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Hantavirus Threat not over Yet, says WHO chief Tedros

Detailed News On Page-08

French President announces huge Africa investments

Detailed News On Page-08



Pakistan tanks Kuwait for diesel facility

Detailed News On Page-08



Briefs

Pak rejects report on Iranian aircraft

Faisal Sheikh

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office has categorically rejected a US-based media outlet's report about Iranian aircraft at the Nar Khan Airbase in Rawalpindi, saying that it is "misleading and sensationalised". "Pakistan categorically rejects the CBS News report regarding the presence of Iranian aircraft at Nar Khan Airbase as misleading and sensationalised. Such speculative narratives appear aimed at undermining ongoing efforts for regional stability and peace," the Foreign Office mentioned in a statement. Following the ceasefire and during the initial round of the Islamabad Talks, the FO said, a number of aircraft from Iran and the United States arrived in Pakistan to facilitate the movement of diplomatic personnel, security teams, and administrative staff associated with the talks process. It added that following the initial talks, some aircraft and support personnel remained temporarily in Pakistan in anticipation of subsequent rounds of engagement.

Qatar FM supports Pak peace efforts

DOHA: Qatar's premier and foreign minister has said his recent visit to Washington sought to bolster mediation efforts seeking to end the US-Iran war, AFP reports. "The visit focused primarily on supporting the Pakistani diplomatic efforts and ensuring a positive response to these efforts to reach a solution as quickly as possible," Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani said during a press conference in Doha with Turkey's Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan. Turkey supports efforts to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan has said, adding the channel should not be used as a "weapon" during the Iran war. Speaking at a press conference in Doha alongside his Qatari counterpart, Fidan also said Ankara was contributing to efforts led by Pakistan to find a negotiated end to the war between Iran and the United States.

Dar talks to Chinese FM

MEHTEAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mubhammad Ishaq Dar with Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China, Wang Yi. The two leaders exchanged in-depth views on recent regional developments and Pakistan's ongoing efforts to facilitate engagement between Iran and the United States, aimed at promoting sustained peace and stability in the region and beyond. Foreign Minister Wang Yi reiterated appreciation and support for Pakistan's constructive mediation role. Both sides underscored the importance of continuing a durable ceasefire and ensuring normal passage through the Strait of Hormuz. They also discussed planned high-level exchanges, activities marking the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and China, as well as broader bilateral and multilateral cooperation. The two sides agreed to maintain close communication on all matters of mutual interest.

First official visit EU to invite Taliban to Brussels

Western countries have declined to recognize the Taliban since the Islamist fighters swept back to power in Afghanistan five years ago, overthrowing a government that had been backed by US and NATO troops for two decades

BRUSSELS: The European Union is planning to invite officials from Afghanistan's Taliban government to Brussels for their first known official visit, to discuss ways to deport some Afghan migrants back to Afghanistan. Western countries have declined to recognize the Taliban since the Islamist fighters swept back to power in Afghanistan five years ago, overthrowing a government that had been backed by US and NATO troops for two decades. An EU spokesperson said the planned Brussels meeting was being set up in response to a request from several EU member states. No date had been set yet, and the meeting did not mean the EU had recognized the Taliban. The meeting appeared to be the first publicly announced visit by Taliban officials to Brussels, although the spokesperson said he was not able to confirm this. EU officials had already traveled to Kabul for a meeting in January, the spokesperson said, and the EU was now working "on a potential follow-up meeting at technical level in Brussels with the de facto authorities in Afghanistan to pursue these discussions." Hundreds of thousands of Afghans have sought asylum in Europe since the Taliban takeover of the country. European law allows some migrants who commit crimes or are considered a security threat to be deported, but this has been difficult to carry out with Afghanistan because of the lack of diplomatic relations. The EU spokesperson said Sweden was helping to coordinate the planned Brussels meeting. The Swedish government did not immediately reply to a request for comment.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding affairs of Ministry of Interior, in Islamabad on 12 May 2026. - DNA

Cocaine dealer arrested

NAZIR SYIAL

KARACHI: Alleged high-profile cocaine dealer Pinky was brought to a court in Karachi without handcuffs, in an apparent protest. According to reports, the investigating officer escorted the suspect while walking behind her and guiding the way as she confidently entered the courtroom. Sources claimed that during custody, the suspect had expressed confidence that she would soon be released. Police arrested the alleged high-profile narcotics supplier, Pinky, during an intelligence-guzzled operation conducted by Garden Police on the indication of security agencies. Officials claimed that she was among the country's most wanted drug traffickers and was allegedly involved in the production and distribution of high-grade cocaine across Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad. Authorities stated that Pinky operated a mobile drug laboratory and was arrested

Govt to pay salaries before Eid

PIAZ CHAUDHRY

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan government has decided to release salaries and pensions of federal employees in advance ahead of Eid-ul-Adha 2026, ARY News reported on Tuesday, citing sources. According to sources, the Ministry of Finance has prepared arrangements for the early disbursement of salaries and pensions for May 2026. The view of the upcoming Eid-ul-Adha 2026 holidays, payments to government employees and pensioners are expected to be made on 22 May, sources added. Officials said the payments will be processed under the Federal Government Receipts and Payments Rules 2025. The Controller General of Accounts has reportedly been instructed to

Middle East tension Iran to use nuclear option if attacked again

Pentagon says war on Iran has cost \$29bn as US consumer inflation hits three-year high

TEHRAN: Ongoing conflicts in the Middle East continue to raise alarms, with fresh warnings about Iran's nuclear capabilities, persistent Israeli strikes in Lebanon despite a ceasefire, and dire humanitarian risks from disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz. An Iranian lawmaker has stated that Tehran could quickly enrich its uranium stockpile to weapons-grade levels if the country faces further attacks. Prominent parliament member Akhbari Boushejri indicated that Iran retains the technical ability to push enrichment beyond its current near-weapon-grade levels as needed, while insisting it has no desire to build a bomb. Similar warnings have surfaced from Iranian officials in recent years, amid stalled diplomacy and a fragile US-Iran ceasefire. US officials have previously assessed that Iran could reach weapons-grade enrichment in as little as a week if it chooses. The Israeli minister claims it has conducted strikes on more than 1,100 targets in Lebanon since a nominal ceasefire took effect in mid-April 2026, primarily targeting Hezbollah infrastructure.

Israel sent Iron Dome batteries to UAE to defend country

TEL AVIV: Israel sent Iron Dome anti-missile batteries and personnel to operate them to the United Arab Emirates to defend the country during the Iran war, the U.S. ambassador to the country said Tuesday. The comments by Mike Huckabee underline the growing defense relationship between Israel and the UAE, countries long suspicious of Iran, as a shaky ceasefire still holds in the Iran war. However, the narrow Strait of Hormuz remains in Tehran's chokehold and negotiations between the U.S. and Iran appear at a standstill for the moment - raising the risk of the conflict breaking out again. Huckabee made the comment on stage at an

9 killed, over 18 injured in blast

Women and children among injured shifted to hospital following deadly Naurang Bazaar explosion

LAKKI MARWAT: At least 9 people were killed and more than 18 others injured in an explosion near Naurang police station in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Lakki Marwat district on Tuesday, police and hospital authorities said. According to police, the blast occurred near a rickshaw in Naurang Bazaar in the Sarai Naurang area. Hospital administration said the bodies of seven victims killed in the explosion were shifted to Naurang Hospital. Officials also said that two traffic police personnel were added among those martyred in the blast. According to hospital authorities, the injured brought to the hospital included women and children. Following the incident, an emergency was imposed at Sarai Naurang Hospital, the hospital administration said. Meanwhile, District Police Officer Nazir Khan said a vehicle was used in the blast and more than one mound of explosive material had been planted in it, he said. Terrorists had started targeting innocent people, adding that investigations were underway to determine whether the explosion was a suicide attack or remotely controlled. Separately, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi sought a report on the incident from the Inspector General of Police. The chief minister termed the incident deeply tragic and said the provincial government would provide every possible support. Pakistan has seen a sharp increase in cross-border terrorist incidents, particularly in the bordering provinces of KP and Balochistan, since

President, PM pay tribute to citizen

SAFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday paid tributes to brave citizen Liaquat, who sacrificed his life while foiling a terrorism threat after he confronted a suicide bomber near Jand and Khushal Garh Bridge, close to Kohat. The president and prime minister, in their separate issued statements, said that as a responsible citizen, Liaquat stopped the terrorist and asked for his identification, who later blew himself up, resulting in the martyrdom of Liaquat. They prayed for the elevation of the rank of Shaheed Liaquat and strength for the bereaved family to bear the loss. President Zardari said that the brave citizens like Shaheed Liaquat were a shining example of national resilience, patriotism and collective awareness against terrorism. "The entire nation stands united with its security forces and law enforcement agencies for the elimination of the scourge of terrorism. The war against terrorism resulting from external support will continue," he reiterated. The president directed Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem

Shehbaz, President Aliyev exchange warm greetings

President Aliyev expressed his deep appreciation at Pakistan's remarkably successful initiatives to bring about a ceasefire between Iran and the US

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif held a telephone call today with H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Islamabad City. During their most warm and cordial greetings, the two leaders exchanged greetings and reaffirmed the strong fraternal bonds of friendship between Pakistan and Azerbaijan. The Prime Minister conveyed his best wishes to President Aliyev for the ongoing peace efforts in the Middle East. President Aliyev expressed his deep appreciation at Pakistan's remarkably successful initiatives to bring about a ceasefire between Iran and the US. This was a clear reflection of the trust and

28th constitutional amendment on the cards?

Simultaneously, discussions about creating more provinces have also resurfaced. Advocates argue that Pakistan's governance crisis cannot be resolved without increasing the number of federating units

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan may once again be heading toward a major constitutional restructuring as discussions surrounding a possible 28th Constitutional Amendment gain momentum in political and policy circles. Though nothing official has yet been announced, informed sources suggest that powerful quarters are seriously considering a rethink of certain provisions of the landmark 18th Amendment, arguing that the federation has become too weak while provinces have accumulated excessive administrative and financial authority. The 18th Amendment, passed in 2010 through broad political consensus, was widely hailed as a historic step toward provincial autonomy. It transferred several ministries and subjects including health, education, culture, labor, and social welfare from the federal government to the provinces. The amendment also strengthened parliamentary democracy and reduced the powers of the presidency. At the time, it was celebrated as a victory for smaller provinces, particularly by the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), which considered it one of its greatest constitutional achievements. However, over the years, concerns have emerged within federal institutions that the center has gradually lost both administrative effectiveness and financial strength. Many federal officials privately argue that after the 18th Amendment and the NFC Award, Islamabad was left with limited resources while provinces became financially dominant. The federal government, they say, now struggles to manage debt servicing, defense spending, and national development projects. Sources indicate that the proposed 28th Amendment may seek to bring certain ministries back under federal control, especially health and education, on the grounds that national standards and coordinated policymaking have weakened under provincial management. The COVID-19 pandemic also exposed gaps in coordination between the federation and provinces, strengthening the argument of those who support a stronger center. Another important aspect reportedly under discussion is the review of the National Finance Commission (NFC) Award. Critics within federal circles believe the current distribution formula disproportionately favors provinces while leaving the center financially overextended. Any attempt to revisit the NFC formula, however, is expected to trigger intense political resistance. The biggest obstacle to any such constitutional move remains the PPP, which has consistently declared the 18th Amendment untouchable. Yet political observers believe that compromises are possible behind closed doors. Some sources claim the PPP may eventually show flexibility if broader political arrangements are reached. One frequently discussed possibility is the party's desire to see Bilawal Bhatto Zardari elevated to the office of prime minister as part of a future power-sharing formula. However, according to insiders, influential quarters remain reluctant to accept such an arrangement at this stage. Simultaneously, discussions about creating more provinces have also resurfaced. Advocates argue that Pakistan's governance crisis cannot be resolved without increasing the number of federating units. Punjab, with its overwhelming population and political weight, continues to dominate national politics. The common perception remains that whoever wins Punjab effectively wins Islamabad and secures the prime minister's office. Supporters of administrative restructuring believe smaller provinces would create a more balanced federation and improve governance delivery. Political parties, especially the PPP, have traditionally opposed the division of provinces, fearing ethnic and political complications. Yet governance experts argue that a country of Pakistan's size and population can no longer function effectively with its current administrative structure. Whether the proposed 28th Amendment materializes or not, one thing is certain: the debate over the balance of power between the federation and provinces is far from over. Pakistan once again appears poised to enter a sensitive constitutional and political phase where competing visions of federalism, governance, and power sharing will shape the country's future direction.

Federal Ombudsman visits regional office Peshawar

ISLAMABAD: Federal Ombudsman, Naved Kamran Baloch, on Tuesday directed officers of his institution to make public service their foremost priority and ensure timely resolution of people's grievances without any negligence. He stated that serving the public was not only the duty of government employees but also an act of devotion. He emphasized that government institutions must ensure implementation of the decisions of the Federal Ombudsman to give relief to masses. He expressed these views during his visit to the Regional Office of the Federal Ombudsman in Peshawar, where he chaired a meeting with officers from the regional offices of Peshawar, Swat, and Abbottabad. During the visit, the Federal Ombudsman also met with Provincial Ombudsman, Mazhar Zeb. They discussed matters related to redressal of public complaints, institutional cooperation, and improving access to justice for citizens. —APP

Efforts Afoot to strengthen primary, secondary healthcare

PESHAWAR: Provincial Minister for Health, Khalid ur Rehman has said that the provincial government is taking comprehensive measures to strengthen primary and secondary healthcare facilities across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In a statement, he said that steps are being taken to address shortages of doctors, nurses and paramedical staff on an emergency basis to ensure timely and quality medical services for the public at nearby health centres. The minister said the government is implementing a complete system under a new health policy aimed at improving basic healthcare infrastructure. He added that modern medical equipment is being provided and monitoring mechanisms are being strengthened to enhance service delivery. Khalid ur Rehman said the reforms would ensure better, accessible and reliable healthcare facilities for the people, enabling them to receive quality treatment without unnecessary delays. —APP

RWU hosts Pak-China friendship design contest

RAWALPINDI: An inter-university coin and postage stamp design competition was held at Rawalpindi Women University (RWU), under the theme "Pak-China Friendship: Cultural and Strategic Relations," highlighting historic bilateral ties through creative student artwork. Organized under the directives of the Higher Education Department, the event was aimed to promote awareness, creative expression and intercultural harmony among the youth in the context of Pak-China friendship. Students participated in large numbers, presenting designs reflecting the depth of Pak-China bilateral relations. —APP

Dr. Oumer lauds Sialkot's industrial potential



The Ambassador explained about the specific competitive advantages Ethiopia offers to Pakistani investors, emphasizing the country's large population, skilled workforce, access to affordable green energy, and its integration with the region and beyond

DNA

LAHORE: Dr. Oumer Hussien Oba, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, paid an official visit to the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) on Tuesday. Upon his arrival, he was accorded a warm welcome by Mr. Murad Arshad, Senior Vice President of the SCCI, along with several Executive Members. Addressing the SCCI members, the Ambassador appreciated

Sialkot's significant industrial potential and highlighted the vast opportunities for establishing bilateral cooperation in trade and investment between Ethiopia and Pakistan. The Ambassador explained about the specific competitive advantages Ethiopia offers to Pakistani investors, emphasizing the country's large population, skilled workforce, access to affordable green energy, and its integration with the region and beyond. These benefits are supported by a conducive investment climate featuring various incentives and tax exemptions resulting from the Homegrown Economic Reforms, which have successfully ad-

dressed macroeconomic imbalances while boosting productivity and job creation in Ethiopia, the Ambassador noted. He urged the business community to visit Ethiopia to explore growing opportunities within the agriculture, agro-processing, manufacturing, mining, tourism, and ICT sectors. Mr. Sped Abtesham Mazhar thanked the Ambassador for his visit and expressed optimism that the industrial strength of Sialkot would play a major role in strengthening business-to-business relations between the two nations. The session concluded with a productive question-and-answer period focused on deepening economic ties.

FCC allows commercial use of residential properties

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Constitutional Court (FCC) on Tuesday lifted the ban on the conversion of residential plots for commercial and recreational use in Karachi, providing major relief to builders and developers. A bench headed by Justice Aamer Farooq disposed of the long-running case regarding illegal constructions in Karachi and withdrew earlier restrictions on changing the category of residential plots to commercial use.

However, the court clarified that amenity plots, including parks, hospitals, schools, mosques, playgrounds, and graveyards, cannot be converted for

commercial and residential purposes. During the hearing, Justice Aamer Farooq remarked that the court would not interfere in the functioning of institutions such as the Sindh Building Control Authority (SBCA). "If any institution violates the law, the relevant forum or the high court can be approached," Justice Farooq observed, adding that affected parties also have the right to file appeals against high court decisions. The judge further noted that the court's suo motu powers no longer exist and emphasized that laws are already in place to address violations of building reg-


ulations. "We expect town planning institutions to work in good faith," he said. The court also observed that the Supreme Court's earlier ruling on plot category conversions would not obstruct the functioning of relevant authorities. Justice Arshad Hussain remarked that any official found violating the law would face legal action. "Courts cannot make laws; they can only ensure their implementation," Justice Aamer Farooq added. Notably, last year, the Sindh Building Control Authority had withdrawn a notification that permitted commercial activities on residential plots. —DNA

IHC seeks CDA reply on One Constitution Avenue appeals


ISLAMABAD: A division bench of the Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday issued notices to the Capital Development Authority (CDA) on intra-court appeals filed by appointed owners of One Constitution Avenue and Bank of Punjab (BoP) and sought a response in the matter concerning lease cancellation and third-party rights. The bench, comprising Justice Muhammad Azam Khan and Justice Raja Inam Amin Minhas, heard arguments from appellants' counsel, Advocate Tahir Aslam, who requested the court to restrain disciplinary or coercive action until the recommendations of a committee recently formed by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif are finalised and approved by the cabinet. On May 1, the premier constituted a high-level committee to review the issue involving One Constitution Avenue and halted authorities from taking any action. The court adjourned further hearing on the intra-court appeals, observing that the decision on the stay application would be issued later. The case stems from an April 30, 2026, judgment of a single-member bench of the IHC, headed by the Chief Justice Mohammad Sarfraz Dogar, which dismissed a petition filed by builder M/s BMP (Private) Limited and upheld the CDA's decision to cancel the lease of the 13.5-acre commercial-residential project over alleged multi-billion rupee payment defaults. The single bench had also ruled that third-party sub-lessees and purchasers would "sink or sail" with BNP, effectively linking their rights with those of the original lessee. —APP



ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Secretary Barrister Danyal Chaudhry along with the Convenor Shaista Pervaitz at finalization of SDG youth campaign "Hum Hain Pakistan" at the National Assembly.



GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN ESTATE OFFICE MANAGEMENT



No. QUT/EE/53/16/General-2026
Islamabad, the 12/05/2026

TENDER NOTICE

- Estate Office Management attached department of Ministry of Housing & works invites sealed bids on Single Stage Single Envelope bidding procedure for the below mentioned works on item rate basis of Pak. PWD Schedule of Rate 2022 from eligible Bidders registered on EPADS v2.0 having valid registration with income tax departments as Active Tax Payer and registered with Pakistan Engineering Council in the relevant category with specialized codes CE01, CE04, CE08, CE09, CE10, EE01, EE02, EE03 & EE04.

Lot No.	Name of Work	Bid Security	Completion Time	Category
1	Annual Repair & Maintenance of Federal Government Lodges, Residential Colonies, Widow's Houses & Mosques at Quetta (SH: Miscellaneous Work)	Rs. 600,000/-	30 days	C-6

- E-Bidding documents, containing detailed terms & conditions, specifications and requirements etc. are available on e-Pak Acquisition and Disposal System (EPADS) at <https://vendors.epads.gov.pk> for all the interested bidders registered on EPADS v2.0. Bidders are required to get themselves registered on EPADS v2.0 to participate in Bidding process.
- All the prospective bidders must upload the legible scanned copies of the documents of mandatory requirements given in the bidding documents, on the EPADS v2.0.
- The e-bids, prepared in accordance with the instructions in the e-Bidding documents, must be submitted through EPADS v2.0 on or before 01/06/2026 at 11:00 AM. E-bids will be opened on the same day at 11:30 AM at Estate Office Management, Block 5-B, Pakistan Secretariat, Saddar Karachi. Manual submission of Bids shall not be entertained.
- The original bid security in the shape of CDR/Banker's Cheque/Pay order issued in the favour of Drawing & Disbursing Officer, Estate Office Management, Quetta must reach to the office of the Deputy Director, Estate Office Management, Block 5-B, Pakistan Secretariat, Saddar, Karachi anytime in the office hours before the online submission deadline of the bid, otherwise respective bid will not be opened.

Note: In terms of Rules 48 of Public Procurement Rules, 2004 Grievance Redressal Committee (GRC) is notified for the subject procurement and notification copy is available on the procuring agency's website and also available on EPADS v2.0 as well as Authority's website at (www.ppra.org.pk). In Case of technical difficulty in using EPADS v2.0, prospective bidders may contact PPRA Team, Director MIS Room No. 109, 1st floor, FBC Building Sector G-5/2, Islamabad. Contact No.: 051-111-137-237.

PID/10128/25

**Assistant Director (Estate)
Estate Office Management
Quetta. 0333-7888273**

National Days and Armed Forces Days

- MAY**
- May 03/Poland National Day
 - May 06/Bulgaria Armed Forces Day
 - May 06/IAE Armed Forces Day
 - May 07/Kazakhstan Armed Forces Day
 - May 08/Czech Republic National Day
 - May 09/European Union National Day
 - May 17/Norway Constitution Day
 - May 21/Hungary Armed Forces Day
 - May 22/Yemen Republic Re-unification Day(National Day)
 - May 24/Eritrea National Day
 - May 25/Lebanon Liberation and Resistance Day
 - May 25/Argentina National Day
 - May 25/Jordan Independence Day
 - May 28/Azerbaijan Republic Day
 - May 28/Ethiopia National Day
 - May 31/Bruncei Armed Forces Day

- Rescue (Police).....15
- Bomb Disposal.....15
- Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....1122 & 16
- Emergency Ambulance 1122 & Rescue Services 4451122
- Motorway Police.....9266044
- Motorway Police 9270601-20
- Women Police Stations Islamabad.....9222596
- Rawalpindi.....92760120

Enquiry

- Ethi Ambulance.....315
- Pil Flight Info.....114
- PIA Cargo.....9280979
- Railway Enquiry.....117
- Railway Exchange 9270831-5
- WASA Rawalpindi 5555489
- CAA.....9241692

Hospitals

- CMH.....5611111
- MH.....5611116
- Coast Hospital.....9270907-11
- DIQ.....5556311-4
- RCH.....9290301-7
- Holy Family.....9290323-7
- PIMS.....9281170-79
- Polyclinic.....921830009
- Shifa International 4603666

Departments

- CCA.....9221334-43
- CDa.....9208301-44
- Met Office.....9256360-6
- RDA.....5555864
- TMA.....5770886
- Contosome Board 9270151-3

Islamabad Metropolitan

- Corporation.....9209224
- Potstar Town.....9209224
- Rawal Town.....5773443

Water Tank

- Islamabad.....0321-5744480

PMYP chief unveils bold youth jobs policy

The event was attended by Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong, Executive Director of the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTCC) Muhammad Aamir Jan, representatives of Chinese partner institutions, industry leaders, development partners, and youth participants.

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) Rana Masbood Ahmad Khan on Tuesday announced that Pakistan's first ever National Youth Employment Policy had received federal cabinet approval and would soon be formally launched by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, as he highlighted the government's broader strategy to expand youth employment, entrepreneurship, and technical skills development across the country. Speaking as the chief guest at the inauguration ceremony of the China Pakistan Technical Cooperation Workshops and WorldSkills Pakistan National Skills Competition 2026 in Islamabad, Mr Khan said the government is focused on creating meaningful opportunities for young people by equipping them with modern skills and connecting them with local and international employment markets. The event was attended by Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong, Executive Director of the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTCC) Muhammad Aamir Jan, representatives of Chinese partner institutions, industry leaders, development partners, and youth participants. Describing the ceremony as a reflection of the deepening partnership between Pakistan and China in technical education and vocational cooperation, Mr Khan said the initiative would help strengthen Pakistan's skilled workforce and prepare youth for future economic challenges. He said the newly approved National Youth Employment Policy envisaged a comprehensive framework aimed at improving workforce participation, supporting startups, and enhancing entrepreneurship opportunities.



for young people. Highlighting key features of the policy, the PMYP chairman said the government had decided to conduct the Labour Force Survey annually instead of every four years in order to maintain accurate and updated employment data for effective policymaking. He further stated that the government aimed to ensure at least a 10 per cent annual increase in new company registrations while extending institutional support to startups and young entrepreneurs nationwide. Emphasising women's economic inclusion, Mr Khan said the policy targeted a minimum 35pc participation

of women in the labour force, adding that sustainable and dignified employment opportunities for women remained a key government priority. The PMYP chairman also commended the performance of NAVTTCC and commended its leadership for transforming the organisation into an effective platform for technical and vocational education and training. He particularly acknowledged Brigadier Sajid Khokhar for his role in advancing vocational training initiatives in Punjab, while stressing that balanced development across all provinces was essential for Pakistan's national progress. Quoting

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, he said sustainable national development could only be achieved when all provinces progressed together. Addressing participants selected for overseas training opportunities, Mr Khan expressed confidence that young trainees travelling to China would acquire valuable expertise and contribute towards Pakistan's economic growth upon their return. He concluded by congratulating the participants and encouraging them to continue striving for excellence in order to secure a brighter future for themselves and the country.

Action taken against over 200 FIA officials for misuse of authority

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry on Tuesday informed the Senate that action had been taken against over 200 officials of the Federal Investigation Agency for misuse of authority in immigration matters. Replying to various supplementary questions during the Question Hour, the minister said some FIA officials were also dismissed from service after the allegations against them were proven. He said the Directorate of Internal Accountability (DIA) of the FIA had been tasked with strengthening internal oversight, protecting institutional integrity, and implementing accountability mechanisms within the agency. Dr

Tariq Fazal said strict accountability measures were in place to take action against immigration officials involved in unjustified offloading of passengers or collusion with human smugglers. He said that in 2025, the FIA Director General penalized 85 officials for misuse of authority in immigration-related matters. The minister clarified that offloading was never random or arbitrary, but carried out strictly under established procedures. Passengers were offloaded only when serious concerns remained after a detailed report, he said. He said a mechanism had been developed at the Integrated Control, Complaints and Communications

Centre to immediately forward complaints received through email, round the clock, to the relevant immigration check posts for swift resolution. The minister said overseas Pakistanis were a major source of remittances and the government had taken several steps to facilitate them. He said that independent courts had also been set up for overseas Pakistanis for speedy resolution of their grievances. He also rejected reports circulating on social media claiming that Pakistanis were being deported from Gulf countries, particularly the United Arab Emirates. He said no Pakistanis were deported without reason.—APP

HEC edu expo attracts students

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan continued the second series of Pakistan Higher Education Expo in Bangladesh under the Pakistan-Bangladesh Knowledge Corridor with a successful and well-attended exhibition in Barisal, following the inaugural event in Dhaka. The Expo featured participation from 20 leading Pakistani universities showcasing higher education opportunities, scholarship programmes, academic exchanges, and research collaboration avenues for Bangladeshi students and faculty members. The series will also be held in Rajshahi, Sylhet, Chittagong, and Rangpur in the coming days, said a press release received here on Tuesday. Deputy High Commissioner of Pakistan in Bangladesh Mr. Muhammad Wasif attended the Expo as Chief Guest. In his remarks, he highlighted the brotherly relations between Pakistan and Bangladesh and stressed the importance of people-to-people connections and educational cooperation in strengthening bilateral ties. The event was also attended by Deputy Commissioner Barisal Ms. Masooma Akhtar, Deputy High Commissioner of Police Barisal Mr. Abdul Hanan, Registrar University of Barisal, Director General Scholarships HEC Pakistan Ms. Ayesha Iram, and Project Director HEC Mr. Jahanzeb Khan. Earlier, Ms. Ayesha Iram welcomed the participants and highlighted that faculty representatives from 20 Pakistani universities were present to guide Bangladeshi students regarding admissions, scholarship, and academic opportunities in Pakistan. Mr. Jahanzeb Khan thanked the participants and the High Commission of Pakistan in Bangladesh for their support. He encouraged students to visit university stalls for detailed information regarding admissions and scholarships, adding that every student serves as an ambassador of his or her country. Under the Pakistan-Bangladesh Knowledge Corridor initiative, the Government of Pakistan, through HEC, is offering 500 fully funded Alama Muhammad Iqbal Scholarships for Bangladeshi students at leading Pakistani universities. The first batch of 74 Bangladeshi students has already commenced studies in Pakistan in diverse academic disciplines, marking a significant milestone in bilateral educational cooperation between the two countries.—APP

Kundi, Sanaullah discuss KP governance issues

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Tuesday met Adviser to the Prime Minister Rana Sanaullah and discussed the overall political situation in the country, with particular focus on law and order and governance issues in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. During the meeting, both leaders expressed serious concern over the deteriorating security situation in the province and what they termed the provincial government's lack of interest in addressing the issue. Governor Kundi apprised the adviser of public concerns regarding poor governance, worsening law and order situation and problems being faced by the residents of the merged districts. He also expressed grave concern over the closure of CNG stations in the province, terming it an inappropriate decision that required immediate redressal by the federal government. The Governor said issues being faced by the CNG Stations Union should be heard and resolved without delay. Rana Sanaullah assured the Governor that he would convey his concerns to the Prime Minister and would play his full role in resolving the issue. Governor Kundi said the federal government would have to take practical measures to remove the sense of deprivation among the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, particularly those living in the merged districts. Matters relating to contacts among political parties in the province also came under discussion during the meeting.—APP

Centre to immediately forward complaints received through email, round the clock, to the relevant immigration check posts for swift resolution. The minister said overseas Pakistanis were a major source of remittances and the government had taken several steps to facilitate them. He said that independent courts had also been set up for overseas Pakistanis for speedy resolution of their grievances. He also rejected reports circulating on social media claiming that Pakistanis were being deported from Gulf countries, particularly the United Arab Emirates. He said no Pakistanis were deported without reason.—APP

Japan-Pakistan development centre inaugurated at AIU

Ambassador Akamatsu congratulated students and faculty, stating, "books are bridges of knowledge that allow you to explore the rich tapestry of Japan, understand our perspectives, and even inspire new ideas and innovations here in Pakistan"

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Under the "Read Japan Project", launched by the Nippon Foundation in 2008 to promote global understanding of Japan through literature, the Embassy of Japan in Pakistan handed over 168 English-language books to Alama Iqbal Open University (AIU) Islamabad. Mr. Akamatsu Shuichi, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, presented the diverse collection spanning Japan's history, politics, economy, security, international relations, philosophy, literature, language, culture and more to Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, AIU Vice-Chancellor during a hand over ceremony held on May 12. On the same day, the Japan Pakistan Advancement Center (JPAC) was inaugurated, aimed at fostering Japanese language, academic exchanges, promoting employment and entrepreneurship. Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, H.E. Chaudhry Satish Hussain, also graced the occasion with his kind presence. Ambassador Akamatsu congratulated students and faculty, stating, "books are bridges of knowledge that allow you to explore the rich tapestry of Japan, understand our perspectives, and even inspire new ideas and innovations here in Pakistan." He praised JPAC as a key step to strengthen Japan-Pakistan ties in terms of education, employment, and entrepreneurship. In his remarks, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood expressed sincere gratitude to the Nippon Foundation and the Embassy of Japan, noting the donation of books would help students learn about Japan and enhance bilateral relations. He expressed his determination to cultivate outstanding students and strengthen relations with Japan through JPAC. Federal Minister also appreciated JPAC's initiatives and expressed hope that they would further promote friendship and cooperation between Pakistan and Japan.



LEI workshop trains journalists

ISLAMABAD: LUMS Energy Institute (LEI), in collaboration with the Ministry of Energy (Power Division) organized a one-day workshop titled "Training Media Personnel on Power Sector Fundamentals" at the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS). The workshop was aimed to enhance journalists' understanding of Pakistan's power sector and its future direction, said a press release issued on Tuesday. Minister for Energy (Power Division), Sardar Awaraz Ahmed Khan Leghari, in his closing remarks, underscored the crucial role of the media in providing accurate and balanced information about the power sector to the public. The Minister noted that several misconceptions about the power sector were based on incomplete and inaccurate information. He said that analyses and news reports founded on half-cooked information failed to present the true picture. He emphasized upon the government's commitment to ensuring that transparent and factual information about the power sector is effectively communicated to the public. Highlighting key reforms and policy initiatives, the Minister stated that the government planned to shift 10 million electricity consumers to Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) meters during the current year. He further announced that no new imported fossil-fueled Independent Power Producers (IPPs) would be established in the future. He added that agreements with most IPPs have already been renegotiated and that, through prudent planning and policy measures, savings of approximately PKR 5 trillion have been secured for electricity consumers over the next ten to fifteen years. The Minister also stated that the recently introduced solar policy would not slow the pace of solar adoption in the country. He reaffirmed the government's support for investment in battery energy storage systems and said efforts were underway to provide more affordable electricity to industrial and commercial consumers during daytime hours. The workshop brought together media professionals from leading print, electronic, and digital outlets, along with students of media sciences. Participants were provided with a comprehensive overview of Pakistan's electricity sector, including generation, transmission, distribution, tariff mechanisms, subsidies, circular debt, distributed solar, and ongoing market reforms. Additional Secretary, Ministry of Energy (Power Division), Makhdoom Bhatti, delivered the welcome remarks and highlighted the importance of informed journalism in shaping public understanding of the energy sector. Technical sessions were conducted by leading energy experts, including Chairman, Board of Directors, National Grid Company of Pakistan (NGC) and Senior —APP

Briefs

Maraka-e-Hau reshaped South Asia: Masood

ISLAMABAD: Former President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and former Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States and the United Nations, Sardar Masood Khan said here Tuesday that Maraka-e-Hau and Operation Burman-in-Maros marked a decisive turning point in the strategic history of South Asia, validating Pakistan's deterrence capabilities and elevating the country's diplomatic and technological stature globally. Addressing students and faculty members at Muslim Youth (MY) University event, Ambassador Khan emphasized the critical role of Pakistan's youth in shaping the country's future, noting that nearly 64 percent of Pakistan's population consists of young people. Referring to international projections, he said that by 2047 Pakistan could emerge among the world's largest economies if its younger generation develops the skills, discipline, and strategic outlook necessary for national advancement. Ambassador Khan observed that Maraka-e-Hau demonstrated, beyond doubt, the credibility of Pakistan's deterrence posture. He stated that despite India's assumptions regarding its numerical superiority, strategic partnerships, and advanced weaponry, Pakistan established military superiority during the conflict through coordinated and integrated operations. He explained that Pakistan fought the conflict across four major fronts: military operations, diplomacy, narrative warfare, and national unity. The Armed Forces successfully utilized modern technologies including drones, cyber warfare capabilities, digital systems, missile platforms, and indigenous defence production to counter Indian aggression effectively, he remarked. Highlighting the information dimension of the conflict, Ambassador Khan noted that Pakistan's media and digital community successfully countered misinformation campaigns and disinformation propagated by Indian media outlets. He stated that Pakistan's narrative gained international credibility because Pakistan institutions and media organizations remained committed to fact-based reporting and strategic communication. He further pointed out that Pakistan's diplomatic outreach during and after the conflict proved equally significant. Pakistan actively engaged international partners, including the United States and other major powers, while consistently advocating dialogue, restraint, and independent investigations into regional incidents. —APP

Naqvi orders major upgrades during visit to Police Academy

He also assigned a deadline of May 31 for the completion of the Elite Police Training School project, announcing that elite-level training for officers will now be conducted at the NPA instead of provincial institutions

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi paid an official visit to the National Police Academy (NPA) on Tuesday, where he chaired a high-level meeting and reviewed multiple development projects aimed at modernising police training in Pakistan. During the visit, the minister inspected the under-construction multi-story hostel and examined the model room,

issuing directives to further enhance its facilities. He also assigned a deadline of May 31 for the completion of the Elite Police Training School project, announcing that elite-level training for officers will now be conducted at the NPA instead of provincial institutions. Naqvi ordered the installation of a solar power system at the Academy and instructed a comprehensive renovation of the existing buildings. To strengthen modern police education, he approved the establishment of three new

IT-equipped classrooms, along with advanced training using drones, night-vision gear, and modern weaponry. The minister also directed reforms in promotional courses, emphasising modern standards and improved service delivery. Plans were approved for a Driving School, where officers will be trained in advanced driving and car-chasing techniques. Additionally, Naqvi ordered the setting up of dedicated crime-scene rooms to enhance investigative skills.

In the sports domain, he instructed the creation of padel-tennis courts and inspected the sports complex, gym, and swimming pool, issuing directions to upgrade all facilities on modern lines. Commandant NPA Saad Akhtar Bhatti was briefed the Interior Minister on the progress of various ongoing initiatives. DG FIA Dr. Usman Anwar, IG Islamabad Police Ali Nasir Rizvi and other senior officials were also present during the visit.

TDCP chief reviews Murree uplift schemes

RAWALPINDI: Managing Director, Tourism Development Corporation of Punjab (TDCP), Asim Raza, on Monday reviewed ongoing development schemes in Murree and directed authorities to complete key projects within four months. During a visit to the Kashmir Point Adventure Track, he instructed officials to develop tourist-friendly facilities while preserving the natural environment. The proposed facilities include gazebos, decks, sculpture parks, trek shops, suspension bridges, climbing walls and other recreational features aimed at enhancing visitor experience. Asim Raza directed the concerned officers and contractor to ensure the timely completion of the project, stressing quality and environmental protection. Speaking on the occasion, he said the new adventure track would provide a unique experience to tourists, noting that Murree previously lacked a proper and standardised track of this kind. He added that, in line with the vision of the Punjab chief minister and senior minister, efforts were underway to transform Murree into an international-standard tourist destination without compromising its natural beauty. —APP

Plastic covers banned on books

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly of Pakistan has passed a bill imposing a ban on the use of plastic covers for books in Islamabad as part of efforts to reduce environmental pollution and protect public health. According to the details of the bill, the use of plastic book covers poses a significant threat to both the environment and human health. The legislation states that Pakistan generates approximately 3.9 million tonnes of plastic waste annually, much of which is non-recyclable and harmful to water resources and wildlife. The bill further argues that the widespread perception of plastic covers as a durable means of protecting books is largely a misconception. Under the proposed measures, schools and educational institutions in the federal capital will be discouraged from wrapping books in plastic materials. Instead, the legislation seeks to promote the use of environmentally friendly alternatives, including paper, cloth and biodegradable materials. Earlier, the Sindh government decided to enforce a comprehensive ban on the production, sale, and use of plastic bags throughout the province, including Karachi. —APP



ISLAMABAD: PM's Advisor on Tourism Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, former Provincial Minister for Health and Population Welfare and Senior Vice President Dr. Jamal Nasir, General (R) Sohaib Ahmed, General (R) Pervez Ahmed, Dr. Abdul Qayyum, Sohail Altaf and Zahid Latif a group photo with children suffering from thalassaemia at an event held on the occasion of World Thalassaemia Day.

TAPI project 'uncertain' future discussed

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan held a detailed meeting with Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan to discuss trade enhancement, regional connectivity, energy cooperation, and strengthening institutional engagement between the two brotherly countries. During the meeting, both sides exchanged views on the growing importance of regional trade corridors, logistics cooperation, and improving commercial connectivity between Pakistan and Central Asian states, said a release issued here on Tuesday. Sources said that the Ambassador took up TAPI project with the minister also, which has been delayed for multiple reasons. Discussions focused on expanding trade routes, facilitating smoother movement of goods, and enhancing direct interaction between the business communities of both countries. Federal Minister Jam Kamal Khan highlighted Pakistan's strategic geographic position as a natural gateway connecting Central Asia with regional and international markets through Pakistan's seaports. He observed that evolving regional dynamics and changing global supply chain patterns have further increased the importance of Pakistan's connectivity and logistics potential. The Minister emphasized that stronger economic integration, efficient transportation linkages, and enhanced business-to-business engagement can unlock significant trade opportunities for both countries. He also underlined the importance of organizing business forums, exhibitions, and institutional interactions between chambers of commerce to promote direct engagement between private sectors. Both sides also discussed prospects for cooperation in the energy sector, including regional energy connectivity and future infrastructure collaboration aimed at promoting long-term regional economic integration and stability. The meeting further reviewed various areas of mutual economic interest and emphasized the importance of continued diplomatic engagement, institutional coordination, and high-level exchanges to strengthen Pakistan-Turkmenistan relations further. Both sides expressed confidence that enhanced cooperation in trade, energy, logistics, and private-sector engagement would open new avenues for economic partnership between the two countries. —DNA

Rank pinning ceremony held for promoted head constables

118 Constables of North Region promoted to Head Constable Rank

ISLAMABAD: A dignified rank pinning ceremony was held in honor of 118 Head Constables (Assistant Patrol Officers) of Motorway North Zone and N-5 North Zone, who were promoted in the National Highways and Motorway Police. Additional IG North Region, DIG N-5 North Zone and DIG Motorway North Zone congratulated the promoted officers and assigned their new ranks during the ceremony. On the occasion, Additional IG North Region said that timely promotion is the fundamental right of every officer. The process of promotions has been completed according to merit, seniority and rules / regulations. The promotion is the result and recognition of the hard work and professional performance of the officers. The families of the promoted Head Constables also attended the ceremony. The National Highways & Motorway Police remains fully committed to ensuring transparency, fairness, and merit-based career progression of its officers. —APP

Over 65,000 Pakistani Pilgrims land in Saudi Arabia

ISLAMABAD: The influx of Pakistani pilgrims for Hajj 2026 continues smoothly, with a total of 65,657 pilgrims under the government scheme having arrived in Saudi Arabia as of May 11, 2026. This represents approximately 55% of the total government Hajj quota. According to the latest situational report, 25,793 pilgrims arrived via Madinah, while 29,864 reached Makkah through Jeddah. Currently, the vast majority of pilgrims (61,607 (94%) are stationed in Makkah, with 4,050 (6%) remaining in Madinah. To date, 262 flights have completed their journey, including 143 to Madinah and 119 to Jeddah. To ensure the well-being and guidance of the pilgrims, the Ministry of Religious Affairs has deployed 84% of its planned welfare staff, totaling 1,322 personnel. This dedicated team includes 826 Pakistani Muarrifin (helpers), 294 medical staff, and 202 technical and media professionals. Additionally, 493 local Khud dam have been engaged to provide on-ground assistance. Transportation logistics in Makkah have been significantly bolstered, with 294 buses and coasters now operational to facilitate pilgrim movement. Guidance services remain a priority, with 34,863 pilgrims receiving assistance at the Haram in Makkah and 26,806 pilgrims having completed their visit to Ruz-ul-Jannah in Madinah. Comprehensive healthcare services are being provided through 33 dispensaries in Makkah and 3 in Madinah. Medical teams have already attended to 47,416 outdoor pilgrims in both holy cities. The Office of Pilgrim Affairs Pakistan (OPAP) also maintains a robust grievance redressal system, having received 936 total complaints related to food, building, and transport; the majority of these have been successfully resolved. —APP

ISSI hosts launch of third dimension policy prism

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) hosted the launch of the Third Dimension Policy Prism, authored by Ambassador G. R. Baluch. The book's discussants included General Khalid Naeem Lodhi, Former Defense Secretary, Pakistan; Ambassador Masood Khalid, Former Diplomat; Dr. Munir Hameed, Associate Professor, QAU; Dr. Sharif Khalid Cheema, Associate Professor, QAU; and Farah Patafi, columnist and anchor. The event was attended by a wide range of diplomats, academics, scholars and media persons. In her introductory remarks, Dr. Naeem Nigar, Director, Centre for Strategic Perspectives (CSP) at ISSI, in sincere gratitude to Ambassador G.R. Baluch for choosing ISSI as the platform for launching his important work. We deeply appreciate his confidence in our institution and his valuable contribution to the discourse on strategic and policy affairs. In his welcome remarks, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood described the book as a timely and significant scholarly contribution at a moment of profound transformation in international politics. He observed that the contemporary global environment is increasingly shaped by geopolitical competition, technological disruption, economic realignments, and evolving security paradigms, making serious scholarship rooted in diplomatic experience more important than ever. Ambassador Mahmood noted that Ambassador G. R. Baluch's work successfully combines academic reflection with practical diplomatic insight, presenting foreign policy through a multi-dimensional lens influenced not only by politics but also by economics, technology, climate change, information flows, and the growing role of non-state actors. Ambassador G. R. Baluch, while introducing his book, observed that the contemporary world is witnessing a "battle of narratives", where influence and dominance are increasingly shaped through ideas, discourse, and the ability to give voice to perspectives. Describing the book as "more of a conversation than a conventional text," he remarked that ideas quickly travel from pages to minds and eventually shape policies and global debates, while also thanking the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad for hosting the launch and encouraging meaningful discourse on foreign policy and international affairs. The reviewers collectively described the book as a timely and multidimensional contribution to contemporary strategic thought. Speaking at the event, General Khalid Naeem Lodhi highlighted the central concept of the "third dimension" in international relations, noting that while traditional strategic thinking has primarily focused on national interests, Ambassador Baluch's work incorporates ethics and humanity into the foreign policy framework. He noted that through its five chapters, the book examines multiple geographical regions, Pakistan's relations with different countries, divisions within the Muslim Ummah, developments in the Middle East, and the crisis in Gaza.

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Educating a nation while fighting for survival

Prof Dr Shujaat Mulk Khan

BEHIND every successful graduate stands a teacher who devoted years of knowledge, patience, and sacrifice to shape young minds. Universities are often called the pillars of national progress, and teachers are the foundation of those pillars. Yet, in many countries, especially in public sector universities, the very educators responsible for building futures are themselves trapped in financial uncertainty and emotional exhaustion. Among the most affected are university teachers hired under the Tenure Track System (TTS), whose salaries have remained unchanged since 2021 despite rising inflation and increasing economic pressures.

At first glance, the term "Tenure Track System" sounds prestigious. It suggests stability, merit, and professional recognition. In reality, however, many TTS faculty members are silently struggling. They entered academia with dreams of contributing to research, inspiring students, and serving the nation through education. Instead, they now find themselves burdened with stress over basic living expenses, shrinking purchasing power, and a growing sense of neglect. The cost of living has increased dramatically over the past few years. Prices of food, fuel, electricity, rent, and healthcare continue to rise almost every month. While employees in several sectors have received salary revisions and inflation adjustments, TTS university teachers have been left behind. Since 2021, there has been no meaningful increase in their salaries. For professionals who spent years earning advanced degrees, conducting research, and dedicating themselves to academic excellence, this stagnation feels deeply unfair.

What makes the situation even more painful is the contradiction between expectations and reality. TTS faculty members are expected to publish research papers, supervise students, attend conferences, secure grants, and maintain international academic standards. Universities proudly showcase their faculty achievements in rankings and promotional campaigns. However, the same institutions often fail to provide financial security and emotional support to the people producing those achievements. Many people assume university teachers live comfortable lives. The truth is far different for many TTS faculty members. Some struggle to pay school fees for their own children while teaching students from privileged backgrounds. Others postpone medical treatments, avoid family gatherings due to financial embarrassment, or work extra jobs just to survive. It is heartbreaking that individuals responsible for educating future leaders are themselves forced to worry about grocery bills and monthly utility payments.



The emotional toll is equally serious. Teaching is not merely a job; it is a profession that demands passion, mental energy, and continuous learning. When teachers constantly feel undervalued, their motivation naturally declines. A teacher entering a classroom with financial anxiety cannot perform with the same peace of mind as someone who feels secure and respected. Over time, frustration replaces enthusiasm, and the academic environment suffers as a result. This issue is not just about salaries. It is about dignity. It is about recognizing that educators are human beings with families, dreams, responsibilities, and emotions. A nation that expects world-class education cannot ignore the welfare of its teachers. Governments and university administrations often speak about improving higher education standards, increasing research productivity, and competing globally. But such goals cannot be achieved while the very people carrying the academic system feel abandoned.

Another worrying consequence is the growing brain drain. Talented young scholars are increasingly leaving universities or moving abroad in search of better opportunities. When experienced researchers and dedicated teachers lose hope, universities lose valuable talent. The country then pays the price through weakened academic institutions and declining educational quality. Investing in teachers is not an expense; it is an investment in national development. Moreover, TTS teachers often face uncertainty regarding policies and promotions. Delays in policy decisions, unclear regulations, and inconsistent treatment create further stress. Instead of focusing fully on teaching and research, faculty members spend time worrying about administrative complications and financial survival. Such an environment discourages creativity and innovation - the very qualities universities should nurture. Society also has a role to play. Teachers deserve more than ceremonial praise on teaching classes, guiding students, publishing research, and serving universities even when they feel unheard. Their silence should not be mistaken for satisfaction. Behind that silence lies exhaustion, disappointment, and a hope that one day their contributions will truly be valued. If nations genuinely want progress, innovation, and educated societies, they must start by taking care of their teachers. A university teacher should not have to choose between academic excellence and financial survival. The people shaping the future deserve stability, respect, and justice today - not promises for tomorrow. The struggle of TTS teachers is more than an employment issue; it is a moral question for society. How can a nation expect its educators to build bright futures when their own futures remain uncertain?

Trump's China Visit in a Changing World Order

Qamar Bashir



China has consistently resisted unilateral U.S. sanctions and remains one of Iran's largest energy customers. Beijing views Iran not merely as an oil supplier but as a strategic node in Eurasian connectivity. At the same time, China has carefully balanced relations with Gulf Arab states, Russia, and Western economies. Unlike the United States, Beijing has largely avoided direct military entanglement while expanding economic influence across continents.

This strategic patience has enhanced China's global image. At the same time, America's relations with traditional allies have visibly deteriorated

President Donald Trump's upcoming visit to Beijing on May 14-15, 2026, may become one of the most consequential diplomatic moments of his presidency - not because it demonstrates American dominance, but because it symbolizes the dramatic transformation of global power relations. Once the uncontested architect of the global order, the United States now approaches China not from a position of overwhelming superiority, but from a position increasingly shaped by economic necessity, military exhaustion, geopolitical isolation, and strategic dependency. For years, President Trump has repeatedly described Chinese President Xi Jinping as his "friend," much like he has referred to Russian President Vladimir Putin and other global leaders. Yet international diplomacy has never operated on permanent friendships. Nations pursue interests, not emotions. Beneath the public compliments and ceremonial gestures lies one of the fiercest strategic rivalries in modern history. From the moment Trump returned to office, virtually every Senate confirmation hearing for his cabinet nominees revolved around one central theme: China as America's principal adversary. The United States' grand strategy was unmistakable - contain China's rise, weaken its economic reach, obstruct the Belt and Road Initiative, challenge its influence over maritime trade routes, and prevent Beijing from replacing Washington as the world's dominant power. Yet the geopolitical landscape has evolved in ways few in Washington anticipated.

The prolonged Iran conflict has fundamentally altered perceptions of American power. The United States and Israel entered the confrontation with sweeping objectives: to curb Iran's nuclear ambitions, dismantle its ballistic missile and drone capabilities, weaken its regional influence, and potentially force political capitulation. However, months later, many of those objectives remain unmet. Iran's political structure survived, its military resilience remained intact, and its regional alliances endured. This outcome has had profound global consequences. Across policy circles in Washington, questions are now openly being asked about the limits of American military power. Reports in Congress and the Senate increasingly acknowledge the heavy depletion of expensive precision-guided weapons systems, including Patriot missile batteries and THAAD interceptors. Analysts warn that replenishing these arsenals could take years and require enormous industrial expansion. The war has therefore produced not only military strain but psychological damage to the image of American invincibility. For China, this changing environment creates strategic opportunity. Beijing enters the Trump-Xi summit with growing confidence. Over the past decade, China has systematically insulated itself from external shocks, built enormous strategic oil reserves, accelerated renewable energy deployment, diversified supply chains, expanded naval and space capabilities, and reduced dependence on vulnerable Western-controlled systems. Today, China dominates the global rare earth minerals industry - critical for electronics, batteries, aerospace systems, missiles, electric vehicles, and advanced defense manufacturing. The United States remains deeply dependent on Chinese rare earth processing and magnet production, especially as Washington attempts to replenish military stockpiles consumed during the Iran war. Even senior American officials acknowledge that building an alternative ecosystem could take many years. This dependency significantly weakens Washington's leverage. The irony is striking. While the United States once sought to economically isolate China, it now desperately requires Chinese cooperation to supply critical industrial and military supply chains. The upcoming Beijing talks are expected to focus heavily on trade stabilization, rare earth exports, shipping security, artificial intelligence, Taiwan, and Iran. According to multiple reports, Washington also seeks to establish a new "Board of Trade" mechanism to formalize economic coordination between the world's two largest economies. The United States hopes China will increase purchases of American soybeans, aircraft, agriculture, energy products, and industrial goods. But beneath these economic discussions lies a deeper geopolitical reality: the United States increasingly needs China to help stabilize the international system. The Iran war has disrupted shipping lanes, endangered energy flows, rattled financial markets, and exposed vulnerabilities across the global economy. Washington is now reportedly urging Beijing to pressure Tehran into accepting a new critical Strait of Hormuz, through which a substantial share of the world's oil and LNG passes. Yet China's position on Iran differs sharply from Washington's. China has consistently resisted unilateral U.S. sanctions and remains one of Iran's largest energy customers. The United States increasingly needs China as a strategic node in Eurasian connectivity. At the same time, China has carefully balanced relations with Gulf Arab states, Russia, and Western economies. Unlike the United States, Beijing has largely avoided direct military entanglement while expanding economic influence across continents. This strategic patience has enhanced China's global image. At the same time, America's relations with traditional allies have visibly deteriorated. Trump's repeated demands regarding NATO burden-sharing, controversial rhetoric toward Europe, pressure over Greenland, and transactional diplomacy have frustrated many longstanding allies. European leaders who once aligned instinctively with Washington increasingly pursue independent relations with Beijing.

In recent years, multiple European delegations have traveled to China seeking investment, trade partnerships, and economic stability. This trend reflects not only Europe's commercial interests but also a broader perception that China now represents predictability and long-term planning, while the United States increasingly

appears driven by short-term political calculations. The symbolic implications are enormous. For decades, American alliances formed the foundation of U.S. global supremacy. It allies gradually hedge toward China economically and diplomatically, the strategic balance of the international system changes fundamentally. The Taiwan issue further complicates the summit. For years, Taiwan relied heavily on implicit American military backing. However, after the Iran conflict exposed strains on U.S. military resources, questions naturally emerge regarding Washington's ability to sustain simultaneous large-scale confrontations in multiple theaters. China understands this reality. Beijing is unlikely to aggressively force the Taiwan issue during Trump's visit, but it recognizes that America's credibility has been weakened. Trump himself previously suggested Taiwan should pay more for U.S. protection, reinforcing perceptions that American commitments may be transactional rather than absolute. At the same time, China's military modernization continues at remarkable speed. Beijing has expanded naval capabilities, advanced space programs, strengthened missile systems, and invested heavily in artificial intelligence and cyber warfare. China's technological and industrial rise is now occurring on a scale unprecedented in modern history. The contrast with America's challenges is increasingly visible. Economically, China continues diversifying energy sources and reducing fossil fuel dependency through renewable infrastructure. Militarily, it avoids prolonged foreign wars while preserving industrial capacity. Diplomatically, it seeks partnerships without demanding ideological alignment. Strategically, it plays a long game. This does not mean the United States has collapsed or China has "won" globally. America still possesses immense military power, technological innovation, financial influence, and alliance networks. However, the perception of unstoppable American supremacy has undoubtedly weakened. Trump's Beijing trip therefore represents more than a diplomatic visit. It symbolizes a historic transition toward a more multipolar world order. The United States enters the talks seeking trade relief, industrial cooperation, shipping stability, rare earth access, and geopolitical de-escalation. China enters the talks seeking recognition of its status, protection of its economic interests, stability for continued growth, and gradual expansion of its global influence. Both sides need each other. However, for now, it appears they need each other on terms far more equal than at any point in recent decades. That reality alone marks one of the most significant geopolitical transformations of the 21st century.

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

Let the rivers flow

Ghazala Anbreen

Human activities, such as deforestation and encroachments, have worsened flood risks. Cutting down the forests and going into conflict with nature are creating multiple problems. It is vital to control construction in flood-prone areas to thwart future catastrophes. Our rivers have shrunk because of encroachments. The flowing area has shriveled. We must let the rivers flow. On a global level, temperatures are rising. We are watching its impacts very clearly now. We should have a check on riverbed encroachment...

PAKISTAN is paying the price for climate change impacts, although it is not the major polluter. There must be consistent ownership all over the world; mainly, there must be accountability for the activities of major emitters, as they are causing a massive disruption. Every year, a flood comes, and we are faced with a huge crisis. Dislocation is not the only problem. Afterwards, Pakistan has to face outbreaks of diseases and severe food shortages. Experts say that rainfall in the coming years will be more intense. It is a serious matter, and flooding has, in a way, become a routine here. The monsoon floods have become a recurring experience in Pakistan. There are unexpected events like floods, torrential rains, and excessive water in the rivers. Food insecurity often worsens during monsoon spells, compounding the suffering. The impact of floods is devastating, leaving lasting consequences. Pakistan is never the same after major flood events. After the floods in 2022, 33 million people were badly affected. In 2022, the Pakistan floods claimed the lives of 1730 people. It caused a 30-billion-dollar economic impact on our economy. In 2022, around 2 million homes were affected and damaged across Pakistan. In 2025, thousands of businesses were destroyed. People who built houses with much effort, a lot of their possessions were washed away with the floods, along with the crops and livestock. During the 2022 Pakistan floods, the evacuation warning times for many residents left little time for preparation. There are abnormal rainfall patterns and a great shift in the weather patterns and water systems. Due to variations in the climate, the forecast or prediction becomes difficult, and it cannot be as reliable as it used to be. For instance, extreme heat accelerates glacial melting and increases the risk of global ice-outburst floods. It continues 8 or more years until the next ice-outburst is likely to prevail. Since global warming is now an accepted reality, we must prepare for the worst situations, keeping in view the climate change that is all over the world. Successful patterns have also changed. The amount of snow is getting thinner now. Now, the increasing torrential rains cause us many problems, especially when seen with the current state of infrastructure. Even moderate

rain can have the potential to put considerable pressure on the drainage systems. This emphasizes the need for improvement, upgradation, and modifications. This calls for the need to strengthen the water governance system in light of new realities and state-of-the-art technologies. This trend reflects not only Europe's commercial interests but also a broader perception that China now represents predictability and long-term planning, while the United States increasingly

its impacts very clearly now. We should have a check on riverbed encroachment and deforestation. Preparation to counter the monsoon flooding should start early. The visits of the officers and officials should be before the rainy season to see that the pumping units are working properly. Also, the drainage canals should be monitored regularly to ensure they are not blocked by plastic bags. There must be a plan for climate change to battle the floods and manage the drainage system. We should prepare ourselves for the challenges in terms of infrastructure. We have to restrict the burning of fossil fuels also, and should look for alternative green energy substitutes. Historical accounts suggest that wider drainage passages were once maintained earlier. Therefore, we should keep the opening channel on a main highway broad and wide for a steady and proper flow of water. For this, there must be a repositioning of roads and drains in light of new realities on an emergency basis. Hill torrents affect a large portion of the country, particularly in hilly and dry regions. The rapidly changing climate patterns, combined with urban expansion and illegal housing schemes, put these areas at an extreme risk of submerging, often compounded by flood insecurity during monsoon spells. During such events, the marginalized communities are always the hardest hit. They are not protected, as during the floods, they are harder to reach. There must be enforcement of environmental laws. Most importantly, the continuity of policies is essential; strict monitoring of illegal housing schemes, new planning, and restricting deforestation, all these measures will help fight the emergency. Medium and long-term plans should be in such a way that we get prepared for the worst, whether there is a heat wave, drought, floods, or earthquake. We cannot control the weather. We have to adapt to it. Our rivers have shrunk because of encroachments. The flowing area has shriveled. We must let the rivers flow. On a global level, temperatures are rising. We are watching

Briefs
Iran to use nuclear option if attacked...

FROM PAGE 01
Despite the truce, daily operations — including air strikes, shelling, and demolitions — have continued in southern Lebanon, with reports of significant civilian casualties. Lebanese health authorities report dozens killed in recent days, including children and medical workers, amid strikes on residential areas, vehicles, and emergency teams. The violence has displaced over a million people and killed nearly 3,000 since early March, according to Lebanese figures. Israel maintains the actions are necessary to counter Hezbollah threats, even as U.S.-mediated talks between Israel and Lebanon are scheduled. A senior UN official has issued a stark warning about the closure or severe restriction of the Strait of Hormuz, a critical chokepoint for global oil and fertilizer shipments disrupted by the U.S.-Iran conflict. Jorge Moraña da Silva, head of a UN task force on the issue, said tens of millions could face hunger and starvation if fertilizer and related materials are not allowed through soon. "We have a few weeks ahead of us to prevent what will likely be a massive humanitarian crisis," he stated, warning of up to 45 million more people pushed into acute hunger. The UN is pushing for a transparent mechanism to ensure safe passage of humanitarian cargo. These developments unfold against a backdrop of a shaky U.S.-Iran ceasefire first described by President Trump as an "life support." Diplomatic efforts continue, with Iran rejecting key U.S. demands and tensions persisting over nuclear issues, maritime security, and proxy conflicts. Global energy prices and food security remain at risk as the standoff in the Gulf remains on. The situation remains highly fluid, with potential for further escalation in multiple theaters. International calls for de-escalation and humanitarian access are growing.

'Israel sent Iron Dome batteries...

FROM PAGE 01
event in Tel Aviv, Israel. "I'd like to say a word of appreciation for United Arab Emirates, the first Abraham accord member," Huckabee said at the Tel Aviv Conference. "Just look at the batteries Israel just sent them Iron Dome batteries and personnel to help operate them." The UAE did not immediately respond to a request for comment over the acknowledgment by Huckabee. Huckabee added that he was "very optimistic" that additional countries in the region will soon join the Abraham Accords, the 2020 diplomatic recognition deal that included the Gulf Arab Kingdom of Bahrain, for formal relations with Israel. However, many Arab states remain incensed by Israel's wide-ranging military campaigns after Hamas' 2023 attack on the country, which has seen the Gaza Strip leveled and Iran's allies attacked across the wider Middle East. Israel now controls territory in Lebanon and Syria as well. "The Gulf states now understand they will have to make a choice — is it more likely they will be attacked by Iran or Israel?" Huckabee asked. "They see that Israel helped us and Iran attacked us. Israel is not trying to take over your land, and is not sending missiles to you."

Shehbaz, President Aliyev exchange warm...

FROM PAGE 01
confidence of the international community in Pakistan and its leadership. The two leaders agreed to maintain close contact, and looked forward to their meeting in person later this year. The Prime Minister also reiterated his cordial invitation to President Aliyev to visit Pakistan, an official visit to Pakistan, at his earliest convenience.

Pakistan facilitating dialogue to promote regional peace: Asim

The ambassador also underlined Pakistan's deep interest in peace and stability in the Persian Gulf region, noting the country's longstanding economic, energy, security, and people-to-people ties with those states, including the presence of millions of Pakistanis living and working there

DNA
UNITED NATIONS: Highlighting the serious risks the Middle East crisis poses to international peace, Pakistan's UN Ambassador Asim Ahmad told a delegation from the U.S. War college that Islamabad is actively fostering dialogue and contributing towards diplomatic efforts aimed at promoting regional stability. Speaking to the 40-member delegation, which visited the Pakistani Mission to the UN on Monday, he emphasized Pakistan's "constructive role" in promoting regional peace, stability and engagement with all relevant stakeholders, noting that Islamabad's close relations with the United States, Iran, Gulf countries, Egypt, China, Turkey, and other partners remained at preserving further escalation and creating conditions conducive to peaceful dialogue. Pakistan's balanced, principled, and objective approach, he said, had enabled it to maintain trust and engagement with all relevant stakeholders, noting that Islamabad's close relations with the United States, Iran, Gulf countries, and major international powers, together with its current membership of the Security Council, positioned it well to facilitate dialogue and contribute constructively to diplomatic efforts aimed at regional peace and stability. Discussing the evolving security environment in the Middle East and Gulf region, Ambassador Asim Ahmad said that recent developments may lead to renewed thinking regarding regional security arrangements and strategic alignments. In this regard, he emphasized that future security frameworks should remain grounded in international law, the UN Charter, collective security, mutual respect for sovereignty, and equal security for all states. The ambassador also underlined Pakistan's

deep interest in peace and stability in the Persian Gulf region, noting the country's longstanding economic, energy, security, and people-to-people ties with those states, and the presence of millions of Pakistanis living and working there. Responding to questions on Islamophobia, the Pakistani envoy explained that the phenomenon refers to discrimination, marginalization, or victimization of Muslims based on their faith. Freedom of religion and belief is a fundamental human right, he said, emphasizing the importance of fostering respect, inclusion, and interfaith harmony. He pointed out that Pakistan, together with like-minded countries, played a leading role at the United Nations in advancing efforts to combat Islamophobia, including support for the establishment of a UN Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia tasked with developing recommendations and action-oriented initiatives for member states. On questions relating to demographic change, population shifts, aging societies, and birth rates, he said these issues are increasingly being discussed within the United Nations framework in the context of development, human rights, economic policy, and social justice. In this regard, he noted that artificial intelligence is playing a growing role in supporting data analysis, cybersecurity, defense, intelligence, counterterrorism, economic cooperation, trade, and strong people-to-people ties.

further in the years ahead. At the outset, Ambassador Asim Ahmad reaffirmed Pakistan's deep and abiding commitment to the United Nations and multilateralism, describing the world body as the central platform for collective action on international peace and security, development, human rights, climate change, and emerging challenges including artificial intelligence and information technology. He emphasized that today's global challenges were too complex and interconnected for any single country to address alone, highlighting the continued importance of multilateral cooperation through the UN platform. There was a need for UN to evolve in response to changing global realities and need ongoing reform efforts, including revitalization of the General Assembly and the Security Council reform. Pakistan's supported democratic, transparent, and accountable reforms of the Security Council while opposing the creation of new permanent seats. Ambassador Asim Ahmad underscored Pakistan's active role as a current member of the Security Council in promoting international peace and security, including through peacekeeping, counterterrorism, regional stability, and advocacy for peaceful settlement of disputes. He also highlighted the broad-based and dynamic relationship between Pakistan and the United States, encompassing security, defense, intelligence, counterterrorism, economic cooperation, trade, and strong people-to-people ties.

deep interest in peace and stability in the Persian Gulf region, noting the country's longstanding economic, energy, security, and people-to-people ties with those states, and the presence of millions of Pakistanis living and working there. Responding to questions on Islamophobia, the Pakistani envoy explained that the phenomenon refers to discrimination, marginalization, or victimization of Muslims based on their faith. Freedom of religion and belief is a fundamental human right, he said, emphasizing the importance of fostering respect, inclusion, and interfaith harmony. He pointed out that Pakistan, together with like-minded countries, played a leading role at the United Nations in advancing efforts to combat Islamophobia, including support for the establishment of a UN Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia tasked with developing recommendations and action-oriented initiatives for member states. On questions relating to demographic change, population shifts, aging societies, and birth rates, he said these issues are increasingly being discussed within the United Nations framework in the context of development, human rights, economic policy, and social justice. In this regard, he noted that artificial intelligence is playing a growing role in supporting data analysis, cybersecurity, defense, intelligence, counterterrorism, economic cooperation, trade, and strong people-to-people ties.

President, PM pay tribute to citizen

FROM PAGE 01
Haider Khan and Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi to locate the family of Shaheed Liaquat and convey the message of complete national solidarity. Prime Minister Shehbaz said the eternal sacrifice of Shaheed Liaquat will always be remembered as he set a noble example of extraordinary courage, a sense of duty and patriotism. "Such brave and fearless citizens are the true symbol of the national resolve against terrorism. Shaheed Liaquat's sacrifice is a guiding light for every citizen of the nation," he said. The prime minister said that the nation would never forget Shaheed Liaquat's sacrifice, as brave citizens like him were an asset to the nation. He said that the entire nation stood shoulder to shoulder with its security forces and law enforcement agencies against the menace of terrorism. The brave people of Pakistan have always followed the superior designs of the energy and will continue to defeat terrorism through national unity and solidarity, he added.

Cocaine dealer Pinky arrested

FROM PAGE 01
along with a fully functional cocaine production unit. During the raid, police recovered one kilogram of semi-purified cocaine, more than 15 cocaine capsules, chemical substances including ketamine, ephedrine, methamphetamine and lidocaine, as well as a pistol. Officials further claimed that the suspect also manufactured premium-quality homemade cocaine. The suspect was arrested along with several bottles of which were seized during the operation. Investigators alleged that Anom alias Pinky produced 100 kilograms of cocaine, including so-called "White Coke" and "Golden Coke", which were reportedly sold at significantly higher prices than ordinary cocaine available in the market.

Govt to pay salaries before Eid

FROM PAGE 01
ensure timely disbursement of salaries and pensions. The Ministry of Finance has also directed all relevant departments to ensure immediate implementation of the decision. It is to be noted that the Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) has predicted that Eid ul Adha 2026 in Pakistan is likely to fall on Wednesday, May 27, based on astronomical calculations. According to SUPARCO's initial assessment, there is a strong possibility of sighting the Dual High moon on Sunday, May 24, at approximately 18 hours and 30 minutes, which is generally considered sufficient for visibility of the crescent moon. SUPARCO further noted that in Pakistan's coastal areas, the time difference between sunset and moonset on May 27 will be around 60 minutes, increasing the likelihood of crescent visibility.

9 killed, over 18 injured...

FROM PAGE 01
the Afghan Taliban government in Afghanistan in 2021. Islamabad has repeatedly urged Kabul to prevent its soil from being used by terrorist organizations to carry out attacks inside its territory. However, the Afghan Taliban regime refused to act against terrorist groups involved in countless attacks on Pakistani security forces and civilians. Pakistan launched Operation Ghaazab Halaq in February this year, with an agreement that the Afghan Taliban regime's reluctance to take action against terrorist outfits operating from its soil.

Bangladesh beat Pakistan in first Test

SPORTS DESK
DHAKA: Bangladesh beat Pakistan by 107 runs in the first match of the two-Test series at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Dhaka, on Tuesday. Resuming the final session at 11:53, Pakistan were bowled out for 163 in 52.5 overs while chasing Bangladesh' 288-run target courtesy of an exceptional five-wicket haul by Nahid Rana. The visitors suffered an early setback when Taslim Ahmed struck and picked up his crucial second wicket by dismissing Salman Agha for 26 off 39 deliveries. Despite the early blow, Aamir Awan and Abdullah Fazal steered the innings with a crucial 50-run partnership for the second wicket, easing pressure and rebuilding momentum. However, the stand ended at 54 when Awan was dis-

missed for 15 off 33 balls after striking one boundary off Mehidy Hasan Mirza, leaving Pakistan struggling at 57 in 12.1 overs. The situation worsened soon after when Nahid Rana removed skipper Stan Masood cheaply for two runs off five balls. Tajal Islam struck early and got rid of Abdullah Fazal who was dismissed LBW after playing an outstanding knock of 67 off 113 deliveries comprising 11 fours and ending the 51-run stand alongside Salman Agha. The visitors suffered an early setback when Taslim Ahmed struck and picked up his crucial second wicket by dismissing Salman Agha for 26 off 39 deliveries. Despite the early blow, Aamir Awan and Abdullah Fazal steered the innings with a crucial 50-run partnership for the second wicket, easing pressure and rebuilding momentum. However, the stand ended at 54 when Awan was dis-

Azerbaijan, Slovakia explore military cooperation

BAKU: Azerbaijan's Minister of Defence, General Zakir Hasanov paid an official visit to the Republic of Slovakia at the invitation of Deputy Prime Minister Igor Matovic. Defense of Slovakia Robert Kalinak, the Ministry of Defence told AZERTAC. Following the official welcoming ceremony held in the city of Bratislava, the Azerbaijan Minister of Defence passed along the guard of honor to the Slovakian General Zakir Hasanov held a meeting with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Igor Matovic on Tuesday. During the meeting, the sides conducted an in-depth exchange of views on the current state of military cooperation between Azerbaijan and Slovakia, emphasizing the importance of reciprocal visits. -APP

Mohyuddin Wani gets Additional charge of DG PSB

OUR CORRESPONDENT
ISLAMABAD: In a major shake-up in Pakistan's sports administration, the federal government has assigned additional charge of Director General of the Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) to Mohyuddin Wani, the Federal Secretary for Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC), who is widely known for his close involvement in sports affairs. The development came after the removal of Muhammad Yaqub Pirzada as Director of the Pakistan Sports Board. He has been directed to report to his parent department, the Federal Board of Revenue, according to a notification issued by the Establishment Division. Yaqub Pirzada, a Grade-20 officer in the Inland Revenue Group, was asked to report to the Federal Board of Revenue with immediate effect. The government has entrusted Mohyuddin Wani with the additional responsibilities of DG PSB for a period of three months or until the appointment of a permanent director general. Mohyuddin Wani is regarded as a sports-friendly administrator and is also currently serving as the ad-hoc president of the Pakistan Hockey Federation.

Pakistani film Maula Jatt to hit Chinese screens from May 21

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani film The Legend of Maula Jatt is set to be released in cinemas across China from May 21, 2026, director Bilal Lashari has announced. "In cinemas across China from May 21, 2026. A huge moment for Pakistani cinema, and a new door opening for our stories on the world stage," Lashari wrote on X, according to a Gawadar Pro's report on Tuesday. Released in October 2022, The Legend of Maula Jatt is a reboot of the Punjabi film Maula Jatt. Directed by Lashari, the film became a major commercial success for Pakistani cinema and was also released in several overseas markets. The China release is expected to draw attention in Pakistan's entertainment industry, where access to the Chinese market is seen as an opportunity to expand the international reach of Pakistani films. Pakistani films have previously secured screenings in China. The military action film Parwaaz Hai Junoon received a theatrical release there in November 2020, when it was reported as the first Pakistani film in decades to reach Chinese cinemas. The planned release of The Legend of Maula Jatt adds to recent cultural exchanges between Pakistan and China, whose cooperation has more often centered on infrastructure, trade and investment under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. -APP

Noman Ali becomes oldest player to complete 100 Test wickets

DHAKA: Pakistan left-arm spinner Noman Ali completed 100 Test wickets, becoming the oldest player in history to reach the milestone during the first Test against Bangladesh at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium on Tuesday. He claimed the milestone by dismissing Mehidy Hasan Mirza, joining an elite group of Pakistan bowlers and becoming the ninth spinner and 20th overall to achieve the feat. The left-arm spinner also picked up the crucial wickets of Bangladesh skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto and Tajal Islam. At 29 years and 217 days, Noman became the oldest player in Test history to reach the 100-wicket milestone. He surpassed former England spinner Bobby Peel, who reached the mark in 1916 at the age of 283 days and 180 days. The 29-year-old also reached another landmark by becoming the first fourth-fastest Pakistan bowler to claim 100 Test wickets, achieving the feat in his 22nd Test match. England great George Lohmann holds the world record for the fastest to 100 Test wickets, having reached the milestone in just 16 matches, while several Pakistan bowlers also feature among the quickest to the landmark.

Hangzhou Cricket regional sports cooperation

"Pakistan is naturally positioned to support cricket's growth in China," said Muhammad Azhar. "Chinese players can benefit greatly from Pakistan's coaching systems and cricket culture." The Hangzhou matches will include exhibition games, coaching clinics, youth training sessions, and technical workshops designed to introduce cricket to wider Chinese audiences

BEIJING: Pakistan, China and Afghanistan are set to strengthen regional sports cooperation as cricket players from all three countries prepare for a series of friendly and development matches in Hangzhou from May 14, aimed at promoting cricket in China and enhancing people-to-people exchanges. An Afghan cricket delegation has already arrived in Hangzhou as part of a technical cooperation and sports exchange initiative with Chinese authorities, according to Afghan media reports. The delegation includes national coach Nawaz Mangal and players Qais Ahmad, Zahir Khan, Faisal Shinoda, and Wahidullah Zadran. Meanwhile, top Pakistani players are expected to arrive in Hangzhou in the coming days to participate in the cricket promotion activities alongside Chinese and Afghan players. Organizers said the initiative reflects the growing sports partnership between China and Pakistan, with cricket emerging as a new bridge for cultural and youth exchange. The Hangzhou matches will include exhibition games, coaching clinics, youth training sessions, and technical workshops designed to introduce cricket to wider Chinese audiences.

ma's most popular sports, cricket has greatly expanded in the country over the past two decades. China, fielded both men's and women's teams during the 2010 Asian Games in Guangzhou, marking cricket's debut at the continental event and an important milestone for the sport's development in China. "Pakistan is naturally positioned to support cricket's growth in China," said Muhammad Azhar. "Chinese players can benefit greatly from Pakistan's coaching systems and cricket culture." The Hangzhou matches will include exhibition games, coaching clinics, youth training sessions, and technical workshops designed to introduce cricket to wider Chinese audiences. Observers say the initiative demonstrates how sports diplomacy can support broader regional cooperation between China, Pakistan, and Afghanistan while helping build a stronger cricket culture in China. -APP



Yaqub Pirzada from his position as Director of the Pakistan Sports Board. He has been directed to report to his parent department, the Federal Board of Revenue, according to a notification issued by the Establishment Division. Yaqub Pirzada, a Grade-20 officer in the Inland Revenue Group, was asked to report to the Federal Board of Revenue with immediate effect. The government has entrusted Mohyuddin Wani with the additional responsibilities of DG PSB for a period of three months or until the appointment of a permanent director general. Mohyuddin Wani is regarded as a sports-friendly administrator and is also currently serving as the ad-hoc president of the Pakistan Hockey Federation.



Oldest players to reach 100 Test wickets
• Noman Ali (Pakistan) – 39y 217d
• Bobby Peel (England) – 39y 180d
• Ray Illingworth (England) – 39y 30d
• Charlie Grimmer (Australia) – 39y 22d
• Sydney Barnes (England) – 38y 310d
Fastest Pakistani bowlers to 100 Test wickets
• Yasir Shah – 17 matches
• Saeed Ajmal – 19 matches
• Waqar Younis – 20 matches
• Mohammad Asif – 20 matches
• Noman Ali – 22 matches*
• Fazal Mahmood – 22 matches
• Saqlain Mushtaq – 23 matches

Briefs

RDA inflows rise to \$12b in April

ISLAMABAD: The inflow of remittances under Boshan Digital Account (RDA) has risen to US \$12.747 billion by the end of April 2026, as compared to US \$12.476 billion by March (2026) end. The data showed that inflows of remittances during April were recorded at US\$12.747 billion as compared to US\$12.476 billion in March and US\$ 242 million February 2026, according to the data released by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). These accounts provide innovative banking solutions to millions of Non-Resident Pakistanis (NRPs), including President Pakistan Origin Card (POC) holders, seeking to undertake banking, payment, and investment activities in Pakistan. The number of accounts registered under the programme also witnessed consistent growth, rising to 927,483 in April from 917,400 in March, indicating expanding participation by Pakistanis living abroad. By the end of April, overseas Pakistanis have invested US \$255 million in Naya Pakistan Certificates, US\$1,155 million in Naya Pakistan Islamic Certificates, and US \$123 million in Roshni Equity Investment-APP

Advanced transport plan unveiled for millions of pilgrims

MAKKAH: Hajj is not merely an act of worship; it is the world's largest human gathering, where the movement of millions within a strictly defined timeframe and geographical boundary presents a monumental administrative challenge. For the 1447 AH (2026) Hajj season, Saudi Arabia's General Transport Center (GTC) has developed an integrated, modern transportation model that stands as a masterpiece of technology and human management. This year, approximately 1.65 million pilgrims are benefiting from this seamless system, including 600 Pakistani pilgrims, for whom specialized arrangements have been made to ensure a comfortable and secure journey. The General Transport Center is leading this massive mission, unveiling all transport entities under a single platform. Traffic flow across Makkah and the Holy Sites (Mina, Arafat, and Muzdalifah) is being managed via a central command room that makes executive decisions based on real-time data. Meeting the demands of the modern era, the "Smart Escalation" application has been deployed to manage over 40,000 bus trips. This digital intervention has not only successfully reduced unauthorised hijab attempts by 95%, directly benefiting legal pilgrims from Pakistan and across the globe by significantly easing congestion. To enhance pilgrim convenience, Makkah's transport hubs have been modernised with substantial capacity increases at major stations such as Sharab Amer, Bab Al, and Juhaf. At these terminals, pedestrian walkways and bus lanes have been completely segregated to minimize the risk of accidents, allowing Pakistani pilgrims who utilize these stations in large numbers to reach the Grand Mosque (Masjid Al-Haram) with ease. Furthermore, during the Tashreeq days, five strategic points have been established between Mina and the Haram, equipped with shaded pathways and directional signage to guide pilgrims. The various phases of the journey, including ascent to Arafat and the return to Muzdalifah (Nafra), have been meticulously balanced between a fleet of buses and the Holy Sites (Mashayir) Train. Under the supervision of the General Automobile Association, the finest vehicles from a fleet of over 15,000 buses have been dedicated to field operations, ensuring the smooth transfer of Pakistani pilgrims from their respective Makkah and residences. Additionally, only the "Ask Me" initiative has deployed trained personnel around the Jamarat and the Grand Mosque to provide immediate guidance to Pakistani pilgrims in case of emergencies, overcoming any potential language barriers. -APP

Media hosts seminar on social, economic impact of talk shows

Media narratives directly influence investors' confidence and economic stability: ICCI President

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Sardar Tahir Mehmood, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, has said that media narratives play a decisive role in shaping public thinking, investor confidence, social behavior, and economic direction. Addressing a seminar titled "Talk Shows and their Social and Economic Impact on Pakistan" held at the Chamber House on Tuesday and attended by a large number of university students, business leaders and senior industry professionals, he observed that Pakistan's economy is largely sentiment-driven and excessive negativity regarding political instability and economic uncertainty directly affects investment, business expansion, tourism, real estate, foreign direct investment, and the stock market. He stressed that Pakistan needs a "Growth Narrative" based on stability, opportunity, entrepreneurship, investment, youth empowerment, and economic reforms, adding that constructive journalism and balanced discussions strengthen investor confidence and national stability. He further stated that media also influences the behavior of ordinary citizens and that fear-driven and sensational reporting weakens public trust, expands the informal economy, and damages economic confidence. He urged talk show hosts to promote awareness, responsible journalism, constructive national dialogue, and greater focus on economy, exports, technology, industrial

growth, and national unity. During the panel discussion on "Media Narratives and Investors' Confidence: Market Behaviors," Multimedia Journalist Ather Kazmi said that media merely reflects society as a mirror and should not solely be blamed for prevailing negativities despite certain weaknesses within the industry. Major General (R) Samrez Salik, former DG ISSRA, NDI, emphasized that promoting positivity is a collective responsibility and urged talk shows to focus more on economic and social issues rather than excessive political polarization. Executive Director Licensing PEMRA, Wajid Khan said Pakistan's media sector has witnessed significant growth with multiple licenses issued for news, entertainment, regional channels, and FM radio stations. He stressed that responsible journalism, authenticity of

news, and effective editorial oversight are essential to curb fake news and sensationalism. Co-Founder and CEO of Mubal Pakistan Amir Jehangir remarked that narratives must remain investor-centric to build public trust and investor confidence. In the second segment titled "Impact on Informal Economy and Public Behaviors," Ambassador Iran Ali said that policymakers and institutions must address the real problems faced by the masses. Anchorperson Faisal Rehman observed that governments are run through institutions, administrative systems, and policy frameworks rather than media alone. Renowned Journalist Abu Baker described media as one of the most powerful tools capable of shaping perceptions and changing mindsets, while Anchorperson Nysair Ali highlighted that polarization

is a global phenomenon and that fair and consistent implementation of regulations remains the real challenge. Former ICCI President and Secretary General United Business Group Zafar Bakhtawar emphasized that Pakistan must focus on building ethical, humane, and compassionate individuals, adding that no society can truly prosper unless businessmen and entrepreneurs are respected as role models. Ms. Saima Sukhera, Senior Advisor Trade and Government Relations, Pakistan Britain Business Council, moderated the session impressively, while Senior Vice President Tahir Ayub delivered the vote of thanks and highly appreciated Chairman ICCI Standing Committee on Sister Cities Initiatives Sajid Iqbal and his entire team for their hard work to make the event successful and result oriented.



Conflict created more internal displacement than disasters

GENEVA: Conflict and violence drove more people to flee within their own countries last year than natural and man-made disasters, for the first time on record, monitors said on Tuesday. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Center and the Norwegian Refugee Council said in their annual report on the subject that at the end of 2025, 82.2 million people were living in internal displacement worldwide. The figure is just under the highest number ever recorded in 2024. "Numbers remain at historic highs," the director of the IDMC, Tracy Lucas, told APP, calling the trends "a wakeup call." Over the course of last year, 65.8 million new internal displacements were reported, including a number of people forced to flee multiple times, the report showed. Conflict and violence were responsible for 32.3 million of those displacements — up 60 percent from a year earlier — while 29.9 million fled storms, floods and other disasters. "Never have we recorded such a staggering number of displacements related to conflict," said Lucas. The report detailed how emerging, escalating and entrenched conflicts in places such as Iran and the Democratic Republic of Congo forced people to flee repeatedly within their countries. Such displacements remain highly concentrated. As they were hit by deepening instability last year, Iran and the DR Congo alone accounted for two-thirds of all new conflict-driven internal displacements, with the former up 10 million each, the report said. Of the 69.7 million people who at the end of 2025 were living in internal displacement because of conflicts across 54 countries, nearly half were in just five countries, it said. Civil war-ravaged Sudan counted the most IDPs for a third consecutive year, with over nine million, followed by Colombia, Syria, Yemen and Afghanistan. "Internal displacement of tens of millions is a sign of a global collapse in prevention of conflict and basic protection of civilians," UN chief Jan Egeland said in a statement. With new wars under way this year adding to numerous entrenched conflicts around the world, more displacement driven by violence can be expected. "Countless families are returning to destroyed homes and disappearing services — or other disasters," Egeland said. "From DR Congo and Sudan to Iran and Lebanon, we see millions more displaced on top of the previous record numbers driven out of their homes." The monitors meanwhile highlighted a 35-percent drop in disaster-driven displacement compared to the "exceptionally high levels" seen in 2024. But they stressed that last year's figures remained 13 percent above the annual average for the past decade. -DNA

Pakistan facilitating dialogue to promote regional peace

UNITED NATIONS: Highlighting the serious risks the Middle East crisis poses to international peace, Pakistan's UN Ambassador Asim Ahmad told a delegation from the U.S. War college that Islamabad is actively fostering dialogue and containing tensions. Diplomatic efforts aimed at promoting regional stability. Speaking to the 40-member delegation, which visited the Pakistani Mission to the UN on Monday, he emphasized Pakistan's "constructive role" in promoting regional peace, stability, dialogue and diplomacy, especially with respect to its mediatory role between the United States and Iran. The delegation, led by Col. Stephan Walters, consisted of 33 American participants as well as two from Pakistan, and one each from Turkey, Sri Lanka, Moldova, Guatemala and Ecuador. Dealing with the Middle East crisis, Ambassador Asim Ahmad, who was answering questions, said it had far-reaching global consequences extending well beyond the region. He pointed out its impact on global energy markets, oil and gas supplies, fertilizer availability, food security, inflation, maritime navigation, merchandise trade, and global economic growth projections. Referring to the disruption in the Strait of Hormuz, he underlined the serious implications for international energy security. The United Nations, he said, had examined various scenarios assessing the consequences of a prolonged crisis. Pakistan, too, had experienced its economic effects arising from regional instability. Beyond economic concerns, the crisis posed serious risks to regional and international peace and security, the Pakistani envoy said. Pakistan supported efforts for de-escalation, dialogue, and diplomacy, he said, noting its engagement with the United States, Iran, Gulf countries, Egypt, China, Turkey, and other partners was aimed at preventing further escalation and creating conditions conducive to peaceful dialogue. Pakistan's balanced, principled, and objective approach, he said, had enabled it to maintain trust and engagement with all relevant stakeholders, noting that Islamabad's close relations with the United States, Iran, Gulf countries, and major international powers, together with its current membership of the Security Council, positioned it well to facilitate dialogue and contribute constructively to diplomatic efforts aimed at regional peace and stability. Discussing the evolving security environment in the Middle East and Gulf region, Ambassador Asim Ahmad said recent developments may lead to renewed thinking regarding regional security arrangements and strategic alignments. In this regard, he emphasized that future security frameworks should remain grounded in international law, the UN Charter, collective security, mutual respect for sovereignty, and equal security for all states. The ambassador also underlined Pakistan's deep interest in peace and stability in the Persian Gulf region, noting the country's longstanding economic, energy, security, and people-to-people ties with those states, including the presence of millions of Pakistanis living and working there. Responding to questions on Islamophobia, the Pakistani envoy explained that the phenomenon refers to discrimination, marginalization, or victimization of Muslims based on their faith. Freedom of religion and belief is a fundamental human right, he said, emphasizing the importance of fostering respect, inclusion, and interfaith harmony. He pointed out that Pakistan, together with like-minded countries, played a leading role at the United Nations in advancing efforts to combat Islamophobia, including support for the establishment of a UN Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia tasked with developing recommendations and action-oriented initiatives for member states. On questions relating to demographic change, population shifts, aging societies, and birth rates, he said these issues are increasingly being discussed within the United Nations framework in the context of development, human rights, economic policy, and technological transformation. He noted that artificial intelligence is playing a growing role in supporting governments and UN agencies through data analysis, policy recommendations, and forecasting tools, saying that the influence of AI on policymaking is expected to expand further in the years ahead. At the outset, Ambassador Asim Ahmad reaffirmed Pakistan's deep and abiding commitment to the United Nations and multilateralism, describing the world body as the central platform for collective action on international peace and security, development, human rights, climate change, and emerging challenges including artificial intelligence and information technology. He emphasized that today's global challenges were too complex and interconnected for any single country to address alone, highlighting the continued importance of multilateral cooperation through the UN platform. There was a need for UN to evolve in response to changing global realities and noted ongoing reform efforts, including revitalization of the General Assembly and the Security Council reform. Pakistan's supported democratic, transparent, and accountable reforms of the Security Council while opposing the creation of new permanent seats. Ambassador Asim Ahmad underscored Pakistan's active role as a current member of the Security Council in promoting international peace and security, including through peacekeeping, counterterrorism, regional stability, and advocacy for peaceful settlement of disputes. -DNA

Iran, Atadjan discuss economic collaboration

Ambassador Atadjan Movlammov appreciated Pakistan's positive approach towards regional trade facilitation and connectivity initiatives

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan held a detailed meeting with Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan, ILE Atadjan Movlammov, to discuss bilateral trade enhancement, regional connectivity, energy cooperation, and strengthening institutional engagement between the two friendly countries. During the meeting, both sides exchanged views on the growing importance of regional trade corridors, logistics cooperation, and improving commercial connectivity between Pakistan and Central Asian states, said a statement issued here on Tuesday. Discussions focused on expanding trade routes, facilitating smoother movement of goods, and enhancing direct interaction between the business communities of both countries. Federal Minister Jam Kamal Khan highlighted Pakistan's strategic geographic position as a natural gateway connecting Central Asia with regional and international markets through Pakistan's seaports. He observed that seeking regional dynamics and changing global supply chain patterns have further increased the importance of Pakistan's connectivity and logistics potential. The Minister emphasized that stronger economic integration, efficient transportation linkages, and enhanced business-business engagement on trade and connectivity initiatives are key to strengthening regional trade facilitation and connectivity initiatives. He reaffirmed Turkmenistan's interest in expanding bilateral economic cooperation and strengthening commercial and transport linkages with Pakistan. Both sides also discussed prospects for cooperation in the energy sector, including regional energy connectivity and future infrastructure trade collaboration aimed at promoting long-term regional economic integration and stability. The meeting further reviewed various areas of mutual economic interest and emphasized the importance of continuing bilateral engagement, institutional coordination and high-level exchanges to strengthen Pakistan-Turkmenistan relations further. Both sides expressed confidence that enhanced cooperation in trade, energy, logistics, and private-sector engagement would open new avenues for economic partnership between the two countries. -DNA



Drone attack kills six in Sudan's Darfur

KHARTOUM: A drone attack killed six people on Tuesday in the paramilitary-controlled city of Al-Daein in Sudan's Darfur region, a medical source and two residents told APP, as the Rapid Support Forces face a wave of defections. Drone strikes by both Sudanese and paramilitary ISF have intensified across Sudan in recent months, with some attacks killing dozens of civilians at a time. A medical source at Al-Daein hospital said six bodies were received after Tuesday's strike, which also wounded five people, three of them critically. The source did not identify who was responsible. Two locals said an army drone hit residential neighborhoods in the north and west of the city early on Tuesday. They spoke via Starlink satellite Internet, widely used in Darfur amid widespread communications outages. An ISF-led alliance accused the Sudanese army of carrying out the attack, saying in a statement that drone strikes began late on Monday and continued into Tuesday morning. The army has not commented. Sudan's war between the army and the ISF, now in its fourth year, has killed tens of thousands of people, displaced millions and triggered what the United Nations has described as one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. After the ISF seized control of North Darfur capital El-Fasher, the army's last stronghold in the region, fighters moved to southern Kordofan and Blue Nile state in the southeast, near the borders with Ethiopia and South Sudan. But the ISF has faced mounting defections of late. -APP

Daesh claims deadly attack on Syrian gov forces

DAMASCUS: Daesh claimed responsibility on Tuesday for a deadly attack in eastern Syria that killed two Syrian army soldiers, the militant group's first deadly operation against the Syrian government since February Monday's attack in the eastern province of Hassakah president to the lingering conflict. Daesh as Syria's army soldiers were killed and others wounded in an attack by unknown assailants on a bus in the Hassakah countryside. Daesh in a statement posted on its Amaq News Agency, said its fighters had killed and wounded six members of "the apostate Syrian army" during an ambush in the same area. Daesh controlled around a quarter or more of Syria at the start of the conflict in 2011, but the Syrian civil war a decade ago, before it was beaten out of the territory by a US-led coalition and other forces. Bashar al-Assad when he was leader of the Al-Qaeda-linked Nusra Front during the civil war. Spokesman Ahmad al-Taiji Al-Qaeda in 2016. -APP

Qatar says Iran should not use 'blackmail' Gulf

DOHA: Iran should not use the Strait of Hormuz, which it has blocked since the start of the Middle East war, as a means to blackmail Gulf states, Qatar's top diplomat said Tuesday. "Iran should not use this Strait as a means of oppression or to blackmail the Gulf countries," said Qatar Foreign Minister and Premier Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani. Turkey supports efforts to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said on Tuesday, adding the channel should not be used as a "weapon" during the Iran war. Speaking at a press conference in Doha alongside his Qatari counterpart, Fidan also said Ankara was contributing to efforts led by Pakistan to find a negotiated end to war between Iran and the United States. -APP

Briefs

WHO chief says work not over after hantavirus evacuation

DNA

MADRID: World Health Organization chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said on Tuesday "our work is not over" to contain hantavirus after evacuations from a cruise ship hit by a deadly outbreak of the illness. The fate of the MV Hondius has sparked international alarm after three passengers died in an outbreak of the rare virus, for which no vaccines or specific treatments exist. Yet health officials have stressed that the global public health risk is low and rejected comparisons to the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.

"There is no sign that we are seeing the start of a larger outbreak," Tedros told a joint news conference with Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez in Madrid after overseeing the evacuation in Spain's Canary Islands. "But of course the situation could change, and given the long incubation period of the virus, it's possible we might see more cases in the coming weeks," Tedros said of the Andos variant, which is transmissible between humans. Among living patients, all of whom are passengers or crew of the ship, seven cases have been confirmed and an eighth is listed as "probable," according to an AFP tally of official figures. The affected nationalities include the United States, Britain, France, Spain, Switzerland and the Netherlands.

4 outlaws arrested in Kuwait

NEWS DESK

DUBAI: Four high-ranking members of the Iranian Navy arrested by Kuwaiti armed forces have admitted their affiliation with Iran's Revolutionary Guards state news agency KUNA reported on Tuesday. Kuwait's interior ministry identified the individuals as Naval Colonel Amir Hossein Abdolmohammad Zareei, Naval Colonel Abdolmasoud Yedehli Ghanavati, Naval Captain Ahmad Jamshid Gholamreza Zolfaghari and First Lieutenant Mohammad Hossein Sohrab Foroughi Har. The group confessed during interrogation that they were tasked by the Revolutionary Guards to infiltrate Bahrain Island on May 1 via a fishing boat sent specifically to carry out hostile acts against Kuwait.

But they were engaged by Kuwaiti armed forces, resulting in an injury to one of its members. Two IRGC-aligned officers - Naval Captain Mansour Qamari and Abdolkarim Siamir, who was the boat's commander - managed to escape during the clash.

Pakistan thanks Kuwait for facilitating diesel supplies

Ambassador Almutairi appreciated Pakistan's peace efforts and stated that Kuwait encourages its brothers in Pakistan to continue their constructive role for peace in the region

SAIFULLAH ANSARI

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum Mr. Ali Pervaz Malik held a meeting with the Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to Pakistan, H.E. Mr. Nassar Abdulrahman Jasser Almutairi. The meeting focused on regional developments, energy cooperation, and agreed to further strengthen bilateral relations and expand collaboration in areas of common interest. The Federal Minister expressed sincere gratitude to the Government of Kuwait for its timely facilitation and support in ensuring the safe dispatch of vessel Khairpur, which reached Pakistan carrying diesel supplies during a challenging period. He highlighted that the vessel transported approximately 45,000 tons of diesel and 10,000 tons of jet fuel from Kuwait to Pakistan under special approvals, following disruptions caused by the closure of the Strait of Hormuz. The Minister said that Pakistan remains committed to peace and stability, adding that the repercussions of the ongoing conflict are being felt not only across the region but also beyond. He noted that, with the concerted efforts of the Field Marshal and the Prime Minister of Pakistan, the Khairpur vessel safely completed its journey and reached Pakistan,



ensuring continuity in fuel supply and supporting national energy needs. Ambassador Almutairi appreciated Pakistan's peace efforts and stated that Kuwait encourages its brothers in Pakistan to continue their constructive role for

peace in the region. He remarked that Pakistan has proven itself through its responsible stance and that now Pakistan is being viewed with a renewed and elevated status in the international community. Both sides discussed prospects for enhanced cooperation in the petroleum and energy sectors especially refining and agreed to explore new opportunities around building strategic storages in Pakistan that could bring mutual benefit to Pakistan and Kuwait.

Starmer defies calls to quite

FAIRER BRITAIN

"The country expects us to get on with governing. That is what I am doing and what we must do as a Cabinet" LONDON: Prime Minister Keir Starmer defied calls to resign on Tuesday, telling ministers he would "get on with governing" despite a "destabilising" 48 hours of growing calls to set out a timetable for his departure after an election. At a meeting of his cabinet team of ministers, Starmer, in the top job for less than two years, repeated that while he took responsibility for one of his Labour Party's worst election defeats, there had been no official move to trigger a leadership contest. "The past 48 hours have been destabilising for government and that has a real economic cost for our country and for families," Starmer told ministers, according to his Downing Street office. "The country expects us to get on with governing. That is what I am doing and what we must do as a Cabinet."

British government bonds rallied weakly on Starmer's comments, but remained firmly in the red for the day. His defiance was a marked contrast to the feelings of many in his Labour Party. On Tuesday, a junior minister resigned after a handful of ministerial aides left the government. More than 80 Labour lawmakers have publicly called for him to set a resignation date so the party could install a new leader in an orderly manner. Starmer had sought to shore up his position on Monday when he promised to act more boldly and with more urgency to tackle Britain's many problems. He had said the country would never forgive the centrist Labour Party if it embarked on a leadership challenge, just two years after its huge parliamentary majority was supposed to bring an end to the political chaos that had gripped the country since Britain voted to leave the European Union 10 years ago. - APP

French president announces billions in African investments

President William Ruto of Kenya, which is co-hosting the summit with France, referred to sovereignty eight times in his speech on the summit's final day

DNA

NAIROBI: Calls for mutual respect dominated the Africa Forward Summit on Tuesday as French President Emmanuel Macron announced new investments and said sovereignty will be key in the new partnership that France hopes to build with Africa. Investments worth €23 billion (\$27 billion) will fund various sectors in Africa including, energy, AI and agriculture, Macron said, adding that €14 billion (\$16.4 billion) will come from French companies and €9 billion (\$10.5 billion) from African entities. Macron said the summit marks a financial shift in relationships between the European nation and African countries, including those that once were its colonies. President William Ruto of Kenya, which is co-hosting the summit with France, referred to sovereignty eight times in his speech on the summit's final day. He reiterated that the days of European dependency were over for Africa in favor of mutual respect between cooperating nations. "New partnerships between the African nations and France must not be built on dependency but on sovereign equality, not on aid or charity but on mutually beneficial investment, and not on extraction or exploitation but on win-win engagements," Ruto said. The event, which is set to close Tuesday with a declaration that is expected to be signed by all 30 heads of state and government, comes at the height of a fallout between France and its former colonies, mostly in West Africa. France has long maintained a colonial policy of economic, political and military sway dubbed *francophonie*, which included keeping thousands of troops in the region it controlled. After years of criticism from leaders and opposition parties in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso over what they described as a demeaning and heavy-handed approach, France has withdrawn most of those troops. It completed the withdrawal of troops from Senegal in July. Macron said Paris will be respectful of each African country's independence, adding that "sovereignty and autonomy is shared, and your success is our success." France's new strategy, according to Macron, is based on a shared agenda and the "days of offering assistance are behind us." "It's like to focus on co-investment," he said. Macron hailed a strong show of unity from the African heads of state and governments as "an image of a united continent with a shared agenda."

The new law was backed by a wide majority 93 of the Knesset's 120 lawmakers, in a rare show of Israeli political unity. Lawmakers from both the governing coalition and the opposition authored the bill, meant to ensure all assailants are brought to justice under existing Israeli criminal statutes for what it describes as crimes against the Jewish people, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Proceedings will be public, with major hearings broadcast live. While defendants will attend only key hearings in person and all others by video, surviving victims will be allowed in-person access, according to the new law. Ya'ara Mordecai, an international law expert at Yale Law School, said the new law raised some concerns about due process, given the military court setting, as well as a risk of atrocious proceedings turning into politicized or symbolic "show trials." Knesset member Yulia Milinsky, one of the bill's authors, claimed that the legislation ensures a fair and lawful trial. "They will be sentenced by Israel's judges, not by the street or by what we all feel," Milinsky said before the vote. "At the end of the day, what makes us great is our spirit, our resilience, ability to cope and withstand this immense pain." Israel's penal code includes capital punishment for some of the charges. - APP

New Israeli law sets military tribunal for Hamas fighters

TEL AVIV: Israel's parliament passed a law late on Monday establishing a military tribunal to try hundreds of Palestinian fighters linked to the October 7, 2023 attack on Israel. The surprise attack, led by elite "Nukhba" force fighters from the Palestinian group Hamas, killed at least 1,200 people. The fighters also took 251 hostages back to Gaza, Israel responded by launching an assault on the enclave that killed more than 72,000 Palestinians, mostly civilians, and left much of Gaza in ruins. Israel has been holding an estimated 200-300 fighters - the precise number is classified - captured in Israel during the attack, who have not yet been charged. The special military court established by the law, to be presided over by a three-judge panel in Jerusalem, could also try others captured later in Gaza and suspected of participating in the attack, or of having held or abused Israeli hostages.

Hezbollah chief says weapons not part of talks

DNA

BEIRUT: Hezbollah chief Naim Qassem said Tuesday that his Iran-backed group's weapons were not part of upcoming negotiations between Lebanon and Israel, and vowed his fighters would turn the battlefield into "hell" for Israeli forces. "Nobody outside Lebanon has anything to do with the weapons, the resistance... this is an internal Lebanese matter and not part of negotiations with the enemy," Qassem said in a written statement addressed to the group's fighters and broadcast on its Al-Manar television channel. A third round of talks between Lebanese and Israeli representatives is set to take place this Thursday and Friday in Washington, after the first direct meeting in decades between the two sides was held last month. US President Donald Trump announced the ceasefire days after the first meeting. The talks have caused divisions in Lebanon, with Hezbollah rejecting direct negotiations with Israel and saying their outcomes do not concern the group. Qassem on Tuesday called for a "withdrawal from the direct negotiations, which are pure gains for Israel and free concessions by the Lebanese authorities." "We are facing an Israeli-American aggression that wants to subjugate our country of Lebanon," Qassem said in the statement. "We will not surrender and we will continue to defend Lebanon and its people, however long it takes and however great the sacrifices," he said. "We will not abandon the battlefield and we will turn it into hell for Israel."

Pakistan to increase oil exports from Russia

DNA

MOSCOW: The government in Islamabad plans to increase oil imports from Russia amid the ongoing crisis in the Strait of Hormuz, Pakistan's Ambassador to Moscow, Faisal Niaz Tirmizi, said. Speaking to Russia's state-owned TASS News Agency, the ambassador said that demand for Russian energy resources has increased amid the crisis around the Strait of Hormuz. "We produce about 10% of the energy resources we need ourselves, while the rest is imported, mainly from the Gulf countries. Therefore, a serious crisis has arisen, and that is why we began to look for alternatives in the Gulf region. At some point, he said, alternative pipelines from Turkmenistan and even from Russia to South Asia will also be discussed. Fuel prices recorded a sharp increase in the country following the oil supply disruption caused by the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, a key route for oil and gas shipping.

SC asks IHC to decide Imaan case in two weeks

Until the IHC decides upon the petitions, the matter will remain pending before the apex court, a three-judge SC bench, consisting of Justice Shahid Waheed, Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan and Justice Shafi Siddiqui, ordered

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Tuesday asked the Islamabad High Court (IHC) to decide within two weeks the plea of human rights lawyer Imaan Zainab Maza-Haider and her husband, Hadi Ali Chatta, seeking the suspension of their sentence in the controversial social media posts case. Until the IHC decides upon the petitions, the matter will remain pending before the apex court, a three-judge SC bench, consisting of Justice Shahid Waheed, Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan and Justice Shafi Siddiqui, ordered. During the hearing, the couple's lawyer, Faisal Siddiqi II, argued that the legal requirements were not met in the trial against his clients. He asserted that they did not get the opportunity to be cross-examined and stated that section 342 of the Criminal Procedure Code were also not recorded. He presented his arguments as the SC took up the couple's plea seeking to set aside an IHC order denying interim

relief to them in the case. The lawyer said that the IHC had kept his clients' pleas for the suspension of their sentences pending despite the passage of two months. "Which court should the accused go to if the high court denies relief or if the SC chooses not to go into the merits of the case," the counsel argued. At this, Justice Siddiqui wondered how the SC could interfere in a matter which fell under the jurisdiction of the high court. The lawyer contended that the SC could hear applications seeking the suspension of a sentence without the high court's final decision. He said that if the court asked him to, he could explain the circumstances his clients were facing. Justice Waheed, however, observed that the SC was aware of the circumstances the appellants were facing, since they had mentioned the details in their applications. "Now there are two options: one is to direct the high court to decide the matter and the second is to give instructions to the high court and keep this application pending in the SC," Justice Waheed suggested.

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