurity and increased climate risks by eliminating natural carbon sinks. These dynamics create formidable obstacles – namely, limited fiscal space and high capital costs – that trap countries in a vicious cycle of vulnerability. Breaking free requires a significant scaling-up in financing for climate-adaptation efforts. To that end, the Sharm El-Sheikh Adaptation Agenda, launched in 2022, proposes 30 adaptation targets in key sectors such as agriculture, public health, and infrastructure with the goal of spurring inclusive, effective, and equitable action by 2030. The proposed outcomes are not merely defensive; they create jobs, boost productivity, and improve creditworthiness. Unfortunately, these benefits are not reflected in current macroeconomic frameworks. The problem is structural. Existing macro-fiscal tools – such as the debt-sustainability frameworks used by the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and, by extension, sovereign credit ratings – account for climate and nature-related risks, but do not sufficiently recognize the economic benefits of reducing those risks. Natural disasters, climate-related or otherwise, are rightly treated as threats to fiscal stability. But the investments

required to mitigate their effects are seen only as adding to the debt burden, rather than as critical for reducing losses or as driving the development of growth-enhancing strategic assets. For example, investments in flood-resilient infrastructure in Vietnam have not only reduced damage costs but also boosted land values, improved public health, and increased worker productivity. And investments in nature-based solutions such as restoring mangroves or wetlands can simultaneously address climate, food, and water challenges, and boost infrastructure performance. As a result, high-impact interventions such as coastal defenses, underground power lines, and mangrove restoration are sidelined in favor of more conventional infrastructure projects like roads, bridges, and ports. These perverse incentives are reflected in EMDEs’ planning and budgeting processes. The environment ministries that oversee Nationally Determined Contributions and National Adaptation Plans under the Paris climate agreement tend not to engage systematically with finance ministries, meaning that these resilience strategies are not fully integrated into medium and long-term national financial planning. That leaves NDCs and NAPs at risk of being aspirational, rather than actionable. With critical adaptation investments overlooked in budgets, and with insufficient volumes of grant or concessional finance to plug ensuing gaps, many are calling for changes in how debt is treated, including reforms of fiscal frameworks so that investments in climate and nature resilience are treated as productive. A recent paper by the Bridgetown Initiative outlines four steps that governments can take to achieve this goal. First, EMDEs must quantify acute and chronic climate and nature risks. A better understanding of the potential macroeconomic effects can help guide assessments of the financing required to reduce those risks. The paper offers a new typology to help categorize investments by risk type and sector, which would streamline the process. Once policymakers have identified which investments are needed, they must assess their impact on the economy’s growth trajectory. Spending

on resilience measures can reduce future losses from climate disasters, boost productivity, and raise incomes. These benefits must be incorporated into forecasting models, as is already done for traditional infrastructure investments. Countries are trapped in a vicious cycle of vulnerability. Pepukaye Bardouille & Mahmoud Mohieldin The long-term growth benefits of resilience-focused capital projects could then be factored into debt-sustainability analyses. This would show that such investments are, in fact, fiscally prudent with the right financing conditions, thus strengthening the case for more concessional and longer-term borrowing. Lastly, with a more comprehensive understanding of the macroeconomic effects of resilience-based interventions, EMDEs can devise credible investment plans and financing strategies that align with fiscal and budgetary policy. Factoring climate resilience into macroeconomic planning should strengthen, not diminish, a country’s growth narrative. When done well, this empowers finance ministries to engage more effectively with donors, credit-rating agencies, markets, and international financial institutions, all of which play a critical direct or indirect role in supporting resilience and adaptation efforts. With the IMF and the World Bank reviewing their Debt Sustainability Framework for Low-Income Countries, this is an opportune time for EMDEs to update their methodologies to reflect the benefits of adaptation measures. Climate and nature shocks are now an economic reality, not a distant threat. Building resilience to these shocks will form the foundation of sustainable development and fiscal stability for years to come. – Pepukaye Bardouille, director of the Bridgetown Initiative and special adviser on climate resilience to the Barbados Prime Minister’s Office, was the founding CEO of the Climate Resilience Execution Agency for Dominica. – Mahmoud Mohieldin, UN special envoy on financing the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and co-chair of the Expert Group on Debt, is a former minister of investment of Egypt (2004-10), former senior vice president of the World Bank Group, and former executive director of the International Monetary Fund.

Governance in Punjab: Rigorous Regulations & Effective Enforcement

Abdul Rashid Shakir

Chief Minister is focused on reforms in the health sector. 32 Field Hospitals, 911 Clinics-on-Wheels, free medicines in government hospitals, and free home delivery of medicines of patients suffering from Cancer, Cardiovascular Diseases, Hepatitis, TB and Type-I Diabetes are major initiatives of the government in this regard. Government is striving...



PUBLIC welfare is bedrock of a welfare state that guarantees a productive education system, a responsive healthcare infrastructure, a cutting-edge communication network, and a rewarding employment apparatus. It stems from development-oriented policy formulation, data-driven project planning, and objective-oriented implementation of major KPIs (Key Performing Indicators), backed by sound legislation and robust enforcement. It is a logical corollary of altruistic vision of ruling elite, stability of political order, dependable law & order and continuity of policies. Pakistan, unfortunately, has a chequered history, dotted with cyclical patterns of boom and bust in almost every field, which rendered our development journey non-starting. That is why even after the lapse of almost 08 decades now, Pakistan still has around 61% literacy rate, and 38% out of school children (OOSC), because we are able to spend just 0.8% of our \$411 billion GDP on education (Pakistan Economic Survey 2024-25). However, it is satisfying to note that the current Government is trying to fix this flaw. Its projects like ‘Uraan Pakistan’, and whole-of-the-government platforms like SIFC (Strategic Investment Facilitation Council) are remarkable interventions in this regard, as they not only provide 5E vision (E-Pakistan & Empowerment, Environment, Energy, Equity and Exports) for economic transformation but also ensure enabling environment for investment and trade by weeding out menace of terrorism from the country. Punjab under its committed Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif is taking an extra mile not only in education, employment and engagement (3Es) but also in infrastructure development, environmental protection and law & order improvement. Budget 2025-26 has allocated record funds for education, health and development. Government has not only earmarked historic development funds of Rs 1240 billion, but has also prioritized education, health and public welfare. 27% of the total budget outlay of Rs 5335 billion has been reserved for education and health, while 73% of it has been kept for public investment projects (finance.punjab.gov.pk). Education and capacity building is another priority

item. Government has committed hefty funds to provide missing facilities in government schools, Rs 40 billion has been allocated in the budget for the purpose. Rs 9.4 billion are allocated for free books while Rs 7 billion have been reserved for School Meal Program. Talented students are being provided meritorious scholarships and laptops to help them in studies, Rs 30 billion have been kept in the budget for the purpose. Additionally, Rs 18 billion have been reserved for the public sector Universities in Punjab. Chief Minister is focused on reforms in the health sector. 32 Field Hospitals, 911 Clinics-on-Wheels, free medicines in government hospitals, and free home delivery of medicines of patients suffering from Cancer, Cardiovascular Diseases, Hepatitis, TB and Type-I Diabetes are major initiatives of the government in this regard. Government is striving its best to lay a network of healthcare facilities in the province. Nawaz Sharif Cancer Hospital Lahore, and Institute of Cardiology Sargodha will be completed this year, while Nawaz Sharif Medical District Lahore will be the first center in Pakistan where all deadly diseases will be treated. Allocations of Rs 14.5 billion for Nawaz Sharif Cancer Hospital Lahore, Rs 4.5 billion for Institute of Cardiology Sargodha, Rs 61 billion for Medical District Lahore, Rs 9.4 billion for Jinnah Institute of Cardiology Lahore, Rs 18.3 billion for Health Centers and Rs 9.7 billion for Health Clinics across the province, Rs 6 billion for Children’s Hospital Rawalpindi, Rs 3.2 billion for Children’s Heart Surgery Program, Rs 3.6 billion for Transplant Program, Rs 8.6 billion for Dialysis Program, Rs 3.5 billion for Clinics-on-Wheels, Rs 79.5 billion for free medicines and Rs 25 billion for Health Insurance Programme in 2025-26 budget speak volume of the efforts of Punjab government to upgrade and make its healthcare system more efficient and responsive to public needs (finance.punjab.gov.pk). Madam Chief Minister has also given top priority to the development of roads and transport infrastructure in the province by allocating Rs120 billion for roads, and Rs 141.5 billion for the provision of modern urban transport facilities in the form of metro trains, metro buses, speedo

buses, electric buses and tram. Rs 46 billion have been earmarked for e-bus, Rs 3.5 billion for e-taxi, and Rs 28 billion for Mass Transit Projects of Faisalabad, Lahore and Gujranwala. Chief Minister has launched a historic project for the construction, expansion and repair of 18,700 KM long 1471 roads in Punjab. The construction of 12,000 KM long 1214 roads has been completed, while total 18,700 KM long roads will be completed by December. Additionally, Rs 50 billion have been allocated in the budget for CM Punjab Local Road Program. 1193 projects for the construction and repair of buildings have been completed in the province, including Phase-I of construction and repair of health centers, Simli General Hospital Murree, Sahiwal Teaching Hospital and Agriculture Malls in four cities. Programs like ‘Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar’, Nawaz Sharif IT City, Ramadan Relief Package, Minority Card, Ration Card, Sahulat Bazaar, Kisan Card, Green Tractor, Agricultural Tube Wells Solarization, Green Pakistan, ‘Suthra’ (Clean) Punjab, Safe Cities, Lahore Development Program, Livestock Assets Program and Film Finance Fund, besides other projects in solar energy, agriculture, environment, forests, wildlife, fisheries, business, governance, IT, housing and public health were introduced in previous year, while more such people-friendly projects like construction and development projects in 144 cities under Punjab Development Program will be completed in collaboration with the World Bank and Asian Development Bank, besides upgradation of 200 villages under CM Model Village Program. Punjab has enacted elaborate legislations required to ensure public welfare, besides protecting their lives and properties. It has rolled out several specialized forces like Environmental Protection Force, PERA (Punjab Enforcement & Regulatory Authority) Force, Counter-Narcotics Force (CNF), and Riot Management Force to ensure effective implementation of various rules and regulations to guarantee public welfare. To wrap up, it can aptly be concluded that all the afore-mentioned interventions of the Punjab Government would prove to be game-changer for public welfare and good governance in the province.

Briefs

China committed to development of Pakistan...

FROM PAGE 01
Foreign Minister Wang Yi, in his remarks, stressed that China values its deep-rooted friendship with Pakistan and is keen to expand bilateral co-operation in diverse fields. He assured Beijing's continued support for Pakistan's development agenda and highlighted that both countries stand together as reliable partners in a rapidly changing global environment. The two sides also agreed to maintain close coordination and communication at both bilateral and multilateral forums. They underlined the importance of strategic alignment on regional security, counterterrorism cooperation, and safeguarding shared interests in international platforms. Analysts view the dialogue as another demonstration of the time-tested partnership between Islamabad and Beijing, which continues to deepen amid regional challenges and shifting global dynamics. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi has said that Beijing is taking its relationship with Islamabad to new heights as he has begun a three-day official visit to Pakistan, highlighting the deepening strategic partnership between the two neighbouring countries.

Foreign Minister of China...

FROM PAGE 01
the SCO CHS meeting, as well as the 80th anniversary of the victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance and the World Anti-Fascist War. He looked forward to his meeting with President Xi Jinping, Premier Li Qiang, as well as other senior Chinese leaders, during the forthcoming visit. The Prime Minister reiterated Pakistan's desire to deepen bilateral cooperation with China in trade, investment, ICT, agriculture, industrialization, mines and minerals and other key sectors. He also underscored the importance of CPEC for Pakistan's socio-economic development and its vital role in enhancing regional connectivity, while expressing satisfaction at the steady progress of CPEC Phase-II.

JCP not proper forum to...

FROM PAGE 01
did not (and were not invited to) participate in this exercise," the letter stated. Both the judges maintained that what was required was collective deliberation and decision-making; that, regrettably, did not come about. They added that at a time when no question was more important for the SC it was necessary to immediately create consensus by calling a Full Court meeting, so that the direly needed institutional response could be given. "That response could only come from the judges themselves, by their convening in open Court or meeting in full conclave," they said, adding that the dire consequences of that not happening continue to reverberate in the SC, the whole of the judiciary and indeed the entire constitutional framework.

5-year travel ban on Pakistanis...

FROM PAGE 01
with their names placed on a special list of deported Pakistanis barred from travelling abroad. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, in a written statement to the Senate, formally notified the enforcement of the new PCL Policy. Under the rules, deported citizens will remain on the PCL for five years, during which they will be ineligible to obtain a new passport or travel internationally. The written response from the ministry clarified that the five-year travel ban applied specifically to those deported for illegal actions, criminal charges or other "undesirable" activities. The policy also includes provisions for extending the ban beyond five years, provided the relevant government department submits a formal request with a detailed justification.

UN Women and Zalmi Foundation Sign MoU to Promote Women's Empowerment through Sports and Skills Development

Main Abbas, Chief Operating Officer-Peshawar Zalmi/Zalmi Foundation, reaffirmed his organization's commitment to advancing gender equality through this initiative: "We believe in the transformative role of sports in shaping a more inclusive society"

DNA

ISLAMABAD: UN Women Pakistan and Zalmi Foundation have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate on advancing gender equality and empowering women and girls through sports, leadership, and economic empowerment initiatives. The signing ceremony, held in Islamabad, marked the beginning of a strategic partnership that will see both organizations join forces on a range of impactful programmes, from national women's sports leagues to vocational training and community outreach. Speaking at the ceremony, Jamshed M. Kazi, Country Representative of UN Women Pakistan, said, "At UN Women, we believe that every woman and girl has the right to realize and reach her full potential – whether in classrooms, at workplaces, in communities or on sports fields. This partnership with Zalmi Foundation is not just about games and competitions; it is about dismantling barriers, defying stereotypes and social norms, and opening doors to leadership and opportunity. Sport has the power to change lives. The ability to drive gender equality by teaching women and girls teamwork, self-reliance, resilience and confidence. Together, we are creating spaces where women's voices are heard, their talents are celebrated, and their dreams are within reach."

Main Abbas, Chief Operating Officer-Peshawar Zalmi/Zalmi Foundation, reaffirmed his organization's commitment to advancing gen-



der equality through this initiative: "We believe in the transformative role of sports in shaping a more inclusive society. By joining hands with UN Women, we aim to not only promote wom-

en in cricket but also support broader efforts for women's empowerment in Pakistan." Under partnership, a series of flagship initiatives will be launched to promote women's empower-

ment through sports and skills development. These initiatives include women's cricket and football leagues aimed at expanding opportunities for young girls to participate in competitive sports, along with skills training programmes designed to strengthen women's economic independence. The sports leagues will involve regional talent identification, structured tournaments, coaching camps, and leadership sessions, while the vocational training will focus on stitching, design, and entrepreneurship, enabling women to establish sustainable home-based businesses. UN Women will contribute by providing technical guidance on gender mainstreaming, facilitating awareness sessions on women's rights, offering mentorship opportunities, and supporting media visibility. Beyond the field and training spaces, the partnership will emphasize mentorship and leadership development by connecting participants with role models from sports and other sectors, community mobilization to ensure inclusive participation from underrepresented areas, and strategic storytelling to highlight inspiring examples of women breaking barriers. Institutional engagement will be reinforced through public events, recognition awards, and advocacy initiatives promoting gender equality. This collaboration represents a multi-dimensional commitment to creating opportunities for women and girls, enhancing confidence and leadership, and challenging stereotypes through both sports and economic empowerment. It marks a significant step towards fostering inclusion, resilience, and ambition across Pakistan.

Pak Shaheens outclass Adelaide Strikers in Top End T20 clash

Pakistan Shaheens players celebrate during the Top End T20 Series match against Perth Scorchers at the TIO Stadium in Darwin, Australia

DNA

DARWIN: Pakistan Shaheens, powered by a scintillating century from Maaz Sadaqat and a dominant all-round bowling display, crushed Adelaide Strikers by 107 runs in their fifth match of the ongoing Top End T20 Series at the DXC Arena on Wednesday. Chasing a daunting 203-run target, the Strikers folded for just 95 in 16.1 overs, as wickets tumbled at regular intervals. Their collapse began early when opener Josh Kann was dismissed for a second-ball duck by Shahid Aziz. The Strikers slipped to 37-3 inside the power-play, with Mubasir Khan removing Ryan King (1) and Mackenzie Harvey (27). From there, Pakistan's

spinners tightened their grip. Mehran Mumtaz dismissed Harry Nielsen (12), while Faisal Akram bowled Alex Ross (6), reducing the Strikers to 49-5. The collapse deepened when Tom O'Connell was run out following a sharp

throw from Mehran, with Ghazi Ghori completing the dismissal. Faisal struck again in the same over, removing Jerissi Wadia for a duck. Mehran then accounted for Harry Manenti (7), before Mubasir returned to claim his third wicket,

dismissing Tim Oakley (11). The innings ended with Maaz Sadaqat, already the batting hero, claimed his first wicket by dismissing Hanno Jacobs (19), sealing a crushing win. For Shaheens, Mubasir Khan starred with 3-19 in three overs, while Faisal Akram and Mehran Mumtaz picked up two wickets apiece. Shahid Aziz and Maaz Sadaqat also chipped in with a wicket each. Earlier, batting first, the Shaheens were propelled by a blistering opening stand of 149 runs between Yasir Khan and Maaz Sadaqat. Yasir played a fluent knock of 51 off 35 balls, hitting five fours and a six, before falling to Jerissi Wadia in the 15th over. Sadaqat carried on in style, registering a magnificent 104 off 59 deliveries, studded with 11 fours and two sixes.



Taimur, Bisma Triumph at Jashan-e-Azadi Table Tennis Tournament

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's rising stars in table tennis, Muhammad Taimur Khan of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) and Bisma Faryal of WAPDA, stamped their authority by clinching the men's and women's singles titles respectively at the Jashan-e-Azadi Masters Cup Table Tennis Tournament. The four-day championship, organized by the Pakistan Table Tennis Federation (PTTF), featured the country's top 32 men and 16 women ranking players representing HEC, WAPDA, Army, OGDCL, NHA, Sindh, Punjab, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The tournament, played in a league format, was held to finalize Pakistan's national squad for the upcoming Islamic Games in Saudi Arabia later this year. In the decisive stage of the men's singles, HEC's Taimur Khan overcame Shayan Farooq 11-9, 4-11, 11-7, 8-11, 11-5 to claim the top spot by winning all eight of his league matches. Hamza Akram secured second place with seven victories. In the women's singles, Bisma Faryal outclassed Kulsoom Khan 11-8, 7-11, 11-9, 11-8 to finish at the top of the rankings, with Kulsoom settling for second place. PTTF President Ahmer Mallick and Punjab Table Tennis Association President Irfan Ullah Khan distributed trophies and cash prizes among the winners. Speaking on the occasion, Mallick announced that the federation will organize a training camp in Lahore ahead of the Islamic Games to prepare the team for the best possible performance at the international event.

Field Marshal did not...

FROM PAGE 01
He stressed the need to implement all 14 points of the National Action Plan in letter and spirit. Governance gaps, he said, are being filled daily by the sacrifices of military, police, and law enforcement personnel.

Supreme Court accepts...

FROM PAGE 01
public properties, and military memorials, triggering a nationwide crackdown. The government accused PTI of orchestrating the violence, while Khan repeatedly distanced himself from the events, calling them a "false flag operation" aimed at crushing his party. Earlier, the LHC had denied Khan bail, arguing that the charges involved terrorism and incitement to violence. However, Khan's legal team moved the Supreme Court, contending that the former premier had been unfairly targeted in politically motivated cases. The apex court, after hearing arguments, granted him bail, terming it a matter of due process and fair trial rights.

'Bail does not mean that Khan...

FROM PAGE 01
the system, damage the economy, and harm the country. The Minister further asserted that the PTI founder is convicted in the 190 million pounds mega corruption case, one of the most significant scandals in the country's history. He highlighted that the PTI founder was sentenced to 14 years in prison following a transparent trial based on substantial evidence. He added that the accused failed to justify in court why billions of rupees were transferred to Malik Riaz or under what legal grounds. Attaullah Tarar said PTI resorted to invoking the narrative of the "State of Medina" instead of presenting credible evidence. He criticized the party for using religious symbolism and the "Islamic touch" as a diversion from accountability.

One killed in firecracker...

FROM PAGE 01
Authorities said flammable items, including oxygen cylinders, were being urgently removed to avert a larger catastrophe. Police and Rangers swiftly worked off the site as rescue workers battled flames engulfing the godown. MA Jinnah Road near Sea Breeze Plaza was sealed from both sides to ensure public safety amid fears of further blasts. Police surgeon Dr Summaiya Syed Tariq said that the number of injured persons reached 34.

Arsenal's ruthless Eze coup shows intent – leaving Spurs stunned

Eberechi Eze scored the winner for Crystal Palace against Man City in May's FA Cup final

DNA

LONDON: Arsenal are poised to snatch Eberechi Eze from under the noses of arch-rivals Tottenham Hotspur in what could be one of the most audacious moves of the Premier League's summer transfer window, it was reported Wednesday. Spurs appeared to be on course to bring the 27-year-old Crystal Palace attacking midfielder to their corner of north London. But it is now being suggested Arsenal, amid concerns over a knee injury to Kai Havertz, will scupper the deal and bring England international Eze, released by the Gunners as a 13-year-old, to the Emirates. The Athletic said Arsenal had reached agreement in principle with Palace to sign Eze, with the deal worth in the region of the expired £68 million (\$91 million) release clause, matching the level of fee Spurs were prepared to pay. Arsenal's interest increased after Havertz suffered an injury setback. The German international came on in the second half of Sunday's victory over Manchester United and completed the game but was absent from Arsenal's open training at the Emirates on Wednesday.

Malaysia rules out return of F1 over costs

SPORT DESK

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia on Thursday ruled out Formula One returning to the country in the near future, citing costs and an already packed racing calendar. The Southeast Asian nation first hosted an F1 race in 1999 at its Sepang International Circuit, with the last grand prix held there in 2017. Malaysia dropped out of the F1 calendar from 2018 amid the rising costs of hosting the event. Sepang still annually stages MotoGP motorbike racing. Sports minister Hannah Yeoh said hosting F1 again would require the Malaysian government to pay about 300 million ringgit (\$71.09 million) annually.

Suarez fills Messi void as Inter Miami beat Tigres 2-1

Suarez Nets Two Penalties as Messi-less Miami Beats Tigres in Leagues Cup Thriller

DNA

MIAMI: Luis Suarez scored a penalty in each half to give Inter Miami a 2-1 victory over Tigres UANL on Wednesday, stepping up to fill the void after Lionel Messi was ruled out of the Leagues Cup quarter-final clash. Messi, who has battled a "minor" muscle injury since a Leagues Cup group match on August 2, returned Saturday after a two-week absence, scoring a goal after coming on as a substitute in a 3-1 win over the Los Angeles Galaxy. However, the 38-year-old World Cup winner was ruled out against Tigres as Inter advanced in the cross-border club competition for teams from Major League Soccer and Mexico's Liga-MX. In a duel that produced few scoring chances, veteran Uruguay striker Suarez was the

difference as Inter kept alive their hopes of regaining the title they won in 2023, during Messi's first season in MLS. Things swung Miami's way in the 20th minute when Javier Aquino slid to intercept a cross and the ball hit his left arm in the area. The referee awarded the penalty and the 38-year-old Suarez converted. Tempers flared, with Suarez moving to calm things down after Miami teammate Rodrigo De Paul and Uruguayan compatriot Fernando Gorriaran exchanged words. Inter coach Javier Mascherano was sent off at half time, receiving a red card for heated protestations to officials after injury time dragged on past what had been indicated. Mascherano watched from a front row of the stands when Tigres grabbed their equalizer in the 67th minute, Angel Correa slipping between two defenders and beating Miami keeper Oscar Ustari.

PMAAF to host Battle for Truth – Pak Combat Night

PAKMMAF President Omar Ahmed thanked Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz for her leadership, saying, "With her all-out support, the MMA is now the sport of choice for Pakistani youth, who can relate more to Khabib than Babar Azam"

ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Mixed Martial Arts Federation (PAKMMAF) has announced the launch of a landmark event titled "Battle for Truth – Pakistan Combat Night", to celebrate Pakistan's sporting victories and express solidarity with the Pakistan Armed Forces. Scheduled for August 24 at DHA Stadium, Lahore, the event will feature two major competitions: the Pakistan Open MMA Championship and Road to BRAVE 100. This high-impact showcase further cements MMA's rise as the future of sports in Pakistan, and is being held with the support of the Punjab government. In the Pakistan Open MMA Championship, amateur fighters, including both men and women, from four regional teams will compete across various weight categories. The winners will earn a spot to represent Pakistan at the IMMAF World Championships in Georgia later this year.

The Road to BRAVE 100 fight card will feature five of Pakistan's top fighters squaring off against elite international opponents from Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Egypt, and Morocco. Victors will qualify for BRAVE CF 100, the global flagship event of BRAVE Combat Federation, held in Bahrain under the patronage of His Highness



Sheikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa. PAKMMAF President Omar Ahmed thanked Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz for her leadership, saying, "With her all-out support, the MMA is now the sport of choice for Pakistani youth, who can relate more to Khabib than Babar Azam. We are proud to see it emerge as the future of sports with some champions as global icons." Highlighting the sport's momentum, Omar Ahmed recalled that Pakistani MMA athletes faced Indian fighters ten times last year across events in Dubai, Lahore, and Bahrain, winning all ten bouts. "This clean sweep was a proud moment for the country and coincided with major victories by our Armed Forces, reflecting unity and national strength on every front." Punjab Sports Minister Faisal Khokhar added: "We aim to make Punjab the sports capital of Pakistan, and MMA is central to that vision." Pakistan Combat Night is not just a tournament, it's a national statement, showcasing talent, unity, and the country's ambition to dominate global combat sports.

Briefs

Price of gold surges by Rs2,000 per tola

LAHORE: The price of gold in the global and local markets has increased after two days of decline, with gold becoming more expensive by Rs2,000 per tola and \$ 20 per ounce.

According to data report released by the local Saraf and Jewelers Association, gold in Pakistan has become more expensive by Rs2,000 per tola to Rs357,200 and ten grams by Rs1,715 to Rs366,241. According to the report, the price of gold per ounce in the global market has increased by \$ 20 to \$ 3,345. The price of silver per tola in Pakistan has increased by Rs78 to Rs4,013 and the price per ounce in the global market has increased by \$ 0.78 to \$ 37.80.—APP

PSX turns bearish, sheds 1,355 points

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Stock Exchange's (PSX) benchmark KSE-100 Index turned around to bearish trend on Thursday, losing 1,355.74 points, a negative change of 0.90 percent, closing at 149,235.26 points against 150,591.00 points last trading day. A total of 1,062,993,695 shares were traded during the day as compared to 667,817,396 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 55.824 billion against Rs 40.728 billion on the last trading day. As many as 480 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 130 of them recorded gains and 323 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 27 companies remained unchanged. The three top trading companies were Fauji Foods Limited with 62,087,443 shares at Rs 16.94 per share, Pak Elektron with 57,228,568 shares at Rs45.36 per share and Telecard Limited with 56,939,244 shares at Rs 8.34 per share. APP

Rupee gains 03 paisa against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Thursday appreciated by 03 paisa against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 281.92 against the previous day's closing of Rs 281.95. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 284 and Rs 284.5, respectively. The price of the Euro increased by 25 paisa to close at Rs 328.58 against the last day's closing of Rs 328.33, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen went up by 01 paisa and closed at Rs1.91, while the exchange rate of the British Pound witnessed a decrease of Rs1.07 to close at Rs379.74 against the last day's closing of Rs380.81. The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal came down by 01 paisa each to close at Rs 76.75 and Rs 75.12, respectively. APP

Russian, Jordan ink agreement on visa-free travel for citizens

MOSCOW : Russia and Jordan have officially signed an agreement enabling their citizens to travel without the requirements of visa. Marking a major step forward in bilateral cooperation, the deal was signed by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and Jordan's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Ayman Safadi on Wednesday, a statement said issued here. The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs noted that the agreement is expected to "further boost humanitarian and tourist exchanges, as well as expand our business ties with Jordan." The international partnership between Russia and Jordan has opened new doors for young people. Alabuga, one of Russia's largest industrial hubs which launched Alabuga Start, has come up with a forward-thinking initiative designed to attract and develop young global talents. The programme is widely recognized as one of the most comprehensive and impactful pathways to professional growth for young specialists aged 18 to 22.—APP

Chairman Senate bids farewell to UAE envoy

Gilani lauds Obaid Ibrahim's role in strengthening bilateral ties On economic and trade cooperation, the Chairman stressed Pakistan's desire to diversify trade collaboration and create new avenues for investment

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to Pakistan, Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Al-Zaabi, paid a farewell call on Chairman Senate, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, in Islamabad. Pakistan-themed clothing Independence Day event decorations Chairman Senate lauded the ambassador's role in further cementing the brotherly ties between Pakistan and the UAE. He said that during the envoy's tenure, close interaction between the leadership and the people of both nations added new dimensions to bilateral relations. Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani paid tribute to the vision and leadership of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the founding father of the UAE, whose foresight transformed the Emirates into a hub of economy, trade, tourism, and technology. The Chairman remarked that Pakistan highly values its half-a-century-long relationship with the UAE—relations that have stood the test of time. Referring to the constructive role of the UAE leadership during the Pakistan-India war of May 2025, he described it as a golden chapter in bilateral ties.

He further expressed satisfaction over the continuity of high-level exchanges, underscoring Pakistan's priority to transform these relations into a strategic and multi-dimensional economic partnership—aimed at addressing shared challenges such as poverty alleviation, food security, and climate change. On economic and trade cooperation, the Chairman stressed Pakistan's desire to diversify trade collaboration and create new avenues for investment. High-



lighting the role of the Pakistani diaspora, he noted that around 1.8 million Pakistanis are contributing to the UAE's development, while their remittances remain vital for Pakistan's economy. Chairman Senate also extended a formal invitation for the partic-

ipation of the UAE's parliamentary delegation in the Inter-Parliamentary Speakers' Conference (ISC) scheduled for November 2025. He said the forum would provide an opportunity to benefit from each other's experiences. Concluding the meeting, Syed

Yousaf Raza Gilani conveyed his best wishes for Ambassador Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Al-Zaabi and affirmed that Pakistan holds his services in high esteem. He expressed confidence that Pakistan-UAE relations will continue to grow stronger in the future.

1m young people engaged to form URAAN Youth Force: Ahsan

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Thursday said that under the initiative of Youth ki URAAN, one million young people across the country are being engaged to form the URAAN Youth Force, a network of social entrepreneurs dedicated to achieving national goals. Addressed the closing ceremony of the URAAN Summer Scholars Program and the Young Parliamentary Development Council (YPDC) Fellowship, the minister said that the URAAN Pakistan is a practical road map aimed at transforming the economy on sustainable and strong foundations. The minister underscored that the program's core objective is to connect the country's youth with the national transformation agenda and to channel their energy toward constructive and positive thinking, said a press release issued by the Ministry of Planning Development and Special Initiatives. The ceremony brought together young scholars, including overseas participants of the Mitti ki Pukaar Summer Scholars Program, and representatives of 131 YPDC chapters from across Pakistan. Ahsan Iqbal lauded the commitment of overseas scholars, noting that they traveled to Pakistan at their own expense to work on pressing national challenges. He said their participation reflected deep dedication to Pakistan's future. He also appreciated the diversity of the program, highlighting that youth from every province and district of Pakistan took part—an achievement that symbolizes national unity. The minister stressed that knowledge alone is not enough, but its true test lies in its application. He reminded the audience that the nation's leading in science and technology are those that lead the world. He called on the new generation to follow the philosophy of Allama Iqbal, which emphasizes learning, research, and innovation. "This is the era of knowledge and innovation. We must move toward the leading edge of innovation," he said. He expressed confidence that through value chain development, Pakistan could enhance its exports by \$100 billion over the next decade. Addressing recent environmental challenges, he pointed out the devastation caused by cloudbursts in Buner, Shangla, and Swat, stressing that climate resilience is a key pillar of the URAAN Pakistan 5Es Framework. He called for collective action to combat climate change and reaffirmed the government's commitment to sustainable development. Highlighting the structure of the program, the Minister explained that the 131 YPDC chapters across the country provide safe spaces for young people to engage in dialogue, build social and cultural consensus, and design roadmaps for collective action. Through these platforms, youth are not only raising their voices but also forging partnerships with the government, participating in policy-making, and contributing to implementation, he added.—DNA

Senates of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan okays roadmap for coop

TASHKENT: The Chairperson of the Senate of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan Tanzila Narbayeva met with the Chairman of the Senate of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan Maulen Ashimbayev in Astana. Current issues on further deepening inter-parliamentary cooperation, as well as priority areas of bilateral cooperation in political, economic, humanitarian, and regional spheres were discussed at the meeting. It was noted that thanks to the firm political will of the heads of state, relations between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan have reached the level of a comprehensive strategic partnership and alliance. Inter-parliamentary ties have strengthened in both bilateral and multilateral formats. The results of the Second Interparliamentary Forum of Central Asian States and the Kazakhstan delegation's participation in the 150th IPU Assembly were highly appreciated. The next meeting will be held in Uzbekistan in the fourth quarter of this year. It will review the activities of the Interparliamentary Commission on Cooperation between the Senates of the two countries. The parties discussed prospects for expanding the partnership between the Parliamentary Commission for Monitoring the Implementation of National Goals and Objectives in Sustainable Development under the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan and a similar commission of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Following the meeting, a roadmap for the development of cooperation between the Senate of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Senate of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2025-2026 was signed, aimed at deepening interparliamentary dialogue and promoting joint initiatives in the international arena.—DNA

Jam Kamal Khan meets Bangladesh's Adilur Rahman Khan

Pakistan, Bangladesh explore industrial coop, trade expansion

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Minister for Commerce of Pakistan, Jam Kamal Khan, held productive discussions with Bangladesh's Adviser for Industries, Adilur Rahman Khan, in Dhaka on Thursday to explore avenues for industrial cooperation between the two countries. Pakistan's High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Imran Haider, was also present during the meeting, said a release issued here. The Minister and the Adviser underscored the importance of leveraging their economic and industrial base to the mutual advantage of the two countries to address issues of food security, value addition in the food industry, and aligning industrial technology. Discussions focused on exchanging expertise across diverse sectors through mutual exchange of delegations and knowledge sharing. The Minister for Commerce emphasized Pakistan's keen interest in being a part of Bangladesh's evolving indus-



trial landscape through collaboration, joint ventures and mutual investment. He emphasised the need for a shared vision to create a facilitative economic ecosystem for industrial growth. Building on the positive growth in bilateral trade, he underscored the need

to transform this relationship into a sustainable partnership. He focused on value-addition industries for revenue generation and socio-economic uplift and appreciated Bangladesh's growth in sectors such as pharmaceuticals, textiles, and Information Technology.

Egypt opens submerged antiquities exhibition

ASTANA : Egypt opened on Wednesday an exhibition for sunken antiquities at the Al-Alexandria National Museum, showcasing treasures from the Mediterranean seabed, Xinhua reports.

Dubbed the "Secrets of the Sunken City Exhibition," the exhibition showcased 86 rare artifacts recovered from several sites in Alexandria, including the two submerged cities of Thonis-Heracleion and Canopus, and the submerged Royal Quarter in the Eastern Harbor of ancient Alexandria.

According to the Egyptian Tourism and Antiquities Ministry, Thonis-Heracleion, a once-flourishing port city active between the 6th century BC and 4th century AD, gradually sank over the centuries due to earthquakes, land subsidence and rising sea levels. It was known for its multiple harbors and Egyptian and Greek temples, including Amun, Khonsu and Heraclides. The submerged city of Canopus was renowned for its sacred sanctuaries dedicated to Osiris and Serapis. The city was also known for its extravagant celebrations during the Roman era, the ministry said.—APP

Iran's navy launches military drill

TEHRAN: Iran launched its first military exercise since the end of its 12-day war with Israel, state television reported Thursday, with navy vessels launching missiles at targets at sea in the Gulf of Oman and the Indian Ocean.

While such drills are routine in the Islamic Republic, the "Sustainable Power 1404" exercise comes as authorities in Iran are trying to project strength in the wake of a war that saw Israel destroy air defense systems and bomb nuclear facilities and other sites.

The state TV report said naval vessels would fire cruise missiles at targets and use drones over the open water. It did not immediately air any footage from the exercise Iran's navy, estimated to have some 18,000 personnel, apparently avoided any major attack during the June war. The navy, based out of the port city of Bandar Abbas, patrols the Gulf of Oman, the Indian Ocean and the Caspian Sea, and broadly leaves the Arabian Gulf and its narrow mouth, the Strait of Hormuz, to Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard. The Guard's naval forces are known for seizures of Western vessels during the breakdown of Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, as well as closely shadowing passing US Navy vessels coming into the region. Since the end of the war, Iran has increasingly insisted that it is ready to counter any future Israeli attack. Defense Minister Brig. Gen. Aziz Nasirzadeh said that the country has equipped its forces with new missile, in remarks reported Wednesday by the state-run IRNA news agency. "In response to any potential enemy adventurism, our forces are prepared to use these new missiles effectively.—APP

UK ministry of defence admits 49 breaches of Afghans' data

LONDON: The UK's Ministry of Defence has admitted that 49 separate data breaches relating to Afghan relocations took place over the past four years, the BBC reported on Thursday. The breaches occurred within the unit responsible for processing relocation claims from Afghans seeking refuge in the UK. Of the 49 breaches, four were publicly known, including the massive 2022 leak of a spreadsheet containing the personal details of almost 19,000 people fleeing the Taliban. That leak led to thousands of Afghans being secretly relocated to the UK, a fact that was concealed from the public for years under a gagging order lifted last month. The latest figure of 49 breaches was revealed to the BBC through the Freedom of Information Act. Initially, the UK's information watchdog described the highly controversial 2022 leak as a "one-off occurrence."—APP

'It's time to end physical punishment of kids once and for all'

DNA

BAKU: Over half of all children under-18 worldwide continue to experience corporal punishment on an annual basis, according to a new report from the World Health Organization (WHO). Corporal punishment refers most frequently to hitting children but can refer to any punishments inflicted by parents, caregivers or teachers which are intended to cause some degree of discomfort. It can happen in the home or in more public settings like the school classroom. But wherever it happens, this sort of punishment has wide-ranging effects, including increased risk of anxiety and depression in addition to reduced cognitive and socio-emotional development. "[Corporal punishment] offers no benefits to the behaviour, development or well-being of children and no benefit to parents or societies either," said Etienne Krug, director of WHO's department of health determinants. Over past decades, many studies have examined the effects of corporal punishment, and not one has found that it has a positive impact on children or their behaviour. In contrast, many have found that it has many long-term negative health impacts on children as individuals – and societies as a whole.

"There is now overwhelming scientific evidence that cor-

poral punishment carries multiple risks to the health of children," Ms. Krug said. A study conducted across 49 low and middle-income countries found that children who are corporally punished are 24 per cent less likely to be developmentally on track with their peers.

In addition to causing immediate physical harm, this form of punishment heightens children's hormonal stress levels which can actually change brain structure and function. In short, the impacts on an individual level can be life-long, according to the report. From a societal perspective, children who are themselves physically punished are also more likely to do the same to their own offspring, creating an intergenerational cycle of violence. Similarly, adults who were corporally punished as children are more likely to develop violent, criminal and aggressive behaviours. "The practice [of corporal punishment] also fuels a broader social acceptance of violence, reinforcing harmful cycles across generations," the report said. While corporal punishment is prevalent across the world and across cultures, regional variations do persist. For example, in Europe and Central Asia, approximately 41 per cent of children are subjected to corporal punishment in homes compared to 75 per cent in the Middle East and North Africa. The disparity is even larger in schools – only 25 per cent of children in the Western Pacific experience corporal punishment dur-

ing their schooling compared to over 70 per cent in Africa and Central America. Girls and boys are almost equally as likely to experience corporal punishment, though they may experience punishment for different behaviours and in different manners. However, children with disabilities are at a heightened risk for suffering from corporal punishment. Additionally, poorer communities and those which experience economic or racial discrimination are more likely to practice corporal punishment. The report emphasizes that banning corporal punishment is important but not enough. In fact, studies have found that there is no consistent association between legal bans and decreased rates in physical punishment. Currently, 67 countries worldwide have universal bans on corporal punishment, both in the home and in school. In addition to better enforcement of these prohibitions, WHO is calling for new educational campaigns to reinforce the harm it can cause. "Continuing use of corporal punishment and persisting belief in the necessity of its use despite legal bans, suggest that efforts to enact and enforce such laws should be accompanied by campaigns to increase awareness," the report said. Studies suggest that if parents knew of alternative and more effective methods of punishment for children, they would use them. "It's time to end this harmful practice to ensure that children thrive at home

Briefs

US senators
call for lifting
barriers on
Gaza media
reporting

NEW YORK: A group of 17 US Senators sent a letter to Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Wednesday calling for the United States to press Israel to grant access and protection to journalists in Gaza. "The United States must make it clear to Israel that banning and censoring media organisations and targeting or threatening members of the press is unacceptable and must stop," the Democratic senators said in a statement. The letter to Rubio, a staunch supporter of Israel, said: "We urge you to press the Israeli government to protect journalists in Gaza and allow international media to access the territory." The letter condemned the Israeli attack which killed four journalists for Al Jazeera, writing: "Absent a compelling explanation of the military objective for this attack, it appears Israel is publicly admitting to targeting and killing journalists who have shown the world the scale of suffering in Gaza, which would be a violation of international law." Among the signatories were Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren, Hawaii Senator Brian Schatz, Virginia Senator Tim Kaine and 13 other Democratic senators, as well as Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders, a registered independent who caucuses with the Democrats. — Agencies

Rs 4.8 tr
irregularities
in power
sector

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Auditor General of Pakistan (AGP) in its audit year 2024-25 report has exposed a serious crisis of governance in the power sector by identifying financial and operational irregularities worth Rs4,800 billion. The report covers financial year 2023-24 and will be presented to the Public Accounts Committee (PAC). It does not pinpoint a single scandal but rather a comprehensive system-wide failure. It details a sorry state of affairs where rules are routinely ignored, contracts are poorly managed, and vast sums of public money are subject to risk, mismanagement and in some cases, outright theft. Following are the key findings of the audit report on the accounts of power division, its attached entities and Nepra: In six cases, theft, embezzlement and misappropriation valuing Rs2,212.95 million was pointed out. In 86 cases, procurement/contractual irregularities involving Rs156,141.88 million were pointed out. In 77 cases, violation of internal regulations and SOPs of addtee entities involving Rs507,242.82 million were pointed out.

US Acting
Ambassador
meets
Mohsin Naqvi

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and US Acting Ambassador Natalie Baker held an important meeting in Islamabad on Thursday, where they discussed bilateral relations, counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics cooperation. During the meeting, Acting Ambassador Baker congratulated Minister Naqvi on receiving the prestigious Nishan-e-Imtiaz award and extended her best wishes for his future responsibilities. She also expressed deep sorrow over the tragic loss of lives caused by recent heavy rains and flash floods in Pakistan, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. "Our deepest sympathies are with the families of those who lost their lives," she said. Minister Naqvi, on the occasion, praised US President Donald Trump's extraordinary efforts for sustainable global peace, highlighting his role in ending four wars, including those between Pakistan and India.

PM Launches One-Stop Facilitation Center for Investors, Entrepreneurs

PM Shehbaz Inaugurates Pakistan's First Business Facilitation Center to Boost Investment

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday inaugurated the first-ever Business Facilitation Center (BFC) here with a vision to promote ease of doing business and attract investment in Pakistan by providing a one-stop solution to investors and entrepreneurs. Established by the Board of Investment, the BFC will facilitate the business community by providing a wide range of services, including guidance on regulatory requirements and facilitating business registration, licensing, and permits. It will serve as a one-stop service, reducing hurdles and facilitating efficient interaction between businesses and government entities. The prime minister, who was briefed on the center's functioning, including the investors' guidance, application for special economic zones, licensing and payments procedures with drastically reduced timelines, also unveiled the plaque of the project, vowing to replicate it across the country if it fulfills the desired objectives. He thanked the Minister for Board of Investment Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh, Secretary BOI, and their team for establishing the country's first-ever facilitation center and particularly for recruiting a highly talented and competent workforce who



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif inaugurates the Business Facilitation Centre. — DNA

were engaged in dealing with customers as the prime minister spoke to the gathering. The prime minister urged all the relevant departments to efficiently run the center to make it a success by facilitating and guiding the investors

or people from other sectors, just like other countries. "Otherwise, this will be nothing more than brick and mortar. That is not my vision... We should welcome customers with a smiling face combined with genuine support without any

delay, not even for a second," he advised. Prime Minister Shehbaz called for making the facilitation center attractive and popular in other countries and establishing it as a model, paving the way for its replication in other parts of the country. In his remarks, BOI Minister Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh called the establishment of the center a breakthrough in investment facilitation. He said that earlier, the investors had to visit various departments to accomplish the required procedures for setting up their businesses; however, the BFC will reduce this hassle, besides remarkably reducing the timelines. Prime Minister Shehbaz, who also visited different desks of the facilitation center, was told that the investors would be able to submit their applications for setting up special economic zones or other projects at the center, by answering different queries such as the nature of the business, loan and equity structure, target market, export potential, expected employment generation, and utility requirements. The system will reflect all attached documents as well as an activity log, besides enabling the applicant to track their application, who will also be timely informed about any shortcomings on their part. Federal Ministers Attaulah Tarar, Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Ahad Cheema and Dr Musadik Malik, and senior government officers also attended the event.

US Judge Frank Caprio dies at 88



NEW YORK: Judge Frank Caprio, renowned for his compassion in the courts of the US state of Rhode Island, has died at the age of 88, his son, David Caprio, said in a social media post Wednesday. His death following a diagnosis of pancreatic cancer was announced on his official Instagram account, where he was remembered for his "warmth" and "unwavering belief in the goodness of people."

"Beloved for his compassion, humility, and unwavering belief in the goodness of people, Judge Caprio touched the lives of millions through his work in the courtroom and beyond," the statement reads. "His warmth, humour, and kindness left an indelible mark on all who knew

"Beloved for his compassion, humility, and unwavering belief in the goodness of people, Judge Caprio touched the lives of millions through his work in the courtroom and beyond," the statement reads

him." "It was the love and support he received from all of you that lifted his spirits and boosted his soul to find the strength to fight on and outlive his diagnosis by a year and a half," David Caprio said in the video. Caprio went viral on social media for hearing cases on traffic and parking violations and arraignments for criminal offenses. It was Caprio's empathy and humour in how he handled the cases that would touch audiences on social media. A couple of times when a Pakistani-American man or a woman appeared in his court, Judge Caprio would smilingly tell him or her that he receives a lot of fan mail from Pakistan. Before becoming a judge, Caprio shined shoes, delivered newspapers and worked on a milk truck. He graduated from Providence College in 1958 and began teaching American government at a local high school in Providence. While teaching, he also attended night school at the Suffolk University School of Law in Boston. Caprio served as a Providence Municipal Court judge from 1985 to 2023. — Agencies

US intel chief slashes payroll to root out 'deep state actors' ODNI has become inefficient, and int'l community is rife with abuse of power, says Gabbard

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: US intelligence chief Tulsi Gabbard said on Wednesday that she will make heavy cuts to her office, which she declared has "fallen short" of fulfilling its mandate and is "rife with abuse of power." Gabbard announced she will reduce the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) by over 40% by the end of fiscal year 2025, estimated to save \$700 million. "Over the last 20 years, ODNI has become bloated and inefficient, and the intelligence community is rife with abuse of power, unauthorised leaks of classified intelligence and politicised weaponization of intelligence," Gabbard said in a news release. In a series of social media posts, Gabbard added that she is "cutting bloated bureaucracy, rooting out deep state actors, and restoring mission focus."

A four-page fact sheet posted to her department's website describes the plan for "ODNI 2.0," which involves reducing her office's efforts to monitor biosecurity, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, cyber intelligence threats and other areas. In explaining cuts to the Strategic Futures Group, the office's intelligence forecasting unit, Gabbard's team said they were "found to violate professional analytic tradecraft standards in an effort to propagate a political agenda that ran counter to all of the current president's national security

priorities." The cuts were, at times, explained with accusations against previous Democrat-led administrations. Cuts to the Foreign Malign Influence Center — established to combat foreign threats to democracy and US interests — were conducted because it was "used by the previous administration to justify the suppression of free speech and to censor political opposition," the fact sheet alleged, in reference to President Donald Trump's predecessor Joe Biden. The fact sheet also touted previous cuts, saying since "Gabbard's first day, ODNI has already reduced its size by nearly 30%, with more than 500 staffers now off the books."

In July, Gabbard accused former president Barack Obama of heading a "treasonous conspiracy" to allege Russia interfered with American elections to help Trump. But Gabbard's findings run up against four separate criminal, counterintelligence and watchdog probes between 2019 and 2023 — each of them concluding that Russia did interfere and helped Trump in various ways.

Critics have accused Gabbard, 43, of being close to Russian President Vladimir Putin and ousted Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. The purge extends beyond slashing the agency's current payroll. The New York Times reported on Tuesday that Gabbard revoked the security clearances of 37 current and former national security officials — many of whom worked on Russia analysis or foreign threats to US elections — at the president's direction.

At UN Pakistan decries stigmatisation of Islam

Envoy Asim Iftikhar highlights "grave and immediate" threat to Pakistan by Afghanistan-based TTP

NEW YORK: Bringing the United Nations Security Council's (UNSC) attention to the rise of right-wing extremists and fascist movements, Pakistan has decried the "dangerous stigmatisation of Islam and Muslims". "It is not understandable, and is indeed unacceptable, that every name on the Security Council's terrorism lists is Muslim, while terrorists and violent extremists elsewhere escape scrutiny. There is no non-Muslim in the lists," Pakistan's UN Ambassador Asim Iftikhar said during a UNSC meeting on "Threats to international peace & security caused by terrorist acts". Urging the need to make adequate changes to the sanctions regimes to incorporate new and emerging threats, envoy Iftikhar called for an "end to the stigmatisation of Islam and Muslims". "We must accept the reality. There has been a surge in the emergence of right-wing, extremist and fascist movements in several countries and regions of the world, leading to terrorist violence. "Yet, we see a strong inclination to see acts by non-Muslims not as terrorism, but often described just as violent crime," remarked the Pakistan envoy. The diplomat further highlighted that the existing situation contradicted both the UN and UNSC's stated position that terrorism is a global phenomenon and it cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilisation or ethnic group. Highlighting that Pakistan's principal adversary — India — was active in sponsoring terrorism in Pa-

kistan, the Ambassador Asim Iftikhar stated at the same session that New Delhi bankrolls and supports terrorist proxies. "Indeed, terrorism within and from Afghanistan is the single most potent threat to that country, to the region, and the world," he remarked, adding that the threat from various other terrorist groups, such as Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Baloch terror groups having sought refuge in ungoverned spaces in Afghanistan, remained unaddressed. "For Pakistan, the danger is grave and immediate. The TTP, with nearly 6,000 fighters, is the largest UN-designated terrorist group, operating from Afghan soil. "With safe havens close to our borders, it directly threatens our national security," Iftikhar noted. He further maintained that there was "credible evidence of collaboration between the TTP and BLA and the Majed Brigade, including sharing of terrorist training camps, that has targeted our strategic infrastructure, economic projects in Pakistan, and most tragically our people". Stressing that Islamabad condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, the envoy said that only a few countries had done more for the success of the global counter-terrorism efforts. "Pakistan has been at the forefront on both counts — with 80,000 casualties and hundreds of billions of dollars in losses to our economy, Pakistan's sacrifices are unmatched. So is our resolve to eliminate this menace," he said. — Agencies

Tarbela dam attains maximum conservation level

Tarbela Dam has been playing a key role for socio-economic development in Pakistan for the last 50 years by providing water for agriculture at the time when it is needed, controlling floods and generating low-cost hydel electricity

ISLAMABAD: Tarbela Dam reached its maximum conservation level of 1550 feet above mean sea level on Thursday, with 5.728 million-acre feet live water storage in the reservoir. Filling of Tarbela Dam to its maximum conservation level is a good sign for irrigated agriculture and hydel generation in the country, said a press release.

The position of the river inflows and outflows at Tarbela, Mangla and Chashma along with the reservoirs levels and the barrages is as under: Rivers: Indus at Tarbela: Inflows 268300 cusecs and Outflows 238900 cusecs, Kabul at Nowshera: Inflows 44600 cusecs and Outflows 44600 cusecs, Khairabad Bridge: Inflows 258100 cusecs and Outflows 258100, Jhelum at Mangla: Inflows 38600 cusecs and Outflows 7000 cusecs, Chenab at Marala: Inflows 67600 cusecs and Outflows 49000 cusecs. Barrages: Jinnah: Inflows 325800 cusecs and Outflows 319400 cusecs, Chashma: Inflows: 403500 cusecs and Outflows 351600 cusecs, Taunsa: 485000 Inflows cusecs and Outflows 479700 cusecs, Guddu: Inflows 439100 cusecs and Outflows 417700 cusecs Sukkur: Inflows 363500 cusecs and Outflows 315400 cusecs Kotri: Inflows 129200 cusecs and Outflows 125800 cusecs, Trimmu: Inflows 79400 cusecs and Outflows 68300 Panjnad: Inflows 70500 cusecs and Outflows 56300 cusecs. Reservoirs (Level and Storage): Tarbela: Minimum operating level 1402 feet, present level 1550.00 feet, maximum conservation level 1550 feet, live storage 5.728 MAF. Mangla: Minimum operating level 1050 feet, present level 1217.45 feet, maximum conservation level 1242 feet, live storage 5.423 MAF. Chashma: Minimum operating level 638.15 feet, present level 643.30 feet, maximum conservation level 649 feet, live storage 0.094 MAF. — APP

Floods: PM reaches out to political leaders

Shehbaz directed the NDMA Chairman to stay in close coordination with the Sindh government

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday reached out to the leaders of different political parties and assured them of the cooperation and support of the federal government and its institutions to handle the situation caused by the heavy monsoon rains and consequent floods. The prime minister telephoned Pakistan Peoples Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and expressed grief over the loss of lives caused by the torrential rains and urban flooding in Southern Sindh, particularly Karachi. He offered full support from the federal government to assist the Sindh government in addressing the emergency situation. PM Shehbaz directed the National Disaster Management Authority Chairman to stay in close coordination with the Sindh government, provide all possible assistance to the Provincial Disaster Management Authority, and ensure the early warnings to the people about potential risks. — DNA

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