

Islamabad POST

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PM for collective efforts to boost economic growth

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Tragic incident in AJK

No survivors as Pak Army Mi-17 crashes

Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and Chief of the Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir and all ranks of the army "express deep grief over the tragic loss of precious lives and extend heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families"

STAFF REPORT / DNA

RAWALPINDI: No survivors were reported after an Mi-17 helicopter of Pakistan Army Aviation crashed near Muzaffarabad on Wednesday during take-off "due to a technical fault", the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said. Rescue and recovery teams immediately reached the crash site. "All personnel on board embraced martyrdom. There were no survivors," the ISPR said in a statement. "A board of inquiry has been ordered to ascertain the exact technical cause of the accident," the military's media affairs wing said. Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and Chief of the Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir and all ranks of the army "express deep grief over the tragic loss of precious lives and extend heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families", the ISPR said. The army's aviation wing had started using the Russian-made Mi-17 transport helicopters in

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Briefs

SC acquits two death row convicts

FIAZ CHAUDHRY

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Wednesday acquitted Abdul Rehman alias Bhole and Zubair alias Chariya in the Baldia Town factory fire case, overturning the death sentences handed down by a trial court and later upheld by the Sindh High Court (SHC). The Baldia Town factory fire, one of Pakistan's deadliest industrial disasters, occurred on September 11, 2012, when a blaze engulfed a garment factory in Karachi, killing 259 people and injuring scores of others. The accused had faced allegations of arson and extortion in connection with the tragedy. A three-member bench headed by Justice Malik Shahzad Ahmad Khan allowed the convicts' appeals, ruling that the prosecution had failed to establish its case beyond reasonable doubt.

Indian-owed oil tanker hit by US

NEWS DESK

LONDON: The U.S. military carried out a "precision" strike on a vessel in the Gulf of Oman that failed to follow its instructions and was carrying oil from Iran, it said, while India said three Indian seafarers were missing after the attack on the tanker. The U.S. began a blockade of Iran-related shipping on April 13 after Iran severely curtailed shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, a major global oil and gas route. The U.S. military's Central Command (Centcom) said a U.S. aircraft "fired precision munitions into the ship's engine room after the crew repeatedly failed to comply with directions from American forces".

Pak strikes terrorist hideouts: 26 killed

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: In the aftermath of recent terrorist incidents in Pakistan, including the attack on Federal Constabulary Post in Musa Dara, vehicle-borne suicide attack in North Waziristan, and the police station assault in Bannu, Pakistan's security forces carried out precise and calibrated strikes along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. According to credible intelligence, the strikes targeted hideouts and safe havens of Fitna Al Khwarji masterminds and planners, resulting in the elimination

of 26 Indian-sponsored militants. Four major targets were destroyed, including a training centre, a hideout, an ammunition cache, and command centres belonging to Commander Aleem Khan Khushali and Commander Akhtar Muhammad Jani Khel. Officials emphasized that Pakistan remains committed to peace and stability in the region, but the safety of citizens is paramount. The ongoing counter-terrorism campaign under the vision "Azme-Istehkam", approved by the Federal Apex Committee on the National Action Plan, will continue at full pace to eradicate foreign-sponsored terrorism.

PM chairs NEC meeting

Govt decides to cut development budget

The National Economic Council (NEC) met to finalise federal and provincial development plans ahead of the presentation of the budget for the upcoming fiscal year (FY2026-27)

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday addressed the National Economic Council (NEC), providing details on the government's discussions as the current fiscal year nears a close. The National Economic Council (NEC) met to finalise federal and provincial development plans ahead of the presentation of the budget for the upcoming fiscal year (FY2026-27). It is the highest economic decision-making forum of the federation, led by the premier and comprising the four chief ministers and four federal ministers. "The Centre [...] held consultations with the provinces on all matters with extreme seriousness, and we made decisions in the best interest of Pakistan," PM Shehbaz said in remarks aired on television. The prime minister thanked all chief ministers for their "consultations and assistance on all matters". PM Shehbaz noted that Punjab CM Maryam Nawaz could not attend the meeting as she was

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Govt extends austerity measures till June 30

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: The federal government on Wednesday extended its austerity drive and fuel conservation measures until June 30, while also revising business operating hours across the country, according to an official statement. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar chaired a meeting of the Committee for Monitoring and Implementation of Fuel Conservation and Additional Austerity Measures, which reviewed exemptions requested by various ministries and divisions and finalised its recommendations. The committee decided that consular attestation

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India claims it's working to stop water flowing into Pak

Not a single drop of water will go [to Pakistan] in the coming years, says Indian water minister

DNA

NEW DELHI: India is working to ensure "not a single drop of water" will flow into neighbouring Pakistan, the water minister has said, after New Delhi suspended a major treaty last year. Pakistan has previously said it would consider any attempt to change the flow of cross-border waterways as an "act of war", and says that the 1960 Indus Water Treaty (IWT) remains in force as there is no mechanism to unilaterally withdraw from it. "It is certain, not a single drop of water will go [to Pakistan] in the coming years," Minister of Water CR Patil told India's ANI news agency late Tuesday. Patil, speaking in Hindi, said that India is "actively working on it" after "directives" from Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The treaty governs the use of water from six rivers, whose headwaters originate in India but flow into Pakistan as part of the Indus basin — a resource relied on by hundreds of millions. Last month, Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Co-

ordination Musadik Malik said that India was attempting to politicise shared water resources in violation of long-standing international commitments, including the Indus Water Treaty. The minister warned that efforts to undermine international water-sharing agreements could jeopardise the rights of downstream nations. "Water aggression is unacceptable," Malik said, stressing that no country should be allowed to use water as a weapon or suspend international agreements unilaterally while depriving other nations of their lawful water rights. The Indus cuts through demarcation lines between India and Pakistan in contested, Muslim-majority Kashmir. India said in May 2025 that it suspended its IWT membership, after accusing Islamabad of backing a deadly attack on tourists in India Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) — charges Pakistan categorically denied. The issue of water has remained a bitter point of contention since. Earlier this month, Pakistan accused India of wanting to

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NATIONAL DAY OF RUSSIA



ISLAMABAD: Chief Guest President Asif Ali Zardari, Ambassador of Russia Albert P Khorev and others cutting cake to celebrate the National Day of Russia, held at Islamabad Serena Hotel. — DNA

Dr. Pandey to be the new Indian envoy to Pakistan

DNA

NEW DELHI: India has designated Dr Satyanjal Pandey as the new Charge d'Affaires at its High Commission in Islamabad, succeeding Dr Geetika Srivastav, who is set to leave Pakistan soon after completing her tenure. Dr Pandey, a career diplomat from the Indian Foreign Service (IFS), is currently serving as the Deputy High Commissioner in Sri Lanka. His appointment marks a significant transition in India's diplomatic representation in Pakistan, a role that carries considerable weight given the sensitive and often complex nature of bilateral relations.

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Middle East issue

Iran accuses US and Israel of undermining diplomatic process

Baqaei claimed that while American officials publicly speak of supporting diplomacy, their actions on the ground tell a different story

NEWS DESK

TEHRAN: Iran has sharply criticized the United States and Israel, accusing both of undermining ongoing diplomatic efforts through repeated ceasefire violations and inconsistent messaging. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baqaei said on Tuesday that Washington's contradictory positions and shifting statements have eroded confidence in negotiations aimed at stabilizing the region. He argued that Israel's military actions, combined with what he described as U.S. duplicity, are preventing meaningful progress toward peace. Baqaei claimed that while American officials publicly speak of supporting diplomacy,

Continued on Page 06

Trump says Iran will have to pay the price

DNA

DUBAI/WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump said on Wednesday Iran had taken too long to negotiate a deal and would now "have to pay the price," while Tehran said it would reassess diplomatic engagement with Washington after tit-for-tat strikes overnight. "Iran is all talk and no action," Trump said in a social media post on Wednesday.

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SCAN TO VISIT WEBSITE

Indian Sikh pilgrims arrive in Pakistan

LAHORE: A large number of Indian Sikh pilgrims arrived in Pakistan on Wednesday to participate in the martyrdom day (Jor Mela) observance of the fifth Sikh Guru, Guru Arjan Dev Ji, being organised under the auspices of the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) and the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony. The pilgrims were warmly received at the Wagah border crossing by Additional Secretary Shrinas Nasir Mushtaq along with Provincial Minister and Pardhan Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora. Members of the Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee were also present. Speaking to the media, Provincial Minister Ramesh Singh Arora said the land of Pakistan conveyed a message of love, peace and harmony. He said the government of Pakistan had issued visas to all pilgrims who had applied for them.

Additional Secretary Shrinas Nasir Mushtaq told media representatives at Wagah that such a large number of Sikh pilgrims had arrived in Pakistan after 14 years to observe the martyrdom day of Guru Arjan Dev Ji, adding that the event was being celebrated collectively and in a spirit of unity. He said all arrangements for the pilgrims had been completed in accordance with the directives of ETPB Chairman Qamar Zaman. These included medical facilities, security measures and the provision of high-quality transport. Nasir Mushtaq added that special arrangements had been made to protect pilgrims from the intense heat, including the supply of chilled mineral water bottles. CCTV cameras had also been installed to ensure foolproof security.

He said authorities were fully prepared to serve the pilgrims despite the severe weather conditions, adding that representatives of provincial governments were actively involved in facilitating the visitors.—APP.

Efforts a foot to ensure best security for Muharram

LAHORE: Punjab Minister and Chairman Cabinet Committee on Law and Order Khawaja Salman Rafique has said that the Punjab government is ensuring the best possible security arrangements across the province for Muharram-ul-Haram. According to a handout issued here on Wednesday, he expressed these views while chairing a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Law and Order in Rawalpindi to review Muharram security preparations. Provincial Minister and Co-Chairman Bilal Yasir, Provincial Ministers Malik Sohaib Ahmed Bharath and Bilal Akbar Khan, Commissioner Rawalpindi Engineer Aamir Khattak, and RPO Babar Sarfraz Alpa attended the meeting. Officials briefed the committee on arrangements in Rawalpindi Division, where security plans for 4,376 majalis and 757 processions have been finalized. Authorities have issued district-wise orders for 199 zakris and speakers and language-related orders for 83 individuals. A total of 312 persons have been placed on the Fourth Schedule in Rawalpindi. During Muharram, five companies of the Pakistan Army and seven companies of Rangers will assist police in maintaining law and order. Addressing the meeting, Khawaja Salman Rafique said that on the directions of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the Cabinet Committee on Law and Order is visiting all divisional headquarters to review arrangements.—APP

A milestone in Romania–Pak cultural, educational coop

Embassy of Romania Inaugurates ‘Romanian Shelf at the National Library of Pakistan



DNA
ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of Romania in Pakistan marked a significant step in bilateral cultural relations

with the inauguration of the Romanian Shelf at the National Library of Pakistan in Islamabad on Wednesday. The ceremony took place during an official visit by the Ambassador of Romania Dr

Da Stoenescu to the National Library, where a formal donation of Romanian books was presented to Director General Muhammad Ali Shahzad Muzaffar and his team. The donation, com-

prising volumes published by the Romanian Cultural Institute Publishing House, covers a wide range of subjects including history, literature, art, and cultural heritage. These works offer Pakistani

readers a direct window into Romania's rich intellectual tradition and its vibrant cultural life. "Libraries connect people, preserve identity, and build bridges of understanding. The Romanian

Shelf at the National Library of Pakistan is more than a collection of books - it is an open invitation to discover Romania's spirit, creativity, and scholarship. Strengthening cooperation in education,

culture, and knowledge exchange is an essential pillar of the Romania–Pakistan partnership." — Dr Dan Stoenescu, Ambassador of Romania to Pakistan. During the visit, the Ambassador and Director General Muzaffar also discussed the prospect of signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the National Library of Pakistan and the National Library of Romania. Such an agreement would establish a formal framework for long-term institutional cooperation between the two libraries, facilitating exchanges of publications, expertise, and joint cultural initiatives. The inauguration was also attended by Eduard Preda, Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of Romania, Romanian soprano Georgiana Costea-Gluga, coordinator of opera courses at PNCA (Pakistan National Council of the Arts), and Syeda Nooshen Iftikhar, member of the National Assembly and president of the Young Parliamentarian Forum (YPF). The establishment of the Romanian Shelf reflects the shared commitment of Romania and Pakistan to deepening people-to-people ties and promoting mutual understanding through culture and education. The Embassy of Romania in Islamabad looks forward to further expanding this partnership in the years ahead.

Ufone, KU partner to strengthen campus opportunities

KARACHI: A delegation from Ufone, one of the cellular companies operating in Pakistan, visited the University of Karachi on Wednesday. The KU hosted a high profile delegation from the Ufone and PTCL Group to explore opportunities for collaboration. During the visit, the delegation met with the KU administration and presented proposals to support researchers, students, faculty, and staff through improved digital connectivity and facilities. Both sides mutually agreed to move forward with the proposals and decided to formalize the partnership through a memorandum of understanding in the coming weeks. The KU management welcomed the initiative, acknowledging the importance of industry-academia linkages in empowering

students, strengthening research, and transforming the campus into a digitally connected hub. With this decision, the University of Karachi has taken another step toward fostering innovation and collaboration by welcoming Ufone to campus as a connectivity partner. The initiative is designed to create new opportunities for students, faculty, and researchers by offering advanced digital facilities and strengthening industry-academia linkages. Speaking on the occasion, the KU Vice Chancellor Professor Dr Khalid Mahmood Iraqi highlighted the importance of such partnerships in bridging the gap between academic learning and industry practices. "By work-

ing closely with technology providers, we can empower our students with practical exposure, enhance research capabilities, and transform the campus into a hub of digital innovation." On this occasion, Asif Ahmed the Chief Business Solutions Officer, who heads PTCL Business Solutions — the Group's unified division leveraging PTCL and Ufone — expressed its commitment to supporting KU in building a digitally connected environment. He mentioned that as part of its broader vision, Ufone has been working with higher education institutions and corporate organizations across the country to promote knowledge transfer, collaboration, and access to modern technologies. — APP

DG KPRA reviews 4-quarter performance

PESHAWAR: Director General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Revenue Authority (KPRA), Miss Irum Naz, visited the KPRA Regional Office North on Wednesday to review the region's performance during the fourth quarter of the financial year 2025-26. Collector Sales Tax on Services KPRA, Muhammad Abbas Khan, and Director Administration, HR & Coordination, Ms. Asma Khyber, also accompanied her during the visit. Additional Collector North Region, Muhammad Iqbal, welcomed the delegation and provided a detailed briefing on the region's revenue collection performance. Deputy Collector North, Ejaz Ali Khan, and Assistant Collector, Hizbullah Khan, highlighted revenues generated from various sectors and informed the Director General that the region had successfully achieved its revenue targets for the first three quarters of the financial year. The DG was informed that the region had collected Rs. 3,315 million so far and was making all-out efforts to achieve its target for the fourth quarter as well. During the briefing, the Director General sought details regarding the increase in revenue from certain sectors and the decline in others. The regional team provided a comprehensive overview of the factors contributing to these trends and outlined the measures being taken to further enhance revenue collection. The DG was informed that since its establishment, the Regional Office North has collected more than Rs. 14 billion in revenue. She also inquired about recoveries in cases referred to the Regional Office North by the KPRA Directorate of Inquiry & Investigation and Directorate of Tax Audit. The regional team briefed her on the recoveries made from registered entities where audits had been conducted.—DNA

Kundi calls for united efforts to secure KP's constitutional rights

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi on Wednesday welcomed dozens of young lawyers into the Peoples Lawyers Forum (PLF) and stressed the need for a collective effort to secure the constitutional rights of the province, particularly in the areas of gas, electricity and water resources. Addressing a PLF induction ceremony held at Governor House, the Governor praised the forum for organizing what he termed a successful membership drive and congratulated 70 young lawyers, including 14 women lawyers, on joining the organization. The ceremony was attended by President Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Muhammad Ali Shah Bacha, PLF President Gohar Rehman Khattak Advocate, Senior Vice President Ejaz Mohmand, KP Bar Council member Khizar Hayat Khazana, General Secretary Lajbar Khan Advocate, senior and young lawyers, and PPP leaders including Deputy General Secretary Malik Saeed, Divisional President Misbahuddin and Dr Janbaz

Afridi. Kundi said the provincial government had failed to effectively present Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's case before the federation during the last 13 years despite the province's significant contribution to the country's energy sector. He said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa produces 508 MMCFD of gas against its total requirement of 180 MMCFD, adding that under the Constitution, the first right over provincial resources belongs to the respective province. The Governor said he had personally raised the issue of CNG closure with the chief minister, after which the provincial assembly unanimously voiced support for the province's rights, leading to the restoration of CNG supply within 48 hours by the federal government. He said the province was also producing substantial electricity but its residents continued to face power outages. "All stakeholders must play their role in securing the rights of the province," he added. Kundi said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa possessed immense potential in minerals,

tourism and religious tourism, which could significantly improve the economic condition of the people if supported by better law and order and increased investment. He also assured the legal community of his full cooperation in resolving issues faced by lawyers. Speaking on the occasion, PPP KP President Muhammad Ali Shah Bacha welcomed the newly inducted lawyers and expressed hope that the PLF would effectively address the concerns of the legal fraternity. He said just as Governor Kundi played a role in resolving the CNG issue for the people of the province, efforts would also be made to address the reservations of PLF lawyers. Bacha also congratulated PPP leadership, including President Asif Ali Zardari and Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, on the party's success in the Gilgit Baltistan elections. PLF President, Gohar Rehman Khattak thanked the Governor for hosting the induction ceremony at the Governor House and apprised him of issues facing lawyers and concerns of PLF members.—DNA

MILITARY LANDS & CANTONMENTS DEPT
RAWALPINDI CANTONMENT BOARD
The Mall, Rawalpindi Cantt

AUCTION NOTICE

E-AUCTION FOR DISPOSAL OF COLLECTION RIGHTS OF EXECUTIVE WASHROOMS/ GROUP LATRINE FEE SITUATED AT TENCH BAZAR FOR THE PERIOD OF THREE YEARS THROUGH EPADS V2.0

Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB) invites electronic bids through the E-Pak Acquisition & Disposal System (EPADS) Version 2.0 for the auction / disposal of collection rights of Executive Washrooms/ Group Latrine Fee situated at Tench Bazar Rawalpindi Cantt for the period of three years in accordance with the provisions of PPRA Rules, 2004 and other applicable with Government regulations. Detailed bidding documents, reserve price, bid security requirements, auction schedule, eligibility criteria and complete terms & conditions are available on the EPADS V2.0 at PPRA websites. Only those bidders who are registered with the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), appearing on the Active Taxpayer List (ATL) and registered on EPADS Version 2.0 shall be eligible to participate in the e-auction process.

Executive Washrooms / Group Latrine situated at Tench Bazar Rawalpindi Cantt			
Ser	Detail	Fee	Disposal ID
1.	3 Washrooms	Rs.20 per head	D10010

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:-

- All interested bidders must be registered with EPADS Version 2.0 before participation in the auction. Registration can be completed at: <https://vendors.epads.gov.pk/register>
- Bids shall be submitted electronically through EPADS only. Manual, physical, or hardcopy bids shall not be accepted.
- The e-auction shall remain open till Monday, 29 June 2026 at 02:00 PM and the bids shall be opened/evaluated online on the same day at 03:30 PM.
- During the e-auction process, bidders may improve/increase their bids multiple times until the closing time. After expiry of the closing time, EPADS v2.0 shall automatically declare the highest evaluated responsive bidder as the successful bidder, subject to approval of the competent authority.
- Each bidder shall submit a Bid Security amounting to **Rs. 180,000/-** in the form of Pay Order / Bank Draft / Call Deposit Receipt (CDR) in favour of "Cantonment Executive Officer, Rawalpindi Cantonment Board. Except for the first and second ranked bidders, all other bidders will have their call deposits refunded on application.
- The original bid security instrument must reach the office of RCB before the bid closing date and time. Cash payments will not be accepted.
- The contract shall be awarded through auction for a period of three (03) years, from 15-07-2026 to 14-07-2029. Bids shall be quoted on an annual basis, and the contract fee shall increase by 10% on a compound basis for the second and third years of the contract.
- The successful bidder shall deposit 25% (one-fourth) of the annual auction amount immediately after closing and acceptance of the bid. In case of failure, the bid shall be rejected and the bid security shall be forfeited in favour of RCB.
- The security deposit shall be returned after successful completion of the contract and shall not be adjusted against monthly installments. The bid security of the second highest bidder shall be returned after approval of the bid by the competent authority.
- After approval of the bid, the first monthly installment shall be deposited **within seven (07) days**. The successful bidder shall execute a contract agreement with Rawalpindi Cantonment Board at his own cost and expense.
- In case of non-execution of the agreement or non-compliance with contractual obligations, the bid security shall be forfeited.
- No claim for compensation or damages shall be entertained from the successful bidder under any circumstances.
- The successful bidder/contractor shall be required to submit monthly postdated cheques for the remaining eleven (11) monthly installments cheques will be drawn on the **5th of each month**.
- In case of delay from the 10th of the month, a penalty of **Rs. 500/-** per day shall be payable. In case of cheque bounce after the 10th of that month, the contract shall be considered cancelled and the security deposit shall be forfeited and further legal/contractual action may be initiated.
- In case of non-recovery of fees, regardless of the reason, the contractor will not be entitled to seek compensation or concession from the board and the contractor will be responsible for the recovery of the fees from the above-mentioned place. The installment amount will not be waived in any unforeseen circumstances.
- Defaulter Firms/Groups of the Cantonment Board will not be allowed to participate in the auction.
- Group latrines will be handed over to the contractor in the same condition in which they are. In case of any damage, the repair costs will be deducted from the security deposit.
- In case of collection of more than the prescribed fee or any complaint, the contractor will have to pay a fine of **Rs.10,000**. In case of 3 times of fine, a final warning will be issued, after which the contract will be cancelled in case of any such incident again.
- The Cantonment Board has the authority to cancel the contract for violation of any condition, in which case all the money deposited by the bidder including the security will be forfeited to the Cantonment Board.
- Income tax will be applicable as per the prevailing rules/clarifications of the Government, which will have to be deposited in advance.
- If the contractor defaults during the contract, the contract will be re-auctioned. In case of second bid being received less than the stipulated amount, the loss will be borne by the contractor who submitted the first bid.
- The condition of toilets shall be maintained in accordance with the principles of health and safety, which shall be inspected from time to time. In case the condition is not satisfactory, a fine shall be imposed.
- In accordance with Rule 48 of PPRA Rules 2004, a Grievance Redressal Committee (GRC) has been constituted. The notification is available on the procuring agency's website and EPADS portal.
- This E-Auction Notice is also available on PPRA website: <https://ppra.gov.pk> and EPADS Portal: <https://eprocure.gov.pk>

Cantonment Executive Officer PID (I) No.9926/25
Rawalpindi Cantt, Tel: 051-9274401-04, Fax No: 051-9274407

National Days and Armed Forces Days

JUNE

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

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- Bomb Disposal.....15
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- Emergency Ambulance.1122 & Rescue Services.4451122
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- Motorway Police.9270601-20
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- MH.....5611116
- Cantt Hospital...9270907-11
- DHQ.....5556311-4
- RGH.....9290301-7
- Holy Family.....9290322-7
- PIMS.....9261170-79
- Polyclinic.....9218300-09
- Shifa International 4603666



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- Met Office.....9250360-6
- RDA.....5555864
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- Cantonment Board 9270151-3



Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Water Tank

- Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Spain, Pak discuss climate coop, sustainable uplift

The minister highlighted the devastating impact of recent floods in Pakistan, saying that changing weather patterns and increasing climate variability had created greater uncertainty

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Spain to Pakistan, Carlos Aragón, called on Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Dr. Musadik Malik on Wednesday and discussed a range of regional and global issues, including climate change, energy security and opportunities for bilateral cooperation in sustainable development. During the meeting, both sides exchanged views on the implications of climate change, evolving geopolitical dynamics and matters of mutual interest. Discussing the Indus Waters Treaty and recent geopolitical developments, Dr. Musadik

Malik observed that the international system appeared to be moving from multilateralism towards increasing unilateralism. He said that if a long-standing international agreement such as the Indus Waters Treaty could be held in abeyance unilaterally, it raised important questions regarding the sanctity of international agreements and rules-based cooperation. The minister highlighted the devastating impact of recent floods in Pakistan, saying that changing weather patterns and increasing climate variability had created greater uncertainty. He stressed the need for enhanced preparedness and preventive interventions to reduce future climate-related risks. The meeting also focused on energy security and the

global transition towards renewable energy sources. In light of ongoing geopolitical tensions and their impact on energy markets, both sides underscored the importance of accelerating the adoption of green energy solutions, including solar and wind power. It was noted that recent developments had highlighted the vulnerability of many regions, including Europe, to disruptions in conventional energy supply chains and reinforced the need for diversified and sustainable energy systems. The Spanish ambassador shared observations from his recent visit to Gilgit-Baltistan and appreciated the region's natural beauty, cultural diversity and the hospitality of its people. Dr. Musadik Malik also briefed the

ambassador on two initiatives currently under development by the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, namely Green University and Green Fields. He said the Green University initiative aimed to promote climate education, research and innovation, while Green Fields sought to connect young entrepreneurs working on green ventures with investors and opportunities to scale sustainable businesses.

Both sides discussed potential avenues of cooperation and knowledge exchange in support of these initiatives and reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening collaboration in the fields of climate action and sustainable development.

Faisalabad to get anti-smog guns as battle against urban pollution

FAISALABAD: Director General (DG) Environment Protection Department Imran Hamid Sheikh said that two anti-smog guns would soon be deployed in pollution hotspots at Faisalabad to combat worsening environmental pollution and improve air quality. His made this assurance in response to a demand raised by Vice President (VP) Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) Engineer Asim Munir during a ceremony. Speaking on the occasion, the Director General Environment said that arrival of the anti-smog guns would strengthen ongoing efforts to curb environmental pollution and help mitigate the adverse effects of smog on public health and urban environment. He directed Deputy Director Environment Protection Department Faisalabad Usman Azhar to accelerate anti-pollution initiatives and ensure improved results through closer coordination with the business community and other stakeholders. Imran Hamid Sheikh said that the anti-smog guns would be operated through Faisalabad Chamber and deployed in the areas experiencing higher levels of pollution. He explained that the equipment would not remain permanently stationed at a single location; rather, it would be shifted periodically to different parts of the city to maximize its effectiveness and ensure broader environmental benefits.—APP

COURT NOTICE

In the Court of Intiaz Ahmed Gondal, Additional District Judge Jhelum, appeal under Section 96 cpc

Case title: Ghulam Abbas etc. vs. Zulfiqar Ahmed etc. Against: 11g- Tabasum Javed son of Javed Akhtar Hussain 13b- Muhammad Raheel son of Muhammad Mahmood Residence Noorpur Baghan Post Office Sanghoi Tehsil Dina District Jhelum (Currently Residence Abroad). As there is not possible to call the respondents through Summons in the instant Appeal so through proclamation in Newspaper, you are directed to appear in the court on 11.06.2026 at 08:00AM, otherwise ex-parte proceedings will be initiated.

ICCI, Alibaba partner to empower SMEs for global markets

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and Alibaba.com have reached a significant understanding to formalize a strategic partnership through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at strengthening the digital export capabilities of Pakistani businesses. The proposed collaboration will provide ICCI members with tailored onboarding packages on Alibaba.com, while also facilitating training and capacity-building programs to enhance the digital export readiness of Pakistani small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The understanding was reached during the visit of Mr. Shawn Young, General Manager APAC, Alibaba.com, to the ICCI, where he held an interactive session with Islamabad's business community. He was accompanied by Ms. Summer Gao, Country Manager for Pakistan and Bangladesh. Both sides also agreed to nominate focal persons to maintain close coordination and ensure the timely implementation of mutually beneficial initiatives. Addressing the gathering, Mr. Shawn Young described Pakistan as a market of immense promise, citing its population of over 250 million people, youthful demographics, rapidly growing digital adoption, and strong manufactur-



ing potential. He said Alibaba.com sees tremendous opportunities for Pakistani suppliers to expand their presence in international markets. "We are keen to work closely with trusted local partners such as ICCI to provide businesses with training, onboarding support, and global visibility, enabling them to compete effectively in the digital economy," he remarked. In his welcome address, ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood said that the Chamber represents thousands of businesses from diverse sectors including technology, manufacturing, real estate, retail, and services. He noted that ICCI serves not only as a representative body but also as a bridge connecting Pakistan's private sector with global business opportunities. He emphasized that collaboration with Alibaba.com could become a game changer for Pakistan's export sector by helping local enterprises access international markets through digital platforms. He expressed confidence that the partnership has the

potential to generate substantial new export opportunities and reaffirmed ICCI's commitment to serving as Alibaba.com's institutional partner in Pakistan for promoting digital trade and SME development. Speaking on the occasion, Ms. Summer Gao, Country Manager for Pakistan and Bangladesh, said Alibaba.com is committed to building a long-term partnership with Pakistan's business community. She stressed that by equipping SMEs with the right digital skills, tools, and market access, they can emerge as competitive global exporters. She termed the visit the beginning of a deeper and more impactful collaboration between Alibaba.com and Pakistan's private sector. Executive Director Computer Hardware Association of Pakistan (CHAP), Abrar-ul-Haq, highlighted the importance of the proposed ICCI-Alibaba.com partnership, stating that it would create new opportunities for entrepreneurs, exporters, startups, and technology-driven enterprises.

12 standing committee reports presented in Senate

ISLAMABAD: As many as 12 reports of various Senate standing committees were presented before the Upper House of the Parliament on Wednesday, covering a wide range of legislative, administrative and public policy matters. The reports were presented by the respective committee chairpersons and members, outlining recommendations, observations and progress on issues referred to the committees for detailed scrutiny and oversight. As per details, the reports presented in the Senate included report of the Committee on a bill to repeal the Pakistan International Airlines Corporation (Conversion) Act, 2016 [The Pakistan International Airlines Corporation (Conversion) (Repeal) Bill, 2026] and Standing Committee on Planning, Development and Special Initiatives' report of the Committee on the subject matter of a Motion under Rule 218 moved by Senator Mohsin Aziz on 19th January, 2026, regarding the issue of exit of Multinational companies from Pakistan and its adverse impact on Foreign Direct Investment and potential job losses. Similarly, Functional Committee on Human Rights' periodical report of the Committee was also presented on a matter referred by the House regarding Resolution No. 584 passed by the Senate on 8th March, 2025, calling for affirmative action against persistent disparities and challenges faced by women and girls in the country, moved by Senator Sherry Rehman and others. Functional Committee on Human Rights' report of the Committee was presented on a point of public importance raised by Senator Aimal Wali Khan on 19th January, 2026, regarding the revocation of visas of Afghan women. Senator Atta-Ur-Rehman, Chairman, Standing Committee on Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony presented report of the Committee on a Calling Attention Notice moved by Senator Manzoor Ahmed on 16th May, 2025, regarding delay in fund transfer for Hajj 2025 depriving 67,000 pilgrims to perform Hajj. Standing Committee on Interior and Narcotics Control's committee report was presented on a bill to amend the Islamabad Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2020 [The Islamabad Real Estate (Regulation and Development) (Amendment) Bill, 2026], introduced by Senator Mohsin Aziz on 23rd February, 2026. Standing Committee on Interior and Narcotics Control's committee's report was presented on a bill further to amend the Passports Act, 1974 [The Passports (Amendment) Bill, 2026], introduced by Senator Mohammad Abdul Qadir on 11th May, 2026. Standing Committee on Cabinet Secretariat's report was presented by the committee on the budgetary allocation and its utilization by the Cabinet Secretariat, in terms of sub-rule (4) of Rule 166 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Senate, 2012.—DNA

Asghar Mall College to have educational museum

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture, Aurangzeb Khan Khichi Wednesday announced to establish a dedicated educational museum at the historic Government Graduate College Asghar Mall, Rawalpindi, reaffirming the government's commitment to preserve country's educational and cultural heritage. The museum will be established through joint efforts of the Department of Archaeology and Museums and the college administration. The announcement was made during a ceremony held to sign a Mem-

orandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Department of Archaeology and Museums, National Heritage and Culture Division and Government Graduate College Asghar Mall. The Federal Minister attended the event as the chief guest and described the agreement as a significant step towards safeguarding one of the country's important academic heritage sites. Speaking on the occasion, Aurangzeb Khan Khichi said that the government would work jointly with the college administration to establish a museum and develop it as a center of learn-

ing, research, and heritage awareness. "We will work together and establish an academy of museum and heritage learning. We are committed to protecting and preserving the valuable heritage of Asghar Mall College for future generations," he said. The Minister emphasized that educational institutions with rich historical backgrounds must be preserved not only as centers of learning but also as repositories of national history and cultural identity. Under the MoU, both institutions will collaborate to promote awareness of cultural. —APP

QAU, IIRIS host discussion at book Renaissance Africa

ISLAMABAD: The Area Study Centre for Africa, North and South America, Quaid-i-Azam University (QAU), Islamabad, in collaboration with the International Institute for Regional and International Studies (IIRIS), successfully organized the launch and discussion of the book Renaissance Africa: A Continent's Rise, A World of Opportunity, authored by Ambassador Ahmed Ali Sirohey and Dr. Shahbaz Ali Malik. The event brought together diplomats, academics, policymakers, business leaders, researchers, students, and officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to discuss Africa's growing role in the global political and economic landscape and explore opportunities for enhanced Pakistan-Africa engagement. The program commenced with opening remarks and an introduction to the book launch, followed by a welcome address by Prof. Dr. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal, Vice Chancellor, Quaid-i-Azam University, and Islamabad. In his address, he welcomed distinguished

diplomats, scholars, policymakers, business leaders, and friends of Africa, emphasizing that Africa is emerging as a continent of immense potential, youthful energy, innovation, and opportunity. He noted that as global attention increasingly turns toward Africa's economic and strategic significance, the book provides valuable insights into the partnerships, investments, and diplomatic engagement that will shape the continent's future. Ambassador Ahmed Ali Sirohey, Director General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Pakistan, delivered a comprehensive presentation on the book. He highlighted the key themes, chapters, and findings of the publication, explaining how Africa's political, economic, and social transformation is creating new opportunities for regional and global cooperation. He also emphasized the importance of strengthening Pakistan's engagement with African countries under the broader framework of South-South cooperation.—DNA

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Briefs

Brief relief from heatwave expected

ISLAMABAD: Director General PMD Dr. Muhammad Afzal on Wednesday said a western wave will enter the country from June 11 afternoon, resulting in pleasant weather and scattered rain in some regions, while Karachi is expected to remain humid. While speaking to a local media outlet, PMD Director General Dr. Muhammad Afzal said a western weather system is expected to bring a break from the ongoing heatwave from June 11 to 13. He said relief is likely in various regions, including Gilgit-Baltistan, Kashmir, Gujranwala, Lahore, parts of Balochistan and Islamabad, where temperatures are expected to decline and isolated rainfall may occur. For Karachi, Dr. Afzal said humid conditions are likely to persist, although sea breezes and winds are expected to provide some respite from the prevailing hot weather. He said June is typically one of the hottest months of the year and humidity levels generally rise during this period, making weather conditions more uncomfortable.

However, he noted that climate change is increasingly causing unusual and unpredictable weather patterns, resulting in sudden fluctuations in temperatures and rainfall. He explained that climate change has caused average weather patterns to shift toward more extreme conditions. Scientifically, increased greenhouse gases warm the Earth, disrupting normal atmospheric and ocean systems. This leads to more frequent and intense heatwaves, heavy rainfall, floods, droughts and storms.—APP

UK MP Afzal Khan condemns violence in AJK

ISLAMABAD: Manchester-based British Member of Parliament Afzal Khan has called for strict legal action against individuals involved in recent violent protests in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), stressing that the rule of law must be applied consistently in all democratic societies. He said British parliamentarians will never support violence, whether it occurs in the UK, AJK, or Pakistan. While reaffirming that peaceful protest is a fundamental democratic right, he emphasized that any form of violence is unacceptable and must be dealt with under the law, received a press release here on Wednesday. Citing recent developments in the United Kingdom, he referred to the Southport riots, stating that British authorities took swift action against those involved in violence, with offenders prosecuted and sentenced through fast-track judicial processes. He added that the AJK government could adopt a similar approach to ensure accountability. He further noted that in democratic systems like the UK, peaceful demonstrations are permitted, but individuals engaging in violence during protests face legal consequences, and the same principle should apply universally, including in AJK. Afzal Khan also warned that instability can be exploited by external actors, stating that elements including India may take advantage of such situations and are actively attempting to create chaos in Pakistan.—APP

\$4.5b hub refinery project to strengthen energy security

The delegation noted that the project represents a major long-term investment in Pakistan's energy sector and has the potential to catalyze the development of downstream petrochemical industries. It further informed the Minister that the groundwork for the project has already commenced and that future implementation strategies are currently being finalized

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan held a meeting with a delegation of SPEC Refinery Pvt Ltd, led by its Chairman, Mr. Zafar Sheikh, to discuss the development of Pakistan's first Deep Conversion Greenfield Refinery Project planned at Hub, Balochistan. The delegation briefed the Minister on the project's progress and highlighted its strategic importance in strengthening Pakistan's energy security, reducing reliance on imported refined petroleum products, and promoting industrial development, said a release issued here on Wednesday. The proposed refinery will employ advanced deep conversion technology capable of maximizing the production of high-value petroleum products while processing a wide range of crude oil grades

sourced from international markets. During the meeting, the delegation requested the government's support in facilitating the implementation of the Greenfield Refinery Policy and expediting the issuance of the remaining regulatory approvals required by the FBR for the project's timely execution. The delegation noted that the project represents a major long-term investment in Pakistan's energy sector and has the potential to catalyze the development of downstream petrochemical industries. It further informed the Minister that the groundwork for the project has already commenced and that future implementation strategies are currently being finalized. Chairman Zafar informed the Minister that the project is expected to create approximately 2,000 direct and indirect employment opportunities in Hub and surrounding areas during both its construction and operational phases. He added that

the project would contribute significantly to regional economic development, skills enhancement, technology transfer, and industrial growth. Jam Kamal Khan welcomed the investment and emphasized that Pakistan offers immense opportunities for large-scale industrial and energy projects owing to its strategic geopolitical location at the crossroads of South Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East, and Western China. The Minister stated that Pakistan's geographic position, growing domestic market of over 250 million people, expanding trade corridors, and connectivity initiatives provide a strong foundation for transforming the country into a regional hub for trade, energy, logistics, and manufacturing. "Pakistan possesses tremendous untapped potential in refining, petrochemicals, logistics, and value-added manufacturing. Strategic projects such as the Hub refinery can play a vital role in strengthening industrial

capacity, enhancing energy security, creating jobs, and attracting long-term foreign and domestic investment," the Minister said. He further noted that the government is committed to facilitating investment that contributes to economic growth, industrial modernization, import substitution, and export enhancement. The delegation also shared its broader vision for the future development of associated petrochemical facilities, including the production of industrial feedstocks and value-added products that could support Pakistan's manufacturing sector and generate additional export opportunities. Both sides agreed on the importance of continued public-private sector collaboration to accelerate industrial investment and unlock Pakistan's full economic potential. The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to advancing strategic projects that support sustainable growth, employment generation, and national economic development.



ISLAMABAD: Member National Assembly Ch. Nasser Ahmed Abbas calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on 10 June 2026. DNA

Two-Day Int'l exhibition, seminar on herbal medicines concludes

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The two-day International Exhibition and Seminar on Herbal Medicines Research, Processing and Drug Development concluded at the COMSTEC Secretariat in Islamabad. The event was organized by the Ministerial Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation of the OIC (COMSTEC) in collaboration with the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP). The exhibition and seminar aimed to bring together regulators, policymakers, researchers, practitioners, academicians, industry representatives, scientists, pharmacists and students to discuss emerging trends, regulatory frameworks, research opportunities and future directions for the herbal, Unani, homeopathic and traditional medicine sectors. Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination Syed Mustafa Kamal inaugurated the event as chief guest. Ambassadors and diplomats from several OIC member states participated in the seminar and visited the exhibition, which featured products and innovations from Pakistan's leading herbal and traditional medicine manufacturers. The two-day programme featured technical presentations by senior experts and regulators. DRAP Chief Executive Officer Dr. Obaidullah discussed the role of alternative medicines in healthcare systems. The President of the National Tibb Council spoke on the integration of Unani medicine into national healthcare frameworks, while Dr. Abdul Rashid,

Consultant (Health Initiatives) at COMSTEC, presented emerging guidelines and regulatory considerations relating to clinical trials of herbal products, alternative medicines and Traditional Chinese Medicine. Representatives of participating companies also addressed the gathering, introducing their organizations and highlighting key products developed for the treatment and management of various diseases. The event provided a platform for dialogue among stakeholders and contributed to the development of short, medium- and long-term policy recommendations aimed at strengthening Pakistan's herbal and traditional medicine sector. Discussions also supported ongoing efforts towards the documentation and standardization of herbal medicines and the development of a comprehensive Herbal Pharmacopoeia for Pakistan. More than 50 manufacturers representing the herbal, Unani, homeopathic and traditional medicine industries participated in the exhibition. Prominent organizations, including Qarshi Industries, Marhaba Laboratories, Hamdard Laboratories, Herbio, Herbiotics, Nutrifactor, Hemani, Kamal Laboratories, Ashraf Laboratories, Mint Pharmaceuticals and Masood Homeopathic Laboratories, showcased their products, research initiatives and technological advancements through dedicated exhibition stalls. The exhibition and seminar formed part of COMSTEC's broader efforts to promote evidence-based traditional medicine, foster industry-academia collaboration, strengthen regulatory frameworks and enhance international cooperation among OIC member states in health sciences and pharmaceutical innovation.

Credible elections reflect democratic maturity in GB

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to the Prime Minister on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah on Wednesday termed the Gilgit-Baltistan elections free, fair and credible, saying the peaceful conduct of the polls and active participation of political parties reflected the region's democratic maturity, while reaffirming the government's commitment to accelerating development and transforming GB into a leading tourism destination. While speaking to a local media outlet, he appreciated the public's trust and said the election results reflected growing confidence in the government's narrative. He expressed optimism that the PML-N would strengthen its position in the near future, noting that it currently stands as the second-largest political force in GB after the PPP. He said the outcome demonstrated that people had endorsed their political vision and policy direction, adding that it was a clear indication of

increasing public support for their governance approach. He also credited the federal government and the caretaker setup in Gilgit-Baltistan for conducting free, fair and transparent elections. Advisor said the process witnessed enthusiastic participation from voters as well as political parties, which contributed to the credibility of the electoral exercise. Responding to a question, he said we are committed to prioritizing development in Gilgit-Baltistan, adding that special attention would be given to strengthening infrastructure and promoting tourism to turn the region into a key tourist hub. To another query regarding possible cabinet changes, he said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has the authority and discretion to make decisions based on performance, however, he clarified that there is no official confirmation regarding any such changes at this stage.—DNA

HEC Chief launches forum of Vice Chancellors of twin cities

ISLAMABAD: The Chairman, Higher Education Commission (HEC) Prof. Dr. Niaz Ahmed Akhtar officially launched the inaugural session of the Vice Chancellors Forum for the Islamabad-Rawalpindi twin cities, hosted by the University of Rawalpindi. The first gathering brought together leadership from more than 25 universities in the region, creating a significant platform for dialogue, collaboration, and the exchange of ideas. In his message, the HEC Chairman emphasized that such platforms help higher education institutions move beyond isolated efforts, allowing them to work collectively to strengthen academic quality, promote a vibrant research culture, and respond effectively to emerging challenges in the sector. The Chairman expressed appreciation for the initiative and acknowledged the active participation of Vice Chancellors, Rectors, and Presidents from the twin cities. He specially recognized Mr. Murtaza Noor, National Coordinator, IUCPSS, for his role in making the forum possible as a follow-up to the recommendations of the recent 6th International Students Convention & Expo, which was successfully organized in collaboration with the Higher Education Commission.—APP

FCCP orders laboratory testing

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Constitutional Court on Wednesday ordered laboratory testing of oil tankers carrying hydrocarbons imported from Iran within 15 days, expressing concern over the fact that the vehicles had remained in customs custody for the past three years. A three-member bench headed by Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi heard the case concerning the Iranian oil consignment. During the hearing, the court observed that keeping oil tankers loaded with flammable material parked for such a long period posed a serious safety risk. Justice Rizvi remarked that if a fire were to break out due to something as minor as a lit cigarette, the question of responsibility would arise. The court noted that leaving the tankers standing for years was an extremely dangerous practice. Justice Rizvi also observed that the prolonged detention of the vehicles may have deprived their drivers of employment.—APP

NUML hosts national conference

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Department of Mathematics at NUML successfully organized the National Conference on Recent Developments in Mathematics (NCRDM 2026) under the theme "Computational Mathematics and Artificial Intelligence Frontiers." The conference brought together distinguished scholars, researchers, and academicians from across Pakistan and abroad to discuss recent advancements and emerging trends in Mathematics, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and interdisciplinary scientific research. The conference featured keynote addresses by renowned experts, including Prof. Dr. Asghar Qadir of the Pakistan Academy of Sciences, Dr. Asjad Shahzad from NUST, Dr. Tahir Mahmood from the International Islamic University Islamabad, Prof. Dr. Asif Hanif from Sakarya University, Turkey, and Dr. Zeeshan Asghar from Prince Sultan University, Saudi Arabia. Their insightful presentations highlighted contemporary developments, challenges, and opportunities in Computational Mathematics and AI, while emphasizing the growing significance of mathematical sciences in addressing complex scientific and technological problems. The event was graced by Prof. Dr. Muhammad Aftab Rafiq, as the Chief Guest. In his address, he underscored the enduring importance of Mathematics as a foundational discipline that continues to drive scientific innovation and technological advancement across all eras. He appreciated the efforts of the Department of Mathematics in providing a platform for scholarly dialogue and knowledge exchange. The conference attracted participation from a wide range of national and international institutions, including Samarkand International University of Technology (Uzbekistan), The University of Waikato (New Zealand), Chuxiong Normal University (China), Quaid-i-Azam University, International Islamic University Islamabad, National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), FAST-NUCES, Fatima Jinnah Women University, University of Agriculture Faisalabad, University of Gujrat, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, The University of Lahore, Abdul Wali Khan University, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and NUML. A total of 37 participants from various universities actively engaged in academic discussions, research presentations, and scholarly interactions, fostering collaboration and the exchange of innovative ideas. The conference concluded on a highly successful note, reaffirming NUML's commitment to promoting quality research, strengthening academic linkages, and exploring emerging frontiers in Computational Mathematics and Artificial Intelligence.

Specialist calls for stronger understanding of Autism

ISLAMABAD: A specialist on Wednesday underlined the significance of understanding the dietary and everyday living challenges faced by Autistic adults, stating that informed awareness can improve well-being and long-term health outcomes while also recommending calm surroundings and reduced sensory overload at home. While speaking to a local media outlet, pediatrician Dr. Abraham Yousaf explained that autism can be influenced by genetic factors or environmental developmental conditions, noting that both biological and external influences may play a role in early brain development. He added that awareness about these contributing factors is important for early recognition and timely support. He further stated that excessive virtual screen time and a noisy, overstimulating home environment can negatively affect a child's behavior and stress levels, potentially contributing to increased anxiety and related health concerns such as hypertension. He also emphasized the importance of raising awareness among parents and caregivers about creating calm, structured, and supportive environments for children, along with balanced routines, to promote healthier development and overall well-being. He also suggested including camel milk in their diet as a source of nutritional support. Specialist advised parents to maintain a balanced and healthy diet for children, emphasizing the importance of reducing sugary foods and processed items that may negatively affect energy levels and behavior. He further recommended avoiding excessive junk food and ensuring regular meals with fresh fruits, vegetables and nutrient-rich foods to support overall growth and development. He also highlighted that proper dietary habits, combined with a calm and structured environment, can play an important role in improving well-being and supporting healthier lifestyle patterns in children. He also noted that only eating a narrow selection of foods can limit the intake of crucial nutrients and vitamins needed for a balanced diet. In Pakistan, autism is often misunderstood and sometimes dismissed as a behavioural issue or attributed to poor parenting. He noted that such misconceptions can delay proper diagnosis and support for affected children.—DNA



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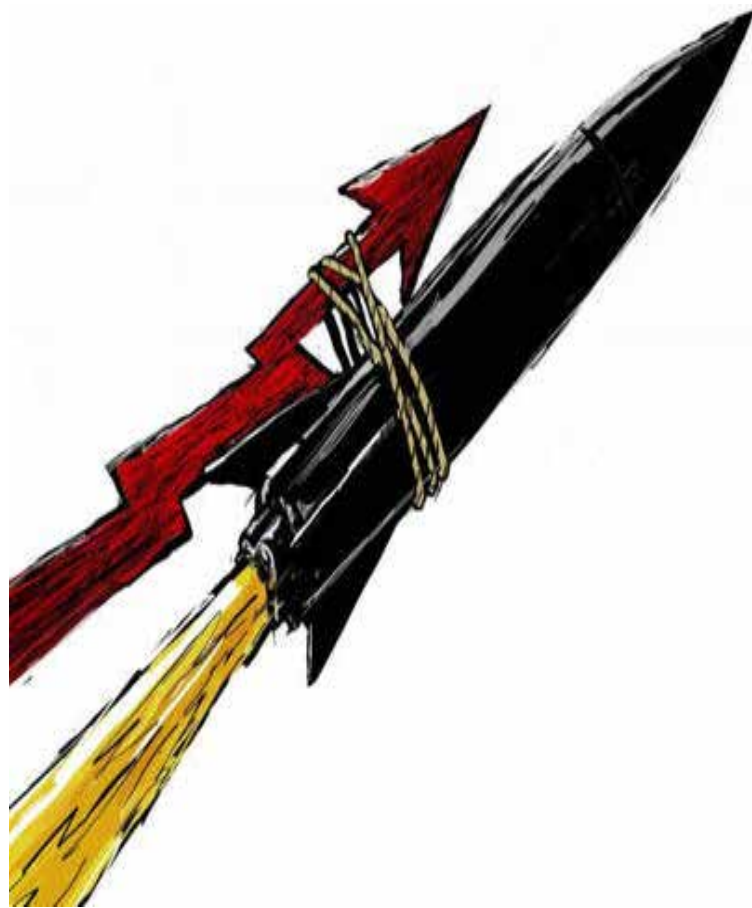
editor.dnanews@gmail.com

www.dnanews.com.pk

What remains of Tehran's empire?

ABDULRAHMAN AL-RASHED

TODAY, Iran clings to one thing: preserving some of its geopolitical gains in the Arab region. Will it succeed in negotiations after failing in war? It seeks to control Iraq and preserve Hezbollah in Lebanon, having lost Syria and being on the verge of losing the Houthis in Yemen. It hopes that negotiations with the US administration will help preserve its extensive realm as much as possible. No state has succeeded in imposing such widespread hegemony in the Arab region, using both hard and soft power, as Iran did over three decades until the Oct. 7, 2023, attack occurred. Nasserism's intellectual and military reach swept through various parts of the region, but it failed to plant proxies, establish governments and control vast geopolitical areas. Cairo's influence over Syria, in the name of unity, lasted only three years before it was ousted in the first coup. Iranian influence, however, has been extensive, long-lasting and backed by military force, unparalleled in the region since the decline of the British Empire's presence. Tehran advanced far in its expansion, reaching the borders of Turkey and the waters of the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea. In the current negotiations, it seeks to preserve most of the expansion it achieved. Recent events have revealed the costly price of the Oct. 7 operation. By losing the Assad regime in Syria, it no longer has a corridor to Hezbollah in Lebanon. Its strategic balance with Turkiye has weakened and it has lost two fronts overlooking Israel: southern Lebanon and western Syria. Hormuz was not the surprise, but rather Iran's widespread attacks on the Gulf and taking its states hostage Tehran's empire was built on propaganda and weapons and it nurtured a generation of Arabs, some of whom believed in the revolution and its image of resistance against the West and Zionism. But, as Al-Mutanabbi said: "The sword conveys truer tidings than books." And just as happened to Nasserist expansion, which extended north to Syria, south to Yemen, east to Kuwait and west to Libya, Israeli power has crippled its Iranian rival and continues to push it back regionally.



This expansion was always going to lead to a clash with Israel, which the events of Oct. 7 accelerated, putting all proposals to the test. Iran was not a paper tiger but a heavily armed fortress ruled by the Revolutionary Guards from behind the ayatollahs. However, it was not a military match for Israel and its ally America. Its military resilience was greater than expected. Offensively, thousands of missile and drone attacks on its enemy Israel did not achieve significant goals. Its strategists succeeded in compensating for what they failed to achieve in confronting the attacks by adopting an equally impactful plan. Closing the Strait of Hormuz became a high-pressure card. Hormuz was not the surprise, but rather Iran's widespread attacks on the Gulf and taking its states hostage. These states are skillfully avoiding becoming a battlefield and are accepting some losses, realizing that matters are out of their control. It is better for Saudi Arabia and its allies to leave the battle to be settled by the three powers and, whatever the outcome, this remains preferable to engaging in direct combat. From the course of the war and its aftermath, we sense that Tehran does not wish to resume fighting Hezbollah, which once threatened the region, is now fighting for survival. Israel, which was not satisfied with President Donald Trump's truce and the negotiation process, opened the southern Lebanon front, seized all Hezbollah strongholds, crossed the Litani River and now threatens Tyre, perhaps even intending to march to Beirut. More than 100 days have passed since the start of the war and two months since the truce and Iran has exhausted most of its options. Trump's blockade on Tehran's ports has deprived it of its highest daily revenue in four decades. From the course of the war and its aftermath, we sense that Tehran does not wish to resume fighting. Even the 10 missiles it launched at northern Israel for a few hours this week were a propaganda announcement and came to reinforce this hypothesis. The regime weaves around itself an image of an invincible regional power, hoping to achieve through negotiations what it failed to achieve through military force. Its endurance of losses, its targeting of less-defended areas and its recent attack on Israel are all theatrical displays. What worries everyone is that the US administration might fall into Iran's trap and grant it more than \$24 billion in the negotiations and lift the blockade, in addition to overlooking its ballistic missile system and regional proxies, which would mean that future confrontations with Iran would be almost certain.

Apache Down, Peace Deal Up?

Qamar Bashir



The result is that President Trump faces growing pressure from every direction. Within the United States, ordinary citizens are increasingly concerned about rising fuel prices, inflation, supply chain disruptions, and economic uncertainty.

What was originally presented as a campaign designed to pressure Iran is increasingly imposing costs on American households.

Higher energy prices, transportation expenses, and business uncertainty have transformed a distant conflict into a domestic political challenge.

Members of Congress, political commentators, and policy experts are also questioning the long-term objectives of the conflict

THE reported downing of a U.S. Apache attack helicopter over the Persian Gulf has emerged as one of the most consequential developments since the ceasefire and diplomatic process began following Pakistan's mediation efforts earlier this year. More than the loss of a sophisticated military platform, the incident has exposed the increasingly complex realities confronting all parties involved in the conflict. It has highlighted Iran's continuing ability to resist militarily, demonstrated the vulnerability of even the most advanced weapons systems, and intensified the pressure on policymakers in Washington to decide whether the future lies in diplomacy or escalation. President Trump responded by stating that the United States would have to respond to the attack. Yet the challenge confronting Washington extends far beyond retaliation. The United States now finds itself caught between competing strategic realities. On one hand, it seeks to maintain deterrence and demonstrate military credibility. On the other hand, it is increasingly aware that further escalation could jeopardize broader diplomatic objectives and drag the region into an even more dangerous confrontation.

What makes the current moment particularly significant is that it comes while Washington is actively attempting to pursue a negotiated settlement with Iran. At the same time, Israel continues to pursue military operations that increasingly appear to diverge from American priorities.

This divergence has become especially visible in Lebanon. President Trump has reportedly expressed frustration over continued military operations that risk undermining the fragile diplomatic process. Iran has repeatedly insisted that any lasting agreement must include an end to hostilities in Lebanon and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from disputed areas. From Tehran's perspective, regional peace cannot be divided into separate compartments. The future of Lebanon, Gaza, and broader Middle Eastern security are interconnected components of the same strategic equation.

The result is that President Trump faces growing pressure from every direction. Within the United States, ordinary citizens are increasingly concerned about rising fuel prices, inflation, supply chain disruptions, and economic uncertainty. What was originally presented as a campaign designed to pressure Iran is increasingly imposing costs on American households. Higher energy prices, transportation expenses, and business uncertainty have transformed a distant conflict into a domestic political challenge.

Members of Congress, political commentators, and policy experts are also questioning the long-term objectives of the conflict. Many argue that the war lacks a clearly defined strategic end state and risks becoming another open-ended military engagement in the Middle East. The growing skepticism reflects a

broader public mood that increasingly favors diplomacy over military escalation.

Compounding these pressures is the approaching 2026 FIFA World Cup. The tournament will be unprecedented in scale and significance. For the first time in history, three countries—the United States, Canada, and Mexico—will jointly host the world's largest sporting event. Organizers hope the tournament will showcase not only football but also the technological, cultural, and organizational capabilities of North America.

For President Trump, therefore, securing a diplomatic breakthrough before the World Cup begins carries substantial political and strategic value. Such an achievement would allow him to claim that his administration prevented a wider regional war, restored stability to energy markets, and removed a significant geopolitical risk before one of the most watched sporting events in human history.

Against this backdrop, the reported loss of the Apache helicopter creates several possible paths forward. The first possibility is restraint. Washington could avoid a major military response and instead accelerate diplomatic engagement. Such a strategy would prioritize negotiations and attempt to transform the incident into an opportunity for renewed diplomacy.

The second possibility is escalation. The United States could conclude that failure to respond decisively would weaken deterrence and encourage further attacks. Under this scenario, Washington could expand military operations, potentially triggering a broader regional confrontation involving multiple actors.

The third possibility is a calibrated response. The United States could conduct limited military actions intended to restore deterrence while avoiding a full-scale escalation. Such an approach would seek to balance military credibility with diplomatic flexibility.

Of these options, the third appears the most practical. It would allow Washington to respond to the incident without completely abandoning the possibility of a negotiated settlement. Yet even this approach carries risks, particularly if miscalculations trigger unintended consequences.

The most effective path forward may be for Washington to clearly and publicly define its interests independently from Israel's broader regional agenda. The United States could state unambiguously that its objectives are limited to regional stability, freedom of navigation, economic security, and the protection of American interests. By dissociating itself from any broader regional ambitions pursued by Israel, Washington could fundamentally transform the diplomatic landscape.

Such a move would immediately create space for direct negotiations between the United States and Iran. For decades, efforts at reconciliation have repeatedly collapsed under the weight of regional crises and com-

peting agendas. A clear declaration that Washington seeks neither regime change nor participation in wider regional rivalries could remove one of the principal barriers preventing a durable settlement.

Under such circumstances, a peace agreement between Washington and Tehran could move forward on a fast-track basis. Both countries possess strong incentives to avoid a prolonged confrontation. The United States seeks economic stability, secure energy supplies, and freedom from another expensive military commitment. Iran seeks sanctions relief, economic normalization, security assurances, and international reintegration. These objectives are not inherently incompatible and could form the basis of a comprehensive agreement.

Such an arrangement would effectively leave Iran and Israel to manage their own disputes without direct American involvement. Supporters of this approach argue that regional actors are ultimately best positioned to establish their own security balances and define their own relationships. They contend that excessive external involvement has often prolonged rather than resolved conflicts.

History demonstrates that Israel's strategic position has benefited enormously from decades of American political, economic, diplomatic, and military support. Advocates of strategic separation argue that if Israel were required to rely primarily upon its own capabilities and resources, it might reassess some of its regional policies and adopt a more pragmatic approach toward its neighbors. In their view, only under such circumstances would Israel begin to behave as a normal state operating within the accepted norms of international relations rather than as a state shielded by the overwhelming support of a superpower.

Whether one agrees with this assessment or not, the debate itself is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore. The fundamental question facing Washington is whether American interests are best served by continuing to align its regional strategy with Israel's or by pursuing a more independent course centered exclusively on American priorities. History often turns on moments that initially appear tactical but later reveal themselves to be strategic. The reported downing of the Apache helicopter may prove to be one such moment. It may become the event that compels policymakers to reconsider old assumptions, redefine national interests, and pursue new diplomatic possibilities. If wisdom prevails, it could mark the beginning of a new chapter in U.S.-Iran relations and create the conditions for a broader regional peace.

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

Lessons from History and Imperative of National Vigilance

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



The story, however, did not end in 1971. Many Pakistanis believe that efforts to destabilise the country continued in various forms in the decades that followed. Karachi, the economic lifeline of Pakistan, experienced prolonged periods of unrest and violence that affected national stability and economic growth

HISTORY is often described as the mirror of nations. Within its reflection are preserved the triumphs and tragedies, the wisdom and follies, the achievements and failures of those who came before us. Yet not every image in this mirror is immediately clear. Some reflections are obscured by the dust of time, prejudice, and incomplete understanding. To perceive the truth in its proper form, one must carefully remove that dust and examine the past with honesty and courage. Only then does history reveal itself as an open book from which valuable lessons may be drawn. No nation is free from weaknesses or mistakes. Every society encounters moments of failure, misjudgment, and internal discord. The difference between decline and progress lies in whether a nation learns from those experiences. The countries that have advanced in the world are not necessarily those that never erred; rather, they are those that confronted their shortcomings, corrected their course, and transformed painful experiences into sources of strength.

The history of Pakistan presents many such lessons. Among the most painful chapters is the separation of East Pakistan in 1971. It was not merely a political event; it was a national tragedy that left a deep scar on the collective memory of the country. The loss of one wing of Pakistan remains a sobering reminder of the consequences of internal divisions and external interference. It must never be forgotten that the Muslims of Bengal played an indispensable role in the Pakistan Movement. Their sacrifices, commitment, and support were instrumental in the creation of Pakistan. From the earliest demands for Muslim political rights to the achievement of independence in 1947, the people of East Bengal stood shoulder to shoulder with their brethren in other parts of the Sub-Continent. The bond that united them was forged through shared aspirations, common sacrifices, and a collective vision of a homeland for the Muslims of South Asia. However, geography placed a formidable challenge before the new state. Between its eastern and western wings stood India, a country whose relations with

Pakistan were marked by persistent hostility from the very beginning. The strategic reality provided opportunities for external manipulation, and over time those opportunities were exploited. Through political manoeuvring, propaganda, and support for separatist elements, India sought to widen existing differences and transform misunderstandings into irreconcilable divisions. The emergence of the Mukti Bahini and the events that followed culminated in the dismemberment of Pakistan.

Yet history demands honesty as well as patriotism. While external intervention undoubtedly played a significant role, it is equally important to examine the internal shortcomings that created conditions favourable for such interference. Nations are seldom weakened solely by their enemies; they are often first weakened by their own failures to maintain unity, trust, and effective governance. The tragedy of 1971 therefore remains not only a lesson about foreign designs but also a lesson about the importance of national cohesion.

As years passed, many hidden realities came to light. Political leaders, scholars, and observers across the region acknowledged the extent of foreign involvement in the events surrounding the separation of East Pakistan. Statements made by Indian Prime Minister Narinder Modi and Bangladeshi Prime Minister Hasina Wajid in subsequent years reinforced the widely held belief that India had actively pursued policies aimed at weakening and dividing Pakistan. Such acknowledgements served to confirm what many had long suspected about the strategic objectives pursued during that turbulent period.

The story, however, did not end in 1971. Many Pakistanis believe that efforts to destabilise the country continued in various forms in the decades that followed. Karachi, the economic lifeline of Pakistan, experienced prolonged periods of unrest and violence that affected national stability and economic growth. Similar concerns have frequently been raised regarding disturbances in Balochistan and parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Pakistani authorities have, on numerous

occasions, asserted that credible evidence exists linking hostile external actors to activities intended to create insecurity and unrest within the country.

The changing regional environment further complicated these challenges. Developments in neighbouring Afghanistan often added new dimensions to the security landscape, creating opportunities for forces seeking to undermine Pakistan's stability. Whether through direct interference, proxy networks, or information campaigns, the objective remained the same: to exploit internal vulnerabilities and weaken national unity.

Today, many observers believe that new arenas of contestation are emerging. Concerns are increasingly expressed regarding attempts to influence public opinion in sensitive regions and to create divisions among communities that have historically demonstrated loyalty to Pakistan. In an age where information travels faster than ever before, the battlefield is no longer confined to borders and armies. Narratives, perceptions, and misinformation have become powerful instruments capable of shaping attitudes and influencing societies. The lesson of history is therefore clear. National security is not safeguarded solely by military strength; it is equally protected by unity, awareness, and resilience. A vigilant nation is one that recognises the value of its internal harmony and refuses to become a victim of discord, misinformation, or manipulation. The greatest defence against any external design is a strong bond between the state and its people.

History does not exist merely to recount what has happened. Its true purpose is to illuminate the path ahead. The tragedy of the past should not become a source of perpetual bitterness, but rather a reminder of the importance of unity, wisdom, and vigilance. If Pakistan is to move confidently towards a stable and prosperous future, it must continue to learn from its history, strengthen its institutions, and preserve the spirit of national solidarity that has enabled it to overcome many challenges. The mirror of history reflects not only what was lost, but also the lessons necessary to ensure that such losses are never repeated.

Briefs

No survivors as Pak Army Mi-17 crashes

FROM PAGE 01
the late nineties. Mi-17s are considered Pakistan Army Aviation's reliable workhorses. The fleet had been stressed because of the excessive use of these helicopters in counter-terrorism operations. The US helped Pakistan refurbish and overhaul 22 of the Mi-17s. President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed deep grief and sorrow over the helicopter crash, state-run APP reported. In separate statements, the president and the prime minister extended their heartfelt sympathies to the families of those martyred in the accident. "The entire nation pays tribute to the great sacrifice of the martyrs and shares the grief of the bereaved families," President Zardari said. Paying tribute to the personnel who embraced martyrdom in the crash, PM Shehbaz said that the entire nation salutes the brave soldiers for their sacrifices.

India claims it's working to stop water flowing...

FROM PAGE 01
"weaponise" water, after two initiatives were announced by New Delhi on the section of the Chenab River it controls. In May, India's government-owned National Hydroelectric Power Corporation issued a tender notice for a proposed tunnel project that would transfer water from the Chenab River to the Beas Basin. India's power ministry said in January it was undertaking "sediment removal" at Salal Power Station on the Chenab River "following the termination of the Indus Waters Treaty". Experts say that India's existing dams do not have the capacity to block or divert water, and can only regulate timings of when it releases flows. Cutting flows would have serious implications for Pakistan's agriculture and overall economy, but any project would take several years before they have an impact.

Govt decides to cut development budget

FROM PAGE 01
recovering after her recent medical procedure. "Today, despite having to face big challenges, our economy is at stable at the macroeconomic level. But, injecting growth into this is an extremely important process," the premier observed. During the meeting, the NEC was to review federal and provincial development plans worth Rs4.715 trillion for the next fiscal year amid conflicting fiscal needs of critical political and other institutional stakeholders. The government has also summoned sessions of the National Assembly (NA) and Senate for 5pm and 4pm today, respectively. A source in the NA Secretariat told Dawn that both sessions have been called budget sessions for 2026-27. However, it is expected that the budget will be presented in parliament on June 12.

Trump says Iran will have to pay...

FROM PAGE 01
"They've taken too long to negotiate a deal that would have been great for them, now they will have to pay the price!!!" Trump latest comments come amidst Tehran's criticisms that diplomatic efforts with the United States cannot advance under repeated ceasefire violations, following overnight clashes in the Gulf between Tehran and Washington. Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei accused Washington of undermining diplomacy through contradictory messages, shifting positions and repeated ceasefire violations, and said Israel was also damaging the process through repeated ceasefire breaches in Lebanon.

Sarfaraz Ahmed set to continue as Pakistan Test head coach

Shan Masood's captaincy future remains uncertain as Pakistan prepare for upcoming Test tours

KARACHI: Former Pakistan captain Sarfaraz Ahmed has reportedly been cleared to continue as head coach for Pakistan's upcoming Test tours of the West Indies and England, sources told Geo News on Wednesday. Sarfaraz recently led Pakistan in his first assignment as Test head coach during last month's Bangladesh tour, where the hosts defeated the national side 2-0 to claim their first-ever home whitewash against Pakistan. Meanwhile, the future of Test captain Shan Masood remains uncertain, although he is still under strong consideration for selection on both tours. Sources suggest that despite ongoing ambiguity over leadership, Masood remains in contention for the role, with a final decision yet to be made.

The left-handed batter, who has featured in 46 Tests and captained Pakistan in 16 matches, has worked under multiple head coaches during his leadership tenure. He has also led Pakistan in seven Test series, winning only one, losing four, and drawing two. He is currently placed in the Pakistan Cricket Board's (PCB) "D category" for captains. Sources further added that T20I captain Salman Ali Agha, who has represented Pakistan in 25 Tests, is set to embark on his maiden England tour as part of the Test squad. Masood previously toured England in 2016 and 2020 and also brings leadership experience from county cricket, having captained Yorkshire and Derbyshire. According to reports, his familiarity with English conditions and

the media environment could prove valuable for Pakistan during the series. Meanwhile, Salman Ali Agha is understood to have strong backing from key figures within the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) think-tank. A final decision regarding Masood's continuation as captain or possible removal is yet to be taken, sources added. It is pertinent to mention that Pakistan are scheduled to play a two-Test series against the West Indies in Trinidad and Tobago from July 25-29 and August 2-6. The Test tour of England is expected to begin on August 19 at Headingley, followed by matches at Lord's on August 27 and Edgbaston on September 9, although the official schedule is yet to be formally confirmed. - APP



Govt extends austerity measures till June 30

FROM PAGE 01
services at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its liaison offices in Quetta, Karachi, Peshawar, Gujrat, and Lahore will remain open on Fridays to facilitate the public. It further recommended extending the validity of austerity measures, originally set to expire on June 13, 2026, until June 30, 2026. The committee also approved extending the closing time of standalone grocery and kiriyana stores to 10pm on all days, including weekends. Earlier, the federal government had issued a notification introducing revised business closure timings under fuel conservation measures, directing provincial governments to ensure implementation. Under the revised schedule, shops, markets, malls, and general retail outlets will close at 9pm, while restaurants, cafes, and eateries are allowed to operate until 11pm.

Iran accuses US and Israel of undermining diplomatic...

FROM PAGE 01
their actions on the ground tell a different story. "Contradictory messages, repeated violations, and shifting positions show that Washington is not serious about diplomacy," he said, adding that Iran views these developments as deliberate attempts to derail the process. He further accused Israel of exploiting the situation by escalating military operations, which Tehran believes are designed to sabotage any chance of a lasting ceasefire. The remarks come at a time of heightened regional tensions, with fragile ceasefire arrangements repeatedly breaking down. Iran has positioned itself as a vocal critic of U.S. and Israeli policies, arguing that both countries are pursuing short-term military gains rather than long-term stability. Baqaei's comments reflect Tehran's broader narrative that Western powers are insincere in their diplomatic overtures, using negotiations as a cover while continuing aggressive actions.

Pakistan-China Joint Research Centre launched in Shenyang to boost Scientific Cooperation

Ambassador Khalil Hashmi praised SYUCT for its achievements in research and innovation, particularly in the field of green technologies and its recent success in China's Dual Carbon Competition 2025

DNA

BEIJING: Pakistan-China Joint Research Centre was officially inaugurated at Shenyang University of Chemical Technology (SYUCT) in Liaoning Province, marking a new step in bilateral cooperation in science, technology, innovation, and higher education as the two countries celebrate the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations. The inauguration ceremony was attended by Pakistan's Ambassador to China, Khalil Hashmi, alongside Xu Guangwen, Member of the Standing Committee of the Liaoning Provincial People's

Congress, and Qin Gaowu, President of SYUCT, according to a Gwadar Pro's report on Wednesday. The newly established centre is the result of a collaborative initiative launched by Liaoning provincial authorities and Ambassador Hashmi in 2025. Following the signing of a cooperation document between the Embassy of Pakistan and SYUCT in June last year, the university entered into partnership agreements with three leading Pakistani institutions the Pakistan Institute of Engineering and Applied Sciences (PIEAS), NED University of Engineering and Technology, and the University of Engineering and Technology

Peshawar to promote joint academic, scientific, and technological research. Addressing the ceremony, President Qin Gaowu highlighted the long-standing friendship between China and Pakistan, describing the centre as the first China-Pakistan joint research platform established by a local Chinese university. He expressed confidence that the initiative would advance scientific innovation, talent cultivation, and people-to-people exchanges while contributing to sustainable development in both countries. Ambassador Khalil Hashmi praised SYUCT for its achievements in research and

innovation, particularly in the field of green technologies and its recent success in China's Dual Carbon Competition 2025. He noted that the research centre would serve as a vital platform connecting academia, technology, and industry, facilitating knowledge exchange, skills development, and collaborative research projects between the two nations. Representatives and academic leaders from the partner universities in Pakistan also attended the inauguration ceremony, which was joined by faculty members, researchers, and international students, including students from Pakistan.

Chinese University brings together Pakistani Community in China

CHENGDU: Sichuan University held a series of events to mark the 75th anniversary of China-Pakistani diplomatic relations, featuring an academic symposium and a friendly badminton tournament that brought together scholars, diplomats and students from the two countries. The Academic Symposium on "China-Pakistan Community of Shared Future: Prospect and Retrospect" took place at the university, according to a report carried by Gwadar Pro. The symposium gathered over 40 experts and scholars from more than 30 Pakistani research institutions across China. The opening ceremony was addressed by Professor Xiong Lin, Vice President of Sichuan University, and Tanvir Bhatti, Consul General of Pakistan in Chengdu. Luo Zhaohui, former Chairman of the China International Development Cooperation Agency, former Vice Minister of China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and former Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan, Canada and India, delivered keynote speeches. Scholars gave recommendations for deepening Pakistan studies, consolidating bilateral ties and expanding people-to-people exchanges under the evolving international landscape. They also emphasized that educators and researchers should support bilateral cooperation through rigorous research, build consensus through insightful analysis and sustain the ironclad friendship through academic exchanges. On June 8, the Consul General of Pakistan in Chengdu and the Pakistan Study Center of Sichuan University co-hosted a friendly badminton tournament at the university. Leveraging sports, the event deepened bilateral friendship and people-to-people exchanges. Tanvir Bhatti along with Chinese and Pakistani teachers and students competed in a friendly atmosphere and awards were presented to the participants afterwards. He noted that more cultural events would be arranged going forward to further consolidate China-Pak friendly relations. - APP

Erdogan says Israel's attacks on Syria, Lebanon threaten Turkiye too

"The attacks by (Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin) Netanyahu and his network of murder on Lebanon and Syria have brought the issue to a point where it also threatens Turkiye," Erdogan told lawmakers from his ruling AK Party in parliament, and added that Ankara's security was tied to that of these two countries

ANKARA: Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said on Wednesday that Israel's attacks on Syria and Lebanon had reached a point where they also threaten Turkiye, adding Israel's "aggression" posed a threat to the whole world and must be stopped. NATO member Turkiye has been one of the fiercest critics of Israel's assaults on Iran, Gaza, and Lebanon, saying Israel was the biggest obstacle to regional peace. It has halted all trade with Israel and called for measures against it at international courts. "The attacks by (Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin) Netanyahu and his network of murder on Lebanon and Syria have brought the issue to a point where it also threatens Turkiye," Erdogan told lawmakers from his ruling AK Party in parliament, and added that Ankara's security was tied to that of these two countries. Erdogan also said Israel was leading a "sneaky effort" to destabilize African countries and the Mediterranean by igniting "the fire of discord" on the ethnically-split island of Cyprus. "These small entities, whose ambitions far exceed their size, have boarded Israel's boat of mischief, taken on the role of Zionist subcontractors, and are pursuing some pipe dreams in the Eastern Mediterranean," he said, without elaborating. "Nobody should chase adventures... I want everyone to know that if the rights of Turkiye and Turkish Cypriots are violated in the Eastern Mediterranean, our response will be very clear and very strong." Turkiye, Iran's neighbor, has blamed Israel's "provocations" for starting the US-Iran war. Erdogan on Wednesday urged world powers to take a more clear stance against Israel, saying it was emboldened by the "silence of international community." "Pulling Israel back to within the bounds of the rule of law has become a shared duty not just for certain countries, but for all of humanity," he said. - APP

Pakistan, China inks agreement on buffalo embryos export

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Pakistan has formally approved export of embryos, ova and frozen semen of buffaloes to China during an official signature ceremony held between the Ministry of National Food Security and Research Pakistan and China's Royal Group. Royal Group has already established "Royal Cell Biotechnology Company (Pakistan)" in Lahore after getting it registered in the Animal Quarantine Department of the Ministry of National Food Security and Research. Dr. Qaiser Shahzad, Program Manager of Royal Cell Biotechnology Company (Pakistan), the company has already fulfilled all requirements of the Chinese government. On a trial basis, previously Pakistan exported 10,000 embryos valued at \$2 million to China, according to a Gwadar Pro's report. Over the next decade, Dr. Qaiser Shahzad declared China intends to import at least 300,000 buffalo embryos from Pakistan. Given the growing demand for buffalo milk in China and the popularity of Pakistani buffaloes for their milk quality - APP

Solar farms breathing new life into S Korean villages

President Lee Jae Myung's administration aims to create more than 500 so-called Sunshine Income Villages by the end of the year and 2,500 by 2030

SEOUL: In South Korea where an aging population, climate change and economic hardship are putting pressure on rural communities, the government is implementing a program that aims to bolster agriculture and speed up the transition to renewable energy. President Lee Jae Myung's administration aims to create more than 500 so-called Sunshine Income Villages by the end of the year and 2,500 by 2030. Under the scheme, farmers are given loans for up to 90 percent of the cost to install solar panels on their land. For the first five years after installation they have to pay back only the interest on the loan, with the principal added to the repayments after that. Any proceeds from the sale of surplus energy go directly to the residents. The villages of Guyang-ri in Gyeonggi province and Songam-ri in Gangwon province are touted by the government as early examples of the project's success. Six solar panel sites in Guyang-ri have a total capacity of 1 megawatt - with plans to expand that to 5 MW - and generate more than 100 million won (\$66,000) of income per year for the village's 130 residents, most of whom are elderly. "I think the future for this village is very bright," local Kim Choonok told newoutlet. "It's only been just a year and a half since we have been able to acquire income from the solar energy but we're actually feeling this first hand. We have had so many people wanting to see how this project is being carried out and a lot of interest, not just from Korea but also abroad." Despite the burden of paying back the loan, village chief Ju Young Jeon said he

was confident that the generators would be profitable and could even create new jobs for young people, most of whom have left to find work in the cities. "Our village, of course, with declining job opportunities elsewhere would be able to actually provide opportunities for the younger people," he said. The residents of Guyang-ri, which lies two hours southeast of the capital Seoul, gather daily for lunch prepared by two chefs and three helpers, all of whom are paid out of the income from the solar panels. The scheme has also paid for a minibus and driver to take residents on free trips and to nearby health clinics, as well as a golf course and a table tennis table. In Songam-ri, about two hours northeast of Seoul, solar power generation has become a main source of income for the village, along with its rice mill, which produces about 15 tonnes a day. The generator, built on converted farmland, produces 657 megawatt-hours and more than 100 million won per year. The money helps to pay for free meals and milk deliveries for residents of the village and its neighbors, as well as support for vulnerable people and donations to senior welfare foundations. Village chief Seong-su Hong said the village had suffered hardships in the past as the prices of the products sold by farmers had been stagnant for the past 10 years while the cost of the things they needed to buy had soared. But the solar project had brought much-needed additional income and created 21 jobs, he said. "For the three years that I have been operating on this project we have been able to grow as a community together," Hong said. - APP

Dr. Pandey to be the new Indian envoy to Pakistan

FROM PAGE 01
Dr. Geetika Srivastav, who has been serving as India's envoy in Islamabad, will conclude her assignment shortly. During her tenure, she oversaw India's diplomatic mission through a period marked by cautious engagement and limited high-level exchanges between the two neighbors. Her departure opens the way for Dr. Pandey to take charge of India's diplomatic outreach in Pakistan. The Charge d'Affaires position is particularly important in the absence of a full High Commissioner, as it involves managing day-to-day diplomatic responsibilities, maintaining communication channels, and representing India's interests in Pakistan. Dr. Pandey's prior experience in South Asia, especially his current posting in Colombo, is expected to provide him with valuable regional insights as he transitions to Islamabad. This appointment comes at a time when India-Pakistan relations remain strained, with limited dialogue and persistent challenges in areas such as security, trade, and cross-border issues. Analysts note that while the role of Charge d'Affaires is largely administrative and diplomatic, it also requires careful navigation of sensitive political dynamics. Dr. Pandey's move underscores India's continued emphasis on maintaining a functioning diplomatic presence in Pakistan, even amid broader geopolitical complexities. His tenure will likely focus on sustaining communication channels, managing consular affairs, and representing India in multilateral and bilateral settings within Pakistan.

Israeli strike hits Lebanon

The Israeli military said on Wednesday that it had detained two people who approached troops in southern Lebanon and taken them to Israel for questioning

SIDON: An Israeli strike hit a car in the centre of the southern Lebanese city of Sidon on Wednesday, state media reported, as Israel persisted with its attacks across the country's south. An AFP correspondent heard an explosion in the area before seeing a car burning as rescuers and firefighters headed to the scene. The correspondent saw rescuers pull two people from the targeted vehicle.

Lebanon's state-run National News Agency reported "an enemy strike on a car" in the city. The largest city in southern Lebanon, Sidon was relatively spared from the major Israeli strikes that have pummeled much of the country's south and east since the Iran-backed Hezbollah drew Lebanon into the Middle East war on March 2. The city, home to the largest Palestinian camp in the country, also shelters a large

number of people displaced by the current war. The last time it was targeted was on May 28, when an Israeli strike on a building killed five people according to the Lebanese health ministry. Two people taken from Lebanon to Israel The Israeli military said on Wednesday that it had detained two people who approached troops in southern Lebanon and taken them to Israel for questioning.

"Earlier today, IDF soldiers identified two suspected individuals who approached the area in which IDF soldiers are operating in southern Lebanon," the military said in a statement to AFP. "Following the identification and in order to rule out any threat, the soldiers apprehended the suspected individuals, who were transferred to Israeli territory for further questioning." - APP

128TH ANNIVERSARY OF PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENCE

Kalayaan. Kinabukasan. Kasaysayan.
(Freedom. Future. History.)

Message of H.E. Dr. Emmanuel R. Fernandez Ambassador of the Republic of the Philippines to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan On the Occasion of the 128th Anniversary of Philippine Independence



On the occasion of the 128th Anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence, I extend my warmest greetings to the Filipino community in Pakistan, our Pakistani friends, and all those who join us in commemorating this important milestone in the history of the Philippine nation. This year's theme, "Kalayaan. Kinabukasan. Kasaysayan." (Freedom. Future. History.), reminds us that the story of every nation is shaped by the sacrifices of those who came before us, the challenges of the present, and the aspirations we hold for future generations. It invites us to honor the struggles that secured our freedom, draw wisdom from the lessons of history, and work together to build a future worthy of those who came before us.

For the Philippines, Independence Day is a celebration of the Filipino people's enduring struggle for freedom, dignity, and self-determination. It is a time to honor the courage and sacrifice of our forebears and to reflect upon the values that continue to guide our nation: unity, resilience, democracy, justice, and service to others. In many ways, the Philippines and Pakistan share similar historical journeys. Both nations emerged from periods of foreign rule and undertook the difficult task of building independent states amid profound political, economic, and social challenges. Both peoples understand that independence is not merely a historical event, but a continuing responsibility—one that requires constant effort to strengthen institutions, uphold the rule of law, promote development, and secure a better future for succeeding generations.

Our two countries also share a deep appreciation for national identity, cultural heritage, and the aspirations of ordinary citizens for peace, dignity, and opportunity. These common experiences have helped foster the goodwill and mutual respect that have characterized Philippines-Pakistan relations for more than seven decades.

As we reflect on our history, we are reminded that freedom is sustained not only through the defense of sov-

eignty, but also through our commitment to the values that give meaning to independence. History teaches us that societies flourish when they respect the dignity and human rights of every person, uphold justice and equality before the law, and cultivate compassion, empathy, and concern for the welfare of others.

The lessons of the past remain relevant today. Across generations and across continents, humanity has witnessed the suffering caused by hatred, discrimination, intolerance, and the abuse of power. These forces seek to divide peoples and weaken societies. Our collective responsibility is to reject such divisions and instead promote mutual respect, understanding, and peaceful co-existence. The future belongs not to fear and exclusion, but to cooperation, dialogue, and our shared humanity. The Philippines believes that genuine progress is measured not only by economic growth and technological advancement, but also by the strength of our institutions, the protection of fundamental freedoms, and the spirit of malasakit—care and concern for one's fellow human beings. It is this spirit that enables nations and communities to remain resilient, united, and hopeful in the face of uncertainty.

This message of resilience and malasakit is especially meaningful as the Philippines responds to the recent earthquake that struck Mindanao, causing loss of life, injuries, displacement, and damage to communities. At this difficult time, we remember the affected families and communities, and we pay tribute to the courage of responders, volunteers, local authorities, and ordinary citizens who continue to assist those in need. Their compassion and solidarity remind us that the Filipino spirit remains steadfast even in the face of adversity. As we look toward the future, the Philippines remains committed to building a nation that is innovative, inclusive, and resilient, while working with partners around the world to promote peace, stability, and sustainable development. We believe that countries such as the Philippines and Pakistan have much to gain through cooperation, dialogue, and stronger people-to-people ties. Today, opportunities for collaboration between our two nations continue to grow in areas such as trade, investment, agriculture, education, labor, tourism, and cultural exchange. The Embassy of the Philippines in Islamabad remains committed to further strengthening these ties and advancing a partnership that contributes to the prosperity and well-being of both our peoples.

As we celebrate Philippine Independence Day, we honor our history, embrace our future, and reaffirm our faith in the enduring values of freedom, human dignity, and national sovereignty. May the friendship between the Philippines and Pakistan continue to flourish, and may our peoples continue to draw inspiration from the shared belief that nations achieve their greatest progress when guided by justice, compassion, perseverance, and hope.

On behalf of the Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines in Islamabad, I wish everyone a meaningful and joyous celebration of Philippine Independence Day.

Mabuhay ang Pilipinas! Pakistan-Philippines Friendship Zindabad!
H.E. Dr. Emmanuel R. Fernandez
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Republic of the Philippines to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

The Philippines and Pakistan: An Emerging Commercial Partnership with Room to Grow

FOR Pakistani business leaders looking toward Southeast Asia, the Philippines offers a promising and welcoming market. It is a large, English-speaking, consumption-driven economy with more than 110 million people, a young and skilled workforce, a strong services sector, and expanding opportunities in trade, tourism, education, digital services, infrastructure, halal industries, and consumer markets.

For the Philippines, Pakistan is likewise an important and valued economic partner. It is one of South Asia's major markets, with long-established strengths in rice, textiles, pharmaceuticals, surgical instruments, sports goods, agriculture, information technology, logistics, and entrepreneurship. Its commercial centers — Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Faisalabad, Sialkot, Gujranwala, Multan, and others — represent a broad and dynamic business landscape. The Philippines and Pakistan are not new partners. The two countries established diplomatic relations in 1949, and in 2024 marked the 75th anniversary of those ties. The friendship is longstanding. What lies ahead is the opportunity to give that friendship a stronger commercial dimension. The existing trade relationship already shows areas of natural complementarity. Pakistan supplies important products to the Philippine market, including rice, cereals, pharmaceuticals, textiles, fruits, paper products, cotton, apparel, and selected industrial goods. Rice is especially significant. Pakistan is a major rice exporter, while the Philippines is one of Asia's major rice-consuming economies. This makes rice not only a traded commodity, but a practical area for food-security cooperation, reliable supply relationships, and long-term commercial partnership. Pharmaceuticals also offer room for greater engagement. Pakistan has an established pharmaceutical manufacturing base, while the Philippines has a large health care market and continuing demand for affordable, reliable, and properly registered medicines. With the right regulatory preparation, distribution partners, and quality standards, this sector can provide meaningful openings for Pakistani firms interested in the Philippine market.

At the same time, the Philippines offers its own strengths to Pakistani partners. The country is one of the world's leading destinations for information technology and business process management. Its services sector has deep experience in customer support, finance and accounting, health information management, back-office operations, creative services, and global capability centers. For Pakistani technology firms, software companies, fintech players, and digital service providers, the Philippines can be a useful partner in joint delivery, regional client servicing, training, outsourcing, and higher-value business services. There is also growing space for cooperation in halal industries. The Philippines has a significant Muslim population, particularly in Mindanao, and is actively developing its halal ecosystem across food, tourism, hospitality, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, personal care, and services. The Philippines is seeking to bring more halal-certified and halal-oriented products to international markets, including Muslim-majority and Muslim-conscious consumer markets such as Pakistan. This opens a useful area of cooperation. Pakistani importers, distributors, retailers, certification bodies, hotel groups, travel agencies, and investors can work with Philippine producers and service providers to introduce Philippine halal products and Muslim-friendly tourism offerings to the Pakistani market. These may include processed food, coconut-based products, tropical fruit products, marine products, snacks, wellness products, personal care items, and tourism services.

Tourism is one of the most promising areas for growth. The Philippines is an island destination known for its beaches, clear waters, warm hospitality, English-speaking environment, shopping, nature, and family-friendly travel experiences. For Pakistani travel agencies and tour operators, the Philippines can be developed as an attractive destination for families, honeymooners, young professionals, business travelers, and corporate groups. The Philippines is also increasingly attentive to Muslim-friendly tourism. This includes greater awareness of halal food, prayer facilities, family-oriented itineraries, and culturally sensitive travel services. For Pakistani travelers, this can make the Philippines a more comfortable and accessible destination. For Pakistani travel companies, it creates opportunities to design packages that combine leisure, family travel, island destinations, shopping, and hospitality. Education is another field with strong potential. The Philippines has long experience in English-medium education and international training in medicine, dentistry, nursing, maritime education, aviation, hospitality, and related disciplines. Pakistani students and education consultants may find opportunities in university partnerships, student recruitment, English-language programs, health sciences, skills training, and professional exchange. Infrastructure, energy, water, logistics, and digital connectivity also offer possible areas of engagement. The Philippines continues to develop opportunities in renewable energy, transport, ports, water systems, digital infrastructure, and urban development. These sectors may be of interest to Pakistani firms involved in engineering services, construction inputs, consultancy, solar-related supply chains, logistics, and project support. The strength of the Philippines-Pakistan economic relationship lies in its diversity. It does not depend on one sector alone. It can grow through rice, pharmaceuticals, halal products, tourism, education, IT services, textiles, logistics, consumer goods, and investment partnerships. This gives both sides many entry points, from large companies to small and medium enterprises.

Business communities in both countries have an important role to play. Chambers of commerce, exporters, importers, travel agencies, universities, technology firms, halal industry bodies, logistics providers, and investors can help turn goodwill into practical cooperation. More buyer-seller meetings, trade missions, product showcases, tourism promotions, education fairs, and business matching activities would help both sides better understand each other's markets. The Philippines welcomes greater engagement with Pakistani business. It welcomes exporters seeking new buyers, importers looking for new products, travel companies building new destinations, education partners exploring new programs, technology firms looking for regional collaboration, and investors studying opportunities in Southeast Asia. For Pakistani companies, the Philippines offers a market that is large but still underexplored, friendly but commercially serious, and familiar in human warmth while distinct in economic opportunity. It is a country where relationships matter, where service culture is strong, and where international partnerships are valued. As the Philippines celebrates its 128th Independence Day in 2026, it looks to Pakistan not only as a diplomatic friend, but as a partner in shared growth. The next chapter of Philippines-Pakistan economic relations can be built through practical cooperation: more trade, more travel, more investment, more education links, more digital partnerships, and more direct contact between business communities. The invitation is open. The Philippines welcomes Pakistani business to explore, connect, and grow with us.

APTMA assured of uninterrupted electricity supply to textile sector

LAHORE: Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Engr. Muhammad Ramzan Butt has assured APTMA of uninterrupted electricity supply to the whole industry, especially export-oriented units to boost economic activity and volume of exports. He was speaking to leading exporters during his visit to APTMA (All Pakistan Textile Mills Association) office here Wednesday. He was accompanied by senior LESCO officers including Faisal Zakria Chief Engineer (P&D), Rai Muhammad Asghar GM (Technical), Abbas Ali CSD, Usman Ali Chief Information Technology Officer and Ahmed Noman, the Company Secretary. APTMA Chairman Kamran Arshad welcomed him along with Chairman (North Zone) Asad Shafi, Treasurer Mohammad Qasim, former APTMA chairmen, senior executives, Energy Advisor Tahir Basharat Cheema and Secretary General Mohammad Raza Baqir. The LESCO chief said that LESCO is committed to serve its industrial consumers as the industry not only promotes manufacturing activities but also generates additional revenue for LESCO if the industry operates at full capacity. He said, it was very painful if

industry was forced to close the mills due to any interruptions in supply of power. LESCO is approving industrial connections on top priority to make humble contribution in the economic activities in the country. He acknowledged the growing electricity demand of APTMA members on LESCO network, as is reflected in the significant increase in consumption from previous years. He, however, expressed his concerns for decline in electricity consumption during the preceding months of April and May. He advised APTMA members to continue operating on grid instead of shifting to other fuels as grid electricity is still cheaper for industrial users. He assured APTMA membership to resolve the issues of power interruptions, fluctuations or any sort of shutdown. He asked APTMA to bring all such instances in his personal notice for immediate resolution. Earlier speaking on the occasion, Kamran Arshad said the interaction between the two sides is need of the hour keeping in mind the energy requirements of the industry. He highlighted the importance of the textile sector as the mainstay of the economy, contributing significantly to GDP, exports (60 percent share),

and employment (40 percent of manufacturing sector). Chairman (North Zone) Asad Shafi called for making electricity cost-effective for the industry. He presented a "Way Forward" including allowing multiple electricity connections at integrated industrial units as per NEPRA Consumer Service Manual, additional connections where load enhancement is not technically feasible, and enhancement of the 11 kV feeder ceiling for B-3 industrial connections from 7.5 MW to 10 MW. He recommended that LESCO should strengthen its network for uninterrupted and quality electricity supply in accordance with the Grid Code and Consumer Service Manual, streamline approval procedures and set timelines for processing load enhancement requests, accelerate installation and up-gradation of power transformers and grid upgrades, change design/standards/specifications to reduce the cost of independent 11kV feeders/consumer grids, and establish dedicated industrial support desks for faster resolution of technical and commercial complaints of APTMA members.—DNA

Rupee gains 01 paisa against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Wednesday appreciated by 01 paisa against the US Dollar in interbank trading and closed at Rs 278.36 compared to the previous day's closing of Rs 278.37. According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the Dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs 278.25 and Rs 279.40, respectively. The price of the Euro against the rupee increased by Rs 0.33 and closed at Rs 321.47 from the previous day's close of Rs 321.14, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen remained unchanged to close at Rs 1.73, whereas the exchange rate of the British Pound witnessed an increase of Rs 0.47 and closed at Rs 372.57 compared to the previous day's Rs 372.10.—APP

PSX turns bearish, loses over 903 points

ISLAMABAD: The benchmark KSE-100 Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bearish trend on Wednesday, losing 903.12 points, a negative change of 0.53 percent, closing at 169,427.44 points against 170,330.56 points on the last trading day. During the session, the ready market recorded a trading volume of 791.636 million shares with a traded value of Rs 25,484 billion, compared to 767,453 million shares valuing Rs 27,176 billion in the previous session.—APP

China's PPI continues to rise in May

BEIJING: China's consumer prices remained broadly stable in May as producer prices rose further, pointing to a steady consumer market and improving demand in some industrial sectors as the country's economy sustained its recovery under supportive macro policies. The consumer price index (CPI), a main gauge of inflation, rose 1.2 percent year on year in May, unchanged from April, official data showed Wednesday. The producer price index (PPI), which measures costs for goods at the factory gate, climbed 3.9 percent year on year, 1.1 percentage points faster than in April. The core CPI, which excludes food and energy prices, increased 1.1 percent year on year, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). "The rise in core CPI showed that the endogenous momentum of consumption remained stable and continued to improve," said Pang Ming, a researcher with the National Institute for Finance and Development. Prices of industrial consumer goods rose 3.9 percent year on year in May, 0.4 percentage points faster than in April. Among them, gasoline prices continued to rise at a faster pace, up 23.5 percent, partly due to a low comparison base in the same period last year, while the increase in gold jewelry prices stood at 39 percent. Prices of household appliances and clothing increased 3.4 percent and 1.5 percent, respectively, according to the NBS. Service prices rose 0.8 percent year on year in May. Among services, travel-related service prices increased 2.8 percent, while prices of other services were broadly stable, NBS data showed. Xing Yuguang, a researcher with the State Information Center (SIC), said domestic demand continued to improve in May, supported by policies such as consumer goods trade-in subsidies and measures to promote service consumption, as well as the boost from the May Day holiday. Data released by the SIC showed that China's consumption continued to improve in May. Offline consumption payments rose 2.4 percent year on year, with relatively fast growth in electronics, catering services and transportation services. As China enters summer, the consumer market has continued to heat up. City football leagues have kicked off in several places, helping drive consumption in catering, transportation, culture and tourism. The nighttime economy has also gained traction, with many cities issuing nighttime consumption coupons, extending business hours in commercial districts, and launching night tours, food markets and evening performances. Xing said goods and services consumption continued to recover, while business vitality among merchants kept improving. Improvements on both the supply and demand sides have helped the domestic consumer market maintain a steady upward trend. On the production side, the PPI rose 0.5 percent month on month in May. Dong Lijuan, an NBS statistician, attributed the increase partly to the continued upgrading of China's industrial structure, which pushed up prices in some sectors. As equipment renewals in manufacturing continued to advance, prices in the ferrous metal smelting and rolling industry rose. Faster electrification, deeper integration of artificial intelligence into various industries, and rising demand for computing power also contributed to price increases in non-ferrous metals, electrical machinery and computer-related industries, Dong said. Seasonal demand also lent support. Demand for coal stockpiling ahead of the peak summer electricity-use season, along with rising non-power coal demand, drove up prices in the coal mining and washing industry. As temperatures rose in May, prices in the manufacturing of household air conditioners and household refrigeration appliances also increased, Dong said. Looking ahead, experts said the impact of external factors is expected to ease, while overall consumer prices are likely to remain moderate in June. Pang said a higher comparison base from the same period last year would weigh on year-on-year growth in June, while food prices are unlikely to see a marked increase and service prices may remain subdued before summer holiday demand picks up.—DNA

SCCI, Tax officials discuss business community issues

SIALKOT: Syed Ahtesham Mazhar, President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), held a meeting with Quaratul-Ain, Commissioner Inland Revenue, Sialkot Zone, to discuss matters related to taxation, revenue administration, and issues affecting the business community. During the meeting, both sides exchanged views on enhancing coordination between the tax authorities and the business sector. Discussions focused on improving taxpayer facilitation and addressing the concerns of exporters, industrialists, and traders. Syed Ahtesham Mazhar highlighted the challenges faced by the business community and emphasized the need for a supportive and business-friendly environment to promote economic growth and exports. Quaratul-Ain reaffirmed the Inland Revenue Department's commitment to facilitating taxpayers and ensuring effective communication with stakeholders. Both parties agreed on the importance of continued engagement to resolve issues and strengthen cooperation for the benefit of the regional economy. The meeting concluded with a mutual commitment to fostering a constructive relationship between the business community and tax authorities.—DNA

Briefs

UK charities donated at least \$37m to illegal Israeli settlements

LONDON: Thirty-two charities in England and Wales have donated at least \$37 million to illegal Israeli settlements, an MP with the governing Labour Party has said. Melanie Ward warned that if gift aid were claimed against the donations as part of the regular UK tax relief scheme, it would mean that British taxpayers had subsidized illegal settlements. The Guardian reported on Wednesday. Under the charity tax relief scheme, about \$7.5 million toward illegal Israeli settlements could have been provided by taxpayers through the charities, a situation Ward described as "deplorable." Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper on Tuesday said the Charity Commission had been ordered to investigate British charities' ties to settlements. The commission must take action and remove any charitable ties to settlements, Ward, former CEO of Medical Aid for Palestinians, wrote in a letter to the body.

"The existence and growth of Israeli settlements in the state of Palestine is globally recognised as one of the major impediments to peace," she wrote. "Any activity which supports the maintenance and the expansion of Israeli settlements — such as that funded by these 32 'charities' — is extremist and not of benefit to the UK public. — APP

Karachi sizzles as feels-like temperature reaches 49°C

KARACHI: The mercury in Karachi stood at 37°C as of 1pm on Wednesday, with the feels-like temperature at 49°C due to humidity as a heatwave continues to grip parts of the country. According to data shared by the Met Office, relative humidity was recorded at 56 per cent at 1pm, with southwest winds blowing at 26 kilometres per hour. The city also witnessed hot and humid weather, with a feels-like temperature of 48°C a day earlier as a severe heatwave persisted across the country. The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) had issued a heatwave warning for various parts of the country last week. The heatwave is expected to persist till June 12. The PMD said temperatures were expected to rise by up to seven degrees Celsius above normal during the heatwave period under the influence of a high-pressure system. The Met Office said maximum temperatures in Karachi were likely to remain between 40°C and 43°C from June 8 to June 12, and warned that night-time temperatures were also likely to rise during this period. — APP

Portugal Day celebrated in Pakistan

Honouring Portuguese communities abroad and strengthening bilateral ties

Over recent years, relations between Portugal and Pakistan have continued to develop positively across a range of areas, including political dialogue, trade and investment, education, culture and people-to-people exchanges. Our bilateral relationship is entering a particularly positive phase, marked by increasingly regular contacts and a shared commitment to deepen cooperation in areas of mutual interest

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Paulo Guedes Domingues Ambassador of Portugal to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan has issued a special message on the occasion of the Day of Portugal, Camões and Portuguese Communities 2026. Here is the text of the message. "It is with great honour and a deep sense of responsibility that we celebrate the Day of Portugal, Camões and Portuguese Communities.

This occasion invites us to celebrate Portugal's history, culture, language and values, as well as the enduring ties that unite Portuguese people across the world. It is also an opportunity to pay tribute to Luís de Camões, one of the greatest figures of world literature, whose work continues to embody Portugal's spirit of openness, discovery and dialogue between cultures.

Portugal Day is also a celebration of the Portuguese Communities abroad. To all Portuguese citizens who live, work and represent our country beyond its borders, I extend my heartfelt gratitude and admiration. Through their dedication, talent and commitment, they strengthen Portugal's presence in the world and serve as valuable

bridges between peoples and nations. It is particularly meaningful to celebrate this day in Pakistan, a country with which Portugal enjoys friendly and constructive relations. Although separated by geography, our two nations share a rich history of contacts and exchanges, as well as a common commitment to dialogue, international cooperation and mutual respect.

The human dimension of our relationship has also become increasingly significant. Today, a growing number of Portuguese citizens have Pakistani roots and make valuable contributions to Portuguese society in diverse fields. Their presence reflects the close links that unite our countries and serves as a living bridge between

Portugal and Pakistan, strengthening mutual understanding and friendship.

Over recent years, relations between Portugal and Pakistan have continued to develop positively across a range of areas, including political dialogue, trade and investment, education, culture and people-to-people exchanges. Our bilateral relationship is entering a particularly positive phase, marked by increasingly regular contacts and a shared commitment to deepen cooperation in areas of mutual interest. We remain committed to further strengthening this partnership and to exploring new avenues of cooperation that can benefit both our countries and peoples. I would also like to acknowledge the dedication and professional

ism of the staff of the Embassy of Portugal in Islamabad, whose daily work contributes to promoting Portugal and strengthening the ties between our two countries. My sincere appreciation also goes to Portugal's Honorary Consuls in Karachi and Lahore, Mr. Fakir S. Ayazuddin in Karachi and Mr. Iftikhar Firoz in Lahore, whose commitment and support play an important role in fostering closer relations with Pakistani institutions, businesses and citizens across the country.

I would like to express my deep and sincere appreciation to the Pakistani Authorities, to the diplomatic corps, to representatives of the business, academic and cultural communities, members of the media, and to all friends of Portugal who are also part of this celebration. You represent the friendship that exists between our countries and our shared confidence in an even stronger partnership for the future.

As we celebrate Portugal today, we also celebrate the friendship between Portugal and Pakistan and the values that bring us together: respect, dialogue, cooperation and mutual understanding. Thank you for being part of this special occasion. Long live Portugal, and long live the friendship between Portugal and Pakistan".



Asian stocks slide, oil gains

DNA

LONDON: The United States launched strikes against Iran after President Donald Trump said Tehran had shot down a US Apache helicopter in the Strait of Hormuz, leaving investors on edge over a fragile ceasefire between all sides. MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan dropped 0.6%. Japan's Nikkei fell 0.9% while the tech-heavy South Korean KOSPI slumped 2% in a volatile week where AI stocks have come under pressure. Oil prices

climbed about 1% in early trade, moving away from a seven-week low touched in the previous session in the wake of the fresh US attacks. Brent futures LCOc1 rose 0.9% to \$92.29 a barrel, while US West Texas Intermediate WTI CL1 crude climbed 0.8% to \$88.97. O/R "Geopolitics is being treated as a headline risk, not a macro shock for now," said Charu Chanana, chief investment strategist at Saxo in Singapore. "Oil holding around \$90 despite fresh Iran headlines suggests markets are not pricing a sustained supply disruption. That leaves room for a bigger repricing if energy infrastructure, shipping routes or US involvement escalate." US stocks overnight slid as a tech rebound fizzled, with AI valuation worries, Middle East tensions and rising rate bets driving investors from risk. Investor focus will be on the US inflation data later on Wednesday to gauge the impact of the war, with a Reuters survey of economists predicting that inflation likely increased 4.2% in the 12 months through May in what would be the largest annual rise in the CPI since April 2023.

May sees 'highest-ever' monthly inflow of remittances of \$4.3 billion

ISLAMABAD: Workers' remittances were recorded at \$4.3 billion in May, registering growth on both a monthly and annual basis, according to data released by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on Wednesday. Adviser to the Finance Minister Khuram Schehzad also shared the data on X, stating that Pakistan had recorded its "highest-ever monthly remittance inflow in history". According to the SBP, the inflows increased by 20.2 per cent compared to April and were 15.4pc higher than the amount received in May last year. "Cumulatively, remittances reached \$38.1bn during July-May FY26, up 9.2pc from \$34.9bn recorded in the corresponding period of the previous fiscal year," the SBP said. It elaborated that remittances from Saudi Arabia remained the highest in May at \$1,025 million, followed by \$1,006.6m from the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Remittances from the United Kingdom stood at \$645.5m and those from the US at \$349.8m, the central bank said. Schehzad said in his post that "with one month remaining in FY26, remittances are on track to exceed well beyond \$41bn for the first time ever". — APP

Over a dozens killed in van fire in Murree

"The victims are from the same family and were travelling from Multan to Murree," it said. The bodies and the injured were taken to the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences in Islamabad, the statement said

DNA

RAWALPINDI: over a dozen people were killed and 13 were injured when a fire broke out in a van after it fell into a nullah while taking a turn on the Islamabad-Murree Expressway near Khajut on Monday, the National Highways & Motorway Police (NHMP) said. The NHMP statement said the Hiace van had fallen in such a manner that it was not possible for the passengers to open its door. "The victims are from the same family and were travelling from Multan to Murree," it said. The bodies and the injured were taken to the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences in Islamabad, the statement said, adding that relief and rescue efforts were initiated after contingents of the motorway police and the district administration reached the site. Last month, a heavy rush was reported on the Murree Expressway as traffic from the Murree Road was diverted there due to reconstruction work.



ISLAMABAD: Chief Ministers of all provinces posing for a picture with the Prime Minister of Pakistan Shehbaz Sharif. — DNA

Pakistan urges restraint amid regional tensions

At UN, Ambassador Asim says renewed Middle East hostilities expose fragile regional security situation

DNA

NEW YORK: Pakistan has expressed deep concern over the escalating situation in the Middle East, warning that renewed conflict and rising tensions have exposed the fragility of the current security environment and the risk of further escalation. In a statement at the United Nations Security Council, Pakistan's Permanent Representative Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad said that the recent surge in violence in the Middle East is a stark reminder of the dangers associated with a tenuous ceasefire and the unbearable consequences it may lead to.

"The cycle of violence and instability must end for the good of regional and international peace, security and prosperity," he added. The ambassador said the breakdown of diplomacy and outbreak of hostilities have also impacted the consideration of the Iran nuclear issue, pushing the parties further apart on this complex file and disrupting the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) verification mandate. Reaffirming its position, Pakistan said all outstanding issues, including the Iran nuclear matter, should be resolved through peaceful means, diplomatic engagement, and sustained dialogue,

based on the rights and responsibilities of all parties. Ambassador Asim said that Pakistan, along with partners, has been actively engaged in diplomatic efforts to de-escalate tensions, secure a ceasefire, and bring parties back to negotiations. He said that Pakistan has maintained continuous engagement with regional and international partners, including Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey, Qatar, and China, to facilitate dialogue and promote stability.

"Pakistan's sincere efforts are meant to break the momentum of hostilities, save lives and give diplomacy a chance. The Pakistani envoy said that efforts are aimed at stopping hostilities, saving lives, and creating space for diplomacy, reflecting Pakistan's consistent commitment to regional stability and principled, dialogue-oriented diplomacy. Urging restraint as negotiations approach a critical stage, Ambassador Asim said all sides must exercise patience and "give peace a little more chance," stressing that continued diplomacy offers the best path forward for lasting peace. Asian stocks fell on Wednesday while oil prices surged as escalating tensions in the Middle East unsettled markets, dimming hopes for an end to the months-long war that has pushed commodities higher and stoked inflation worries.





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