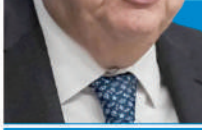


Islamabad POST

Friday, July 10, 2026

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 30



UN chief Pakistan role in defusing Middle East row

Detailed News On Page-08

KP chief minister assures to give best healthcare

Detailed News On Page-02



Pakistan greatly values ties with Britain

Detailed News On Page-08



Tensions escalate

Iran condemns US strikes, 14 dead in two days

Meanwhile, the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) warned that approximately 6,000 sailors remain trapped around the Strait of Hormuz as hostilities escalate

NEWS DESK

TEHRAN/STRATEGIC REGION: Iran's health ministry reported that 14 people were killed in two days of US strikes, which officials say targeted civilian infrastructure including railway bridges. The foreign ministry denounced the attacks as a "gross war crime," accusing the US of deliberately hitting transport routes leading to the holy city of Mashhad. The statement described the US administration as "evil and psychopathic," according to AFP. Meanwhile, the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) warned that approximately 6,000 sailors remain trapped around the Strait of Hormuz as hostilities escalate. IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez said, "These reckless attacks have again placed innocent seafarers in grave danger. No seafarer should have to risk their life simply for doing their job," NBC News reported. The situation underscores rising tensions in the Gulf, with both civilian and maritime safety at risk as the conflict intensifies.

Continued on Page 06

FM Araghchi talks to CDF Asim Munir

SAIFULLAH ANSARI

ISLAMABAD: In a telephone conversation with Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) General Asim Munir, Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi strongly condemned recent United States military strikes on Iranian territory, terming them a violation of the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). According to official sources, Araghchi conveyed Tehran's deep concern over what he described as "unprovoked aggression" that undermines regional stability and breaches commitments made under the bilateral framework. He stressed that the attacks not only threaten Iran's sovereignty but also erode trust in international agreements designed to prevent escalation. General Munir, during the exchange, reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to peace and stability in the region. He emphasized the importance of dialogue and adherence to established accords, including the Islamabad MoU, which was intended to foster cooperation and prevent unilateral military actions. The conversation comes amid heightened tensions following the US strikes, which have drawn criticism from several quarters. Observers note that Araghchi's direct outreach to Pakistan's military leadership underscores Iran's intent to rally regional support against what it views as violations of international norms.



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Croatia, H.E. Dr. Gordan Grlic Radman calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. - DNA

ADB says Pak economy grew at 3.7pc in 26

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) said Thursday that Pakistan's economy grew at 3.7 percent in fiscal year 2025-26, supported by better performance in the industrial and services sectors along with modest gains in agriculture. According to Asian Development Outlook (ADO) July 2026, the economic growth during FY2026, which ended on June 30, 2026, was driven by broad-based expansion across key sectors of the economy. The ADB, however, revised down its GDP growth forecast for FY2027 to 3.7 percent, citing higher energy costs and mounting pressure on workers' remittances that are expected to weigh on economic activity. The bank also revised Pakistan's inflation forecast upward to 7.2 percent.

Continued on Page 06

Radman meets PM also Pakistan, Croatia vow to further deepen relations

Croatia closed its embassy in Islamabad in mid-90; ever since there is no formal contact between the two countries

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said on Thursday that Pakistan and Croatia could utilise their geographic locations to unlock the "enormous potential" of their growth. His remarks came after he met with Croatia's Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Gordan Grlic Radman, who was in Islamabad on a one-day visit. Croatia closed its embassy in Islamabad in mid-90s and since then there is no direct diplomatic link between the two countries. Croatia has closed its embassy due to security and financial reasons. The Croatian PM met with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also.

Continued on Page 06

British High Commissioner meets Ishaq Dar

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Jane Marriott called on Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar. During the meeting, both sides discussed the state of Pakistan-UK relations and exchanged views on regional developments, including the recent US-Iran situation.

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

20 Pakistani crew members rescued

DNA

RAWALPINDI: In a swift and coordinated emergency response, Pakistan Navy in coordination with Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) has successfully rescued all 20 Pakistani crew members from a sinking cargo ship operating east of Ormara which was experiencing severe flooding. PNS HUMAN and required aerial assets were diverted to undertake rescue operation upon receipt of distress call to Joint Maritime Information Coordination Centre. All 20 crew members were safely recovered from the distressed vessel due to the professionalism displayed by the rescuers. All those rescued are being provided necessary medical attention.

Journalists killer gets death penalty

NAZIR SYAL

KARACHI: An additional district and sessions court on Thursday sentenced prime accused Afiz Zaman to death on two counts in connection with the 2019 murder of anchorperson Muneer Abbas and his friend. Police booked and arrested Afiz Zaman and his brother, Afiz Zaman, in connection with the killing of anchor Muneer Abbas and his friend Khazir Hayat in Karachi's Khaspooche-Bokhara area on July 9, 2019. The court also ordered the convict to pay Rs500,000 each to the legal heirs of both victims as compensation. The sessions court also issued perpetual arrest warrants for co-accused Afiz Zaman, noting that the trial court had already declared him a proclaimed offender.

Raisa new Principal Information Officer

Raisa Adil brings with her a distinguished career in public service. Prior to this appointment, she served as Director General of the External Publicity Wing, where she played a pivotal role in projecting Pakistan's image abroad

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has appointed BPS 20 officer of the Information Group, Madam Raisa Adil, as the new Principal Information Officer (PIO) and Executive Director General of the Press Information Department (PID). She succeeds Mobashir Iqbal, who has been posted as Director General Digital Media Communication. Meanwhile, Shalaz Ahmed, the incumbent head of Digital Media, has been assigned the role of Director General Press Information Department. Raisa Adil brings with her a distinguished career in public service. Prior to this appointment, she served as Director General of the External Publicity Wing, where she played a pivotal role in projecting

Pakistan's image abroad and strengthening communication channels with international stakeholders. Her extensive management experience and proven leadership skills are expected to transform the PID into a more dynamic and transparent institution. Officials believe that under her stewardship, the department will emphasise transparency, efficiency, and cordial relations with media stakeholders. Her appointment is seen as part of the government's broader strategy to modernise its information apparatus and adapt to the evolving media landscape. Outgoing PIO Mobashir Hassan, now tasked with leading Digital Media Communication, is credited with initiating reforms in the PID during his tenure. Shalaz Ahmed's new role as DG PID is also viewed as a strategic move to integrate digital and traditional communication platforms more effectively. The reshuffle reflects the government's commitment to strengthening its information management system, ensuring that

Continued on Page 06

PM Shehbaz Sharif reiterates resolve to eliminate terrorism

At high-level security moot in Quetta, premier says terrorists using Afghan soil to launch attacks in Pakistan

DNA

QUETTA: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday reaffirmed the resolve of the civil and military leadership to eliminate India-backed terrorism in Balochistan. The premier made the remarks while chairing a meeting of the Provincial Apex Committee on the National Action Plan in Quetta. The PM expressed concern over the recent terrorist attacks in the province, saying that "very serious incidents" took place in the past four days. At least 54 India-backed terrorists were killed, while 42, including troops and civilians, embraced martyrdom while defending the motherland during three major terrorist incidents in Balochistan over the past four days. Lamenting the sacrifices of the armed forces and the civilians, the premier said: "We have to thwart the nefarious designs of Fitna al-Khwarezmi so that the entire nation stands shoulder to shoulder with the armed forces. This war against terrorism will continue until the last terrorist in Pakistan is eliminated," the premier added. Referring to India, the prime minister said

Pakistan's "eastern neighbour" was behind the terrorist attacks, adding that Afghan soil was being used to launch attacks in Pakistan. The prime minister said that the "enemy was unable to digest Pakistan's diplomatic achievements." The prime minister reaffirmed that all available resources will be utilised to eradicate the scourge of terrorism and put the country on the path of sustainable development and prosperity. Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and Chief of the Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir, Balochistan Governor Jaffer Khan Mandokhal, Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Bugti, and heads of law enforcement agencies were among the attendees of the high-level meeting. The development came a day after Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Director General Lt Gen Ahmed Shari Chandhry had expressed the armed forces' resolve to hunt down "every terrorist, facilitator" after recent wave of Balochistan attacks. Addressing a press conference, Lt Gen Chandhry had said a total of 42, including 38 security personnel, embraced martyrdom while defending

Continued on Page 06

ChikTok
BY MONAL GROUP

WHERE EVERY BITE GOES VIRAL

NOW OPEN IN F-11 & I-8 MARKAZ

MoU signed to protect 3.3m women, kids from malnutrition

Today's signing of BNP 3.0 is not merely the continuation of a programme, it is a renewed national commitment to giving every child a healthier start in life and every mother the opportunity to build a better future for her family

ISLAMABAD: The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), in collaboration with United Nations agencies has extended the Benazir Nashonuma Programme for another three years to protect an additional 3.3 million children and women from malnutrition across Pakistan. The three-year extension was jointly announced by BISP, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO), reaffirming their commitment to improving maternal and child nutrition and reducing malnutrition among vulnerable communities across the country. Integrated into BISP, the Benazir Nashonuma Programme delivers nutrition and health services to the most vulnerable, pregnant and lactating women and children under the age of two through a nationwide network of 578 facilitation centres and 224 nutrition stabilization centres. Since its launch in 2010, the programme has reached 4.7 million people. With this extension, its total reach is expected to increase to eight million people.

"The Benazir Nashonuma Programme is a powerful demonstration that when social protection is combined with nutrition, healthcare and strong partnerships, we can transform the lives of mothers and children," said Senator Rubina Khalid chairperson BISP. "The Benazir Nashonuma carries forward the vision of Shaukat Mohd Hanif Benazir Bhutto, who dreamt of a Pakistan where no mother or child would be left behind because of poverty. I feel proud to play a role in turning that vision into reality." Today's signing of

BNP 3.0 is not merely the continuation of a programme, it is a renewed national commitment to giving every child a healthier start in life and every mother the opportunity to build a better future for her family. Together with our development partners, we will continue to expand this impact so that no deserving woman or child is left behind," she added. The partnership aimed to consolidate a science-based initiative that has served some of the strongest results ever documented globally for a nutrition programme. Children enrolled in the programme were 22 percent less likely to be stunted at 6 months of age. In Pakistan, four in every ten children under five are stunted as a result of chronic malnutrition, equivalent to 40 million children, while stunting stands at 17.7 percent, affecting 5.5 million children and contributing to an estimated annual economic loss of USD 7 billion. The Benazir Nashonuma Programme addresses these challenges by embedding nutrition services within Pakistan's national social protection system. Evidence generated also found improved maternal nutrition and child growth, reduced rates of anaemia, diarrhoea, healthcare pregnancy weight gain, and improved birth outcomes. "The results of the Benazir Nashonuma Programme are extremely promising for the prevention of child malnutrition," said Anita Hensh, WFP Representative and Country Director in Pakistan. "Building on this success, the three-year extension will continue to strengthen nutrition and health services, protect the most vulnerable women and children with the nutrition services they need, and consolidating the posi-

tive results we have seen so far." "We commend the Government of Pakistan for its strong leadership and continued commitment to advancing nutrition-responsive social protection through the Benazir Nashonuma Programme," said Sharmada Rastogi, UNICEF Deputy Representative in Pakistan. "Together with WFP and WHO, UNICEF is proud to support the Government in improving nutrition outcomes for the most vulnerable mothers, adolescent girls and children. Building on this strong partnership, we will continue working together to strengthen systems, expand equitable access to and demand for high-quality nutrition interventions, and empower communities with essential care practices. Investing in nutrition is ultimately an investment in Pakistan's future, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to survive, grow and thrive." "The positive results achieved by the Benazir Nashonuma Programme prove the power of integrated social protection and science-based approaches across health, nutrition, social protection, WASH, food systems, and education," said WHO Representative in Pakistan Dr. Dayana Wilson. "We stand ready to work with Pakistan and partners to use science to protect every child and every mother regardless of economic and social status, no matter where they live or the way they live." Through this renewed partnership, the Government of Pakistan, BISP, UNICEF, WFP, and WHO will continue working together to strengthen nutrition and health services, protect the most vulnerable women and children, and build a healthier, more resilient future for Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan, Justice Yahya Afridi meeting with Sheikh Dr. Muhammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Hasa, Secretary General of the Muslim World League (MWL) at the Supreme Court of Pakistan.

Over 70 youth complete digital marketing workshop

PESHAWAR: More than 70 youngsters, including female students, completed a two-day digital marketing workshop held at the Ilmsa University Program Campus, in the District administration of Peshawar. The workshop was organized by District Youth Affairs Department and the Ilmsa University Program Campus, in the District administration of Peshawar. The workshop was organized by District Youth Affairs Department and the Ilmsa University Program Campus, in the District administration of Peshawar. The workshop was organized by District Youth Affairs Department and the Ilmsa University Program Campus, in the District administration of Peshawar.

KP CM for DHQ hospitals upgradation

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Mohammad Sahid Khan Afridi on Thursday chaired a meeting to review progress on rehabilitation and upgradation of District Headquarters (DHQ) Hospitals of the province. The CM directed relevant authorities to complete these projects by the end of current financial year and said that no further delay in the public welfare initiative would be tolerated. During the meeting, officials informed the meeting that the rehabilitation and upgradation of DHQ hospitals is already being approved for rehabilitation and upgradation of 32 DHQ hospitals throughout KP. The meeting was further informed that the procurement of modern medical equipment worth Rs2.55 billion has been completed and the equipment has already been supplied to the respective hospitals. Officials also stated that the infrastructure designs for the hospitals have been approved while civil works are expected to commence shortly. Directing the concerned departments to accelerate implementation, CM instructed that hospitals where work is near completion should be prioritized and made operational for public use as soon as possible. He also directed officials to immediately identify and remove obstacles hindering the project's progress, stressing that any unnecessary delays would not be accepted under any circumstances. CM announced that the project's progress would be reviewed again after three months, reiterating that rehabilitation and upgradation of DHQ hospitals, establishment of proposed health City remains one of the provincial government's top priorities. —APP

already been approved for rehabilitation and upgradation of 32 DHQ hospitals throughout KP. The meeting was further informed that the procurement of modern medical equipment worth Rs2.55 billion has been completed and the equipment has already been supplied to the respective hospitals. Officials also stated that the infrastructure designs for the hospitals have been approved while civil works are expected to commence shortly. Directing the concerned departments to accelerate implementation, CM instructed that hospitals where work is near completion should be prioritized and made operational for public use as soon as possible. He also directed officials to immediately identify and remove obstacles hindering the project's progress, stressing that any unnecessary delays would not be accepted under any circumstances. CM announced that the project's progress would be reviewed again after three months, reiterating that rehabilitation and upgradation of DHQ hospitals, establishment of proposed health City remains one of the provincial government's top priorities. —APP

already been approved for rehabilitation and upgradation of 32 DHQ hospitals throughout KP. The meeting was further informed that the procurement of modern medical equipment worth Rs2.55 billion has been completed and the equipment has already been supplied to the respective hospitals. Officials also stated that the infrastructure designs for the hospitals have been approved while civil works are expected to commence shortly. Directing the concerned departments to accelerate implementation, CM instructed that hospitals where work is near completion should be prioritized and made operational for public use as soon as possible. He also directed officials to immediately identify and remove obstacles hindering the project's progress, stressing that any unnecessary delays would not be accepted under any circumstances. CM announced that the project's progress would be reviewed again after three months, reiterating that rehabilitation and upgradation of DHQ hospitals, establishment of proposed health City remains one of the provincial government's top priorities. —APP

7 passengers injured due to driver's negligence

BAHAWALPUR: At least seven passengers suffered injuries after their coach skidded off road and overturned in an agriculture field due to negligence of the driver in Pakki Bal area of Bahawalpur East. According to the rescue staff, a non-AC passenger bus was traveling from Multan to its destination when the driver lost control of the vehicle after drinking a cold beverage while driving. The bus overturned, crossed the divider, and veered onto the opposite side of the road before coming to rest in near by fields," they said. —APP

Unity essential for lasting peace in Pakistan: Ashrafi

PESHAWAR: Chairman of the Pakistan Ulama Council, Hafiz Umar Ashrafi, on Thursday stressed the need for national unity and adherence to the Constitution to bring about Pakistan's peace and stability. He said that the international community was now returning to Islam as a "land of peace" and that the country's future lies in the hands of its citizens. He also emphasized the importance of national unity and adherence to the Constitution to bring about Pakistan's peace and stability. He said that the international community was now returning to Islam as a "land of peace" and that the country's future lies in the hands of its citizens. He also emphasized the importance of national unity and adherence to the Constitution to bring about Pakistan's peace and stability.

ing that the country had achieved significant progress. Referring to the recent conflict with India, he said Islam did not permit the killing of innocent people and denounced elements attempting to undermine Pakistan's security and economic stability. He reiterated the support of religious scholars for state institutions and called on the nation to stand united for the country's peace, security and development. Speaking on the occasion, Maulana Tayyab Qureshi said that the country's future lies in the hands of its citizens. He also emphasized the importance of national unity and adherence to the Constitution to bring about Pakistan's peace and stability. He said that the international community was now returning to Islam as a "land of peace" and that the country's future lies in the hands of its citizens. He also emphasized the importance of national unity and adherence to the Constitution to bring about Pakistan's peace and stability.

not interfere with that of others." Condemning terrorism and violence, he said Islam did not permit the killing of innocent people and denounced elements attempting to undermine Pakistan's security and economic stability. He reiterated the support of religious scholars for state institutions and called on the nation to stand united for the country's peace, security and development. Speaking on the occasion, Maulana Tayyab Qureshi said that the country's future lies in the hands of its citizens. He also emphasized the importance of national unity and adherence to the Constitution to bring about Pakistan's peace and stability. He said that the international community was now returning to Islam as a "land of peace" and that the country's future lies in the hands of its citizens. He also emphasized the importance of national unity and adherence to the Constitution to bring about Pakistan's peace and stability.

Steps ordered to ensure water supply across Cholistan

BAHAWALPUR: Managing Director (MD) Cholistan Development Authority (CDA) Shahid Hassan Kalayani has directed officials to implement corrective measures to mitigate the impact of the ongoing heatwave and ensure uninterrupted availability of drinking water throughout the Cholistan region. Chairing an emergency meeting at his office to review the heatwave situation, the MD stated that all available resources must be utilized to maintain a continuous supply of potable water and keep water supply lines operational around the clock in all areas of Cholistan. He instructed officials to ensure clean drinking water for residents and their livestock, adding that water tankers should be dispatched immediately to areas requiring additional supplies. He warned that strict action would be taken against officials if any locality experienced a disruption in water supply, stressing that water shortages would not be tolerated under any circumstances. He noted that protecting both human lives and livestock from the adverse effects of the extreme heat remains the authority's highest priority. The Managing Director also directed the launch of a public awareness campaign to educate residents about heatwave safety precautions. He instructed officials to display awareness banners across the region to help inform local communities about preventive measures. "During the meeting, it was decided that the CDA's engineering and field revenue teams would conduct continuous visits to remote areas of Cholistan to monitor ground conditions closely. Officials were instructed to maintain constant surveillance of the water supply network to ensure uninterrupted service and to respond promptly in any emergency situation. To further strengthen the emergency response, the Managing Director ordered the immediate establishment of a dedicated heatwave control room to coordinate relief efforts and improve communication for the prompt resolution of public complaints. He reiterated that the Cholistan Development Authority would remain on high alert throughout the heatwave and continue taking all necessary measures to safeguard the well-being of residents and their livestock while ensuring the uninterrupted supply of safe drinking water across the desert region. —DNA

China Window crosses another milestone

According to the management, it would not be wrong to say that China Window has also become an attractive recreational center for the citizens of Peshawar

PESHAWAR: The Chinese Cultural and Information Center, China Window, established in the provincial capital, has achieved another important milestone during the first six months of this year, more than 50,000 people visited China Window, bringing the total number of visitors to this state-of-the-art Chinese cultural center to 250,000. According to the management of China Window, extensive social media coverage has played a key role in attracting a large number of people to the center. China Window is playing an important role in further strengthening Pakistan-China friendship and has especially contributed to enhancing people-to-people contacts between the two countries.

Talking to the media, China Window Director, Nur Parvin said that during the current year, more than seven foreign delegations also visited China Window. These included delegations from Turkey, China, Germany, the Netherlands, Iran, Canada and other countries. In addition, a large number of students from schools, colleges and universities have also visited the center. She said that it was the desire of government schools should also visit the center. However, due to transport issues, many of them were currently unable to come. She expressed confidence that efforts would be made to bring them to China Window in the near future. China Window has now

become a hub of academic, literary, social and cultural activities. All possible facilities for organizing events are provided free of cost so that more and more people may visit the center and get to know about Pakistan's rich and diverse culture. China Window, a neighbouring country, China. So far, eight provincial governors, seven chief ministers, federal and provincial ministers, members of the Senate, National Assembly and provincial assemblies, as well as a large number of people from all walks of life, have visited China Window. According to the management, it would not be wrong to say that China Window has also become an attractive recreational center for the citizens of Peshawar. —APP

MILITARY LANDS & CANTONMENTS DEPT
RAWALPINDI CANTONMENT BOARD
Tele:051-9274401-4 Facsimile No.051-9274407

FCPS / MCPS TRAINING IN SURGERY, MEDICINE & PEDIATRICS AT CANTONMENT GENERAL HOSPITAL, RAWALPINDI

Applications are invited for FCPS / MCPS training in Surgery, Medicine and Pediatrics Department at Cantonment General Hospital, Rawalpindi for the period of 04 years for FCPS and 02 years for MCPS. Criteria for FCPS/MCPS training are given below:

| Discipline | Vacancies | Qualifications | Annual Leaves |
|-------------------|-----------|--|-----------------------------------|
| FCPS (Surgery) | 2 | MBBS or Equivalent FCPS Part-1 Obs & Gynae 01 Year House Job Valid PMC(PM&D) Registration | 10 Days Leave per year admissible |
| | | FCPS (Medicine) | |
| MCPS (Pediatrics) | 1 | MBBS or Equivalent 01 Year House Job Valid PMC(PM&D) Registration | 10 Days Leave per year admissible |

- Cantonment General Hospital, Rawalpindi is recognized by College of Physicians & Surgeons of Pakistan (CPS) for training leading to FCPS in Gynae, Medicine, Surgery Department & MCPS in the discipline of Pediatrics.
- Candidates employed in Government / Semi-Government / Autonomous Bodies must apply through proper channel.
- Only short-listed candidates will be called for test / interview. They will bring original certificates / testimonials at the time of interview.
- Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB) reserves the rights to reject any or all applications at any time, at any stage, without assigning any reason.
- One candidate can apply only for one discipline.
- Applications can be submitted at careers.mlc.gov.pk by 25 July 2026

CANTONMENT EXECUTIVE OFFICER
RAWALPINDI CANT
PID (I) No.262/26

National Days and Armed Forces Days

JULY

July 01/Japan Self Defence Day

July 01/Singapore Armed Forces Day

July 01 / Canada National Day

July 01/Somalia Independence Day

July 04/USA Independence Day

July 05/Algeria Independence Day

July 09/Argentine Independence Day

July 09/Mongolia Revolution Day

July 14/France National Day

July 15/Brunei Sultan's Birthday

July 21/Belgium National Day

July 20/TRNC Independence Day

July 23/Egypt National Day

July 26/Cuba National Day

July 26/Liberia National Day

July 30/Morocco National Day

Rescue (Police).....15

Bomb Disposal.....15

Fire Services Rawalpindi/

Islamabad.....1122 & 16

Emergency Ambulance 1122

& Rescue Services 4451122

Motorway Police.....9296044

Motorway Police 92760120

Women Police Stations

Islamabad.....9222599

Rawalpindi.....92760120

Enquiry

Ethi Ambulance.....115

PIA Flight Info.....114

PIA Cargo.....9248079

Railway Enquiry.....117

Railway Exchange 9270834

WASA Rawalpindi 3555489

CAA.....9281092

Hospitals

CMH.....5611111

MIL.....561116

Cost Hospital.....9270907.11

DIQ.....5556314

RCH.....9293917

Holy Family.....9291322.7

PIMS.....9261170.79

Polyclinic.....9218906.49

Shifa International 4693666

Departments

CDA.....9221304.43

CDA.....9208301.04

Met Office.....9250360.6

RD.....5555894

TMA.....5770886

Customs Board 9270151.3

Islamabad Metropolitan

Corporation.....9209224

Pastor Town.....9209224

Rawal Town.....5773843

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

ACT initiative to equip young people with AI skills: Rana

Addressing the participants, Rana Mashhood said the ACT-AI initiative reflects the Government's continued commitment to preparing Pakistani youth for opportunities in the rapidly evolving digital economy. He further shared that work is underway to develop Pakistan's first uniform AI curriculum and emphasized that future cohorts would continue to incorporate the latest advancements in Artificial Intelligence

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan noted that ACT-AI initiative, launched under the vision of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, is being implemented through collaboration between the PMYP, HEC, NAVTTC, and ACT-AI to equip young people with state-of-the-art AI skills. He made these remarks during a visit to the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Smart Classroom, where he was virtually interacting with students enrolled in the ACT-AI Online Short Course on Artificial Intelligence (AI) Skills. The visit was followed by a meeting with HEC officials to review the programme's progress and discuss strategies for expanding AI education and strengthening industry linkages for Pakistani youth. Representing HEC were Dr. Noor Khan, Member Quality Assurance, Dr. Shafiq-e-Rohman, Member Strategic Planning, and IT and Curriculum Division officials involved in implementing the ACT-AI initiative. During the virtual interaction, students from Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) across Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Gilgit-Baltistan shared their experiences, appreciating the programme's quality instruction, practical curriculum, and reference to emerging industry demands. They also highlighted areas for improvement, to which Chairman PMYP assured them that their feedback would be incorporated into future phases of the initiative. Addressing the participants, Rana Mashhood said the ACT-AI initiative reflects the Government's continued commitment to preparing Pakistani youth for opportunities in the rapidly evolving digital economy. He further shared that work is underway to develop Pakistan's first uniform AI curriculum and emphasized that future cohorts would continue to incor-



porate the latest advancements in Artificial Intelligence. The subsequent meeting focused on the programme's next phase and strategies to build a stronger AI talent pipeline. Participants discussed expanding collaboration with key national organizations, including Inqate, the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC), the National Incubation Centre (NIC), the Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB), the Pakistan Software Houses Association (PSHHA), and university incubation centres. These partnerships

aim to provide students with internships, mentoring, entrepreneurship support, industry exposure, and employment opportunities. The success was informed that the programme's first cohort has yielded encouraging results, with several alumni now contributing to the initiative as instructors and mentors. Participants agreed to continue the programme through structured two-month cohorts, while follow-up coordination meetings with partner organizations will further strengthen implementation and industry engagement. HEC

officials also briefed the meeting on the Commission's broader initiatives to enhance computing education and graduate employability. These include the National Skill Competency Test (NSCT), which benchmarks the competencies of final-year computing students against industry requirements, as well as HEC's recent decision to introduce a mandatory Artificial Intelligence course across undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes to equip students from all disciplines with foundational AI knowledge.

SP CTD Khalid inspects checkpoints

ISLAMABAD: Senior Superintendent (SP) Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Khalid Mehmood Azam visited various security checkpoints to review security arrangements and inspect the performance of police personnel deployed on duty. An official told APP on Thursday that the SP Khalid inspected security measures at the checkpoints and reviewed the checking mechanism to ensure effective monitoring of suspicious movements. Khalid directed the officers to ensure thorough checking of suspicious vehicles and motorcycles, while maintaining a high level of vigilance to prevent any untoward incident. SP Khalid also instructed police personnel to deal with citizens courteously and professionally while performing their duties and to facilitate the public without compromising security. He emphasized that effective checking, alertness, and public-friendly policing were essential for maintaining peace and strengthening security across the federal capital, the official added.—APP

AD Safe City reviews AI-powered surveillance

ISLAMABAD: Assistant Director Safe City Abbas Mehdi on Thursday reviewed the performance of AI-enabled surveillance cameras and Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras being used across the federal capital. He directed the Police Operations Hall to ensure effective monitoring for maintaining smooth traffic flow, identifying traffic violators, tracking criminal elements, shifting professional beggars to police stations and responding promptly to criminal incidents. Abbas Mehdi also instructed the Operations Hall to charge to keep senior police officers regularly informed about the law and order situation across the city and ensure prompt assistance to citizens contacting the Pucar15 emergency helpline. He further emphasized the effective use of AI-enabled tracker systems installed in police patrol vehicles to strengthen 24/7 policing, improve patrol efficiency and ensure the protection of citizens' lives and property throughout the federal capital. Safe City would continue to utilize modern technology and intelligent policing solutions to enhance operational effectiveness and deliver timely public services.—APP

Maritime task force reforms boost customs efficiency

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) on Thursday said sweeping reforms initiated under the Prime Minister's Maritime Task Force have significantly enhanced customs efficiency, increased revenue collection, curbed smuggling and improved trade facilitation. It said a series of digital and infrastructural interventions were also underway to transform Pakistan into a regional maritime and logistics hub. Addressing a joint news conference along with Chairman of the Prime Minister's Maritime Task Force Iftikhar Raza and Secretary Maritime Affairs Nadeem Malibab, FBR Member Customs Syed Shaukel Shah said the task force had identified key structural bottlenecks in the maritime sector and facilitated their swift resolution through coordinated implementation. He said one of the most successful reforms was the introduction of the faceless customs assessment system, which eliminated direct interaction between customs officials and importers, improved transparency and substantially enhanced compliance. "The average revenue per Goods Declaration (GD) has increased from Rs 5.8 million to approximately Rs 7.7 million, reflecting a 15 per cent improvement," Shah said, adding that import-related tax collection had grown by 14 per cent, of which eight percentage points resulted from improved enforcement and compliance while six percentage points were driven by higher import volumes. Highlighting the impact on port efficiency,

he said customs clearance time had been reduced from 53 hours to only 18 hours since the task force was established. "Our next target is to bring customs dwell time down to 12 hours over the next one to two years, placing Pakistan below international benchmarks," he said. The FBR member said the task force had also paved the way for Pakistan's entry into the ship-banking business by facilitating the formulation and notification of comprehensive banking regulations. He said international operators were already planning land supply operations at Karachi and Gwadar ports, which would attract larger vessels and enhance maritime commercial activity. He added that dredging work had commenced at both major ports to enable the handling of bigger ships, a critical step towards positioning Pakistan as a regional transshipment and logistics hub. Shah said customs and sales taxes on vessels and shipbuilding had been abolished, removing a major obstacle to investment in Pakistan's maritime industry. He said the task force had also helped streamline cargo handling at Azadi Dry Port, introduced faceless assessment there, and curbed misuse of cargo clearance procedures. The FBR member said work was progressing on Digital Enforcement Stations under the FBR transformation programme to facilitate legitimate trade while using risk-based targeting to intercept smuggled and tax-evaded goods without disrupting lawful commerce. He said enforcement measures had produced encouraging results, with

legal imports of tyres increasing by 42 per cent, fabrics by 41 per cent, toiletries by 75 per cent and electronics by 105 per cent, reflecting a significant reduction in illicit trade. "The success against type smuggling has restored investor confidence, making local investment in tyre manufacturing commercially viable," he observed. Shah said freight forwarding agents were being tested under an automated registration regime through the Pakistan Single Window, while the licensing examination for customs agents had been outsourced to the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Karachi, to ensure transparency and professional standards. He said a new point-based accountability system had also been introduced for customs agents to improve declaration quality. Among other reforms, Shah said the FBR planned to expand advance filing of Goods Declarations, allowing importers to complete customs formalities before cargo arrived in Pakistan, thereby reducing congestion and accelerating cargo clearance. He said the current uptake of advance declarations had reached around eight per cent and the target was to raise it beyond 50 per cent during the current fiscal year. The FBR member said customs operations at ports were also being expanded towards 24-hour working through fresh recruitment to ensure uninterrupted cargo clearance. He said the Pakistan Single Window-based Port Community System was being rolled out to digitally integrate customs, regulators, ports, terminal operators, banks and logistics providers, enabling traders to complete documentation.—APP

Public warn users to stay vigilant

ISLAMABAD: Cybersecurity experts Thursday cautioned the public to remain aware and vigilant against sharing high-resolution images online, warning that Artificial Intelligence (AI) could be exploited by criminals to reconstruct fingerprints and carry out identity-related fraud. Talking to a private news channel, cybersecurity expert Abdul Qadir highlighted growing digital privacy risks and urged people to exercise caution while sharing photos on social media platforms. He warned users against posting high-resolution images showing gestures such as thumbs-up and victory signs, as such images may expose sensitive biometric details. Abdul Qadir explained that advancements in Artificial Intelligence have increased the ability of cybercriminals to analyse publicly available images and potentially reconstruct fingerprint patterns from clear photographs, adding that fingerprints are unique biometric identifiers and should be protected like passwords. The cybersecurity expert advised social media users to avoid sharing close-up images of their fingers, especially those captured with high-quality cameras, as criminals may misuse such information for identity-related fraud and other cybercrimes. He further encouraged the public to adopt responsible online habits, including reviewing privacy settings, limiting the amount of personal information shared publicly and being mindful of the potential risks associated with digital content. Abdul Qadir said that awareness and caution are key to reducing cyber threats in an increasingly digital environment. He urged users to think carefully before uploading personal images online and to remain updated about emerging cybersecurity risks. He emphasized that while social media platforms provide opportunities for communication and connection, users must also take necessary precautions to protect their personal data and digital identities. The expert further encouraged social media users to review their privacy settings, limit the information they share publicly, and remain aware of the risks associated with posting personal images online.—DNA

Webinar boosts Pak-Russia coop in various sectors

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Regional Studies (IRS), Islamabad, in collaboration with the University of World Civilizations (UWCW), Moscow, on Thursday convened the second event in the Pakistan-Russia Webinar Series, titled "Pakistan-Russia Strengthening Trade, Education & Energy Collaboration." The webinar brought together senior policymakers, diplomats, business leaders and academics from both countries to examine practical opportunities for expanding bilateral engagement in trade, industrial development, energy, education and regional connectivity. Building upon the success of the first webinar in the series in June 2026, the second dialogue advanced discussions from geopolitical perspectives toward concrete geoeconomic initiatives. Participants emphasized that sustained interaction between governments, academic institutions, businesses and policy communities is essential to unlocking the considerable potential of Pakistan-Russia relations in an evolving Eurasian landscape. Opening the webinar, Ambassador Juhar Saleem, President of the Institute of Regional Studies, observed that Pakistan and Russia are entering a new phase of bilateral engagement in which economic cooperation, institutional partnerships and people-to-people exchanges can complement and strengthen expanding diplomatic relations. He stressed that policy dialogue must increasingly be accompanied by practical initiatives capable of generating long-term economic and strategic benefits for both countries.—APP

Pakistan's largest circulated diplomatic magazine



For over two decades, **CENTRELINE HAS BEEN** the trusted source of news and analysis on diplomacy, international relations and global developments from Pakistan and world.

- DIPLOMATIC COVERAGE**
In-depth reporting on global affairs, foreign policy and diplomatic engagements.
- EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS**
Conversations with diplomats, decision-makers and thought leaders.
- ANALYSIS & INSIGHTS**
Expert views and analytical pieces on key international issues.
- PREMIUM QUALITY**
A high-quality publication with credible, balanced and unbiased content.

Your window to Pakistan, the region and the world.

Subscribe. Read. Stay Informed.

centrelinemag@gmail.com

CentreLineInstar

www.centrelinemag.com.pk

Briefs Government begins land demarcation

ISLAMABAD: The Balochistan government has formally begun demarcating land for a low-cost housing scheme intended for low-income fishermen in Gwadar. The exercise began on July 8 under the supervision of Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) Zahoor Ahmad Baloch, following instructions from Gwadar Development Authority Director General Moin ul Rehman Khan. In April, the provincial government allocated more than 200 acres of land for the project, with an estimated cost of \$2.24 billion. The site is near the intersection of Jhiani and Awaran avenues and the Gwadar Sports Complex, according to a Gwadar Pro's report on Thursday. The scheme is expected to include 2,970 residential plots, each measuring 200 square yards, to be allocated to eligible fishermen. A joint team comprising officials from the Gwadar Development Authority, the district administration and police has begun surveying the site and installing boundary markers. Revenue officials, surveyors, enforcement personnel and police officers took part in the operation. Officials also inspected alleged encroachments and unauthorized occupation of government land during the exercise. Those found occupying the land were asked to vacate it within a specified period, officials said, adding that legal action could follow in cases of non-compliance. The Gwadar Development Authority said the demarcation forms part of efforts to implement the city's master plan and protect public land.—APP

PCTVI, varsity of Gwadar and BRSP sign MoU

ISLAMABAD: The Pak-China Technical and Vocational Institute (PCTVI), the University of Gwadar and the Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP) signed a memorandum of understanding to provide market-oriented technical and vocational training for young people in Gwadar district. The signing ceremony was held at the BRSP head office in Quetta, according to Gwadar Pro on Thursday. Under the agreement, 400 young men and women from Gwadar will receive demand-driven, skills-based training in a range of trades through the Government of Balochistan's Resilience, Integration and Socio-Economic Empowerment (RISE) Programme. BRSP will fully fund the training. The initiative aims to help participants acquire technical skills aligned with local labour-market needs and improve their employment prospects, according to officials. The three institutions said the partnership would support the development of a skilled workforce in Gwadar and contribute to local economic development.—APP

2,108 Kashmiris lost lives

ISLAMABAD: Indian troops have martyred 2,108 Kashmiris, including 46 women, in a relentless campaign since the extrajudicial killing of popular youth leader Burhan Muzaffar Wani in 2016 till date in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir. According to a report released by the Research Section of Kashmir Media Service, those martyred Kashmiris, 204 were killed in face encounters or in custody during the period. The report stated that at least 30,218 people have sustained injuries in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) due to the use of force, including the firing of bullets, pellets, and teargas shells on demonstrators and mourners by Indian military, paramilitary and police personnel. According to the report, at least 8,500 people were injured by pellet guns, including at least 115 individuals who lost their eyesight completely. It further stated that at least 1,800 Kashmiris, mostly youth, children, girls, and women, suffered partial loss of eyesight due to pellet injuries.—APP

Blood donation at Indonesian embassy involves more youth

The humanitarian cooperation between the Embassy of Indonesia continues with the Emergency Training on 9-10 July 2026, for ASEAN family members

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Islamabad, in collaboration with the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), organised the Blood Donation Drive in conjunction with 81st Anniversary of Indonesia's Independence Day Celebration next month and the Embassy's current Chairperson of ASEAN Committee in Islamabad (ACI) (8/7). The annual event which themed, "Share Blood, Share Hope" ASEAN-Pakistan Zindagidagi, brought together diplomats from ASEAN member states, Indonesian diaspora, Pakistani counterparts, as well as tens of Indonesian and Pakistani students. Thai Ambassador, Rongrudi Virabutr and Brunei High Commissioner Pengiran Haji Kamal Basah bin Pengiran Haji Ahmad were among the attendees. The event was officially inaugurated by the Indonesian Ambassador, Chandca W. Sukojo, who graced the occasion accompanied by his spouse, Tamara Sukojo. Representing PRCS, Dr. Dani Hissan emphasized the importance of Blood Donation Drive continued by the Emergency Training, as follow up of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Humanitarian Cooperation



signed by the Indonesian Ambassador and Chairperson of PRCS last year. In his opening remarks, Ambassador Chandca W. Sukojo called to mark the momentous days with action. "Indeed, voluntary blood donation is simple, yet profound act of kindness. It gives others a second chance at life," he said. The Ambassador further viewed that the blood donation activity could build more compassionate community through blood donation. "I feel more connected with the Indonesian colleagues,



since I frequently participate in discussions held at the Indonesian Center, National Library of Pakistan (NLP), expressed Shikr Malik, Pakistani student of Political Science at the International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI). "For me, taking part in blood donation is a reflection of gratitude to Allah," explained Iham Amin, Indonesian student at IIUI who has just received congratulatory messages from the Indonesian Ambassador along with his graduating fellows

Pakistan gains access to China's maize market

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has secured access to China's maize market, opening a potential new outlet for one of the country's major cereal crops after Chinese customs published the quarantine rules governing the trade. China's customs administration set out the requirements in an announcement, allowing imports of Pakistani maize with immediate effect. The measure accords a phytosanitary protocol agreed between the two sides under Pakistan's Ministry of National Food Security and Research, according to a report carried by Gwadar Pro on Thursday. Pakistani trade officials have cast China as a significant opportunity for the country's growers and exporters, pointing to Chinese maize imports of around 25 million tonnes — worth some \$9 billion in 2023 — driven by a large livestock and feed industry. Maize is Pakistan's third-largest cereal crop after wheat and rice, and China would add to existing buyers such as Vietnam. Under the rules, eligible maize must be grown in Pakistan and used only for processing, not planting. Growing areas across the country qualify. Shipments will not start at once. Pakistani growing, processing and storage facilities must first be registered with Chinese customs, which will publish a list of approved firms. The rules name 16 pests that consignments must be free of, including khapra beetle, and require fumigation where live insects are found. Cargoes lacking valid certificates, from unregistered firms, or carrying soil or unapproved genetically modified content will be returned or destroyed. The decision is the latest in a run of farm market-access steps between the two countries over the past year, from dried fruit and nuts to medicinal plants, as they mark 75 years of diplomatic ties and deepen agricultural cooperation under a maturing economic partnership.—DNA

NAHE HEC concludes national outreach programme

ISLAMABAD/PESHAWAR: The National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE), Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan, has successfully concluded the National Outreach Programme (NOP) for University Management Staff at the University of Peshawar. The programme, organised by the Centre for Human Resource Career Development (CHRCDD), University of Peshawar, reaffirms HEC's commitment to strengthening institutional leadership and administrative excellence across Pakistan's higher education sector. The programme brought together university management staff to enhance their competencies in university governance, leadership, administration, and institutional effectiveness. Managing Director NAHE Dr. Noor Anna Malik acted as the chief guest. She distributed certificates among the participants in recognition of their successful completion of the programme and commended their commitment to continuous professional development. In her remarks, Dr. Malik reiterated HEC's resolve to expand high-quality professional development opportunities for university leadership and management across the country through NAHE's national outreach initiatives. The ceremony was also attended by Meritocracy Professor Dr. Johar Ali, Vice-Chancellor, University of Peshawar, as the Guest of Honour. He congratulated the participants on completing the programme and encouraged them to apply the knowledge and skills acquired during the training. Director CHRCDD Dr. Muhammad Naeem Butt acknowledged the collaboration and support in advancing professional development initiatives.

Seafood exports hit record \$568m

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Awar Chaudhry on Thursday said Pakistan's exports of fish and fish preparations reached a record US\$568 million during fiscal year 2025-26. In a statement, the minister said the milestone reflected the government's commitment to strengthening the blue economy, expanding seafood exports and ensuring compliance with international food safety and quality standards. He said frozen fish remained the leading export commodity with earnings of US\$105.09m, followed by frozen squid and cuttlefish (US\$103.71m), fish meal (US\$83.12m), shrimp (US\$82.85m), frozen fish skin (US\$65.62m), mackerels (US\$22.67m), flat fish (US\$17.24m), octopus

AIOU holds capacity-building workshop

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) organized a three-day capacity-building workshop on "Assessment of Special Needs" in collaboration with EPIC Trainings. The concluding ceremony was held yesterday and was presided over by Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood. The workshop was designed to enhance participants' knowledge and practical skills in the timely and accurate assessment of children with special needs. It also focused on strengthening the professional competencies of teachers and practitioners by introducing modern assessment approaches and evidence-based practices in special education. A total of 43 teachers, specialists and professionals from Islamabad and Rawalpindi participated in the training programme. Participants represented the Autism Resource Centre, Directorate of Special Education Punjab, Directorate General of Special Education Islamabad, Bahria Special Education School and College, Paqui Foundation Institute of Special Education, Unleashed: Noor Special Education School and several other institutions working in the field of special education. Addressing the concluding ceremony, Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood said that timely and accurate assessment of children with special needs is fundamental to providing quality education and appropriate educational support. He emphasized that continuous professional development of teachers and specialists is essential for improving educational outcomes and ensuring inclusive education. He reaffirmed AIOU's commitment to advancing special education through quality training, research and academic collaborations. He also appreciated the efforts of the Department of Special Education and EPIC Trainings for successfully organizing the workshop and expressed hope that the knowledge and skills gained by the participants would contribute to strengthening special education services across the country.

Bestway, Geely partner to introduce hybrid vehicles

The two companies said the collaboration is expected to expand over the long term, with plans to increase localisation, strengthen Pakistan's automotive supply chain, promote skills development and generate employment

ISLAMABAD: Bestway Group has entered into a strategic partnership with China's Geely Auto Group to distribute and assemble Geely vehicles in Pakistan, marking the conglomerate's entry into the country's automotive sector. Under the agreement, Bestway Automotive (Private) Limited, a subsidiary of Bestway Group, will become the sole authorised distributor of Geely Auto Group products in Pakistan, the Bestway announced, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro on Thursday. According to the company, the first phase of the partnership will see the launch of Geely vehicles as completely built units (CBUs), allowing customers to access the brand's products before local assembly begins at Bestway's existing automotive assembly plant in Karachi. The agreement was signed during a ceremony held at Geely Auto Group's headquarters in Hangzhou, China. The two companies said the collaboration is expected to expand over the long term, with plans to increase localisation, strengthen Pakistan's automotive supply chain, promote skills development and generate employment. Among the models planned for introduction are the Geely EX6, an all-electric SUV, the Geely EX2, described as China's best-selling passenger vehicle in 2025, and the Geely Staray EX4, a plug-in hybrid SUV that holds the Guinness World Record for the lowest fuel consumption by a plug-in hybrid SUV.—DNA

FIA arrests proclaimed offender

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has arrested a proclaimed offender wanted in an illegal money value transfer case involving Rafiq Mallika, following a raid conducted by the Commercial Banking Circle Islamabad. An official told APP on Thursday that the accused, Haroon, son of Faisal Mushtaq, was arrested from Rawalpindi on the basis of credible intelligence after remaining in hiding to evade arrest. The official said the suspect was a proclaimed offender nominated in FIR No. 422/25 registered with the FIA Commercial Banking Circle Islamabad. According to the investigation, the accused allegedly caused a loss of Rs 56 million to the complainant through illegal money value transfer services. Following his arrest, the suspect was produced before the competent court, which granted the FIA a three-day physical remand for further investigation. The official said the investigation was continuing to identify other individuals who might have been involved in the illegal financial network and to recover additional evidence related to the case.—APP

Advertisement for General Practice Hospital. The ad features the text 'General Practice HOSPITAL' and 'We Are OPEN'. Below this, there is a list of services offered: General Practice Services, Specialized OPD Clinic, Urgent Care Unit, Modern Radiology Unit, Well-Equipped PICU rooms, Operation Theatres, On-site Laboratory for general diagnostic, specialty services, and comfortable inpatient wards. The ad also includes a grid of icons representing various medical services and a testimonial at the bottom: 'Empathy & Caring for everyone. We know that seeking medical care can be overwhelming, but you're not alone. With empathy at the heart of our care, we listen, understand, and support you every step of the way. In our clean, premium environment, you'll feel safe, valued, and truly cared for. Book your appointment today and experience healthcare with compassion.'

How to protect yourself from evolving cyber threats

Dr. MAJID RAFIZADEH

AS digital interconnectedness now permeates every facet of our lives, the privacy and security of ordinary individuals are facing unprecedented challenges. Hackers, increasingly sophisticated in their methods, are now harnessing advanced technologies — including artificial intelligence — to automate and amplify attacks. Financial data, personal identifiers, email accounts, computers, smartphones and online identities have become prime targets. This is why it is important to examine the dynamics of the cybersecurity landscape, assess the factors driving the escalation of cyber threats and chart some actionable and concrete strategies for individual protection. In other words, proactive digital measures are not merely advisable but imperative. The cybersecurity ecosystem has undergone a profound transformation. Traditional threats such as malware and phishing persist, but their efficacy has been dramatically increased by AI. According to CrowdStrike's 2026 Global Threat Report, attacks by AI-enabled adversaries surged by 89 percent last year, with the average breakout time — the period between initial access and lateral movement onto another system — plummeting to 29 minutes, a 65 percent acceleration from 2024. Moreover, 82 percent of detections involved malware-free techniques, which underscores the shift toward stealthier, AI-orchestrated methods and operations. Cybercrime is imposing staggering economic burdens on nations. Projections indicate that costs will escalate from about \$8.2 trillion in 2024 to \$13.4 trillion by 2028. Ransomware alone is forecast to inflict \$74 billion of damage worldwide in 2026. Data breaches remain rampant: IBM's Cost of a Data Breach Report 2025 recorded a global average cost of \$4.4 million per incident, with the US experiencing an all-time high average of \$10.22 million. AI is acting as a force multiplier for cybercriminals. Generative AI can automate exploitation and facilitate phishing campaigns and deepfakes can enable social engineering. For example, Microsoft documented a 65 percent rise in AI-generated phishing content last year, while up to 80 percent of phishing attacks now incorporate AI tools. Deepfakes have transitioned from a novelty to a tool for hacking. In one high-profile case, a Hong Kong financial professional was deceived via a deepfake video call in which hackers impersonated company executives, resulting in a fraudulent \$25 million payment. There are independent and state-sponsored actors. Regionally, Asia (34 percent) and North America (24 percent) were the most-targeted areas in IBM X-Force observations for 2025. Vulnerable populations include everyday users whose devices and accounts serve as entry points into broader networks. Human factors remain central. Verizon's Data Breach Investigations Report

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily
Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti
Deputy Editor: Abid Raza
Member APNS / ABC Certified
Vol: 06 Issue: 331
Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com
Phone: 051-8488394
Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad



consistently attributes a significant portion (about 68 percent) of breaches to human error. This has been amplified by AI's capacity to craft convincing lures that are devoid of grammatical errors or inconsistencies. This escalation is down to several related forces and drivers. First, AI tools lower the barriers for low-skilled actors, enabling scalable automation. Second, the asymmetry between defenders and attackers favors the latter. Third, rapid digital adoption coupled with insufficient digital skills in the existing workforce capacity is leaving systemic gaps. To address this issue, comprehensive solutions that require governmental and corporate intervention are needed. Nevertheless, individuals can still mitigate the risks through disciplined digital measures. Firstly, employ strong, unique passwords and use password managers. Avoid reusing passwords across accounts. Utilize complex, system-generated passwords managed by reputable tools such as those with end-to-end encryption. This single practice can thwart many attacks. Secondly, enable multifactor authentication universally. Preferably use phishing-resistant methods such as authenticator apps or security codes sent via text message. Multifactor authentication blocks more than 99 percent of automated credential-based attacks. Third, recognize and counter phishing and social engineering attempts. Scrutinize unsolicited communications for urgency, unexpected attachments or anomalous sender details. AI-generated content may appear flawless but you can verify it via independent channels such as direct phone calls using known numbers. Hover over links without clicking and employ email filters. Be technically conservative but not paranoid — though military posture. Fourth, maintain device and software hygiene. This means regularly updating operating systems, applications and firmware to address any vulnerabilities. Enable automatic updates. You can also install reputable antivirus/antimalware software with real-time scanning and behavioral detection. For sensitive devices, any permissions can be revoked. Unofficial apps should be avoided. Traditional threats such as malware and phishing persist, but their efficacy has been increased by AI. Fifth, secure sensitive information and backups. Encrypt data while it is in transit. Use virtual private networks or public Wi-Fi. Some recommend implementing the so-called 3-2-1 backup rule: keep three copies using two different media types, with one offsite. Regularly monitor financial statements and credit reports for anomalies. You can also consider identity theft protection services. Sixth, cultivate situational awareness. Limit the amount of personal information shared on social media. Use privacy settings judiciously. For high-risk activities, such as financial transactions, employ dedicated devices. Remote wipe capabilities for lost devices are essential. Finally, stay informed and adaptive. Follow the latest and most credible sources for emerging cyber threats. Periodically review account activity logs and revoke unused authorizations. Some people simulate phishing tests personally or via organizational programs. Through these simple actions, one can yield compounding benefits that significantly lower the likelihood and lessen the impact of any breach.

How America Backstabbed Iran at Hormuz (Part II)

Qamar Bashir



The MoU also did not expressly authorise Washington and Oman to establish a separate American-protected passage capable of circumventing Iran's approved system. The absence of an explicit prohibition cannot automatically become a licence for strategic sabotage of the agreement's negotiating purpose. This is where American power repeatedly collides with the international order Washington claims to lead. The United States invokes international law when demanding restraint from adversaries, yet when American strategic interests are involved, legal principles are frequently...

WHEN a superpower publicly discusses controlling a distant maritime chokepoint, it boasts of secretly moving enormous oil volumes through it and subsequently supports a rival transit arrangement during an interim peace understanding, the other party is entitled to question whether it is negotiating with a peace partner or confronting an empire. Iran appears to have reached its own conclusion. The attacks on commercial vessels were dangerous and, if deliberately directed against civilian shipping, locally indefensible. No political grievance automatically transforms an LNG tanker or crude carrier into a legitimate military target. Iran cannot demand respect for international law while disregarding the protection owed to civilian maritime traffic, and Tehran must answer for any deliberate attacks proven to have been carried out by its forces. Condemning those attacks, however, does not require intellectual dishonesty about their strategic context. The vessels appear to have become instruments in a much larger confrontation. Iran was not necessarily attacking commercial ships because it regarded Qatar, Saudi Arabia or civilian crews as its principal enemies. Tehran appears to have been sending a brutal message that an alternative Hormuz navigation system could be operationalised by completely bypassing Iranian authority. The ships were physically on the water, but the strategic message was directed at Washington. The United States responded with overwhelming military force, again attacking Iranian coastal radars, air defences, naval installations and IRGC assets. President Trump then declared the interim understanding effectively dead, reducing the fragile MoU to little more than a diplomatic memory. Washington now presents this sequence as evidence that Iran cannot be trusted. Tehran, however, can legitimately ask the opposite question: at what stage was the United States trustworthy? Was it trustworthy when Trump claimed the millions of barrels of oil had been quietly moved through Hormuz while negotiations were developing and then publicly boasted about the operation? Was Washington acting in good faith when Iran agreed to free commercial passage for 60 days and the United States subsequently backed a transit mechanism capable of neutralising Iran's negotiating leverage? Was it respecting the spirit of an interim peace arrangement when President Trump repeatedly threatened to destroy Iranian bridges, energy supplies and critical infrastructure while negotiations towards a final agreement were still expected to continue? A Memorandum of Understanding is not merely a collection of isolated sentences waiting to be exploited by clever lawyers. International agreements possess an object and purpose and create an expectation of good faith between the parties. If Iran committed to opening Hormuz temporarily so that a permanent settlement could be negotiated, Washington could not reasonably expect Tehran to remain indifferent while the United States used the interim period to make Iran's role in that permanent settlement increasingly irrelevant. The United States may argue that Article 5 did not explic-

itly prohibit an alternative route through Omani waters. That is technically correct, but it is not the point. The MoU also did not expressly authorise Washington and Oman to establish a separate American-protected passage capable of circumventing Iran's approved system. The absence of an explicit prohibition cannot automatically become a licence for strategic sabotage of the agreement's negotiating purpose. This is where American power repeatedly collides with the international order Washington claims to lead. The United States invokes international law when demanding restraint from adversaries, yet when American strategic interests are involved, legal principles are frequently stretched around military realities. Freedom of navigation becomes American naval supervision, regional security becomes permanent American military presence, deterrence becomes provocation and navigation becomes an opportunity to reduce an adversary's leverage before the final bargain is reached. Then, when the weaker state reacts, Washington begins the history of the conflict from the moment of reaction. Iran attacked the ship; therefore America bombed Iran. End of story. Such selective chronology may serve political messaging, but a serious analysis of international affairs cannot erase the actions, threats and strategic manoeuvres that created the conditions for confrontation. The Hormuz crisis is the consequence of accumulated actions by all parties. Iran must answer for attacks on civilian vessels, but the United States must equally answer for attempting to insert itself as the decisive military power in the management of a waterway where it possesses neither coastline nor territorial sovereignty. Hormuz belongs geographically to the region, although its safe navigation is undeniably an international concern. That is not the dilemma of a permanent chokepoint, therefore form the core of a transparent maritime management system. Other Gulf states should participate wherever their legitimate commercial and security interests are involved, while international maritime institutions can provide technical assistance, monitoring and verification. What cannot be accepted as a permanent arrangement is the transformation of the U.S. Navy into the de facto government of the Strait of Hormuz. America must therefore re-evaluate its permanent military presence in the Middle East, has become a permanent threat to American power. Iran is not located off the coast of Florida, nor did it sail an invasion fleet towards California. If the confrontation returns to full-scale war, America and the Middle East will be consumed by a permanent state of Iran's military capacity has already suffered heavy attacks, meaning a further escalation could increasingly threaten power systems, oil installations, gas infrastructure, transportation networks and the foundations of civilian economic life. Iran would undoubtedly suffer immense pain. Iran, however, would not suffer alone. American bases across the Middle East could come under attack, Israel would remain a primary Iranian target, Gulf infrastructure could be endangered and Hormuz could again become

nearly impassable. Oil and gas prices could surge, shipping insurance would become prohibitive, and inflation could fracture and inflation could sweep through economies already struggling with debt and poverty. Millions of people who have never seen Hormuz would pay for the war through higher prices for fuel, electricity, food and transportation. Iran does not claim to be the defender of the global economic order; the United States does. Leadership carries responsibility, and a country claiming guardianship of the international system must consider the global consequences of military actions undertaken thousands of miles from its own territory. There remains time for diplomacy, and Pakistan should once again intervene. Islamabad should bring Washington and Tehran towards negotiations and insist that the Hormuz dispute be separated from the Iran nuclear confrontation. Iran must stop attacks on commercial shipping, while the United States must stop bombing Iran and place the alternative Omani-side arrangement before negotiators rather than enforcing it through military power. Iran and Oman should negotiate a single transparent navigation mechanism with the participation of concerned Gulf states and appropriate international maritime institutions. There should be no secret routes of unilateral Iranian control, no American-controlled corridor and no military power acting as a toll collector. Above all, no superpower should pretend that aircraft carriers have transformed it into a coastal state. The United States had an opportunity to make the MoU work. Instead, it appears to have treated Iranian restraint as a strategic opening through which Tehran's last major bargaining asset could be weakened. Iran saw the emerging trap and reacted brutally. America answered with bombs, and once again the world is being told that the fire began only when Iran struck back. The truth is harder. Washington did not merely lose Iran's trust at Hormuz. It took an agreement designed to create peace, extracted the strategic benefits it could and supported bypassing the leverage Iran expected to negotiate and then reached again for overwhelming military force when Tehran refused to accept the emerging reality. That is not the dilemma of an international order. It is the conduct of a hegemon increasingly convinced that agreements bind the weak while military power liberates the strong. If the United States genuinely wants peace, it must leave the management of Hormuz principally to the states that actually border it and support a lawful regional navigation arrangement. If Washington instead wants control, it should stop pretending that resistance to its domination is unexpected. International law cannot remain a screen followed by the powerful to the weak. Either the law binds every state — including the United States — or Hormuz may become the place where the world finally admits that military power, not law, has become the true ruler of the international system. **— Press Secretary to the Prime Minister (Rtd) Former Press Minister, Embassy of Pakistan to Malaysia Former Press Attaché to France Former MD, SRBC | Michigan, USA**

The Perils of Power in Sports: From Biased Empires to Presidential Calls

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



The reaction has been swift and severe. Belgium's football authorities expressed astonishment, declaring their intent to safeguard the principles of fair play and investigating every avenue of recourse. Their coach, Rudi Garcia, likened the affair to an April Fools' jest misplaced in July. UEFA condemned...

IN the 1980s, when bilateral cricket between India and Pakistan burned with unmitigated intensity, the two nations met not only as rivals on the field but as embodiments of national pride. Series were contested on home soil, featuring five Test matches and a handful of One-Day Internationals, with local empires presiding over the proceedings. On the 13th of March 1987, Bangladesh's Glimmering Stadium, Pakistan led by Imran Khan, faced India in a Test match overseen by umpires RB Gupta and WK Ramaswamy. Pakistan's spinners, Iqbal Qasim and Tauseef Ahmed, delivered masterly spells, their every appeal for leg-before-wicket or caught behind resounding through the ground. Yet the umpires appeared resolute in their reluctance to dismiss the Indian stalwarts Sunil Gavaskar and Gundappa Viswanath. Despite such apparent partiality, Pakistan prevailed by a narrow margin of sixteen runs and claimed the series by a single victory. The episode laid bare a troubling truth when officials from the host nation wield the power of decision, fairness may yield to favouritism. Another Indian umpire, long remembered in cricketing lore as "Umpire Panjab", earned notoriety for his readiness to raise the finger against Pakistani batsmen while sparing his countrymen. Such conduct wounds the very spirit of sport, breeding resentment among fans and eroding the trust that binds competitors and spectators alike. In the time, the outcry compelled the appointment of neutral umpires, a reform born of necessity to restore credibility to the game. Decades later, the world finds itself once more confronting the spectre of interference in sport. This time on the grand stage of the FIFA World Cup, co-hosted by the United States, Canada, and Mexico, the tournament had unfolded with considerable promise until a recent controversy cast a long shadow over its integrity. In the

Round of 32, American forward Folarin Balogun, who had already scored three goals and emerged as his side's chief threat, received a red card for playing with his foot widely on the ankle of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Tarik Muharemovic. The offence, witnessed by referee Raphael Claus, triggered an automatic one-match suspension under established rules. Many viewed the decision as harsh, believing it suggested a potential bias in favour of what appeared an accidental collision born of imbalance. Yet the laws of the game were clear. What followed has shaken the foundations of fair play. United States President Donald Trump, declaring the incident no fault at all but merely two athletes colliding at speed, telephoned FIFA President Gianni Infantino to urge a review. FIFA, invoking Article 27 of its disciplinary code, suspended the implementation of the ban for a probationary period, permitting Balogun to line up against Belgium in the last sixteen. The decision marked the first time since 1969 that a World Cup red card had not resulted in automatic absence from the subsequent fixture. In that earlier case, Brazil's Garrincha had benefited from the era's less rigid procedures; here, the intervention bore the unmistakable imprint of political influence. The reaction, it is clear, is swift and severe. Belgium's football authorities expressed astonishment, declaring their intent to safeguard the principles of fair play and investigating every avenue of recourse. Their coach, Rudi Garcia, likened the affair to an April Fools' jest misplaced in July. UEFA condemned the ruling, having crossed a red line, while Senegal's former president of FIFA, warned pointedly that red cards are overturned by evidence and independent judgment, not by telephone calls from heads of state. "Quo vadis, FIFA?" he asked. Coaches of oth-

er nations voiced unease. Norway's Stale Solbakken foresaw damage to the tournament's reputation, while England's Thomas Tuchel questioned whether such overturns might end—night yellow cards too become negotiable? Former players, including Ian Wright and Roy Keane, decried the episode as shameful to the game's integrity. Critics rightly observe that FIFA appears from the narrative to be equivocating. The one-sided suspension following a red card stands enshrined in multiple articles of the disciplinary code and World Cup regulations. By setting aside this provision after presidential intervention, the governing body has invited accusations of bending rules to accommodate a powerful host nation. The United States, as co-host, carries the weight of expectation and influence yet when policies intrude upon the pitch, the universal language of sport risks translation into the dialect of power. But alas, despite all these irregularities, the United States lost the match to Belgium 2-1 and was eliminated from the tournament. History whispers a caution. From the biased empires of Bangalore to the controversial reprieve granted Balogun, the lesson endures: once the impartiality of officials is compromised, whether by national loyalty or political pressure, the spirit of competition withers. Pans across continents which march to different beats but for the assurance that merit, not manipulation, decides the outcome. As the World Cup advances toward its knockout climax, the controversy surrounding this American player lingers like a cloud. It serves as a reminder that sport, at its noblest, must remain a sanctuary from the manipulations of the political realm. Should governing bodies fail to defend that sanctuary, they risk alienating the very hearts that sustain the game. In the end, true victory belongs not to nations or presidents, but to the timeless ideals of fairness and honour.

Briefs ADB says Pak economy grew at 3.7pc in 26

FROM PAGE 01 For FY2026, attributing the increase to rising food and fuel prices. For FY2027, the inflation forecast has been raised further to 8.3 percent, reflecting the persistent adverse spillover effects of the ongoing Middle East conflict. According to the ADB, elevated energy prices and continued external uncertainties are expected to keep inflationary pressures high, posing challenges to Pakistan's economic outlook in the coming fiscal year. It is pertinent to mention here that the bank has lowered its growth forecast for developing Asia and the Pacific economies to 4.5% for 2026 compared to 5.5% growth in 2025. This is a reduction of 0.2 percentage points from April projections, according to ADB's latest economic outlook released by the bank on Thursday. Prolonged disruptions to energy markets caused by the Middle East conflict have weighed more heavily on the region's prospects than anticipated, says Asian Development Outlook (ADO) July 2026 adding the 2027 growth forecast is maintained at 5.1%, reflecting recovering activity as these pressures ease. The outlook expects disruptions to global energy markets to unwind only gradually, despite a framework agreement signed in June. With impacts extending beyond energy to fertilisers, other commodity prices, and supply chain inflationary pressures are likely to persist. Regional inflation is now forecast at 4.2% in 2026-an upward revision of 0.7 percentage points from April. The inflation forecast for 2027 remains at 5.4%.

Iran condemns US strikes, 14 dead in two days

FROM PAGE 01 Qatari Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman al-Thani told Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Aragchi in a phone call on Thursday that Iran and the United States should commit to diplomacy. Al-Thani added that the Washington and Tehran should implement the signed memorandum of understanding aimed at ending the war, the Qatari foreign minister said. Iran launched drones towards a site in Qatar earlier on Thursday and a Qatari tanker was attacked in the Strait of Hormuz earlier the week. Al-Thani condemned the attack in the Gulf, the foreign ministry said.

PM Shehbaz reiterates resolve to eliminate...

FROM PAGE 01 the country in the recent Balochistan attacks, while law enforcement agencies had so far killed 54 India-backed terrorists in operations carried out in response to the recent attacks. The ISPR DG had said that the security forces will continue pursuing every terrorist and their facilitators. "We will hunt down every terrorist and all their facilitators," he added. He had said that the Afghan territory under the control of the Taliban regime was being used to carry out terrorist attacks against Pakistan.

Raisa new Principal Information Officer

FROM PAGE 01 official communication remains credible, transparent, and responsive to public needs. With Raisa Aidi at the helm, the Press Information Department is poised to enter a new phase of institutional growth and stakeholder engagement.

Fifa refereeing chief rejects claims of bias in Argentina's win over Egypt

Collina defends World Cup officials, warns against integrity allegations

IFIFA refereeing chief Pierluigi Collina defended the officiating in Argentina's 2-1 victory over Egypt in the World Cup round of 16, dismissing allegations of bias and saying match officials operated with complete independence. In an interview published on FIFA website on Thursday, Collina said the criticism of referees was part of football but he condemned the questioning of the officials' integrity after Egypt complained about the officiating following the defeat. "Constructive discussion about decisions will always be part of football, but unfounded allegations have no place in our sport," Collina said. "Nobody can question the integrity of the Fifa World Cup match officials... Nobody can claim that 'Fifa refereeing can be biased' by anyone, not even by the Fifa president (Gianni Infantino)," Collina said that such allegations could provoke threats against referees and their families. Egypt exited the tournament but claimed they had been treated unfairly after Argentina overturned a 2-0 deficit to snatch victory with a stoppage-time winner from Enzo Fernandez.



Coach Hossain Hassan alleged after the match there may have been pressure on the referee to keep Argentina in the tournament. And the Egyptian Football Association said "several key incidents raised serious concerns and left profound questions about the consistency and fairness of decisions that directly influenced the course of the game." Egypt argued that Mostafa Zico's second-half strike was incorrectly ruled out for what it described as a non-existent foul in the build-up. Egypt were also incensed that a challenge on Mohamed Salah was not penalised moments before Argentina handed the move that produced the winning goal. Fifa's Collina said VAR had correctly recommended overturning Zico's goal after identifying a foul by Marwan Attia on Argentinian defender Lisandro Martinez during the attacking possession phase. "We believe that a foul is a foul," Collina said. "Regardless of whether the foul appears 'obvious', if the referee did not see it on the field, the VAR can intervene." Collina also defended the decision not to award Egypt a penalty before Argentina's winner, saying both the referee and VAR judged the contact between Salah and Julian Alvarez to be "normal football contact". "It was not an opponent's foot is a foul, whereas a defender who touches the ball first and then makes normal football contact has not committed a foul," he said. While acknowledging that some decisions would always require an element of subjectivity, Collina said Fifa was satisfied with how VAR principles had been applied throughout the tournament. — APP

Kostyuk makes quick work of Paolini

Paolini made 26 unforced errors to Kostyuk's 19 but where the Ukrainian won 90 per cent of her first serve points, the Italian's figure was only 60 percent. LONDON: Ukraine's Marta Kostyuk made quick work of Italy's 2024 runner-up Jasmine Paolini on a sweltering Centre Court. In speed into her first Wimbledon semifinal 6-3, 6-2 on Wednesday. The 12th seed was a woman in a hurry from the start as she took the opening set in 36 minutes, breaking Paolini to go 3-2 up and then again at 5-3 as temperatures soared over 30 degrees Celsius (86 degrees Fahrenheit). The 26-year-old, appearing in the Wimbledon singles quarterfinals and on Centre Court for the first time, had just her last two meetings with her 12th seeded opponent but used her powerful forehand to telling effect in an impressive victory. She broke Paolini again to take a 3-1 lead in the second set, with the Italian netting and then held serve. With Queen Camilla watching from the Royal Box, the crowd cheered for the Italian underdog but Kostyuk closed out remorselessly on 69 minutes with a second match point on her opponent's serve. Kostyuk, who will now play unseeded Czech

Linda Noskova in the last four on the same court on Thursday, said it was all a dream come true. "Winning here was not even in the plans today, I just wanted to go out, enjoy and put on a good show," she told the crowd after shaking Paolini's hand and then doing a pirouette on court to celebrate the win. The semifinal will be the second of her career in a Grand Slam tournament after this year's French Open, where she lost to eventual winner Mirra Andreova of Russia. Kostyuk took a streaky path to Centre Court on Tuesday and her coach making her do so to help her adjust. "I was on this court as a spectator since nine years ago watching Federer (Federer) and it was super special," she said. "To be back here as a player... I sat beside it and look at moment, soaking it all in." — APP

British HC meets Ishaq Dar

FROM PAGE 01 Senator Dar highlighted Pakistan's constructive, mediation efforts, emphasising Islamabad's commitment to dialogue, diplomacy, and de-escalation in the region. The British High Commissioner appreciated Pakistan's role in promoting regional peace and stability. She noted that Pakistan's proactive engagement in fostering understanding among stakeholders contributes significantly to resolving tensions and promoting cooperative solutions. Officials underscored that the meeting reflects the continued strengthening of bilateral ties between Pakistan and the United Kingdom, with both sides reaffirming their resolve to work together on issues of mutual interest. The discussion also centres at a critical time, as regional tensions have heightened following recent developments in the Middle East.

Marquez confirmed as Mexico coach after Aguirre departure

The appointment continues the federation's "Project 2030," announced in August 2024 when Marquez was named Aguirre's assistant as part of a planned succession. MEXICO CITY: Mexico has appointed Rafael Marquez as head coach to succeed Javier Aguirre following the coach's elimination from the World Cup, the football federation said on Wednesday. Marquez, 47, was Aguirre's assistant throughout the World Cup campaign, in which Mexico won a knockout match for the first time in 40 years before losing 2-1 to England in the last-16. The appointment continues the federation's "Project 2030," announced in August 2024 when Marquez was named Aguirre's assistant as part of a planned succession. Aguirre's third spell in charge ended with 22 wins, nine draws and six losses across 37 matches, including a knockout group stage — three wins from three — at the World Cup. Under Aguirre, Mexico also won the 2024-25 CONCACAF Nations League and the 2025 Gold Cup. As a player, Marquez captained Mexico in the World Cup and earned 148 caps, also winning the 1999 FIFA Confederations Cup and CONCACAF Gold Cup titles in 2003 and 2011. Marquez began his coaching career with Spanish sides RSD Alcala and Barcelona Athletic before joining Aguirre's staff for the World Cup qualifying campaign. — APP

Portuguese teenager Quenda completes Chelsea move

"It feels great to be here. Chelsea is a great team and I am excited to play here at Stamford Bridge." LONDON: Chelsea has completed the signing of Portuguese teenager Gonçalo Quenda from Sporting Lisbon on a contract until 2034, the Premier League club announced on Wednesday. The deal, which was struck last year, sees the versatile 19-year-old head to London for a fee of around £4.1 million (\$51 million). "It feels great to be here. Chelsea is a great team and I am excited to play here at Stamford Bridge," Quenda told the club's website. "The club has shown faith in players like me and I am proud to be here, proud to be part of this club." The Portugal under-21 international, who can play on either wing or at wing-back, helped Sporting win the domestic league and cup double in 2024/25. Named Primeira Liga Young player of the season in 2025, Quenda made 54 appearances in all competitions for Sporting. He also holds the record as the youngest Portuguese player to score in the UEFA Champions League, netting the 4-1 victory over Kaisar in September 2025. — APP

Wani Hails Football Revival, Backs Gilani's Leadership

OUR CORRESPONDENT ISLAMABAD: Federal Secretary for Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC) Mohyuddin Wani has said Pakistan football is back on the right track after years of administrative uncertainty, crediting Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) President Mohsen Gilani for leading the revival of the game. He also announced that Pakistan is preparing to host the South Asian (SAP) Games next year following the Prime Minister's approval of funds. Briefing the National Assembly Standing Committee on Inter-Provincial Coordination, chaired by Sheikh Atiq-ur-Rahman, Wani said Pakistan football has witnessed remarkable progress over the past year following the restoration of the PFF after years under a FIFA-appointed Normalisation Committee. Responding to questions from committee members, Wani said the federation has regained stability and has delivered encouraging results in a short period. He praised Mohsen Gilani for his leadership, saying his efforts to revive football have been recognised by PIFA, the Pakistan Olympic Association (POA) and the Government of Pakistan. He added that the federation is actively promoting football across the country through grassroots initiatives and development programmes, highlighting future plans. Wani said that the PIFA Vice President has committed financial support for the construction of at least two modern football grounds in Pakistan, a move aimed at strengthening football infrastructure and youth development. He also informed lawmakers that Pakistan will host the South Asian (SAP) Games next year. Wani said the Prime Minister has already approved funding for the event, the Ministry has also sought an additional Rs6 billion from the federal government to ensure the successful staging of the regional games. Responding to MMA Member Razaq Razaq Bot, Wani said that in his capacity as Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) President, ten PHF League matches were already played, adding that rebuilding a competitive side requires time as no team can be built in two months. Pakistan competed against some of the world's strongest hockey teams, and such a transition cannot happen overnight," Wani said. He also confirmed that the PHF is working closely with the International Hockey Federation (IHF) on the PHF electoral process, adding that the world governing body is fully on board to facilitate transparent and credible elections.

Women's cricket gets its first Lord's Test as England face India

"Our first ever women's Test at Lord's feels like the perfect occasion to sign off on a career," says batter Tammy Beaumont. ENGLAND'S captain at Lord's that day was the late Richard Hughes Flint, a pioneering figure in a women's game where players were still wearing skirts rather than, as they do now, white or coloured trossers. Hughes Flint, who died in 2017, now has a photo named after him at Lord's. But in 1976, Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), the owners of Lord's, were still decades away from admitting women as members, with the thought of females walking directly through the Long Room of the pavilion before taking the field a distant dream. England's No 5 that day, Megan Lear, compared the experience to the moon landing, telling the Guardian: "On that day in 1976, to walk on to the hallowed turf at Lord's, it was like one small step for us women cricketers, but one giant leap towards the future of women's cricket." It is a sign of how things have changed from those amateur days that a Test between two professional sides will also be England's second fixture at Lord's in under a week following Sunday's defeat by Australia in the women's 2025 World Cup final — a match that attracted a capacity crowd. Nine of England's World Cup squad are included for the Test, including captain Nat Sciver-Brunt, who is "hoping to play" despite a nagging calf injury. "We've always known this has been on the calendar," said England coach Charlotte Edwards. "A lot of our players have been involved with the absolute world." As well as a breakthrough, the game will also mark England batter Tammy Beaumont's farewell to international cricket's 720 World Cup final at Lord's. "It's a historic Test match for us as a group and for the Indian team, and we can't wait to play in front of a lot of people again over the next four days." Teenage England spinner Tilly Corteen-Coleman is well aware of the importance of the occasion. "I remember speaking to Leila (Edwards) about when she used to play here and they weren't allowed in the Long Room," said the 18-year-old. "The first women's Test at Lord's is history in the making, so to be involved would be incredible. It would mean the absolute world." As well as a breakthrough, the game will also mark England batter Tammy Beaumont's farewell to international cricket's 720 World Cup final at Lord's. Beaumont has made 280 appearances for England since her debut 17 years ago and for the Indian team, and we can't wait to play in front of a lot of people again over the next four days. "When I fell in love with playing cricket as a young girl, I barely knew that playing cricket for England was an option," said Beaumont. The 35-year-old, who will continue to play domestic cricket, added: "Our first ever women's Test at Lord's feels like the perfect occasion to sign off on a career that I could never have dreamt would be as special as it has been."

Pakistan, Croatia vow to further deepen...

FROM PAGE 01 Addressing a joint press briefing with Bradman, Dar said, "Both Pakistan and Croatia are situated at important geographical locations and could utilise their presence and locations to untap their enormous potential for growth between the two countries and beyond." Dar said he briefed Bradman on the "potential, capacity, facilities and connectivity of our Karachi port," both sides discussed the possibility of collaborative arrangements between the ports of the two countries," he added. The deputy PM noted that connectivity "lies at the heart of a vision for sustainable development, regional stability and global economic integration". Dar described the discussions between the two sides held earlier in the day as "warm, constructive and promising", adding that both sides reviewed the entire spectrum of Pakistan-Croatia relations. They "agreed to undertake steps to inject greater momentum to our political and economic relations as well as to enhance our cooperation in various areas of mutual interest, including trade, investment, development, agriculture, labour mobility, education, defence, sports facilitation, climate change, tourism, infrastructure, IT, seaport collaboration, etc", he said.

India secures Australian uranium supply deal

NEWS DESK NEW DELHI: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he clinched a uranium supply agreement, while visiting Australia on Thursday, securing a fuel source that will play a crucial role in his nation's nuclear energy ambitions. Modi faced with an almost insatiable appetite for electricity in the world's most populous nation. Modi has vowed plans to substantially scale up nuclear power generation in coming years. Australia lays claim to around 28% of the world's uranium resource, but legal hurdles and political sensitivities have hindered exports to India. "We have signed an important agreement to advance our nuclear energy," Modi said after talks with his Australian counterpart Anthony Albanese. "This deal will open the way for uranium supplies from Australia to India and give our clean energy objectives fresh momentum." A joint statement said the arrangement allowed long-term uranium exports for "exclusively peaceful purposes". The exports would fall under subsequent established by the International Atomic Energy Agency. "The arrangement facilitates Australian uranium exports to India to help increase the share of non-fossil fuel power capacity," Albanese told reporters.

China factory fire kills at least 28 people

DNA BEIJING: A fire that tore through a shoe factory in eastern China on Thursday killed at least 28 people, state media said. More than 500 fire and rescue personnel racing against time to extinguish the blaze. Hours after the fire broke out at the Haining Shoes factory around noon (0400 GMT), authorities feared people were still trapped inside the building in Jiaxing city, Fujian province. President Xi Jinping said the fire resulted in "heavy human losses", with state news agency Xinhua later calling a preliminary toll of 28 dead. Footage shared by state television CCTV showed firefighters dousing the facility at the end of a large, multi-story white building with fire hoses, as thick black smoke billowed out of broken windows. People could be seen taking refuge near the windows and on the roof of the building, while the blaze raged in the lower floors. CCTV said fire fighters and other emergency personnel were on the scene. "The cause of the accident should be identified as soon as possible. Those responsible must be strictly held accountable," Xi said, in remarks carried by Xinhua.

Briefs

Rupee gains 01 paise against Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Thursday appreciated by 01 paise against the US Dollar in interbank trading and closed at Rs 278.08, compared to the previous day's closing of Rs 278.07. According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs 278.95 and Rs 279.10, respectively. The price of the Euro against the Rupee increased by Rs 0.25 and closed at Rs 317.23 from the previous day's closing of Rs 317.68, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen remained unchanged to close at Rs 1.71, whereas the exchange rate of the British Pound witnessed a surge of Rs 1.92 and closed at Rs 373.06 compared to the previous day's Rs 371.76. The exchange rate of the Emirati Dirham stood stagnant to close at Rs 75.71, while the Saudi Riyal came down by 01 paise, closing at Rs 71.05.-APP

PSX stays bearish, sheds over 369 points

ISLAMABAD: The benchmark KSE-100 Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) remained in the red on Thursday, losing 369.69 points, a negative change of 0.20 percent, to close at 181,259.68 points against 181,629.37 points on the previous trading day. During the session, the ready market recorded a trading volume of 882.12 million shares with a traded value of Rs1,860 billion, compared to 1.561 billion shares valuing Rs62,437 billion in the previous session. The market capitalization stood at Rs20,282 trillion, slightly down from Rs20,283 trillion a day earlier. Out of 497 active companies in the ready market, 263 advanced, 203 declined, and 31 remained unchanged. Geopagic PK led the volume chart with 211,081 million shares, followed by LSE Capital Ltd. with 58,382 million shares and Pak Refinery with 49,649 million shares.-APP

CDNS sets Rs1.5t savings goal

ISLAMABAD: Riding on strong public confidence in government-backed savings schemes, the Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has set an ambitious savings mobilisation target of Rs1.5 trillion for the fiscal year 2025-26, aiming to further strengthen the country's savings culture and expand financial inclusion. The fresh target follows the successful achievement of CDNS's annual savings mobilisation goal of Rs1,381 trillion during FY2025-26, underscoring growing investor confidence in secure and low-risk investment instruments offered by the government. According to official sources, CDNS mobilised Rs1,381 trillion between July 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026, fully achieving its annual target. The milestone reflects sustained public trust in National Savings products despite evolving economic conditions.-APP

D-8 Secy-Gen calls for deeper halal eco integration

The Secretary-General noted that the D-8, representing more than 1.28 billion people and a combined GDP exceeding US\$5 trillion, possesses the complementary strengths required to become a globally competitive hub for halal production, trade, investment, and innovation

DNA

JAKARTA: The first-ever D8 Halal Expo Indonesia (HEI) 2026 was officially inaugurated on 8 July in Jakarta marking a major milestone in advancing economic cooperation and strengthening the halal economy among the Member States of the Developing 8 Organization for Economic Cooperation (D8). With the thematic focus on "Strengthening D8 Halal Economy Through International Collaboration," the 5-day event brings together Ministers, Senior Officials, business leaders, investors, entrepreneurs, and halal industry stakeholders from across the D8 region and beyond to promote trade, investment, innovation, and strategic partnerships throughout the global halal ecosystem. The Opening Ceremony for HEI was officiated by H.E. Anis Matta, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, along with senior representatives of the National Committee for Islamic Finance, the Indonesian Agency (KNEKS), the Halal Product Assurance Agency (BPPI), the Halal Fund Management Agency (BPPIK), and Ambassadors and Officials from D8 Member States, as well as other noted dignitaries. In a special video message on the occasion, H.E. Ambassador of Pakistan Mahmood, Secretary-General of the



D8 Organization, extended his warm felicitations to the Government of Indonesia on successfully hosting the first-ever D8 Halal Expo and commended its leadership in advancing the halal economy as a key driver of sustainable development, industrial transformation, and regional economic integration. He particularly welcomed Indonesia's proposal to institutionalize the D8 Halal Expo as an annual flagship event and to host the proposed D8 Halal Economy Cooperation (HEC) Secretariat, describing these as far-reaching initiatives that would further strengthen the Organization's institutional architecture while fostering enhanced policy coordination, private-sector engagement, research collaboration, capacity building, and intra-D8 trade and investment. The Secretary-General noted that the D8, representing more than 1.28 billion people and a combined GDP exceeding US\$5 trillion, possesses the complementary strengths required to become a globally competitive hub for halal production, trade, investment, and innovation. He observed that although the global halal

US\$ 500 billion intra-D8 trade by 2030. He emphasized that deeper cooperation in the halal sector can contribute significantly to SME diversification, food security, economic development, investment promotion, and sustainable growth across Member States. To advance this vision, Secretary-General Ambassador Sohail Mahmood proposed three specific initiatives. First, the establishment of an Integrated D8 Halal Trade Corridor through the gradual harmonization and mutual recognition of halal standards and certification systems, interoperable digital certification, enhanced customs cooperation, dedicated halal logistics corridors, and simplified trade procedures. Second, the creation of a D8 Digital Halal Marketplace and Investment Platform to connect manufacturers, exporters, SMEs, investors, Islamic financial institutions, certification authorities, and buyers, thereby facilitating business matchmaking, cross-border e-commerce, investment partnerships, and supply-chain integration. Third, enhanced joint investment in research, innovation, halal industry parks, biotechnology, food technology, pharmaceuticals, artificial intelligence, blockchain-enabled traceability, sustainable logistics, green manufacturing, and skills development to ensure that D8 Member States remain competitive in the industries of the future.

ICCI to pursue early resolution of fruit market issues: Tahir

ISLAMABAD: Acting President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Tahir Ayub, has assured the members of Fruit Market, Sector I/14, Islamabad, that the Chamber will take up all their longstanding civic, infrastructure and traffic-related issues with the relevant authorities to ensure their early and permanent resolution. He expressed these views while talking to a delegation of the Fruit Market, Sector I/14, which called on him at the Chamber House on Thursday under the leadership of its Patron-in-Chief, Chaudhry Muhammad Arshad, to congratulate him on assuming the charge of Acting President of ICCI. The delegation also included Khalid Khizer Awan, Vice Chairman, Chaudhry Muhammad Arshad, Executive Member, and Chaudhry Arshad Iqbal, Member. The delegation briefed the Acting President on the key challenges confronting the market, particularly the closure of one carriageway of the main double road in front of the local police station, which they said has been causing severe traffic congestion and immense difficulties for traders, transporters, customers and visitors throughout the day. They urged ICCI to intervene for the reopening of the road to restore the smooth flow of traffic. The delegation also highlighted several civic issues, including blocked sewerage lines, the shortage of safe drinking water, inadequate security arrangements and the growing problem of encroachments, which they said were disrupting business activities and creating hardships for the trading community. Responding to the concerns, Tahir Ayub acknowledged the strategic importance of the Fruit Market in maintaining the uninterrupted supply of fresh fruits to Islamabad and adjoining areas. He emphasized that the smooth functioning of the market is essential not only for traders but also for consumers across the region. He assured the delegation that ICCI would vigorously pursue all these issues with the Capital Development Authority (CDA), Islamabad Traffic Police, the district administration and other relevant departments to secure practical and lasting solutions. He stressed that the Chamber remains fully committed to protecting the interests of the business community and improving the overall business environment in the federal capital. The Acting President further announced that he would personally arrange a visit of the Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Islamabad, Ms. Kaiyat Ahsar Khan, to the Fruit Market to assess the traffic situation firsthand and facilitate the removal of bottlenecks. He expressed hope that reopening the closed side of the main double road would significantly ease traffic congestion and provide much-needed relief to traders, transporters and the general public. The members of the delegation appreciated the proactive approach of the ICCI Acting President and expressed confidence that, under his leadership, the Chamber would continue to effectively advocate the resolution of issues confronting the business community and contribute to the sustainable development of Islamabad's commercial sectors. On this occasion Vice President Muhammad Irfan Chaudhry, executive member Irfan Minhas, Irfan-Elia Mashwani, Chaudhry Sohail and Khawaja Anwar ul Hassan were also present.-DNA

Syria regains its voting rights at chemical weapons watchdog

AMSTERDAM: Member states landed back Syria's voting rights at the global chemical weapons watchdog on Thursday, following what they described as "a significant change in circumstances" since the fall of the Assad regime. Syria was stripped of its rights at the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in 2021, after its forces were found to have repeatedly used poison gas during the civil war. Although largely symbolic, this sent a political signal to Syria that breaches of the 1997 Chemical Weapons Convention, prohibiting all use of chemicals as the battlefield, would not be accepted. "Following the fall of the Assad regime, the new Syrian authorities committed to fulfilling Syria's obligations under the Convention and have since taken concrete steps," the OPCW said. Syria has vowed to work with the international community to rid itself of legacy weapons of mass destruction that pose a proliferation risk. A Syrian official told Reuters in May that the country's transitional leadership had located remnants of former President Bashar Assad's clandestine chemical weapons program, including raw materials and munitions similar to those used to carry out deadly gas attacks during the country's civil war. Repeated investigations by the United Nations and the OPCW's special investigation and identification Team concluded that Syrian government forces used the nerve agent sarin and chlorine barrel bombs in attacks that investigators said killed or injured thousands. At the time, Syria and its military ally Russia repeatedly denied the use of chemical weapons. The OPCW's executive council on Thursday said it would continue to monitor Syria's progress and take decisions necessary to eliminate the remaining chemical weapons inherited from the former regime.-APP

KSA, Arab states condemn Iran's attacks on Bahrain, Kuwait and Jordan

DUBAI: Gulf states on Thursday condemned the latest Iranian missile and drone attacks targeting Kuwait, Bahrain and Jordan, while renewing calls for restraint and a return to diplomacy as regional tensions continued to escalate. Kuwait and Bahrain said their air defense systems intercepted multiple missiles and drones early Thursday, hours after Iran's Revolutionary Guards vowed retaliation following another round of US strikes on Iranian territory. Jordanian military said it intercepted eight missiles fired from Iran on Thursday, while the Islamic republic said it targeted a US base there amid a new exchange of strikes between Tehran and Washington. "Jordanian air defense systems intercepted and shot down, today, Thursday, eight missiles that were launched from Iran toward Jordanian territory," the military said in a statement. Iran's Revolutionary Guards said they struck the US's "command-and-control center in West Asia and the enemy air base in Al-Azraq, Jordan, with 10 ballistic missiles." It added that "if the terrorist US military repeats its aggression, the other US bases in the region will not be safe from our heavy fire." Kuwait's military said air defense systems had intercepted and destroyed four missiles and 10 drones, adding that explosions heard across the country were the result of interception operations. The defense ministry said one person was injured and was in stable condition. In Bahrain, air raid sirens sounded across the capital, Manama, before air defense systems intercepted incoming projectiles. The Bahrain Defence Force said it remained prepared to respond to any further attacks, accusing Iran of continuing "its systematic aggressive approach" through missile and drone strikes targeting the kingdom. Iranian state media later reported that the Revolutionary Guards had launched missiles and drones targeting two US military bases in Kuwait and two in Bahrain. Saudi Arabia condemned the attacks during a phone call between Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan and his Kuwaiti counterpart, reiterating the need to halt the escalation and return to dialogue. The United Arab Emirates likewise condemned what it described as a flagrant violation of the sovereignty of Jordan, Bahrain and Kuwait, reaffirming its support for all measures taken by all three countries to safeguard their security and stability. It reaffirmed its full solidarity with them and its support for all measures to safeguard their security. Qatar also issued a security alert before later announcing that the threat had ended. During a telephone call with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, Qatar Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani stressed the need for Iran and the US to commit to diplomacy and implement the memorandum of understanding aimed at ending the conflict. Al-Thani also discussed the latest developments with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal, with both sides emphasizing the importance of resuming dialogue and ending hostilities.-APP

US envoy to Lebanon foresees Israeli withdrawal

DUBAI: Lebanon's President Joseph Aoun met with US Ambassador to Beirut Michel Issa to discuss his upcoming official visit to the United States on the invitation of US President Donald Trump, as well as the current situation in Lebanon and the wider region. During the meeting, President Aoun stressed the importance of reinforcing the ceasefire, addressing the humanitarian and increasing pressure on Israel to stop its military operations and comply with the framework agreement announced following the Lebanese-American-led negotiations held in Washington. He also called for an end to the hostilities by Israeli forces in several occupied towns and villages. Following the meeting, Ambassador Issa said President Aoun's visit to Washington was particularly significant under the current circumstances and reflects the level of attention President Trump is giving to Lebanon, as well as his efforts to promote security and stability in the country and alleviate the suffering of its people. Issa said the planned meeting in Rome on July 14-15, Ambassador Issa explained that the decision to hold the talks in the Italian capital was made solely for technical reasons related to facilitating travel for ambassadors and delegation members. He noted that the Rome meeting will focus on the organizational and implementation aspects of the framework agreement, particularly the formation of specialized working groups responsible for carrying out the arrangements agreed upon in Washington. These teams may include legal or technical experts depending on the issues involved. Issa said the Rome discussions were a continuation of the understandings reached in Washington and added that additional meetings would take place in Rome or other locations to monitor implementation according to agreed stages.-APP

SBP, FDA join hands to fast-track housing finance

ISLAMABAD: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) and the Pakistan Development Authority (PDA) have agreed to strengthen coordination and speed up official procedures for applicants seeking housing finance under the Prime Minister's "Aans-e-Ghar" program. The decision was made during a meeting at the PDA Complex, chaired by PDA Director General Muhammad Asif Chaudhry and attended by SBP Chief Manager Fouzia Aslam, senior PDA officials and representatives of commercial banks. Addressing the meeting, Fouzia Aslam said the lowest housing initiative had received more than 78,000 applications nationwide over the past six months, with over 18,000 approved and financing disbursed to more than 3,000 successful applicants. Under the scheme, eligible applicants can obtain housing finance of up to Rs10 million at a subsidized market rate of five per cent annually for up to 10 years to construct houses on plots of up to 10 marbas. The participants reviewed administrative and procedural arrangements to ensure timely loan approvals.-APP

credible News. Global Reach. Trusted by All. DIPLOMATIC NEWS AGENCY Connecting Pakistan to the World. DNA delivers fast, accurate and balanced news from Pakistan and around the world and the source for real-time updates on diplomacy, politics, economy and more. FOLLOW DNA Stay informed. Stay connected. Stay ahead. REAL-TIME UPDATES Fast and timely news from around the world. CREDIBLE & DEPENDABLE Committed to accuracy, fairness and integrity. GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE In-depth coverage with a diplomatic lens. WIDEST NETWORK Connecting sources, stories and societies. DIVERSE COVERAGE Politics, diplomacy, economy, culture and beyond.

Briefs NATO touts \$50 billion in arms deals

LONDON: Defense companies from NATO member states gathered in Ankara this week for an industry forum held alongside the alliance's annual summit, where officials touted more than \$50 billion in defense procurement and industrial agreements as allies sought to demonstrate their commitment to bolstering military spending. While some announcements involve firm contracts and procurement plans, others remain subject to further negotiations, approvals or future development. The agreements come as European allies face continued pressure from US President Donald Trump to shoulder a greater share of the alliance's defense burden. Following are the deals announced so far: SAAB Swedish defense equipment maker Saab said NATO will begin formal negotiations on the acquisition of up to 10 GlobalEye airborne early warning and control aircraft.

Italy expels two Russians moly attaches

MOSCOW: Russia will respond to Italy's expulsion of two of its military attaches who had been working at the Russian embassy in Rome, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said on Thursday, the RIA state news agency reported. The Italian government has decided to expel two military attaches at the Russian Embassy in Italy who were allegedly involved in espionage activities, Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani said on Thursday. Earlier this week, two people were arrested on charges of passing classified information to a Russian agent. Prosecutors said the main suspect was a former officer of Italy's Carabinieri police force. Five other individuals are also under investigation. Tajani said on social media platform X that the two Russian officials must leave Rome within three days. - APP

Iraq not to leave OPEC

BAGHDAD: Iraq will not leave OPEC, but is seeking a fair output quota within the oil producer group, Iraqi Prime Minister Ali Al-Zaidi said in an interview with Saudi-owned Al Arabiya TV, according to his office. Reuters reported in an exclusive in June that Iraq, the group's second-largest producer after Saudi Arabia and one of its five founding members, had considered leaving OPEC if the group did not allow Baghdad to significantly increase oil production. - APP

Pakistan greatly values its relations with UK

Pakistan's newly appointed High Commissioner to the UK Calls on Finance Minister to Discuss Pakistan-UK Economic Cooperation



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's newly appointed High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, Mr. Tipu Usman, called on the Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, to discuss matters of mutual economic interest and explore avenues for further strengthening Pakistan-UK economic and financial cooperation. The Finance Minister welcomed the High Commissioner on his new assignment and expressed confidence that his experience and diplomatic acumen would contribute to further enhancing bilateral economic engagement and advancing Pakistan's economic objectives in the United Kingdom. The meeting reviewed opportunities to expand cooperation in trade, investment, banking, remittances, capital markets, and financial services. Discussions also focused on strengthening Pakistan's engagement with international investors and financial institutions, while leveraging London's position as a leading global financial centre to support Pakistan's financing and capital market objectives. The Finance Minister highlighted the Government's

ongoing efforts to diversify financing sources, deepen Pakistan's access to international capital markets, and strengthen the country's financial architecture. The two sides also exchanged views on developments in digital finance, blockchain-based financial solutions, virtual assets, and emerging instruments such as the tokenization as part of Pakistan's broader digital transformation agenda. The meeting also discussed avenues for enhancing cooperation in debt management and capital market development, including continued engagement with the United Kingdom Debt Management Office. The High Commissioner briefed the Finance Minister on prospects for engaging institutional investors and facilitating future investment roadshows in coordination with leading financial institutions. Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb underscored the importance of the Pakistan diaspora in the United Kingdom in strengthening economic linkages between the two countries, particularly through remittances and the Rashid Digital Account, investment, and commercial engagements. He also emphasized the importance of continued collaboration with UK-based financial institutions and the private sector to further promote bilateral economic and financial ties. The Finance Minister reaffirmed the Government's commitment to maintaining macroeconomic stability, strengthening fiscal discipline, improving the ease of doing business, and creating an enabling environment for investment and private sector growth. Both sides agreed to remain closely engaged to advance areas of mutual interest and further strengthen Pakistan-UK economic cooperation. The High Commissioner reiterated Pakistan's commitment to strengthening its economic partnership with the United Kingdom across all domains, describing the relationship as one of long-standing importance that continues to hold significant potential for further growth.

Workers' remittances rise 8.6% to \$41.6bn in FY26

Saudi Arabia remains the top source of inflows, followed by the UAE, UK and United States

KARACHI: Workers' remittances rose 8.6% to \$41.6 billion in fiscal year 2025-26, while monthly inflows eased in June after a sharp rise in the previous month, central bank data showed on Thursday. Remittances stood at \$3.5 billion in June 2026, up 26% from the same month last year but down 18.3% from May, according to State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) data. Topline Research attributed the month-on-month decline primarily to a higher base in the previous month and the festive season. Cumulatively, overseas Pakistanis sent \$11.6 billion during FY26, compared with \$38.2 billion in FY25, the central bank said. The highest inflows in June came from Saudi Arabia at \$828.6 million, followed by the United Arab Emirates at \$792.2 million, the United Kingdom at \$514.9 million and the United States at \$298.8 million. Brokerage Ihsan Iqbal Securities' data, citing SBP figures, showed May 2026 was the strongest month of the fiscal year at \$12.22 billion, consistent with Topline Research's view that June's month-on-month decline reflected a high base in the previous month. For the full fiscal year, Saudi Arabia remained the largest source of remittances at \$9,783 billion, followed by the UAE at \$8,807 billion, the UK at \$6,326 billion and European Union countries at \$5,227 billion, according to the brokerage data. "Workers' remittances remained a key source of external sector resilience in FY2025-26, reaching a record \$41.6 billion, up 8.6% over the previous year," Dr. Khagan Najeeb, former adviser to the Ministry of Finance, told Geotv.

Govt issues emergency LNG tender after 'Qatari shipment aborted'

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has issued an emergency tender to procure a liquefied natural gas (LNG) cargo for delivery on July 15-16 after a Qatari shipment bound for Pakistan was aborted mid-journey due to fresh hostilities in the Strait of Hormuz, Bloomberg reported. State-owned Pakistan LNG issued the tender Wednesday after the government approved it on Wednesday, following the cancellation of a Qatari cargo scheduled for delivery this month, Bloomberg reported, citing traders familiar with the matter. Traffic through the Strait of Hormuz has come to a near standstill after the United States carried out strikes on Iran for a second consecutive day, following Iranian attacks on vessels in the waterway that included an LNG tanker. A ship carrying a Qatari cargo bound for Pakistan turned back earlier this week without completing its transit through the strait. Earlier this week, Bloomberg reported that Pakistan had already purchased an LNG cargo from TotalEnergies SE for delivery on July 10-11 at \$17.37 per million British thermal units - its second spot market procurement in two weeks - as Islamabad scrambled to replace cancelled Qatari supplies stranded in the Persian Gulf. Pakistan relies on Qatar for nearly all of its LNG supplies under long-term contracts, leaving the country increasingly vulnerable to energy shortages since the Middle East conflict erupted in late February. Islamabad has already been compelled to procure two shipments from the costly spot market over the past few weeks to avert a gas shortfall, the US media outlet reported. Government officials have emphasized ensuring adequate fuel inventories remains a top priority. The NCMC, established to coordinate responses to national challenges including fuel supply disruptions, has reportedly remained engaged in monitoring energy markets and facilitating timely procurement decisions whenever risks to fuel availability emerge. Pakistan's LNG procurement strategy has drawn increased attention since March when reports emerged LNG facilities at Ras Laffan LNG Facilities, operated by QatarEnergy, had come under attack, creating uncertainty in regional energy markets.

UN chief Antonio praises Pakistan's contributions

NEW YORK: The discussion focused on Pakistan's mediation efforts that led to the signing of an agreement between the United States and Iran and its longstanding role in promoting regional and global peace, according to PTV News. The UN secretary-general commended Pakistan's continued endeavors and contributions towards the establishment of peace, acknowledging the country's mediation efforts in addressing regional challenges. Separately, Pakistan and Russia agreed to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between their respective interior ministries to institutionalize and expand bilateral cooperation. The discussions also included a review of progress made on decisions taken during their previous meeting. The interior minister and his Russian counterpart, Alexanderovich, Kholokovskiy, held a meeting at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, where both sides reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening bilateral relations and expanding cooperation on key security issues. The two ministers held detailed discussions on the prevailing regional situation and explored avenues to enhance collaboration in counterterrorism, counterterrorism, cybercrime prevention, and joint police training exercises. They also discussed developing a coordinated strategy to counter terrorist networks operating in the region, particularly in Afghanistan.

China's remarkable progress due to strong institutions, says Gilani

Mr Gilani observed that Xi Jinping's "Thought on Party Building" places emphasis on self-reform, internal accountability and a firm approach to corruption, adding that these principles offer useful insights for political parties and institutions, particularly in the Global South

SAIFULLAH ANSAR ISLAMABAD: Acting President Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani addressed a special commemorative seminar organized by the Pakistan-China Economic and Cultural Council (PCECC) to mark the 105th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China (CPC). The seminar brought together senior Pakistani political leaders, parliamentarians, diplomats, policy experts and representatives of the Chinese Embassy to reflect on the global significance of Xi Jinping's "Thought on Party Building" and the enduring Pakistan-China partnership. Addressing the seminar, Mr Gilani said China's remarkable development under the leadership of Xi Jinping reflects the importance of strong institutions, long-term planning and effective governance. He said the CPC has demonstrated extraordinary institutional resilience over more than a century, leading China's unprecedented economic transformation and lifting hundreds of millions of people out of poverty. He noted that these achievements have made a significant contribution to global development. Mr Gilani observed that Xi Jinping's "Thought on Party Building" places emphasis on self-reform, internal accountability and a firm approach to corruption, adding that these principles offer useful insights for political parties and institutions, particularly in the Global South. He said durable institutions must remain accountable to the people, continually renew themselves and translate political stability into development that benefits ordinary citizens. Reaffirming the enduring Pakistan-China friendship, the Acting President described the relationship as an Iron Brotherhood built on mutual respect, shared interests and strategic cooperation. He paid tribute to the vision of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Chairman Mao Zedong and Premier Zhou Enlai in laying the foundations of the bilateral relationship. He said Pakistan-China cooperation has expanded across defence, trade, infrastructure, education, health and

Advertisement for General Practice Hospital (GPH) featuring a grid of medical services including General Practice, Gynaecology, Paediatrics, and various surgical specialties, along with contact information and a tagline 'Your Health Our Priority - Every Step of the Way!'.

600 dead in DR Congo Ebola outbreak

GENEVA: The Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo has now claimed 600 lives, figures published by the World Health Organization showed Thursday - only three days after the figure topped 500. Updated numbers issued by the UN health agency showed there have been 1,759 confirmed cases in DR Congo since the outbreak was declared in mid-May, including 500 confirmed deaths. Two other people have died in neighboring Uganda, where 17 patients have recovered out of 29 total confirmed cases. The WHO's figures for the DRC, which come from the health authorities in the vast country, show that the outbreak there has a case fatality rate of 34 percent. A total of 285 patients in the DRC have recovered, while 304 suspected cases of the viral haemorrhagic fever are under investigation. The outbreak in northern DRC has hit four provinces but has focused on Ituri province. - APP

Bangladesh relocates refugees

DHAKA: Authorities in Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh used loudspeakers and a network of volunteers and community leaders to relocate people from risky areas to safety Thursday after landslides killed at least 13 refugees in the past few days. At least five children died Wednesday when a landslide caused by monsoon rains swept through an Islamic school at a camp in Cox's Bazar where more than 1 million Rohingya refugees from neighboring Myanmar are housed. A teacher at the Islamic school described the scene from the landslide as chaotic, saying girls at the school were preparing for lessons when part of the building collapsed. "Those of us who were on the western side managed to get out, but everyone on the eastern side was buried under the debris," said Begum Jahin, who teaches the Quran, Islam's holy book. "Some suffered broken arms, and some of the girls lost their lives," she said. People in the refugee camp started rescue operations before emergency services reached the scene, Dolar Tripara, head of the local fire service and civil defence, said Thursday. - APP