



Islamabad POST

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Serena Williams to return to tennis at Queen's Club

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Pakistan says mediation first life of defence

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Bilawal says Center wants to abolish BISP

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Briefs

Four Pak workers murdered in Italy

DNA

ROME: Italian police have arrested two Pakistani nationals for the murder of four Pakistani farm workers found dead in a burnt-out minivan in southern Italy, Corriere della Sera daily reported Tuesday. The burnt-out vehicle was found at a petrol station near the village of Amendolara in a vast farming area in the Calabria region. CCTV images from the petrol station showed two people blocking the van's doors from the outside and throwing liquid inside, Corriere della Sera reported citing law enforcement sources. The images showed a fire breaking out and the two people running away, the report said. Firefighters found the bodies inside after putting out the fire. "This is definitely murder, we just have to work out the details," local police chief Antonio Borelli was quoted by Corriere as saying. The paper said there had been 14 cases of arson involving cars and minivans in recent months in the area, where there are tensions between migrants over the division of farm work and residency papers and accommodation. After reports of the murder of four Pakistani farmers in Italy, the Foreign Office (FO) said on Tuesday that the "exact nationality" of the deceased was not confirmed yet. The FO's statement came hours after Corriere della Sera daily reported that Italian police had arrested two Pakistani nationals for the murder of four Pakistani farm workers found dead in a burnt-out minivan in southern Italy.

Bilawal says Center wants to abolish BISP

FIAZ CHAUDHRY

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Tuesday said that incumbent coalition government led by the PML-N is planning to abolish the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), pledging that his party would protect the scheme. "It is unfortunate that the rulers want to end the Benazir Income Support Programme. We will save the Benazir Income Support Programme," Bilawal said while addressing a public gathering in Gilgit-Baltistan's Skardu. He said the PPP would ensure an increase in BISP funding by discussing it with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif during the budget process. The PPP chief's remarks come amid reports that the PML-N-led federal government is considering changes to the scheme's structure. Last month, Minister of State for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Kheal Das Kohistani said that the government was considering devolving the BISP programme to provinces. Launched in 2008, BISP is Pakistan's poverty alleviation and social safety programme, providing financial assistance to more than 10 million low-income families, particularly women. In a conversation with reporters on May 8, Kohistani clarified that the complete abolition of the programme was not under consideration.

Enough is enough

Trump terms Netanyahu mentally sick

"Any [Israeli] Troops that are on their way [to Lebanon], have already been turned back," says US president

DNA

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump angrily confronted Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu over Israel's escalation in Lebanon and later claimed Israeli troops had been turned back from Beirut, as Washington sought to prevent the fighting from derailing negotiations with Iran. Axios, citing two US officials and a third source briefed on the call, reported that Trump lashed out at Netanyahu in an explosive-laden phone call on Monday, calling him "crazy" and accusing him of ingratitude. The call came after Iran warned that the ceasefire between Tehran and Washington applied to all fronts, including Lebanon, and threatened to abandon negotiations with the US over Israel's actions in Lebanon. "The ceasefire between Iran and the US is unequivocally a ceasefire on all fronts, including in Lebanon," Iranian Foreign Minister Seyyed Abbas Araghchi wrote on X. "Its violation on one front is a violation of the ceasefire on all fronts," he said, adding that the US and Israel would be responsible for the consequences of any violation. In a post on Truth Social after the call, Trump said he had held "a very productive call" with Netanyahu and that there would be "no Troops going to Beirut". "Any Troops that are on their way, have already been turned back," Trump wrote.

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Lebanon announces partial ceasefire between Israel, Hezbollah

NEWS DESK

BEIRUT: Lebanon announced a partial ceasefire between Hezbollah and Israel on Monday in what would amount to a limited de-escalation of a conflict that has killed thousands of people and inflamed the broader US-Israeli war with Iran. According to Lebanon's embassy in Washington, the agreement would not end the conflict in that country. But it calls for Israel to refrain from strikes on Beirut and its suburbs controlled by Hezbollah, while the group would halt its attacks on Israel. Hostilities in southern Lebanon, which Israel invaded in March, continued on Monday evening. Early on Tuesday, the Israeli military said that it intercepted two projectiles that crossed from Lebanon into northern Israel, and that no injuries were reported. US President Donald Trump, who first announced the agreement, said Hezbollah, through

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Iran to open nuclear talks, says Marco Rubio

Says any easing of sanctions would depend on substantive progress regarding Iran's nuclear activities, including discussions over its stockpile of highly enriched uranium

DNA

WASHINGTON: U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Iran has shown a willingness to discuss aspects of its nuclear programme that it had previously refused to negotiate, signaling a potential opening for future diplomacy. However, Rubio stressed that Washington has not offered sanctions relief in exchange for Tehran merely reopening the Strait of Hormuz. Speaking before lawmakers, Rubio said any easing of sanctions would depend on substantive progress regarding Iran's nuclear activities, including discussions over its stockpile of highly enriched uranium. He emphasized that reopening the strategic waterway is only a first step and not sufficient on its own to secure economic concessions from the United States. Rubio noted that Iranian officials have indicated a readiness to address issues that were previously considered off limits in negotiations, although he cautioned that uncertainty

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Senior Iranian officer says renewed war with US 'inevitable'

DNA

WASHINGTON/TEHRAN: A senior Iranian military officer said Tuesday that a resumption of hostilities with the United States was inevitable, as negotiations between Tehran and Washington appeared to stall. "The United States demands our total surrender, and the Iranian nation will never surrender," said Mohammad Jafar Assadi, deputy head of Iran's central military command, Khatam Al-Anbiya. "Without surrender, war is inevitable." Iran has not yet responded to a proposed final

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NATIONAL DAY OF ITALY

DNA



ISLAMABAD: Chief guest Ali Pervez Malik, Federal Minister for Energy, Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, Defence Minister Khwaja Muhammad Asif, Railways Minister Hanif Abbasi, Governor KPK Faisal Karim Kundi, Ambassador of Italy Ms. Marilina Armellini and others cutting cake to celebrate the National Day of Italy. - DNA

President felicitates Italian President

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday extended felicitations to the President of the Italian Republic Sergio Mattarella, and the people of Italy on Republic Day, annually observed on June 2. The president, in a statement, said that Pakistan deeply valued its longstanding and friendly relations with Italy, which were marked by mutual trust, cooperation and a shared commitment to peace and prosperity. He expressed confidence that bilateral ties between the two nations would continue to grow in strength and substance in the years ahead.

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Pak, Italy sign visa waiver agreement

DNA

ROME: Pakistan and Italy have signed an agreement abolishing visa requirements for holders of diplomatic passports. A statement issued by the Pakistani embassy in Rome read that the agreement was signed by Pakistan's Ambassador to Italy, Ali Javed, and Italy's Secretary General for Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Riccardo Guariglia. The ceremony was hosted by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ahead of the signing, the two officials held talks and reviewed the full spectrum of bilateral relations and cooperation at

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To check fake medicines

Cabinet approves track & trace system nationwide

PM directs all ministries to ensure meaningful expert consultation for modern technologies' integration across economy

SAIFULLAH ANSAR / DNA

ISLAMABAD, Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination, Syed Mustafa Kamal, announced that the federal cabinet has approved the implementation of a nationwide track-and-trace system for medicines, describing it as a landmark initiative aimed at eliminating counterfeit, substandard and fake medicines from the country. According to the Ministry on Tuesday, the cabinet has also approved the necessary amendments to the Drug Labeling and Packing Rules, 1978, enabling the introduction of a modern digital system for tracking and verifying medicines throughout the supply chain. Under the new regulatory framework, all pharmaceutical manufacturers and

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Allies' disagreements delay federal budget

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The federal budget has been delayed as the government seeks to complete key legislation before the budget session, while coalition allies continue to oppose the proposed amendments, parliamentary sources. According to National Assembly sources, the federal budget is now likely to be presented on June 10 instead of June 5.

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Galați drone attack

Romanian envoy thanks EU for support

On behalf of Minister Oana Toiu, I thanked her for the EU's firm position on the recent Russian drone attack in Galați, which injured two innocent Romanian citizens," Stoensescu stated

DNA NEWS REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Kaja Kallas, High Representative of the European Union (EU) for Foreign Affairs and Vice-President of the European Commission visited Islamabad for high-level meetings with Pakistani officials. During her visit, she also met

Romania's Ambassador to Pakistan, Dan Stoensescu, where discussions centered on regional cooperation and recent security concerns. Ambassador Stoensescu highlighted the recent Russian drone strike in Galați, Romania, which injured two civilians, and expressed appreciation for the

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Nawaz, Aseefa enter GB campaign ahead of polls

PML-N and PPP leaders arrive in Gilgit-Baltistan as election campaigning gathers pace

STAFF REPORT

GILGIT: Political activity in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) reached its peak ahead of the June 7 elections for 24 Assembly seats, as senior leaders of major parties arrived in the region to campaign. Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Nawaz Sharif reached Gilgit on a short visit, while PPP leader Aseefa Bhutto Zardari arrived in Skardu to address an election rally in constituency GBA-7. Elections for 24 seats of the Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly are scheduled to be held on June 7, with major political parties stepping up their campaigns across the region. Nawaz reached Gilgit Airport by plane on a short visit, PML-N spokesperson Shams Mir said. The former prime minister later reached a local hotel from the airport along with other party leaders. According to a PML-N spokesperson, Nawaz will meet and address party ticket-holders, as well as provincial, divisional and district office-bearers. The spokesperson said Nawaz would announce the party's "Vision Gilgit-Baltistan" during the visit. Meanwhile, First Lady Aseefa Bhutto Zardari reached Skardu, where she is scheduled to address an election rally in constituency GBA-7. Preparations for the PPP rally were underway near Yadgar Chowk, where the party secretariat is located. The main road near the venue was blocked as arrangements continued for the gathering. Aseefa was received at the airport by Syed Mehdi Shah and other local leaders before being brought to Skardu. According to reports from the venue, the rally was initially scheduled for 2pm but was later expected to begin at 3pm. PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Aseefa Bhutto Zardari are both expected to address the gathering. Party workers and supporters were seen moving towards the venue

in groups, while Skardu's main bazaar was closed from both sides due to preparations for the rally. Separately, Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party chairman Aleem Khan also reached Skardu for the election campaign. Authorities have also decided to send 5,000 Punjab Police personnel to GB for election duty. According to sources, the Gilgit-Baltistan Election Commission had requested Punjab Police personnel for security arrangements. Addressing party workers in Gilgit ahead of June 7 elections, Nawaz - who served as three-time prime minister of Pakistan - said he was saddened by the condition of roads in GB and questioned why major development projects launched during his government had not been completed. "I wanted Gilgit-Baltistan to witness significant development. Seeing



potholes on roads and unfinished projects causes me great pain," he said. Without naming any political party, he questioned why successive governments had ignored development priorities in the region. "We seek votes based on performance, not by criticising opponents," he said, adding that the resources meant for the welfare of Gilgit-Baltistan's people should have been spent on their development. Nawaz claimed that major projects in the region, including hospitals, hydro-power plants and the Naltar project, were completed during the PML-N government, while many subsequent projects remained incomplete. He said GB deserved modern infrastructure, including a larger airport capable of handling Boeing aircraft, and announced that he would discuss airport expansion with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. Noting that he had travelled to Gilgit on a small aircraft, Nawaz said the region should have at least 30 weekly flights instead of the current limited operations. He highlighted his government's efforts to reduce travel time to Skardu from nine hours to three hours and cited the completion of the long-delayed Lowari Tunnel project after decades of inaction. The PML-N president also expressed concern over prolonged electricity shortages in GB, saying a region blessed with abundant water resources and sunlight should not be facing severe power outages. He said load-shedding lasting up to 20 to 22 hours in some areas was unacceptable and stressed that solar energy projects could help address the crisis. "Whether we receive votes or not, the people of GB should not be deprived of basic facilities," he said. Nawaz also announced plans to regularly visit the region every few months to monitor development initiatives and said he would ask both

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Pak, Turkiye for boosting bilateral eco coop

Dr. Irfan Neziroglu praised Pakistan's Prime Minister Youth Programme, calling it an effective initiative for youth development, and said cooperation between the two countries would continue to expand in education, technology, and capacity-building sectors

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi met with Turkiye's Ambassador to Pakistan Dr. Irfan Neziroglu here on Tuesday, where both sides discussed Pakistan-Turkiye relations, mutual cooperation, and a range of bilateral issues. During the meeting, the two sides reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening the longstanding fraternal ties between Pakistan and Turkiye. Discussions focused on expanding cooperation in trade, investment, education, and cultural exchanges, with special emphasis on enhancing economic linkages between Turkiye and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province Governor Kundi

stressed the importance of engaging the younger generation in promoting Pakistan-Turkiye friendship. He proposed initiating visits of traders and students from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to Turkiye, alongside exchanges of cultural and literary delegations to deepen people-to-people contacts. He also highlighted significant potential for agricultural development and investment in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and suggested declaring Peshawar as a sister city with a major Turkish city to strengthen municipal-level cooperation. The Turkish Ambassador welcomed the proposal and assured that efforts would be made to establish a sister-city relationship

for Peshawar. He also expressed Turkiye's readiness to support training opportunities for Pakistani youth in information technology and modern technologies. Dr. Irfan Neziroglu praised Pakistan's Prime Minister Youth Programme, calling it an effective initiative for youth development, and said cooperation between the two countries would continue to expand in education, technology, and capacity-building sectors. The meeting was also attended by Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Parliamentary Leader Ahmed Kundi. —APP



MULTAN: Labourers busy in the construction of a sewage disposal system at Chungi No. 9 as part of an ongoing development project to improve civic infrastructure in the city.

Call for peace, harmony during Muharram

RAWALPINDI: An inter-faith unity conference was held in Rawalpindi on Tuesday to ensure maintaining law and order during Muharram, bringing together religious scholars, administration, and law enforcement officials who collectively reaffirmed their joint commitment to peace. The conference was chaired by Chairman Muttahida Ulema Board Punjab and Member Council of Islamic Ideology, Mufti Dr Intikhab Ahmed Noori. Commissioner Rawalpindi Aamir Khattak, RPO Babar Sarfraz Alpa, Deputy Commissioner Dr. Hassan Waqar Cheema, MNA Huma Akhtar, and MPAs Asma Naz Abbasi and Zebun-Nisa were among the participants. — APP

CM hails 'Mera Pyara' project global recognition

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Tuesday expressed gratitude after the province's Virtual Centre for Child Safety (VCCS) "Mera Pyara" project was declared a Global Champion by the United Nations-backed World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Awards 2026. In a landmark achievement for Pakistan, two projects launched under the leadership of the chief minister secured top positions in the prestigious international competition. The "Mera Pyara" project was ranked among the world's top five initiatives, while the Virtual Women Police Station was shortlisted among the top 20 projects globally. Congratulating the project team, the chief minister said the recognition of two Punjab government initiatives at

a United Nations forum was a matter of pride for Pakistan and reflected the province's growing success in digital governance and public service delivery. She said the Virtual Centre for Child Safety had set an outstanding example by handling more than 145,000 child-related cases and taking effective action in over 54,000 cases involving missing children. She described the efforts to trace and protect missing children as highly commendable. CM Maryam Nawaz said the project had also provided assistance in cases related to child abuse, online harassment and the protection of vulnerable children. She added that the international recognition of "Mera Pyara" demonstrated global confidence in technology-driven public services and helped project a positive

image of Pakistan at the international level. According to the WSIS report, the Virtual Centre for Child Safety has handled 145,772 cases across various categories, successfully resolving 136,157 of them. A total of 26,274 FIRs have been registered and 7,081 challans submitted to courts. The report stated that out of 54,741 reported cases of missing or abducted children, 53,811 children were successfully traced and reunited with their families. More than 77,000 missing children have been recovered through the initiative, including around 3,000 special children. It further revealed that rescue teams recovered 22,989 children, of whom 21,178 were immediately handed over to their families. —DNA

Bharth orders completion of flood preparedness steps

LAHORE: Punjab Communication and Works (C&W) Department has initiated pre-emptive measures ahead of the upcoming monsoon season and activated its field formations to safeguard roads and bridges from urban flooding and potential flood situations. The decision was taken at a meeting chaired by Provincial Minister for Communication and Works (C&W) Malik Sohaib Ahmed Bharth here on Tuesday. Secretary C&W Raja Jahangir Anwar, special secretaries, additional secretaries and chief engineers attended the meeting, while superintending engineers (SEs) and executive engineers (XENs) participated online. During the meeting, the minister was briefed on the rehabilitation of roads damaged during last year's floods. Officials informed him that restoration and rehabilitation work on flood-affected roads had been completed at a cost of Rs16 billion. Addressing the participants, Malik Sohaib Ahmed Bharth directed that all precautionary arrangements to deal with urban flooding and possible flood emergencies during the monsoon season be completed on a priority basis. He stressed the need to ensure the availability of pumps, backup generators and additional machinery for efficient drainage of rainwater. The minister instructed all chief engineers, SEs and XENs to personally inspect bridges, culverts and drainage systems along roads in their respective jurisdictions and ensure their proper cleaning and maintenance. He further directed that all flood preparedness measures be finalized within 15 days and asked officers to remain actively engaged in field operations rather than working from offices. —APP

KP police to expand forensic capabilities: IGP

PESHAWAR: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Zulfiqar Hameed has stressed the need for strengthening forensic and scientific investigation systems, saying modern technology and evidence-based policing are essential for effectively combating crime and ensuring justice. During a visit to the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) in Hayatabad on Tuesday, the IGP reviewed the laboratory's operational performance and inspected various forensic sections, including fingerprint analysis, ballistics, narcotics examination, document verification, and biological testing. Officials briefed him on the laboratory's role in supporting criminal investigations, the use of advanced technologies, and efforts being made to improve the accuracy and efficiency of forensic examinations.

Speaking on the occasion, Zulfiqar Hameed said forensic science had become a cornerstone of modern policing, enabling investigators to solve complex cases through reliable scientific evidence. He noted that strengthening forensic services would not only help identify criminals more effectively but would also ensure fair and transparent investigations. The police chief said the provincial police force was committed to modernizing its investigative framework and enhancing the use of digital and forensic tools to improve crime detection and prosecution. He directed authorities to further upgrade the laboratory's infrastructure, equip it with the latest technology, and enhance the professional skills of forensic experts through specialized training programmes. —APP

Record 415 companies incorporated in a single day

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) registered 3,161 new companies during May 2026, reflecting continued growth and increasing confidence in the country's corporate sector, despite reduced working days due to the Eid-ul-Adha holidays. With 99.9 percent of companies registered online, the total number of registered companies in Pakistan has reached 297,239, said a release issued here on Tuesday. Notably, during the month, the SECP set a new benchmark by incorporating 415 new companies in a single day, marking the highest number of company incorporations in the Commission's history. This breakthrough achievement demonstrates the growing trend toward corporatization, improved ease of doing business, and the effectiveness of the SECP's facilitative registration framework, which continues to enable entrepreneurs and businesses to formalize their operations

efficiently and conveniently. Geographically, Punjab remained the hub of business activity, accounting for 1,643 (52 percent) of new registrations. This was followed by the Islamabad Capital Territory with 596 (19 percent), Sindh with 479 (15 percent), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with 260 (8 percent), Gilgit-Baltistan with 112 (4 percent), and Balochistan with 71 (2 percent). The trend toward formalization is clearly reflected in the choice of corporate structures, with private limited companies remaining the preferred option, accounting for 1,884 registrations (60 percent). This is followed closely by single-member companies (SMCs), which account for 1,212 registrations (3 percent), while limited liability partnerships (LLPs) and other categories comprised the remaining 65 (2 percent). The high percentage of SMCs highlights a significant rising trend of individual entrepreneurship and the successful formalization of

small-scale businesses across the country. The information technology and e-commerce sector continues to serve as the primary engine of corporate growth, leading the monthly registrations with 598 new incorporations. The broader diversification of Pakistan's corporate landscape is further evidenced by robust performance across other key industries, including trading with 503 companies, services with 404, and real estate development and construction with 303. Additionally, the tourism and transport sector showed significant activity with 206 new companies, reflecting well-rounded expansion across multiple segments of the economy. International trust in Pakistan's regulatory environment continued to show sustained growth in May 2026, with foreign participation recorded from 17 countries across 80 local companies. China emerged as the leading foreign investor with 89 shareholders. —APP

Rs11.2b okays for Karachi infrastructure projects

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Tuesday presided over a meeting of the provincial cabinet which approved a wide-ranging package of financial, infrastructure, energy, health, security and education initiatives, including Rs 8.825 billion in additional funds for water and drainage schemes across the province and Rs11.198 billion worth of major infrastructure projects for Karachi. The meeting, held at CM House, was attended by provincial ministers, advisors, special assistants, the chief secretary and other senior officers. Under the recommendations of the Cabinet Committee on Finance, presented by Minister for Local Government Syed Nasir Shah, the cabinet approved Rs 8.824 billion in additional funds for 16 Annual Development Programme (ADP) schemes in the water supply and drainage sector for the financial year 2025-26. Of this amount, Rs 6.206 billion will be re-appropriated from the ADP block allocation, while Rs2.618 billion will come from another development allocation. The chief minister directed the relevant administrative departments to ensure that all payments are made within the current financial year after completion of the required codal formalities. In another major decision, the cabinet approved 11 non-ADP infrastructure schemes under the Karachi Mega Project, to be financed through the allocation for New Development Initiatives' of the ADP 2025-26. These projects carry a cumulative estimated cost of Rs 11.198 billion. The schemes include improvement and rehabilitation of important roads and transport corridors in Karachi, such as Haji Ibrahim Essa Road, Haji Camp Road, Korangi Link Road, Clifton roads connecting Marine Drive, Mehran and Pajero roads in Scheme-33, Korangi Creek Airbase Road, the extension of Jinnah Avenue in Gulzar-e-Hijri, and the Balda Stadium Road project linking Shahrah-e-Orangi to Hub River Road. The cabinet also approved the construction of two major bridges at Power House Chowrangi in North Karachi and 4-K Chowrangi in Surjani Town to improve traffic flow and urban connectivity. — APP

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E-PAD NOTICE CIVIL WORKS

Tenders in favour of Cantonment Board Officer, Attock Cantt are invited from PEC registered contractors in appropriate category having valid upto date registration with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC), for execution of following original works out of grant-in-aid:-

S/N	Description of Work	Est. Cost Rs.(M)	Earnest Money 5% (Rs)	Cost of Bidding Documents (Rs)	PPRA E-Pad 2.0 Code
1.	Provision of Sewerage line / Drainage system and PCC Streets In Muhalla Noor Al Islam Attock Cantt	7.000	350000	3000	P42617
2.	Provision of Sewerage line / Drainage system and PCC Streets In Younas Street Attock Cantt	2.090	104500	2000	P42620
3.	Provision of Sewerage line / Drainage system and PCC Streets In Khoi Street Attock Cantt	2.470	123500	2000	P42626
4.	Provision of Sewerage line / Drainage system and PCC Streets In Qadeemi Masjid Street Attock Cantt	1.140	57000	1500	P42632
5.	Provision of Sewerage line / Drainage system and PCC Streets In Madrasa Haqani Attock Cantt	1.510	75500	1500	P42635
6.	Provision of Sewerage line / Drainage system and PCC Streets In Qazi Madrasa Street Attock Cantt	2.000	100000	2000	P42698
7.	Provision of Sewerage line / Drainage system and PCC Streets In Mandar Street Attock Cantt	3.790	189500	4000	P42704

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Tender documents instruction and specification can be viewed / download from E-PAD.
- The Contractor shall submit 5% bid security of the estimated cost sealed in envelope in the shape of call deposit (original) by hand or through courier shall reach before closing date & time otherwise tender will not be entertained.
- The tenders can only be submitted in electronic format through E-PAD portal from date of publication in newspaper and portal, the deadline for submission of tender is 18/06/2026 at 1200hrs tenders would be opened on the same day at 1330hrs in the presence of contractor or their authorized representatives.
- "Single stage one envelope E-PAD system will be adopted / followed" method of procurement / work / tendering will be adopted as envisaged in PPRA rules.
- No manual tender shall be entertained.
- Any information / bidding documents regarding the E-PAD can be obtained from the office of the Cantonment Board Attock during office hours.
- The validity of Tender / Quotation rates shall be minimum upto 180 days as per PPRA / PEC Rules.
- The Cantonment Board reserves the rights of demanding the analysis of the quoted rates from the concerned tenderer to check their responsibility and workability.
- In case if the lowest tendered rate is less than reasonable rates the lowest tenderer shall have to deposit standing security (refundable after successful completion of the work) @10% of estimated cost in the shape of Call Deposit Receipt (CDR) within 07 days. In case of failure the already deposited 5% earnest money shall be forfeited and the same shall be offered to 2nd lowest participant as per rules.
- The quantum of work may increase / decrease as per PPRA Rules and lowest tenderer shall be bound to execute the work on similar rates / terms & conditions.
- Bidding documents will be issued keeping in view the relevant PEC's Category, criteria and job specification.
- Rates should be quoted on the basis of MES Schedule of Rates 2021 (amended upto date) for schedule items and market rates for non-schedule items.
- Conditional / incomplete tenders / quotation wherein necessary details are missing will not be accepted.
- Works will be executed as per availability of funds.
- The issuance of work orders shall be subject to approval of from CFA / release of grant.
- Successful tenderer will be bound to deposit mandatory dues as already resolved by the Board and shall have to execute an agreement (at their own cost) on non-judicial stamp paper of appropriate value for faithful execution of the contract.
- The Cantonment Board / Executive Officer reserves the right to reject all tenderers as per PPRA's Rules No. 33 (1) due to any reason thereof.
- In case of any further queries, please contact 057-9316154 from 0800hrs to 1600hrs.

PID(I)9659/25

(Samreen Agha)
Cantonment Executive Officer,
Attock Cantt.

Sindh first to implement GSP+ framework

KARACHI: Spokesperson for the Government of Sindh, Sukhdev Hemnani on Tuesday said that Sindh has emerged as Pakistan's leading province in implementing European Union's GSP+ framework through wide-ranging reforms. Highlighting labour sector reforms, Hemnani said that Sindh has led Pakistan in advancing workers' rights and welfare. He noted that since 2008, the minimum wage in Sindh has increased from Rs 6,000 to Rs 40,000 – with plans to increase it further in its upcoming budget. He said labour protections have been extended to agricultural, industrial home-based, fisheries and domestic workers through landmark legislation and welfare initiatives, including Benazir Mazdoor Card, Benazir Hari Card, Sindh Home-Based Workers Act, Sindh Women Agricultural Workers Act, Sindh Domestic Workers Welfare legislation. Hemnani said that

Sindh has adopted a comprehensive child protection framework that has ensured 50 percent reduction in child labour, while recent legislation has prohibited the employment of children in domestic work. He said the province has also launched a Rs14 billion Early Childhood Development Programme benefiting more than 885,000 children under the age of five through quarterly financial assistance to caregivers, growth monitoring, nutrition counselling and school-readiness support. He added that 3,000 non-formal education centres are being established across Sindh to bring out-of-school children into the education system. He further noted that key health indicators have improved significantly, with infant mortality declining to 2.9 percent compared to the national average of 5.4 percent. Reflecting on Sindh's flagship initiatives, Hemnani said that the Peo-

ples Poverty Reduction Programme has helped nearly 1.5 million women rise out of poverty and transformed rural communities through targeted economic empowerment interventions. He added that the Sindh Peoples Housing for Flood Affected programme, covering 2.1 million flood-affected families, has emerged as the world's largest public asset transfer initiative, with ownership rights of climate-resilient homes being granted in the name of women. He further noted that Sindh remains the first province in Pakistan to legislate 18 years as the minimum legal age of marriage for both males and females. He further highlighted the establishment of Gender-Based Violence Courts, Anti-Rape Crisis Cells and specialised investigation mechanisms, which have contributed to an increase in rape conviction rates from 5 percent to 22 percent. — APP

National Days and Armed Forces Days

JUNE

- June 02/Italy National/Independence Day
- June 04/Finland Armed Forces Day
- June 06/Sweden National Day
- June 10/Portugal Portugal Day (National Day)
- June 10/Jordan Arab Revolution& Army Day
- June 11/United kingdom Birthday of Her Majesty The Queen Elizabeth
- June 12/Philippines Independence Day
- June 12/Russian Federation Day of Sovereignty of the Russian Federation(National Day)
- June 13/Zambia Armed Forces day
- June 17/Iceland National Day
- June 18/Seychells National Day
- June 25/Croatia National Day
- June 25/Mozambique National Day
- June 26/Azerbaijan Army 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.....9270601-20



Enquiry

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- PIA Flight Info.....114
- PIA Cargo.....9280979
- Railway Enquiry.....117
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- WASA Rawalpindi..5555489
- CAA.....9281092



Hospitals

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- MH.....5611116
- Cantt Hospital...9270907-11
- DHQ.....5556311-4
- RGH.....9290301-7
- Holy Family.....9290322-7
- PIMS.....9261170-79
- Polyclinic.....9218300-09
- Shifa International 4603666



Departments

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- RDA.....5555864
- TMA.....5770886
- Cantonment Board 9270151-3



Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Water Tank

- Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Digital Youth Hub tops 800,000 users

Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan described Pakistan's youth bulge as a strategic national asset and emphasized the importance of sustained investment in skills development, employment creation and youth empowerment

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan on Tuesday met Kevin Frey, Chief Executive Officer of Generation Unlimited, and Pernille Ironside, UNICEF Country Representative in Pakistan, at the Prime Minister's Office to strengthen collaboration on youth development, digital inclusion, skills training and employment generation. The meeting focused on the ways government and international partners can expand opportunities for Pakistan's young population through innovative and technology driven initiatives. Senior representatives from PMYP and UNICEF attended the meeting, which reviewed ongoing efforts to equip young people with market relevant skills and connect them with education, employment and entrepreneurship opportunities. A major highlight of the discussion was the rapid growth of the Digital Youth Hub, which has surpassed 800,000 registered users, reflecting increasing youth engagement with digital learning and career development platforms across the country. Kevin Frey praised the progress made under the initiative, saying the platform's expanding reach demonstrates the ambition, talent and active participation of Pakistan's youth. Mr Frey stressed the need to further strengthen entrepreneurial and digital skills to prepare young people for future employment opportunities and foster innovation-led growth. Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan described Pakistan's youth bulge as a strategic national asset



and emphasized the importance of sustained investment in skills development, employment creation and youth empowerment. Mr Khan briefed the delegation on key reforms being pursued under PMYP, including the National Youth Employment Policy and the National Adolescent and Youth Policy, aimed at creating greater op-

portunities and an enabling environment for young people. Both sides acknowledged the Digital Youth Hub as a transformative platform that connects youth with learning resources, mentorship, employment opportunities and career pathways. They reaffirmed their commitment to expanding cooperation to ensure inclusive youth de-

velopment and greater economic participation. The meeting concluded with a shared resolve to deepen collaboration between PMYP, Generation Unlimited and UNICEF to advance youth empowerment, expand digital access, enhance skills development and create sustainable employment opportunities for young people across Pakistan. —DNA

Police check 380 individuals

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police checked 380 individuals and shifted 19 suspicious persons, including one Afghan national, to police stations for further verification during grand search and combing operations conducted in different parts of the federal capital. official told APP on Tuesday that the large-scale operations were launched on the directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi to further strengthen security and maintain law and order across the city. The official said search operations were conducted in the areas of Sabzi Mandi, Karachi Company, Shahzad Town, Industrial Area and Sumbal police stations under the supervision of the respective zonal SPs. Lady police officials also participated in the operations, he added. During the search operations, police checked 380 individuals, 185 households, 22 hotels and 90 shops. The official said 162 motorcycles and 63 vehicles were also inspected, while 19 suspicious individuals, including one Afghan national, and 27 motorcycles were shifted to the relevant police stations for further verification. According to the official, special checking points had been established at entry and exit routes of the city to ensure effective monitoring and security screening.

ANF seizes 231 kg of hashish

RAWALPINDI: The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) conducted two operations in different parts of the country and arrested two suspects, recovering 231.2 kilograms (kgs) of hashish worth more than Rs 7.3 million here on Tuesday. According to an ANF spokesperson, the operations were carried out as part of ongoing efforts to curb the trafficking and distribution of narcotics. In the first operation, ANF recovered 230 kgs of hashish from a vehicle near Ghaza Band Road in Quetta district and arrested the suspect. In a separate operation near Iqbal Shaheed Toll Plaza in Attock, 1.2 kgs of hashish were seized from a passenger, who was subsequently taken into custody. The spokesperson said cases had been registered against the accused under the Control of Narcotic Substances Act (CNSA) 1997, while further investigations were underway.—APP

PIDE proposes transparent minimum wage determination

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) here on Tuesday unveiled a landmark policy proposal aimed at transforming Pakistan's minimum wage determination from a symbolic annual announcement into a transparent, evidence-based, and rules-based wage governance system. In Policy Viewpoint No. 62, titled "Reforming Minimum Wage Determination in Pakistan: From Wage Announcements to Wage Governance," PIDE scholars propose a hybrid framework aligned with International Labour Organization (ILO) principles.—APP

Pak, Kazakhstan to expand ties in vocational edu: Wajiha

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Federal Education and Professional Training, Ms. Wajiha Qamar, met Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan Mr. Yerzhan Kistafin, at the Embassy of Kazakhstan and discussed avenues for enhancing bilateral cooperation in the education sector. During the meeting, both sides exchanged views on strengthening educational ties between Pakistan and Kazakhstan, with a particular focus on technical and vocational education, skill development initiatives, scholarship opportunities, and the exchange of skilled workforce. Wajiha Qamar empha-

sized the importance of expanding collaboration in higher education, research, and professional training programs to equip youth with modern skills and improve employment prospects. She highlighted the Government of Pakistan's commitment to promoting international partnerships aimed at enhancing education standards and creating new opportunities for students and professionals. Ambassador Yerzhan Kistafin reaffirmed Kazakhstan's interest in deepening cooperation with Pakistan in the fields of education and human resource development. He expressed willingness to explore joint initiatives, including scholarship programs, technical training exchanges, and capacity-building op-

portunities for students and skilled workers from both countries. The meeting also discussed mechanisms for facilitating institutional linkages between educational organizations of the two countries and promoting mutual learning through academic and professional exchanges. Chief Executive Officer of Pakistan Education Endowment Fund (PEEF), Syeda Hajra Suhail, Secretary PEEF, Murad Shuaib, and Principal Staff Officer to the Minister of State, Syed Bilal Ahmad, were also present during the meeting. Both sides agreed to continue engagement and work closely towards translating the discussed initiatives into practical cooperation for the mutual benefit of Pakistan and Kazakhstan.

Forest fire destroys over 3,000 hectares in Kotli Sattian

ISLAMABAD: The devastating forest fire, fuelled by a recent intense heatwave, has decimated an estimated 3,037 hectares (7,504.7 acres) of natural forest tree cover across 25 locations in the ecologically sensitive Kotli Sattian region of Punjab. According to satellite data released by SUPARCO on Space4Climate.gov.pk, the analysis comparing imagery from May 9 to May 29, 2026, shows extensive damage in Chir pine forests. These forests play a key role in protecting sub-watersheds linked to the Indus and Jhelum river basins. Experts warn that the ecological aftermath extends far beyond the immediate burn scars; the disaster has severely disrupted the peak breeding season for local birds and wildlife, destroyed vital young seedlings and saplings, and opened the door for invasive, fire-tolerant grasses and shrubs to colonise the damaged terrain. While local communities and forest department personnel have successfully contained the blaze in several areas, active fires continue to spread across neighbouring slopes, driven by strong, hot winds that threaten further environmental degradation.

Kundi, Kamal discuss healthcare needs

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi met with Federal Minister for National Health Services Mustafa Kamal here on Tuesday and discussed the provision of radiology machinery and medical equipment for Dinar Hospital, Dera Ismail Khan. During the meeting, the Governor highlighted the difficulties faced by cancer patients from the southern districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and urged the federal government to extend support for the provision of modern medical equipment to the hospital. He said that special attention should be given to underdeveloped and affected areas of the province in the health sector, adding that improved facilities at Dinar Hospital would provide significant relief to patients from southern districts. Federal Minister Mustafa Kamal assured full cooperation and said that the required machinery and medical equipment would be provided. He reiterated the federal government's commitment to strengthening healthcare services in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Both sides agreed to further enhance cooperation between the federal government and the province in the health sector. Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentary Leader in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Ahmad Karim Kundi was also present during the meeting.

NDMA cautions against landslide risks

The NDMA also urged citizens to stay informed through the "Pak NDMA Disaster Alert" mobile application for real-time alerts, weather advisories and emergency updates

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority's (NDMA) National Emergencies Operation Center (NEOC) has issued a landslide alert for northern Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) from June 2 to 6, warning that ongoing rainfall and glacier melt could trigger road blockages, travel disruptions and localized flooding in vulnerable mountainous regions. According to the advisory, persistent rains and accelerating glacier melt between June 2 and 5 are expected to increase the risk of landslides in several districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including Chitral, Upper and Lower Dir, Swat, Shangla, Kohistan, Battagram, Mansehra, Abbottabad and Haripur. The NDMA has identified key transport corridors, including the Lowari Tunnel route, Chitral-Dir Road, Swat Valley roads, the Karakoram Highway and the Naran-Kaghan Road, as highly susceptible to landslides during the forecast period. The authority further warned that the threat of landslides is likely to persist in Azad Jammu and Kashmir from June 2 to 6, particularly affecting the connectivity routes of Shahi, Sharda, Athmuqam and Arang Kel. NEOC noted that heavy rainfall in upper catchment areas may also cause localized surges in streams and nullahs, creating hazardous travel conditions and temporary road closures in mountainous terrain. In response to the anticipated weather-related risks, the NDMA has issued advance alerts to all relevant federal, provincial, and local authorities, directing them to remain prepared for any emergency situation. The authority said its National Emergencies Operation Center is continuously monitoring weather patterns, flood threats, Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs) and landslide risks across the country. Tourists and commuters planning to travel to northern and mountainous regions have been advised to check weather forecasts and road conditions before departure and strictly follow instructions issued by local administrations. The NDMA also urged citizens to stay informed through the "Pak NDMA Disaster Alert" mobile application for real-time alerts, weather advisories and emergency updates.

CDA chief assures full support to business community

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Lt. (R) Sohail Ashraf, has reaffirmed his commitment to facilitating the business community, describing it as the backbone of the national economy and a key contributor to Pakistan's economic growth and prosperity. He expressed these views while addressing a delegation of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), led by its President Sardar Tahir Mehmood on Tuesday. CDA Member Finance and Planning Muhammad Umair was also present during the meeting, said a press release. During the meeting, both sides held detailed discussions on a wide range of issues affecting businesses and investors in Islamabad. Key agenda items and broader reforms aimed at improving the ease of doing business and enhancing the competitiveness of Islamabad's industrial and commercial sectors were discussed. ICCI Presi-

dent Sardar Tahir Mehmood presented the concerns and proposals of the business community in a comprehensive manner. He emphasized that Islamabad possesses immense potential to emerge as a vibrant business and investment hub; however, this objective requires a more business-friendly regulatory framework and a reduction in the financial burden currently imposed on entrepreneurs and investors. He stressed that the business community is facing challenging circumstances due to multiple charges and procedural hurdles, which are adversely affecting investment activity, real estate development, industrial growth and overall economic confidence. He urged the CDA leadership to take practical measures that would facilitate businesses, attract investment and generate economic activity in the federal capital. Chairman CDA Lt. (R) Sohail Ashraf listened attentively to the concerns and recommendations put forward by the ICCI

delegation and appreciated the Chamber's constructive role in highlighting issues affecting the business community. He assured the delegation that all genuine demands and proposals would be examined sympathetically and that the CDA would make every effort to promote a business-friendly environment in Islamabad. He reiterated that the CDA remains committed to public service and facilitation, particularly for the business community, which plays a vital role in driving economic progress. He informed the delegation that he personally holds an open public hearing (Khuli Katcheri) every morning to address the grievances and concerns of citizens and stakeholders, ensuring prompt resolution of issues. The meeting concluded with a mutual commitment to strengthen cooperation between the CDA and the business community for the promotion of investment, economic growth and sustainable development in Islamabad.—DNA

Agriculture machinery imported

ISLAMABAD: The imports of agriculture machinery and implements into the country during last 10 months of current financial year grew by 23.18 percent as compared to the imports of the corresponding period of the last year. During the period from July-April 2025-26, agriculture machinery and implements valued at \$114.569 million were imported into the country as compared to the imports of \$93.009 million of the same period of the last year. The imports of machinery group into the country during the period under review increased by 8.16 percent as compared to the imports of the same period of the last year, according to the data of the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. In last 10 months of the current financial year, the import of the machinery group into the

country reached to \$8.951 billion as compared to the imports of \$8.275 billion of the same period of the last year. On year on year basis, the imports of agriculture machinery and implements into the country during the month of April, 2026 increased by 79.95 percent as compared to the imports of the same month of the last year. During the month of April, 2026, agriculture machinery valued at \$12.276 million were imported as compared to the imports of \$6.822 million of the same month of the last year. However, the import of the machinery group during the month of April, 2026 decreased by 5.12 percent as it was recorded at \$1.083 billion as compared to the imports of \$1.142 billion of the same month of the last year.—APP

LOST AND FOUND

I hereby declare that the following documents have been lost in Sector G-6, Islamabad: MBA degree from Muhammad Ali Jinnah University, Karachi, 2003. B.Com degree from Punjab University, 1999. FSc certificate from FBISE, 1998. Matriculation certificate from FBISE, 1996. Domicile certificate issued from Sanghar, Sindh, 1998. Experience certificate issued by National Highway Authority, 2008. Experience certificate issued by Karachi Pharmaceutical Lab, 2003. Experience certificate issued by Islamabad Travels Consultant, 2000. If found, please inform me at the address below: Ghulam Shabir Mashori S/o Ghulam Rasool Mashori House No. D-15, Street No. 25, Sector G-62, Islamabad.

Briefs

Gwadar scholar Aidah Baloch's achievement celebrated

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Aidah Baloch, a native of Ormara in Gwadar district of Balochistan, has reportedly successfully defended her doctoral dissertation in fisheries at the Ocean University of China, according to community pages and social media posts that have widely circulated in the province. Ocean University of China, located in Qingdao in eastern China's Shandong Province, is known for its programs in marine science, oceanography, aquaculture and fisheries research, Gwadar Pro reported on Tuesday. Community pages and social media users in Gwadar and other parts of Balochistan celebrated the reported achievement, describing Baloch as a role model for young women pursuing higher education. The reported achievement has been welcomed by social media users as a significant milestone for Balochistan's coastal region, where fisheries remain an important source of livelihood and economic activity, and as an example of growing academic cooperation between Pakistan and China.—APP

IRSA releases 189,400 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 189,400 cusecs of water from various rim stations with inflow of 209,600 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in the River Indus at Tarbela Dam stood at 1448.05 feet which was 48.05 feet higher than the dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam were recorded as 103,200 cusecs and 90,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1168.90 feet, which was 118.90 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 41,000 cusecs and 34,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 143,800, 87,700, 58,700, and 19,300 cusecs, respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 42,800 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera, and 19,300 cusecs were released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP

Budget must not overlook women entrepreneurs

She argued that expanding women's participation in the formal economy is a growth strategy rather than a welfare measure. With fiscal space constrained by debt servicing, she said dedicated budget allocations are essential if the National Women Entrepreneurship Policy is to deliver results rather than join a long list of underfunded frameworks

DNA

ISLAMABAD: With federal budget for 2026-27 due to be presented in the National Assembly shortly, Samina Fazil, founder president of the Islamabad Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IWCCI), is urging the government to treat women entrepreneurs as an economic asset rather than a welfare category, warning that years of policy commitments have produced little practical change damaging economy.

Women remain significantly underrepresented in business. State Bank of Pakistan data shows women own only about eight percent of the country's more than five million small and medium enterprises. Fazil said the Finance Ministry should bridge the gap between policy rhetoric and fiscal commitment before the budget is finalised.

She noted that women-focused projects accounted for just 0.2 percent of the federal development budget in 2025-26. Combined spending on women-focused education and health programmes stood at only 0.57 percent, while just 1.3 percent of Public Sector Development Programme allocations over the past five years were directed toward women-focused initiatives.

She said our key demands include a dedicated credit line for women entrepreneurs at concessional rates, mandatory representation of women on the boards of the Export Development Fund and SMEDA, reserved procurement quo-



tas for women-led businesses in federal contracts, and replication of Islamabad's G-11 women's marketplace model across provincial capitals. IWCCI is also seeking greater inclusion of women in trade delegations and dedicated land allocations. Fazil

said successive governments have offered assurances but failed to implement them.

The government launched the National Women Entrepreneurship Policy in November 2025, aiming to increase women's participation in economic activity, boost women-led exports and improve access to finance. However, the policy lacks funding commitments and enforcement mechanisms, raising concerns about implementation. Naima Ansari, former vice president of FPCCI, said the contrast with regional peers is stark. Bangladesh's gender budget stands at about USD 23.7 billion, while its 2.8 million women-led micro and SMEs account for roughly a quarter of all SMEs.

India's gender budget for 2026-27 is estimated at about USD 52.7 billion, equivalent to 9.37 percent of total federal spending, up from 8.86 percent a year earlier. Malaysia a country of 36 million people, has allocated about USD 164 million for women and youth entrepreneurship, alongside a USD 50 million financing facility for low-income women entrepreneurs and a USD 38 million fund at four percent interest for women-owned small businesses. Samina Fazil said Pakistan's Rs17.1 trillion budget for 2026-27 sets a GDP growth target of 4.1 percent and a tax revenue target of Rs15.267 trillion. She argued that expanding women's participation in the formal economy is a growth strategy rather than a welfare measure. With fiscal space constrained by debt servicing, she said dedicated budget allocations are essential if the National Women Entrepreneurship Policy is to deliver results rather than join a long list of underfunded frameworks.

Pakistani official honoured

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Muhammad Muzammil Zia, Project Director and Executive Director of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Secretariat at Pakistan's Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, has been named one of the 2025 Jiangsu University Outstanding International Alumni. He was awarded in a recognition that underscores the deepening educational and strategic ties between China and Pakistan, China Economic Net reported on Tuesday. According to his official profile on the PEC Secretariat website, he earned his PhD from the School of Finance and Economics at Jiangsu University, China. Previously, he completed an M.Phil. degree from Friedrich Alexander University in Germany, specializing in Development Economics, and holds a bachelor's degree in Business Administration. During his undergraduate studies, Dr. Zia was a Confucius Scholar, receiving a scholarship to study Chinese language and culture at Beijing Language and Culture University—an early exposure that laid the foundation for his engagement with China. Dr. Zia has actively participated in the construction of the "Belt and Road" after graduation, accompanying Pakistani Federal Minister of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives on official visits to China and taking part in key events advancing the CPEC.—APP

4 injured as vehicle falls into nullah

RAWALPINDI: Four people were injured when a vehicle plunged into a nullah near Pirwadhai Mor, while a man lost his life in a separate train accident at Rawalpindi Railway Station on Monday, according to Rescue 1122. A Rescue 1122 spokesperson said a Suzuki Cultus carrying four passengers went out of control due to overspeeding and fell into a nullah in front of Turbo CNG on IJP Road near Pirwadhai Mor. Upon receiving the emergency call, Rescue 1122 dispatched four vehicles to the scene, including a motorcycle rescue service unit, two ambulances and a rescue vehicle. Rescue personnel successfully extricated the occupants from the vehicle, administered first aid and shifted them to a nearby hospital for further treatment. The injured included two men and two women, all of whom were reported to be in stable condition and out of danger. In a separate incident, a man was killed in a train accident at Platform No. 3 of Rawalpindi Railway Station. Rescue 1122 teams, accompanied by an ambulance.—APP

National Police Academy upgrade project accelerated

ISLAMABAD: The upgradation project of the National Police Academy (NPA) has gained significant momentum, with major components of the training infrastructure nearing completion. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi visited the National Police Academy on Tuesday to review progress on the ongoing modernization initiative aimed at enhancing the capacity and quality of police training in Pakistan. During the visit, the Interior Minister inspected various development works and chaired a high-level review meeting to assess progress on different projects being undertaken as part of the academy's comprehensive upgrade plan. Officials informed the meeting that construction work on the rappelling tower at the Elite Training School has reached 80 percent completion, while work on the jogging track and obstacle training facilities is approximately 70 percent complete. These facilities are expected to play a vital role in improving the physical preparedness and tactical training of police personnel. The review meeting examined progress on all ongoing projects related to the National Police Academy's modernization. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi directed the concerned authorities to ensure timely completion of the remaining works and maintain high construction and training standards. The meeting assigned a target to complete the Elite School's firing range and boundary wall within the next two months, emphasizing the government's commitment to strengthening specialized police training capabilities. In a significant policy decision, the meeting approved the phased transition of the National Police Academy to solar energy, reflecting the government's broader efforts to promote sustainable and cost-effective energy solutions in public institutions. Officials noted that the move would help reduce operational costs while ensuring a more reliable energy supply for training and administrative facilities. The Interior Minister also directed that all classrooms at the National Police Academy be equipped with modern information technology facilities, enabling trainees to benefit from contemporary learning tools and digital training resources. The meeting further granted principle approval for a review of the MCMC Course, with the objective of updating the curriculum in line with modern policing requirements and international best practices. The visit and review session was attended by several senior officials, including the Director General of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), the Chairman of the Capital Development Authority (CDA), the Inspector General of Islamabad Police, the Deputy Commandant of the National Police Academy, the Deputy Commissioner of Islamabad, and other high-ranking officers. The ongoing upgradation of the National Police Academy is expected to significantly enhance Pakistan's law enforcement training framework by providing state-of-the-art facilities, modern instructional resources, and advanced tactical training infrastructure for future police officers.—DNA

Indonesia seeks admissions for medical students in Pakistani institutions

ISLAMABAD: A high-level meeting chaired by Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination Syed Mustafa Kamal was held to discuss the admission of Indonesian students to Pakistan's medical institutions following a request from their government. According to ministry on Tuesday, the meeting was attended by Pakistan's Ambassador to Indonesia Zahid Hafeez Chaudhri through video link, while Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) President Dr. Rizwan Taj and the council's registrar were also present. Participants held detailed discussions on matters related to the admission of Indonesian medical students to Pakistani medical and dental institutions. During the meeting, it was noted that the Indonesian government has requested admissions for its undergraduate and postgraduate medical students in quality medical colleges across Pakistan. The Indonesian government will bear all educational and residential expenses of the students. Speaking on the occasion, Mustafa Kamal said Indonesian students would be granted admissions to leading medical colleges in Pakistan through a transparent and merit-based process. He said around 200 Indonesian medical and dental students would be provided world-class educational and training facilities in Pakistan, adding that the initiative would significantly strengthen cooperation between the two countries in the field of medical education. Describing the development as encouraging, the minister said the Indonesian government's preference for Pakistani institutions reflected growing confidence in the quality of medical education available in the country.—DNA



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador Ali bin Mubarak Al-Khatir met with his excellency Tariq Fatemi, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister of Pakistan for Foreign Affairs. During the meeting, topics of mutual interest were discussed. DNA

China, FAO facilitate capacity-building for Pakistani delegation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Pakistan, with the support of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Pakistan, has facilitated the participation of a Pakistani delegation in a 14-day Seminar on Marine Sustainable Development in Xiamen, China, under the China Aid Programme. In a statement, FAO said the seminar is aimed at strengthening international cooperation

and enhancing technical capacity in sustainable marine resource management and ocean governance. Organized by the Fujian Institute of Oceanography, the event has brought together 33 participants from seven countries and reflects growing collaboration between China and partner countries on blue economy development and sustainable use of marine resources. "The seminar brings together participants to strengthen cooperation and technical capacity on sustainable

marine resource management and ocean governance," the statement said, according to a Gwadar Pro's report on Tuesday. The Pakistani delegation includes Tariq Qamar Baloch, Secretary of the Fisheries and Coastal Development Department of Balochistan; Dr. Kanwar Muhammad Javed Iqbal, Senior Policy Specialist and Focal Person for Blue Economy at FAO; and researchers Komal Shabbir and Wajih ur Rehman from the National Institute of Maritime Affairs. The participation of Balochistan's

Fisheries and Coastal Development Department is particularly significant given the province's vast coastline and the growing strategic and economic importance of coastal areas including Gwadar. The seminar is expected to help Pakistani officials and researchers gain international experience and technical insights into sustainable coastal management, marine resource governance and blue economy development that could support ongoing development initiatives along Balochistan's coast.

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From Awareness to Action: The Nation Rises Against Proxy Terrorism

MUHAMMAD MOHSIN IQBAL

HISTORY bears eloquent testimony to the immutable truth that no enemy—whether marching openly with banners flying or striking from the shadows with deceit—can ever be mastered without the full and harmonious support of every pillar of the state. Should even a single unit falter or withhold its strength, the grand design for victory collapses. From the sacred struggles of 1948 through successive trials down to the present day in 2025, whenever hostile forces have assailed Pakistan, they have met a resolute and befitting reply. Yet these triumphs have never sprung from military prowess alone; they have drawn their deepest sustenance from the unbreakable solidarity of the people. Without such popular resolve, no enduring success against adversity can be conceived. Our foremost adversary has revealed itself time and again as both cunning and craven. India, though compelled to taste crushing defeat in honourable, open warfare, has retreated into the darkness of proxy conflicts and cowardly subterfuge. It orchestrates its designs sometimes from Afghan territory and at other times by exploiting and misleading vulnerable souls in Balochistan, turning them into instruments against the Pakistani state, its gallant forces, and its innocent citizens. These acts are not the deeds of brave soldiers but the machinations of those who fear direct confrontation. The people of Pakistan, hailing from every province and walk of life, have now seen through this veil of deception. They recognise these elements as true enemies of the homeland—traitors who would barter the nation's future for foreign patronage. Those voices that once sought to drive a wedge between the citizenry and the armed forces have been exposed. The soldiers, officers, and personnel of Pakistan's army and law enforcement agencies are flesh of our flesh and blood of our blood—sons, brothers, and fathers of this very soil, not agents of any foreign power. When they fall martyr to terrorist bullets, it is Pakistan itself that bleeds. This realisation has rent asunder the curtains of propaganda. Public sentiment has awakened, transforming quiet grief into open defiance. In this awakening, the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have emerged as a shining beacon of resilience. Long having borne the brunt of violence, they stand silent no more. Along Kohat Road, in the historic lands of Bara, throughout Khyber Agency, and in the bustling streets of Peshawar, ordinary citizens have taken to the walls with chalk and conviction. These are not



orchestrated slogans but heartfelt declarations from the common man and woman. They proclaim the total rejection of the terrorist ideology of Fitna-ul-Kharj—a deviant creed that cloaks barbarism in false piety. As the Almighty declares in the Holy Quran: "And what is [the matter] with you that you do not fight in the cause of Allah and for the oppressed among men, women, and children who say, 'Our Lord, take us out of this city of oppressive people...'" (Surah An-Nisa, 4:75). This divine call resonates deeply today, urging believers to stand firmly against oppression and protect the innocent. The Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) warned of such fitna-makers, describing groups who would recite the Quran beautifully yet whose deeds remain evil, departing from the faith as an arrow leaves its target. He declared blessed those who confront them, for they are the worst of creation. Another noble Hadith instructs: "Help your brother, whether he is an oppressor or oppressed." When asked how to help the oppressor, the Prophet replied, "By preventing him from oppression." These timeless words guide the nation: true faith demands halting tyranny, not enabling it. The public fury burns bright against such bloodshed. Masterminds of this terrorist activities stand condemned as murderers of the innocent, their hands drenched in the sacred blood of security personnel, policemen, revered scholars, and countless civilians. The terrorists of Fitna-ul-Kharj have claimed over ninety-four thousand Pakistani lives—a staggering toll of martyrs whose sacrifice steels the national will. When ordinary citizens themselves inscribe these messages of rejection, it signals a profound and irreversible shift. The people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, ever brave and steadfast, now align unequivocally with peace, national unity, and the stability of the state. They declare with one voice that terrorism and the Khawarij ideology shall find no refuge upon this blessed land. This noble struggle, however, cannot remain confined to any single region or institution. From the pulpit to the universities, from intellectuals to poets, from the political stage to the media, all schools of thought must play their full and active part. Every voice of influence and every platform of expression must rise in unison to reinforce the message of national unity, expose the enemy's designs, and nurture a collective consciousness rooted in peace and patriotism. These are not fleeting scenes but enduring testaments to a nation's maturing consciousness. The enemy may continue its schemes, striking from afar or through proxies, yet it confronts a people reconciled in purpose. United under the banner of faith, sovereignty, and self-respect, Pakistan draws strength from both divine guidance and its own resilient spirit. History, which has chronicled many trials, now inscribes a new and hopeful chapter—one authored not solely by warriors in the field but by the awakened conscience of an entire people, determined to bequeath to their children a homeland secure, prosperous, and free from the scourge of fear. In this collective stand lies the surest promise of triumph, for when the nation stands as one, no external cunning or internal betrayal can ultimately prevail.

From Colonial Oceans to Colonial Space

Qamar Bashir



As investment accelerates and technological barriers fall, these ambiguities could become sources of future conflict. History demonstrates that competition for valuable resources often leads to confrontation. On Earth, disputes over territory, minerals, water, and trade routes have triggered countless wars. There is little reason to assume that human nature will fundamentally change simply because the competition occurs on the Moon or Mars instead of Earth. Without comprehensive international governance, future disputes may arise over lunar mining zones, orbital infrastructure...

HISTORY often repeats itself, not in identical form, but in familiar patterns. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, European maritime powers such as Portugal, Spain, the Netherlands, France, and Britain discovered that mastery of the seas translated into mastery over nations. Ships became instruments of conquest. Navigation became a pathway to domination. What began as exploration quickly evolved into colonization, exploitation, and the systematic extraction of wealth from foreign lands. The consequences were profound. Entire civilizations were transformed. Indigenous cultures were marginalized or erased. Languages disappeared. Economic systems were redesigned to serve distant imperial capitals. Vast quantities of gold, silver, spices, agricultural products, and human labor were extracted from colonies and transferred to imperial powers. The wealth accumulated during this period laid the foundations of modern Western prosperity, while many colonized societies were left struggling with the political, economic, and social scars of centuries of foreign domination. Even after formal colonialism declined in the twentieth century, new forms of influence emerged. Military alliances, overseas bases, economic dependencies, and political leverage replaced direct territorial control. Powerful nations maintained their influence through strategic military installations, financial institutions, and geopolitical arrangements that often allowed them to shape the policies of weaker states. While the methods changed, the competition for resources and strategic advantage remained remarkably similar. **Modern Space Race** Today, humanity stands at the threshold of another historic transformation. The new frontier is no longer across oceans. It lies beyond Earth itself. The race that once focused on discovering and conquering distant continents has evolved into a race to establish a permanent presence on the Moon and, ultimately, Mars. The objectives are presented as scientific exploration, technological advancement, and the survival of humanity. These goals are noble and inspiring. Yet history teaches us that whenever new frontiers emerge, competition for control and resources inevitably follows. Governments remain major players in this endeavor. The United States, through the NASA, is pursuing the Artemis program, which aims to establish a sustainable human presence on the Moon. China is rapidly advancing its lunar and deep-space ambitions through the China National Space Administration. Russia continues to maintain significant capabilities despite economic constraints. India has demonstrated remarkable achievements through the Indian Space Research Organisation, including

successful lunar missions that have elevated its standing among spacefaring nations. However, the most striking development in this new era is the emergence of private corporations as primary drivers of space exploration. Unlike previous generations, where governments monopolized space activities, today's space race is increasingly led by entrepreneurs and private investors willing to spend billions of dollars pursuing extraterrestrial ambitions. Foremost among these companies is SpaceX, founded by Elon Musk. Its Starship program is specifically designed to transport large numbers of people and massive quantities of cargo to the Moon and Mars. Musk openly speaks about making humanity a multi-planetary species and establishing self-sustaining settlements on Mars. SpaceX has already revolutionized launch economics through reusable rockets, dramatically reducing the cost of accessing space. Another significant player is Blue Origin, founded by Jeff Bezos. The company envisions millions of people living and working in space. Its long-term strategy includes orbital habitats, lunar infrastructure, and extensive industrial activities beyond Earth. Other companies are contributing to this emerging ecosystem. Rocket Lab specializes in launch services and satellite deployment. Sierra Space is developing commercial space stations and transportation systems. Astrobotic Technology and Intuitive Machines are working on lunar delivery systems that could support future settlements and mining operations. Several companies are researching methods to extract water ice, rare earth elements, and other valuable resources from the Moon and asteroids. The economic potential is enormous. Lunar water can be converted into hydrogen and oxygen for rocket fuel. Rare minerals may support advanced manufacturing. Asteroids contain metals whose value could reach trillions of dollars. Mars may eventually offer opportunities for scientific research, resource extraction, and human settlement on an unprecedented scale. Yet these possibilities raise profound questions. Who will own these resources? Who will regulate their extraction? Will humanity repeat the mistakes of colonial history, allowing a handful of powerful nations and corporations to monopolize extraterrestrial wealth? Or will space become a shared domain managed for the benefit of all humankind? Existing legal frameworks provide only partial answers. The Outer Space Treaty prohibits national appropriation of celestial bodies through sovereignty claims. Space is legally considered the province of all humanity. However, the treaty was written during the Cold War, long before private corporations possessed the capability to establish lunar bases or mine extraterrestrial resources.

Many legal ambiguities remain unresolved. As investment accelerates and technological barriers fall, these ambiguities could become sources of future conflict. History demonstrates that competition for valuable resources often leads to confrontation. On Earth, disputes over territory, minerals, water, and trade routes have triggered countless wars. There is little reason to assume that human nature will fundamentally change simply because the competition occurs on the Moon or Mars instead of Earth. Without comprehensive international governance, future disputes may arise over lunar mining zones, orbital infrastructure, transportation corridors, or access to strategically important locations. Military applications of space technologies could further complicate matters. A conflict extending into space would threaten not only the participants but the entire global community, given humanity's increasing dependence on satellites for communication, navigation, finance, weather forecasting, and national security. Therefore, humanity faces a historic responsibility. Before large-scale colonization of celestial bodies begins, the international community must establish a comprehensive rule-based framework governing extraterrestrial activities. Such a framework should define resource rights, environmental protections, dispute resolution mechanisms, technology sharing principles, and equitable access for developing nations. The benefits of space exploration should not be reserved exclusively for the wealthiest countries or corporations. Scientific discoveries, technological innovations, and economic gains generated through these ventures should contribute to the advancement of all humanity. Just as the oceans eventually became subject to international law, space too requires robust legal, ethical, and moral foundations. The dream of reaching the Moon and Mars is among humanity's greatest aspirations. It reflects our curiosity, ingenuity, and desire to explore the unknown. But exploration without justice risks repeating the tragedies of history. The oceans once carried ships that connected civilizations, yet they also carried empires that enslaved and exploited millions. As humanity prepares to cross a new frontier, it must decide whether space will become another arena of competition and domination or a realm of cooperation and shared progress. The choice we make today may determine not only the future of space exploration but the future character of human civilization itself.

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

The Thucydides Trap in the Age of US–Russia–China Rivalry

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



Consider the evolving US–China relationship. Competition in the Indo-Pacific, disputes over technology and rival visions of global governance have all intensified tensions. Yet beneath these frictions lies a more complex reality: shared economic interests, overlapping crisis-management needs and interlinked supply chains

THE language of global politics has long been shaped by metaphors that attempt to reduce the complexity of international affairs into digestible ideas. Among the most influential in recent years is the "Thucydides Trap," a phrase popularised by political scientist Graham Allison, drawn from the ancient historian Thucydides, who observed that the rise of Athens and the fear it generated in Sparta made war almost inevitable. In modern strategic discourse, the term has come to describe the supposed inevitability of conflict when a rising power challenges an established one. In the context of contemporary geopolitics particularly the triangular tensions among the United States, Russia and China the idea has gained renewed relevance. Yet, to treat it as destiny is to misunderstand both history and politics. The Thucydides Trap is not a fixed law of international relations; it is a warning about perception, miscalculation and the absence of political imagination. Whether it becomes reality depends less on structural forces and more on the choices made by statesmen. At the heart of today's global competition lies the uneasy balance between established and rising powers. The United States remains the dominant military, financial and technological force, but its relative position is no longer unchallenged. The China has emerged as the most significant systemic competitor, reshaping global trade networks, technological ecosystems and regional alignments. Meanwhile, the Russia, though economically weaker than the other two, continues to assert itself militarily and strategically, particularly in its near abroad, seeking to preserve influence in a rapidly shifting Eurasian order. It is in this triangle of ambition and insecurity that the Thucydides analogy is often invoked. China's rapid ascent is sometimes framed as the "Athens" of the modern world, while the United States is cast as the "Sparta" determined to resist decline. Russia complicates this binary, not as a peer competitor to the United States in global economic terms, but as a revisionist power seeking to reclaim strategic depth and regional authority. The interaction of these three actors creates a volatile equilibrium, but volatility is not the same as inevitability. History offers more nuance than the Trap metaphor suggests. Not every rising power leads to war and not every

established power responds with confrontation. The post-Cold War period itself demonstrated moments of cooperation, integration and managed rivalry. Even today, despite deep strategic distrust, the United States and China remain economically interdependent, while Russia continues to navigate sanctions, alliances and strategic isolation with pragmatic adjustments. The danger lies not in structural change alone, but in how that change is interpreted. When rising power is automatically equated with threat and defensive behaviour is automatically interpreted as aggression, the space for diplomacy narrows. Misreading intentions becomes as dangerous as actual hostile intent. In this sense, the Thucydides Trap is less a prediction than a psychological condition one that can be self-fulfilling if leaders accept it uncritically. Consider the evolving US–China relationship. Competition in the Indo-Pacific, disputes over technology and rival visions of global governance have all intensified tensions. Yet beneath these frictions lies a more complex reality: shared economic interests, overlapping crisis-management needs and interlinked supply chains. If strategic distrust hardens into ideological confrontation, cooperation becomes politically costly even when it is practically necessary. The Trap, therefore, emerges not from power transition alone, but from the erosion of diplomatic restraint. Russia's trajectory adds another layer of complexity. Its confrontation with the West, particularly in the context of Ukraine, reflects a long-standing struggle over spheres of influence and security architecture in Europe. Yet even here, the assumption of inevitability obscures the role of policy choices, missed diplomatic opportunities and competing narratives of legitimacy. Conflict was not predetermined; it was the result of escalating cycles of action and reaction, each justified by the perceived intentions of the other. What makes the current era particularly precarious is the simultaneity of these tensions. Unlike earlier periods of bipolar rivalry, today's world is characterised by overlapping arenas of competition. The United States and China contest technological leadership; Russia and the West confront each other militarily in Europe; and middle powers navigate shifting alignments in Asia, Africa and the Middle East. This multipolar friction increases the number of potential flashpoints, but it does not remove agency from

decision-making. The crucial question, therefore, is whether leadership in these capitals can resist the logic of inevitability. The Thucydides Trap becomes dangerous when policymakers begin to believe in it as destiny. Once war or confrontation is seen as historically unavoidable, restraint appears naive and compromise appears as weakness. This mindset narrows strategic options and elevates worst-case assumptions into guiding principles. Yet history also shows that rivalry can be managed. The Cold War, despite its ideological hostility and nuclear danger, was contained through a combination of deterrence, diplomacy and institutional frameworks. Even at its most tense moments, channels of communication remained open. The lesson is not that rivalry disappears, but that it can be structured, limited and, at times, defused. In the present context, avoiding the Trap requires more than rhetoric. It demands sustained investment in crisis communication mechanisms, arms control frameworks and multilateral institutions capable of absorbing shocks. It also requires intellectual humility—the recognition that no single power fully controls the trajectory of the international system. Equally important is the role of domestic politics. In all three major powers, internal pressures shape external behaviour. Nationalism, economic insecurity and political polarisation can amplify threat perceptions and reduce flexibility. Leaders often find it easier to respond to external competition with firmness rather than nuance, especially when domestic audiences reward assertiveness. Ultimately, the Thucydides Trap should be understood not as a historical law, but as a cautionary framework. It warns of the dangers inherent in transitions of power, but it does not dictate their outcome. Between structural pressure and political choice lies a wide space for diplomacy, misjudgment, cooperation and restraint. The future of US–Russia–China relations will not be determined by ancient analogies, but by contemporary decisions. Whether the world moves toward confrontation or coexistence depends on whether leaders treat rivalry as a pathway to conflict or as a condition to be managed. The Trap, in this sense, is not destiny. It is a test of judgment in an age where the costs of failure are far greater than in Thucydides' time.

Briefs

Nawaz, Aseefa enter GB campaign ahead of polls

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Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz to pay greater attention to GB's needs. Referring to a committee formed during his government to address constitutional and financial issues related to the region, Nawaz said the initiative could not be completed because he was ousted in 2017. He said the committee's work would be taken to completion and expressed confidence that its final recommendations would benefit the GB people. Describing Gilgit-Baltistan as the centre of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Nawaz said expanded trade with China through the region would generate prosperity and employment opportunities for local residents. He called for the construction of a motorway from Mansehra to Gilgit and said all pending development projects would be pursued under his personal supervision. The former premier said better healthcare facilities should be established so residents would not have to travel to Islamabad or other cities for treatment. Nawaz proposed housing loans for residents, noting that many people in the region still lacked homes of their own. Drawing a comparison with Punjab's housing initiatives, he said similar schemes should be extended to Gilgit-Baltistan. He further called for interest-free loans for youth, scholarships and laptops for talented students, and announced plans to establish a women's university in the region. Referring to the Diamer-Bhasha Dam, Nawaz said his government had allocated Rs100 billion in 2015 for land acquisition, but the project had yet to be completed despite the passage of more than a decade.

Trump terms Netanyahu..

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Trump also claimed he had spoken with Hezbollah through representatives and that the group had agreed to stop firing at Israel and its soldiers, while Israel had also agreed to stop shooting at them. "Let's see how long that lasts - Hopefully it will be for ETERNITY!" Trump wrote. No US president has ever spoken with Hezbollah, with or without intermediaries, and the group is designated as a terrorist organisation by the United States. A Lebanese official told Reuters that Hezbollah had informed the United States, through Lebanon's parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, that it was willing to halt attacks on northern Israel in exchange for Israel sparing Beirut and its suburbs from strikes. Lebanon's embassy in Washington said Hezbollah had accepted a US proposal for a "reciprocal cessation of attacks".

Lebanon announces partial...

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intermediaries, had pledged not to attack Israel. No US president has ever spoken with Hezbollah, with or without intermediaries. The US has designated the group as a terrorist organisation. Trump also said Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu agreed to pull back any troops preparing to attack Beirut. BEIRUT: Lebanese parliament speaker Nabih Berri, a Hezbollah ally, will guarantee the Iran-backed group's adherence to a "global ceasefire" with Israel, his adviser told AFP on Tuesday. Berri, who heads the Hezbollah-allied Amal party, has long acted as an intermediary between the group and the United States, which considers Hezbollah a "terrorist" organisation. US President Donald Trump said late Monday that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had agreed to call off a military raid on Beirut while Hezbollah agreed "all shooting will stop." Adviser Ali Hamdan told AFP that "speaker Berri's main demand is a global ceasefire. If a global ceasefire deal is reached, he will guarantee Hezbollah's respect for it."

Serena Williams to return to tennis at Queen's Club

American legend receives wildcard for Queen's Club women's doubles event

LONDON: Serena Williams confirmed her return to tennis on Monday after an absence of nearly four years, with the American great set to compete in women's doubles at Queen's Club next week. The 44-year-old, who has not played competitively since the 2022 US Open, has been granted a wildcard for the London tournament, which starts on June 8. The 23-time Grand Slam singles champion will reportedly play alongside teenage Canadian Victoria Mboko. Rumours have swirled in recent months that the former world number one was on the verge of a return and Monday's confirmation sent the tennis world into a frenzy. Williams shared a video on social media of herself on a tennis court containing the caption: "Guess everybody heard the news", with her phone buzzing repeatedly in the background.

A post from the seven-time Wimbledon champion alongside the video said: "Good news travels fast." Tournament chiefs said her return would be "one of the biggest sporting moments of the year so far". "Queen's Club feels like the perfect place to begin this next chapter," Williams said in a statement from organisers. "Grass has given me some of the most meaningful moments of my career, and I'm excited to be back competing on one of the sport's most iconic stages." Queen's WTA tournament director Laura Robson described Williams as "one of the greatest athletes the world has ever seen". Williams' third-round loss at Flushing Meadows in 2022 left her one short of the all-time record of 24 Grand Slam singles titles, jointly held by Margaret Court and Novak Djokovic. Her imminent return has been touted since it was revealed in December she had re-



entered the anti-doping programme - a prerequisite to play on the tour again. The American, renowned for her unparalleled power, denied she was planning a competitive comeback but speculation grew. In March, Djokovic predicted a return for Williams and a number of players have spoken about the subject at the ongoing French Open. Coco Gauff, who lost in the third round at Roland Garros on Saturday, said she would love to face Williams for the first time. Former world number one Martina Navratilova, who launched a comeback at 43, hailed her fellow American. "Serena brought the game to another level and it is incredible for the sport that she's pushing the boundaries and coming back," she said. "To many of the younger players, they never had the opportunity to play her. Some may have never watched her on television so this will be a new and exciting experience." Williams, who won her last singles Grand Slam in Australia

in 2017, spent 319 weeks at the top of the world rankings and won 73 singles titles on the WTA Tour. She also won 14 major Grand Slam doubles titles with older sister Venus Williams, who ended a 16-month hiatus from professional tennis last year. When Serena Williams stepped away from the court in 2022 she did not want to use the word "retiring" but instead explained she was "evolving" away from tennis. She has earned nearly \$95 million in prize money and is believed to be the highest-paid woman athlete of all time. The American has largely stayed away from tennis over the past few years, giving birth to a second daughter in 2023. She has focused on entrepreneurial projects through her venture capital fund Serena Ventures and has stakes in a number of sports teams. Wimbledon starts at the end of June and it is not clear whether Williams, if she plays, would feature as a singles or doubles player. Three-time Wimbledon champion John McEnroe said he was "semi-shocked" by her decision but added the "logical next step" would be for her to enter the singles draw at the grass-court Grand Slam. "She's not coming back as 'I'm happy to play and it's fun' - she wants to go win another major," he said on TNT Sports. "That's the only reason that I can think that Serena Williams will want to play tennis again." - DNA

South Korea, Canada discuss stronger space, defense co-op

SEOUL: South Korea and Canada have discussed deeper partnership in advanced industries, including space and defense, Seoul's industry ministry said Tuesday, as the country is making last-minute efforts to win Canada's submarine project. Currently, South Korea's Hanwha Ocean Co.-HD Hyundai Heavy Industries Co. consortium is competing with Germany's Thyssenkrupp Marine Systems for the estimated 60 trillion-won (US\$39.7 billion) deal, with Canada expected to announce the preferred bidder in late June.

During the business roundtable, Hanwha proposed ways to deepen space and defense cooperation between South Korea and Canada, while Hyundai Motor Co. unveiled its vision for hydrogen partnership between the two countries, the ministry said. Korean and Canadian companies signed three memorandums of understanding

for collaboration in space and defense sectors marking the event, it added. "If Canada's abundant resources and advanced technological capabilities are combined with Korea's world-class manufacturing capacity, the two countries will be able to lead the global market in advanced industries," Kang was quoted as saying. On Tuesday, the presidential chief of staff wrote on his Facebook account that he held a meeting on Monday (local time) with Canadian Secretary of State for Defense Procurement Stephen Fuhr and Defense Minister David McGuinty. In the meeting, Kang stressed Seoul's "willingness and capacity" to proactively contribute to Canada's security amid growing security uncertainties stemming from the conflict in the Middle East and other issues, he wrote. - APP

two countries, according to the ministry. The visit by the high-ranking Korean officials to Canada is widely seen as a move to support Seoul's bid to win Ottawa's high-profile submarine procurement project. Currently, South Korea's Hanwha Ocean Co.-HD Hyundai Heavy Industries Co. consortium is competing with Germany's Thyssenkrupp Marine Systems for the estimated 60 trillion-won (US\$39.7 billion) deal, with Canada expected to announce the preferred bidder in late June. During the business roundtable, Hanwha proposed ways to deepen space and defense cooperation between South Korea and Canada, while Hyundai Motor Co. unveiled its vision for hydrogen partnership between the two countries, the ministry said. Korean and Canadian companies signed three memorandums of understanding

Pakistani mangoes export target slashed

PESHAWAR: Pakistan's mango export season begin under mounting pressure from geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, soaring freight costs, climate-related challenges and declining fruit yields, prompting exporters to cut this year's export target by nearly 30 percent. Pakistan Travel Guide. The first shipment of Pakistani mangoes is scheduled to leave for international markets on Tuesday, but industry stakeholders fear one of the most difficult export seasons in recent years. According to Waheed Ahmed, Patron-in-Chief Pakistan Fruit and Vegetable Exporters, Importers and Merchants Association (PFVA), exporters are grappling with unprecedented logistical and financial hurdles as regional instability disrupts access to key Gulf markets, the largest destination for Pakistani mangoes. - APP

India takes down giant Messi statue over safety concerns

A gold-coloured statue was unveiled in December during Messi's much-publicised GOAT tour of India

A GIANT statue of football superstar Lionel Messi was taken down in India on Monday after it was spotted swaying dangerously in the wind, authorities said. Hydraulic cranes and ropes were used to dismantle the 21-metre (70-foot) sculpture in Kolkata, the capital of West Bengal state, before it was taken away on an open-top flatbed truck, AFP journalists saw. "The statue was removed on Monday afternoon after locals complained it was swaying in the wind," state lawmaker Sharadwat Mukherjee told AFP. Mukherjee said the statue would be kept in a government warehouse while authorities decide on a new location. The gold-coloured statue, depicting the 38-year-old Argentina and Inter Miami star lifting the World Cup trophy, was unveiled in December during Messi's much-publicised GOAT tour of India. Messi will captain Argentina at the upcoming World Cup, to be co-hosted by the United States, Canada and Mexico. The statue drew scrutiny as political power shifted in West Bengal, where Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party swept into office last month after defeating the opposition Trinamool Congress (TMC). The statue was reportedly designed under the patronage of former chief minister and TMC leader Mamata Banerjee, and was criticised by the new BJP sports minister Nisith Pramanik as "unsightly".

SC seeks federal govt's response over non-payment of APS martyrs' package

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Tuesday sought a response from the federal government regarding the non-payment of the announced compensation package to the families of the martyrs of the Army Public School (APS) tragedy. A three-member bench headed by Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar heard the case. During the proceedings, Justice Irfan Saadat remarked that the petition had been filed with a delay of 25 days. Counsel for the petitioners submitted that the compensation package announced by the government for the families of the APS martyrs had still not been provided. Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar observed that if the package had been granted to some individuals, it should be extended to all affected families. He further directed the federal government to clarify the extent to which the judgment of the Peshawar High Court had been implemented. The court also considered a contempt petition filed by the families of the martyrs concerning the alleged non-implementation of the Peshawar High Court's decision. The High Court had previously dismissed the contempt application. After preliminary hearing, the Supreme Court adjourned further proceedings in the case for an indefinite period and sought a response from the federal government. - APP

Writ petitions maintainable against any person or body

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Constitutional Court has ruled in a significant constitutional judgment that under Article 199(1)(c) of the Constitution, High Courts have the authority to issue appropriate directions for the enforcement of fundamental rights against 'any person', 'institution', or 'regulatory body'. According to the detailed judgment, a two-member bench comprising Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Rozi Khan Bareech issued the verdict, which had been reserved on March 31, 2026, in appeals filed by the Peshawar High Court Bar Association. The court observed that a review of the constitutional history of the High Courts' writ jurisdiction, from the Government of India Act, 1935, to the Constitutions of Pakistan of 1956, 1962, and the present Constitution, showed that the power had consistently remained broad and was never confined solely to government authorities. The judgment stated that the purpose of Article 199(1)(c) is to ensure the protection of fundamental rights. Therefore, where the rights of a citizen are affected by the actions of a private individual, a private institution, or an autonomous regulatory body, the High Court is competent to intervene. The court emphasized that fundamental rights cannot be treated as merely theoretical rights and that constitutional courts are duty-bound

to ensure their effective enforcement. Referring to various judicial precedents, including the Pakistan Olympic Association case, the court held that the phrase "any person" used in Article 199(1)(c) carries a wide meaning and includes bodies corporate, autonomous institutions, and other organizations. It observed that a violation of fundamental rights need not necessarily originate from a government entity. Citing Article 5 of the Constitution, the court noted that loyalty to and obedience of the Constitution is obligatory upon every citizen. According to the facts of the case, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bar Council had passed a resolution barring lawyers from representing a police officer accused in the murder case of a young lawyer. Subsequently, disciplinary proceedings were initiated against Supreme Court lawyer Shabbir Hussain Gigyani, while Advocate Ali Azeem Afridi's licence was suspended for appearing before a court during a lawyers' strike. The affected lawyers challenged the actions before the Peshawar High Court, which set aside the Bar Council's measures and held that lawyers have the right to practise their profession independently and to represent their clients. The Bar Council then filed appeals before the Federal Constitutional Court. - APP

Iran to open nuclear...

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with Iran's leadership structure continues to complicate diplomatic efforts. The Strait of Hormuz, a critical global energy corridor, remains central to ongoing discussions between Washington and Tehran as both sides explore options for reducing tensions and advancing broader negotiations over Iran's nuclear programme.

Senior Iranian...

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agreement with the United States aimed at ending the conflict between the two countries, and discussions on the final text are continuing in Tehran, a source close to the Iranian negotiating team told Mehr News on Tuesday. The source said Iran was reviewing the proposal cautiously because of what it sees as a history of US non-compliance and longstanding mistrust. "Based on previous experiences, Iran is seeking tangible and real benefits," the source said.

Cabinet approves...

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importers will be required to place standardized 2D barcodes and serialization data on medicine packaging. The system will enable regulators to monitor medicines from production to consumption, helping identify and eliminate counterfeit products from the market. Minister said the decision represented a major and historic step towards ensuring the availability of safe and authentic medicines in Pakistan.

Allies' disagreements..

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Parliamentary sources said the government wants to pass important legislation before the budget session, adding that the proposed laws would have significant implications for the upcoming federal budget. However, the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), a key government ally, is not in favour of the legislation and is opposing the proposed amendments, the sources said.

Romanian envoy...

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EU's strong stance on the matter. "I had an excellent meeting with the EU High Representative, Kaja Kallas, at the EU Delegation in Islamabad, alongside other EU ambassadors. On behalf of Minister Oana Toiu, I thanked her for the EU's firm position on the recent Russian drone attack in Galați, which injured two innocent Romanian citizens," Stoescu stated.

President felicitates...

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President Zardari said that Pakistan attached great importance to its engagement with the European Union (EU) and highly valued Italy's constructive role within the EU in promoting cooperation, dialogue and international peace and stability. He also reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to further strengthening Pakistan-EU relations in areas of mutual interest.

Pak, Italy sign visa...

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multilateral forums, including the United Nations and the European Union, the embassy said. Both sides expressed satisfaction with the substance and growing momentum of strategic cooperation between the two countries and described the agreement as a reflection of mutual trust and friendship. They said the accord would facilitate smoother exchanges of diplomatic delegations and further strengthen bilateral engagement. According to the statement, Pakistan and Italy currently maintain a broad framework of cooperation. Twenty-one memorandums of understanding have been signed between universities and think tanks, while 15 agreements between the two governments cover areas including tourism, culture, science and technology, sports, higher defence studies and cooperation against drug trafficking.



Ahmed Baig Claims Tied-7th in Morocco

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's leading professional golfer Ahmed Baig delivered an impressive performance at the 2026 am green IGPL Morocco Rising Stars, securing a tied-7th finish and building momentum ahead of this week's \$500,000 am green IGPL Bharath Classic. Playing at the Mazagan Beach & Golf Resort, Baig closed the tournament with a two-under-par 68, highlighted by six birdies and two bogeys. His strong finish reflected the consistency and attacking style that have established him among Pakistan's top golfing talents. After opening with a one-over-par 73, Baig bounced back superbly with rounds of 66, 70 and 68 to finish the week on a positive note. His ability to recover from a slow start and compete strongly against an international field underlined his growing stature on the professional circuit. Fellow Pakistani golfer Aadam Syed also enjoyed a solid week, carding rounds of 71, 69, 70 and 70 to finish in 20th place, further highlighting the progress of Pakistani golf on the international stage. Thailand's Tanapat Pichaikool claimed the title at 17-under par. The tournament served as valuable preparation for the am green IGPL Bharath Classic, which will be played from June 4-7 at the same venue and carries a prize purse of \$500,000. Baig heads into the Asian Tour event with confidence, encouraged by his strong ball-striking and steady performances throughout the week. His journey continues to inspire young golfers in Pakistan. Despite limited resources, Baig has emerged as one of the country's most successful self-made sporting talents, aided significantly by the guidance and support of Brigadier (Retd) Riaz Bajwa, who played a key role in his development as a professional golfer.

Briefs

PSX turns bullish, gains over 421 points

ISLAMABAD: The benchmark KSE-100 Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bullish trend on Tuesday, gaining 421.57 points, a positive change of 0.25 percent, closing at 171,021.77 points against 170,600.20 points on the last trading day, according to PSX data.

During the session, the ready market recorded a trading volume of 550.790 million shares with a traded value of Rs 27,444 billion, compared to 589.759 million shares valuing Rs 31,984 billion in the previous session. The market capitalization increased to Rs 18,940 trillion from Rs 18,876 trillion a day earlier.

Out of 488 active companies in the ready market, 221 advanced, 226 declined, and 41 remained unchanged. WorldCall Telecom topped the volume chart with 42,984 million shares, followed by Treet Battery Ltd. with 41,012 million shares and Dewan Cement with 30,501 million shares.

The top gainers included The Thal Industries Corporation Limited, which increased by Rs 84.70 to close at Rs 931.72, and Nestle Pakistan Limited, which gained Rs 56.29 to settle at Rs 7,702.00. On the losing side, PIA Holding Company Limited declined by Rs 333.90 to close at Rs 17,612.00, while Khairpur Sugar Mills Limited fell by Rs 267.24 to close at Rs 2,405.12. In the futures market, 310 companies traded, of which 161 recorded gains, 142 declined, and 7 remained unchanged, according to PSX data.—APP

Gold prices increase by Rs 4,600 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The prices of gold registered a sharp increase in the local market on Tuesday, with 24 karat gold per tola gaining Rs 4,600 to settle at Rs 476,362 compared to Rs 471,762 on the previous trading day, according to rates issued by the All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association. Similarly, the price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold increased by Rs 3,944 to Rs 408,403 from Rs 404,459, whereas 10 grams of 22 karat gold rose by Rs 3,616 to Rs 374,383 against Rs 370,767 in the international market, the price of gold increased by \$46 to \$4,540 per ounce from \$4,494. Meanwhile, the price of silver per tola increased by Rs 94 to Rs 8,153, while the price of 10 grams of silver rose by Rs 80 to Rs 6,989. The price of silver in the international market increased by \$0.94 to \$76.69 per ounce, the association reported.—APP

Rupee gains 01 paisa against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Tuesday appreciated by 01 paisa against the US Dollar in interbank trading and closed at Rs 278.46 compared to the previous day's closing of Rs 278.47.

According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the Dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs 278.30 and Rs 279.55, respectively. The price of the Euro against the rupee decreased by Rs 0.25 and closed at Rs 324.40 from the previous day's close of Rs 324.65, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen remained unchanged to close at Rs 1.74, whereas the exchange rate of the British Pound witnessed an increase of Rs 0.18 and closed at Rs 375.18 compared to the previous day's Rs 375.03. The exchange rate of the Emirate Dirham stood stagnant to close at Rs 75.82, and the Saudi Riyal came down by 01 paisa to close at 74.19.—APP

New motorway linking Pak, China announced

Highlighting the economic significance of the project, Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan stated that traditionally, trade from the Arabian Sea to China via existing routes consumes an immense amount of time and leads to a massive wastage of financial resources

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan on Tuesday announced that a new state-of-the-art Motorway (MNJC) comprising Mansehra, Kaghan, Naran, Jhal Khand and Chilas will be constructed, providing an excellent and safe alternative route to the Karakoram Highway. Chairing a high-level meeting of the National Highway Authority (NHA), the minister said the proposed Mansehra-Naran-Jhal Khand-Chilas (MNJC) Motorway would reduce travel distance on the existing Karakoram Highway by up to 120 kilometres and provide a safer and more efficient route for passengers and trade. During the briefing, it was shared that the total length of the MNJC Motorway will be 172 kilometers. According to the Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan, this project will be completed in two phases. In the first phase, the Motorway will be built from Mansehra to Kaghan, Naran, and Babusar Top, while in the second phase, the project will be completed from Babusar Top to Chilas. A major highlight of the project is the construction of the 13.5 km long Babusar Tunnel which will be the longest tunnel in Pakistan. Keeping future requirements in mind, this 4-lane Motorway will have the capacity to be expanded into 6



lanes. Furthermore, modern rest areas will be built every 25 to 30 kilometers for commuters and specialized trucking terminals for goods transport will be established on both sides of the Motorway. Highlighting the economic significance of the project, Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan stated that traditionally, trade from the Arabian Sea to China via existing routes consumes an immense amount of time and leads to a massive wastage of financial resources. In

contrast to this lengthy and costly transit, this new Motorway will be directly linked with China, connecting Western China to the Ports of Karachi and Gwadar. This network will serve as the fastest, shortest, and most cost-effective route from the Arabian Sea to Western China, drastically reducing transit times and expenditures while proving to be a real game-changer for the sustainable development of the Gwadar Port. At the conclusion of the meeting, the

Federal Minister issued directives to the concerned to finalize all technical aspects of the project within the stipulated time frame. Secretary Communications and Chairman NHA were also present. In the meeting of the National Highway Authority, key decisions were approved to modernize the country's communication network. During the meeting, Federal Minister for Communications was briefed in detail on crucial matters and new projects.

UN warns funding cuts could worsen Rohingya crisis

DHAKA: The UN refugee agency warned on Tuesday that declining humanitarian funding could significantly worsen conditions for around 1.2 million Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, nearly nine years after they fled Myanmar, as aid groups struggle to sustain essential services. As global crises multiply and donor budgets tighten, the United Nations and its partners are finding it increasingly difficult to maintain support for one of the world's largest refugee populations. The pressure has grown with the arrival of about 150,000 more Rohingya Muslims since early 2024, fleeing renewed violence in Myanmar, UNHCR said. Meanwhile, the US and some European countries have cut funding for international aid in recent years. Last month, the UN and the Bangladesh government launched a \$710.5 million appeal to fund food, shelter, health care, education and protection services. However, the appeal — already 26 percent lower than last year's — remains only about 60 percent funded, underscoring mounting financial strain. The funding push comes ahead of the ninth anniversary of the August 2017 military crackdown in Myanmar's Rakhine State, which forced some 750,000 Rohingya to flee to Muslim-majority Bangladesh. "For decades, Rohingya people have been driven from their homes in Myanmar's Rakhine State, with Bangladesh providing protection to successive movements of refugees since the late seventies," UNHCR spokesperson Babar Baloch said. Life in the Rohingya camps in Bangladesh remains bleak. Overcrowded and fragile, the settlements face constant threats from extreme weather, disease and insecurity, with limited access to basic services compounding hardships. With limited access to education and jobs, refugees remain largely dependent on aid, with recent food ration cuts deepening hardship, while vulnerable groups — including women, children, the elderly and people with disabilities — face the greatest risks. As conflict in Myanmar persists, prospects for a safe return remain slim, while growing desperation is pushing some Rohingya to undertake perilous sea journeys to Malaysia or Indonesia — with nearly 900 reported missing or dead in 2025, the deadliest year on record. "We just want the world not to forget that we are still living through this suffering, day after day, year after year. We see no clear future here and no way of returning home," said refugee Mohammed Jashim, 35, a father of three from the camps in Bangladesh. UNHCR called on donors to continue supporting Rohingya refugees until returns can take place safely.—AGENCIES

India resumes trade talks with US

New Delhi: India and the US have almost concluded the first part of their new trade deal, the Indian commerce minister said, as delegations began talks in New Delhi on Tuesday. A US delegation led by Assistant US Trade Representative for South and Central Asia Brendan Lynch arrived in India on Monday. The three-day visit takes place four months after the two countries formally initiated talks, and the first phase of the deal was now almost ready, India's Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal told reporters. "US Ambassador Sergio Gor said that 99 percent of the things have been finalized. Discussions are going on about small issues — commas and full stops," he said, adding that he was confident that they would "conclude the first tranche of the BTA as soon as possible, sign it and start further discussions on how to have a more comprehensive BTA." India and the US released a framework for an interim trade agreement in early February. US reciprocal tariffs on Indian goods were accordingly set at 18 percent, while India agreed to eliminate or reduce tariffs on all American industrial goods and a wide range of food and agricultural products. The framework came six months after US President Donald Trump accused India of funding Moscow's war in Ukraine by buying Russian oil and hit the country with 50 percent tariffs on most of the exports. Negotiations on the new deal slowed, however, after the US Supreme Court struck down Trump's tariff policies a few weeks later. Goyal said that during the current talks, negotiators would examine how these legal changes in the US will be "reflected in the final agreement, and what kind of changes will be made accordingly." Ahead of the US delegation's arrival, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio took to social media to announce that India had "committed to purchasing \$500 billion in US goods over the next five years, focusing on energy, technology, and agriculture." Indian officials have not commented.—APP

UK has 'failed the Palestinian people': Thornberry

LONDON: The UK government has let down the Palestinian people by failing to stand up to Israel or follow through with support for a two-state solution, a prominent MP with the ruling Labour Party has said. Emily Thornberry, the former shadow attorney general, said the government lacked ambition when it came to Gaza and had allowed Israel to act with "impunity" there and in the West Bank, The Guardian reported on Tuesday. "Anyone who believes that what Gazans have right now is a genuine ceasefire has to look at what the truth is. They need to look at the pictures of the children who've been bitten by rats as they sleep in displacement camps in mountains of rubble," said Thornberry, who chairs the Foreign Affairs Select Committee. "More than 72,000 Palestinians have been killed, but we also know that the death toll continues to rise during this so-called ceasefire." Speaking at an event in London hosted by Medical Aid for Palestinians and the Council for Arab-British Understanding, she said though recognizing a Palestinian state was the correct first step to take, more needs to be done to bring about a two-state solution. "We knew, and we have to remember, that recognition was only the first step," she added. "Where's the second step, where's the 10th step, what are we doing?" Thornberry condemned the government's slow reaction to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's announcement last week that he plans for Israel to control as much as 70 percent of Gaza. "I've always been so proud that Britain has always realized the importance of international law. It's something we're strong on, probably for good reason since much of international law was written by British lawyers. "But when it comes to our record on Palestine, I'm afraid we've fallen well short, and in doing so we've failed the Palestinian people." Thornberry noted that it had been 682 days since the International Court of Justice issued an advisory position on the legality of Israel's occupation of Palestinian land, yet the UK had yet to respond to it. "If you accept the ICJ advisory opinion that settlements are illegal and states should do everything they can not to facilitate them, then there are certain actions that should follow logically," she said. "We should be banning the import of goods produced in illegal settlements. We should be going further. We should be placing sanctions on those involved in the settlements. We should be making sure we're stopping the involvement of any British companies. We should be coming down hard on insurance networks. We should be making it clear that it's not possible to construct settlements on the West Bank, and we're going to do everything to stop it." Thornberry urged the UK to reconvene the group of countries that backed Palestinian statehood in 2025. "Let's act together so we make sure it's so economically painful for Israel that settlement expansion becomes untenable, because what's happening in the West Bank is untenable — families driven from their homes, communities under constant threat, Palestinians being lynched in the streets," she said. "That is what we should be confronting. Words of condemnation are just not going to cut it. The tragedy of Gaza is a lesson of what happens when you do too little too late. We failed to intervene early enough. We failed to apply enough pressure when pressure might've made a difference, and we can't let the West Bank suffer the same fate."

Tanveer for smart taxation to promote rural economy

ISLAMABAD: Minister for National Food Security & Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain on Tuesday said that Pakistan needed smart taxation in order to promote nutrition, innovation and rural economy. The minister was addressing a high-level consultation organized by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), where key stakeholders from government, academia, industry, and development partners gathered to deliberate on the rationalization of Federal Excise Duty (FED) on beverages and juice products in Pakistan. The discussion centered on the economic, nutritional, industrial, and agricultural dimensions of the existing tax structure and its broader implications for the country's food and beverage sector. The minister underscored that taxation is not merely a fiscal instrument but also a policy tool that shapes consumption patterns, public health outcomes, and industrial development. He observed that the current uniform FED regime does not adequately reflect the significant differences in sugar content, nutritional value, and economic contribution across various beverage categories, and therefore calls for a more nuanced and evidence-based approach to taxation. Rana Tanveer Hussain emphasized that Pakistan's policy framework must carefully balance multiple objectives, including the protection of public health, the sustain-

ability of domestic agriculture, the competitiveness of industry, and the stability of government revenues. He noted that these goals are not contradictory and can be pursued simultaneously through calibrated and rational policy design. Highlighting the link between the beverage industry and agriculture, the minister pointed out that the formal juice industry plays an important role in strengthening agro-based value chains by procuring substantial quantities of locally produced fruits, thereby generating income opportunities for farmers, transporters, processors, packaging suppliers, and rural workers. He stressed that policy stability in this sector is essential for encouraging investment, value addition, and long-term growth. At the same time, he drew attention to the growing challenge of undocumented and unregulated markets, cautioning that excessive pressure on documented industries can unintentionally shift consumers toward cheaper, lower-quality alternatives. Such shifts, he noted, raise serious concerns regarding food safety, consumer protection, and revenue leakage, and therefore require careful policy calibration. The minister also highlighted the global trend toward differentiated taxation based on sugar content and nutritional composition, stating that Pakistan should move in a similar direction by

encouraging healthier product formulations and innovation within the industry. He stressed that incentives for low-sugar and no-added-sugar products can play a constructive role in improving public health outcomes while supporting industrial modernization. Referring to the broader agricultural context, Rana Tanveer Hussain underlined the importance of value addition through fruit processing as a means to enhance export competitiveness, reduce post-harvest losses, and strengthen rural livelihoods. He noted that Pakistan has significant untapped potential in agro-processing, which can be realized through supportive and rational policy frameworks. Reaffirming the Government's commitment, the minister stated that Pakistan seeks to simultaneously advance public health, strengthen agriculture and industry, and ensure fiscal sustainability through effective revenue mobilization. He described these objectives as mutually reinforcing rather than conflicting, provided that policymaking remains thoughtful, balanced, and evidence-driven. Appreciating SDPI for convening the consultation, he highlighted the importance of inclusive stakeholder engagement in shaping effective public policy and expressed hope that the deliberations would lead to practical, actionable recommendations for the government to consider in future reforms of the FED regime.—DNA

Asia's glaciers, Indonesia's 'eternal snow' may disappear

JAKARTA: Indonesia's "eternal snow," Asia's last two tropical glaciers, are projected to disappear by 2027, the country's meteorology agency said on Tuesday, as global warming has dramatically accelerated ice melt. Perched on Puncak Jaya, a mountain surrounded by dense rainforests in Indonesia's easternmost province of Papua, the Carstenz Glacier and the East Northwall Fin are remnants of the last Ice Age and have existed for around 5,000 years. The Papuan glaciers have undergone a rapid loss of coverage and thickness in the past three decades that will cause the ice sheets to completely disappear by next year, Indonesia's Meteorological, Climatological, and Geophysical Agency BMKG has found. "The loss of ice in Puncak Jaya has been dramatic over the last century," BMKG said in a statement to Arab News. "Based on current retreat rates, the glaciers are expected to disappear completely no later than 2026 or 2027." Around the beginning of the industrial revolution, in 1850, the total glacier area on the Puncak Jaya mountain range was estimated at around 19.3 sq. km. But by September 2025, they had shrunk to a mere 0.09 sq. km. The two glaciers that remain today used to belong to a group of six, with the other four having completely disappeared. Though atmospheric warming has been a primary long-term driver of the ice melt, strong weather events driven by El Nino — a phenomenon that causes tropical ocean water and atmospheric temperatures to get warmer — has sped up the thinning of the glacier. "The El Nino anticipated for the latter half of 2026 is likely to hasten the thaw, ensuring that the current vanishing timeline remains unchanged," BMKG said.—APP

Indonesia, Qatar eye defense coop agreement

JAKARTA: Indonesia and Qatar have expressed an intent to sign a defense cooperation agreement as both countries seek to boost defense capacity and cooperation, officials said on Tuesday. Indonesian Defense Minister Sjafrie Sjamsuddin met his Qatari counterpart Sheikh Saoud bin Abdurrahman bin Hassan bin Ali Al-Thani in Jakarta on Tuesday. The ministers signed a memorandum of understanding, Sjafrie said. "Although we are still in the process of formulating a Defense Cooperation Agreement (DCA), today we will be signing an agreement leading up to the DCA," Sjafrie told reporters. Both ministries also signed other agreements to hold joint military training and education, as well as agreements related to the defense industry, Sjafrie said without giving further details. "Relationship between Indonesia and Qatar is very strategic, especially in defense sector... We look forward for further cooperation between our two countries," the Qatari minister said.—APP

ME war hammering aid supply chains: UN

GENEVA: Even if the Middle East war stopped immediately, disrupted global humanitarian supply lines would not recover before 2027, the United Nations said Tuesday. Nearly 100 days on from the February 28 US-Israeli attacks on Iran which triggered the conflict, the fallout extends far beyond the Middle East region, said Jean-Cedric Meues, chief of global transport and logistics for the UN children's agency UNICEF. "The disruption to the global humanitarian supply chain is impacting children across all the globe, with continued congestion in global supply chain routes and higher costs," he told a press conference in Geneva. Weeks of indirect US-Iran talks, threats and air strikes have failed to end the war or reopen the Strait of Hormuz, the key shipping channel for Gulf oil and gas.—APP

Briefs

Israeli fire kills three in Gaza

NEWS DESK

CAIRO: Israeli fire killed at least three Palestinians in separate incidents across the Gaza Strip on Tuesday, Gaza health officials said. Medics said at least one person was killed and four were wounded when an Israeli airstrike hit a vehicle east of Deir Al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip. The blast left the vehicle a mangled skeleton. Another strike earlier in the day killed one person and wounded another in the nearby Zawayda town, they added, while Israeli gunfire killed one man in northwest Khan Younis, south of the enclave. The Israeli military did not immediately comment on either of the incidents. An October ceasefire, brokered by US President Donald Trump, has failed to halt Israeli attacks in Gaza. Israel and Hamas are deadlocked in indirect talks over implementing the second phase of the deal, which includes the group's disarmament and Israeli army withdrawals. The ceasefire left Israel in control of more than half of Gaza, with Hamas controlling a sliver of coastal territory. Some 930 Palestinians have been killed in Israeli strikes since the truce came into effect, according to figures from Gaza health officials that do not distinguish between combatants and civilians. Four Israeli soldiers have been killed by militants during the same period, the country's military has said.

NAB hands over recovered assets to KP Govt

DNA

PESHAWAR: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) handed over assets worth more than Rs6 billion recovered in the Kohistan financial corruption case to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government, NAB Chairman Lieutenant General (Retd.) Nazir Ahmed formally transferred the recovered assets to KP Chief Secretary Shahab Ali Shah during a ceremony held in Peshawar on Tuesday. According to a statement issued by NAB, assets worth over Rs6 billion were handed over to the provincial government in the first phase. The recovered assets include cash, gold, valuable properties, and luxury vehicles. NAB said that the recovery was made possible through a comprehensive and systematic investigation into the Kohistan financial corruption case. The Kohistan financial corruption scandal allegedly involved the embezzlement of more than Rs37 billion in public funds. As part of the investigation, NAB Khyber Pakhtunkhwa conducted forensic and financial examinations of more than 1,500 bank accounts. Chairman NAB Lt Gen (R) Nazir Ahmed said the complex financial fraud was uncovered through effective investigative efforts and praised NAB KP Director General Farmanullah and the investigation team for their performance.

Pakistan urges UN to make mediation first line of defence

Envoy tells UNSC 2,000 sq km of Lebanon under "illegal Israeli occupation", warns evacuation orders causing civilian suffering

DNA

NEW YORK: Amid rising tensions in the Middle East and continuing diplomatic efforts surrounding the US-Iran conflict, Pakistan told the United Nations on Monday that mediation must become the guiding principle of conflict prevention rather than a tool used only after crises erupt. This message was conveyed by Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, during the UN General Debate on strengthening the role of mediation in the peace-

ful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution. "Peaceful settlement of disputes remains a cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy and a solemn obligation under the UN Charter," he said, adding, "The true test of our commitment to peace is not how we condemn conflicts after they break out, but how proactively we prevent them in the first place." Describing mediation as an essential instrument for peace, he said: "Mediation is the bridge between confrontation and peace. It enables diplomacy to further its noble purpose to replace force with reason, silence with dialogue,

and human suffering with justice." "Conflicts arise when diplomacy is delayed, dialogue is avoided, and disputes are allowed to fester," he said, stressing that the UN's first responsibility was not only to respond to conflicts after they erupt but also to prevent them before they destroy lives, regions and generations." Ambassador Ahmad also referred to UN Security Council Resolution 2788, presented by Pakistan and adopted unanimously in July 2025. He said the resolution reaffirmed the centrality of Chapter VI, encouraged the effective use of mediation and good offices, and underscored the role of the United Nations and

regional organisations in the peaceful settlement of disputes. According to the envoy, the same belief has guided Pakistan's diplomatic conduct, including during the recent crisis in the Middle East. "As a friendly neighbour of Iran, a brotherly partner of the Gulf countries, and a country with longstanding ties of amity with the United States, Pakistan continues to make sincere efforts to facilitate a durable solution for regional and global peace and stability," he said. Outlining Pakistan's proposals to strengthen mediation efforts, the ambassador called for mediation to begin early through enhanced early

warning systems, preventive diplomacy, the secretary-general's good offices and proactive use of Chapter VI mechanisms. He also stressed the need to anchor mediation in international law and the UN Charter, address the root causes of conflicts, strengthen the UN mediation architecture through predictable funding and deeper partnerships, and encourage parties to view mediation as a responsibility to their people and international peace. Pakistan, he added, would continue to uphold mediation at the heart of collective efforts aimed at peaceful settlement, conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

Rubio faces Congress for first time

DNA

WASHINGTON: Secretary of State Marco Rubio faced a litany of questions Tuesday about the Trump administration's fragile or stalling diplomatic efforts around the world when he appears for back-to-back hearings on Capitol Hill for the first time since the Iran war began. The Republican former senator will sit before House and Senate committees to make the State Department's annual budget request. But the focus is likely to shift quickly to the already unsteady ceasefire between Washington and Tehran, which has been further tested in recent days by back-and-forth attacks. Cabinet members, including Rubio, have defended President Donald Trump's decision to launch the conflict despite promises over the years not to engage in "forever wars" in the Middle East. That work has been made more difficult by Trump's shifting goals for the conflict. While Rubio is testifying before Congress for the first time since the Iran war started on Feb. 28, he took part in a classified briefing for lawmakers days after the first US and Israeli strikes. He faced Democrats' anger over the lack of congressional approval but strong support from most Republicans for taking action against one of America's oldest adversaries.

Bahrain bans citizens travel to Iran

DUBAI: Bahrain has banned citizens from traveling to Iran and Iraq until further notice citing regional security concerns, the interior ministry said on Tuesday. The ministry statement said that "it has been decided to prohibit citizens from traveling to both the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Iraq, until further notice." It said the decision was made due to the current security situation resulting from "the repercussions of the Iranian aggression, and out of concern for preserving the security of the homeland and the safety of all citizens." Iran and its proxies in Iraq have launched attacks against Gulf countries, including Bahrain, since the onset of the US-Israeli conflict with Iran. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs progress review meeting on sectoral reforms on 2 June, 2026. - DNA

Oil slips after Trump says talks with Iran are ongoing

Brent crude falls 75 cents to \$94.23, while WTI trades near \$91.31 a barrel

DNA

LONDON: Oil prices trended lower on Tuesday following the previous session's sharp gains as the market remained cautious about progress in US-Iran peace talks. US President Donald Trump said on Monday that talks with Iran were ongoing, while Tasnim news agency reported that Tehran had suspended indirect negotiations with Washington. Brent crude futures lost 75 cents, or 0.79%, to \$94.23 a barrel at 0434 GMT, while US West Texas Intermediate fell 85 cents, or 0.92%, to \$91.31 a barrel. Both benchmarks rose more than 5% in the previous session, having posted a monthly loss of more than 16% in

May on hopes of a peace deal. "While markets had hoped to move past the uncertainty amid prospects of a potential deal, nothing appears to have changed for oil as of this morning," said Priyanka Sachdeva, senior market analyst at Phillip Nova. In a separate interview with CNBC on Monday, Trump had said he did not mind if the talks were over. Shortly after, Trump issued a social media post saying talks with Iran were continuing and told ABC News on Monday that he expects a deal to extend the ceasefire and reopen the Strait of Hormuz "over the next week," according to a post by the outlet on X. "The market is currently focused on whether there's any concrete progress or setbacks in US-Iran negotiations, the tone and substance of statements from both sides (particularly Iran's threats regarding the Strait of Hormuz), and actual physical tanker movements through the waterway," said Tim Waterer, chief market analyst at KCM Trade. The status of the US-Iran negotiations at any given point will ultimately determine whether the current risk premium stays embedded in oil prices or starts to unwind, Waterer added.

Strong E1 Nino could drive up global temperatures

DNA

GENEVA: The United Nations weather agency on Tuesday forecast a moderate or possibly strong El Nino that could drive up global temperatures and increase the risk of extreme weather over the coming months. El Nino is a periodic warming of sea surface temperatures in the central and eastern Pacific Ocean, which typically lasts between nine and 12 months, according to the World Meteorological Organization. The WMO said warm ocean waters were fueling El Nino's development and predicted above-average temperatures in most parts of the world from June to August. The WMO said it is likely El Nino will continue until November. "We need to prepare for a potentially strong El Niño event - which will exacerbate drought and heavy rainfall and increase the risk of heatwaves both on land and in the ocean," said WMO Secretary-General Celeste Saulo. The most recent El Nino, in 2023-24, contributed to 2024 being the hottest year on record, Saulo added. A shift has been observed in the Equatorial Pacific, with sea surface temperatures rising rapidly from late April to mid-May, suggesting El Nino conditions were developing, the WMO said. The agency said it has observed unusually warm subsurface conditions across the tropical Pacific with temperatures exceeding 6°Celsius above average, creating a reservoir of heat that is driving surface warming. The weather pattern is known to disrupt regional climates, potentially bringing increased rainfall to southern South America, the southern United States, parts of the Horn of Africa and central Asia, while causing drought in Australia, central America, Indonesia, and sections of southern Asia. It can also have a warming effect on the global climate, and fuel hurricanes in the central and eastern Pacific Ocean, the WMO said. "The world must treat it as the urgent climate warning it is. El Niño conditions will pour fuel on the fire of a warming world," said UN Secretary-General António Guterres, urging a shift away from fossil fuels toward renewable energy. While there is no evidence that climate change increases the frequency or intensity of El Nino events, it can make associated impacts such as extreme heatwaves and heavy rainfall worse, according to the WMO.

Iran war hands Syria windfall

DNA

DUBAI/LONDON: Syria recorded nearly 12,000 aircraft transits in May as regional airlines rerouted around airspace disrupted by conflict in the Middle East and into skies that most carriers had avoided for more than a decade. Figures from Syria's General Authority for Civil Aviation show 11,801 flights crossed Syrian airspace, more than double the 4,267 recorded in February, the last full month before the Iran war disrupted regional aviation. Overflights in May were about 375 percent higher than in the same month last year. Syria's airspace was a no-go zone throughout the 14-year civil war that ended with the ousting of President Bashar Assad in late 2024. The turnaround is potentially lucrative for Syria, which increased the fees it charges airlines early this year. Based on a flat fee of \$499 per flight introduced by Syria's new government, last month's traffic could have generated as much as \$5.9 million in overflight revenue, according to Reuters calculations. The General Authority for Civil Aviation declined to comment on revenue poten-

tial and the new fees. Airlines were forced to reassess Syria after US and Israeli airstrikes began the Iran war on February 28 and the airspace over Iraq and the Gulf that airlines previously relied upon was shut during March. A ceasefire led to the reopening of airspace in April, but the majority of flights to Europe from Dubai and Doha - two of the world's busiest aviation hubs - have since crossed central Syria rather than Iraq, according to flight-tracking services Flightradar24 and AirNav. Flying over Syria cuts journey times and fuel costs as airlines try to lessen the impact of the surge in international oil prices caused by the disruption linked to the Iran war. Syria upgraded infrastructure at Damascus International Airport after receiving advanced radar and navigation systems from Turkiye late last year, according to Turkish Transport Minister Abdulkadir Uraloglu. Even so, OPSGroup, an aviation risk monitoring advisory body, said that airspace over Syria is still considered risky and is operating with "procedural control only" - the most basic level of air traffic control. Traffic remains less than half the levels before Syria's war, according to aviation officials, and the increase in traffic is largely limited to Gulf carriers as Europe's aviation safety agency still recommends airlines avoid flying over the country and region due to the Iran conflict.

EU says Germany, France should phase out border checks

NEWS DESK

BRUSSELS: Germany, France, Italy and other EU countries that have put in place border controls with other nations in the bloc should move to phase them out, Brussels said Tuesday. The European Commission said the bloc's new external digital border check system and the imminent coming into force of a migration pact strengthening screening procedures lessened the need for internal controls. "With these conditions in place, member states are in the position to work toward phasing out controls at internal borders," said Magnus Brunner, the EU's commissioner for migration. Free movement is the rule within the EU's Schengen area and countries can put up checks at the frontier with fellow members only if they feel there is a threat to public order or internal security. Such measures should be exceptional and temporary - in principle not lasting more than two years. Yet, under political pressure to crack down on migration, many capitals have increasingly used the clause to deploy agents to check comings and goings.

Germany has had some sort of controls on at least part of its border almost continuously in place since 2015. When checks last more than 12 months, the commission has to review the case for them. On Tuesday it issued opinions to Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Slovenia, Sweden and Norway. The latter is not an EU member but is part of the Schengen area. It found that overall the checks were established "due to genuine and legitimate concerns related to security threats and the migratory situation." But it suggested that they should be gradually replaced by "non-systematic police checks," "mobile biometric identification" and "vehicle tracking technologies." Irregular border crossings into the EU detected by authorities fell by 40 percent in the first four months of 2026 compared with the same period last year, according to the EU's border agency. The bloc's new automated system replacing passport stamps with a digital registration and the collection of facial images and fingerprints, became operational in April - causing long queues at some airports.

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