

Islamabad POST

Monday, June 08, 2026

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 30

PM Shehbaz lauds security forces' role in Waziristan

Detailed News On Page-08

UK envoy cautions against illegal agents

Detailed News On Page-08

Aseefa Bhutto slams acid attack on doc

Detailed News On Page-02



Independents' role crucial

PPP, PML-N to shape the future of GB politics

It should not come as a surprise if the establishment takes a keen interest in the formation of the next government. Given the strategic importance of the region, policymakers responsible for national security are unlikely to remain indifferent to political developments there

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The results of the Gilgit-Baltistan elections have once again demonstrated a political reality that cannot be ignored: no single party is in a position to dominate the political landscape on its own. The outcome points towards a future in which the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) will continue to play a central role in shaping the region's politics, either through direct cooperation or indirect understanding. A stable government in Gilgit-Baltistan may only be possible if the major political stakeholders work together. While the PPP appears to be in a stronger position to claim the right to form the next government, it will inevitably require the support of independent candidates and smaller political groups to secure a workable majority. Independents, as always in GB politics, have emerged as kingmakers. Their role could prove decisive in both making and breaking governments in the days ahead. Ideally, the PPP may be encouraged to take the lead in forming the government with the backing of independents and smaller parties. The PML-N, despite being an important political player, may choose to support such an arrangement without formally becoming part of the government if it will not be in a position for the government independently. Such a formula would mirror the broader federal political understanding that has prevailed in Islamabad in recent years. This approach could provide stability

while allowing both parties to maintain their distinct political identities. At the same time, it is evident that the PPP would prefer to run the Gilgit-Baltistan government without sharing power directly with the PML-N. Whether such a model becomes viable will depend on post-election negotiations and the willingness of independent candidates to align themselves with the party. However, politics in Gilgit-Baltistan cannot be viewed solely through the conventional lens of electoral arithmetic. The region occupies a highly sensitive and strategic position due to its geographical location and its connection to national security considerations. Like Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan falls within an area where security concerns often intersect with political developments. Consequently, the role of the establishment remains significant. It should not come as a surprise if the establishment takes a keen interest in the formation of the next government. Given the strategic importance of the region, policymakers responsible for national security are unlikely to remain indifferent to political developments there. Stability, governance, and continuity will be among the key considerations. Interestingly, the political formula that eventually emerges in Gilgit-Baltistan could serve as a model for the upcoming elections in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, scheduled for June 27. Political observers are already closely watching developments in GB to gauge the direction of future electoral alliances and power-sharing arrangements.

Continued on Page 06

Over 27 terrorists killed in Waziristan

President, PM laud forces role

DNA

RAWALPINDI: In continuation of series of intelligence based operations, Security Forces engaged multiple Khwarijs' locations in general area Miran Shah, North Waziristan District. Following intense fierce exchanges of fire, in last seventy two hours, twenty seven khwarij belonging to Indian-sponsored Fitna-al-Khwarij have been sent to hell. Weapons and ammunition have also been recovered from killed Indian sponsored Khwarij, who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities and target killing of innocent civilians. By neutralising this group of killed Khwarij the heinous act of target killing of prominent figure Shaheed Malik

Continued on Page 06

AJK govt fulfills 24 out of 44 JAAC demands

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) has achieved significant progress in implementing its agreement with the Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC), successfully completing 24 out of 44 total demands. According to a progress report released on Sunday, an additional 16 demands are partially completed or under active process, while only four face an impasse or have been deemed not feasible. The report outlines massive governance and relief breakthroughs alongside critical challenges, where remaining political demands are being considered as an attempt to disrupt the democratic process in AJK. According to the details, the JAAC was formed in September 2023, initially based on three core economic demands including subsidized flour,

Continued on Page 06



TEHRAN: Pakistani Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi met with Iran's FM Araghchi in Tehran. Naqvi delivered Field Marshal Asim Munir's letter addressed to the supreme leader. - DNA

US-Iran stand-off

Tehran-Islamabad ties strengthen amid high-level talks

Lebanon crisis deepens as Israel-Hezbollah fighting escalates

CENTRELINE REPORT

TEHRAN: Regional diplomacy in the Middle East and South Asia is experiencing notable developments, with Pakistan and Iran engaging in high-level exchanges while Lebanon continues to suffer from ongoing conflict. In Tehran, Pakistani Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi met with Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, during which Naqvi submitted a special letter addressed to Iran's Supreme Leader. This gesture underscores Islamabad's intent to strengthen ties with Tehran at a time when regional cooperation is increasingly vital. The meeting also included

Continued on Page 06

Trump says he would not unfreeze Iran assets

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump said in an interview with NBC News' "Meet the Press" that he would not unfreeze Iranian assets or lift any sanctions before a peace deal is reached. Trump said he would consider those steps after an agreement is done. "Comes after," he said. "Yeah."

Continued on Page 06

North Korea nuclear program 'non-negotiable'

Sister of Kim Jong says Beijing is a vital source of political and economic support to North Korea

NEWS DESK

PYONGYANG: North Korea's nuclear weapons programme is "absolutely non-negotiable", the powerful sister of leader Kim Jong Un said in a statement carried by state media on Sunday, ahead of a visit by Chinese President Xi Jinping. Pyongyang has long insisted on its right to a nuclear weapon and ballistic missile

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

Peshawar-Torkham highway re-opens

SHAMIM SHAHID

KHAYBER: The Peshawar-Torkham Highway was reopened following a temporary closure by Sultan Khel tribesmen protesting the handling of 'targeted killings' in their area by Zaka Khel elders and government authorities. Two Sultan Khel residents were gunned down by unidentified assailants on Friday evening - in the same area where two policemen had been targeted over the last few months. The fresh violence prompted Sultan Khel residents from the Zaka Khel tribe to block the Peshawar-Torkham Highway by staging a protest.

Elections on June 27

AJK Supreme Court upholds govt's stance on refugee seats

Court says constitutional amendment essential for any change to reserved seats

DNA

MUZAFFARABAD: The Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Supreme Court on Sunday endorsed the government's position on the issue of refugee seats, ruling that the 12 reserved refugee seats in the AJK Legislative Assembly enjoy constitutional protection and cannot be altered through an administrative decision. The presidential reference had been filed by the President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir under Article 46-A of the Interim Constitution, 1974, on the advice of the government, seeking the court's opinion on

constitutional questions relating to refugee seats and other connected matters. In its opinion, the apex court held that the 12 refugee seats derive constitutional protection under Article 22 and are rooted in historical legal arrangements dating back to the laws of 1960, 1964 and 1970. The court observed that the seats are also linked to the interim constitutional framework, the 1974 Constitution and the 1975 Act. "Accordingly, we are of the considered opinion that the twelve refugee seats incorporated in Article 22(1)(a)(ii) and (ii) of the Constitution can be altered, reduced, or

Continued on Page 06

CENTRELINE

Pakistan's Premier News & Diplomatic Affairs Magazine



Your *trusted* window to Pakistan and the *world*.

- DIPLOMATIC COVERAGE**
Global affairs & foreign policy insights
- EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS**
Top diplomats & decision-makers
- ANALYSIS & INSIGHTS**
Expert views on international issues
- PREMIUM QUALITY**
Credible & unbiased content

Subscribe. Read. Stay Informed.



Massive fire in Nowshera market reduces over 200 shops to ashes

PESHAWAR: A wrecking fire broke out late Saturday night in Nowshera, causing widespread destruction and reducing more than 200 shops to ashes. Initial reports on Sunday indicate that merchandise worth millions of rupees was destroyed in the blaze. According to rescue and local sources, the fire erupted due to unknown reasons and rapidly spread throughout the market, engulfing shop after shop within a short period. The intensity of the flames left shopkeepers with little or no opportunity to save their goods. The affected busi-

nesses included clothing stores, footwear outlets, general merchandise shops, electronics stores and other commercial establishments. Large stocks of goods stored inside the shops were completely destroyed. Eyewitnesses said the fire swept through the entire marketplace within a few hours, turning valuable inventories worth hundreds of thousands of rupees per shop into ashes. The incident has caused severe financial losses for traders and business owners. Preliminary estimates suggest that the to-

tal damage may amount to tens of millions of rupees. The local authorities have launched an investigation to determine the cause of the fire and assess the extent of the losses. Following the incident, affected traders appealed to the government for immediate financial assistance and compensation. Many shopkeepers said that their lifetime savings and investments were wiped out within a matter of hours. No casualties have been reported so far, while officials continue to evaluate the damage and gather further details about the incident.—APP



MULTAN: A newly hatched duckling drinks water from a puddle to quench its thirst on a hot day.

First lady strongly condemns acid attack

ISLAMABAD: First Lady Bibi Aseefa Bhutto Zardari has strongly condemned the horrific acid attack on Dr. Mahnoor Nasir at Civil Hospital Quetta, yesterday. Expressing her deep shock and sorrow over the incident, the First Lady stressed that violence against women has no place in our society and must be dealt with using the full force of the law. The relevant authorities must ensure that such incidents are curbed in future. The First Lady prayed for the quick recovery of Dr. Mahnoor and Abdul Razaq Tarakai, the brave ward boy who was injured while defending the doctor during the attack. She called upon the local administration and medical authorities to provide the best possible medical treatment and specialised care to both the doctor and the brave ward boy. Lauding the extraordinary valiance of the ward boy, the First Lady requested the President of Pakistan to confer a high civil award upon Abdul Razaq Tarakai in recognition of his selfless gallantry. She remarked that his timely and courageous intervention not only saved a precious life but also stands as an inspiring example of humanity for the entire nation.—DNA

Heat wave alert issued for KP

PESHAWAR: The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) has issued a heatwave warning across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, with temperatures expected to rise as high as 46°C in several districts over the coming days. According to the Pakistan Meteorological Department, an increase in atmospheric pressure is likely to develop from June 8 and persist until June 11, causing temperatures in most districts to remain 4 to 6 degrees Celsius above normal. The highest temperatures are expected in Dera Ismail Khan, Tank, Bannu, Karak and Lakki Marwat, where daytime temperatures may range between 41°C and 46°C. In Peshawar, Nowshera, Charsadda, Mardan, Swabi, Haripur and Kohat, temperatures are forecast to reach between 41°C and 45°C.

In response, the PDMA has directed district administrations to establish heatstroke centers, cooling points, and mobile cooling units. Rescue 1122, fire brigade services and hospitals have also been instructed to remain on high alert and ensure the availability of medical staff and emergency facilities. Authorities have warned that the intense heat may also trigger dust storms and strong winds. In northern areas, rising temperatures could accelerate snowmelt. Citizens have been advised to avoid unnecessary exposure to direct sunlight and increase water intake. Farmers have been urged to take precautions during harvesting activities and ensure proper care of livestock. Special attention has also been advised for children and the elderly, who are encouraged to avoid outdoor activities between 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. The PDMA stated that the Emergency Operations Center remains fully operational and citizens can report emergencies through the helpline 1700.—APP

Call for increasing taxes on all beverages

ISLAMABAD: A coalition of civil society organizations and public health professionals working under the TRANSFORM Pakistan Campaign, aiming to safeguard public health in Pakistan, on Sunday has urged the government for increase in Federal Excise Duty to 40 percent on all sweetened beverages, including juices and fruit juices, with no exception, in the upcoming budget 2026-27. The coalition warned that Pakistan was facing an unprecedented rise in non-communicable diseases (NCDs), driven in large part by unhealthy diets and increasing consumption of sweetened drinks. Pakistan currently has one of the highest diabetes burdens in the world, with an estimated 35 million adults living with the disease, placing enormous pressure on families, communities, and the healthcare system, said a press release. If no immediate policy action is taken, the number is set to increase to 70 million

by 2050. The annual cost of diabetes management is already reaching over USD 2.6 billion, nearly double the annual installment of the IMF program. Munawar Hussain, Health and Nutrition Policy Expert, stated that scientific evidence around the world and from Pakistan shows that taxing all sweetened beverages is an evidence-backed policy measure for reducing their consumption and preventing obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and other NCDs. Dr. Saba Amjad, CEO, Heartfile, emphasized that all sweetened drinks, including juices, regardless of their source of sugar, contributed to increasing the risk of serious health conditions like diabetes, stroke and heart disease. She noted that public health policies must be guided by science and global best practices. Afshar Iqbal, Director Communications and Advocacy at Pakistan Youth Change Advocates (PYCA), cautioned against misleading

narratives by certain elements of the food and beverage industry claiming that packaged fruit juices were healthy simply because they contain no "added sugar." He noted that such claims contradict scientific evidence and the guidance of the World Health Organization (WHO), which recognizes fruit juices as free sugars and recommends limiting their consumption through taxing and various other policy measures. Mukhtar Ahmed Ali, Executive Director, Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI), stressed that the upcoming federal budget would present a critical opportunity to prioritize public health and reduce the growing economic burden of diet-related diseases. The revenue generated through taxing sweetened beverages and juices should be invested in health promotion and disease prevention, he added.—APP

IESCO power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Sunday issued a power suspension programme for Monday in various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to an IESCO spokesperson, the power supply from the Islamabad Circle will remain suspended from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. in Khana Dak, Khana East, Khana-II/Qad-eer road, Al Noor Colony, Shareefabad, Ghouri Garden feeders. In the GSO Circle, the electricity supply will remain suspended from 6:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in areas served by the Azad Pattan feeder. Similarly, from 08:00 a.m. to 04:00 p.m., 132KV New Wah to POF along with related earth switch, from 08:00 a.m. to 06:00 p.m., 132KV Chakwal-Bhagwal-Talagang, 132KV Kahuta City-Palandri, 132KV New Wah-Bahtermore along with related earth switch and surrounding areas will remain closed. The IESCO management apologized to its esteemed customers for the power outage. If the work is completed ahead of time, the power supply can be restored even before the scheduled time, it said.—APP

IRSA releases 217,300 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Sunday released 217,300 cusecs of water from various rim stations with inflow of 240,500 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in the River Indus at Tarbela Dam stood at 1455.05 feet which was 55.05 feet higher than the dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam were recorded as 121,700 cusecs and 110,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 171.60 feet, which was 121.60 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 40,500 cusecs and 29,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 179,800, 105,700, 54,800, and 18,500 cusecs, respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 46,800 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera, and 8,200 cusecs were released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP

Digital tech to enhance transparency, efficiency

LAHORE: The Punjab Assembly (PA) has taken a significant step towards becoming a modern digital legislature, with preparations underway to conduct its next session in a completely paperless environment. Punjab Assembly Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan reviewed the newly installed tablets in the Assembly Hall and termed the digitalization initiative a major milestone in the modernization of the parliamentary system. Under the European Union's IP-5 Programme, the Assembly has been provided with 380 state-of-the-art tablets for members. The Speaker said that Members of the Provincial Assembly (MPAs) would receive all legislative

documents, including agendas, bills, resolutions, questions and other parliamentary papers, in digital format. He added that the initiative would make Assembly proceedings more efficient, transparent and expeditious while reducing the use of time, resources and public funds. He said the transition to a paperless Assembly was expected to save millions of rupees annually and significantly reduce paper consumption, contributing to environmental sustainability and supporting the vision of a Green Parliament. Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan observed that the adoption of modern technology would improve members' access to information, enhance

convenience and strengthen the legislative process. He emphasized that parliamentary institutions must adapt to evolving technological requirements in an increasingly digital world. The Speaker remarked that just as the printing press revolutionized the dissemination of knowledge in its era, digital technology represented the transformative force of the modern age, promoting transparency, better governance and improved institutional performance. Reaffirming his commitment to innovation, he expressed confidence that the Punjab Assembly was emerging as a modern, environmentally responsible and technology-driven legislature.—APP

Future of Pashtuns lies in education, not armed group

PESHAWAR: Awami National Party (ANP) President and Senator Aimal Wali Khan has said that the problems facing Pashtuns could never be resolved through militias or armed groups, but only through awareness, education and skill development. In a statement issued from the Bacha Khan Center here on Sunday, the ANP chief reaffirmed his party's principled stance that all political and social struggles must remain within the constitutional framework of the state. He stressed that no success can be achieved through force or confrontation against the state. He stated that in any civilized society, the authority to use force rests solely with the state, adding that the rise

of non-state armed groups has been one of the major reasons behind worsening instability in the region. Aimal Wali Khan warned that forming armed groups in the name of resolving issues ultimately harms Pashtuns the most, damaging their businesses, livelihoods, daily life and long-standing social and intellectual traditions. He called for a serious shift away from "militant thinking" toward sustainable solutions. Emphasizing modern education and the knowledge economy, he said that without adopting contemporary sciences and properly training the youth, nations cannot progress in today's world. He described a "knowledge economy" as the only viable path to development

and global integration. The ANP leader also reiterated that Pakistan's future lies in peaceful co-existence, education and strengthening the writ of the state, adding that citizens who pay taxes and fulfill their responsibilities are entitled to full protection of life, property and livelihoods by the state. Regarding Balochistan, he said Pashtuns share a historic and brotherly relationship with its people and that the ANP engages only through peaceful, political and constitutional means. He clarified that the party has no links with any separatist or armed organizations operating against the state, while condemning attacks on civilians, including transport vehicles and workers.—APP

Fashion center to boost exports: Kashif

LAHORE: Board of Industrial Collaboration to Enhance Fashion Export (BICEFE) Chairperson Mian Kashif Ashfaq said on Sunday that Pakistan's first modern, world-class dedicated Fashion Innovation Center had been established to enhance the country's competitiveness in the global marketplace and strengthen fashion-related exports. Chairing the second meeting of BICEFE here, he said the center, established at the Pakistan Institute of Fashion Design, would spearhead research, development, and market intelligence for the textile, fashion, apparel, and furniture sectors. He said the global fashion industry was evolving at an unprecedented pace due to changing consumer preferences, technological advancements, sustainability requirements, and the rapid expansion of digital commerce. The innovation center would serve as a collaborative platform bringing together designers, manufacturers, exporters, academic institutions, and policymakers. Mian Kashif Ashfaq said the facility would facilitate research on international market requirements, provide training in advanced design techniques, support product diversification and encourage the adoption of modern technologies, including artificial intelligence, smart textiles and e-commerce solutions. He noted that Pakistan was now developing its own institutional capacity to support innovation and export-led growth instead of relying on foreign assistance and acceptance. Highlighting the importance of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in strengthening the national economy, he said the Small and Medium Business Network (SBN) viewed the coming decade as a period of rapid transformation and growth for Pakistan's fashion and textile sectors. Innovation centers, he added, would play a pivotal role by supporting entrepreneurs, startups and established businesses seeking to expand their presence in international markets. He said investment in innovation was no longer an option but a necessity, adding that the Fashion Innovation Center would help Pakistan capitalize on emerging opportunities, increase export earnings, generate skilled employment and position the country as an important player in the rapidly evolving global fashion industry.—DNA

Meeting ends without elections after disorder at Islamabad club

The meeting was subsequently adjourned without completing its scheduled agenda. Further decisions regarding the pending election process are expected to be announced by the relevant district authorities at a later date

DNA

JHELUM: A special meeting of Lions District N-2, convened at Islamabad Club, ended without the completion of its agenda after disorderly conduct and heated exchanges among participants forced the proceedings to be terminated. According to an official notification issued to members, the meeting commenced at 2:00 PM in accordance with the scheduled notice and the provisions of the organization's Constitution and By-Laws. The purpose of the gathering included conducting election-related proceedings and addressing important district matters. However, the meeting was disrupted by misconduct, intense arguments, and the use of inappropriate language among some advisory members.



Kamran Gujjar

Despite repeated appeals by the District Governor to maintain decorum and allow the agenda to proceed, the situation reportedly continued to deteriorate. Witnesses stated that the atmosphere became increasingly confrontational, resulting in disorder within the meeting hall. To ensure the safety of attendees and restore order, the management of Islamabad Club intervened and formally terminated the proceedings, requesting all participants to vacate the premises. As a consequence, the election process could not be carried out. Officials confirmed that no elections were held, no voting took place, and no vacancies were filled or declared elected during the special meeting. The meeting was subsequently adjourned without completing its scheduled agenda. Further decisions regarding the pending election process are expected to be announced by the relevant district authorities at a later date.

MOST EXPERIENCED
MANUFACTURERS &
EXPORTERS OF
MARTIAL ARTS UNIFORMS
IN
PAKISTAN

2020 KARATE

2020 BOXING

2020 JUDO

2020 TAEKWONDO

JUDO
KARATE
KUNG-FU
JU-JITSU
TAEKWONDO
UNIFORMS AND
COLOURED BELTS

WHERE EACH STITCH IS WATCHED

Ashraf

ASHRAF INDUSTRIES (PVT) LTD
127 C, Industrial Estate
Sialkot-51340, Pakistan
Phones: +92-52-3250000 / 3250700
E-mail: info@ashraf.net.pk

National Days and Armed Forces Days

JUNE

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

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



Enquiry

- Edhi Ambulance.....115
- PIA Flight Info.....114
- PIA Cargo.....9280979
- Railway Inquiry.....117
- Railway Exchange 9270831-5
- WASA Rawalpindi.....5555489
- CAA.....9221082



Hospitals

- CMH.....5611111
- MH.....5611116
- Cantt Hospital...9270907-11
- DHQ.....5556311-4
- RGH.....9290301-7
- Holy Family.....9290322-7
- PIMS.....9261170-79
- Polyclinic.....9218300-09
- Shifa International 4603666



Departments

- CDA.....9221334-43
- CDA.....9208301-04
- Met Office.....9250360-6
- RDA.....5555864
- TMA.....5770886
- Cantonment Board 9270151-3



Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Water Tank

- Islamabad.....0321-5744480



ISLAMABAD: Representatives of participating countries at the Francophone Film Mela pose for a group photo during the screening of a Canadian film, marking the formal opening of the festival. French Ambassador to Pakistan Nicolas Galey addressed the gathering and shared details of the event, announcing that after Islamabad, the film mela will also be held in Lahore and Karachi. — DNA Photo

Pak students win 2nd prize at business elite challenge

This year's finals attracted over 500 international students from 54 countries, including Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Russia and Serbia

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The "Belt and Road" Business Elite Challenge (BRBEC) Brand Planning Competition 2026 concluded in Sanmenxia, Henan, China, with a team of Pakistani and Tajik students securing second prize for their proposal to bring 3D-printed orthopedic solutions from China to Pakistan. The award-winning team, named BE-FLEX and based at Nanjing Tech University, comprised three Pakistani master's and bachelor's students majoring in computer science, pharmacy and mechanical engineering, along with a Tajik master's student major-

ing in business administration. The team was supervised by Chinese teacher Liu Yun, according to a Gwadar Pro's report. BE-FLEX team wins second prize at the "Belt and Road" Business Elite Challenge (BRBEC) Brand Planning Competition 2026, photo provided to GP Their entry proposed promoting Basinlead, a Chinese innovator specializing in digital orthopedic 3D printing, into the Pakistani market. Since its inception, the company has been dedicated to digital solutions for orthotics and orthopedic devices. The team identified a pressing need in Pakistan, where diabetic and orthopedic problems are widespread. They proposed introducing 3D customized foot insoles

and back braces – products that remain rare in the Pakistani market. The team noted that even where foot insoles exist locally, none feature the 3D TPU lattice structure offered by their proposal. Pakistani student Faria Rashid, a member of the BE-FLEX team, described the competition as an excellent opportunity to stimulate thinking, showcase their ideas and engage in exchanges with peers from around the world. She noted that the core mission of their proposal was to contribute to the well-being of people – a principle that guided the entire planning process. According to the judges, entries from international students studying in China demonstrated

innovative concepts closely aligned with global trends, showcasing original thinking in differentiated brand building, localized operations and diverse marketing strategies. Organized by the CCPIT Commercial Industry Committee, the competition has been included in the China's National University Discipline Competition Ranking for five consecutive years, making it one of the most comprehensive contests in terms of institutional coverage, industry-academia collaboration and international exchange. This year's finals attracted over 500 international students from 54 countries, including Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Russia and Serbia.

China, Pakistan step up tropical agricultural science cooperation

BEIJING: China and Pakistan will jointly advance tropical agricultural research under a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) recently signed between the Chinese Academy of Tropical Agricultural Sciences (CATAS) and the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC), China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Saturday. Per the inked document, both sides will conduct joint scientific research across four core sectors: tropical cash crops, food grains, tropical fruits & vegetables, and agricultural biotechnology. Beyond scientific research, the bilateral collaboration will feature germplasm resource exchange and technical training, designed to turn cutting-edge agricultural technologies into tangible productivity gains for farming industries in both nations, as CEN learned from CATAS.—DNA

University alumna wins research award

ISLAMABAD: Ayesha Bibi, an alumna of the Department of English at the University of Sahiwal, has received the 2026 Research Star Award from Hangzhou Normal University in China, Gwadar Pro reported. The university said Bibi, a graduate of the Department of English's 2021-25 session, earned the award in recognition of her research achievements, academic excellence and contributions to scholarly innovation. The university described the honor as a significant achievement reflecting the growing presence of Pakistani researchers in the international academic community. "Ayesha Bibi, a distinguished alumna of the Department of English at University of Sahiwal, has brought great pride to her alma mater by receiving the 2026 Research Star Award at Hangzhou Normal University China," the university said in a social media post.—APP

\$1.64bn Landhi–Rohri ML-1 upgrade picks up steam

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways (PR) is accelerating work on the \$1.639 billion upgrade of the Landhi–Rohri section of ML-1, with groundbreaking targeted for October 2026. Official documents available with Wealth Pakistan show that the 450-kilometre corridor is set for extensive modernization, including the overhaul of 32 railway stations and 551 bridges and culverts. The project will also introduce modern signaling systems, including Auto Block Signaling and Centralized Block Interlocking (CBI), aimed at improving operational efficiency and safety. Envi-

ronmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) surveys and plans are expected to be completed by August 2026. The design review by the PRF consultant and approval of environmental and social (E&S) plans by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) are targeted for December 2026. The document further reveals that contractor hiring, retro financing, and groundbreaking activities are all scheduled for October 2026, signaling the government's intent to fast-track one of the most critical railway infrastructure projects in the country. The project also covers the

improvement and grade separation of level crossings between Landhi and Hyderabad, along with climate risk assessment studies, environmental and social safeguard measures, and land acquisition and resettlement plans. The modernization of the Landhi–Rohri section will go a long way toward significantly enhancing freight and passenger rail capacity between Karachi and the rest of the country, reducing travel time, improving logistics efficiency, and strengthening Pakistan's transport connectivity and economic growth prospects.—DNA

SECP fines 36 SOEs Rs 3.175m

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has concluded enforcement proceedings against 36 State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs), imposing monetary penalties totaling Rs 3.175 million through 46 adjudication orders, while issuing warning orders in 12 cases. In March 2026, the SECP issued 66 Show Cause Notices (SCNs) to 41 State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) for non-compliance with statutory reporting and corporate governance requirements, said a press release issued by the SECP on Saturday. The violations included failure to submit annual audited financial statements and annual returns within the prescribed timelines, non-compliance with disclosure requirements, and breaches of the Corporate Governance Regulations. To date, proceedings have been concluded in 58 cases. As part of the government's reform agenda to strengthen transparency, accountability, and governance in the SOE sector, the SECP has enhanced its oversight of State-Owned Enterprises and is taking measures to ensure effective compliance with the Companies Act and Corporate Governance framework. The minimum penalty imposed was Rs 25,000 for failure to file annual returns, while a penalty of Rs 50,000 was imposed for failure to file both annual returns and financial statements. The highest penalty, amounting to Rs 225,000, was imposed for repeated non-compliance with statutory filing requirements. Collectively, penalties totaling Rs 3.175 million were imposed. The proceedings were concluded after due process, including providing the concerned SOEs with sufficient opportunity to respond to the SCNs and present their case during hearings. Several companies regularized their compliance by filing outstanding annual returns following the issuance of SCNs. To facilitate compliance, the SECP also established a dedicated help desk to assist SOEs in the submission of annual returns and other statutory filings. Copies of the adjudication orders have been shared with the relevant Principal Accounting Officers (PAOs) of the concerned SOEs and the Director General of the Central Monitoring Unit (CMU) for information and necessary follow-up.—DNA

NAVTTTC trains 2,000 youth in AI

ISLAMABAD: The National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) has trained 2,000 youth in artificial intelligence (AI) and cloud computing, with 1,703 earning international certifications and 70 percent securing employment under the programme. According to official documents available with Wealth Pakistan, the training, held in partnership with Huawei, has been implemented in cloud tech essentials, cloud architecture, and artificial intelligence fundamentals in collaboration with Huawei, with 1,703 trainees obtaining international certifications and 70 percent securing employment. Under the initiative, 2,000 participants were trained through leading training partners, including CyberVision, Corvit, and the University of Engineering and Technology (UET) Lahore. Out of the total trainees, 1,703 successfully earned international certifications, resulting in a certification pass rate of 85.15 percent. The document further shows that the program achieved an employment rate of 70 percent, with graduates reporting an average monthly income of Rs87,298, highlighting the growing demand for advanced digital skills in Pakistan's technology sector. The pilot project was designed with a strong emphasis on employability, targeting job placement rates between 60 and 80 percent. It also incorporated soft-skills training alongside technical instruction to enhance workplace readiness and improve career prospects for participants. According to the document, international certification requirements have been completed, while placement verification has also been finalized. The success of the pilot phase has paved the way for the next batch of training, which is already in the pipeline. The initiative forms part of broader efforts to strengthen Pakistan's digital workforce, equip the youth with globally recognized technology credentials, and support the country's transition towards a knowledge-based economy. The strong certification and employment outcomes indicate the growing effectiveness of public-private partnerships in addressing skills gaps in emerging technologies such as cloud computing and artificial intelligence.—DNA

Muharram security blueprint finalized in Taxila

WAH CANTT: A comprehensive security plan for Muharram-ul-Haram was finalized in Taxila on Sunday as SP Pothohar Sardar Babar Mumtaz Khan chaired a high-level consultative meeting with key stakeholders to review arrangements aimed at ensuring peace, public safety, and uninterrupted religious observances throughout the holy month. The meeting was attended by the SDPO Taxila, Station House Officers (SHOs), members of the Peace Committee, representatives of traders' bodies, caretakers of Imambargahs, and organizers of Muharram processions. Addressing participants, the SP announced that robust security measures would be

enforced at all Majalis and processions, with attendees required to pass through walk-through gates and undergo thorough security screening in line with approved protocols. He also directed organizers to strictly adhere to designated routes, approved timings, and prescribed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), emphasizing that all events must commence and conclude according to schedule. Sardar Babar Mumtaz Khan underscored that the code of conduct and security guidelines issued by the Punjab Home Department for Muharram-ul-Haram would be implemented in letter and spirit, warning that any violation of

the approved framework would not be tolerated. On this occasion, the participants assured the police and district administration of their full cooperation and commitment to complying with all security directives. Reaffirming the administration's resolve to maintain a peaceful environment, the SP said all available resources were being mobilized to protect lives and property, stressing that close coordination among law enforcement agencies, religious leaders, community representatives, and procession organizers remained vital for fostering religious harmony and ensuring the peaceful observance of Muharram across the region.—APP

HEC official, family 'kidnapped' from Lahore Railway Station

LAHORE: A Higher Education Department Islamabad employee, his wife and two young children were allegedly kidnapped from Lahore Railway Station, according to a case registered at Naulakha Police Station. The family has been missing since June 2, and despite efforts to trace them, no information about their whereabouts has emerged so far, according to the complainant. Police have registered a case regarding the alleged abduction of Hafiz Zeeshan and his family at Naulakha Police Station. According to the FIR, Hafiz Zeeshan is a resident of Haripur and works as a messenger in the Higher Education Department, Islamabad. The report states that he was allegedly kidnapped along with his wife and two children from Lahore Railway Station on June 2. The case was formally registered on June 4. Family was travelling to Haripur. According to details included in the FIR, Hafiz Zeeshan had arrived at Lahore Railway Station with his family to travel to their native area, Haripur. The FIR included his wife, his two-year-old son Zaviar and his six-year-old child Zorain. The FIR states that the family was at the railway station when the alleged kidnapping took place. Before heading to the railway station, Hafiz Zeeshan and his family had visited his in-laws in Lahore's Shah Di Khui area. After their visit, they proceeded toward the railway station to begin their journey back to Haripur. However, according to the complainant, the family disappeared before they could leave for their hometown. "No trace of family after three days. The complainant stated in the FIR that three days had passed since the alleged kidnapping, but the family had not yet been located. Efforts were made to contact relatives and family members, but no information regarding Hafiz Zeeshan, his wife or their children could be obtained." The complainant further stated that all possible contacts had been approached, yet no one had any knowledge of the family's whereabouts. The complainant has urged senior police officials and relevant authorities to take immediate action to locate Hafiz Zeeshan and his family. "The FIR includes a request for the swift recovery of the missing official, his wife and their two children.—DNA

Briefs

Chinese Firm
sign MoU

DNA

GILGIT: The Karakoram International University (KIU) and Chinese company Ningxia have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to collaborate on the cultivation, research and commercial utilization of medicinal plants in Gilgit-Baltistan. Under the agreement, the partners will establish a research center at KIU focused on the scientific identification of indigenous medicinal plants, assessment of their therapeutic properties and exploration of their applications in pharmaceutical development. According to KIU, the research center will provide students and researchers in Gilgit-Baltistan with opportunities to conduct scientific studies on medicinal plants within the region, Gwadar Pro reported.

Summer
camps boom
continues

ISLAMABAD: Summer camps have increasingly become a topic of debate among parents and educators, with some viewing them as a valuable source of learning, recreation, and healthy engagement for children during summer vacations, while others raise concerns over commercialization and question whether certain camps operate more as profit-driven setups than meaningful developmental spaces. With the onset of summer vacations, digital platforms have seen a surge in advertisements for summer camps, promoting a wide range of activities designed to engage and keep children productively occupied during the holiday period. Parents and education experts remain divided over the growing trend of summer camps, with some viewing them as useful for skill-building and social development, while others question their educational value and rising commercialization. A WhatsApp group of mothers recently discussed and shared their views regarding summer camps, expressing mixed opinions about where children are being enrolled during the vacation period. While some parents said these camps provide structured activities and keep children engaged in a productive routine, others raised concerns about the increasing number of such programs and the pressure it places on families to participate. Several mothers also criticized the high fee structures of some summer camps, questioning whether the charges truly reflect the quality of learning and activities being offered. They further debated the real purpose of these camps, with some arguing that they are becoming more commercial in nature rather than focusing on genuine child development and meaningful skill-building.

How
Rawalpindi
shop became
a gateway to
China

ISLAMABAD, Jun 07 (APP): Amid rows of colourful vases, pottery, decorative pieces and imported handicrafts at a modest shop on College Road, rays of knowledge spread far beyond the shelves of Dream Land Handicraft. Here, Syed Muhammad Naem is doing more than business. For years, he has been teaching Chinese language and practical trade skills to traders, factory owners and aspiring entrepreneurs, helping them understand not only how to speak with Chinese suppliers but also how to buy smarter, negotiate better and compete more confidently in one of the world's largest markets. While customers browse through interior decoration items, another group gathers around him with notebooks in hand, learning Chinese words, business terms and practical lessons that could one day help them negotiate deals in China's bustling markets. For Naem, business and education have gone hand in hand for decades. A businessman since 1995, Naem's academic journey is as diverse as the products displayed in his shop. He holds a BSc degree in Double Mathematics and Physics, an MA in Political Science from Punjab University.—APP

Allottees announce protests
against housing authority

Green Enclave, Sector G 14/1, Bara Kahu delayed due to alleged nonchalance of the FGEHA

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Allottees of the long-stalled Green Enclave-I housing scheme of the Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) announced a protest movement over continued delays in development work and non-delivery of possession of plots. The announcement was made during a consultative meeting held at Yasmin Garden, where more than 100 allottees and plot owners gathered to review the situation of the housing project, which has remained incomplete for nearly 17 years. Participants recalled that the scheme was launched in 2009 for government employees with the promise of providing affordable residential plots. Thousands of employees, they said, invested their savings in the project in good faith, expecting timely development and possession. However, the allottees alleged that despite receiving full payments along with additional charges under revised development cost structures, the FGEHA has failed to complete basic infrastructure work or hand over plots to rightful owners. Speakers described the situation as a result of poor planning, weak supervision, and administrative inefficiency. Some participants pointed out that several original allottees had passed away without seeing possession of their plots. Spearheading the concerns, Chaudhary Amjad Ali said the patience of allottees had reached its limit. "Seventeen



years is a very long time. Employees invested their hard-earned money, but instead of delivery, they received only uncertainty. We are now compelled to begin a protest movement to secure our rights," he said. Another allottee, Aslam Chaudhary, termed the situation deeply disappointing. "We completed all payments as required, yet we are still without possession. People are aging, some have already retired, and

many are still paying rent despite owning plots in this scheme," he said, adding that the delay had caused serious hardship for affected families. The meeting concluded with a unanimous decision to initiate a phased protest movement if the situation does not improve. The allottees warned that future demonstrations would not remain limited to internal gatherings but could extend to government offices,

the Parliament House, and the National Press Club in Islamabad. They called upon the government to take immediate notice of the matter, conduct a transparent inquiry into the project's delays, and fix responsibility for negligence and mismanagement. The participants also demanded a clear deadline for completion of development work and handing over of possession.

PIDE for national savings drive to
strengthen eco resilience

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) on Sunday suggested launching a targeted 'National Savings Drive' through the upcoming Finance Bill 2026-27 aimed at strengthening domestic resource mobilization and enhancing the country's economic resilience. Authored by PIDE, Professor of Economics Dr S. M. Naem Nawaz and Research Economist Wajid Islam, the policy viewpoint titled "Mobilizing Domestic Savings: A Finance Bill and Institutional Reform Agenda for Pakistan" highlighted the importance of increasing domestic savings to support sustainable economic growth and reduce reliance on external financing. The study revealed that Pakistan's gross domestic savings stood at 6.4 percent of GDP in 2024, compared with 17.4 per cent in 1992, stressing the need for measures to encourage household and institutional savings. According to the report, stronger domestic savings can provide a stable foundation for investment, economic expansion and financial stability. It was observed that several regional economies have achieved higher savings rates through policies that promote secure, accessible and rewarding savings mechanisms. The policy viewpoint identified inflationary pressures, high consumption patterns and limited incentives for formal savings as factors affecting savings mobilization. It mentioned that households often prefer alternative assets such as gold and real estate, underscoring the need to strengthen confidence in formal financial instruments. The study proposed a comprehensive National Savings Mobilization Package under the Finance Bill 2026-27. Key recommendations include restoring and redesigning savings-related tax incentives, introducing a capped tax credit for approved long-term savings instruments under a revised Section 62 of the Income Tax Ordinance, and strengthening voluntary pension incentives under Section 63, particularly for first-time contributors, women, self-employed individuals and workers in the informal sector. It also proposed reintroducing a protection-linked savings credit under Section 62A covering health insurance, life insurance and family takaful to encourage precautionary savings and support household financial security. The report highlighted the importance of supporting vulnerable savers through targeted concessions for pensioners, widows, Shuhada families, women and senior citizens, ensuring that benefits are directed towards genuine small savers. The authors further recommended expanding access to Sukuk, Shariah-compliant savings products, voluntary pension schemes, takaful, micro-insurance, REITs, regulated gold funds and digitized National Savings products.—APP

AIU announces
admission schedule

ISLAMABAD: The Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU) on Sunday announced admission schedule for the Autumn 2026 semester, offering academic programs from Matriculation to PhD level across the country. According to the University administration, admissions for all programs will begin simultaneously nationwide from July 1, 2026. The facility will be available across all four provinces, as well as Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan and other northern regions. The university has also extended its academic offerings to overseas Pakistanis and international students, allowing them to apply for various programs at different levels. Officials stated that admission forms and prospectuses for all programs will be made available online on the university's official website from July 1, enabling students to apply conveniently from home without visiting campuses. To facilitate applicants, Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr Nasir Mahmood has directed the heads of all 53 regional offices to ensure the establishment of Student Facilitation Desks before the start of admissions. These desks will provide complete guidance regarding the admission process while free computer and internet facilities will also be available to assist students in completing online applications.—DNA

IWT under strain amid
India's projects

ISLAMABAD: Former Punjab Minister for Irrigation Mohsin Leghari has said that the Indus Waters Treaty, long regarded as one of the world's most durable water-sharing arrangements between Pakistan and India, is facing renewed strain amid recent developments involving treaty interpretation, hydropower expansion, and inter-basin water transfers. Mohsin Leghari, senior water policy expert currently associated with UNDP Pakistan's National Governance Programme, noted that for over six decades, the treaty had largely survived periods of war and political tension, with India allocated the eastern rivers (Ravi, Beas, Sutlej) and Pakistan receiving rights over the western rivers (Indus, Jhelum, Chenab), subject to limited permissible uses by India. Talking to APP, Leghari said concerns intensified after India reportedly placed the treaty in abeyance in April 2025, arguing that such a move weakened the legal framework governing one of the world's largest shared river systems, which supports the livelihoods of people across both countries. Leghari highlighted multiple Indian hydropower projects on the Chenab River, including Pakal Dul, Kiru, Kwar, and Ratle, noting that while each project is individually claimed by India to comply with treaty provisions, their com-

bined operation could potentially influence the timing and regulation of river flows. He stressed that the core concern is not only the total volume of water, but also the ability to control when water is released, which could have downstream implications for agriculture and irrigation systems in Pakistan. He also pointed to an 8.7-kilometre tunnel project in India's Lahaul-Spiti region designed to divert water from the Chandra and Bhaga rivers—tributaries of the Chenab—into the Beas basin. Leghari argued that even if the volume diverted is relatively small compared to the Chenab's annual flow, such inter-basin transfers raise significant legal and treaty interpretation questions, as the Indus Waters Treaty was based on the principle of keeping eastern and western river systems largely separate. According to Leghari, Pakistan's irrigation network—including systems such as the Marala Barrage and the Upper Chenab Canal—was developed on the assumption of predictable flows within the Chenab basin. Any diversion outside the basin, he warned, could create long-term uncertainty for downstream water users and affect agricultural planning. He added that evolving river management practices on both sides have increased the importance of legal clarity and technical monitoring under the treaty framework.—APP

CM's vision for cleaner,
greener Punjab lauded

ISLAMABAD: Director General (DG) Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Punjab Dr. Imran Hamid Sheikh on Sunday said sustained efforts under the Chief Minister's vision are delivering results through smart environmental governance, cleaner production methods, coordinated enforcement and province-wide sanitation drives aimed at improving public health and cleanliness. While speaking exclusively to PTV News, DG EPA Hamid Sheikh praised the Chief Minister's vision for a cleaner, greener and healthier Punjab, saying the government is pursuing environmental excellence through technology-driven reforms and strong enforcement measures. He said significant efforts are being made to strengthen air quality management across the province through scientific monitoring, improved coordination with relevant departments and strict action against sources of pollution. The conversion of brick kilns to zig-zag technology has also contributed to reducing emissions and improving environmental standards. Dr. Sheikh highlighted the role of modern technology in environmental governance, noting that data-based monitoring systems are helping authorities identify violations and ensure compliance with environmental regulations more effectively. He further said the Suthra Punjab programme is promoting cleaner cities and communities, while crackdowns on littering, illegal waste dumping and other environmental viola-

tions are helping create a healthier and more sustainable environment for citizens across the province. He mentioned that international organizations, including the WHO and the United Nations, are observing Punjab's technology-based environmental solutions and its strict implementation of the Chief Minister's vision. He said these efforts reflect a growing commitment to global environmental standards and sustainable governance. Dr. Imran Hamid Sheikh added that Punjab's approach to air quality improvement, waste management and industrial regulation is increasingly aligned with scientific best practices. He noted that continuous monitoring and enforcement are ensuring measurable progress across key environmental indicators. He further said that recognition and attention from global institutions highlight the province's serious commitment to environmental protection and modern governance. According to him, these developments demonstrate Punjab's transition towards a more responsible and technology-driven environmental management system. Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif has consistently championed the vision of a plastic-free Punjab, extending full support to green initiatives across the province. Her leadership has helped strengthen policies aimed at reducing plastic use and promoting sustainable alternatives, he mentioned.—APP

Gilani
attends
MINI All-
Electric
vehicle
showcase

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Senate of Pakistan, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, attended the MINI Brand Display and All-Electric Vehicle Showcase organised by Dewan Motors. During the event, the Senate chairman appreciated Dewan Motors' contribution to promoting modern, environmentally responsible, and high-quality transportation solutions in Pakistan. He said that the adoption of advanced and electric mobility solutions reflects the country's commitment to technological advancement and sustainable economic growth. Gilani was briefed on MINI's latest all-electric vehicle lineup and other innovative automotive offerings. He was introduced to the brand's modern design philosophy, advanced technologies, sustainable mobility initiatives, and customer-focused services. Speaking on the occasion, he acknowledged Dewan Motors' role in supporting the development of Pakistan's automobile sector by providing access to internationally recognised automotive standards and enhancing customer experience through its nationwide presence, modern showrooms, and after-sales services. He said that private-sector investment and innovation play a vital role in economic growth, industrial development, and employment generation. Expressing confidence in the company's future contributions, Gilani said Dewan Motors would continue supporting Pakistan's progress by expanding access to efficient, modern, and sustainable transportation solutions. The event was attended by business leaders, representatives of the automobile industry, distinguished guests, and members of the media.—APP



DNA

DIPLOMATIC NEWS AGENCY

Connecting Pakistan to the World

Credible News. Global Reach. Trusted by All.

DNA delivers fast, accurate and balanced news from Pakistan and around the globe. Your trusted source for real-time updates on diplomacy, politics, economy and more.





REAL-TIME UPDATES

Fast and timely news from around the world.



CREDIBLE & DEPENDABLE

Committed to accuracy, fairness and integrity.



GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

In-depth coverage with a diplomatic lens.



WIDEST NETWORK

Connecting sources, stories and societies.



DIVERSE COVERAGE

Politics, diplomacy, economy, culture and beyond.



FOLLOW DNA
Stay informed.
Stay connected.
Stay ahead.

www.dnanews.com.pk

f A M Bhatti

X @EditorDnanews



DIPLOMATIC NEWS AGENCY
Connecting Pakistan to the World

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti
Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 06 Issue: 203

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-8488394 / 051-2261960

Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad

The international refugee system has collapsed

DR. AZEEM IBRAHIM

DISPLACEMENT is no longer an interruption between two stable lives. It has become a condition of its own and the institutions built to address it were never designed for that reality. When the architects of the postwar international order drafted the 1951 Refugee Convention, they had a specific crisis in mind. Europe was full of displaced people. Camps were filled with those uprooted by a war that had, mercifully, ended. The assumption embedded in every article of that convention was that displacement was an interruption, a temporary rupture that good institutions could bridge. Build the camps. Mobilize the aid. Wait for conditions to stabilize. Send the people home. That model has not merely aged poorly. It has collapsed. The numbers tell a story the international community has been reluctant to directly confront. According to the UN Refugee Agency, the number of forcibly displaced people worldwide passed 117 million in 2023, more than double the figure recorded a decade earlier. That doubling did not happen because the world suddenly became twice as violent. It happened because old crises are not resolving, while new ones accumulate on top of them. The pipeline flows in. Almost nothing flows out. The clearest measure of this failure is duration. The average length of a major refugee situation now exceeds 20 years. The average length of a major refugee situation now exceeds 20 years. Two decades. A child born in a camp at the moment of displacement grows to adulthood, forms a family and raises children of their own, all within a system designed to be temporary. The Afghan displacement crisis has, in various forms, persisted for more than 40 years. The Somali crisis for 30. The Palestinians, the original test case for whether the international community could manage protracted displacement, have been displaced for more than 75 years and counting. The emergency, in each case, became the permanent condition. The institutions responded by pretending otherwise. This is not a resource problem, though resources are chronically inadequate. It is a structural one. The UN Refugee Agency's mandate is organized around three durable solutions: voluntary repatriation, local integration in the country of first asylum and third-country resettlement. In theory, one of these three pathways resolves every refugee situation. In practice, all three are failing simultaneously. Repatriation, historically the preferred and most common outcome, requires a safe, voluntary and dignified return. In the current landscape of protracted civil wars and authoritarian consolidation, those conditions rarely materialize. Local integration is politically toxic in most host countries, which are overwhelmingly low and middle-income states already absorbing populations that dwarf anything the wealthy world accepts. Türkiye hosts more than 3.2 million registered Syrian refugees.



Pakistan and Iran together host at least 4 million Afghans. Bangladesh carries nearly a million Rohingya in what is arguably the world's most densely populated refugee settlement. These are not short-term burdens being temporarily shouldered. They are permanent demographic realities that host governments were never asked to formally accept and receive no proportionate support to manage. Third-country resettlement, meanwhile, operates at a scale that borders on the symbolic. In 2022, the US, historically the world's largest resettlement country, admitted fewer than 25,000 refugees from a global population requiring resettlement that the UN estimated at more than 1.5 million. The entire global resettlement system that year processed about 114,000 people. The math does not work and everyone involved knows it does not work. Host states carrying disproportionate burdens without proportionate support eventually reach their political limits. The Rohingya crisis illustrates what this failure looks like in human terms. Nearly a million people have now spent eight years in the camps of Cox's Bazar, with repatriation blocked by conditions in Myanmar that have deteriorated rather than improved since the 2017 expulsions. Local integration is politically unavailable in Bangladesh. Resettlement proceeds at a pace that could absorb the population over several centuries. A generation of children has grown up with access to informal education at best, no legal right to work and no documentation that would allow participation in any formal economic life. The system's three solutions are all inoperative. What remains is indefinite management dressed up as temporary accommodation. The geopolitical consequences of this management approach are becoming impossible to ignore. Host states carrying disproportionate burdens without proportionate support eventually reach their political limits. When they do, the results are not orderly. They are dangerous. Secondary displacement, sea crossings, stateless populations that become recruitment pools for criminal networks and armed groups – these are not hypothetical risks, they are the documented outcomes of a system that offers people no legal horizon. What is required is not more humanitarian pledges. The pledge-making machinery runs without interruption and without discernible effect. What is required is for the meaning of refugee protection to be fundamentally reconceived in cases where there is no foreseeable prospect of return. Displaced people need the right to work, to move and to build economic lives in the countries that host them. Host countries need binding, enforceable burden-sharing arrangements rather than voluntary commitments that wealthy states consistently fail to honor. Development finance, not just emergency relief, needs to flow to the communities – both refugee and host – that are absorbing the cost of crises they did not cause. The 1951 convention was a serious document written by serious people for a world in which displacement was an exception. They could not have imagined, or perhaps chose not to imagine, a world in which it was a permanent feature of the international landscape. That world is here. The gap between the institutions we have and the problem we face grows wider every year. Filling it is not a humanitarian aspiration. It is a geopolitical necessity. The emergency was always going to become permanent. The only question was whether the system would adapt before the cost became unbearable. The answer, so far, is no.

Quantum Computing and Pakistan's Future

Qamar Bashir



Pakistan today faces a complex web of interconnected challenges. Educational attainment remains below desired levels. Agricultural productivity lags behind international benchmarks. Industrial output remains limited relative to the country's population and resource base. Infrastructure development struggles to keep pace with demand. Political instability periodically disrupts long-term planning. Informal economic activity remains substantial, reducing the government's ability to generate revenue and provide public services.

THROUGHOUT history, humanity has experienced a series of transformative eras that fundamentally altered the trajectory of civilization. The Renaissance unleashed intellectual curiosity and scientific inquiry. The Industrial Revolution mechanized production and transformed economies. The Communication Revolution connected people across continents. The Information Age digitized knowledge and placed unprecedented computing power in the hands of ordinary citizens. Today, humanity stands at the threshold of yet another transformative epoch: the Quantum Age. While the exact timeline remains uncertain, leading technology companies, research institutions, and governments are investing billions of dollars in the development of practical quantum computers. Some experts predict commercially useful quantum systems within a few years, while others believe widespread adoption may take a decade or more. Regardless of the timeline, one reality is becoming increasingly clear: quantum computing has the potential to become one of the most consequential technologies in human history. Much of the global discussion surrounding quantum computing focuses on advanced scientific applications such as molecular simulations, pharmaceutical discoveries, climate modeling, and cryptography. However, for developing nations such as Pakistan, the most transformative application may be entirely different. Quantum computing could become a national decision-support system capable of helping policymakers identify the most effective pathways toward economic growth, social stability, and institutional reform. Pakistan today faces a complex web of interconnected challenges. Educational attainment remains below desired levels. Agricultural productivity lags behind international benchmarks. Industrial output remains limited relative to the country's population and resource base. Infrastructure development struggles to keep pace with demand. Political instability periodically disrupts long-term planning. Informal economic activity remains substantial, reducing the government's ability to generate revenue and provide public services. These challenges do not exist independently. Education affects productivity. Productivity influences income. Income shapes investment. Investment drives industrialization. Industrialization creates employment. Employment reduces poverty. Poverty affects social stability. Social stability influences governance. Governance impacts investment. The entire national system functions as a vast interconnected network of variables that continuously influence one another. The difficulty facing policymakers is not necessarily a lack of intelligence or commitment. Rather, it is the overwhelming complexity of modern governance. Every policy decision produces intended consequences, unintended consequences, secondary effects, and long-term implications that are often difficult to predict. Traditional decision-making methods frequently rely on incomplete information, limited simulations, and assumptions that may not accurately reflect reality. This is where quantum computing could become revolutionary. Imagine providing a quantum computer with

comprehensive data regarding Pakistan's economy, demographics, education system, agricultural sector, transportation infrastructure, energy production, governance structures, taxation mechanisms, trade relationships, labor markets, and social indicators. Instead of evaluating a handful of policy options, the system could potentially analyze millions of possible combinations simultaneously. For example, Pakistan's agricultural sector could benefit immensely from such capabilities. A quantum system could evaluate soil conditions, weather patterns, irrigation availability, fertilizer utilization, seed varieties, transportation costs, market demand, and export opportunities to identify the optimal agricultural strategy for each region of the country. The result could be higher yields, lower costs, improved food security, and increased farmer incomes. Similarly, the energy sector could use quantum-powered optimization to reduce transmission losses, improve power distribution, integrate renewable energy sources, and identify the most cost-effective infrastructure investments. Such improvements would reduce energy shortages and increase industrial competitiveness. Transportation represents another area where quantum computing could have significant impact. Pakistan Railways, road networks, urban transportation systems, airports, and logistics corridors could be analyzed as a unified system. Quantum simulations could identify the most efficient allocation of resources, optimize routes, reduce congestion, and improve connectivity between economic centers. The industrial sector could also benefit substantially. By analyzing global supply chains, labor availability, infrastructure constraints, market demand, and investment opportunities, quantum systems could help identify industries where Pakistan possesses the greatest comparative advantages. Such insights could guide industrial policy and attract targeted investment. One particularly intriguing application involves institutional reform and governance. Constitutional arrangements, electoral systems, administrative structures, and fiscal frameworks often generate passionate political debates. Yet these discussions are frequently driven by ideology rather than empirical analysis. A sufficiently advanced quantum-enabled simulation platform could potentially model the likely outcomes of different governance arrangements under varying conditions. While no machine can determine the values a society should embrace, it may help policymakers understand the probable consequences of different institutional choices. The private sector would also benefit enormously. Businesses could optimize production schedules, supply chains, inventory management, pricing strategies, and investment decisions. Banks could improve risk assessment. Airlines could optimize routes and fuel consumption. Telecommunications companies could enhance network efficiency. The cumulative effect would be higher productivity across the entire economy. Consider Pakistan International Airlines. Rather than relying solely on traditional planning tools, a quantum-powered system could analyze global passenger demand, fuel costs, aircraft utilization rates, airport congestion patterns, main-

tenance schedules, and competitive dynamics simultaneously. Such analysis could help transform operational efficiency and improve profitability. Yet perhaps the greatest contribution of quantum computing would not be technical but strategic. Nations often fail not because they lack resources but because they lack clarity. They pursue multiple objectives simultaneously without understanding tradeoffs. They change direction frequently. They implement policies without fully appreciating long-term consequences. Quantum computing could provide policymakers with an unprecedented ability to evaluate competing strategies before committing national resources. Pakistan also faces important capacity constraints that must be acknowledged. The country currently has a limited pool of quantum physicists, quantum engineers, and specialized researchers. Research funding remains constrained relative to leading technological nations. Advanced laboratory infrastructure is still developing, and broader challenges in education, digital connectivity, data quality, and institutional coordination could slow adoption. Even if powerful quantum systems become available globally, Pakistan's ability to benefit from them will depend heavily on investments made today in human capital, scientific research, and technological ecosystems. Recognizing these limitations does not diminish the promise of quantum computing. Rather, it places that promise within a practical framework. The technology should be viewed not as a near-term miracle solution to every national challenge, but as a potentially transformative capability that will require sustained preparation, realistic expectations, and long-term commitment. Pakistan therefore should not wait passively for the technology to mature. The country should begin preparing now by investing in mathematics, physics, computer science, artificial intelligence, data infrastructure, and advanced research institutions. Partnerships with global technology companies, universities, and quantum research centers should become national priorities. By the time practical quantum computing reaches maturity, Pakistan should be ready not merely to consume the technology but to participate in its development and application. History rewards nations that prepare before transformations arrive. The countries that embraced industrialization early became economic powers. Those that mastered information technology dominated the digital age. The same principle will likely apply to quantum computing. The Quantum Age may not solve every mystery of the universe, nor answer every philosophical question regarding consciousness, existence, or the origins of reality. But it may provide humanity—and nations such as Pakistan—with the most powerful tool ever created for understanding complex systems and making better decisions. In a world increasingly defined by complexity, that capability alone could prove revolutionary.

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

How US-Turkiye ties shape Ankara's power play

Dr. Sinem Cengiz

Although Barrack's rhetoric may appear provocative at times, it also often aligns with certain Turkish interests. US support for the post-Assad transition in Syria and discussions around the integration of the SDF have overlapped with Ankara's own strategic preferences. While US and Turkish interests often diverged during the Syria war, they are now at a more pragmatic and cooperative phase in their relations, which is also helping Türkiye's regional positioning. Although Barrack's rhetoric may appear provocative at times...

AT various times in history, the trajectory of Turkish-American relations has played a key role in shaping Türkiye's position in the region. Depending on the geopolitical context, Ankara has at times acted as Washington's security partner in the region. At other times, it has positioned itself as a bridge between the US and its rivals or asserted itself as a regional middle power pursuing autonomous foreign policy for its own strategic interests. Thus, US policies have both constrained Ankara's role while also providing opportunities for it to enhance its position in the region. Ankara now faces a new opportunity. All eyes are fixed on the upcoming NATO Summit, which will be hosted by Türkiye next month. US President Donald Trump is expected to attend. Both US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan have confirmed his participation. Rubio this week said: "I think the next meeting of NATO in Türkiye in July is probably the most important meeting in NATO's history, because there are some things here that need to be cleared up and fixed." At the Ankara summit, NATO members are expected to address questions over defense spending and the US' evolving role in the alliance. Within this context, Türkiye appears poised to seize an opportunity by positioning itself as a bridge between NATO allies to manage the growing divisions within the alliance. The personal rapport between Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Trump and the evolving Turkish-American relations have likely contributed to the US president's decision to attend. This was confirmed by Trump confidant Tom Barrack, the US envoy to Ankara, who noted in April that relations between Washington and Ankara had improved significantly over the past 16 months, adding that the two sides had made more progress during this period than in the previous 15 years. Türkiye appears poised to act as a bridge between NATO allies to manage the growing divisions within the alliance. This week, Trump announced that Barrack would serve as his special envoy for Syria and Iraq — two of Türkiye's

neighbors that occupy a central place in its foreign policy. This appointment reflects Washington's preference for continuity in its engagement with regional issues, relying on Barrack's established ties with the Turkish political elite. Barrack was praised in Ankara when he supported the integration of the Syrian Democratic Forces into the new security structures in Damascus in the post-Assad transition. He is also expected to take an increasingly visible role in shaping US policy in Iraq, which Ankara will closely follow. However, Barrack's dual appointment as special presidential envoy for both Iraq and Syria sparked debate. Barrack is often regarded as a controversial figure due to his outspoken statements on regional issues. After his appointment, he posted on X remarks that drew criticism from Turkish analysts and political figures. He stated that "Iraq, Syria, and Türkiye remain the strategic fulcrum upon which any enduring Middle East stability must pivot. Balancing these three nations requires a single, consistent point of American contact and leverage." Critics argued that such statements are against the sovereignty of regional states. Others interpreted his remarks differently, saying he was emphasizing that regional stability requires coordination among Türkiye, Syria and Iraq. Although Barrack's rhetoric may appear provocative at times, it also often aligns with certain Turkish interests. US support for the post-Assad transition in Syria and discussions around the integration of the SDF have overlapped with Ankara's own strategic preferences. While US and Turkish interests often diverged during the Syria war, they are now at a more pragmatic and cooperative phase in their relations, which is also helping Türkiye's regional positioning. Although Barrack's rhetoric may appear provocative at times, it also often aligns with certain Turkish interests. Historically, Türkiye's disagreements with the US have at times enhanced its regional credibility. For example, Ankara's decision not to support the 2003 US-led war against Iraq and its refusal to give permission for American troops to use its northern

territory in the war against Iraq increased its credibility in the region. At the time, many scholars wrote that the decision challenged the long-held view of Türkiye as a "stooge of the US" in the region. Similarly, Türkiye's opposition to fragmentation in Syria in the post-Assad era, despite differing from US policy toward Kurdish groups, has received support from regional actors that prioritize centralized states. This approach is also a setback for destabilizing powers that prefer fragmented states. That is why Türkiye's stance against Israeli policies has gained broader approval, as regional states increasingly align around efforts to contain Israeli policies, which prefer regional fragmentation. Additionally, increasingly hostile rhetoric from Israel toward Türkiye brings new tensions that neither Barrack's diplomatic maneuvering nor broader US policy has fully addressed. Türkiye expects the US to play a more decisive role in containing Israel. Ankara views regional stability as impossible without addressing Israeli policies that it considers destabilizing. As a response to recent escalations, Türkiye has accelerated its coordination with regional states to develop alternative economic corridors, as the US-Israeli war with Iran has led to disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz. At the same time, Ankara is deepening security ties with these countries as doubts grow in the region about the reliability of US security guarantees. Both Türkiye and regional states are pursuing a containment strategy in the current war, aiming to avoid alignment with the US. Within this context, US policies in the region continue to act as both a constraint and a source of strategic opportunity for Ankara. This gives Türkiye the leverage to assume a dual power play: positioning itself as a bridge between NATO allies and a regional power aligning with the interests of the Arab regional system — even when it diverges with the US-envisioned regional order.

— Dr. Sinem Cengiz is a Turkish political analyst who specializes in Türkiye's relations with the Middle East. X: @SinemCngz

Briefs

PPP, PML-N
to shape
the future of
GB politics

FROM PAGE 01
Another notable aspect of the elections was the absence of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) as a direct electoral contestant. PTI-linked candidates reportedly contested under the banner of Majlis-e-Amal and other platforms, highlighting the party's continuing challenges in participating openly in the electoral process. As coalition negotiations begin, one conclusion is already clear: consensus-building, rather than confrontation, will determine the future course of politics in Gilgit-Baltistan. The coming days will reveal whether political leaders can rise above partisan interests to provide the region with the stable and effective governance it urgently requires.

AJK SC
upholds
govt's
stance on...

FROM PAGE 01
abolished only through a constitutional amendment enacted strictly in accordance with Article 33," read the statement - a copy of which is available with Geo News. "Any demand seeking abolition of any constitutional provision through coercion, brute force, threats of mass public obstruction, or other extra-constitutional means is devoid of constitutional sanction, legally unenforceable, and wholly incompatible with the principles of constitutional supremacy and the rule of law embodied in Articles 33 and 57 of the Constitution," it added. The court also endorsed the government's decision to leave the remaining constitutional questions to the elected Legislative Assembly, stressing that constitutional amendments can only be enacted through public mandate, parliamentary debate and the prescribed constitutional procedure. Interpreting Articles 22(3) and 22(4), the court clarified the powers and tenure of the Legislative Assembly and emphasised that elections must be conducted within the constitutional timeframe. It stated that political disputes or protests cannot be used as grounds to delay the electoral process. The court further observed that the responsibility for conducting elections and maintaining law and order rests with the state, which is constitutionally bound to ensure the continuation of democratic and constitutional processes.

Tehran-
Islamabad
ties
strengthen
amid....

FROM PAGE 01
discussions with Iran's Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni, who praised Pakistan's efforts and highlighted the importance of collaboration in addressing shared challenges. Such diplomatic overtures reflect a broader strategy by Pakistan to deepen its role in regional affairs, balancing relationships across its borders while navigating complex geopolitical realities. At the same time, Lebanon remains mired in instability as clashes between Israel and Hezbollah intensify. The fighting has exacerbated humanitarian concerns, with civilians bearing the brunt of the violence. Lebanon's fragile political and economic situation has been further strained, leaving the country vulnerable to external pressures and internal divisions. The ongoing conflict risks spilling over into wider regional instability, drawing in neighboring states and complicating diplomatic efforts aimed at de-escalation. International observers warn that without meaningful intervention, Lebanon's crisis could deepen, undermining prospects for peace and stability in the broader Middle East.



ISLAMABAD: Families visiting the Dino Valley in Margallah Hills in the Federal Capital. The Dino Valley is located near Pir Sohawa and features life-sized dinosaur models and rides, making it a popular location for families. - Online

Indian lift U-18 Asian
Cup Hockey trophy

DNA

TOKYO: India were crowned champions of the Men's U18 Asia Cup 2026 after a superb 4-1 victory over hosts Japan in the Gold Medal Match held in Kakamigahara. The final day of the tournament delivered excitement and drama, beginning with the Bronze Medal Match where Pakistan produced a disciplined and commanding performance to defeat Malaysia 3-0, se-

curing third place on the podium. The spotlight then shifted to the championship clash between India and Japan, two of Asia's strongest youth hockey teams. India showcased consistency, attacking quality, and determination throughout the contest, scoring four goals to overwhelm the hosts and claim the continental crown. Japan fought hard but were unable to match the pace and precision of the Indian side, eventually settling for the silver medal. The victory marked a deserved

triumph for India, who had demonstrated tactical maturity and relentless energy across the tournament. Their campaign was defined by sharp attacking play, defensive resilience, and a collective spirit that carried them to the top of the standings. Pakistan's bronze medal finish also highlighted their progress, as they combined discipline with clinical execution to secure a convincing win over Malaysia. The final standings saw India take gold, Japan claim silver, and Pakistan secure

bronze, while Malaysia finished just outside the podium. The Men's U18 Asia Cup 2026 not only provided thrilling matches but also served as a platform for Asia's emerging hockey talent to showcase their skills on an international stage. With India lifting the trophy after an impressive campaign, the tournament concluded on a high note, reinforcing the promise of youth hockey across the continent and setting the stage for future stars to rise.

Pakistan outclass
Malaysia 3-0 to secure
Bronze medal in
Kakamigahara

The final quarter saw Pakistan maintain composure, ensuring Malaysia remained scoreless. The scoreboard reflected Pakistan's superiority: Q1: 1, Q2: 1, Q3: 0, Q4: 1 - Final: 3, while Malaysia ended with zeros across all quarters

DNA

KAKAMIGAHARA: Pakistan's hockey team delivered a commanding performance to defeat Malaysia 3-0 and clinch the bronze medal at the Kawasaki Heavy Industries Hockey Stadium in Kakamigahara. The match, played at 3:00 PM local time, showcased Pakistan's dominance across all four quarters, while Malaysia failed to find the net. Pakistan opened the scoring in the first quarter when Uzair Ahmed Qureshi struck at 02:54, giving his side an early advantage. The momentum carried into the second quarter, with Asnan Muhammad (24:25) and Haider Asam (22:40) applying relentless pressure. Malaysia's Muhammad Ashrafeel Iman attempted to rally his team but was denied by Pakistan's disciplined defense. In the third quarter, Pakistan tightened its grip on the game. Adeel scored at 44:06 and later at 58:04, extending the lead and effectively sealing the contest. Malaysia's Yogeswaran Nagulan tried to respond with late pushes at 46:33 and 44:42, but Pakistan's backline, led by Akbar Hassan with a crucial intervention at 59:09, held firm. The final quarter saw Pakistan maintain composure, ensuring Malaysia remained scoreless. The scoreboard reflected Pakistan's superiority: Q1: 1, Q2: 1, Q3: 0, Q4: 1 - Final: 3, while Malaysia ended with zeros across all quarters.

Key Performers:
Adeel - decisive goals and attacking presence.
Uzair Ahmed Qureshi - early breakthrough that set the tone.
Akbar Hassan - defensive anchor with critical late-game clearance.

Pakistan reach historic
football final after 64 years

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan produced another memorable performance on Sunday, defeating Afghanistan 2-0 to reach the final of the Diamond Jubilee International Football Tournament and secure a place in the final of a stand-alone international football competition for the first time in 64 years. Goals from Umar Nawaz and Harun Hamid sealed a historic victory for the Shaheens, who topped the four-nation tournament at Male, Maldives under head coach Norberto Solano and continued their remarkable resurgence on the international stage. The achievement marks Pakistan's first appearance in the final of an independent international football tournament since the 1962 Merdeka Cup, where they finished runners-up to Indonesia. It is one of the most significant milestones in the country's football history and another major step forward for a team that had struggled for years amid administrative turmoil and international isolation. Fresh from their 3-0 victory over hosts Maldives - Pakistan's first international win in 961 days - the Shaheens needed only a draw to qualify for the final. Instead, they delivered a commanding performance against Afghanistan. Pakistan made the perfect start when Umar Nawaz opened



the scoring in the fifth minute, expertly converting a long cross from Shayek Dost to give his side an early advantage. The early breakthrough allowed Pakistan to control large portions of the match, with Shayek Dost, Umar Nawaz and Otis Khan consistently troubling the Afghan defence, while Haris Zeb and Fazal provided energy and width on the flanks. Afghanistan came closest to an equaliser just before halftime when captain Omid Popalzay's free-kick struck the crossbar, but Pakistan maintained their one-goal lead heading into the break. The second half saw Afghanistan push forward in search of a result, but Pakistan remained disciplined and dangerous on the counterattack. Ali Agha nearly doubled the lead after being released by a superb Shayek Dost pass, but his effort drifted wide. As the match entered stoppage time, Harun Hamid put the result beyond doubt. The forward latched onto a pass from Adil Nabi before unleashing a powerful strike into the net, sealing a famous 2-0 victory and sparking celebrations among the Pakistani contingent. The win confirmed Pakistan's place in the final on June 10, where they will face either Afghanistan or Bangladesh, with the Shaheens now just one victory away from completing one of the greatest achievements in the nation's football history.

Pak Navy actively works to preserve marine
eco-systems: Admiral Naveed Ashraf

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS) Admiral Naveed Ashraf NI NI(M) T Bt has said that as custodian of Pakistan's maritime frontiers, Pak Navy actively works to preserve marine eco-systems and promotes sustainable use of ocean resources. In his message on the occasion of World Oceans Day 2026, the CNS said that Pakistan Navy remains steadfast in its commitment to safeguard maritime environment and sustainable use of maritime resources to contribute to the overall objective of World Oceans Day, said a statement issued by Directorate General Public Relations (Pak Navy). "It does so, through regular coastal and sea cleaning campaigns, awareness drives and environmental programs, to help reduce

marine pollution and contribute to the health of the Arabian Sea, the statement further said. He said the protection of our oceans is a shared responsibility and national priority. "We must act with diligence and foresight to ensure that present and future generations inherit a healthy, resilient and productive planet. I call upon all stakeholders to reaffirm their commitment to this objective. Let us review existing measures, enhance inter-sectoral collaboration and accelerate the implementation of actions that secure the integrity and productivity of our marine environment. Together we can make a meaningful and significant positive impact," the CNS said. World Oceans Day is observed annually on 8th of June to recognize the importance of oceans and reaffirm our shared responsibility towards protecting the marine environment. The theme for World



Oceans Day 2026 is 'Strong Marine Protected Areas for Our Blue Planet' that underscores the urgency to strengthen conservation efforts aimed at preserving marine eco-systems and ensuring the

sustainable future of our oceans. Oceans constitute more than seventy percent of the Earth's surface and play a pivotal role in regulating climate, supporting biodiversity, facilitating global trade and sustaining millions of livelihoods worldwide. They remain a source of food, energy and economic prosperity. However, increasing threats from marine pollution, overfishing, habitat destruction and climate change continue to endanger the health and sustainability of our oceans. Admiral Naveed Ashraf said that Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are specific regions of the ocean where human activities are carefully managed to protect the natural resources. MPAs serve as critical instruments for conserving marine biodiversity and protecting fragile eco-systems such as coral reefs, mangroves, fish population, endangered marine

species and coastal habitats. Strong and effective management of MPAs enhances ecological resilience, supports sustainable fisheries and helps mitigate adverse impacts of climate change. This year's theme encourages countries to expand and strengthen these MPAs for a healthier and more sustainable ocean environment. He said World Oceans Day also reminds individuals and communities of their responsibility towards protecting marine life. Reducing plastic waste, preventing water pollution, supporting sustainable fishing practices and participating in coastal clean-up activities are important ways in which people can contribute. Environmental organizations, maritime institutions and other relevant stakeholders must work together to create awareness that promotes ocean conservation and responsible use of marine resources.

Over 27
terrorists
killed in
Waziristan

FROM PAGE 01
Saifullah Dawar in Miran-shah has been avenged and perpetrators have been brought to justice. Sanitization operations continue to eliminate holed up khwarji from these areas, as relentless Counter Terrorism campaign under vision "Azam e Istehkam" (as approved by Federal Apex Committee on National Action Plan) by Security Forces and Law Enforcement Agencies of Pakistan will continue at full pace to wipe out the menace of foreign sponsored and supported terrorism from the country.

North Korea
nuclear
program...

FROM PAGE 01
according to state media. 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. Xi's upcoming visit to Pyongyang would be his first in seven years, and comes after he hosted back-to-back summits with US President Donald Trump and Russia's Vladimir Putin last month. Pyongyang has repeatedly declared itself an "irreversible" nuclear state since Kim Jong Un's 2019 summit with Trump collapsed over the scope of denuclearisation and sanctions relief. North Korea's leader has since been emboldened by the war in Ukraine, securing critical support from Moscow after sending thousands of troops to fight alongside Russian forces. He inspected a major munitions factory at the weekend and called for it to boost production capacity, according to a separate report by the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) on Sunday. This was "in order to supply enough quantity of missiles", KCNA quoted him as saying.

Trump says
he would
not unfreeze
Iran assets

FROM PAGE 01
If they behave, if they do a good job, we start talking. Yeah," Trump also said that he was not demanding that Lebanon be a part of a short-term deal with Tehran. "I think they'd like to see it, but I'm not demanding," Trump said in the interview recorded on Friday. US and Israeli forces began strikes on Iran on February 28. The Trump administration has been trying to negotiate a potential peace deal for weeks. "We're very close to a deal, or I'm going to blow the hell out of them," Trump told NBC News. The president also said he would be willing to speak with Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei, who has not been seen in public since being wounded in US strikes at the beginning of the conflict. "I don't want to say whether or not I know where he is, but there's a good probability that I do," Trump said. Top Trump administration officials such as Secretary of State Marco Rubio insist a temporary ceasefire agreement has been holding up despite recent US strikes on Iran, telling lawmakers last week those are defensive actions.

AJK govt
fulfills 24
out of 44...

FROM PAGE 01
reduction in electricity tariffs and reduction of elite privileges. Following its formation, AJK experienced widespread protests, shutter-downs, wheel-jam strikes, violence, and clashes in May 2024. By September 2025, JAAC expanded its agenda into a formal charter consisting of 38 demands, backed by further shut-downs and protests across AJK. This led to a formal peace agreement signed between the AJK Government and JAAC in October 2025. However, despite massive implementation progress, fresh protest calls and a march call were mobilized across AJK recently.

Briefs

Jordan sentences man to death for killing drug agents

AMMAN: A Jordanian court sentenced a citizen to death on Sunday after he was convicted of killing three drug enforcement agents during a raid earlier this year. The Jordanian state security court said, in a statement, that it "unanimously issued its final ruling on Sunday in the case concerning the martyrdom of three members of the anti-narcotics administration." It said the accused was found guilty of charges including "physically assaulting officials charged with enforcing the narcotics law, resulting in death... and consequently sentenced him to the most severe punishment, which is the death penalty." Jordan still sentences people to death, but there has been an effective moratorium on capital punishment for years. The last executions in the kingdom were in 2017, when 15 people were hanged, 10 of them over terror-related charges. The case dates back to March 18, when three members of the anti-narcotics unit were killed and a fourth was wounded during a raid that resulted in the arrest of the suspect and the seizure of weapons and drugs, according to the Jordanian public security directorate.—APP

Israel strikes Beirut's suburbs days after ceasefire agreement

BEIRUT: Israel struck southern Beirut suburbs on Sunday just days after a fragile ceasefire agreement in Washington went into effect. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the strikes were in retaliation for the Hezbollah militant group firing toward northern Israel earlier. Hezbollah did not immediately claim responsibility for those strikes. Israel has struck the sprawling urban neighborhoods twice since the first agreement between Lebanon and Israel went into effect on April 17. Strikes over southern Lebanon continue daily, where Hezbollah fighters and Israeli troops have also clashed. Residents heard three explosions in the area. It was not immediately clear what was targeted in the strikes. There was no immediate word of casualties. Hezbollah entered the war on March 2, saying it was retaliating for the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader at the start of a conflict that has since killed thousands in Lebanon and displaced more than a million people.—APP

Closing Bell: Saudi main index ends lower at 10,928

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's benchmark Tadawul All Share Index closed lower on Sunday, shedding 61.66 points, or 0.56 percent, to close at 10,928.79. The MSCI Tadawul 30 Index declined 10.21 points, or 0.70 percent, to 1,453.46, while the parallel market Nomu fell 88.38 points, or 0.38 percent, to 22,989.62. Trading turnover on the main market reached SR3.48 billion (\$925.9 million), with 185,980,140 shares changing hands. A total of 75 stocks advanced, while 177 declined. Marketing Home Group for Trading Co. led the gainers, rising 7.53 percent to SR48.58, followed by Saudi Cable Co., which gained 5.60 percent to SR166.00. Armana Cooperative Insurance Co. advanced 5.42 percent to SR7.39, Miahona Co. rose 4.64 percent to SR16, and Saudi Industrial Development Co. added 4.24 percent to SR15.50. On the losing side, Jarir Marketing Co. fell 3.96 percent to SR15.54. Saudi Manpower Solutions Co. declined 3.57 percent to SR6.22, Arabian Mills for Food Products Co. dropped 3.48 percent to SR46, Saudi Arabian Mining Co. lost 3.09 percent to SR61.15, and Herfy Food Services Co. slipped 3.02 percent to SR15.43. On the announcement front, Jarir Marketing Co. announced the opening of a new showroom on Al-Madinah Road in Jeddah, replacing its previous branch on King Abdulaziz Road.—APP

Albania seeks more trade opportunities with Pakistan

Tahseen Sayed also held productive meetings with representatives of Albanian private sector, academic and research institutions

DINA

TIRANA: Albania, a key Muslim-majority country in the Balkans which is en route to EU membership, has sought closer trade and investment cooperation with Pakistan, especially opportunities for training of Albanian officials in Pakistan's institutions. This was stated by Tahseen Sayed, Honorary Consul for Albania in Pakistan, after her meeting with Ferit Hoxha, Albania's Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs. Foreign Minister Hoxha expressed Albania's strong interest in further developing bilateral relations with Pakistan, especially in expansion of trade, promoting tourism and seeking training opportunities for Albanian officials in Pakistan's higher institutions of administrative training. Both sides also discussed a number of practical initiatives to advance cooperation, including initiation of consultations between senior officials of the respective ministries of Foreign Affairs, potential participation of Albanian Foreign Ministry officials in professional training programs in Islamabad, holding of trade exhibitions, IT and the participation of Albanian officials, parliamentarians and civil society representatives in specialized events organized by Pakistani institutions. Tahseen Sayed also held productive meetings with representatives of Albanian private sector, academic and research institutions. There was considerable interest in learning more about Pakistan and exploring avenues for engagement with Pakistani businesses, universities, think tanks and research institutes. "There is growing interest to expand into action between Albania and Pakistan", said Tahseen Sayed, Albania's Honorary Consul. "The



discussions held during this visit highlighted promising opportunities to further strengthen cooperation, more so, at a time, when Islamabad is one of the most happening places in Asia". With tourism surging,

a stable economy and good momentum on its European Union accession path, Albania is emerging as a promising European destination for tourism, trade and investment. Foreign Minister Hoxha and the Pakistani

Envoy also agreed on the need to promote Peace in Europe and Asia, particularly to strengthen Inter-Faith Harmony and coexistence among communities, cultures and countries.

KSA opens June 'Sah' sukuk issuance with 4.6% returns

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia has opened subscriptions for its June issuance of the government-backed "Sah" savings sukuk, offering an annual return of 4.60 percent, up from 4.56 percent in the previous month. In a post on X, Saudi Arabia's National Debt Management Center said the subscription period for the issuance opened at 10:00 a.m. Saudi time on June 7 and will close at 3:00 p.m. on June 9. The latest offering forms part of the 2026 issuance calendar managed by the NDMC and underscores the Kingdom's ongoing commitment to advancing financial inclusion and promoting personal savings. Introduced as part of the Financial Sector Development Program, a core pillar of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, "Sah" aims to increase the national savings rate from around 6 percent to 10 percent by 2030. According to the NDMC, the minimum subscription amount for the June offering is SR1,000 (\$266.56), and the maximum is SR200,000 per investor. The sukuk has a one-year maturity and provides fixed returns payable at redemption. June "Sah" subscriptions are available exclusively to Saudi nationals aged 18 and above through approved investment platforms, including SNB Capital, Aljazira Capital, Alinma Investment, SAB Invest and Al Rajhi Capital. Sukuk are Shariah-compliant investment instruments that give investors partial ownership in the issuer's underlying assets, serving as a popular alternative to conventional bonds. Unlike conventional bonds, sukuk returns are structured in full compliance with Shariah principles. The "Sah" product is marketed as a low-risk savings instrument that is fee-free, offers flexible redemption, and provides returns linked to prevailing market conditions. The offering underscores sustained investor confidence in Saudi Arabia's economic outlook. In January, Fitch Ratings reaffirmed the Kingdom's sovereign credit rating at A+ with a stable outlook, citing its strong debt metrics and substantial sovereign financial assets. In May, the Kingdom raised SR2.42 billion (\$644 million) through its May sukuk issuance. Saudi Arabia has accelerated debt issuance in recent years as it balances lower oil revenues with heavy spending on Vision 2030 projects, including infrastructure, tourism, industrial development and mega-projects such as NEOM, while maintaining fiscal flexibility through domestic and international borrowing.—DNA

First Int'l Conference on Recycling in Faisalabad

FAISAL: The First International Conference on Recycling would be held at Serena Hotel Faisalabad on Wednesday (June 10, 2026), bringing together more than 300 policymakers, researchers, entrepreneurs, industrialists, international experts and leading companies to discuss practical pathways for recycling, circular economy and sustainable industrial transformation. The University of Kamalia (UKM) in collaboration with Government College University Faisalabad (GCUF) and Government College Women University Faisalabad (GCWUF) would organize the conference under the leadership of Prof. Dr. Yasir Nawab Vice Chancellor UKM; Prof. Dr. Rauf-Azam Vice Chancellor GCUF; and Prof. Dr. Kanwal Ameen Vice Chancellor GCWUF. UKM spokesman Muhammad Aamir Shakeel said here on Saturday that a major highlight of the conference would be the participation of around 80-100 CEOs and company heads from different industrial sectors, making it one of the most significant industry-academia gatherings on recycling and circular economy in Faisalabad. He said that the day-long conference would run from 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. and it would feature high-level panel discussions, keynote sessions, invited talks, technical presentations and parallel thematic sessions. Key themes include textile circularity, industrial recycling, plastic waste valorisation, biodegradable materials, smart waste systems, agro-food waste utilisation, bioenergy, wastewater reuse, traceability, sustainable materials and circular product systems, he added. He said that industry participation would cover major economic sectors including textiles, fashion, footwear, poultry, plastics, agro-food, recycling technologies, waste management, entrepreneurship and sustainable manufacturing. The conference would also focus on developing Circular Faisalabad as a regional model by linking universities, chambers, municipalities, industries, entrepreneurs and international partners, he added. He said that international participation is expected from Germany, Kenya, UK, Netherlands, Sri Lanka and Estonia, bringing global perspectives on circular economy, textile recycling, traceability, sustainable supply chains and waste-to-value innovation. Similarly, the speakers from more than 15 universities would share their research-based solutions in this conference, which is supported by the SMEP Program, UN Trade & Development (UNCTAD), and UK Intern LAHORE, Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Industries and Production, Haroon Akhtar Khan, said that Hisense, the global technology giant, launch in Pakistan is a clear proof of world's strong vote of confidence in Pakistan's economic potential, industrial capabilities, and investment environment. He was addressing the Hisense launching ceremony organized by Airlink Communication Limited here at Expo Center. The launch event, marked a significant milestone for Pakistan's consumer electronics and manufacturing sectors. The ceremony was also attended by senior government officials, members of the diplomatic corps, business leaders, industry representatives, and stakeholders from Pakistan's technology and manufacturing sectors. Haroon Akhtar Khan added that the arrival of Hisense sends a clear message to the international community that Pakistan is not merely a consumer market but an emerging hub of production, innovation, entrepreneurship, and industrial growth. He stated that partnership between Hisense and Airlink represents a new model of industrial collaboration that combines global technology, local manufacturing excellence, skilled Pakistani talent, and a shared commitment to creating long-term economic value. He congratulated Airlink Communication Limited and Hisense for establishing a partnership that will contribute significantly to industrial development, employment generation, and technology transfer in Pakistan. The SAPM emphasized that nations achieve sustainable prosperity not by consuming technology but by manufacturing, innovating, and exporting it. He noted that under the leadership of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Pakistan has embarked on a comprehensive programme of economic and industrial transformation aimed at building a productive, competitive, export-oriented, and technology-driven economy. Haroon Akhtar Khan said, the Hisense-Airlink collaboration is a practical manifestation of this vision. He highlighted that the partnership will facilitate technology transfer, skills development, industrial upgrading, and job creation while strengthening confidence in Pakistan's future as a manufacturing destination. Referring to Airlink's state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in the Sundar Special Economic Zone, he described it as a testament to Pakistani entrepreneurship and innovation. He noted that such facilities are not merely factories but engines of economic progress, centres of innovation, and platforms for developing skilled human capital. The SAPM observed that every television assembled locally and every air conditioner manufactured in Pakistan contributes towards reducing imports, conserving foreign exchange reserves, strengthening industrial capacity, and creating employment opportunities for the country's youth.—DNA

US media slammed for showing Iran as victor of war

RIYADH: A veteran Lebanese economist and political adviser has criticized some US media coverage for portraying Iran as the war's victor. In his opinion, much of the analysis reflects domestic political divides more than realities on the ground. "I'm very disappointed with the analysis you get from the mainstream media in America," Nadim Shehadi said on the Arab News current affairs program "Frankly Speaking." "All of this is Washington political analysis. It's driven by whether you're pro-Trump or anti-Trump." He drew a sharp distinction between Iranian civilization and the current leadership, and rejected claims that Iran has a "successful strategy" and "has won the war." "That's not true," Shehadi said. "Iran has lost a lot in this war. Iran has made major mistakes. The first mistake was to bring the war to its own home. The second was to misread its enemy." Alluding to classical military theory, he said Iran's strategy has deviated from principles outlined in Sun Tzu's "The Art of War," where success depends on understanding both one's adversary and battlefield dynamics. Shehadi argued that Iran's actions have escalated global risks. By disrupting the Strait of Hormuz — a narrow waterway that carries about 20 percent of the world's oil and gas — Tehran "is holding the whole world economy hostage." "This is all the more reason to confront Iran," he told Katie Jensen, the host of "Frankly Speaking," adding that both the US and Iran "can play the same game." Shehadi also dismissed what he described as an unrealistic portrait of Iran in some Western commentary. "There is this romantic view that you read in some of the media that the Iranians are an ancient civilization that invented chess and that weaves carpets and have strategic patience and all that," he said. "This applies maybe to Iranian culture, but it doesn't apply to the gang of criminals that are the Islamic Revolutionary Guards that hold Iran and the whole region hostage." Since Feb. 28, when the US and Israel launched joint strikes on Iranian targets, the Strait of Hormuz has become a central flashpoint. Iran has tightened control over the waterway, while the US has responded with

a naval buildup and restrictions on Iranian ports. As a result, the economic consequences of the conflict are being felt far beyond the region. And as the crisis deepens, questions persist about the reliability of US support in the Middle East. Shehadi said regional leaders are wary of what they perceive as inconsistency in American policy. "I think every leader in the region and every analyst is worried about American continuity of support," he said. "The United States has, in a way, capitulated several times in front of Iran." He pointed to historical examples: "The first time was in 983, ... after the Marine barracks bombing and the American embassy bombing in Lebanon, which was a confrontation between Iran and the United States in Lebanon, and President (Ronald) Reagan decided to pack up and leave. "So, that was capitulation towards Iran, and that led to Syrian control, the growth of Hezbollah and all that. "There are consequences to this," Shehadi said. "So, the United States capitulated again, of course, after the Iraq war with the withdrawal from Iraq, and with allowing Iran and Russia to destroy Syria and maintain (now-deposed Syrian President Bashar) Assad in power. And that was on America's watch. "And that's what worries us: that the United States can change, that it's not consistent." As Lebanon again finds itself a central arena in the broader conflict and as diplomatic efforts largely stall, Shehadi declined to directly criticize the country's leadership, instead describing it as highly qualified and operating under extraordinary pressure. "We have the most qualified government probably in the history of humanity," he said. "If you think that we have 24 ministers, 14 of them have Ph.D.s, including the prime minister. And I think in the history of England, there's only been one prime minister that I know of that had a Ph.D. "So, in terms of qualification," he added, "in terms of honesty, in terms of transparency, qualifications, good will, we have the best possible combination of government and president, but they need support. "I don't think we should judge them on this as personal leadership, because the challenge is too huge," Shehadi said. "What happened was they

came in exceptional circumstances." Those challenges have been compounded by major regional shifts, including the collapse of the Assad regime in neighboring Syria — a development Shehadi described as a significant blow to Hezbollah and Iran's broader "Axis of Resistance." In this context, Lebanon's government has taken what he called unprecedented steps, including directly challenging Hezbollah's influence. "They've taken very bold moves and very important policies that were unprecedented before, challenging Hezbollah," he said. "And Hezbollah, even though it makes declarations and all this sort of posturing, is still part of the government." The Israel-Hezbollah conflict escalated sharply on March 2, when Hezbollah launched missiles into Israel in retaliation for US-Israeli strikes on Iran that killed Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei. Israel responded with intensified attacks in Lebanon that rights groups have described as disproportionate. Lebanese government figures estimate that about 1.5 million people have been displaced, with at least 3,558 killed and more than 10,800 wounded since the escalation began. For Shehadi, Lebanon cannot be viewed in isolation. He stressed that the conflict is fundamentally regional in nature. "Forget about the word 'alone,'" he said. "This is a regional war, with a regional confrontation which involves every single state in the region. "There is no such thing as Lebanon being alone. And Lebanon is not alone. Lebanon is in Washington with (the) full support (of) the United States administration." He warned that leaving Lebanon to manage the crisis on its own would worsen regional instability. "Lebanon cannot be left alone to handle this anymore because, since Oct. 7, 2023, it's obvious that this involves the whole region, that no state in the region can dissociate itself, however much they try, can dissociate themselves from this confrontation with Iran that's holding the whole region hostage," he said. Regional powers, particularly Saudi Arabia, appear to recognize this. According to Shehadi, Gulf states are increasingly approaching the crisis as part of a broader regional equation in which stability in Lebanon is linked to wider security outcomes.—DNA

Kosovo returns to polls as voter frustration grows

PRISTINA: Polls opened on Sunday for another snap election in Kosovo, its third in just over a year, as voter frustration mounts at a grinding political gridlock in Europe's youngest country. The ballot comes after a polarized parliament failed to elect a president in April, deepening a political crisis that has gripped the country since inconclusive parliamentary elections in February 2025. "Enough is enough," retired teacher Gezim Selimi told AFP after casting his vote in the capital Pristina. "I expect parties to finally come to their senses and work for Kosovo, instead of wasting time fighting for power through one snap election after another." Despite topping the polls in February's vote, Prime Minister Albin Kurti's party fell short of the majority needed to form a government, triggering months of bitter division among MPs and eventually forcing a snap election in December. Kurti's Vetevendosje party — which blends a leftist agenda with fervent nationalism — again topped the vote and joined with ethnic minority MPs to form a government. But an opposition boycott of the vote to replace the outgoing president eventually sank the parliament.—APP

S Korean president nominates would-be second woman PM

SEOUL: South Korean President Lee Jae Myung nominated Han Seong-sook to be his next prime minister on Sunday, making her only the second woman to hold the post if confirmed by parliament. Han currently serves as minister for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and Startups. The nomination comes after Lee's party dominated local elections on Wednesday, although the Democratic Party lost the high-profile Seoul mayoral race to the opposition. The elections also sparked controversy over ballot shortages that affected 50 polling stations nationwide, prompting the head of the state election watchdog to resign. Han Seong-sook currently serves as minister for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises and Startups. (The Blue House/AFP) Lee has "judged nominee Han to be the right person to take responsibility for growth and people's livelihoods at a time when the country faces a major strategic transition driven by AI innovation and complex global crises," Lee's chief of staff Kang Hoon-sik told reporters at a news conference. Han's nomination requires parliamentary approval, but is expected to be confirmed as the ruling party holds a majority in the 300-member National Assembly, barring any major ethical concerns or scandals.—APP

Oman producer prices fall 3.9% in Q1 as lower energy prices weigh

JEDDAH: Oman's producer price index fell 3.9 percent in the first quarter of 2026 compared with the same period a year earlier, according to official data. The decline was primarily driven by an 11.3 percent drop in the mining and quarrying sector, reflecting an 11.6 percent decrease in prices of crude oil and natural gas products, according to data released by the National Centre for Statistics and Information. Oman's producer price trends continue to reflect volatility in global energy markets, with the mining and quarrying sector remaining the primary driver of overall index performance, while non-hydrocarbon sectors showed mixed but broadly positive movements. The decline marks a reversal from the first quarter of 2025, when the producer price index rose 4.1 percent, supported by higher oil and gas prices. The latest figures underscore the continued influence of energy markets on Oman's industrial price trends.—APP

Briefs

UK envoy cautions against illegal agents

DNA

ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Jane Marriott on Saturday cautioned against agents deceiving asylum seekers with false assurances of UK settlement and financial gain, stressing that genuine applicants must submit their applications only through official online systems, so that those who are truly eligible can apply safely and without being misled by illegal facilitators. While speaking with a local media outlet, British High Commissioner highlighted the tactics used by illegal agents who mislead people with false promises of migration to the United Kingdom. She explained that these agents often exploited vulnerable individuals by offering deceptive assurances of asylum and settlement opportunities in exchange for money. She further expressed concern over the rising number of Pakistani nationals applying for political asylum in the United Kingdom, noting that nationals currently feature among the top nationalities in such applications. She regretted that many of these cases were linked to misinformation and exploitation by unauthorized intermediaries rather than genuine eligibility. The High Commissioner stressed that genuine applicants should rely only on official and legal online systems for visa and asylum-related processes, rather than trusting agents who operate outside the law.

Starmer will stand if a leadership contest is triggered

NEWS DESK

LONDON: British Prime Minister Keir Starmer will stand if a leadership contest is triggered, a senior minister said Sunday, after media reported Starmer had contacted key backers insisting he would run in any race. This came after popular northern mayor Any Burnham, who is standing in a key by-election this month, said last week he would participate in any leadership race, although none has yet been triggered. Starmer "has been absolutely clear - were there to be a contest - you need 81 signatures (of MPs) to launch a contest - he will be part of that contest," Deputy Prime Minister David Lammy told Sky News on Sunday. The prime minister would automatically be included in any leadership ballot if he wanted to participate. The BBC and The Sun newspaper reported Sunday, citing unnamed MPs, that Starmer has been calling key supporters this weekend to say that if there is a contest he would "fight it." The Sun reported: "Sir Keir has hardened his position and is hellbent on running against Mr. Burnham."

One killed in shooting attack in Israel

DNA

TEL AVIV: One person was killed and five injured on Sunday in a suspected terror shooting in central Israel, the Israeli ambulance service said. Israel's emergency service Magen David Adom said "a man of about 30 was found with no signs of life and penetrating wounds" near the community of Tzur Natan, a few kilometers away from the West Bank. At the same site, a man was "evacuated in serious condition." MDA said it provided medical treatment to two men in another shooting, aged about 50 and 30 respectively, at a gas station near the town of Kokhav Yair. It also said it treated a man aged about 30 in Tzur Yitzhak whose hand was wounded. The Israeli army said that "following reports of multiple shooting incidents, IDF soldiers

73RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE ASCENT OF MOUNT EVEREST



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. Sajjad Haider Director General Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rana Aftab MD TDCP and President Alpine Club also participated. Besides ambassadors and high commissioners from various countries also participated in the event. - DNA

FIA offloads Afghan national

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Immigration officials at Islamabad International Airport offloaded an Afghan national bound for Germany after detecting a fake travel record and evidence of suspected dual identity during immigration clearance. An official told APP on Sunday that passenger Muheezullah Khan was intercepted after a Pakistani departure stamp on his passport was found to be fake, while no corresponding travel record was available in the Integrated Border Management System (IBMS). The official said further scrutiny of the passenger's mobile phone led to the recovery of a NADRA-related document, revealing that he had previously travelled abroad using a Pakistani passport. According to the official, examination of available records indicated possible use of multiple identities and nationalities, prompting a detailed investigation into the matter. The passenger was subsequently offloaded and handed over to FIA Anti Human Trafficking Circle (AHTC) Islamabad for further legal proceedings and comprehensive inquiry. The official said mobile phones, travel documents, travel records and other relevant evidence had been taken into custody as part of the investigation.

West Bank issue

France, allies eye national measures to pressure Israel

The diplomats said that with efforts blocked at the European Union to advance tougher measures against Israel, several countries had concluded that coordinated national sanctions were the best option for now

DNA

PARIS: France is working with several countries to step up pressure on Israel by pressing ahead with coordinated national sanctions targeting individuals linked to violence in the West Bank, three European diplomats said. The measures, which would include asset freezes and travel bans, have yet to be finalized and countries may adopt different lists of individuals, the diplomats said. The move comes amid escalating violence by Israeli settlers in the occupied West Bank and underscores anger in many Western countries toward Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government, which has expanded settlements. Diplomats say that expansion is aimed at undermining prospects for a Palestinian state. The diplomats said that with efforts blocked at the European Union

to advance tougher measures against Israel, several countries had concluded that coordinated national sanctions were the best option for now. "There is no unanimity at the EU level, so we have moved to discussions at the national level," one diplomat said. Two of the diplomats said the announcement would be in the coming days. Another diplomat said Britain and Norway were among the countries France was coordinating with, although it remained unclear who else could join. Most countries avoid publicly discussing national sanctions for fear that potential targets could shift assets in advance. Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Saar said after some new EU sanctions on May 11 that the bloc had "chosen, in an arbitrary and political manner, to impose sanctions on Israeli citizens and entities because of their political views and without any basis." Seven Western nations, including France, Britain, Australia and Canada, accused the Israeli government on May 22 of aggravating tensions in the West Bank. A key concern is Israel's plan to build a settlement east of Jerusalem, known as the E1 project, which would bisect the West Bank and cut it off from East Jerusalem, fragmenting territory Palestinians seek for an independent state. "In the face of settlement expansion and violence in the West Bank, we have already taken measures. More could follow," a French diplomatic source said, declining to elaborate. Britain's Foreign Office declined to comment. The Norwegian foreign ministry did not immediately reply to a request for comment.

Boko Haram frees over 400 kidnaped persons

MAIDUGURI: Nigeria: Boko Haram has freed more than 400 people kidnaped earlier this year from a village in the north-eastern state of Borno, a senator and a local youth leader said Sunday. Kidnappings, often for ransom, have become a key tactic of Boko Haram militants in their 17-year-old insurgency against the Nigerian state, mostly concentrated in the northeast. Samaila Kaigama, president of the Borno South Youth Alliance (BOSYA), said his group "has secured the release of all the 416 women and children abducted from Ngoshe." They were released Saturday, Kaigama told journalists. Mohammed Ali Ndume, a senator from Borno, confirmed the release to AFP. It was not immediately clear how the victims' release was secured. Authorities deny paying ransoms, though analysts say it is common practice, by both the government and victims' families. Ndume said he didn't know the circumstances of the release. BOSYA, which had established communication channels to act as an intermediary between the abductors and affected families, did not provide details.

Greece arrests a Palestinian man

NEWS DESK

ATHENS: Greece has arrested a Palestinian man suspected of links to the Islamist movement Hamas for "planning terrorist acts," police said late Saturday. The 37-year-old was arrested Saturday on the island of Crete where he was working in a hotel, media reports said. "According to the information available so far, he was linked to individuals recently arrested in Cyprus for terrorism-related offenses," the police said in a statement, adding that he had allegedly "received training" by Hamas.

Quetta female doctor, attacked by acid

BUREAU REPORT

QUETTA: A female doctor injured in an acid attack at a Quetta hospital is in a stable condition and receiving treatment at a private hospital in Karachi, according to hospital sources. The victim, identified as Dr Mahnoor Nasir, was shifted to Karachi via air ambulance after sustaining serious injuries in the attack at Sandeman Provincial Hospital in Quetta. Hospital sources said reconstructive surgeons and eye specialists had completed their assessment of the doctor. She has sustained burn injuries to her face, abdomen, legs, and right hand and has been transferred to a Special Care Unit for treatment. According to sources, the doctor suffered burns over 13% of her body. While her eyes were also affected by the acid, her eyesight remains intact,

and she is out of danger.

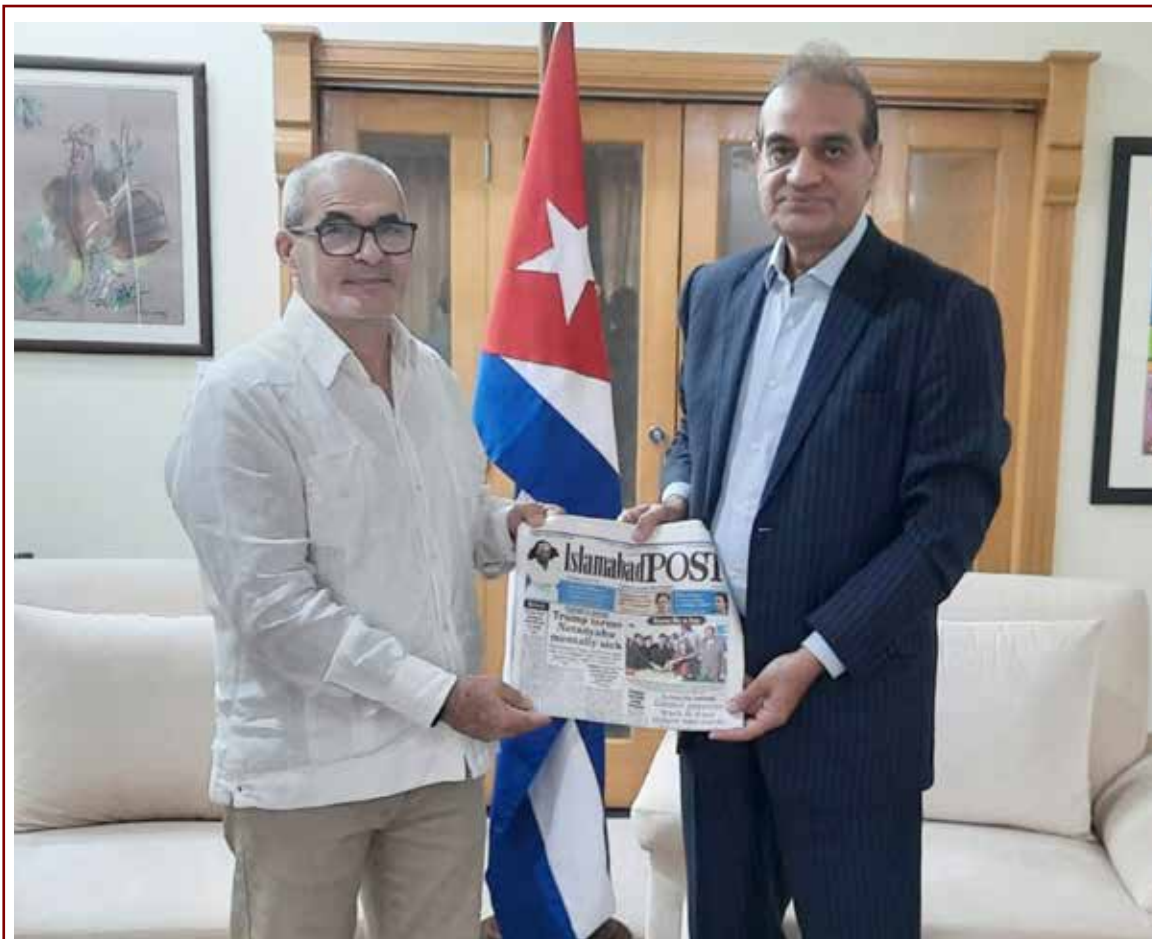
Doctors carried out an initial medical examination and tests after her arrival at the private hospital on University Road in Karachi. Hospital sources said she would undergo another medical assessment after 24 hours and described her condition as satisfactory. The doctor will remain under special medical observation for 10 days, while she is expected to stay in the intensive care unit (ICU) for the first two days of treatment. Meanwhile, a case has been registered at the Civil Lines police station in Quetta over the acid attack on the female doctor at Civil Hospital, police officials said. The FIR was registered against suspect Humayun Shah under Section 336-B. Police said the suspect was killed during an encounter that took place while authorities were attempting to arrest him. Balochistan Health Minister Bakht Kakar said the suspect had allegedly

been harassing the doctor for several months. He claimed evidence of harassment had been found in messages recovered from the suspect's mobile phone. Kakar said Balochistan had two burn centres, but the victim was shifted to Karachi at her family's request. He added that Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti had assured the doctor and her family of complete treatment and all possible support. Medical organisations have also called for stricter mechanisms to protect female doctors from harassment and violence in hospitals. Separately, Chief Minister Bugti spoke by phone with Abdul Razzaq Tareen, a Civil Hospital employee who suffered burn injuries while trying to save the female doctor during the attack. "You served humanity without caring for your own life," the chief minister told Tareen, praising his courage and bravery.

More than a million line Madrid streets to see Pope

MADRID: Over a million people filled the streets of Madrid and one of its main squares on Sunday morning to catch a glimpse of Pope Leo as he made his way to an open-air Mass in what

was expected to be the largest event during his week-long visit to Spain. People waved flags and shouted, "Long live the pope" as Leo was driven in the popemobile down Madrid's main thoroughfare Paseo de la Castellana toward Cibeles Square, where he was due to preside over the Mass. Some tossed flower petals as he arrived in the square. Some 1.2 million people were in the square and its surrounding streets, the Vatican and local organizers said. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Chief Editor of Daily Islamabad POST, CENTRELINE, and Diplomatic News Agency, Ansar Mahmood Bhatti, held a meeting with the Ambassador of Cuba to Pakistan, H.E. Damian Cordero Torres. The two sides discussed matters of mutual interest, focusing on enhancing bilateral cooperation in media and diplomacy. Both expressed their resolve to strengthen relations between Pakistan and Cuba, highlighting the importance of dialogue and collaboration in promoting cultural and diplomatic ties. - DNA