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German chancellor says war on Iran has no moral ground

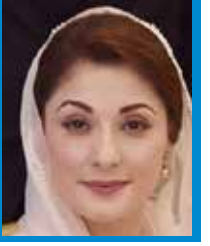
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Pakistan is a responsible state: Gilani

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Punjab CM to establish film city in Lahore

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Attack not related to Iran war, says White House

Trump, first lady safe in deadly gun attack

Officials believe shooter to be "lone wolf", says Trump, adding, "He was a guy who looked pretty evil"; Just over two months after the Butler shooting, Secret Service agents spotted a man wielding a gun and hiding in bushes at the Trump International Golf Club in West Palm Beach, Florida, while Trump was on the course

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump and first lady Melania Trump were rushed out of the White House Correspondents' Association dinner by Secret Service agents on Saturday night after a man opened fire with a shotgun on security personnel, officials said. The armed man fired at a Secret Service agent, an FBI official told Reuters. About two hours after the incident, Trump told reporters at the White House that the officer was saved by his bulletproof vest and is in "good shape". "A man charged a security checkpoint armed with multiple weapons, and he was taken down by some very brave members of the Secret Service," Trump said at a White House press conference after the incident. Closed-circuit TV footage released by Trump on Truth Social showed someone running rapidly through a security checkpoint, momentarily catching security personnel off-guard before they quickly drew their weapons.

"You know, he charged from 50 yards away, so he was very far away from the room. He was moving. He was really moving," Trump said after the gala dinner was cancelled. Officials believe he is a "lone wolf" who acted alone, Trump said, adding, "He was a guy who looked pretty evil when he was down." Trump said federal agents were raiding the California home of the suspected shooter. Anthony Guglielmi, a Secret Service spokesman, said the service was investigating a shooting near the main screening area at the entrance to the event.

After the sound of shots, dinner attendees immediately stopped talking and people started screaming "Get down, get down!" Many of the 2,600 attendees took cover while waiters fled to the front of the dining hall. Security agents pushed cabinet officials to the ground, including Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Health Secretary Robert F Kennedy Jr and Interior Secretary Doug Burgum. Other security personnel in combat fatigues stormed the stage and evacuated Trump and his wife. Some security personnel took up position on the stage, pointing their rifles into the ballroom. Cabinet members were evacuated from the venue one by one. The White House Correspondents' Association dinner, a marquee fixture of Washington's social calendar each year, was also attended by many members of

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PM Shehbaz, world leaders 'relieved' after Trump safe

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, and other world leaders have expressed relief after President Donald Trump, the First Lady, and other attendees were reported safe following a shooting incident at the White House Correspondents' Dinner in Washington, DC.

Gunshots were fired near the venue at the Washington Hilton hotel during the annual political media event, prompting the security officials to evacuate Trump, his wife, US Vice President JD Vance and other senior officials. The shooter has been arrested. The man fired a shotgun at a Secret Service agent at a checkpoint in the Washington Hilton hotel before being tackled and arrested. It was not immediately clear whether Trump was the target of the attack, though he told reporters he believed that he was. The president has survived two previous attempts on his life since 2024, a period of deepening political polarisation in the United States. In a post on X, President Zardari's office condemned the shooting, calling it a "heinous act of terrorism," while expressing relief that President Trump and the First Lady were unharmed. "President Asif Ali Zardari condemned the shooting at the White House Correspondents' Dinner, expressed relief that President Trump & the First Lady are safe, and termed the

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Briefs

Atomic energy should be used for peaceful purpose: Pope

NEWS DESK

VATICAN CITY: Pope Leo XIV marked the 40th anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster with an appeal for atomic energy only to be used for peaceful purposes. The deadly explosion at the Soviet-era plant "marked the conscience of humanity" and "remains a warning of the risks inherent in the use of increasingly powerful technologies," the US pontiff said at the end of a prayer service at the Vatican. "I hope that at all levels of decision-making, discernment and responsibility will always prevail, so that every use of atomic energy may be at the service of life and peace," the 70-year-old said.

Trump's security again faces scrutiny

Hundreds of agents from several law enforcement agencies were tasked with protecting the annual bash, which President Donald Trump headlined this year

MONITORING DESK

WASHINGTON: The shooting on Saturday night of a Secret Service agent at the White House Correspondents' Association dinner raises questions yet again about the protection afforded to America's political leaders at a time of increased political violence. Hundreds of agents from several law enforcement agencies were tasked with protecting the annual bash, which President Donald Trump headlined this year. Yet a suspect with a shotgun and other weapons managed to get just a floor above the Washington ballroom where an extraordinary concentration of cabinet members, high-ranking lawmakers and celebrities were dining. In addition to Trump, Vice President JD Vance, Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Pentagon chief Pete Hegseth, Attorney General Todd Blanche, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, Interior Secretary Doug Burgum and various other government officials were in attendance, many with their own security details.

'Not particularly secure building,' Trump says It is too early to definitively say whether there were any law enforcement failures or miscommunications. But coming less than two years after a pair of assassination attempts against Trump during the presidential campaign in 2024, Saturday's incident suggests even the nation's most comprehensive personal security apparatus has points of vulnerability. Washington's police chief said the alleged gunman — who was armed with a shotgun, a handgun and knives — was staying at the Washington Hilton hotel where the dinner took place. During an impromptu White House press conference after the incident, Trump praised first responders, including the Secret Service. He also mused about the dangers of being president, noting some of his predecessors had been assassinated, but adding that the suspect had not been close to "breaching" the doors of the ballroom. "It's not particularly a secure building," Trump said of the hotel about a 10-minute drive from

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What we know so far about gunman attack

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: A suspected gunman is in custody after storming a security checkpoint at the White House Correspondents' Dinner — forcing President Donald Trump, cabinet members and a ballroom full of guests to scramble to safety. Authorities have identified the suspect as 31-year-old Cole Tomas Allen, a California native, three sources familiar with the matter told media. The suspect was armed with a shotgun, a handgun and multiple knives and "exchanged fire" with law enforcement officers when he was intercepted and taken into custody, interim Washington, DC, Police Chief Jeffery Carroll told reporters. A motive has not been determined, and the suspect is expected to be arraigned in court on Monday. He faces two charges: using a firearm during a crime of violence

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LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif offers condolence over the demise of sister of Speaker of the Punjab Assembly. Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi is also present. — DNA

Middle East tensions

Iranian FM takes up war issue with Sultan of Oman

Araghchi returns to Islamabad for a short time for another round of consultations with Pakistani leadership, signaling that backchannel diplomacy is still very much alive

NEWS DESK

MUSCAT/ISLAMABAD: Sultan Haitham bin Tariq held a key meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi in Muscat on Sunday, as regional mediation efforts to end the ongoing conflict gathered momentum. During the talks, both sides reviewed the evolving regional situation and discussed ongoing diplomatic initiatives aimed at de-escalation and a possible ceasefire. Oman, which has historically played a neutral and facilitative role, reaffirmed its commitment to mediation between Iran and its adversaries. The meeting comes at a critical juncture after Araghchi's recent visit to Islamabad, where Pakistan has been actively engaged in efforts to broker dialogue. Despite the absence of a breakthrough in earlier rounds, diplomatic channels remain open, with multiple regional actors continuing to push for a negotiated settlement. Araghchi returned to Islamabad on Sunday

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US-Iran talks future uncertain

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD/WASHINGTON: Hopes of a diplomatic breakthrough in the US-Israeli war with Iran faded on Sunday, as efforts to revive talks stalled and both Tehran and Washington showed little sign of softening their positions. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi flew back to the Middle East from mediation talks in Pakistan over the weekend, while US President Donald Trump scrapped a planned visit to Islamabad by his envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner. Although a ceasefire has paused full-scale fighting in the conflict, which began with US-Israeli strikes on Iran on February 28, no agreement has been reached on terms to end a war

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Serena Hotel, Red Zone traffic restrictions lifted

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Traffic restrictions around Serena Hotel and the Red Zone in Islamabad ended today. Authorities thanked the people of Pakistan, especially citizens of Islamabad and Rawalpindi, for their patience and cooperation during the restrictions. "The support of the public helps us ensure the safety of our guests and continue our efforts for peace in the region," an official statement said. Officials added that they remain committed to these goals and deeply appreciate the continued prayers and good wishes of the nation.

Pakistani exports to major European markets slow down

Earlier this month, the EU Ambassador to Pakistan Raimundas Karoblis also warned Pakistan that access to the GSP+ — which allows duty-free entry into most European markets — was neither guaranteed nor automatic, signalling a more conditional approach from Brussels reliant on Islamabad's progress on human rights issues

NEWS DESK / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's exports to major Western and Northern European markets have recorded negative growth in the first nine months of the current fiscal year compared with a year ago, despite the continuation of the Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP+) status, raising concerns about weakening demand for Pakistani goods. The development comes against the backdrop of a shifting global trade environment, as the US-Iran conflict sends shockwaves through the Middle East, impacting global goods transport, accelerating the fall in exports to European markets. Additionally, earlier this year, European Union preferential market access was offered to India, one of Pakistan's key competitors in textiles. Earlier this month, the EU Ambassador to Pakistan Raimundas Karoblis also warned Pakistan that access to the GSP+ — which allows duty-free entry into most European markets — was neither guaranteed nor automatic, signal-

ling a more conditional approach from Brussels reliant on Islamabad's progress on human rights issues. For Pakistani exporters, the evolving situation presents a dual challenge: maintaining compliance with EU conditions while facing increasing competition from countries gaining preferential or expanded market access. Exporters will face mounting pressure to retain their markets amid logistical challenges posed by the ongoing conflict coupled with rising input costs in the country. Trade analysts warn that the conflict could further dampen export demand, as rising energy costs are likely to squeeze consumer spending in Europe, which is already under strain from the economic fallout of the Ukraine war. They caution that these pressures could erode purchasing power and weigh further on demand for imported goods, including those from Pakistan. Official data compiled by the State Bank of Pakistan showed that Pakistan's exports to European countries recorded a paltry year-on-year growth of 0.94 per cent to

Continued on Page 06

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ICCI President urges equal growth space for all sectors

Referring to the Interior Minister's vision of developing a new ultra-modern city, modeled after global hubs like Manhattan and Shanghai, he described the initiative as ambitious and forward-looking, with the potential to transform Islamabad into a world-class economic center

ISLAMABAD: President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Sardar Tahir Mehmood has welcomed the recent initiative of Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi aimed at promoting tourism and strengthening the hospitality sector, terming it a progressive step towards enhancing Islamabad's global image and economic vitality. In a statement issued here on Sunday, he said that incentives for the hotel industry, along with ongoing beautification efforts in the federal capital, would significantly improve the city's appeal as a modern destination for both domestic and international tourists. These measures, he noted, would help generate employment, attract investment, and stimulate economic activity. Sardar Tahir Mehmood particularly appreciated the relief measures introduced by the Capital Development Authority, including the rationalization and rebate in Floor Area Ratio (FAR) charges for hotel projects, observing that such steps would facilitate vertical development and encourage new investment in the hospi-

talities sector. Referring to the Interior Minister's vision of developing a new



ultra-modern city, modeled after global hubs like Manhattan and Shanghai, he described the initiative as ambitious and forward-looking, with the potential to transform Islamabad into a world-class economic center. However, the ICCI President emphasized that while these incentives are commendable,

policy fairness and consistency must be ensured across all sectors, particularly real estate and construction. He underscored that stakeholders from other sectors also have an equal right to sustain, grow, and contribute to the national economy. Sardar Tahir Mehmood highlighted that the real estate and construction sector serves as a backbone of economic activity with strong linkages to multiple allied industries. He urged the government to extend comparable incentives, including rationalization of FAR and related charges, to ensure balanced, inclusive, and sustainable growth. Reaffirming ICCI's full support for initiatives aimed at tourism promotion and urban beautification, he stressed that a level playing field is essential for unlocking the full economic potential of all sectors. He further called for consultative and inclusive policymaking, ensuring that all stakeholders are taken on board so that reforms remain equitable, transparent, and conducive to long-term investment and national development.—APP

Promotion of environment-friendly transport top priority

LAHORE: Punjab Finance Minister Mian Mujtaba Shuja-ur-Rehman attended as chief guest, the launching ceremony of a new hybrid vehicle by a leading automobile company here. Addressing the ceremony, he said that promotion of modern, environment-friendly transport is an urgent priority, and Punjab government is actively advancing alternative energy solutions in the transport sector to not only safeguard the environment but also provide sustainable and cost-effective mobility options to the public. The Finance Minister highlighted that special concessions are already being offered on the registration of electric vehicles in Punjab. In line with the special directions of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, government departments will prioritize the procurement of electric and hybrid vehicles in the coming years. He shared that upcoming provincial budget will include a dedicated scheme for establishment of electric vehicle charging stations. To enhance public affordability, a proposal to reduce duties on electric vehicles has also been forwarded to the federal government and is currently under consideration. Addressing the broader economic context, the Finance Minister noted that the government is taking comprehensive measures to mitigate the impact of rising global petroleum prices. He stated that the federal government has provided a fuel subsidy amounting to Rs. 129 billion over the past two months. In Punjab, free public transport facilities have been extended to ease the burden on citizens. Additionally, as part of austerity measures, government fuel consumption has been reduced by up to 50 percent.—APP

Plan to train 5,000 mountaineering professionals

ISLAMABAD: In a major push to professionalize adventure tourism and mountaineering, the Alpine Club of Pakistan (ACP) has rolled out a comprehensive national training initiative, that aims to create a skilled workforce capable of meeting international standards. Talking to APP here Sunday, the ACP President Major General (Retd) Irfan Arshad said the country is finally addressing a decades-old gap in formal mountaineering education that has long limited the sector's potential. He said that a small mountaineering school had already been established in Sadpara, a village in Gilgit-Baltistan with a historically significant climbing community. The facility was set up with backing from the Commander of the Force Command Northern Areas, alongside contributions from Pakistan Army and the ACP President

itself. The centerpiece of the initiative, however, is the National Mountaineering School at Shigar, a government-backed project for which land has been allocated, funds earmarked, and the tendering process is now underway. The project carries an estimated cost of 946 million rupees, Irfan said. In addition, he said an Alpine Climbing Academy in Islamabad is being developed, with its infrastructure and scope currently being finalized. "The courses for the academy are being approved by NAVTTC (National Vocational and Technical Training Commission), under a structured programme designed to produce certified professionals at scale. Under a five year plan, the ACP aims to train up to 5000 professionals across the mountaineering and climbing sector," he added. Irfan emphasized that mountaineering and climbing represent a complete ecosystem, deeply inter-

linked with tourism and employment in Gilgit-Baltistan. "Mountaineering and climbing is a complete ecosystem; it is not like other sports. "Employment in GB is connected to tourism, and tourism is connected to climbing, mountaineering, and hiking. All of these are intertwined." He noted that while advanced certification takes time, shorter training modules would be introduced for support roles, ensuring inclusivity across the workforce. Shorter training programmes of few weeks to six months would cater to lower-altitude workers kitchen crews and other support personnel, he said and added that after three years, no tour operator would be able to use untrained staff. The compliance will be mandatory for everyone. It's a matter of a few years, everyone working in our mountains will be trained and will carry the certification of appropriate institutions, the ACP President added.—APP

KP moves to reform child protection rules

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Commission, with the support of UNICEF, held a consultation workshop here to review and reform the Child Protection Rules 2016 aimed at strengthening child protection systems across the province. The workshop brought together representatives from key government departments including Social Welfare, Health, Education, Police, Labour, Prison, Prosecution, and Local Government, along with technical experts and development partners to discuss reforms needed to make child protection rules more practical, responsive, and child-centered. Speaking at the event, Additional Secretary Social Welfare, Special Education and Women Empowerment Department, Umarah Khan, said the Child Protection Rules 2016 had laid a strong foundation for safeguarding children, but changing challenges now require updated measures aligned with present-day realities and best practices. He reaffirmed the provincial government's commitment to protecting children from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence while ensuring access to a safe and supportive environment. Participants stressed that child protection is a shared responsibility requiring stronger coordination among all departments. They highlighted the need to improve implementation mechanisms, referral pathways, inter-agency coordination, and institutional responses for children in need of care and protection. Head of Child Protection at UNICEF Peshawar, Bushra Ajmal, reaffirmed UNICEF's continued partnership with the provincial government and said strong child protection systems depend on practical implementation, effective coordination, and sustained commitment from all stakeholders. She noted that the recommendations from the workshop would help create a stronger and more responsive framework for protecting children in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Chief of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Commission, Ijaz Muhammad Khan, shared that recommendations from the consultation would be compiled with UNICEF's support before being presented to the Technical Working Group, followed by the Executive Board and later the provincial cabinet for final approval. A provincial launch of the reformed child protection rules is also planned after formal approval. The workshop concluded with a joint commitment from government departments and development partners to accelerate reforms and strengthen child protection systems in the best interests of children across the province.—DNA

Better public service dawns in Lakki Marwat

PESHAWAR: In a decisive break from years of neglect, the district administration of Lakki Marwat extended governance beyond its traditional reach, bringing state institutions directly to communities long defined by physical and administrative isolation. For decades, the remote stretches of the district, where rugged dirt tracks replace paved roads and access to public services remains uncertain have symbolized neglect, where being heard often required long and difficult journeys. That narrative was significantly challenged. In an unprecedented demonstration of outreach, a coordinated delegation of civil and security officials, led by Deputy Commissioner Hamidullah Khan, District Police Officer Nazir Khan, and Commander 55 Brigade Brigadier Haider Ali, visited remote settlements of Sub-Division Bhatni, including Shadikhel, Madikhel, Gazgoba, and Masti Khel. For many residents, it was a rare moment when the state did not wait to be approached—it arrived at their doorstep. By bringing governance directly to these underserved communities, the administration not only addressed immediate concerns but also set a precedent for more responsive and inclusive governance in regions where public confidence has often been weakened by neglect. The visit, conducted

under the directives of the Chief Secretary Shohab Ali Shah and the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa through the District Service Delivery (DSD) and PMRU initiatives, aimed to bridge the persistent gap between governance and geography by improving access to public services. During open-air "khuli katchahris," elders, youth, and tribal representatives gathered to present their concerns directly to officials. The discussions were candid and focused, with water shortages, inadequate health facilities, under-resourced schools, and poor road infrastructure dominating the agenda. Rather than formal applications or delayed correspondence, grievances were addressed in real time, with officials issuing on-the-spot instructions to relevant departments and marking several issues for immediate follow-up. For many residents, this direct engagement represented a shift from symbolic governance to visible responsiveness. Beyond civic issues, the delegation also reviewed the security situation in the border region. Police and Levies checkpoints were inspected, and coordination between security forces was assessed in detail. Officials emphasized the need for stronger inter-agency synchronization to ensure stability in this strategically sensitive area. The message from the leadership

was clear that security and service delivery are to be pursued as parallel priorities. The delegation also visited key public institutions, including schools, health facilities, and the tehsil office, to assess service delivery on the ground rather than through reports alone. Officials interacted directly with staff and residents, gathering feedback on infrastructure gaps, staffing shortages, and operational challenges. In Masti Khel, the focus shifted toward youth engagement, where a football tournament featuring 16 local teams was inaugurated. The event drew young players from surrounding villages and was presented as more than a sporting activity—it was seen as a platform for constructive engagement in a region where opportunities remain limited. Officials encouraged youth participation and announced a cash prize for the winning team. Speaking during the visit, officials stressed that sustainable peace and development depend on continuous engagement with communities rather than occasional outreach efforts. Sports, public forums, and direct interaction, they noted, serve as tools for development, social cohesion, and resilience against extremism.—DNA



ISLAMABAD: The electric bus service has been restored in twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi after recent suspension ahead of 'likely second round of peace talks' between the United States and Iran.

KP releases Rs 300m under "Roshan Peshawar" initiative

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government has released Rs 300 million for installing streetlights in Peshawar under the "Roshan Peshawar" initiative. The project aims at restoring the city's historic vibrancy and address the issue of dark streets According to official sources on Sunday, under the plan, modern streetlights will be installed across major commercial hubs as well as residential areas, particularly in the inner city. Officials say the project will improve visibility, support business activities and enhance overall security. The Metropolitan Government's officials said that all tenders would be processed through an e-bidding system in accordance with rules set by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Public Procurement Regulatory Authority and the federal government's policy framework. The system is designed to minimize human involvement and prevent favouritism. Only technically qualified and licensed contractors will be eligible to participate. All tender-related information has been uploaded to the official platform for open access. In case of objections, contractors can approach the KPRA committee, where complaints will be addressed strictly on merit, they told. The officials noted that the e-tendering model would help ensure transparency and allow only capable firms meeting all requirements to secure contracts and deliver quality work.—APP

Punjab governor opens solar-powered water scheme in Jand

He emphasised that access to clean drinking water is a fundamental right of every citizen, noting that the newly launched solar scheme is part of broader efforts to address long-standing water supply challenges in underdeveloped areas

ATTOCK: Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan inaugurated a solar-powered water supply scheme in Langar village, Jand tehsil of Attock district on Sunday, reaffirming the government's focus on improving basic infrastructure in rural areas. A formal inauguration ceremony was held on the occasion, attended by a large

number of local elders and residents. The governor said the development of Attock district remained among his top priorities, adding that concrete steps were being taken to ensure the provision of essential public services. He emphasised that access to clean drinking water is a fundamental right of every citizen, noting that the new-


ly launched solar scheme is part of broader efforts to address long-standing water supply challenges in underdeveloped areas. Highlighting his party's development vision, the governor said the Pakistan Peoples Party believes in public service and continues to promote uplift projects across neglected regions.—DNA

GB moves closer to 5G as trials get approval

ISLAMABAD: Gilgit-Baltistan has moved closer to next-generation digital connectivity after authorities approved policy directives for the launch of 5G trials in the region, with testing expected to begin shortly. The decision follows months of consultations after the nationwide 5G spectrum auction process, initiated in February, did not initially include Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir Caretaker Minister for Information Technology in Gilgit-Baltistan, Ghulam Abbas, raised the issue with federal authorities and remained actively engaged on the matter. The minister held meet-

ings with Hafeez ur Rehman, Chairman of the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority, and Federal IT Minister Shaza Fatima Khawaja, stressing the need to extend 5G services to the region. Subsequently, the Gilgit-Baltistan Council Secretariat prepared a summary seeking approval of policy directives for the trials. The caretaker minister said the proposal was endorsed by the Ministry of Law and Justice and the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication before being forwarded to the prime minister, who also serves as chairman of the Gilgit-Baltistan Council. The sum-






mary was later circulated among council members. He said the council approved the proposal, which was subsequently ratified by the Gilgit-Baltistan governor, removing key procedural hurdles for the commencement of 5G trials. He added that the telecom regulator had already prepared guidelines for testing, and following formal approval, telecom operators would now be allowed to initiate trials in the region. The PTA chairman has indicated that a formal 5G spectrum auction in Gilgit-Baltistan will follow the successful completion of the trials. The move is expected to improve digital connectivity, support tourism, and facilitate business activity in the mountainous region.—APP



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National Days and Armed Forces Days

APRIL

- April 04/Senegal National Day
- April 07/W. H. O. World Health Day
- April 12/Somalia Armed Forces Day
- April 15/DPR Korea The Day of the Sun
- April 16/Denmark National Day
- April 17/Iran Army Day
- April 17/Syria Independence Day
- April 18/Zimbabwe Independence Day
- April 24/Holy See Anniversary of His Papacy of his Pontificate
- April 25/DPR Korea Armed Forces Day
- April 26/Tanzania National Day
- April 27/Sierra Leone Independence Day
- April 27/South Africa Freedom Day
- April 30/Sweden Birthday of His Majesty
- April 30/Netherlands Birthday of Queen

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- RGH.....9290301-7
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- Cantonment Board 9270151-3



Islamabad Metropolitan

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- Potohar Town.....9209224
- Rawal Town.....5773343

Water Tank

- Islamabad.....0321-5744480



ISLAMABAD: Visitors taking interest in paintings by artist Faisal Niaz. The visitors greatly admired the works of Faisal.

Water experts warn of shortages after India's illegal IWT suspension

Leghari explained that Pakistan's agricultural system operates under a "warabandi" (rotational water distribution) mechanism, under which farmers receive water according to a fixed schedule. If water is not available at the designated time, farmers miss their turn, negatively affecting crop cultivation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Water experts have warned that Pakistan may face future water shortages following India's "illegal" suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty, (IWT) cautioning that the move could also hit the agricultural sector hard. Experts noted that India's decision to suspend the treaty could have long-term implications, even if immediate impacts have so far remained limited. Former Indus Water Commissioner Syed Jamaat Ali Shah, in an interview with international media, said that if any party withdraws from an agreement, it reflects a lack of seriousness. He observed that over the past year, India's actions have not caused significant damage to Pakistan so far, but their long-term effects could emerge in

the future. He added that if one party keeps a decades-old agreement suspended or attempts to terminate it, it naturally heightens concerns for the other party. This, he said, is why Pakistan has approached the United Nations Security Council on the matter. Jamaat Ali Shah emphasized that the treaty is not a concession to Pakistan; rather, under its terms, Pakistan agreed to allocate three rivers to India. He stressed that every agreement carries a certain sanctity and must be upheld, adding that the Indus Waters Treaty is of critical importance for Pakistan. He further stated that he does not believe India currently has the capacity to completely stop Pakistan's water, but any such attempt in the future could have serious consequences. He warned that if India violates the treaty by constructing projects that obstruct

water flows, it could disrupt the natural flow toward Pakistan. This may result in water shortages when needed and excess water when demand is low. He added that if India initiates such projects in violation of the treaty today, Pakistan could begin to feel their impact within the next five to ten years. He also alleged that during last winter and the preceding flood period, India attempted to manipulate water releases. Former Punjab Irrigation Minister and senior water policy expert with UNDP Pakistan's National Governance Programme, Mohsin Leghari said that strict implementation of the Indus Waters Treaty is essential. Referring to the Chenab River, he claimed that India sometimes fills its dams abruptly, reducing water flow to Pakistan, and later releases water suddenly, causing a surge that can lead to flooding. Leghari explained that

Pakistan's agricultural system operates under a "warabandi" (rotational water distribution) mechanism, under which farmers receive water according to a fixed schedule. If water is not available at the designated time, farmers miss their turn, negatively affecting crop cultivation. He further noted that, in the past, officials from both countries remained in contact regarding water flow data under the treaty. However, over the past year, this coordination has ceased, and such data is no longer being shared. Leghari stressed that timing is crucial for crops, and any delay in water supply can result in losses for farmers. He warned that if Pakistan is not informed about water flows from India, it will disrupt planning, leading to either shortages during critical periods or excessive water that increases the risk of flooding.

CTO Virk enforces ITP paperless licensing

ISLAMABAD: Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Islamabad Muhammad Sarfraz Virk chaired an important meeting to review implementation of the paperless licensing system across Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) service centres. An ITP official told APP on Sunday that all in-charges of police facilitation centres attended the meeting. CTO Virk issued clear directions to ensure complete implementation of the paperless system at all centres. The ITP informed that ITP's licensing system had been made fully paperless. He said that from medical examination to printing of driving licence, no paper would be used in the entire process. The CTO said that all in-charges were directed to strictly follow the system and ensure smooth service delivery. He said that separate counters had been allocated for women and senior citizens to facilitate them. CTO Virk directed officers to treat every citizen with courtesy and professionalism during the process. He said citizens would now only need to bring their original CNIC to obtain a driving licence.—APP

ITP rolls out facilitation van schedule

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) has announced the schedule of its facilitation vans for the coming week, while ICT Police's PS on Wheels will also provide various civic services at multiple locations across the federal capital. An ITP official told on Sunday that the facilitation vans will operate from April 27 to May 3, 2026 (08:30 AM to 04:30 PM), offering services including driving licences, learner permits, renewal and duplicate licences, while PS on Wheels will facilitate citizens with character certificates, missing documents reports and registration of tenants and domestic workers. He said the services will be provided through Van-I (GAC-709 Abdul Qadeer), Van-II (GAC-656 Yasir Idrees) and Van-III (GD-896 Aqib Khan), while PS on Wheels (SI Asim Zaidi) will operate separately. According to the schedule, on Monday (April 27), Van-II will be at I-8 Markaz, Van-I at F-10 Bolan Gate and Van-III at Hostel City Park Road, while PS on Wheels will be available at D-12 Markaz. On Tuesday (April 28), Van-II will be stationed at Naval Complex E-8, Van-I at ZABIST University H-8 and Van-III at Social Site B-17, while PS on Wheels will operate at Bhara Kahu Union Council Office. On Wednesday (April 29), Van-II will be at Air HQ E-9, Van-I at Urdu University Chak Shahzad and Van-III at E-11 Toba Masjid, while PS on Wheels will be available at G-14 Srinagar Highway check post. On Thursday (April 30), Van-II will operate at Aabpara Market, Van-I at G-9 Markaz near Awami Trade Centre and Van-III at Bahria University, while PS on Wheels will be stationed at Traffic Office Rawal Town. On Friday (May 1), Van-II will be at G-7 Markaz, Van-I at DHA Phase 5 and Van-III at Bari Imam House. On Saturday (May 2), Van-II will operate at H-13, Van-I at Air University and Van-III at Tarnol Benazir Chowk.—APP

Kashmiris face heightened fear as authorities target homes

ISLAMABAD: Indian forces in the Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) have ramped up brutal operations across the valley, carrying out raids, arbitrary detentions and ruthless property seizures in a vicious campaign to crush the Kashmiri people under false pretenses. According to Kashmir Media Service, these operations were launched across multiple districts, with a particular focus on South Kashmir's Islamabad district, where police conducted search operations at around 20 identified hotspots. Multiple teams raided the residences of locals, deepening fears of harassment and further repression among the population. In the latest crackdown, properties worth approximately Rs 3.5 crore were seized under draconian laws. In the Sangam area, two immovable properties linked to

Shakeel Ahmad Ganie and Farooq Ahmad Mir, residents of Kreshbal Noorbagh, were confiscated. These included double-storey residential houses and one kanal of land each, valued at over Rs 2 crore and Rs 1.5 crore, respectively. Critics have condemned these actions as part of a broader strategy of dispossession aimed at weakening Kashmiri resistance. Authorities have also begun surveys of properties they claim were acquired illegally, but analysts argue that the systematic seizure of Kashmiris' properties has become a disturbing norm, especially since August 2019. Hundreds of locally owned properties have been confiscated, exacerbating the economic and psychological strain on the people. Rights observers and analysts maintain that these property confiscations are part of a wider agenda

to break the Kashmiri resolve for freedom, aligning with what they describe as India's settler-colonial project in the region. They believe that the Modi regime is using these measures as a form of political vendetta to deprive Kashmiris of their land, homes, and livelihoods, while demolitions and repeated cordon-and-search operations continue to fuel public distress. In neighbouring Shopian district, police displayed photographs and lists of alleged individuals at police stations and posts, a clear attempt to intimidate locals and create an atmosphere of fear. Despite these oppressive tactics, observers assert that the people of Kashmir remain resolute in their pursuit of self-determination. They emphasize that such measures, no matter how brutal, will not deter the Kashmiri people from their unwavering struggle for freedom.—APP

Generation Z chooses clicks over family conversations

ISLAMABAD: Experts warned Sunday that the rise of digital life and brand obsession among Generation Z is eroding traditional family routines, with harmful consequences for relationships, mental and physical health, and weakening the cohesion that once defined home life. Renowned psychiatrist Dr Maria Sohail Qureshi, speaking to a local media channel, highlighted deepening concerns over Generation Z's intense attachment to brands and immersive use of technology, emphasizing the profound impact on their values, relationships and daily lives. She noted that young people today are increasingly engrossed in online activity, scrolling through social media, and making purchases that reflect their identity, leaving traditional family interactions on the sidelines. Dr. Qureshi explained that this shift is not just a change in habits but carries harmful consequences. Families are spending less time together, conversations are becoming shorter and more superficial, and the emotional bonds that once held households together are weakening. She emphasized that constant digital engagement can impact mental health, increase stress and reduce empathy among young people. The psychiatrist urged parents, educators and society at large to address these trends proactively. Encouraging offline activities, creating moments for shared experiences, and teaching the value of in-person connection are essential steps to counterbalance the lure of brands and screens. Dr. Rabia Munir, a leading psychiatrist, emphasized that Generation Z prefers shopping online for convenience, speed, and low prices, with fast delivery now a non-negotiable expectation. Delays or high shipping costs can easily turn them away. She noted that this constant focus on online shopping is replacing traditional family time, as meals, conversations, and shared activities are increasingly pushed aside for screen time and quick purchases. Dr. Munir warned that while technology offers convenience, excessive online shopping and brand obsession can harm emotional bonds, reduce meaningful communication and weaken the sense of togetherness that once defined family life. Experts Dr. Maria Sohail Qureshi and Dr. Rabia advise parents to encourage offline activities and mindful technology use, cautioning that without balance, young people may face increased stress, reduced empathy and a growing disconnect from family life.—DNA

48 professional beggars arrested in recent crackdown

ISLAMABAD: A total of 48 beggars were arrested in a recent crackdown in Islamabad as the district administration carried out operations in at least five sectors, including Blue Area, F-6, F-7, E-11 and nearby localities. The action was taken on the directions of Deputy Commissioner Islamabad, who also asked citizens to report such activities through a control room number. The district administration launched a campaign against professional begging in different parts of the federal capital. Officials said the operations were conducted in areas with high public movement to check the presence of organized beggars. According to details, the team led by Assistant Commissioner City arrested 34 individuals during operations in Blue Area, F-6 and F-7. All of them were shifted to police lock-ups for further process. Officials said these areas were selected due to repeated public complaints about begging activities. In a separate operation, Assistant Commissioner Shalimar took action and arrested 14 professional beggars. They were also moved to custody after being detained during checks in assigned areas.—APP

Briefs

China-backed healthcare initiative launched

ISLAMABAD: In a major boost to Balochistan's public health sector and a significant demonstration of deepening Pakistan-China cooperation, Balochistan government has formally launched a comprehensive initiative aimed at improving maternal and newborn healthcare services across seven districts, with substantial support from the Government of China. The project, described by officials as a transformative intervention in the province's healthcare delivery system, will upgrade facilities in as many as 100 medical centers. According to a Gwadar Pro's report, these upgrades are expected to enhance access to quality care for mothers and infants, particularly in underserved and remote areas where healthcare indicators have historically lagged behind the national averages. "We are deeply grateful to the Government of China for this vital collaboration," Balochistan's Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti said in a statement, adding that the project underscores the strength of bilateral ties and places maternal and child health at the forefront of provincial priorities. Health officials explained that the program is designed not only to upgrade infrastructure but also to elevate service delivery standards, ensuring that expectant mothers and newborns receive timely and effective medical attention. The initiative will also contribute to reducing maternal and infant mortality rates, a longstanding challenge in Balochistan. _APP

Acting President condemns US shooting incident

ISLAMABAD: Acting President Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, Sunday, strongly condemned a shooting incident that occurred in the United States during a dinner event attended by US President Donald Trump and his wife. According to reports, the firing took place at a dinner gathering where President Trump and the First Lady were present. The acting president expressed his best wishes for President Trump and his spouse, while also conveying relief that they, along with all other attendees, remained safe. President Secretariat Media Wing said in a press release. Gilani termed such acts as "cowardly attacks" and said such acts were highly condemnable. _APP

Power Division asks NEPRA to abolish fee

ISLAMABAD: The Power Division has formally requested the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) to abolish application fees and remove licensing requirements for solar consumers with systems up to 25 kilowatts, following directions of Federal Minister for Power Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari. According to an official statement issued on Sunday, the Power Division had previously alerted NEPRA about the adverse effects of this decision and requested that it be aligned with the old regulations. Under the previous 2015 regulations, distributed generation facilities of 25 kilowatts or below did not require a license from NEPRA. Applications were processed directly by Distribution Companies (DISCOs) without any fee, serving as a major fiscal incentive for residential users. However, the new Prosumer Regulations centralize approval authority with NEPRA and impose application fees even on these small facilities. The Power Division noted that the Private Power and Infrastructure Board (PPIB) had flagged the regulatory shift and requested NEPRA to maintain consistency with the earlier approvals regime for systems of 25 kW or below. _APP

Pak proactive diplomacy continues to rebuild trust

Highlighting key diplomatic initiatives, Sardar Masood Khan noted that Field Marshal Asim Munir undertook a critical visit to Tehran, engaging with Iran's top leadership, while Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif conducted a series of high-level visits to regional capitals, including Doha, Riyadh and Ankara

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States, China and the United Nations, Sardar Masood Khan said here Sunday that Pakistan had maintained unwavering diplomatic engagement following the first phase of US-Iran contacts, successfully sustaining momentum and rebuilding confidence between the parties. In a statement, he categorically rejected the perceptions of any diplomatic setback, asserting that Pakistan remained fully active after the initial round of negotiations. "There was no disappointment in Pakistan's role or resolve," he said, adding

that Islamabad intensified its outreach to ensure continuity in the peace process. Highlighting key diplomatic initiatives, Sardar Masood Khan noted that Field Marshal Asim Munir undertook a critical visit to Tehran, engaging with Iran's top leadership, while Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif conducted a series of high-level visits to regional capitals, including Doha, Riyadh and Ankara. These efforts, he emphasized, were aimed at building regional consensus and demonstrating solidarity with Iran while reinforcing Pakistan's credibility as a mediator. He described the recent visit of Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi to Pakistan as a clear indication of Tehran's trust in Islamabad. "His arrival sends a

strong signal that Iran continues to repose confidence in Pakistan's facilitation role," he observed, noting that attempts to create confusion or undermine Pakistan's position had failed. Khan explained that Pakistan was now actively facilitating the exchange of proposals between Washington and Tehran. He revealed that multiple proposals have already been shared by both sides, and that Iran's latest response has been conveyed through Pakistan, reflecting Islamabad's role as a conduit for sensitive diplomatic communication. He expressed cautious optimism that a US delegation may also visit Pakistan in the coming days, enabling proximity talks. Such an arrangement, he said, would allow both sides to

engage indirectly while Pakistan bridges the communication gap and works to narrow differences. Describing the evolving process as part of a broader continuum, he said that Pakistan's diplomacy had transitioned from initial engagement to a more structured phase focused on technical, legal and political aspects of a potential agreement. "Every conflict ultimately finds resolution at the negotiating table," he remarked, stressing that sustained engagement was essential. He further underlined that Pakistan's leadership had maintained close coordination with global stakeholders, including major powers and regional actors, thereby strengthening its diplomatic leverage and international standing.



ISLAMABAD: A beautiful view national flags hoisted at Zero Point Bridge in the Federal Capital.

PIDE calls on State Bank to hold policy rate

ISLAMABAD: As the State Bank of Pakistan's Monetary Policy Committee convenes on 27 April 2026, the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) is calling for the policy rate to be held unchanged at 10.5 percent. The main message is "keep the policy rate status quo, no urgency to increase it, the committee will have another chance to meet after 1.5 months." In Policy View Point, authors Dr. Irem Batool, Amna Riaz, and Dr. S. M. Naeem Nawaz argue that the central question before the committee has shifted: it is no longer whether inflation has fallen far enough from its 2023 peak to permit easing, but whether Pakistan can safely ease at all into a period of renewed geopolitical and commodity-market stress. On that question, PIDE's answer is an unambiguous no. The inflation picture alone counsels restraint. Headline CPI rose to 7.3 percent year-on-year in March 2026, reversing February's 7.0 percent reading, while rural core inflation climbed to 8.4 percent — driven by supply-chain inefficiencies, higher transport costs, and the outsized weight of food in rural consumption baskets. The March uptick is troubling not just in magnitude but in timing: prices firmed precisely as energy risks were intensifying, raising the prospect that fuel, freight, and import-cost pressures could broaden further. Cutting rates in this environment, PIDE warns, risks signalling that the State Bank is prioritising short-term sentiment over its inflation-anchoring mandate — a perception costly to reverse. Growth, meanwhile, provides no urgent case for easing. Real GDP expanded at 3.89 percent in Q2 FY2025-26 and industry surged to 7.4 percent growth, reflecting the gains from the State Bank's prior easing cycle since July 2025. The economy is in recovery, not distress — and PIDE is clear that a rate cut is warranted when urgent support is needed, not simply because conditions have improved. The marginal growth gain from a fifty-basis-point cut in April would be limited; the potential cost in weakened inflation expectations could be materially larger. The Israel-US-Iran war has added a decisive new layer of risk. Higher crude prices feed through to fuel and electricity costs; Strait of Hormuz disruptions have elevated freight and insurance costs beyond crude itself; a larger oil import bill puts pressure on the rupee; and costlier energy raises agriculture and logistics costs that filter into food inflation with a lag. Although the early-April ceasefire eased immediate pressure — with the Sensitive Price Index falling in two consecutive weeks — PIDE cautions that this fragile calm does not justify loosening policy before the scale and persistence of the external shock are clear. On the external side, a current-account surplus of \$1.07 billion in March, powered by remittances of \$3.83 billion, is encouraging, but SBP reserves slipping from \$16.4 billion to \$15.1 billion in a matter of days illustrates just how exposed Pakistan remains to a prolonged commodity shock. _DNA

GDA establishes "Kids Fun Land" at Gwadar Central Park

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Gwadar Development Authority (GDA) has established a "Kids Fun Land" with installation of profuse mechanical and electrical rides and swings at GDA Central Park. Taking another important step to promote children's recreation and positive activities by adding a new entertainment facility in the city, GDA central park has become a mesmerizing amusement attraction for kids following the GDA Beach Model Park. According to a Gwadar Pro's report, this modern facility offers a variety of safe and high-quality play equipment for children, where they can enjoy themselves in a pleasant and secure environment. The project has been completed through collaboration with the private sector, serving as an excellent example of public-private partnership. It is worth noting

that GDA Beach Model Park is exclusively designated for women and children, while this newly established "Kids Fun Land" at GDA Central Park provides a great option for men who wish to spend quality recreational time with their children. It has added attractions including Bike, 4 Bee Rides, Badal New Shape, Banmanus Kingkong, Buggi 2 Horse, Moto Car, Moto Cup, Panda Jahaz, Titanic Ship and Train rides. Officials said the rides have been installed with a strong focus on safety and quality, offering a comfortable and enjoyable environment for families. Another highlight of the park is the Baloch Insight Café, a three-container café that has emerged as a social space for women and families. The café hosts gatherings and children's birthday celebrations and offers a variety of fast food and refreshments. Earlier, GDA highlighted improvements to public parks and recreational facilities as part of broader efforts to promote youth-friendly activities, women's access and quality of life in Gwadar.

Pakistan eyes Zhejiang model for exports under CPEC

Pakistan's ability to benefit will depend on domestic reforms, including easing regulatory bottlenecks, improving logistics infrastructure, and ensuring policy continuity

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan could tap new investment and export opportunities through closer industrial cooperation with China's Zhejiang province under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a business leader said, pointing to the province's manufacturing strength and digital economy as a workable model. Syed Jawad Ali Shah, Senior Advisor, CPEC Investment Department, Belt and Road, Zhejiang Chamber of Commerce, and President of Pakistani Community Zhejiang said Zhejiang has evolved into one of China's most dynamic economic regions due to consistent policymaking, a deep industrial base, and a business-friendly regulatory environment. He highlighted Yiwu as

a global trading hub handling large-scale daily exports, supported by advanced logistics and integrated supply chains. "Under CPEC and the Belt and Road Initiative, there are vast opportunities for industrial cooperation, joint ventures, and technology transfer between Pakistan and Zhejiang Province," he said, adding that such collaboration could support Pakistan's export diversification and industrial upgrading. According to Shah, sectors with immediate potential include textiles, machinery, e-commerce, and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). He said investor-friendly policies and the use of modern technology in Zhejiang's industrial zones offer practical lessons for Pakistan, where firms face high energy costs, limited access to finance, and weak export

competitiveness. He said efforts are underway to link Pakistani businesses with Chinese partners through business-to-business platforms, with a focus on facilitating joint ventures and market access. "Our priority is to build reliable channels where investors from both countries can confidently collaborate," he added. Pakistan's ability to benefit will depend on domestic reforms, including easing regulatory bottlenecks, improving logistics infrastructure, and ensuring policy continuity. Increased investment in Pakistan could support job creation and export earnings, while businesses may gain access to technology and new markets, he said, adding that businesses in Pakistan should engage further with Chinese counterparts to translate proposals into formal projects under CPEC's next phase.

Writer Amardeep Singh calls on Pak High Commissioner

ISLAMABAD: Amardeep Singh, a noted writer, along with his spouse, called on Pakistan High Commissioner in Singapore, Rabia Shafiq, on Sunday. He is the author of two acclaimed books, 'Lost Heritage: The Sikh Legacy in Pakistan and The Quest Continues: Lost Heritage, The Sikh Legacy in Pakistan', a press release said. The high commissioner appreciated his valuable contributions to the Sikh community, particularly his efforts to document the legacy of Guru Nanak and his followers. His work represented a significant service to the preservation and promotion of Sikh heritage in Pakistan, she observed. Amardeep Singh informed that he was currently leading the Oneness in Diversity project, which focused on developing audio-visual educational content based on the life and teachings of Guru Nanak and the 15 Bhagats. _APP

FGEHA uplift work in sectors F-14, F-15 picks up pace

ISLAMABAD: Rapid development is underway in Islamabad's Sectors F-14 and F-15, where road construction and nullah channelization continue apace, and the grid station location has already been finalized. Talking to APP, a spokesperson for the Federal Government Employees Housing Authority said major work in Sector F-15 has commenced, with internal linking roads and nullah channelization advancing steadily as part of the broader infrastructure push. In Sector F-14, development work is also in full swing. Access roads have been developed, while heavy machinery remains actively engaged across the site. Work on a significant portion of the sector has already been initiated. The total land area for the project spans approximately 10,875 kanals. The grid station location has been finalized within the overall planning framework. Meanwhile, in Sector F-15/4, notable progress has been made on critical infrastructure. Culvert No. 6 has already been concreted, and work is currently in progress on the base of the structure. Alongside this, nullah channelization is continuing at full pace, with machinery actively operating on-site. He added that development work across various sections is progressing rapidly, reflecting the authority's commitment to the timely completion of the project. _APP

Province-wide events in Punjab

The celebrations are continuing across the province, with more events planned in the coming days to further engage youth and reinforce the spirit of Pak-China friendship

ISLAMABAD: Acting on the directions of the Higher Education Department, Government of Punjab, colleges and schools across the province have organized a series of academic and co-curricular activities to mark 75 years of Pakistan-China diplomatic relations. The province-wide initiative drew active participation from male and female students and teachers, reflecting broad engagement in promoting the longstanding bilateral friendship. According to a Gwadar Pro's report on Saturday, at Government Graduate College for Women, Kot Radha Kishen in Kasur, students took part in commemorative coin and stamp design competitions, with Sadaf Mustafa and Alina Akhtar securing top district positions. A quiz competition on Pakistan-China relations was held at Government Graduate College for Women, Shah Rukn-e-Alam in Multan, where BS Political Science and first-year students participated under the supervision of faculty members. In Bhakkar, Government Graduate College for Women hosted an inter-female collegiate district-level coin and stamp drawing competition, bringing together participants from multiple colleges. At Government Graduate College for Women, Chandni Chowk in Sargodha, Fine Arts students organized a stamp and coin painting competition that depicted symbols of bilateral friendship. In Muzaffargarh, Government Graduate College hosted a painting competition on commemorative stamp and coin design, with participation from several institutions, including women's colleges from Muzaffargarh, Kot Addu, Alipur and Rangpur. Students secured top positions in both stamp and coin categories. At Government Graduate College for Women, Chak Jhumra in Faisalabad, activities included poster exhibitions, a solidarity walk and quiz preparations. District-level competitions were also held at Government Graduate College in Joharabad, Khushab, with participation from colleges across the district. Other institutions, including GACW Guliana in Gujrat, Govt Iqbal Ameer Graduate College Women Jalal Pur Jattan, Govt Graduate College Women Saifabad Faisalabad, Govt Associate College for Women Dhoke Mangtal in Rawalpindi, Government Graduate College Darya Khan and Government Graduate College for Women Baddomalhi, organized activities such as quizzes, essay writing, coin and stamp design, and awareness sessions. The celebrations are continuing across the province, with more events planned in the coming days to further engage youth and reinforce the spirit of Pak-China friendship. _DNA

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Deterrence, Dignity and Pakistan's Evolving Global Role

MUHAMMAD MOHSIN IQBAL

It has been nearly a quarter of a century since I first made Islamabad my home, a city whose measured calm and ordered avenues often conceal the quiet struggles of those who dwell within it. I still recall a remark made to me in 2004 by my Additional Secretary in the National Assembly, Tariq Shafiq, who observed with a mixture of candour and concern that securing official accommodation in Islamabad was no ordinary undertaking; rather, it was a trial that could test one's patience, endurance, and at times even one's very survival. In those days, such words seemed almost an exaggeration, yet experience has a way of lending gravity to what once appeared overstated. By the grace of Almighty Allah, and through the benevolence of my benefactor Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain and the then Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, I was fortunate enough to be allotted official residence in one of the most distinguished sectors of the capital. Gratitude for such blessings is not merely a matter of courtesy but an obligation of the heart, for in a city where many continue to strive for a secure roof over their heads, such fortune cannot be taken lightly. It was during one of my conversations with a neighbour that I was struck by a simple yet profound remark. With a sigh that carried both relief and reflection, he said, "May Allah bless my father, who had the foresight to purchase a house in times when prices were modest, for today it would have been beyond my means to build one here." In that moment, his words transcended the confines of personal circumstance and seemed to echo a larger truth—one that extends beyond the streets of Islamabad to the very narrative of Pakistan itself. Nations, much like individuals, are shaped by decisions made in moments that may not immediately reveal their full significance. Pakistan, too, was once faced with such a moment. In times that could be described as comparatively favourable, it undertook the monumental step of acquiring nuclear capability, thereby becoming the first Islamic state to do so. That decision, fraught with challenges and international pressures, has since defined the strategic posture of the country in ways that cannot be overstated. Those who contributed to this achievement—scientists, policymakers, and leaders alike—rendered a service of such magnitude that it defies repayment. The nation owes them a debt of gratitude that can only be acknowledged through remembrance and respect. It was this very capability that stood as a pillar of strength during the events of May 2025, when Pakistan demonstrated a resolve that left an indelible mark on the regional balance of power. The outcome was not merely a military or strategic success; it was a restoration of confidence, a



reaffirmation of national will.

Yet, strength invites scrutiny, and capability often becomes the focus of suspicion. Pakistan's strategic assets have, over the years, attracted the attention of adversaries both near and distant, giving rise to various designs aimed at undermining them. In the face of such challenges, however, the unity of Pakistan's civil and military leadership, coupled with the unwavering spirit of its people, has remained steadfast. There exists a collective resolve that this capability, once attained, shall be defended at all costs. It is worth recalling that while this strength existed in earlier times, it was not always accompanied by the confidence required to assert it on the global stage. There lingered an air of hesitation, even an apologetic tone in international engagements. The recent past, however, has witnessed a transformation. Courage has replaced caution, and clarity of purpose has supplanted uncertainty. In standing firm against adversity, Pakistan has not only regained its stature but has also earned the trust of the international community. Perhaps the most striking manifestation of this renewed confidence is Pakistan's emerging role as a mediator in complex international matters, including efforts to bridge differences between the United States and Iran. Such a role would once have seemed improbable, if not altogether inconceivable. Yet, it is precisely this evolution that underscores the principle that nations, like individuals, command respect when they learn to carry themselves with dignity and self-assurance.

Greatness is seldom bestowed; it is achieved through decisions that require both vision and courage. Pakistan's journey in recent years reflects an understanding of this truth. By the grace and mercy of Allah, it has undertaken steps that have elevated its standing and redefined its place in the world.

In the broader context, the question of strategic capability is not unique to Pakistan. Iran, too, as a sovereign nation, seeks to secure its future in a world where power dynamics are often dictated by strength rather than sentiment. The resistance it faces is shaped as much by geopolitical considerations as by the unease that accompanies the rise of any Muslim state in strategic domains. Critics argue that such capability could threaten regional peace, yet history offers a perspective that is both sobering and instructive. The only nation to have ever employed atomic weapons in warfare remains the United States, and that too in circumstances that continue to evoke moral and historical debate. It is reasonable to suggest that had Japan possessed similar capability at the time, such an act might never have occurred. This paradox—where the possession of power deters its use—lies at the heart of modern strategic thinking.

At the same time, the global landscape presents its own contradictions. The United States extends security guarantees to various nations, particularly in the Gulf, often at considerable financial cost to those it protects. Whether these arrangements have consistently fulfilled their intended purpose is a question that merits reflection, especially for those who rely upon them. In the final analysis, the lesson is neither obscure nor complex. Security, dignity, and independence are intertwined, and nations must ultimately take responsibility for their own defence. Just as my neighbour's father secured a future for his family through timely foresight, so too must nations act with prudence and resolve when opportunities arise. For in the calculus of history, it is often the decisions made in moments of possibility that determine the fortunes of generations to come.

Gunfire in Washington Shocks the World

Qamar Bashir



At the heart of this breakdown lies the Strait of Hormuz, one of the most critical energy chokepoints in the world. What appears to be a military standoff is, in reality, a much broader strategic maneuver. The United States is not simply attempting to pressure Iran—it is reshaping global energy flows and redefining economic leverage on a global scale. By restricting access to this vital waterway, whether directly or indirectly, the United States creates a supply shock in global oil markets. That disruption compels energy-importing nations to seek alternatives...

WHEN gunfire erupted near the White House Correspondents' Dinner in Washington on April 25, 2026, President Donald J. Trump, Vice President JD Vance, and other senior officials were swiftly evacuated by the Secret Service. A suspect armed with weapons was apprehended, and an officer narrowly escaped serious injury. The incident, unfolding just outside a gathering meant to celebrate democracy and free speech, sent a chilling signal across the nation and the world. This was not merely a security scare. It reflected a deeper strain—psychological, political, and strategic—emanating from a war that is no longer confined to the Middle East. At a moment when America was projecting power abroad, it suddenly appeared vulnerable at home. The symbolism was stark: a superpower engaged in high-stakes geopolitical confrontation while facing instability within its own borders.

The timing made the situation even more consequential. Only hours earlier, President Trump had abruptly canceled the planned visit of his top negotiators to Islamabad, effectively derailing a second round of peace talks with Iran before they could begin. Iran's Foreign Minister had already departed Pakistan, and President Masoud Pezeshkian made it clear in discussions with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif that Tehran would not engage in negotiations under pressure, threats, or blockade. The diplomatic process, already fragile, collapsed under the weight of distrust.

At the heart of this breakdown lies the Strait of Hormuz, one of the most critical energy chokepoints in the world. What appears to be a military standoff is, in reality, a much broader strategic maneuver. The United States is not simply attempting to pressure Iran—it is reshaping global energy flows and redefining economic leverage on a global scale. By restricting access to this vital waterway, whether directly or indirectly, the United States creates a supply shock in global oil markets. That disruption compels energy-importing nations to seek alternatives, and increasingly, those alternatives are found in American oil and gas. This is not an unintended consequence—it is a structural shift. As traditional supply routes

become uncertain, demand for U.S. energy rises, strengthening America's position as a dominant exporter. This strategy also reduces reliance on prolonged military engagement. Precision-guided weapons are expensive and often used against targets of relatively low economic value. Instead of relying solely on kinetic warfare, the United States appears to be leveraging economic pressure as a more efficient tool. By controlling access to energy supply chains, it can exert influence over entire economies without the need for sustained battlefield operations.

This leads to a critical observation: the United States currently has little incentive to fully reopen the Strait of Hormuz. As long as the disruption persists, American exports expand, global dependence increases, and strategic leverage grows. The blockade becomes not just a temporary measure, but a sustained instrument of economic and geopolitical influence. However, this approach is triggering a significant global response. European leaders such as Emmanuel Macron and Keir Starmer are increasingly advocating for alternative systems that reduce reliance on the United States. There is a growing effort to develop independent financial, trade, and investment mechanisms that can operate outside the influence of U.S. sanctions and economic controls.

This shift is not limited to Europe. Countries across Asia, the Global South, and major economies like China, India, and Brazil are gradually aligning toward a more multipolar system. If these economies—many of which already rival or exceed the United States in combined output—coordinate their efforts, they could form one of the most powerful economic blocs in modern history. Such a coalition would significantly reduce America's ability to unilaterally influence global markets and political outcomes.

While this emerging alignment is still in its early stages, it is gaining momentum. The more the United States uses military and economic tools to enforce its objectives, the more other nations are incentivized to create parallel systems that bypass its influence. The dominance of the dollar, the reach of sanctions, and the structure of

global trade are all being quietly reexamined. Meanwhile, the Middle East remains highly unstable. In Lebanon, the fragile cease-fire between Israel and Hezbollah continues to hold only on the surface. Israeli strikes ordered by Benjamin Netanyahu and retaliatory attacks by Hezbollah keep the region on edge. The risk of escalation remains constant, and any miscalculation could trigger a broader conflict. Against this backdrop, the Washington shooting incident takes on a deeper significance. While it may ultimately be determined as an isolated act, it reflects the broader atmosphere of tension and uncertainty. Prolonged conflict, aggressive rhetoric, and global instability can influence domestic environments in unpredictable ways. The line between external and internal security becomes increasingly blurred.

The events of April 25 are therefore not isolated. They represent interconnected developments in a rapidly changing global order: the collapse of diplomacy in Pakistan, the continued blockade in the Strait of Hormuz, the fragile cease-fire in Lebanon, and a security scare at the heart of American political life. The world is entering a new phase—one where economic power is weaponized, alliances are shifting, and traditional systems are being challenged. The United States may achieve short-term gains through increased exports and expanded influence, but it also risks accelerating the formation of a counterbalancing global structure. The choice ahead is critical. A strategy based on pressure and control may deliver immediate results, but it may also erode long-term stability. A more sustainable path would require restoring trust, respecting international norms, and engaging in genuine diplomacy. If current trends continue, the incident in Washington may be remembered not just as a moment of domestic alarm, but as a symbol of a world in transition—where power is contested, systems are redefined, and the future of global order hangs in the balance.

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

Keeping the Capital Moving: Practical Solutions for Continuity in Islamabad and Rawalpindi

Prof Dr Shujaul Mulk Khan



It is important to acknowledge that security considerations are both necessary and justified. No responsible system can compromise on the safety of visiting dignitaries or national leadership. However, the challenge lies in how these measures are implemented. At present, the approach appears heavily reliant on broad restrictions rather than precise...

THERE is a certain pride that comes with seeing one's capital host international delegations, major sporting events, and important political gatherings. These occasions place Pakistan on the global stage and reflect its diplomatic and cultural significance. Yet, for residents of Islamabad and Rawalpindi, such moments often come with an unintended cost: the slowing down or complete standstill of daily life. Roads close, institutions suspend operations, and ordinary routines are disrupted, sometimes for days at a time. This recurring pattern has gradually shaped a quiet but persistent concern among citizens. When a high-level visit takes place—be it a significant diplomatic dialogue such as a potential Iran-USA engagement, a multilateral forum like OIC or SCO meetings, or even an international cricket match in Rawalpindi—the response tends to follow a familiar script. Key routes are sealed, security checkpoints multiply, schools announce closures, and access to essential services become uncertain. Similarly, political events, the movement of senior leaders, or visits by institutional heads can trigger widespread traffic disruptions, affecting thousands who have no direct connection to the event itself.

It is important to acknowledge that security considerations are both necessary and justified. No responsible system can compromise on the safety of visiting dignitaries or national leadership. However, the challenge lies in how these measures are implemented. At present, the approach appears heavily reliant on broad restrictions rather than precise management. The result is a city that feels as though it must pause to function securely. The impact of this approach goes beyond temporary inconvenience. Students miss valuable academic time, sometimes during critical phases of their studies. Patients face delays in reaching hospitals or attend-

ing appointments. Small businesses and daily wage earners experience financial strain due to sudden closures. Court proceedings are postponed, adding to existing backlogs. Over time, these repeated disruptions can lead to public frustration and a sense that the needs of ordinary citizens are being overshadowed by the demands of high-profile events.

A closer look suggests that the issue is not rooted in the events themselves, but in the way the urban system is structured. Islamabad, despite being a planned city, has become highly centralized. Key government offices, diplomatic areas, and major road networks are closely interconnected. This concentration means that any security-sensitive movement can have a cascading effect across large parts of the city. Rawalpindi, closely linked both geographically and functionally, often experiences the spillover, particularly during sports events or large gatherings. Encouragingly, this is a challenge that can be addressed with thoughtful planning and a forward-looking approach. Many cities around the world manage to host high-security events while maintaining the flow of daily life. Islamabad and Rawalpindi can move in a similar direction by gradually shifting from a model of disruption to one of continuity.

One practical step could be the development of dedicated zones for diplomatic and large-scale events. These areas would be designed with built-in security features, separate access routes, and necessary facilities, allowing major engagements to take place without affecting the wider. Alongside this, investing in smart traffic management systems could make a significant difference. Real-time updates clearly communicated alternative routes, and time-specific diversions can help citizens plan their movements more effectively rather than being caught off guard by sudden closures. Another important measure is the gradual

decentralization of essential services. By distributing educational institutions, administrative offices, and judicial facilities across multiple sectors, the impact of any single disruption can be reduced. In the context of Rawalpindi, especially for international cricket and similar events, dedicated transport corridors and improved crowd management systems can help contain the impact within a defined area.

Equally crucial is ensuring continuity in essential services. Hospitals, emergency responders, and critical public services should have guaranteed access routes and clear operational protocols during high-security periods. This would reassure citizens that, even during major events, their fundamental needs will not be compromised. To bring these efforts together, there is also value in considering a more coordinated institutional approach. A specialized framework or authority focused on urban continuity and event management could help align the efforts of security agencies, city planners, and civil administration. Such coordination would allow for better anticipation of challenges and more balanced decision-making. Ultimately, the goal is not to eliminate disruption entirely, as some level of inconvenience may always be unavoidable. Rather, it is to manage it in a way that respects both national priorities and the everyday lives of citizens. A capital city should be able to host the world without closing its doors to its own people. Islamabad and Rawalpindi stand at a point where thoughtful adjustments can lead to meaningful improvements. By embracing smarter planning, investing in infrastructure, and prioritizing continuity, these twin cities can set an example of how to balance security with accessibility. In doing so, they can ensure that moments of national importance become occasions of shared pride—not shared inconvenience.

Briefs

Trump, first lady safe in deadly gun attack

FROM PAGE 01
Trump's cabinet and other senior administration officials. The event is held in the basement ballroom of the Hilton hotel. Trump and the first lady bent down behind the dais before being hustled out by Secret Service officers. Trump stayed backstage about one hour, a source told Reuters. "We are staying," he was overheard saying, the source said. Trump posted on social media that he hoped the dinner, the first he has attended as president, could be rescheduled in 30 days. He was the subject of two assassination attempts in 2024 while he was campaigning for reelection after leaving the White House in 2021. The most serious attempt occurred while Trump was campaigning at an outdoor rally in Butler, Pennsylvania, in July 2024. Trump was shot and wounded in his upper ear by a 20-year-old gunman. The gunman was shot dead by security personnel. Just over two months after the Butler shooting, Secret Service agents spotted a man wielding a gun and hiding in bushes at the Trump International Golf Club in West Palm Beach, Florida, while Trump was on the course. It was deemed an assassination attempt and the suspect was sentenced to life in prison in February. The site of Saturday's dinner, the Washington Hilton, was the scene of an attempt on the life of President Ronald Reagan, who was shot and wounded by a would-be assassin outside the hotel in 1981.

PM Shehbaz, world leaders...

FROM PAGE 01
incident a heinous act of terrorism." PM Shehbaz said he was "deeply shocked" by the incident and expressed relief over the safety of all attendees, adding prayers for continued safety and well-being. "Deeply shocked by the disturbing shooting incident at the White House Correspondents' Association Dinner in Washington, D.C., a short while ago," he posted on X. "Relieved to know that President Trump, the First Lady, and other attendees are safe. My thoughts and prayers are with him, and I wish him continued safety and well-being." India PM Narendra Modi also expressed relief, stating that violence has no place in a democracy and must be unequivocally condemned. "Relieved to learn that President Trump, the First Lady and Vice President are safe and unharmed following the recent security incident at a Washington DC hotel," Modi wrote on social media.

Pakistani exports to major...

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\$6.86 billion in the nine months (July to March) of fiscal year 2025-26 (9MFY26) against \$6.79bn over the last year. The slowdown is mainly driven by a decline in shipments to northern and western European states. In FY25, the exports to the EU rose 7.44pc to \$8.86bn, up from \$8.24bn in the previous fiscal year. In comparison, in FY24, Pakistan's exports to the EU had dipped 3.12pc to \$8.24bn despite its GSP+ status. Exports to northern Europe slightly dipped by 0.85pc to \$557.31m in 9MFY26, from \$562.13m in the corresponding months last year. Western Europe, which includes countries such as Germany, the Netherlands, France, and Belgium, accounts for the largest share of Pakistan's exports to the EU. Exports to southern Europe grew by 6.47pc to \$2.43bn in the 9MFY26, from \$2.28bn in the corresponding period last year, while exports to eastern Europe grew 5.06pc to \$566.92m in 9MFY26 from \$539.63m in the corresponding period last year. Before Brexit, Pakistan's major export destination was the United Kingdom. In the post-Brexit period, Pakistan's exports to the UK decreased slightly to \$1.62bn in 9MFY26 from \$1.62bn in the corresponding period last year, a decline of 0.23pc.

Historic FIFA Arena Project Launched in Pakistan

"This is a historic day for Pakistan football. When we first discussed bringing FIFA Arena to Pakistan, the response from government officials was highly encouraging and supportive," said Gilani

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has taken a landmark step in promoting grassroots football and world-class sports infrastructure as the foundation stone of the country's first-ever FIFA Arena pitch was laid in Lahore's Sabzazar area. The groundbreaking ceremony was performed by Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP), Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan. The ceremony brought together government officials, football administrators and community leaders, marking the arrival of international-standard football infrastructure in Pakistan and the beginning of what organisers described as a broader nationwide rollout.

The FIFA Arena initiative was brought to Pakistan through the efforts of Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) President Syed Mohsen Gilani, whose discussions with PMYP leadership helped turn the project into reality. He said the initiative reflects Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's vision for youth empowerment and sports development. "This is a historic day for Pakistan football. When we first discussed bringing FIFA Arena to Pakistan, the response from government officials was highly encouraging and supportive," said Gilani, adding that the project represents a new era for football in



the country, where children will now have access to the kind of modern pitches they previously only saw on television. "When our children watch football on TV, they see pitches like these. I am proud to say that what once seemed distant is now becoming a reality in Pakistan," he said. Rana Mashhood announced that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will personally inaugurate the pitch upon completion, calling the project part of Pakistan's larger transformation on the global stage. "The next Pelés, the next Maradonas, the next Martas will come from Pakistan, shaped on pitches like these," he said. "The real journey of growth starts at the grassroots, and this pitch will go

a long way in ensuring that." The FIFA Arena is a standardised, FIFA-endorsed small-sided football pitch model designed to increase access to the game at neighbourhood level. Pakistan's first installation in Sabzazar is being seen as a major milestone and the start of a wider nationwide rollout of similar facilities.

Pakistani runners, diaspora set to make mark at London Marathon 2026

More than 50,000 runners from across globe expected to participate in iconic 42.19km run



DNA

KARACHI: A strong contingent of Pakistani runners, both from within the country and across the diaspora, is set to feature in the 46th edition of the London Marathon on Sunday, one of the world's most prestigious long-distance races and part of the elite Abbott World Marathon Majors circuit. More than 50,000 runners from across the globe are expected to participate in the iconic 42.195km run, which winds through central London, passing histor-

ic landmarks and drawing massive roadside crowds. Widely regarded as one of the most vibrant and inclusive marathons, the London Marathon is also a global leader in charity fundraising, having raised over £1 billion since its inception. This year, 18 Pakistani runners, including athletes based in Pakistan and expatriates from the United Kingdom, United States, Denmark, Norway, Austria, and the UAE, will take part, reflecting the growing footprint of Pakistani endurance runners on the global stage. The group includes

16 male and two female participants, with three Six Star finishers among them — a distinction awarded to those who complete all six World Marathon Majors. From left to right Zeeshan Rab, Sara Lodhi, and Adnan Gandhi. — Reporter
Among Pakistani participants, one name is UAE-based Sarah Lodhi, the winner of the Karachi Marathon 2025, who returns to London for her 12th career marathon. Having previously competed here, Lodhi described the experience as unmatched. "Representing Pakistan on such a prestigious international platform is a tremendous honour," she said. "London is an incredible city, and this marathon stands out as one of the most vibrant and lively among the world's major races. I feel truly humbled and grateful for this opportunity."

India to bid for 2038 Asian Games in Ahmedabad

DNA

NEW DELHI: India will bid to host the 2038 Asian Games in Ahmedabad, the country's Olympic chief told AGENCY on Saturday, in its latest push to stage elite multi-sport events. India will stage the 2030 Commonwealth Games in Ahmedabad and is also bidding for the 2036 Olympic Games in the western Indian city. "Indian Olympic Association has already sent an expression of interest to OCA (Olympic Council of Asia) for organising the 2038 Asian Games in Ahmedabad," IOA President PT Usha told Reuters by telephone from China. "I met the OCA president and other functionaries here and they are all happy and want to support us." Former Olympian Usha is in China to attend the Asian Beach Games in Sanya. "They had an EC (executive committee) meeting here where they discussed it.

DHO Sanghar urges child vaccination, announces Congo virus

NSANGHAR: District Health Officer Sanghar, Dr Muhammad Farooq Arain, has said that World Immunization Week was being observed globally from April 24 to April 30 with the aim of ensuring children receive vaccines against 12 life-threatening diseases. Speaking to the media at the Tando Adam Press Club the other day, he urged parents to take children who had missed routine vaccinations to their nearest health centre without delay so they could receive protective immunisation and be safeguarded against permanent disability and dangerous illnesses. Dr Arain said that following the death of a young man in Tando Adam due to Congo virus, a health alert had been issued across the district and all relevant departments had been directed to utilise all available resources to prevent further spread. He added that precautionary measures regarding both Congo virus and monkeypox were extremely important and an awareness campaign was underway to educate the public about prevention and early treatment. He advised people, particularly those involved in livestock trading, cattle markets and handling sacrificial animals, to take strict precautions against Congo virus by wearing gloves, using full-body protective clothing and protecting themselves from ticks commonly found on animals. He said that symptoms such as fever, body aches or unusual bleeding should be treated seriously and immediate medical consultation should be sought. Regarding monkeypox, Dr Arain stressed the importance of maintaining hygiene, avoiding close contact with infected individuals, frequent handwashing, using face masks and keeping personal belongings separate. He said that anyone experiencing skin rashes, fever or physical weakness should report to the nearest hospital without delay. The DHO said separate wards had been established in all hospitals across Sanghar district for suspected Congo virus and monkeypox patients to ensure timely medical care in case of any emergency. He maintained that the overall situation in Sanghar district remained under control, but the health department was continuing to take all possible measures to protect public health.

Water sports in peril: Lives along Indus fear an uncertain future

PESHAWAR: Standing by the edge of Kund's watersports lake here, a 28-year-old tourist Zeeshan Khan watches the River Sindh currents with a mix of excitement and unease amid violations by the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) by India. The confluence of the Indus and Kabul rivers has long been his weekend escape of heat but today, the rising and unpredictable waters carry a deeper uncertainty due to threats to water sports following passing of one year illegal abeyance of IWT by India in April last year. Every Sunday, Zeeshan brings his family to Kund Sports Park, where laughter echoes across the lake as colourful boats glide over the water. For him, it is more than leisure but a source of happiness. "Kund is my favourite watersports lake," he says, adjusting his life jacket. "Here, you can explore both the Kabul and Indus rivers—it's thrilling." But beneath that joy lies a growing fear about the future of these waters, and the livelihoods tied to them, may be at high risk if IWT violations continued. Kund attracts visitors from Nowshera, Charsadda, Peshawar, and Mardan districts especially on weekend. — APP

Mohsen Gilani Hails Field Marshal's Football Vision

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: In a major boost for Pakistan football, Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) President Syed Mohsen Gilani has thanked Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir for his strong support in promoting football and launching talent hunt programs, saying the armed forces are playing a decisive role in discovering young talent and shaping the future of the game in the country. Speaking during a meeting with Pakistan's Under-16 national football team, which is participating in the UEFA Development Tournament for the first time, Mohsen Gilani said Field Marshal Asim Munir is a sports-loving personality who has shown keen interest in youth development through sports.



He added that the Director General Army Fitness and Sports Directorate has successfully implemented the talent hunt program, helping identify promising players from the grassroots level. Gilani said it is the federation's responsibility to provide opportunities to talented youngsters

and ensure their progress. The PFF President said the federation will continue working with the support of the Army for Pakistan's participation in major international events and for the overall development of football in the country. He added that tournaments like the UEFA Development Tournament are excellent learning platforms where young players can improve their skills and gain valuable experience. On the occasion, Pakistan Under-16 team coach Muhammad Essa said that participating in the UEFA Development Tournament was no less than a dream come true. "I represented Pakistan for 20 years but never got an opportunity to play in a UEFA event," he said, adding that for the first time, talented young Pakistani players are getting the chance to compete in a UEFA tournament.

US-Iran talks future uncertain

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that has killed thousands, driven up oil prices, fueled inflation and darkened the outlook for global growth. Tehran has largely closed the Strait of Hormuz, which normally carries a fifth of global oil and liquefied natural gas shipments, while Washington has imposed a blockade of Iran's ports.

Iranian FM takes up war issue...

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evening for another round of consultations with Pakistani leadership, signaling that backchannel diplomacy is still very much alive. The renewed shuttle diplomacy underscores a coordinated effort involving Oman and Pakistan to keep negotiations on track, even as formal talks between Iran and the United States face setbacks. Analysts believe Muscat's engagement, combined with Islamabad's mediation role, could prove crucial in reviving stalled peace efforts in the region.

What we know so far about...

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and assault on a federal officer using a dangerous weapon, US Attorney Jeanine Pirro said. Carroll said the attacker appeared to be "a lone actor" and is believed to have stayed at the Washington Hilton, where the dinner took place. Police have secured the hotel room and are examining what's inside. A Secret Service officer who was shot during the attack has been released from the hospital. The officer's ballistic vest "helped us avoid a potential tragedy," a Secret Service spokesperson said. Authorities said the suspect was not struck by gunfire but was taken to a hospital for evaluation. According to public records, the suspect worked as a teacher and video game developer in Southern California. He studied engineering and is a graduate of the California Institute of Technology, according to materials shared with CNN. Trump noted his security team was not aware of any threats prior to Saturday's dinner. The attack has been condemned by lawmakers in the US and leaders across the world — many expressing relief over Trump's safety and praising the swift law enforcement response.

Trump's security again faces scrutiny

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the White House. It was also the site of a 1981 assassination attempt against then-President Ronald Reagan. While the roughly 2,600 attendees were required to pass through metal detectors to enter the basement ballroom, they needed only to show a ticket to enter the hotel itself, which also was open to guests. With the venue's entrance surrounded by demonstrators, many protesting the Trump administration's war against Iran, attendees were quickly waved through. In video footage, the gunman can be seen charging down a hallway past a security checkpoint. He then shot an agent, before being tackled and handcuffed, according to authorities. Inside the ballroom, attendees were still eating the spring pea and burrata salad when guests toward the back of the room reported hearing multiple gunshots. Secret Service agents quickly rushed Trump and Vance off the long head table, though the protective agents for many cabinet members and lawmakers — seated on the floor with the journalists and their guests — reacted in different fashions. Some agents clambered through the packed ballroom, standing on chairs and overturning tableware to reach protectees, while bewildered guests ducked under tables. Security details for cabinet members, including Rubio, Bessent and Burgum, pushed their protectees to the ground and formed human shields. Most protectees were eventually ushered out, though the timing of their removals varied significantly, with some being spirited out almost immediately and some staying put for minutes.

PSL 11: Hyderabad Kingsmen qualify for playoffs with victory over Rawalpindiz

Kingsmen bowl out Pindiz for 136 after setting 245-run target in second last group match

DNA

KARACHI: Hyderabad Kingsmen qualified for the playoffs after beating Rawalpindiz by 108 run in the second last group match of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) at the National Bank Stadium in Karachi on Sunday. Defending 244, the Kingsmen bowled out the Pindiz for 136 in 17.1 overs. Asked to bat first, the Kingsmen were powered by blistering contributions from Usman, Perera, Maxwell and Maaz Sadaqat, as they tore into the Pindiz bowling attack throughout the innings. Skipper Marnus Labuschagne fell early, clean bowled by Ben Sears for five off five balls in the second over after striking a

boundary. Maaz and Usman then steadied the innings with an aggressive 50-run partnership, taking the Kingsmen past the 50-run mark. However, Amad Butt broke the stand at 54, removing Maaz for 28 off 11 deliveries, which included five fours and a six, with wicketkeeper Mohammad Rizwan completing a sharp catch. The Kingsmen were reduced to 64-2 in 5.1 overs. Usman continued his attacking approach, registering his fifth PSL half-century while dominating the bowling with regular boundaries. Saim Ayub briefly joined him but was dismissed for 12 off six balls, including a four and a six, by Asif Afridi. Usman and Perera then combined to take the innings past the 100-run milestone before Saad Masood struck twice in a single

over to swing momentum. Usman was dismissed for a blazing 54 off 26 balls, featuring four fours and four sixes, while Irfan Niazi fell for a first-ball duck, leaving the Kingsmen at 119-5 in 9.2 overs. Perera and Maxwell rebuilt the innings in style, keeping the scoreboard ticking and forming a strong partnership that took the side beyond 200 in the 17th over. Maxwell, in particular, took the attack to the bowlers, reaching his maiden PSL fifty and helping the pair cross a 100-run stand. Their 108-run partnership ended in the final over when Maxwell was run out by Sam Billings after a superb 70 off 37 deliveries, which included eight fours and three sixes. Perera brought up his fourth PSL fifty and remained unbeaten on 50 off 30 balls, hit-

ting five fours and a six, while Hassan Khan added a quick 16 to push the total to a formidable 244-6. The Kingsmen are currently ranked sixth on the points table and must secure a convincing victory to qualify for the playoffs after bolstering their points tally to 10, besides surpassing Lahore Qalandars — who are at the fourth position — in terms of net run rate. While the exact margin required will only be clear after the first innings, the Kingsmen are likely to need a win of around 85 runs or a successful chase within approximately 10 overs. Meanwhile, Rawalpindiz have already been eliminated from the tournament after a disappointing campaign, managing just one win from their nine matches so far.

Briefs

Japan
deploys 1,400
firefighters to
battle raging
wildfires

OTSUCHI: Japan has deployed 1,400 firefighters and 100 Self-Defense Force personnel to battle mountain blazes in the northern part of the country, with the fires, now burning on Sunday for a fifth straight day, continuing to threaten a picturesque coastal town. The area consumed by the fires reached 1,373 hectares (3,393 acres) as of early Sunday morning, up 7 percent from a day earlier. The fires threaten residential districts of Otsuchi on the Pacific Coast — a town that lost nearly a tenth of its population in one of Japan's worst disasters, the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami. Evacuation orders are in place for 1,541 households or 3,233 residents, roughly a third of Otsuchi's population. "Although the Self-Defense Forces are fighting the fires from the sky (with helicopters), the dry weather and winds are helping the fires expand," Otsuchi Mayor Kozo Hirano told a press conference. One Otsuchi resident said he worried about the damage the wildfire could inflict. "A fire burns everything down. With a tsunami, you might have something left after the destruction," Yoshinori Komatsu, 74, said as he watched Self-Defense Force helicopters dump water over fires in the distance. The only casualty to date has been one minor injury suffered when a person fell at an evacuation center, Japan's Fire and Disaster Management Agency said on its website.—APP

Three killed
in Israeli
attacks

GAZA: Gaza's civil defense agency said Israeli strikes in the Palestinian territory on Sunday killed at least three people, including a woman. Despite an October ceasefire, Gaza remains gripped by daily violence as Israeli strikes continue and both the Israeli military and Hamas accuse each other of breaking the truce. "Three martyrs and several others were injured following attacks by occupation forces in Gaza City and Khan Yunis," said the agency, which operates as a rescue service under Hamas. Two men were killed when an Israeli drone fired a missile that "struck a group of civilians" near the Zeitun neighborhood of Gaza City, the territory's largest urban center, the agency reported. Gaza's Al-Shifa hospital confirmed it had received the bodies. In a separate incident, a woman was killed after being shot by Israeli forces in Khan Yunis. Her body transferred to Nasser hospital, according to the agency. The Israeli military said it was not aware of any incident involving the death of a woman in Khan Yunis, adding it was looking into reports concerning the deaths of the two men. The October truce has largely halted the Gaza war that began after Hamas's October 7, 2023 attack.—APP



CHANGSHA — President Asif Ali Zardari being given a round of the industrial compound at SANY Heavy Industry Co., Ltd. (News on Back Page). DNA

Measles overwhelms Bangladeshi hospitals

The numbers of reported infections and related deaths have been rising since March 15, with more than 32,300 suspected measles cases and at least 259 children have died — according to Directorate General of Health Services data released on Sunday

DHAKA: An unprecedented measles outbreak is overwhelming Bangladeshi hospitals, doctors say, as they struggle to isolate and treat hundreds of children admitted every day with symptoms of the highly infectious disease Bangladesh is battling its deadliest measles outbreak in recent history, following a disruption in its regular mass vaccination drive that should have taken place in 2024-25 — a period marked by political turmoil after student-led protests that ousted the previous administration. The numbers of reported infections and related deaths have been rising since March 15, with more than 32,300 suspected measles cases and at least 259 children have died — according to Directorate General of Health Services data released on Sunday. Since the beginning of the outbreak, around 1,000 people have been hospitalized every day — half of them in Dhaka, where patients

are referred from other regions, which lack specialized infectious diseases care. At the Mohakhali Infectious Diseases Hospital, wards are operating beyond capacity. "All bed capacities are exhausted, and we are compelled to accommodate patients in the corridors as well," Dr. Ariful Bashar, the hospital's senior consultant, told Arab News. "It's a 100-bed hospital dedicated to the treatment of other contagious diseases as well. But at the moment, considering the health emergency, most of our efforts are focused on dealing with measles patients, most of whom are children ... we currently can't offer ICU treatment to patients with other infectious diseases." Measles is an airborne disease, which is especially dangerous for children under five years old. Proper isolation is one of the biggest logistical problems that hospitals are facing. "It's

highly contagious — six times more than COVID-19," Bashar said. "Ensuring isolation for measles-infected patients has become a challenge ... We don't have enough nurses to handle this emergency. As a result, we have to allow parents and guardians to stay in the hospital with their children, which increases transmission." At the Bangladesh Shishu Hospital and Institute in Dhaka, which specializes in pediatrics, doctors have been observing an increase in the numbers of children developing complications, which adds pressure on hospital admissions. "As measles-infected patients lose immunity, they can become more vulnerable to other infections such as pneumonia and diarrhea. The situation becomes critical in such cases," said Prof. Dr. Mohammad Mahbubul Huq, the hospital's director. "We have not seen such a measles out-

break in our country before ... Not only our hospital, but most hospitals are now experiencing a higher number of patients, sometimes beyond their capacity." A nation of 170 million people, it has been able to contain measles since 1990s with routine vaccination — usually two doses given in early childhood, with the first administered at the age of nine months. But as even small gaps in coverage can lead to outbreaks, supplementary mass immunization to prevent resurgence and boost population immunity has been conducted every four to five years. To contain the current crisis, following the missed mass campaign last year, the newly elected government started last week a nationwide immunization drive expected to reach 20 million children by the time of the Eid Al-Adha holiday in late May.—Agencies

Switzerland angers Italy by claiming costs of treating Crans-Montana fire victims

ZURICH/MILAN: Switzerland will charge Rome for the costs its health system sustained to treat Italian nationals wounded in the New Year's Eve fire at the Crans-Montana ski resort, which claimed 41 lives, the government's office in charge of social insurance matters said. The expense claim adds further strain to the relationship between the two countries, with Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni on Friday describing the move as "disgraceful" following news that the families of the fire victims had been billed. In a statement to Reuters late on Saturday, the Federal Social Insurance Office (FSIO) confirmed plans for Switzerland to recoup the money spent on hospital treatment, though not from the families of the victims. The FSIO said that, under current agreements between the EU member states and Switzerland, the victims would receive an invoice only for verification purposes and the costs charged "to the relevant foreign health insurer." Italy's pm meloni says will reject request. A spokesperson later clarified that in Italy's case that would be the health ministry. Meloni said in a post on Facebook late on Friday: "Should this disgraceful request be made formally, I hereby announce that Italy will reject it outright and will not act upon it in any way." "I have faith in the Swiss authorities' sense of responsibility and hope that the report will prove to be entirely unfounded," she added. Switzerland is asking for more than 100,000 Swiss francs (\$127,000) in refunds for four Italian nationals treated for just one day at the Sion hospital after the blaze, Italian ambassador to Switzerland Gian Lorenzo Cornado was quoted as saying on Saturday by news agency ANSA.—APP

Women's economic empowerment imperative for uplift

FAISALABAD: Rwanda's High Commissioner Harerimana Fatou underscored the pivotal role of women's economic empowerment in socioeconomic development and called for enhanced trade and business collaboration between Pakistan and Rwanda. She was addressing a meeting during her visit to Faisalabad Women Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FWCCI). She said that empowering women economically was essential for sustainable growth and prosperity, adding that both countries needed to explore new avenues for bilateral trade, economic cooperation and women-led entrepreneurship. She said that gender equality is 65% over there and Rwanda is global leader as 53% representing women in Parliament. She said that in Punjab Chief Minister (CM) Maryam Nawaz is very much working for women empowerment. She said that Rwanda Vision 2050 emphasizes on promoting gender equality, women's empowerment, peace and security as indispensable drivers for realizing long-term goals outlined in Rwanda's development agenda. Founder President FWCCI Rubina Amjad highlighted the chamber's ongoing efforts to empower women through capacity building and business support initiatives.—DNA

Russia speaker thanks Kim for 'liberation of Kursk'

Only two North Korean troops have been captured alive and are currently in custody of Ukrainian authorities. The two soldiers have expressed their desire to come to South Korea

SEOUL: Russia's parliamentary speaker thanked North Korean leader Kim Jong Un for "the liberation of Kursk" by sending troops there to fight off Ukrainians, Russian news agency TASS reported on Sunday. Pyongyang has sent thousands of troops — as well as missiles and munitions — to support Russia's war in Ukraine. They were deployed to Russia's western Kursk region to fend off a months-long counter-offensive by Kyiv's troops. Seoul estimates about 2,000 North Koreans have been killed in Moscow's war with Ukraine. In return, analysts say North Korea is receiving financial aid, military technology, food and energy from Russia, helping Pyongyang circumvent heavy international sanctions over its banned nuclear programs. A Russian delegation, including Vyacheslav Volodin — the speaker of Russia's Duma, or lower house of parliament — arrived in Pyongyang on Saturday to attend the opening ceremony of a memorial complex honoring those killed while supporting Moscow's war effort against Ukraine. "(Let me express these) words of gratitude to you, esteemed Comrade Kim Jong Un, and to the Korean people for their fraternal support in the liberation of Kursk," Volodin was quoted as saying by TASS. "Korean soldiers fought shoulder to shoulder with our soldiers and officers, liberating Russian soil from the Ukrainian Nazis," he said. A short video posted on TASS's Telegram account shows Volodin and Kim hugging, with Volodin delivering his opening remarks in a meeting. North Korea has yet to comment on the meeting. Russia's Defense Minister Andrey Belousov also arrived in Pyongyang on Sunday "for talks with the country's top leadership and armed forces command," TASS reported. In 2024 the two countries signed a military treaty, obligating both states to provide military assistance "without delay" in the event of an attack on the other. North Korean soldiers are said to have been instructed to kill themselves rather than be captured in battle. Only two North Korean troops have been captured alive and are currently in custody of Ukrainian authorities. The two soldiers have expressed their desire to come to South Korea.

Diabetes: Awareness is the first cure

tes, but unfortunately, they are not provided with clear and simple awareness. Even doctors often use complex medical terminology instead of easy language, which makes it difficult for ordinary people to understand the condition. As a result, many patients remain unaware of early warning signs and continue unhealthy habits until complications arise.

Just like a vehicle needs petrol to run, the human body needs energy to function. The food we eat is digested and converted into glucose. Then a hormone called insulin helps transport this glucose into the body's cells, where it is used as energy. This energy enables the brain to perform thousands of functions, the heart to beat, the lungs to supply oxygen, the kidneys to filter blood, and all organs such as hands, feet, eyes, ears, and nose to perform their duties properly. In a healthy body, this entire process runs smoothly and efficiently without any noticeable disruption. If glucose is properly delivered to all parts of the body,

everything works normally. Problems arise when either excessive glucose is produced in the body or when there is insufficient insulin to transport it. This condition is known as diabetes. In many cases, symptoms develop gradually, which is why people often ignore early signs such as excessive thirst, fatigue, blurred vision, and frequent urination. There are mainly two types of diabetes: Type 1 and Type 2. Type 1 diabetes is relatively rare. In Pakistan, around 3 to 4 percent of all diabetic patients suffer from Type 1, while the remaining 96 percent have Type 2 diabetes. Type 1 is usually a genetic or autoimmune condition. The human body has an automatic immune system to fight diseases. In this condition, due to an error, the immune system of the affected person attacks and destroys the cells of the pancreas that produce insulin. When insulin production stops completely, glucose cannot reach the body's cells, leading to weakness, weight loss, vision problems, and damage to various organs. The treatment involves life-

long insulin injections along with dietary control. Patients also need regular monitoring of blood sugar levels to maintain stability and prevent sudden complications. On the other hand, Type 2 diabetes is mainly caused by unhealthy eating habits, overeating, physical inactivity, and obesity. When a person consumes more food than the body needs, excess glucose is produced. The pancreas tries to control this by producing more insulin. Initially, insulin transports glucose to the cells, but over time, the cells develop resistance to insulin. As a result, excess glucose returns to the liver through the bloodstream, increasing blood sugar levels and putting extra pressure on the liver. Some of this excess sugar is also excreted through the kidneys, causing frequent urination and dehydration. The liver begins converting excess glucose into fat for future energy needs. This fat accumulates around the liver, heart, and intestines, affecting their function. The patient gains weight, and kidney function may also deteriorate due to ex-

cessive workload. Wounds take longer to heal, and in severe cases, infections may worsen, sometimes leading to complications such as amputation of limbs. Vision problems, nerve damage, and kidney failure are also common complications of uncontrolled diabetes. Another important factor to consider is lifestyle. Modern routines, especially in urban areas, involve long sitting hours, reduced physical activity, and increased dependence on processed foods. This combination significantly raises the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes at an earlier age. Stress and irregular sleep patterns further contribute to hormonal imbalance, making blood sugar control even more difficult. Type 2 diabetes is relatively easier to manage compared to Type 1. With proper medical supervision, dietary control, and lifestyle changes, it can often be reduced or even reversed in its early stages. Food intake should be limited to actual body requirements. A proper diet chart should be followed, including calorie details. Portion control is equally important, as even healthy

foods can become harmful if consumed excessively. Protein-rich foods such as milk, yogurt, meat, fish, and eggs should be included, along with fiber-rich foods like carrots, cucumber, spinach, capsicum, and certain fruits. Whole grains should be preferred over refined flour products. Carbohydrate intake such as rice, white flour, refined flour products, and potatoes should be reduced. Sugar, soft drinks, bakery items, fast food, and fried foods should be strictly avoided, as they rapidly increase blood glucose levels. To reduce fat and cholesterol, moderate use of nuts such as almonds, pistachios, walnuts, and peanuts is beneficial. However, portion control should be maintained since these foods are calorie-dense. Drinking plenty of water and avoiding sugary beverages also plays an important role in maintaining balanced blood sugar levels. Regular physical activity is one of the most effective ways to control diabetes. A daily routine of walking, light exercise, or any physical activity not only

helps in reducing blood sugar levels but also improves heart health and overall fitness. Even simple changes like using stairs instead of elevators or walking short distances instead of using vehicles can make a significant difference over time. It is also important to emphasize regular medical checkups. Early diagnosis can prevent long-term complications and help patients manage their condition effectively. Monitoring blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels should become a routine practice, especially for individuals with a family history of diabetes. In conclusion, diabetes is a manageable condition if addressed with awareness, discipline, and timely action. A balanced diet, active lifestyle, and adherence to medical advice can significantly improve quality of life. It is important to remember that small, consistent changes in daily habits can lead to long-term health benefits. Ignoring the condition, however, can lead to serious and life-threatening complications. Therefore, adopting a healthy lifestyle today is the key to a better and safer tomorrow.



TANVEER HUSSAIN)

DIABETES is a disease that has spread across the world like an epidemic. According to the International Diabetes Federation (IDF), approximately 11% of the global population is affected by this condition. In Pakistan, various local studies suggest that more than 20% of the population is suffering from some form of diabetes. This growing prevalence makes diabetes not just a medical issue but a serious social and economic challenge that affects families, workplaces, and the healthcare system alike. There are many questions in people's minds about diabe-

Briefs

Work on BRT project resumed

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The Frontier Works Organisation (FWO) has resumed construction work on Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Red Line Lot 2 on Karachi's University Road, Mayor Murtaza Wahab announced on Sunday.

Wahab said Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah set a 90-day deadline for completion of work on the mixed traffic corridor and drain. "Happy to inform that work on the University Road has resumed from today by FWO," Wahab said in a post on X, adding that the provincial government wanted the corridor and drainage works completed within three months.

Sources said work on the mixed traffic lanes of Red Line Lot 2 has been handed over to FWO, while the main corridor contract for Lot 2 has not yet been awarded to any contractor. The development comes days after authorities cancelled the contract for Lot 2, which covers the Mosammat-Numaish corridor, citing persistent delays and unsatisfactory performance by the contractor.

TransKarachi had earlier said the decision followed concerns raised by an Asian Development Bank (ADB) delegation over the pace and quality of work during a recent visit. The delegation also expressed reservations over health, safety and environmental compliance, while officials said development work on the section failed to meet required standards.

Bomb explosion in N Ireland

DNA

LONDON: Police in Northern Ireland have declared a security alert in the town of Dunmurry, on the outskirts of Belfast, after reports that a car bomb exploded near a police station. Homes in the vicinity have been evacuated and members of the public are advised to avoid the area, the Police Service of Northern Ireland said on Sunday.

"It is distressing and disturbing to wake up to the news that a car bomb exploded outside Dunmurry police station last night," said Sorcha Eastwood, a member of the UK Parliament who represents the Langan Valley, southwest of Belfast.

"A busy area, a car bomb left outside residential housing, small businesses and any number of people out and about on a Saturday night working or socialising," she said. "It is only through the grace of God that there are no casualties." Police have released no information about the motive for the attack. Last month, police said a "crude but viable" improvised bomb was used in an attempted attack on another PSNI station in Lurgan, about 20 miles (32 kilometers) southwest of Dunmurry.

Pakistan is a responsible nuclear state, says Gilani

He further remarked that this is a time for unity, recalling that such unity was demonstrated when India attacked Pakistan, and Pakistan responded as a responsible nuclear state

SAIFULLAH ANSAR/DNA

ISLAMABAD: Acting President Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani stated that sustained efforts are required to ensure global peace, as the world today is undergoing a phase of transformation. He highlighted that serious challenges such as climate change demand urgent attention and emphasized the need to adapt to evolving global realities. He further remarked that this is a time for unity, recalling that such unity was demonstrated when India attacked Pakistan, and Pakistan responded as a responsible nuclear state. He underscored that Pakistan is a responsible nuclear state, and although India not only carried out an attack but also unilaterally revoked the Indus Water Treaty, Pakistan exercised restraint while reserving its right to defend itself. He said that Pakistan only responded in self defence. Mr. Gilani added that Pakistan's brave armed forces and political leadership, through their unity, sent a clear message to the world that Pakistan is a responsible nuclear state. Addressing the participants, he noted that Pakistan had called for an independent inquiry into the Pahalgam incident, but India did not respond. He said that Pakistan's narrative was appreciated globally. Mr. Gilani emphasized the need to align with emerging global challenges, including technological advancement and climate change. He highlighted Pakistan's responsible



and proactive role in promoting peace, dialogue, and regional stability, noting that the country's diplomatic efforts are being recognized internationally. He further observed that Pakistan's mediation efforts for stability in the region

particularly diplomatic initiatives to reduce tensions and build mutual trust between Iran and US are being acknowledged by the international community. He said that Pakistan will continue to support peace in the region and beyond. Addressing the participants, the Acting President remarked that GCU Lahore has, for over a century and a half, produced outstanding leaders, thinkers, and public servants who have contributed significantly to national development. He noted that the institution fosters independent thinking and character-building, which remain its defining strengths. On the occasion, he also referred to his book, Chah-e-Yousaf Se Sada, which he wrote during his time in prison. Reflecting on his student life, he described his identity as an "Old Ravian" as one of his proudest distinctions and appreciated the strong bonds of friendship and shared experiences that continue to unite alumni. He urged the Old Ravians Association to establish structured mentorship initiatives to guide younger graduates and help them navigate evolving professional landscapes. Commending the efforts of the Association, including Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar and General Secretary Shahbaz Ahmed Sheikh, he assured his full support in strengthening alumni engagement and contributing to the continued excellence of GCU Lahore. The Acting President concluded by encouraging alumni to remain connected and committed to their alma mater, emphasizing that the true legacy of the institution lies in enduring relationships and shared values.

Passenger bus crashes into wall in Lahore

ISLAMABAD: At least one person was killed and dozens injured when a speeding passenger bus crashed into a wall in Lahore early Sunday morning. Rescue officials reported that a passenger bus carrying commuters collided with a roadside wall after losing control, killing one person instantly and injuring twenty others, local media channel reported.

Rescue teams and police arrived at the scene promptly to assist the victims and manage the situation. Injured passengers were shifted to nearby hospitals for medical treatment.

Authorities are investigating the exact cause of the accident. Rescue officials and police are working together to determine how the crash occurred and to prevent similar incidents in the future. Further investigation was underway. - APP

President condemns shooting incident

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Sunday strongly condemned the shooting incident that took place during the White House Correspondents' dinner in Washington DC.

The president, who is currently on a five-day visit to China, in a statement, expressed his relief that US President Donald Trump and the First Lady Melania Trump remained safe during the incident.

"This regrettable incident is a heinous form of terrorism, and it deserves the strongest possible condemnation," the president remarked. As per details, an individual fired gunshots at the event which prompted the immediate evacuation of President Trump, the First Lady, and other high-ranking officials. - APP

Israeli attack kills 4 Palestinians

DNA

CAIRO: Israeli military attacks killed at least four Palestinians in the Gaza Strip on Sunday, health officials in the enclave said. Medics said an airstrike carried out by Israel's forces killed one person near the central village of Al-Mughraqa, while Israeli gunfire and tank shelling killed two others near Gaza City. In another incident, Israeli forces shot and killed a 40-year-old woman in Khan Younis, in the south of the territory, health officials said.

War on Iran 'completely unnecessary': Merz

DNA



BERLIN: German Chancellor Friedrich Merz has described the US-Israel war on Iran as "completely unnecessary", warning that the conflict is fuelling wider instability across regions. Merz said the war was contributing to rising tensions affecting Europe, Asia and the

United States, and stressed that only a united Europe could respond effectively to emerging global challenges. "We have spent two days meeting with the 27 heads of state and government of the European Union to discuss how to tackle major challenges that lie ahead, including the Iran conflict and this completely unnecessary war there, as well as many other challenges we face," the chancellor said. He added that Europe must adapt to changing global conditions. "We must accept this new economic reality, however difficult it may be."

Iranian president wants people to conserve energy

DNA

TEHRAN: Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian has called on his people to conserve electricity, warning that while there were no shortages at present, the US and Israel aimed to sow "dissatisfaction" among the Iranian people. "We have asked our dear people, who are now ready and present on the ground, a simple request. And that is to reduce their own electricity and energy consumption," the president said on state TV. "We do not need people to sacrifice for the time being, but we do need to control consumption. Instead of 10 lights, two lights should be turned on in the house - what is wrong with that?" he added. Despite the US-Israeli bombing campaign against Iran, there have been no reported power cuts in Tehran in recent days. Pezeshkian accused Iran's enemies of hitting infrastructure and imposing a blockade "so that the current satisfaction turns into dissatisfaction." Even before the current war with the US and Israel, however, Iran suffered frequent power outages during the winter and summer peaks in demand.

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According to the International Energy Agency, Iran generates nearly four-fifths of its electricity from burning natural gas, a resource in which it is self-sufficient thanks to vast gas fields. It supplements this with low-quality heavy fuel oil, known as mazout, used at older power stations. Nevertheless, aging infrastructure, a lack of investment, and the impact of severe international sanctions that cut off access to technology and capital have left the electricity grid unable to meet demand. Pezeshkian has previously launched several public awareness campaigns to reduce energy use.

Pakistan's fuel supply stable

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik emphasized that resolving world conflicts is crucial to permanently control petrol prices, affirming that Pakistan's fuel supply is secure, unlike India, where citizens faced long queues and shortages on petrol pumps. During an exclusive conversation with a local news channel, Ali Pervaiz Malik stated that efforts are ongoing to stabilize fuel prices and maintain balance in the market. He emphasized that Pakistan's situation remains comparatively stronger than many countries like India facing economic stress due to global conflicts. He praised the leadership of the Prime Minister, the Field Marshal Asim Munir and the Deputy Prime Minister for their proactive measures, expressing admiration for their efforts in ensuring energy security and economic stability. The minister also highlighted that Pakistan has an agreement with the IMF which must be honoured, warning that any failure to comply could have serious consequences for the country's economic situation. Finally, he expressed confidence that strategic adjust-

ments, including reducing diesel load and channeling it into petrol, have strengthened fuel availability and helped manage prices effectively. Responding to a query, Minister for Petroleum stressed that Pakistan does not produce oil or petrol domestically and relies entirely on imports to meet its energy needs, adding that ensuring a stable supply and managing prices requires strategic planning and adherence to international agreements. He further noted that permanent control of petroleum product prices is linked to resolving global conflicts, particularly between the US and Iran, which directly impact international oil markets. The minister highlighted that ending such tensions, along with other geopolitical issues, is essential for long-term stability in fuel costs. In response to another query, he highlighted the ongoing OGRA digitalization process and the need for further deregulation to improve efficiency and transparency in the petroleum sector. The minister stressed that these reforms are essential for better governance and streamlined management of fuel distribution. - APP

Maryam to Establish 'Punjab Film City'

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif announced to establish 'Punjab Film City' in Nawaz Sharif IT City Lahore, spanning over 50 acres of land. She said that this Film City project is Pakistan's first complete "end-to-end" media production hub. She added that revival of Pakistan's film industry will be ensured through modern technology, facilities, and resources; as modern facilities for film, TV, animation, and digital media will be provided under one roof. She underscored that

foreign dependency for VFX and post-production will be reduced; as modern studios, sound stages, and post-production labs are also included in the Film City project.

Chief Minister Pankab said that all necessary facilities for shooting, sets, and a central lake will be built; besides establishing convention halls for international events and award shows. She added that a media trade hub, and a film and music school will also be part of the Film City project, which will generate thousands of direct and indirect employment opportunities. She highlighted that the modern film city will promote sectors like animation, gaming, and digital media, as it is a significant breakthrough for the promotion of creative economy. She flashed that Punjab Film City will provide a platform for talent, technology, and business, and the project will be completed in phases. - DNA

LNG cargo set for April 30 arrival through Seapeak Magellan

Govt buys single LNG cargo at \$18.4/mmbtu to ease rising power shortages

ISLAMABAD: TotalEnergies will dispatch the vessel Seapeak Magellan after winning a contract to supply one LNG cargo at \$18.4 per mmbtu, officials said. The vessel is expected to berth at the PGPC terminal at Port Qasim on April 30, 2026, carrying around 140,000 cubic metres, or approximately 3 billion cubic feet, of LNG. Officials said the volume would not be enough to run four RLNG-based power plants at optimum capacity. The plants require at least 720mcmcf of RLNG to generate about 4,800MW of electricity at full load. The government had received bids for three cargoes but decided to procure only one to immediately ease rising load shedding during peak hours, rejecting two cargoes scheduled for May because of higher prices.

For the cargo scheduled between April 27 and 30, TotalEnergies initially offered the lowest bid at \$18.88 per MMBtu and later reduced it to \$18.4 per mmbtu, which was approved. For the second cargo, due between May 1 and 7, Vitol Bahrain submitted the lowest bid at

\$18.54 per mmbtu. For the third cargo, arriving between May 8 and 14, OQ Trading offered the lowest bid at \$17.997 per mmbtu, while Vitol Bahrain also submitted a second offer of \$18.74 per mmbtu for the same cargo. Authorities expressed concern that LNG traders may have formed a cartel, resulting in elevated bid prices compared to the Asian benchmark, the Japan Korea Marker (JKM), currently hovering around \$16.41-\$16.47 per mmbtu. The duration of the imported LNG will depend on daily regasification: at 100 mcmcf, the cargo would last about 30 days; at 200 mcmcf, around 15 days; and at 300 mcmcf for power generation, it would be consumed in approximately 10 days. Officials said future LNG procurement hinges on geopolitical developments, particularly related to the Strait of Hormuz. Pakistan had been expecting four LNG cargoes from Qatar, but these could not materialise due to regional tensions, delays in the opening of Hormuz, and associated shipping risks. - DNA

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