



Islamabad POST

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Environmental protection central to our policy: Dar

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Govt unfurls scheme to boost the tax base

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Pakistan values relations with Ethiopia: Gilani

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To collect more tax

Govt announces fixed tax scheme for small traders

“Everyone says that instead of increasing tax rates at this time, there is a need to reduce them,” the finance czar said. According to the finance minister, an estimated three to four million small traders fell within this category

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The federal government on Friday introduced a fixed tax scheme for small shop owners as part of its ongoing efforts to expand tax collection and document the economy. Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb announced the scheme during a joint press conference with State Minister for Finance Bilal Azhar Kiani, outlining its key features and objectives. FinMin Aurangzeb said that economic stability must be maintained and that increasing the country's revenue to a specific level remained important. “Everyone says that instead of increasing tax rates at this time, there is a need to reduce them,” the finance czar said. According to the finance minister, an estimated three to four million small traders fell within this category. He welcomed the participation of traders who had not previously contributed to the tax net, saying they were now coming forward voluntarily. Aurangzeb said that all stakeholders wanted to play their part in national resources and that the scheme was being introduced in line with consultations and demands from small traders. Speaking on the occasion, Kayani said the simplified scheme would apply to shopkeepers whose annual sales do not exceed Rs200 million, saying the government was bringing the fixed tax framework to make it easier for small traders to fulfil their tax obligations. “This is a one-page form on which traders will record the sale of their goods,” Kayani said, adding that the scheme was being introduced

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Finance Minister Chairs ECC

FIYAZ CH

ISLAMABAD: The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet met today at the Finance Division under the chairmanship of the Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb. The ECC approved a summary submitted by the Cabinet Division for Rs. 7,026.3 million through Technical Supplementary Grant (TSG) for the Sustainable Development Goals Achievement Programme (SAP). The allocation will facilitate continuity of development projects, prevent cost escalations, and timely achievement of programme objectives. The ECC also approved a summary submitted by the Ministry of Defence for provision of a TSG amounting to Rs. 10.15 billion for the Hangor Project of Pakistan Navy under the Revised Armed Forces Development Plan (RAFDP)-2030. The Committee further approved seven summaries submitted by the Ministry of Interior and Narcotics Control. These included Rs. 692.9 million for security arrangements undertaken during the Islamabad Peace Talks,

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ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Nepal Rita Dhital hosted a reception to celebrate 73rd Anniversary of the ascent of Mount Everest. Prime Minister coordinator on tourism Sardar Yasir Ilyas was the chief guest. - DNA

Strict security in place for, transparent GB elections

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Raja Shahbaz Khan Friday assured all arrangements have been finalized for the June 7 elections, with strict security measures in place to ensure free, fair and peaceful polling, warning that any violation of the election code of conduct will invite strict action. While speaking to PTV News, the CEC said that the entire region was under strict security arrangements ahead of elections on Sunday, adding, all necessary measures have been taken to ensure peaceful and smooth polling across constituencies and the election drive has ended peacefully. He warned that strict action will be taken against any violation of the election code of conduct. The CEC urged political parties and candidates to strictly follow the election code to maintain

Continued on Page 06

Operation clean-up

Six India-backed terrorists killed in Panjgur IBO: ISPR

Operation launched on reported presence of Fitna al-Hindustan militants, says military's media wing

STAFF REPORT / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Security forces neutralised six militants belonging to India-sponsored Fitna al-Hindustan in an intelligence-based operation in the Panjgur district of Balochistan, the Inter-Services Public Relations said on Friday. According to the military's media wing, the IBO was conducted on the reported presence of India-backed terrorists. “During the conduct of operation, own forces effectively engaged multiple terrorist locations,” the ISPR said, adding that after intense fire exchanges, six terrorists were killed. The IBO follows two separate engagements in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Dera Ismail Khan and Mohmand districts that killed four terrorists belonging to India-sponsored Fitna al-Khawarij. The military's media wing said that weapons, ammunition, improvised explosive devices, and vehicles have also been recovered from killed terrorists, who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities in the area.

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President, PM commend security forces

APP

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday commended the security forces for successfully carrying out an operation against Indian-backed Fitna al-Hindustan terrorists in Panjgur, resulting in the killing of six militants. In separate statements, both leaders said that operations against terrorists under Operation Azm-e-Istehkam would continue until their logical conclusion. President Zardari reaffirmed the nation's resolve to eliminate terrorism, stating that Fitna al-Hindustan and its facilitators would never succeed in undermining Pakistan's peace and stability.

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MPA booked under Peca law

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: The National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) has registered a case against Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) lawmaker Saqib Chadhar under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA) over allegations of cyber harassment, blackmail and threats made against actor and model Momina Iqbal. The case was registered after Iqbal recently approached the NCCIA with a complaint against the Punjab Assembly member. According to the FIR, Chadhar, his wife, and several associates allegedly subjected Iqbal to cyber harassment and blackmail, while also threatening her and members of her family.

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Briefs

AJK general election on July 27

Candidates to file nomination papers between June 9 and 19

DNA

MUZAFFARABAD: The Election Commission of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) has announced July 27, 2026, as the date for general elections and issued the complete election schedule. According to a notification issued by the region's Election Commission, polling for all constituencies of the AJK Legislative Assembly will be held on July 27 from 8am to 5pm. The notification states that candidates will be able to submit their nomination papers to returning officers from June 9 to June 19. Scrutiny of nomination papers will take place on June 20, while the preliminary list of candidates whose papers are accepted will also be issued the same day.

US dismisses Iranian claims

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: The United States military has dismissed Iran's assertion that its naval forces fired “warning shots” at American warships operating in the Gulf of Oman, calling the claim false and misleading. In a statement released by U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), officials confirmed that no missiles or drones were launched toward U.S. Navy vessels and that American ships continue to operate safely in international waters. “Iranian forces did not fire at U.S. warships. Any such claim is categorically untrue,” the statement read. Earlier, Iran's Army had claimed that its navy fired Qadir missiles and deployed Shahid Dana drones toward US destroyers DDG-103 and DDG-87, allegedly forcing them to retreat.

SCO huddle

Pakistan calls for coordinated response to security challenges

Interior minister says region facing increasingly complex security challenges that require coordinated response

DNA

BISHKEK: Stressing the need for collective action against evolving security threats, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi urged the member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) to strengthen regional cooperation in combating terrorism, organised crime, narcotics trafficking, cybercrime, and terror financing. Addressing a special meeting of Interior Ministers and Public Security Ministers of SCO member countries in Bishkek, Naqvi said the region is facing increasingly complex and interconnected security challenges that require coordinated and forward-looking responses. He noted that criminal and terrorist networks were rapidly adapting to technological advancements, exploiting artificial intelligence, digital platforms, online networks and cryptocurrency transactions to expand their activities. In response, he emphasised the impor-

tance of modernising institutional coordination and enhancing intelligence-sharing mechanisms across the region. “Shared threats demand shared solutions,” Naqvi told the delegates, calling for a comprehensive regional strategy to tackle transnational crime and emerging security risks. Highlighting Pakistan's commitment to the principles of the SCO, he said the country remains firmly dedicated to the “Shanghai Spirit,” which is based on mutual trust, equality, cooperation, and respect for sovereignty. He added that Pakistan has made unparalleled sacrifices in the fight against terrorism and extremism and continues to strengthen its security architecture to address evolving threats. Naqvi pointed to Pakistan's efforts under the National Action Plan, including enhanced intelligence coordination, improved border management, and stronger anti-money laundering measures.

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\$70 bn for Trump immigration crackdown approved by Senate

The legislation allocates billions to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the U.S. Border Patrol, ensuring robust operational capacity through the remainder of Trump's term. Supporters argue the funding is essential to secure America's borders, crack down on illegal immigration

DNA

WASHINGTON: In a dramatic development on Capitol Hill, the U.S. Senate on Friday approved a sweeping \$70 billion funding package to bolster President Donald Trump's hard-line immigration agenda. The measure, passed after months of contentious debate, represents a major victory for Trump on one of his most defining policy issues — deportations and border enforcement. The legislation allocates billions to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the U.S. Border Patrol, ensuring robust operational capacity through the remainder of Trump's term. Supporters argue the funding is essential to secure America's borders, crack down on illegal immigration, and strengthen national security. Critics, however, warn that the bill could lead to mass deportations, family separations, and heightened tensions with immigrant communities.




The Senate vote followed weeks of bitter partisan clashes, with Republicans largely united behind the president's vision and Democrats raising concerns over humanitarian implications. Despite the heated exchanges, the bill's passage underscores Trump's enduring influence over immigration policy and the Republican Party's commitment to advancing his agenda. The measure now heads to the House of Representatives, where GOP leaders are optimistic about swift approval early next week. If passed, the bill will be sent to Trump's desk for signature, cementing one of the most significant legislative victories of his presidency. Observers note that the funding battle reflects broader divisions in American politics, with immigration continuing to serve as a flashpoint in national discourse. The outcome will likely shape the trajectory of U.S. immigration enforcement for years to come, reinforcing Trump's pledge to prioritize border security as a cornerstone of his administration.



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Call to integrate climate action into planning & budgeting

ISLAMABAD: Experts on Friday called for integrating climate action into development planning and budgeting, expanding innovative financing mechanisms, strengthening disaster preparedness systems, and fostering stronger public-private partnerships to help Pakistan build resilience against escalating climate risks. The demands were made during a webinar, titled: Advancing Climate Action through Partnerships and Innovation, on World Environment Day, organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) here. In his opening remarks, Dr. Abid Qayyum Suleri, Executive Director, SDPI and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF), said that Pakistan's climate challenges could only be addressed through evidence-based policymaking, innovative financing, and strong institutional partnerships. He further said climate resilience must become a central pillar of the country's development agenda, having greater alignment between national policies, budgetary priorities and local-level implementation. Dr. Suleri emphasized that climate adaptation should be viewed not only as an environmental necessity but also as an economic investment that safeguards livelihoods, infrastructure and future growth. —APP

CM for early environment observatory project completion

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, in her special message on World Environment Day, reaffirmed the provincial government's strong commitment to eliminating plastic pollution and protecting the environment. She urged citizens to plant more trees and safeguard natural resources, while expressing gratitude over the significant reduction in fog and improvement in environmental conditions witnessed during the past year. The chief minister also commended Punjab Senior Minister Mariyum Aurangzeb and her entire team for achieving notable environmental improvements in Lahore and other parts of the province. —APP

PESCO asked to avoid unannounced loadshedding

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Friday directed the Peshawar Electric Supply Company (PESCO) to avoid unannounced load-shedding across the province, particularly in Dera Ismail Khan, during Muharram-ul-Haram. The directive was issued during a meeting with a PESCO delegation led by Chief Executive Engineer Akhtar Hameed Khan at Governor House. The Governor was informed that the required equipment for the Band Korai Grid Station had been delivered, paving the way for its early inauguration.—APP

Hinza meets President RCCI to discuss startup investment

DNA

Rawalpindi: Hinza Asif, President of Asia Web3 Alliance Japan (AWAJ), held a productive meeting with the President of the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) to explore opportunities for strengthening Pakistan's startup ecosystem, promoting innovation, and increasing international investment opportunities for entrepreneurs. During the meeting, both parties discussed the importance of creating stronger connections between Pakistani startups and global investors, particularly from Japan and other international markets. Hinza Asif shared AWAJ's vision of supporting entrepreneurs through mentorship, cross-border partnerships, investor access, and innovation-driven programs. A

key highlight of the discussion was RCCI's commitment to empowering women entrepreneurs through its dedicated Women Innovation Wing. The RCCI leadership shared the significant progress made in supporting women-led businesses, fostering innovation, and creating opportunities for women to participate



actively in Pakistan's economic development. Hinza Asif praised RCCI's efforts and emphasized the importance of providing women innovators with access to global markets, international mentorship, and investment opportunities. "Pakistan has a talented and ambitious generation of entrepreneurs, particularly women innovators who are creating meaningful impact across industries. Through collaboration between RCCI and international partners, we can help connect these innovators with investors, mentors, and business opportunities beyond Pakistan's borders," said Hinza Asif. The discussions also focused on potential collaboration in areas such as startup acceleration programs, innovation forums, business delegation exchanges, investment roadshows, and initiatives that encourage greater participation of women in technology, entrepreneurship, and emerging industries. Both sides expressed their commitment to working together to create a stronger environment for innovation, startup growth, and international business collaboration. The meeting marks an important step toward building bridges between Pakistan's entrepreneurial community and global investment ecosystems.

Kayani discusses e-commerce evolution with Daraz, Alibaba representatives

The meeting concluded with a shared understanding on the importance of continued collaboration between the government and the private sector to strengthen Pakistan's digital economy, improve the business environment, and contribute to long-term economic development and stability

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Finance and Revenue, Mr. Bilal Azhar Kayani, chaired a consultative meeting with representatives of Daraz and Alibaba Group at the Ministry of Finance. The delegation included Mr. Ben Yi, Daraz Group Chief Commercial Officer, Mr. Kamran Pervaiz, Director Corporate Affairs, and Mr. Umar Usmani, Director Government Affairs. Senior officials of the Ministry of Finance, including representatives from the Tax Policy Office (TPO), also attended the meeting. The meeting was held as part of the government's ongoing stakeholder consultation process ahead of the Federal Budget FY 2026-27. Discussions focused on the evolving e-commerce landscape in Pakistan and the role of digital platforms in promoting entrepreneurship, expanding market access, strengthening economic documentation, and supporting the country's broader digital transformation agenda. The delegation shared its perspectives and proposals relating to the e-commerce sector, including matters concerning the regulatory environment, business facilitation, compliance mechanisms, and the continued development of digital commerce in Pakistan. Participants also exchanged views on opportunities and challenges facing the sector and its contribution to economic growth, innovation, and formalization. During the meeting, the Minister of State emphasized that all proposals under consideration for the upcoming budget are being examined in light of the government's broader fiscal and economic priorities. He reiterated the government's commitment to maintaining a balanced policy framework that supports economic activity, encourages investment and innovation, and promotes sustainable growth. The Minister appreciated the constructive input provided by the delegation and noted the importance of continued engagement with stakeholders in the policy formulation process. He reaffirmed the government's commitment to a consultative and inclusive approach to decision-making and welcomed contributions from industry representatives to support informed and evidence-based policymaking. The meeting concluded with a shared understanding



on the importance of continued collaboration between the government and the private sector to strengthen Pakistan's digital economy, improve the business environment, and contribute to long-term economic development and stability.

NAB, BoR reclaim state land worth Rs433b from encroachers

LAHORE: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB), in collaboration with the Punjab Board of Revenue (BoR), has reclaimed 25,444 kanals of state land worth approximately Rs433 billion from illegal occupants and land mafia networks during one of the largest anti-encroachment drives in Punjab's history. Addressing a press briefing regarding the Punjab State Assets Task Force, Lahore NAB Director General Mirza Faran Baig said the operation was launched in September 2025 under the leadership of Chairman NAB Lt Gen (ret) Nazir Ahmad Butt, DG NAB Faran Baig and Punjab Senior Member Board of Revenue (SMBR) Nabeel Javed. He said the recovery campaign was carried out through joint efforts involving scrutiny of revenue records, demarcation, field enforcement and coordination between NAB and the BoR across several districts of Punjab. Faran Baig said the successful recovery of state land represented a major milestone in safeguarding public assets and strengthening the state's writ over government properties. He added that in recognition of the achievement, the prime minister awarded commendation certificates and shields to the DG NAB Lahore and the SMBR Punjab. The DG said the Punjab government had established the Punjab

State Assets Task Force to ensure the recovery, protection and transparent utilisation of state land. The task force is working in coordination with the BoR to eliminate illegal encroachments and ensure lawful disposal of reclaimed land. He said Lahore NAB Director Muhammad Wasif Bhatti was serving as NAB's representative and focal person in the task force to facilitate coordination among relevant institutions. The NAB and BoR also appealed to the public to report illegal occupation of government land through official complaint mechanisms to enable prompt action by the authorities. Highlighting reforms introduced by the BoR under the guidance of SMBR Nabeel Javed, Faran Baig said the department had ensured 100 per cent collection of agricultural income tax amounting to Rs9.97 billion and generated Rs5.9 billion through lease and sale of government land and properties between July 2025 and April 2026. He said more than 23.5 million registered documents dating from 1947 to 2024 and over 300 million pages had been digitised under the Punjab Urban Land Systems Enhancement (PLUS) Project, while more than 2.5 million mutations had been processed through digital systems. The DG said GIS-based Green Property Certificates, digital valuation

tables and an e-stamp platform had been introduced to improve transparency and reduce discretionary powers in land administration. He added that a fully digital Property Transfer System had been implemented in more than 500 housing societies to ensure transparent audit trails, while mass partitioning had resulted in the creation of over 671,000 new land units to help resolve ownership and inheritance disputes. Speaking about institutional reforms in NAB, Mirza Faran said the bureau had strengthened engagement with chambers of commerce and industry to facilitate business activity and policy development. He said NAB had achieved record recoveries amounting to Rs15.6 trillion during 2023-2026 and facilitated the return of nearly Rs180 billion to victims in cases involving more than 115,000 affected individuals during 2025 alone. According to the DG, NAB recovered Rs263.096 billion and distributed funds among 61,700 claimants, while it was currently pursuing several large-scale public fraud cases involving more than 81,000 victims and estimated losses of Rs124 billion. He said accountability facilitation, business facilitation and parliamentarians' facilitation cells had been established to improve public service delivery.—DNA

Dragon boat festival to commemorate Pak-China friendship anniversary

DNA

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and Tourism Authority (KPCTA) will jointly organize the Dragon Boat Festival being arranged by China Window to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Pakistan-China friendship. The decision was made during a meeting, chaired by Director Culture and Tourism Ms. Halima Iqbal here Friday. China Window was represented by its Administrator, Amdad Aziz Malik. During the meeting, the participants were informed that the Dragon Boat Festival is one of the most popular traditional events in the People's Republic of China. For the first time, it will be organized near Peshawar at Sardaryab in District

Charsadda on the Kabul River. Participants will compete in boat races powered by paddles, showcasing teamwork, skill, and sportsmanship. The primary objective of organizing the festival is to enable the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to share in the celebrations and happiness of their Chinese brothers and sisters, further strengthening the bonds of friendship between the two nations. According to China Window Administrator Amdad Aziz Malik, a series of meetings has already been held with the relevant institutions to ensure the safety and security of all participants. He stated that arrangements for the festival are being finalized and every effort is being made to ensure a successful and memorable event. Director Culture and Tourism Ms. Halima Iqbal said

that the provincial Department of Culture and Tourism is fully committed to promoting tourism and highlighting the rich cultural heritage of both Pakistan and China. She added that under the guidance of the Chief Minister's Adviser on Tourism and Culture, Adil Iqbal, Secretary Saadat Hassan and Director General KPCTA Shahid Khan, the Authority will work closely with China Window to make the event a resounding success. She further noted that as this is the first-ever Dragon Boat Festival being held in Pakistan as part of the celebrations marking 75 years of Pakistan-China friendship, it is essential to ensure its success so that a positive message of friendship, cultural harmony, and international cooperation can be conveyed from Peshawar and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to the world.






Protecting nature key to a sustainable future

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa marked World Environment Day 2026 on Friday with renewed commitment to environmental protection, sustainable resource management and climate resilience, as provincial authorities emphasized the need for collective action to address growing environmental challenges. In a special message issued on the occasion, Secretary Climate Change, Forests, Environment and Wildlife Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Junaid Khan, said protecting the environment was not only essential for the present generation but also a guarantee of a safe, healthy and prosperous future for generations to come. He said the conservation of natural resources, expansion of forest cover, reduction of pollution and mitigation of climate change impacts required coordinated efforts from both government institutions and the public. Describing World Environment Day as more than a symbolic observance, the secretary said the day served as a reminder of humanity's responsibility towards nature and the planet. He noted that the world was facing serious environmental issues, including air and water pollution, rising temperatures, extreme weather events, shrinking forests and increasing pressure on natural resources. Junaid Khan said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was endowed with rich natural assets, including forests, wildlife, mountain ecosystems and water resources, and that the provincial government was implementing measures to ensure their protection and sustainable use. He added that the department was working under a comprehensive strategy focused on environmental conservation, forest development, wildlife protection, enforcement of environmental laws and adaptation to climate change. He highlighted the critical role of trees in maintaining ecological balance, improving rainfall patterns, enhancing soil fertility and supporting human life. He said afforestation, forest conservation and ecosystem restoration were essential to counter the growing threats posed by climate change. The secretary urged citizens, educational institutions, civil society organizations, businesses and the media to actively promote environmentally responsible behavior and increase public awareness about conservation. He said simple actions such as planting trees, reducing waste of water and energy, minimizing unnecessary plastic use and keeping surroundings clean could make a significant difference. Reaffirming the provincial government's commitment, Junaid Khan said environmental protection, forest conservation, wildlife preservation and sustainable management of natural resources remained among its top priorities.—APP

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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

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- PIMS.....9261170-79
- Polyclinic.....9218300-09
- Shifa International 4603666



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- Cantonment Board 9270151-3



Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Water Tank

- Islamabad.....0321-5744480



ISLAMABAD: A large crane hoists a towering flagpole into position at the construction site of the "Marka-e-Haq Monument, as work on the grand structure progresses rapidly, with the scenic Margalla Hills forming a striking backdrop.

Pak becomes pharmaceuticals for human use observer

The Ministry reaffirmed its full support in advancing regulatory excellence, strengthening international collaboration, and ensuring improved access to safe and effective medicines for the people of Pakistan and our export markets

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination Syed Mustafa Kamal welcomed the announcement by the International Council for Harmonization of Technical Requirements for Pharmaceuticals for Human Use (ICH) on the designation of the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) as an Observer at the ICH Assembly held on 2-3 June 2026 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Congratulating the nation on this landmark achievement, the minister termed it a major step forward in Pakistan's journey towards a modern, globally integrated regulatory system, said a press release on Friday. As a globally recognized platform, ICH brings together leading regulatory authorities and industry

to develop harmonised technical guidelines that ensure the quality, safety, and efficacy of medicines. Engagement at this level will enable Pakistan to benefit from global best practices, while contributing to ongoing international regulatory dialogue. This development is expected to strengthen regulatory capacity, improve transparency and efficiency, and enhance confidence in the national pharmaceutical system. It will also open new avenues for the domestic industry to align with international standards and expand its global footprint. This milestone reflects the Government's steadfast commitment to advancing the vision of the Honourable Prime Minister of Pakistan for modernizing public institutions, strengthening the

health system, and ensuring Pakistan's alignment with internationally recognised best regulatory practices. "Alhamdulillah, DRAP's recognition as an ICH Observer is a landmark achievement that reflects Pakistan's determined progress towards global regulatory alignment. We are decisively advancing towards internationally harmonised standards, strengthening our regulatory institutions, and ensuring that medicines available in Pakistan meet the highest levels of quality, safety, and efficacy. This milestone reinforces our vision of a modern, transparent, and globally trusted healthcare system that safeguards the well-being of our people," Kamal said. Reaffirming national priorities, the Government remains fully committed to

supporting DRAP in achieving and sustaining WHO Global Benchmarking Tool (GBT) Maturity Level 3, a key indicator of a stable, well-functioning regulatory system. Looking ahead, the Minister expressed the confidence that DRAP will continue to build on this momentum and progress toward full membership of ICH, alongside enhanced engagement with other international regulatory platforms, including the Pharmaceutical Inspection Co-operation Scheme (PIC/S). The Ministry reaffirmed its full support in advancing regulatory excellence, strengthening international collaboration, and ensuring improved access to safe and effective medicines for the people of Pakistan and our export markets—DNA

SSP Qazi reviews Muharram security at Imambargahs

ISLAMABAD: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations Islamabad Qazi Ali Raza visited various Imambargahs in the federal capital and reviewed security arrangements to ensure safety of mourners during Muharram-ul-Haram. An official told APP on Friday that SSP Qazi met police officers and personnel deployed on security duties and inspected the overall security and screening arrangements at different Imambargahs. Qazi reviewed the checking process and issued necessary directions to further strengthen existing security measures. He directed officers and personnel to remain highly vigilant during duty hours, maintain close watch on suspicious individuals and vehicles, and ensure strict implementation of all security standard operating procedures (SOPs) The SSP also emphasized making the checking process more effective and purposeful to prevent any untoward incident during Muharram-ul-Haram.—APP

FIA offloads Spain-bound passenger

ISLAMABAD: Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Immigration authorities at Islamabad International Airport offloaded a passenger attempting to travel to Spain on a suspected tampered Portuguese residence card. An official told APP on Friday that passenger Gul Fam Khan, son of Aman-ul-Haq and a resident of Sialkot, was travelling to Spain on flight QR-633 when he was intercepted during immigration clearance. The official said scrutiny of travel documents revealed that the expiry date on the Portuguese residence card had allegedly been altered. During initial interrogation, the passenger disclosed that he had paid 200 euros to an agent for changing the expiry date of the residence card, the official added. The accused was subsequently offloaded and handed over to FIA Anti Human Trafficking Circle (AHTC) Islamabad for further legal proceedings and investigation.—APP

Arabian Sea heatwave spurs urgent climate action

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry has warned of an under-water heat emergency in the Arabian Sea and urged urgent climate action to protect coastal communities, fisheries and maritime infrastructure. In a statement on Climate Day, he emphasized that nature provides countless sustainable solutions to the climate crisis, from ocean depths to mountain peaks. He called for urgent action to protect ecosystems and strengthen environmental resilience worldwide. The minister said sustained sea-surface temperatures in the northern Arabian Sea have exceeded the 90th percentile across more than 30 percent of the region in recent weeks. Scientists, he added, describe the event as an unprecedented marine heatwave that is already intensifying climate risks along Pakistan's coast and altering forthcoming monsoon behaviour. "Warmer waters are a known factor in both cyclone formation and intensification," Junaid Chaudhry said, linking the marine heatwave to a potential rise in

tropical cyclone activity in the North Arabian Sea. He warned that increased cyclone frequency and strength would place additional pressure on ports, fishing fleets and coastal infrastructure, and demanded heightened preparedness across government and industry. The minister said climate records show a warming trend since the 1980s and pointed to a westward shift in monsoon moisture that could increase the likelihood of heavier-than-normal rainfall in southern Pakistan, particularly Karachi and Sindh, between mid-August and mid-September. Junaid Anwar Chaudhry said the planet is sending urgent warning signals through increasingly frequent climate extremes. He pointed to rising heatwaves, prolonged droughts, and devastating floods as clear evidence of a changing global climate system. "These events highlight the growing vulnerability of communities worldwide and the need for immediate action. We must respond collectively to protect future generations from

escalating environmental risks and ensure sustainable development policies," he added. He said anomalous Arabian Sea warming is projected to enhance moisture transport toward the coastline, raising the probability of intense rainfall events that could overwhelm urban drainage systems and heighten flood risk. Junaid Chaudhry highlighted the vulnerability of the Indus Delta, citing sea-level rise, coastal erosion and saltwater intrusion that are damaging agricultural land and freshwater resources. He warned of severe coral bleaching and shifting fish populations that threaten livelihoods and the wider blue economy. Referring to recent United Nations Environment Programme reports, the minister said record greenhouse-gas emissions and rapid planetary warming are increasing the frequency, intensity and duration of marine heatwaves worldwide. "The ocean has absorbed a large share of excess atmospheric heat," he said, adding that this buffering role is straining marine ecosystems and the communities that depend on them.—DNA

Sherry urges collective action against climate change

ISLAMABAD : Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Vice President Senator Sherry Rehman Friday called for urgent and collective action to address the growing environmental challenges facing Pakistan, warning that climate change is no longer a future threat but a present and serious reality affecting the country's economy, food security and water resources.

In her message on World Environment Day, Sherry Rehman said Pakistan has suffered an estimated economic loss of nearly \$59 billion due to climate-related disasters over the past three decades. She said that the devastating floods of 2022 and 2025 exposed the country's vulnerability to extreme weather events and underscored the need for stronger climate resilience measures. Highlighting the worsening water crisis, she said the per capita water availability in Pakistan has declined from around 5,000 cubic meters to below 1,000 cubic meters, placing the country under severe water stress. She also expressed concern over the growing threats to glaciers and freshwater reserves, which are vital for Pakistan's long-term water security. The PPP leader said Pakistan generates approximately 50.79 million tonnes of solid waste annually, including nearly 3 million tonnes of plastic waste, creating significant environmental challenges. She added that air pollution had also reached alarming levels, posing serious risks to both public health and the environment. Sherry Rehman welcomed the 2026 legislation banning plastic book covers in Islamabad, describing it as a positive step toward reducing single-use plastics and protecting the environment. Despite the challenges, she said meaningful progress is possible through the promotion of clean energy, large-scale afforestation, water conservation and modern waste management systems. "Environmental protection is not solely the responsibility of governments; it is the duty of every citizen," she said, urging the people to adopt environmentally friendly lifestyles by conserving water, planting trees and reducing plastic consumption. She stressed that immediate practical measures were needed to ensure a safer, greener and more sustainable Pakistan for future generations.—APP

Minorities' rights, interfaith harmony discussed

Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar reaffirmed the government's commitment to providing equal rights and opportunities to all citizens without discrimination. He emphasized that the protection of fundamental rights and the promotion of an inclusive society remain key priorities of the government

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Punjab Minister for Minority Affairs Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora met Federal Minister for Law, Justice and Human Rights Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar here Friday to discuss issues related to minority rights, interfaith harmony, and the promotion of human rights in Pakistan. During the meeting, both leaders exchanged views on measures aimed at safeguarding the rights of minority communities and fostering greater religious harmony across the country. They also agreed to enhance cooperation between the Federal Government and the Government of Punjab to ensure the effective implementation of policies and initiatives benefiting minority groups.



Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar reaffirmed the government's commitment to providing equal rights and opportunities to all citizens without discrimination. He emphasized that the protection of fundamental rights and the promotion of an inclusive society remain key priorities of the government. Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora welcomed the approval of the Child Marriage Restraint Act, describing it as an important step toward protecting vulnerable members of society. He also appreciated ongoing efforts to strengthen the National Commission for Minorities (NCM) and enhance its role in addressing issues faced by minority communities. The two ministers agreed to continue working together to promote minority rights, strengthen interfaith harmony, and support initiatives aimed at building a more inclusive, tolerant, and rights-based society in Pakistan.

Briefs

Five injured after car overturns

ISLAMABAD: A car overturned near roadside rest area at Chakri motorway service in Rawalpindi early Friday morning, leaving at least five people injured. According to details, rescue officials said that panic gripped commuters near Chakri Motorway after a car overturned, leaving five people injured, local media channel reported. A rescue official said the accident apparently occurred due to the driver's negligence; however, the exact cause of the incident has not yet been determined. Authorities are investigating the circumstances surrounding the crash.

Rescue teams reached the scene shortly after receiving information about the accident and shifted the injured to a nearby hospital for medical treatment. Further investigations are underway. Students are educated about environmental challenges through awareness writing publications, research activities and institutional programs, they become more responsible citizens. Strengthening environmental education in schools, colleges and communities can build a culture of sustainability, ensuring that future generations are better equipped to protect natural resources and respond effectively to climate change.—APP

IG reviews community policing, public outreach initiatives

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi remained engaged in important meetings late into the night and reviewed various community policing and public facilitation initiatives aimed at strengthening police-public relations. An official told APP on Friday that the IGP Rizvi met Director ITP FM 92.4 Ayesha Jameel and her team and discussed measures to further enhance community policing in the federal capital. The official said the meeting focused on Islamabad Police's community policing initiatives, educational seminars being conducted in academic institutions and ongoing efforts to improve public awareness and citizen facilitation. According to the official, participants also exchanged views on utilizing FM radio and other communication platforms to strengthen engagement with citizens and promote public safety awareness. IGP Rizvi emphasized the importance of effective communication with the public and directed that awareness initiatives should continue to reach a wider segment of society.—APP

CNF recovers over 52kg narcotics

ISLAMABAD: Punjab Counter Narcotics Force (CNF) has recovered more than 52 kilograms of narcotics worth approximately Rs 9 million during an intelligence-based operation in Sahiwal, officials said on Friday. According to a CNF spokesperson, the operation was launched after the force received information about the transportation of narcotics through a motorcycle in the Sahiwal Chowk area of Sahiwal. Acting on the intelligence, the CNF team arrested a suspect identified as Talha Aslam. During interrogation, the accused led the investigators to a Suzuki car allegedly being used for storing narcotics. A search of the vehicle resulted in the recovery of 36 kgs of charas and 16 kgs of opium with a combined estimated value of around Rs.9 million. The spokesperson said the recovered narcotics had been taken into custody and a case had been registered against the accused under relevant laws while further investigations were underway. CNF Director General Brig Mazhar Iqbal termed the successful operation a reflection of the force's professional capabilities and effective intelligence network. He said indiscriminate action against drug traffickers and their facilitators would continue across the province, adding that investigations had been expanded on the basis of information obtained from the arrested suspect to identify.—APP

Pak inflation hits 22-Month high as U.S -Iran crisis threatens

Officials informed the meeting that Pakistan's economy recorded provisional growth of 3.7 percent in FY2025-26, supported by gains in industry and services, while exports reached \$34 billion and remittances climbed to \$33.9 billion

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's inflation surged to a 22-month high in May, underscoring mounting economic pressures from the ongoing U.S.-Iran conflict and raising questions about the government's ability to achieve its inflation target of 8.2 percent in FY2026-27. Gwadar Pro quoting the data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), stated, headline consumer price index (CPI) inflation rose to 11.7 percent year-on-year in May 2026, up from 10.9 percent in April and 3.5 percent in May last year. On a monthly basis, prices increased by 0.5 percent. The latest reading, the highest since July 2024, came just days after the government unveiled an ambitious economic roadmap targeting 4 percent GDP growth and 8.2 percent inflation for the next fiscal year. The economic targets were discussed during the Annual Plan Coordination Committee (APCC) meeting chaired by Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal. Officials informed the meeting that Pakistan's economy recorded provisional growth of 3.7 percent in FY2025-26, supported by gains in industry and services, while exports reached \$34 billion and remittances climbed to \$33.9 billion. Despite these improvements, economists warn that escalating energy prices linked to Middle East tensions could keep inflation elevated well into the next fiscal year. PBS data showed urban inflation rising to 11.8 per-

cent in May from 11.1 percent a month earlier, while rural inflation increased to 11.5 percent from 10.6 percent. The Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), which tracks prices of essential commodities, also rose 12 percent year-on-year. "Pakistan's CPI inflation has risen to 11.7%, which is highly abnormal. In normal times, inflation may increase by two to three percentage points, but this jump reflects extraordinary external pressures," Islamabad-based economist Malak Tanveer Ahmad told Gwadar Pro. "The biggest driver is the U.S.-Iran conflict and disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz, which pushed oil prices from around \$65-\$70 per barrel before the crisis to above \$100, and at one point nearly \$120," he said. "Pakistan is an import-dependent economy, particularly in energy. Higher oil and LNG costs are feeding directly into inflation and will also affect economic growth." Ahmad said Pakistan's weekly energy import bill had increased from around \$300 million before the conflict to approximately \$500-\$600 million, placing additional pressure on foreign exchange reserves and the rupee. "If the conflict continues, the rupee is likely to come under greater pressure because more dollars will be required to finance energy imports," he said. The State Bank of Pakistan had already warned during the APCC meeting that inflation could remain around 8.2 percent in FY2026-27 due to uncertainties arising from tensions in the Middle East and their impact on global energy markets. Professor Zafar Habib of the Institute of Management

Sciences (IMSciences), Peshawar, said the inflationary impact of the conflict extends far beyond Pakistan. "The impact is not limited to Pakistan. The entire world is feeling the effects of the energy crisis triggered by the conflict," he told Gwadar Pro. "Energy prices do not affect only oil and gas. They influence electricity, transportation, agriculture, and almost every sector of the economy," he said. "Countries that are heavily import-dependent, such as Pakistan, are particularly vulnerable because higher energy prices put additional pressure on their external balances," Habib said, adding that the oil price shock had become a key driver of rising production and transportation costs. The inflation uptick comes as the government seeks to sustain economic recovery through exports, investment, and infrastructure development. During the APCC meeting, Ahsan Iqbal stressed that Pakistan must reduce its dependence on borrowing and pursue export-led growth. "Exports are the master key to economic sovereignty," Iqbal said, adding that long-term economic stability depends on competitiveness, industrial development, and export-oriented foreign investment. The government aims to achieve 4 percent economic growth in FY2026-27, with agriculture expected to expand by 3.8 percent, industry by 4 percent, and services by 4.2 percent. More than 98 percent of development resources in the upcoming fiscal year are expected to be allocated to ongoing projects in water, energy,

transport, and other core infrastructure sectors. Ahsan Iqbal also described projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as the "backbone of the national economy," highlighting their role in supporting long-term growth and connectivity. However, economists caution that achieving both growth and inflation targets may become increasingly difficult if geopolitical tensions persist and oil prices remain elevated. "Pakistan remains highly exposed to energy price shocks and disruptions in remittances. If Gulf tensions keep oil above \$100 per barrel, double-digit inflation could persist through much of FY2026-27," Dr. Salman Ali Bettani, Assistant Professor at the School of Politics and International Relations, Quaid-i-Azam University, told Gwadar Pro. "The main victims would be ordinary households facing higher food, transport, and electricity costs. Even if a U.S.-Iran agreement is reached, it would likely take several months, for structural reasons, before lower energy prices translate into meaningful relief for consumers and inflation," Bettani added. Analysts say that while strong export performance, rising remittances, and continued infrastructure investment could support economic activity, inflation remains one of the biggest risks facing policymakers in the coming fiscal year. Much will depend on developments in global energy markets, exchange-rate stability, and the government's ability to maintain fiscal discipline amid growing external uncertainties.

IRSA releases 228,900 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 228,900 cusecs of water from various rim stations with inflow of 275,500 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in the River Indus at Tarbela Dam stood at 1453.30 feet which was 53.30 feet higher than the dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam were recorded as 138,900 cusecs and 110,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1170.60 feet, which was 120.60 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 46,700 cusecs and 29,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kala-bagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 170,500, 88,000, 54,400, and 18,500 cusecs, respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 57,500 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera, and 10,900 cusecs were released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP

Chinese, Pakistani companies partner on waste management

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Tus-Digital Sanitation Group and Imperial Group Limited Pakistan signed a strategic cooperation framework agreement to establish a long-term partnership in Pakistan's waste treatment service sector, integrating their respective strengths to jointly develop the local solid waste and environmental sanitation market. The agreement marks a step forward in China-Pakistan environmental cooperation, according to a China Economic Net's report on Friday. It follows the signing of a memorandum of understanding on Karachi Technology City between Tus Holdings and the Pakistani side last month during the China-Pakistan B2B Investment Summit in Hangzhou, which committed both parties to jointly build the "Two Countries, Two Parks" innovation mechanism. Under the framework, Tus-Digital Sanitation Group provides technological expertise and project experience in environmental technology, solid waste disposal and digital operations, while Imperial Group Limited contributes its local presence and market knowledge in Pakistan. The two sides will take this cooperation as a point of departure to explore comprehensive collaboration in sanitation operations and resource utilization across Pakistan and the wider Belt and Road markets to jointly build a model green project under CPEC.



ISLAMABAD: Children enjoying a train ride during their visit to Lake View Park in the Federal Capital.

World Environment Day NDMA representative issues climate alert

ISLAMABAD: NDMA representative Waseem Ahmad on World Environment Day stressed collective action by institutions and society is vital for urgent preventive measures, warning of rising pollution, climate change impacts, glacier melt and urging tree plantation, wetland protection, improved housing planning and public participation. NDMA representative Waseem Ahmad, in an exclusive interview with PTV News on World Environment Day, explained the practical grounds of climate change, highlighting the real-time experiences and visible impacts being felt across the country, including rising temperatures, changing weather patterns and environmental stress. He said climate change is no longer a distant threat but a present reality, warning that its effects are intensifying due to pollution, deforestation and loss of natural ecosystems. He stressed that immediate and coordinated action is required to reduce risks and protect vulnerable communities. Waseem Ahmad called for joint efforts by institutions and the public to protect the environment, emphasizing tree plantation, ending deforestation, conserving wetlands, promoting home-based agriculture and adopting nature-based solutions as key steps toward long-term environmental stability. In response to a query, NDMA representative Waseem Ahmad said the authority has significantly upgraded its systems by using state-of-the-art scientific technology for early warning alerts. He said modern monitoring tools are being used to identify high-risk areas in advance, enabling timely warnings and improved disaster preparedness across

vulnerable regions. He further said NDMA is working closely with expert teams and relevant departments, with strong coordination with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan, Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan and other regions, particularly on issues such as glacier melt, environmental risks and climate impacts. He added that initiatives like tree plantation drives, capacity-building trainings and improved response tools are part of ongoing efforts to strengthen resilience and reduce disaster risks. He said many housing societies are not following proper development planning, which is increasing environmental pressure and urban risks. He stressed the need for better land-use planning, regulated construction practices and incorporation of green spaces in urban layouts. He further suggested promoting greenery around homes through kitchen gardening and home-based vegetable cultivation, saying such practices can improve food security, support sustainable living, and help restore environmental balance at the household level. He concluded that nature-based solutions and greenery revival are essential for long-term environmental protection and climate resilience. He reiterated that tree plantation, wetland conservation and sustainable living practices must be widely adopted to reduce growing environmental risks. The NDMA urged the public to stay updated through its official mobile application "Pak NDMA Disaster Alert" and directed provincial and district authorities to remain on high alert, ensuring timely response and effective coordination during any emerging climate or disaster situation.—DNA

933 child martyrs in Kashmir

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Indian occupation forces, through decades of state terrorism and systematic repression, have martyred 933 children during the last 38 years in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, highlighting the tragic human cost of a prolonged campaign of violence against the Kashmiri people. A report released by the Research Section of Kashmir Media Service, a report revealed that 933 children were among 96,497 Kashmiris martyred by Indian forces' personnel from January 1989 till date. The report said that the killing of civilians by the troops rendered 108,007 children orphaned in the territory during the period. The report said that thousands of people, including schoolboys and girls, were also injured by pellets, bullets and teargas shells fired by Indian troops, paramilitary, and police forces. It added that hundreds of persons, including teenagers Hiba Jan, Shahid Fayaz, Owais Ahmed, Aasif

Ahmed Sheikh, Insha Mushtaq, Aaqib Zahoor, Ulfat Hameed, Bilal Ahmad Butt, Tariq Ahmed Gojri, and Faizan Ashraf Tantray, had lost eyesight in one or both eyes due to pellet, PAVA, and poisoned teargas shell injuries after 2010 in the disputed territory. The report added that hundreds of boys as well as girls aged below 19 have been martyred during cordon and search operations and fake encounters, while a large number of boys under the age of 19 are facing illegal detention under black laws in different jails of IIOJK and India. APHC spokesman Advocate Abdul Rashid Minhas, in a statement in Srinagar, said that while the International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression is being observed around the world, a large number of minors are being abused and mistreated by Indian troops in IIOJK. He called upon the United Nations, OIC, EU, and human rights and child protection organizations to come forward and save Kashmiri children from Indian violence. "Indian troops not only arrest innocent children but also use

them as a weapon of war," he said. The world community must also play its role in resolving the Kashmir dispute according to United Nations resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people, he added. He said Indian forces have orphaned and injured children in IIOJK over the last three decades, whose parents have been brutally martyred in fake encounters and in custody. The statement said that violence, cruelties, and brutalities against Kashmiri children had been a well-thought-out plan of the Indian government, which was being carried out by the personnel of the Indian forces. "The world must not ignore the suffering of Kashmiri children on 'Int'l Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression,'" the statement stressed. Meanwhile, APHC-AJK leaders, including Mushtaq Ahmed Butt, in their separate statements said that while the International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression is being observed around the world today, a large number of minors are being abused and mistreated by Indian troops in IIOJK.

Haseena calls climate action a shared responsibility

ISLAMABAD: Commemorating World Environment Day, Haseena Zehra, a Carbon Management expert Friday called for stronger climate awareness initiatives in educational institutions, stressing the importance of engaging students in understanding and publishing the effects of climate change, particularly in Pakistan, a highly vulnerable country and emphasizing tree plantation as a key response strategy. While speaking to PTV News on Environment Day, the expert highlighted that Pakistan is among the most vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change, facing increasingly severe challenges such as rising temperatures, irregular rainfall patterns, floods and water scarcity. She stressed that urgent and collective action is needed at all levels to reduce environmental risks and build resilience against future climate shocks. She emphasized that tree plantation drives play a vital role in restoring ecological balance, improving air quality, and reducing the effects of global warming. Alongside this, she called for stronger awareness writing publications by students, encouraging young people to actively contribute articles, essays, and research-based writings on climate change and environmental protection to spread knowledge within society. The expert also pointed out the growing threat of plastic pollution, describing it as a major environmental hazard affecting land, rivers and marine life. She urged strict reduction in single-use plastics and greater public responsibility in waste management. Furthermore, she highlighted the important role of educational institutions in promoting environmental awareness through research, writing activities, seminars, and eco-friendly initiatives such as clean-up campaigns and plantation drives. She added that public participation is essential for meaningful change, encouraging citizens to adopt sustainable practices in daily life. Activities such as community plantation events, awareness picnics focused on environmental education, and youth-led campaigns can help build a stronger environmental culture. She concluded that only through combined efforts of the government, students, institutions and the general public can Pakistan effectively combat climate change and protect future generations.—DNA

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When Climate Warnings Become Reality

DR. MUHAMMAD BILAL TAHIR

AS the world observes World Environment Day on June 5, 2026, under the theme "Inspired by Nature. For Climate. For Our Future" and the campaign slogan #NowForClimate, Pakistan finds itself confronting a stark reality: climate change is no longer a distant threat. It is unfolding before our eyes, disrupting lives, damaging infrastructure, and testing the resilience of communities across the country. The first week of June has brought an alarming reminder of this reality. Across Punjab, particularly in South Punjab, intense heatwaves have combined with powerful dust storms, strong winds, and sudden rainstorms, causing widespread disruption. Over the past two weeks, temperatures in many parts of the country have repeatedly ranged between 41°C and 47°C. What were once considered rare weather extremes are becoming increasingly frequent, severe, and unpredictable. The recent dust storms and high-velocity winds have uprooted trees, damaged power transmission systems, disrupted transportation, and affected agricultural activities. In several areas, power outages persisted for hours due to damaged electricity infrastructure. Farmers, already struggling with rising input costs and water shortages, have witnessed damage to standing crops and orchards. Tragically, lives have also been lost, while many people sustained injuries due to collapsing structures, falling trees, and weather-related accidents. These events should not be viewed as isolated incidents. They are part of a broader global pattern of extreme weather linked to climate change. Rising global temperatures increase the intensity and frequency of heatwaves, alter atmospheric circulation patterns, and contribute to more volatile weather systems. Scientific evidence increasingly suggests that climate change amplifies the likelihood of extreme events, transforming what were once occasional disturbances into recurring crises. Pakistan faces a particularly difficult challenge. Despite contributing less than one percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, the country remains among the most climate-vulnerable nations in the world. From devastating floods and prolonged droughts to glacier melt and heat stress, Pakistan continues to experience the consequences of a warming planet at a disproportionate scale. The economic implications are equally concerning. Extreme heat reduces labor productivity, increases electricity demand, strains healthcare systems, and affects industrial output. Agriculture, which remains a cornerstone of Pakistan's economy and food security, is especially vulnerable. Unpredictable weather patterns complicate crop planning, reduce yields, and threaten rural livelihoods. Without effective adaptation measures, climate-related losses could continue to escalate in the coming years. One of the most pressing questions is whether such losses can be pre-



vented. While no country can completely stop natural hazards, a significant portion of climate-related damage can be reduced through preparedness, planning, and resilience-building measures. The recent storms once again highlighted a gap between weather forecasting and public preparedness. Meteorological agencies often issue warnings in advance, yet these alerts do not always translate into timely action at local and community levels. Pakistan must therefore strengthen its climate adaptation framework. Early warning systems should be integrated with district-level emergency response mechanisms. Local governments need clear protocols for communicating risks to citizens, schools, hospitals, businesses, and farming communities. Critical infrastructure, including electricity networks, water systems, and transportation facilities, should be redesigned to withstand increasingly severe weather conditions. Nature-based solutions offer another powerful pathway. Expanding urban forests, restoring wetlands, protecting river ecosystems, and increasing green spaces can reduce heat stress, improve air quality, and strengthen resilience against climate-related disasters. Large-scale tree plantation initiatives should be accompanied by long-term ecosystem restoration strategies rather than short-term numerical targets alone. Water management must also become a national priority. Rising temperatures accelerate evaporation, intensify water scarcity, and place additional pressure on already stressed water resources. Investments in efficient irrigation systems, rainwater harvesting, groundwater recharge, and climate-smart agriculture can significantly enhance resilience in both urban and rural areas. Universities and research institutions are no longer passive observers—they are frontline actors in the climate crisis. Through rigorous scientific research, advanced climate modeling, real-time environmental monitoring, and cutting-edge technological innovation, they must generate actionable, evidence-based solutions tailored to Pakistan's escalating and context-specific climate risks. Equally critical is the urgent integration of climate literacy into education at all levels, transforming awareness into capability and equipping future generations not just to understand environmental risks, but to actively anticipate, respond to, and reshape them. World Environment Day 2026 should therefore be more than a symbolic observance. It should serve as a national wake-up call. The dust storms sweeping across Punjab, the scorching temperatures gripping cities, and the increasing frequency of extreme weather events are warning signs that cannot be ignored. Climate change is no longer a future possibility; it is a present reality. The issue is no longer whether climate impacts will intensify—they already are. The real test is whether Pakistan moves from awareness to action fast enough to limit the damage. Today's storms are not anomalies; they are signals of a deeper systemic shift. If we translate warnings into preparedness through stronger early warning systems, climate-resilient infrastructure, and community-level response mechanisms, we can still safeguard lives, livelihoods, and ecosystems. But if response continues to lag behind risk, every passing season will compound losses—economic, environmental, and human—at an escalating and irreversible scale. The climate warnings have already become reality. Now, climate action must become our national priority.

Congress Clips Trump's War Wings on Iran

Qamar Bashir



The White House immediately attempted to minimize the vote, calling it meaningless and arguing that it undermines ongoing negotiations with Iran. Republican leaders similarly argued that Congress was weakening the president's hand at a critical diplomatic moment. Ironically, that argument may contain the strongest evidence that the vote matters. If the resolution truly had no impact, there would be little concern about its effect on negotiations. The very fact that administration officials and congressional allies argue that it weakens American leverage implicitly acknowledges that the vote has changed perceptions...

THE passage of the House War Powers Resolution by a vote of 215-208 on 3rd June may ultimately be remembered as the most consequential political development of the Iran war—not because it immediately ends the conflict, but because it fundamentally alters the balance of power, the psychology of negotiations, and the strategic calculations of every actor involved. For nearly three months, the United States approached the conflict believing that military pressure, economic sanctions, naval deployments, and the threat of further escalation would compel Iran to make concessions. Instead, the opposite appears to have happened. The war has become increasingly unpopular inside the United States, imposed significant economic costs on American households, generated uncertainty in financial markets, strained relations with allies, and exposed vulnerabilities in America's military posture throughout the Middle East. Against that backdrop, the House vote represents far more than a symbolic congressional gesture. It is the first clear institutional signal that domestic political support for an open-ended conflict is beginning to fracture. The resolution, introduced by Representative Gregory Meeks of New York, directs President Donald Trump to remove U.S. armed forces from hostilities against Iran unless Congress formally authorizes military action. Although the measure does not automatically terminate the conflict and faces significant legal and political obstacles before becoming binding law, its political significance is undeniable. Most importantly, the resolution passed despite opposition from Republican leadership and the White House. Four Republicans—Brian Fitzpatrick, Thomas Massie, Tom Barrett, and Warren Davidson—joined every Democrat in supporting the measure. This transformed what could have been dismissed as a partisan maneuver into a bipartisan warning that congressional patience with the conflict is wearing thin. The White House immediately attempted to minimize the vote, calling it meaningless and arguing that it undermines ongoing negotiations with Iran. Republican leaders similarly argued that Congress was weakening the president's hand at a critical diplomatic moment. Ironically, that argument may contain the strongest evidence that the vote matters. If the resolution truly had no impact, there would be little concern about its effect on negotiations. The very fact that administration officials and congressional allies argue that it weakens American leverage implicitly acknowledges that the vote has changed perceptions of presidential authority and political support. Before the House vote, Iran had to assume that President Trump retained broad freedom to escalate military operations if negotiations stalled.

American aircraft carriers, regional bases, strategic bombers, sanctions, and military alliances all reinforced the credibility of that threat. After the vote, Tehran sees a different picture. Iran now sees an American president facing congressional resistance, growing public opposition, rising economic pressures, and increasing questions about the sustainability of the war effort. As a result, Iran's negotiating position has strengthened. Iranian leaders will now conclude that time is increasingly on their side. They may calculate that domestic political pressures inside the United States will continue to grow as fuel prices, inflationary pressures, and economic uncertainty affect American voters. The House vote reflects that growing reality. Members of Congress must answer to voters. As public skepticism about the conflict increased, lawmakers faced mounting pressure to reassert Congress's constitutional role in decisions of war and peace. For the Gulf Cooperation Council states, the resolution presents a complicated picture. Gulf governments traditionally viewed American military bases as sources of protection and deterrence. However, the conflict exposed another reality. During periods of escalation, those same bases became potential targets for retaliation. Many Gulf states found themselves caught between dependence on American security guarantees and concern that their territories could become battlegrounds in a wider regional confrontation. The House resolution may therefore be interpreted not simply as a limitation on American power but as a possible step toward reducing regional escalation. For Israel, the implications may be equally significant. Israeli security planning has long relied upon close strategic coordination with Washington. Any indication that Congress is becoming reluctant to support expanded military operations inevitably affects calculations in Jerusalem. While the resolution does not alter America's commitment to Israel, it signals that future military escalations involving Iran may face greater political scrutiny in Washington. This introduces a new variable into regional decision-making. For Iran, meanwhile, the House vote creates opportunities but also risks. Iran may interpret congressional opposition as evidence that American political divisions are deepening. That perception could encourage Tehran to harden its negotiating position. However, overconfidence carries dangers. If Iranian leaders misinterpret congressional restraint as military weakness, they risk provoking reactions that could ultimately strengthen support for a tougher American response. The most likely outcome is neither immediate peace nor immediate escalation. Instead, the resolution shifts incentives toward negotiation. President Trump now faces a poli-

tical environment in which continued military escalation becomes more difficult to justify. Congress has signaled opposition. Public support remains uncertain. Economic costs continue accumulating. Allies are increasingly nervous. Markets prefer stability. Under such circumstances, a negotiated settlement inevitably becomes more attractive than continued confrontation. The true significance of the congressional resolution therefore lies not in its legal force but in its psychological and political impact. It sends a powerful signal that the debate in Washington is shifting, and that shift is being carefully observed far beyond the halls of Congress. In Tehran, it reinforces the perception that military escalation may no longer enjoy the unquestioned political support it once did. Across the Gulf, it compels governments to reassess risks, security assumptions, and future alignments. In global financial markets, it introduces the possibility that diplomacy may eventually prevail over conflict, influencing calculations about stability, energy flows, and investment. At home, it revives a broader discussion about Congress's constitutional role in matters of war and peace, while simultaneously increasing pressure on the White House to pursue a more sustainable diplomatic path. In that sense, the resolution's greatest impact is not what it legally compels, but how it reshapes perceptions, expectations, and strategic calculations among all the key actors involved. Yet the significance of this moment extends even further. Tehran is unlikely to misinterpret congressional criticism of the war as a sign of imminent American retreat or weakness. Iranian leaders have repeatedly argued that they were engaged in negotiations when previous military confrontations erupted, and as a result, deep skepticism toward American and Israeli intentions remains embedded in Iran's strategic thinking. For that reason, Iran is unlikely to abandon its cautious posture. Rather than celebrating, it will likely continue to negotiate from a position of vigilance, seeking guarantees, verification mechanisms, and tangible commitments before making significant concessions. It signals that the debate over the Iran war has moved from the deserts and waterways of the Middle East into the heart of American democracy itself. And once that transition occurs, the outcome of the conflict is shaped not only by military power, but by politics, public opinion, constitutional authority, and economic reality. That is why the House vote may ultimately be remembered as the turning point that changed the trajectory of the Iran war.

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The Price of Unchecked Indulgence

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



The consequences of this flawed upbringing are increasingly visible around us. Newspapers frequently carry reports of horrific road accidents involving expensive vehicles travelling at reckless speeds. Innocent pedestrians are crushed, families are plunged into grief, and valuable property is destroyed. In some cases, the young driver himself loses his life. Investigations often reveal a common...

AMONG the many pearls of wisdom inherited from previous generations, few are as profound as the saying that a child should be fed with a golden spoon but watched with the eye of a lion. It encapsulates an entire philosophy of parenting in a single sentence. Children deserve love, comfort, and opportunities, yet these blessings must be accompanied by vigilance, discipline, and moral instruction. Affection without limits often produces arrogance, while discipline without affection breeds resentment. The art of successful upbringing lies in maintaining a delicate balance between the two. Unfortunately, many parents and close relatives fail to appreciate this balance. Out of love, they fulfil every demand, overlook every mistake, and defend every wrongdoing of their children. What begins as innocent indulgence gradually transforms into a dangerous habit. The child learns that there are no boundaries, no consequences, and no obligations accompanying privilege. He begins to believe that rules are meant for others while he remains exempt from them. Such children often grow into adults who mistake licence for liberty and recklessness for confidence. The consequences of this flawed upbringing are increasingly visible around us. Newspapers frequently carry reports of horrific road accidents involving expensive vehicles travelling at reckless speeds. Innocent pedestrians are crushed, families are plunged into grief, and valuable property is destroyed. In some cases, the young driver himself loses his life. Investigations often reveal a common and disturbing pattern. The vehicle was being driven by a teenager who neither possessed the legal age required for driving nor held a valid driving licence. Yet he had access to a powerful machine worth millions and was permitted to use it without supervision. Such incidents are seldom the result of a single moment of carelessness. They are the culmination of years of unchecked behaviour. Long before the accident occurred, warning signs had appeared. The child may have displayed arrogance, disregard for rules, or contempt for authority. Yet parents and relatives, instead of correcting him, chose to excuse his conduct. Some regarded such behaviour as a symbol of confidence or status. Others remained silent to avoid displeasing the child. In doing so, they unknowingly contributed to a tragedy waiting to happen.

The responsibility therefore does not rest solely upon the shoulders of the young offender. It extends to all those who enabled him. Every unlawful desire fulfilled, every mistake overlooked, and every act of indiscipline ignored became another step towards disaster. Society often focuses on the final act while forgetting the long chain of negligence that preceded it. This principle applies not only to families but also to nations and international affairs. Human nature remains fundamentally the same whether it manifests itself in an individual or in a state. When a person or a country is repeatedly protected from the consequences of its actions, a sense of impunity inevitably develops. Over time, restraint diminishes, caution disappears, and excess becomes normal. Many observers argue that this dynamic can be seen in the relationship between the United States and Israel. For decades, Israel has enjoyed extraordinary diplomatic, political, military, and economic support from Washington. Whenever international criticism intensified, particularly within the United Nations Security Council, the United States frequently exercised its veto power to shield its ally from resolutions seeking censure or accountability. This unwavering protection, regardless of intention, fostered the perception that Israel could pursue its policies without fear of meaningful consequences. The devastating scenes witnessed in Gaza, the repeated military operations in Lebanon, and numerous actions condemned by large sections of the international community have deepened this perception. Each episode generated criticism, yet substantial pressure for accountability often remained absent. Consequently, critics contend that Israeli leaders became increasingly confident that their actions would continue to enjoy protection from their most powerful ally. Recent new report from Axios alleges that Trump lashed out at Netanyahu after Iran "threatened to abandon the negotiations with the U.S. over Israel's actions in Lebanon". US President allegedly called Israeli Prime Minister "crazy" and accused him of being ungrateful to the Trump administration amid the Iran war due to Israel's actions in Lebanon, according to a new report. "You'd be in prison if it weren't for me. I'm saving you. Everybody hates Israel because of this." Trump allegedly told Netanyahu that if he bombed Beirut, Lebanon's capital, as he threatened, the

move would "further isolate" Israel from the rest of the world, the U.S. official told Axios. Whether every detail of the reported conversation withstands historical scrutiny is ultimately less important than the broader lesson it conveys. The episode symbolizes the predicament of a parent who suddenly discovers that the child whose every mistake was excused has become unwilling to heed advice or obey instruction. Years of unquestioning support may secure loyalty for a time, but they can also weaken the authority necessary to enforce restraint when restraint becomes essential. The irony is that accountability, whether within a family or among nations, is not an act of hostility. On the contrary, it is often the highest expression of responsibility. A parent who corrects a child seeks to protect his future. A friend who points out a mistake seeks to prevent greater harm. Likewise, an ally who insists upon adherence to law and principle demonstrates a commitment to long-term stability rather than short-term convenience. History repeatedly teaches that unchecked power seldom remains moderate. It expands until it encounters resistance. The absence of accountability does not create harmony; it merely postpones confrontation. The longer correction is delayed, the more difficult and painful it becomes. The spoiled child eventually collides with reality. The unrestrained state eventually faces consequences that could have been avoided through timely discipline and prudent counsel. The wisdom of our elders therefore deserves renewed attention. Love must never become indulgence. Support must never become blind endorsement. Authority must always be accompanied by responsibility. Whether in the home, on the road, or in the arena of international politics, the same principle endures. Those who ignore wrongdoing when it is small often find themselves powerless when it grows beyond control. The tragedies that unfold before our eyes, from fatal road accidents to devastating conflicts, remind us that responsibility neglected today has a habit of returning tomorrow in a far more destructive form. Indeed, the eye of affection must always be accompanied by the eye of vigilance. Only then can individuals, families, and nations avoid the heavy price that unchecked indulgence inevitably demands.

Briefs

Govt announces fixed tax scheme...

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Following consultations and demands from traders' associations, Outlining details of the initiative, Kayani said that the scheme carries a fixed tax rate of 1%, while any withholding tax already deducted will be adjusted against it. Under the scheme, eligible retailers would be required to submit a simple one-page declaration form, available in Urdu, Pashto, Sindhi and Balochi languages, he added. The minister said that participants would be required to deposit a minimum of Rs25,000 at the time of filing the form, irrespective of the amount of withholding tax already deducted. Businesses with higher turnover would pay tax at 1% according to their sales volume, he added. The minister said that both filers and non-filers could become part of the scheme by submitting the required form. According to Kayani, the scheme was optional, and shopkeepers would have the choice either to join the new fixed tax regime or remain under the normal taxation system. The minister said participants in the scheme would generally be exempt from tax audits. In exceptional cases where an audit became necessary, it would only be conducted after consultation with, or intimation to, a notified committee comprising representatives of traders' organisations. Shopkeepers who neither joined the fixed tax scheme nor filed returns under the normal tax regime would face penalties of Rs10,000 in the first month, Rs25,000 in the second month and Rs50,000 in the third month, Kayani said. He clarified that street vendors and pushcart operators remained exempted from the scheme. According to Kayani, traders seeking to benefit from the programme must ensure their tax payment is at least equal to the previous year's amount.

Six India-backed terrorists...

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"Sanitisation operations are being conducted to eliminate any other Indian sponsored terrorist found in the area." The ISPR reiterated that the relentless counter-terrorism campaign under the vision "Azam e Iste-hkam" – as approved by the Federal Apex Committee on the National Action Plan – by security forces and law enforcement agencies will continue at full pace to wipe out the menace of foreign-sponsored and supported terrorism from the country. The security forces intensified counter-terrorism efforts in Balochistan following a deadly blast near a railway track on May 24 that left several people martyred and injured. At least 14 people, including three Frontier Corps (FC) personnel, were martyred and several others injured when an explosion occurred near the railway track close to Chaman Phatak in Quetta, the Balochistan government spokesperson said. Pakistan has experienced a sharp rise in terrorist activity, particularly in the KP and Balochistan provinces, since the Afghan Taliban returned to power in 2021.

Strict security in place for...

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discipline and ensure free, fair and transparent elections. He further said that all necessary administrative arrangements had been finalized, and teams were working in close coordination to ensure that polling was carried out in a fair, transparent and orderly manner. The Returning Officer for Constituency GBA-12 Shigar Faisal Hayat further added that voters are actively taking part in the electoral process, reflecting strong public engagement across the constituency. He stated that transport facilities had been arranged for polling day, while sensitive locations have been clearly identified to ensure effective monitoring and response.

From Crisis to Success: How Mohsen Gilani Revived Pakistan Football

Beyond the field, Gilani focused heavily on football diplomacy. The PFF strengthened ties with FIFA, AFC and several foreign football federations through cooperation agreements and MoUs aimed at coach education, referee development, youth exchanges, infrastructure growth and professional league development



OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: After more than a decade of political disputes, FIFA suspensions, administrative uncertainty and missed opportunities, Pakistan football is showing clear signs of revival under the leadership of Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) President Syed Mohsen Gilani. From 2015 to 2025, Pakistan football endured one of the most turbulent periods in its history. Internal conflicts, governance disputes, court battles and repeated FIFA suspensions in 2017, 2021 and 2025 severely hampered the sport's growth. The prolonged six-year tenure of the Normalisation Committee further restricted domestic football activity and international participation, leaving players and fans frustrated. Against this backdrop, Gilani's election as PFF President in May 2025 marked a significant turning point. Within his first year in office, he successfully restored Pakistan's engagement with FIFA, the Asian Football Confederation (AFC), SAFF and

several international football federations, helping rebuild the country's credibility within the global football community. One of the most visible achievements of his administration has been Pakistan's return to international competition across all levels of the game. Under Gilani's leadership, Pakistan participated in the AFC Asian Cup Qualifiers, AFC U23 Asian Cup Qualifiers, AFC U17 Asian Cup Qualifiers, SAFF U17 Championship, FIFA Women's Series 2026, AFC Futsal Asian Cup Qualifiers, SAFF Men's and Women's Futsal Championships and the FIFAe World Cup 2026 qualification campaign—all within a single year. For the first time in Pakistan's football history, the country established both Men's and Women's National Futsal Teams while also creating a dedicated FIFAe Department and entering FIFAe World Cup qualification events. Women's football achieved historic milestones, with Pakistan's Women's National Team recording a landmark 8-0 victory during its debut appearance in the FIFA Women's Series and producing encouraging performances against higher-ranked opponents.

Youth football was also revived through regular participation in regional and continental competitions, providing valuable international exposure to young players after years of inactivity. Beyond the field, Gilani focused heavily on football diplomacy. The PFF strengthened ties with FIFA, AFC and several foreign football federations through cooperation agreements and Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) aimed at coach education, referee development, youth exchanges, infrastructure growth and professional league development. His administration also secured Pakistan's highest-ever representation on FIFA and AFC committees, ensuring a stronger voice for the country in international football affairs. At the development level, the PFF launched FIFA Arena projects, advanced plans for Pakistan's first National Football Training Centre and accelerated preparations for the country's first professional football league. In another major development attributed to the PFF's renewed engagement with global football authorities under Gilani's leadership, discussions are underway regarding a his-

toric visit by FIFA President Gianni Infantino to Pakistan. If finalized, it would mark the first-ever visit by a FIFA President to the country. During the proposed visit, Infantino is expected to meet Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir and other senior national leaders to discuss long-term football development plans, infrastructure projects and FIFA's future support for the growth of the game in Pakistan. While FIFA continues to emphasize the need for constitutional reforms and stronger governance structures within the PFF, many stakeholders believe Gilani's first year in office has delivered more international engagement, football activity and development initiatives than the country has witnessed in many years. After a decade marked by crisis and uncertainty, Pakistan football is once again active on the international stage. For many observers, Mohsen Gilani's first year as PFF President has laid the foundations for a new era—one focused on stability, international cooperation, player development and the long-term growth of football in Pakistan.

Mourinho lined up as Riquelme promises Haaland, Rodri in Real Madrid election battle

JOSE Mourinho has emerged as Florentino Perez's preferred candidate to return as Real Madrid manager, as the club's presidential race intensifies ahead of Sunday's election. In a brief video shared on the official Instagram account of Perez's campaign, the Portuguese coach appears wearing a Real Madrid shirt and simply says: "Yes," in what is widely seen as confirmation of his willingness to return to the Santiago Bernabeu. He also said he would sign defender Ibrahima Konate

who is leaving Liverpool. The timing of the announcement appeared deliberate, coming as Perez's rival, Enrique Riquelme, unveiled his own ambitious plans during a television appearance. Speaking on Antena 3, Riquelme pledged to sign Manchester City striker Erling Haaland and Spain international midfielder Rodri should he win the presidency on 7 June. He revealed a Real Madrid shirt bearing Haaland's name and the number nine as part of the announcement. "Rodri plays in a position

Real Madrid need and he fits the profile. If I become president, he will play for Real Madrid," Riquelme said. He added that discussions with Manchester City and the player's representatives would begin "as early as next Monday", while acknowledging the midfielder still has a year remaining on his contract. "As for Haaland, it is a different situation. He has a release clause and would like to join Real Madrid," he added. The current president had previously stopped short of confirming his choice, though

he has consistently praised the Portuguese coach. Mourinho, who first managed Real Madrid between 2010 and 2013, would return to the club thirteen years after his departure. During his previous spell, he won a La Liga title, a Copa del Rey and a Spanish Super Cup, while overseeing a fierce rivalry with Pep Guardiola's Barcelona. He would be set to arrive in Madrid after managing Benfica this season. Perez has also indicated that, should he remain in charge, a new signing will be announced later this week.

Pakistan beat Australia in third ODI to clinch series 2-1

Pakistan's 2-1 series triumph marks their third consecutive ODI series win over Australia

SHADAB Khan starred with both bat and ball as Pakistan secured a hard-fought four-wicket victory over Australia in the third and final ODI of the home series at Gaddafi Stadium on Thursday. The victory meant Pakistan clinched the three-match series 2-1, and it marked their third consecutive triumph against the six-time champions in the format. The Green Shirts got off to a shaky start to the pursuit as they lost right-handed opener Sahibzada Farhan (six) in the third over with 27 runs on the board. Following the early stutter, Maaz Sadaqat, who dominated the opening stand, then shared a brief 14-run partnership for the second wicket with Babar Azam until being trapped lbw by Matthew Short in the eighth over. The left-handed opener remained a notable run-getter for Pakistan with a brisk 27 off 26 deliveries, laced with five fours. – APP

Finance Minister Chairs ECC

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Rs. 241 million for compensation-related expenditures arising from the suicide bomb blast at Imam Bargah Khadijah-tul-Kubra, Taralai, Islamabad, Rs. 528 million for operational requirements of the Pakistan Land Ports Authority (PLPA), Rs. 800 million for procurement of Fast Patrol Boats and associated infrastructure for Pakistan Coast Guards, Rs. 1,883.7 million for the "Expansion of Safe City, Islamabad" project, Rs. 150 million for operational requirements of the National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA), and Rs. 413.9 million for security charges relating to the Reko Diq Project. The Committee appreciated the successful conduct of the Islamabad Peace Talks and commended the efforts of all stakeholders involved.

MPA booked under Peca law

FROM PAGE 01

The suspects face allegations of carrying out unlawful surveillance and issuing threats to the actor and her relatives. The FIR of the case stated that Iqbal had declined Chadhar's marriage proposal after learning that he was already married. Following the refusal, the lawmaker allegedly began blackmailing her by sending private videos and threatening to leak her personal data if she did not agree to marry him. Investigators also alleged that Chadhar levelled false accusations against the actor in 2023, resulting in the breakdown of a previous marriage proposal. According to the complaint, threatening messages were sent to Iqbal, her current husband and her family members. Similar messages were also allegedly sent to her sister.

President, PM commend...

FROM PAGE 01

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif praised the security forces for neutralizing the terrorists, who, he said, were plotting to harm the lives and property of innocent and unarmed Pakistani citizens. The prime minister also reiterated the government's commitment to eradicating terrorism from the country and ensuring lasting peace and security.

Pakistan calls...

FROM PAGE 01

He said these initiatives have significantly strengthened the country's capacity to combat terrorism and organised crime. The minister also stressed the importance of expanding cooperation under the SCO's Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS), particularly in intelligence sharing, joint threat assessments, and efforts to counter online radicalisation and extremist propaganda. Pakistan, he said, fully supports initiatives such as regional workshops and expert exchange programs aimed at building collective capabilities. Naqvi said cybersecurity emerged as another key theme of his address. He described cyber intelligence and digital forensics cooperation as an urgent regional requirement, noting that technological advances have created new opportunities for criminal organisations and terrorist groups. On the issue of narcotics trafficking, he warned that the illegal drug trade remained a major source of terrorist financing. He called for a coordinated strategy against drug trafficking networks, online criminal operations and illicit financial flows facilitated through digital currencies.

Dubai Basketball takes step toward ABA League glory

DUBAI: After three months away from home, Dubai Basketball returned to a packed Coca-Cola Arena on Thursday night and delivered a memorable 99-93 victory over Partizan in Game 1 of the 2025/2026 ABA League Finals. With nearly 9,500 fans filling the arena, the evening felt like more than a basketball game. It was a celebration of a team representing Dubai on one of the biggest stages in European basketball, with supporters creating an electric atmosphere from tip-off to the final buzzer. Dubai Basketball head coach Aleksandar Sekulic was quick to acknowledge the role the fans played in the team's opening finals victory. "It's the finals. It's something that everybody was excited to start, especially here in Dubai. A big praise and big thanks to the fans coming to the arena, cheering us on and bringing the energy we needed," he said after the

game. Dubai Basketball repaid that support with an impressive performance, leading for most of the night and showing composure when the reigning champions mounted a comeback. A strong start to the fourth quarter helped the home side pull away and secure a deserved six-point victory. Dzanan Musa led the scoring with 22 points, while Mfondu Kabengele added 19 points and 8 rebounds. McKinley Wright IV also starred with 19 points and 9 assists. The win gives Dubai Basketball a 1-0 lead in the best-of-five series and moves the team one step closer to a historic first ABA League title. The journey continues on Saturday, June 6, when the finals return to Coca-Cola Arena for Game 2. With history on the line and the city firmly behind them, Dubai Basketball will again look to turn home-court energy into another unforgettable night. – APP



ISLAMABAD: Officer bearers and members of the RISJA presenting a bouquet to senior journalist Abdul Mohi Shah on getting the prestigious award and Shakeel Awan upon his retirement from Daily Jang after 37 years of service. – DNA

Briefs

Call for eco-friendly practices to safeguard environment

ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Sardar Tahir Mehmood, has called for greater environmental responsibility and collective action to tackle the growing challenges of climate change, pollution and environmental degradation. Talking to visiting delegations of businessmen at the Chamber House here Friday on the occasion of World Environment Day, he said that a clean and healthy environment was essential for sustainable economic growth, public health and the well-being of future generations. He noted that environmental issues had become a global concern and required coordinated efforts from governments, businesses and the society at large. The ICCI President observed that Pakistan was among the countries most vulnerable to climate change and environmental disasters. He stressed the need for adopting environmentally friendly business practices, promoting renewable energy, conserving natural resources, and reducing industrial and commercial waste. He emphasized that the business community had a vital role to play in protecting the environment by embracing green technologies, improving energy efficiency and supporting sustainable development initiatives. He added that economic progress and environmental protection must go hand in hand to ensure long-term national prosperity. Sardar Tahir Mehmood reaffirmed the ICCI's commitment to creating awareness among the business community regarding environmental conservation and supporting policies aimed at promoting a greener and cleaner Pakistan. He urged all stakeholders, including policymakers, businesses, educational institutions and citizens, to join hands in preserving natural resources and combating environmental challenges.—APP

Gold price declines by Rs 1,469 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The prices of gold decreased in the local market on Friday, with 24 karat gold per tola falling by Rs 1,469 to settle at Rs 467,816 compared to Rs 469,285 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 decreased by Rs 1,323 to Rs 401,012 from Rs 402,335, whereas 10 grams of 22 karat gold went down by Rs 1,197 to Rs 367,624 against Rs 368,821. In the international market, the price of gold decreased by \$14,689 to \$4,453,810 per ounce from \$4,468,499. Meanwhile, the price of silver per tola decreased by Rs 67 to Rs 7,730 from Rs 7,797, while the price of 10 grams of silver declined by Rs 61 to Rs 6,623 from Rs 6,684. The price of silver in the international market also decreased by \$0.669 to \$72,520 per ounce from \$73,189.—APP

PSX turns bearish, loses over 696 points

ISLAMABAD: The benchmark KSE-100 Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned bearish on Friday, losing 696.57 points, a negative change of 0.41 percent, closing at 170,478.94 points against 171,175.51 points on the last trading day. During the session, the ready market recorded a trading volume of 727.166 million shares with a traded value of Rs 26,753 billion, compared to 697.166 million shares valuing Rs 26,135 billion in the previous session. The market capitalization declined to Rs 18,928 trillion from Rs 18,983 trillion a day earlier. Out of 491 active companies in the ready market, 248 advanced, 205 declined and 38 remained unchanged. TPL Properties topped the volume chart with 42,058 million shares, followed by TPL Corp Ltd with 41,999 million shares and Pace (Pak) Ltd. with 41,812 million shares. The top gainers included Khairpur Sugar Mills Limited, which increased by Rs 47.21 to close at Rs 2,420.84, and Hoechst Pakistan Limited, which gained Rs 43.50 to settle at Rs 4,052.50. On the losing side, Rafhan Maize Products Company Limited declined by Rs 71.41 to close at Rs 9,624.46, while Khyber Textile Mills Limited fell by Rs 29.17 to close at Rs 1,527.83.—APP

Saudi-Pak Business Council show interest in motorways uplift

During the dialogue, Abdul Aleem Khan assured the delegation that Saudi Investors would be provided with highly viable and profitable investment models, noting that the country's expanding road network plays a pivotal role in boosting regional trade activities

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Saudi-Pak Business Council, Prince Mansour Bin Muhammad Al Saud, on Friday expressed keen interest in exploring investment opportunities in Pakistan's motorway infrastructure during a high-level meeting with Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan. The meeting discussed matters of mutual interest and the strategic promotion of bilateral relations including investment in Motorways of Pakistan, said a press release. During the meeting, Abdul Aleem Khan extended invitation to the Saudi Pak Business Council to invest in Pakistan's rapidly growing infrastructure, specifically highlighting the construction of new Motorways and key transport networks currently underway across the country. Focusing on specific ventures ripe for foreign capital, Federal Minister for Communications offered strategic partnerships in the M-6 Sukkur-Hyderabad, M-10 Karachi Port and M-13 Kharian-Rawalpindi Motorway Projects. He emphasized that these particular routes are highly viable, commercially lucrative and represent prime investment opportunities for the Saudi Business Community due to their significant commercial importance. Chairman Saudi Pakistan Business Council Prince Mansour bin Muhammad Al Saud expressed strong interest on behalf of the Saudi Business Council to explore partnership and investment opportunities in these specific Motorway Projects, affirming that the Council is well-positioned to collaborate extensively in Pakistan's Communications and infrastructure sectors. During

the dialogue, Abdul Aleem Khan assured the delegation that Saudi Investors would be provided with highly viable and profitable investment models, noting that the country's expanding road network plays a pivotal role in boosting regional trade activities. He reiterated that Pakistan and Saudi Arabia share long-standing, time-tested and deep-rooted fraternal ties, adding that every Pakistani shares a profound spiritual

and emotional bond with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia which has consistently demonstrated goodwill towards Pakistan. Concluding the meeting, Chairman Saudi Pakistan Business Council Prince Mansour bin Muhammad Al Saud assured the Fed-

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erated that Pakistan and Saudi Arabia share long-standing, time-tested and deep-rooted fraternal ties, adding that every Pakistani shares a profound spiritual and emotional bond with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia which has consistently demonstrated goodwill towards Pakistan. Concluding the meeting, Chairman Saudi Pakistan Business Council Prince Mansour bin Muhammad Al Saud assured the Fed-

India secures new trade gateway thru Oman pact

New Delhi: India's expanding partnership with Oman offers Delhi an alternative route for crucial imports amid supply disruptions caused by the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, experts said on Friday, as a free trade pact between the two countries went into effect earlier this week. Under the India-Oman Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement, India will export most of its goods without paying tariffs, covering about 99 percent of the total value of India's exports to Oman. While lower tariffs and improved trade rules are expected to help Indian businesses remain competitive, the pact that came into force on Monday arrives as energy supplies from the Middle East remain disrupted following US-Israeli attacks on Iran on Feb. 28. "The coming into force of the CEPA between India and Oman has immediately gained significance due to the crisis in the Middle East and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, through which massive chunks of energy and trade flow," said Anil Wadhwa, former Indian ambassador to Oman and a distinguished fellow at the Vivekananda International Foundation. "For India, this agreement is about securing its future when the ground beneath global supply chains is shifting." Though India has launched diversification efforts, it still depends on the closed Strait of Hormuz route for about 30 percent of its crude and 90 percent of its LPG imports. In a statement, India's Ministry of Commerce and Industry said that Oman's strategic ports at Sohar, Duqm and Salalah will provide Indian exporters with "enhanced access" to the wider Gulf region and East African markets, as the CEPA is expected to "energize a new trade gateway." The pact gives India a number of practical tools, including alternative logistics, a friendly transshipment base, investment linkages, and a trade partner that can keep corridors open, Wadhwa told Arab News. While the agreement may not "fully insulate India from the macroeconomic shock of a major regional war or act as a substitute for comprehensive naval and diplomatic strategies," it still plays a significant and timely role. "In the 21st century contest between commerce and conflict, geography still matters, and agreements such as these amplify the advantages therein," Wadhwa said. "This agreement sets a historic precedent and turns it into a modern buffer and bridge, shielding Indian trade from immediate regional spillover, all while broadening access to the markets that matter most to India's economic ambitions." The pact is the second such trade agreement with a GCC country after a 2022 CEPA with the UAE. For Oman, it is the second such bilateral deal after the Oman-US free trade agreement signed in 2006. Oman is India's second-largest trading partner in the Gulf, with bilateral trade valued at more than \$11 billion in the 2025-26 fiscal year. The strategic pact not only boosts India's manufacturing and engineering exports, but helps to diversify "supply chains away from the Strait of Hormuz and cements India's geopolitical foothold" in the Gulf, said Manish Mohan, a senior director at the Confederation of Indian Industry.—DNA

Malaysia PM facing crucial test of support

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim's ruling coalition will face a test of its public support amid signs of internal tensions after two states this week called snap elections, as speculation mounts over an early national poll. Two of Anwar's national coalition partners lead the governments in Negeri Sembilan and Johor, where the state assemblies were dissolved on Friday and Monday, respectively, with elections to be held within 60 days. While the state polls will not directly impact Anwar's majority in the national parliament, any significant losses could weaken his coalition's prospects at a general election due by early 2028. Anwar said last month he would consider calling a snap poll if internal divisions continued to widen within his administration. Anwar's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Friday. There have been differences in Anwar's ruling alliance, which consists of his Pakatan Harapan bloc, former rival Barisan Nasional, and a handful of other parties, on how to tackle ethnic and religious issues in the multi-racial, Muslim-majority country, and frustration has grown among his progressive allies over the slow pace of reforms. Anwar has also come under pressure from the once-dominant United Malays National Organization, which is part of Barisan, over its push for a royal pardon for former prime minister and UMNO leader Najib Razak, who was imprisoned in 2022 for his role in the multibillion-dollar 1MDB scandal.—APP

EU weighs curbs on protection for Ukrainian men of fighting age

LUXEMBOURG: European Union ministers on Thursday broadly supported a proposal to limit access to temporary protection for Ukrainian men of military age, reflecting a growing debate over how the bloc can continue supporting refugees while also helping Ukraine sustain its war effort against Russia. The European Union activated the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) after Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine to manage the mass arrival of displaced people. The scheme, extended three times and currently due to expire in March 2027, grants beneficiaries residence permits, access to labor markets and social welfare programs across the bloc. Swedish Migration Minister Johan Forsell said Sweden supported the proposal discussed during a meeting of EU justice and home affairs ministers in Luxembourg. Any restrictions, he stressed, should apply only to future applicants and not to Ukrainians already covered by the scheme. "It is essential for us to provide Ukrainians with protection, but at the same time the war needs to be fought and won. For that to happen, it is essential that more men stay in Ukraine and fight," Forsell said ahead of the meeting. The debate marks an early political discussion about what happens when the temporary protection framework expires in 2027 and whether future extensions should be more narrowly targeted than the bloc's original blanket approach. Several member states, including Austria, Sweden, Poland and Finland, have advocated limiting automatic protection for Ukrainian men considered to be of fighting age. Austria's Interior Minister Gerhard Karner has proposed ending automatic protection for men aged 23 to 60 beginning in March 2027, an age range that largely mirrors Ukraine's wartime restrictions on male travel under martial law. Officials emphasized that any changes under discussion would not affect Ukrainians already living in the EU under temporary protection. More than one million Ukrainian men currently benefiting from the scheme would retain their status, according to officials involved in the talks. The proposed restrictions would apply only to new arrivals seeking protection after any revised rules take effect. Another idea under consideration would require applicants to demonstrate that they left Ukraine legally. EU working groups are examining mechanisms such as verifying official Ukrainian exit documentation, including border stamps, in an effort to distinguish between those who departed through authorized channels and those who may have crossed illegally to avoid military service. Supporters of the proposal argue that the current system unintentionally undermines Ukraine's ability to mobilize manpower at a time when the country faces mounting battlefield pressures and a prolonged war of attrition. By removing the guarantee of automatic residency rights, work permits and welfare benefits for newly arriving military-age men, they hope to encourage more Ukrainians to remain in the country and contribute either to military service or the wartime economy. The proposal also reflects growing domestic political pressures within several EU countries hosting large numbers of refugees. Germany and Poland, which together account for a significant share of displaced Ukrainians in Europe, have faced increasing debate over the financial and social costs of long-term refugee support as public budgets tighten and local services come under strain.—DNA

Pak hails Syria-OPCW coop on chemical weapons elimination

He hoped that the continued positive engagement between the Technical Secretariat and Syrian authorities will further build on the positive momentum to resolve all outstanding issues at the earliest, and close this file

DNA

UNITED NATIONS: While hailing the recent progress made by the Technical Secretariat of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the new Syrian authorities, Pakistan has said that such cooperation would accelerate the elimination of former President Bashar al-Assad's chemical weapons programme. "The OPCW Technical Secretariat must continue to be enabled to carry out its independent verification to eliminate suspected chemical weapons in Syria and any risks of proliferation, Ambassador Usman Jadoon, deputy permanent representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, told the UN Security Council on Thursday. The 15-member Council

was discussing the latest international efforts to implement resolution 2118 (2013), which called for the complete elimination of Syria's chemical weapons programme. In his remarks, Ambassador Jadoon reiterates Pakistan's firm opposition to the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, and under any circumstances. "(The) Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) remains a cornerstone of global disarmament framework, and we support all efforts for its universalization as well as its full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation." In this regard, the Pakistani envoy underscored the need for enhancing capacities and extend cooperation to Syrian authorities in overcoming obstacles and challenges associated with this complex file. "This cooperation is critical in addressing several

challenges including the nature of suspected sites, institutional constraints and limited technological capacities and experience of Syrian national teams in handling, transporting, and storing chemical munitions." He commended all those extending cooperation to Syrian authorities to build capacity and enhance institutional capabilities, especially Türkiye and Qatar. "The OPCW Technical Secretariat must continue to be enabled to carry out its independent verification to eliminate suspected chemical weapons in Syria and any risks of proliferation, in compliance with the CWC." Ambassador Jadoon said. He hoped that the continued positive engagement between the Technical Secretariat and Syrian authorities will further build on the positive momentum to resolve all outstanding issues at the earliest, and close this file.

Rs 7.1b social impact financing facility launched

ISLAMABAD: A landmark Rs.7.1 billion Social Impact Financing Facility, aimed at strengthening Pakistan's critical agricultural storage infrastructure, was launched on Thursday by InfraZam in Pakistan (IZP) in partnership with The Bank of Punjab (BoP), Faysal Bank Limited, and Pak Brunei Investment Company Limited (PBICL). The initiative seeks to mobilize private sector investment to address long-standing gaps in agricultural warehousing, silos, and cold storage facilities across the country. Speaking at the signing ceremony, Mr. Adnan Pasha, Adviser to the Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue, described the initiative as an important milestone in Pakistan's evolving social impact financing landscape and a significant step towards improving agricultural productivity, reducing post-harvest losses, and expanding financial inclusion for farmers, according to press release issued by finance ministry. Pasha noted that the facility represents Pakistan's second major social impact financing transaction following the successful launch of the inaugural PKR 1Bn Pakistan Skills Impact Bond in December 2025. He highlighted that the new facility demonstrates growing confidence in innovative financing models that leverage private sector participation to achieve measurable development outcomes. "This is a very important opportunity for Pakistan," Pasha said.—DNA

Call for transition to Shariah-compliant banking system by 2027

FAISALABAD: Officials of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) underscored the critical role of Islamic banking institutions in achieving the country's transition to a fully Shariah-compliant banking system by December 2027 and urged the banks to further strengthen their outreach and performance in line with national objectives. These remarks were made during the fourth and final quarterly meeting of the Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) for FY2025-26, organized by State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Banking Services Corporation (BSC) Faisalabad through zoom. The ROC, established across 16 field offices of the State Bank of Pakistan, is tasked with promoting Islamic banking throughout the country in accordance with the policy directions of the Government of Pakistan. The committee comprises representatives of five Islamic banking institutions including Meezan Bank, Dubai Islamic Bank Pakistan, Askari Islamic Bank, Bank Alfalah Islamic and MCB Islamic Bank.—APP

Awareness session held for women entrepreneurs

LAHORE: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), in collaboration with HomeNet Pakistan (HNP), organised an awareness and financial inclusion session for women home-based workers and micro-entrepreneurs to enhance their access to financial services and banking products. The session was held at the Head Office of HomeNet Pakistan under a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the SBP and HNP. Around 30 women micro-entrepreneurs from Lahore attended the event along with representatives of the SBP, Faysal Islamic Bank and Bank Alfalah. Speaking on the occasion, HomeNet Pakistan Executive Director Ume Laila Azhar welcomed the participants and highlighted the importance of financial inclusion in promoting women's economic empowerment and strengthening women-led enterprises. The SBP delegation comprised Deputy Chief Omer Makhdoom and Assistant Directors Quat-ul-Ain and Muhammad Talha from the Financial Inclusion Department. Representatives of partner banks included SME Unit Head Asim Jamal and Regional Manager Wagim Sarwar from the Agriculture and SME Department of Faysal Islamic Bank, while Shahzeb Ali Khan, Faisal Ali Amjad, Muqadas Wakeel Butt and Awasi Ahsan Cheema represented Bank Alfalah.—APP

Briefs

Mohsin Naqvi praises security forces

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has commended the security forces for carrying out a successful operation against militants identified by the government as "Fitna al-Hindustan" in the Panjur area of Balochistan. In a statement on Friday, the interior minister praised the bravery and professional capabilities of the security forces for eliminating six terrorists during the operation. Mohsin Naqvi said the security forces acted in a timely manner and thwarted the nefarious designs of what he described as Indian-sponsored terrorists in Panjur. He paid tribute to the forces for bringing six Indian-sponsored militants to what he termed an exemplary end. The minister further stated that the ongoing operations by security forces against "Fitna al-Hindustan" terrorists in Balochistan are commendable and reflect the forces' commitment to maintaining peace and stability in the region. Reaffirming national support for counterterrorism efforts, Naqvi said the entire nation stands firmly alongside the security forces in the fight against terrorism. — APP

FIA offloads Spain-bound passenger

ISLAMABAD: Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Immigration authorities at Islamabad International Airport offloaded a passenger attempting to travel to Spain on a suspected tampered Portuguese residence card. An official told APP on Friday that passenger Gul Fam Khan, son of Aman-ul-Haq and a resident of Sialkot, was travelling to Spain on flight QR-633 when he was intercepted during immigration clearance. The official said scrutiny of travel documents revealed that the expiry date on the Portuguese residence card had allegedly been altered. During initial interrogation, the passenger disclosed that he had paid 200 euros to an agent for changing the expiry date of the residence card, the official added. The accused was subsequently offloaded and handed over to FIA Anti Human Trafficking Circle (AHTC) Islamabad for further legal proceedings and investigation. According to the official, the travel documents, mobile phone and other relevant evidence were taken into custody. FIA Islamabad Zone continues its crackdown against document fraud, human smuggling and illegal immigration and is taking action against those involved in such offences in accordance with the law.

Elected CM for Islamabad proposed

ISLAMABAD: The government has prepared a major reform blueprint for sweeping changes to the governance system of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), including the creation of an elected territorial government led by chief minister or mayor, consolidation of fragmented institutions, and a shift towards an integrated "Smart City" model aimed at improving service delivery and long-term urban planning in the federal capital. The 138-page report on "ICT Governance Model" was prepared by a high-powered committee under Planning Commission Minister Ahsan Iqbal, amid concerns that Islamabad's rapid transformation from a planned administrative capital into a metropolitan city of more than 2.42 million people has not been matched by institutional evolution. The report has been presented to PM Shehbaz Sharif. At the centre of the proposal is the creation of a representative Islamabad Capital Territory Government (ICTG) with administrative and financial autonomy comparable to provincial governments, while preserving Islamabad's special federal character.

Ethiopia, Pakistan agree to forge strong parliamentary bond

The Senate Chairman expressed his deep appreciation for the rapid economic development, impressive growth, and comprehensive domestic reforms currently taking place across Ethiopia



DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan agreed on Friday to

forge a strong parliamentary bond to enhance bilateral cooperation across trade, investment, agriculture, aviation, and culture. The discussion took place during a meeting in Islamabad between H.E. Dr. Oumer Hussien Oba, Ambassador Extra-

ordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ethiopia, and H.E. Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani, the Honorable Chairman of the Senate of Pakistan. The two sides reviewed growing bilateral relations across various sectors, explored new avenues for cooperation, and reaffirmed their commitment to taking their ties to new heights. Ambassador Dr. Oumer reaffirmed the deep-rooted and long-standing bilateral relations between the two nations, highlighting their shared history, culture, and values. Emphasizing Ethiopia's strategic positioning as the seat of the African Union and a vital gateway to the African continent, the Ambassador noted that Pakistan can leverage its relations with Ethiopia to significantly increase its footprint across Africa. The Senate Chairman expressed his deep appreciation for the rapid economic development, impressive growth, and comprehensive domestic reforms currently taking place across Ethiopia. To further strengthen people-to-people ties, the Chairman emphasized that cultural exchanges and religious tourism must serve as essential foundations for the bilateral relationship. Highlighting the agricultural potential of Pakistan, the Senate Chairman stressed the need to exchange knowledge and technical expertise to achieve the shared goals of development and prosperity in the Global South. Towards the conclusion of their discussion, the two sides also agreed on establishing parliamentary friendship groups and exchanging parliamentary delegations to further strengthen institutional and diplomatic relations.

Several injured in Boeing 787 nose-gear collapse in Frankfurt

NEWS DESK

FRANKFURT: Several staff members were injured when the nose gear of a Boeing 787 jetliner unexpectedly collapsed at a gate at Frankfurt airport on Thursday, its operator Lufthansa said. "Passengers had not yet boarded," a company spokesperson said in an emailed statement, adding that crew members and ground staff were on board the aircraft at the time of the incident, which was first reported by Bloomberg News. Central Asia News For all the latest headlines, follow our Google News channel online or via the app. "Several staff members were injured and are currently receiving medical treatment," the company added. A Boeing spokesperson said the company was aware of the incident and was supporting its customer but offered no further detail. A Reuters photographer saw multiple emergency vehicles parked around the two-engine widebody aircraft, which partly lay on its belly. The incident occurred at 12:45 p.m. (10:45 GMT), and the jet was scheduled to depart for Los Angeles as flight LH450, Lufthansa said. "We are currently investigating the exact circumstances with the relevant authorities," the company added.

China's Xi to visit North Korea next week

DNA

BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping will visit North Korea next week, state media said Friday, the latest in a series of high-level summits as Beijing asserts its position as a diplomatic superpower on the world stage. State broadcaster CCTV said that Xi would visit from June 8 to 9 at the invitation of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, his first trip to Pyongyang in seven years. Beijing is a vital source of political and economic support to North Korea, which is one of the most diplomatically isolated countries in the world and under heavy international sanctions. The upcoming meeting will be Xi's first official trip abroad this year, and comes after he hosted back-to-back summits with US President Donald Trump and Russia's Vladimir Putin last month. "China is meeting leaders from around the world, coordinating positions and playing a mediating role," Lim Eul-chul, a North Korea expert at South Korea's Kyungnam University, told AFP. "As China's international standing rises, Beijing is likely seeking to draw Pyongyang more actively into its diplomatic orbit as a partner in advancing a more multilateral order." Pyongyang depends on China for up to 95% of total trade and 85% of its exports, according to 2022 statistics from

the National Committee on North Korea, a Washington-based think tank. But North Korea has drawn closer to Russia in recent years, particularly since Moscow's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, with Pyongyang sending thousands of troops and weapons to support the war effort. In return, analysts say North Korea is receiving financial aid, military technology, food and energy, helping it circumvent sanctions over its banned nuclear programmes. Xi last met Kim in September, when he invited the North Korean leader and Russia's Vladimir Putin as guests of honour to a military parade in Beijing marking the 80th anniversary of the victory over imperial Japan in World War II. In 2019, Xi and his wife Peng Liyuan were welcomed to North Korea with great pomp and fanfare to celebrate the two countries' "unbreakable friendship". Prior to that trip, no Chinese leader had visited the North since Hu Jintao in 2005. Beijing's Foreign Minister Wang Yi said during a visit to Pyongyang in April that China and Korea should "enhance coordination" on international and regional issues and "maintain close communication and interaction". China's interests include keeping an eye on North Korea's nuclear programme, the advancement of which is "extremely rapid", Hong Min of the Korea Institute for National Unification (KINU) told media.

Environmental protection central to our policy: Dar

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Friday said the government was committed to placing environmental protection at the centre of its policy priorities, highlighting the constitutional recognition of the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a fundamental right of every citizen. In his message on World Environment Day, the deputy prime minister said Pakistan was advancing climate-resilient housing, accelerating the transition to clean energy and promoting environmentally responsible and sustainable construction practices to address growing environmental challenges. He said Pakistan joined the international community in observing World Environment Day and reaffirming the urgent need to protect the planet and strengthen collective efforts to combat climate change. DPM/FM Ishaq Dar noted that despite being among the countries most vulnerable to climate change, Pakistan continued to demonstrate resilience in the face of recurring floods, accelerating glacial melt, droughts, heatwaves and increasing water stress. He stressed the need to sustain and deepen international cooperation to address the interconnected challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation, guided by the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. The deputy prime minister said the scale of the climate challenge underscored the importance of collective global action and enhanced international collaboration.



Malaysian PM faces test of public support

NEWS DESK

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim's ruling coalition will face a test of its public support amid signs of internal tensions after two states this week called snap elections, as speculation mounts over an early national poll. Two of Anwar's national coalition partners lead the governments in Negeri Sembilan and Johor, where the state assemblies were dissolved on Friday and Monday, respectively, with elections to be held within 60 days. While the state polls will not directly impact Anwar's majority in the national parliament, any significant losses could weaken his coalition's prospects at a general election due by early 2028. Anwar said last month he would consider calling a snap poll if internal divisions continued to widen within his administration. Anwar's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Friday. There have been differences in

Anwar's ruling alliance, which consists of his Pakatan Harapan bloc, former rival Barisan Nasional, and a handful of other parties, on how to tackle ethnic and religious issues in the multi-racial, Muslim-majority country, and frustration has grown among his progressive allies over the slow pace of reforms. Anwar has also come under pressure from the once-dominant United Malays National Organization, which is part of Barisan, over its push for a royal pardon for former prime minister and UMNO leader Najib Razak, who was imprisoned in 2022 for his role in the multibillion-dollar 1MDB scandal. Pakatan currently governs Negeri Sembilan state, where an election was not due until late 2028, while Barisan leads Johor, where polls were not due until next year. In what was seen as a sign of the coalition tensions, Barisan has said it would contest the Johor state polls independently without Pakatan's support. In Negeri Sembilan, Pakatan will contest all 36 seats, having won 17 at the last state election. Two other states, Malacca and Sarawak, are also due to hold elections in coming months. The Election Commission (EC), which will set the dates for the state polls, has said that an early general election would allow state polls to be held concurrently, saving costs.

In open letter, Zelenskiy invites Putin to talks on ending war

DNA

KYIV: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy published an open letter to President Vladimir Putin on Thursday in which he proposed the two leaders meet to agree an end to more than four years of war, warning that Kyiv stood ready to fight on otherwise. In his letter, which the president's office said had been sent to other countries, including the United States, Zelenskiy said the majority of Russians had grown tired of Ukrainian missile and drone attacks, inflation and fuel shortages, and were ready for peace. Zelenskiy said that with the United States focused on the conflict in Iran "it would be wrong to simply wait until the war in Europe returns to the center of its attention". And the path to peace, he said, had to start at the frontline, "the line from which diplomacy must begin". Ukraine, Zelenskiy said, stood for "a full ceasefire for the duration of the negotiations. This is standard practice." He said the United States "has the capability to monitor a ceasefire along the line where hostilities stop". Zelenskiy proposed

setting a clear date for a meeting and said several countries had "traditionally hosted leaders to resolve issues of war and peace", citing Switzerland, Turkiye and the countries of the Arab world. "Do not be afraid to take the path out of this war. That is the main thing that is required of you now," Zelenskiy wrote. "Ukraine proposes ending this war through direct engagement between us — and you. I am proposing a meeting... If you do not personally come to the conclusion that it is time to end this war, Ukraine will continue fighting for its existence." And continued war, Zelenskiy suggested, could threaten Putin's personal position. "It is a fact of Russian history that you know well: when Russia grows tired, change comes." In Moscow, the Kremlin said it had seen Zelenskiy's letter and that Putin would be briefed on it. Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiba, writing on X, said the letter would also be sent officially through diplomatic channels. Sybiba described the letter as "a serious and meaningful proposal to end the war...with clear, doable steps and an invitation for a personal meeting." "We expect a meaningful response to this proposal. It's time to end this war. It's time to choose peace."



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