



Pledged to elevate Pakistan's maritime sector to meet the standards of China's port and shipping industry

Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs
Qaiser Ahmad Sheikh

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Shaza Fatima calls for adopting emerging technologies



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Tuesday underlined the urgent need to adopt emerging technologies to drive the country's progress, calling for joint efforts to uplift Pakistan. She expressed these views during a signing ceremony of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) among Jazz, the National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST), and the National Information Technology Board (NITB).

Secretary IT, Zarrar Hasham Khan and Special Secretary IT Division, Azfar Manzoor, were also present. Shaza Fatima highlighted the necessity for Pakistan to stay aligned with global advancements in technology. She said that the collaboration between Jazz, NUST and NITB would not only foster innovation but also position Pakistan as a leader in AI, aligning the country's capabilities with international standards. "This initiative marks a significant step in leveraging technology for national development," she added. Shaza Fatima stressed the importance of developing Pakistan's first Local Large Language Model (LLM) within a defined timeline. She also pointed out that academia-industry linkages could generate job opportunities for the youth, emphasizing the need to equip them with the latest digital skills. Speaking at the event, Jazz CEO Aamir Ibrahim highlighted the critical role of Artificial Intelligence and big language models in shaping the country's future. "We are committed to building a local ecosystem that meets the needs of our communities," he said. He added that tools and relevant information would be provided to teachers, doctors, and farmers in their native languages. He said that the aim is to develop a functional model in the coming months, which would lay the foundation for a groundbreaking AI framework in Pakistan.

Gilani highlights parliamentarians' role in global peace, Justice

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on Tuesday highlighted the crucial role of parliamentarians in promoting peace, democracy, and justice on a global scale. While addressing participants of the Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) gathered in Pakistan for the 45th PGA meeting, Senate Chairman Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani praised the organization's four-decade legacy in advocating for human rights, international justice, and sustainable peace. He highlighted the significant impact PGA has had on shaping global policy and advancing grassroots initiatives aimed at fostering justice and equality worldwide. APP



RAWALPINDI: Colonel General Alexander V. Fomin, Deputy Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation, calls on General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS) at the General Headquarters (GHQ) today.

PM appreciates KSA's support for economic revival



RIYADH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday highlighting the importance of deep-rooted brotherly relations between Pakistan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, appreciated Kingdom's support for the economic revival and stability. The prime minister met with Crown Prince and the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al-Saud on the sidelines of the eighth session of the Future Investment Initiative (FII) in Riyadh, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. The two leaders took stock of the ongoing bilateral engagements, especially in follow up to the decisions taken in previous high-level meetings held in Makkah and

Riyadh in April.

Apprising the crown prince on the government of Pakistan's economic, institutional and policy reforms agenda, the prime minister said that the Kingdom had a central role in Pakistan's future economic plans. The prime minister appreciated Kingdom's efforts to promote regional peace and stability in the Middle East and reiterated Pakistan's unwavering commitment to stand by the Kingdom in these efforts. The two leaders exchanged views on regional developments and agreed to closely coordinate positions on regional issues. The prime minister conveyed best wishes for the health and wellbeing of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud. Separately, on X handle, the prime minister posted that he had the honour of meeting Mohammed Bin Salman, the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia along with his delegation.

"Thanked him for his gracious hospitality. Pakistan's ties with Saudi Arabia are historical and time-tested. During our very productive talks we reviewed the progress in Pakistan-KSA relations across multiple sectors and reaffirmed our commitment to strengthening bilateral ties, particularly in areas such as trade and investment, culture, innovation, technology, and beyond," he further posted.

COAS General Syed Asim Munir reiterates Pak's commitment to strengthen traditional defence ties with Russia

Russian Deputy Minister of Defence commends Pak Army's achievements in combating terrorism

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan and Russia have affirmed dedication to bolster collaboration in security and defence domains.

According to the statement issued by the ISPR, the resolve was expressed during a meeting between Deputy Minister of Defence of Russia, Colonel General Alexander V. Fomin, and Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir in Rawalpindi on Tuesday. The meeting addressed regional security environment and matters of mutual interest, including enhancement of bilateral defence and security cooperation.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief of Army Staff reiterated Pakistan's commitment to strengthen traditional defence ties with Russia.

The Russian Deputy Minister of Defence commended Pakistan Army's achievements in combating terrorism and highlighted the importance of a unified, cooperative approach among the global community to counter extremism. PR

Group of 95 participants of 26th National Security Workshop, conducted by NDU visits the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ishaq Dar & FS Anna Baloch brief them on the dimensions, strengths, challenges & considerations of foreign policy of Pakistan



ISLAMABAD: A group of 95 participants of the 26th National Security Workshop, conducted by the National Defence University (NDU), on Tuesday visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Foreign Secretary Ambassador Anna Baloch briefed them on the dimensions, strengths, challenges and considerations of the foreign policy of Pakistan. The participants were also briefed on the working of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Pakistani Missions abroad. At the conclusion of the session, the Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister and the Foreign Secretary entertained questions from the audience and held a thought-provoking discussion with the course participants. SABAH

Mohsin Naqvi felicitates Turkiye on its 101st Republic Day



ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has conveyed heartfelt congratulations to the government and people of Turkiye on the occasion of their 101st Republic Day.

In a statement, he extended warm wishes to the Turkish leadership, particularly recognizing President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's role in Turkiye's development and progress.

Naqvi highlighted Pakistan's strong and enduring ties with Turkiye, stating, "We equally share the happiness of our Turkish brethren on this historic day."

He praised Turkiye's advancements under President Erdogan's leadership, noting, "The country's remarkable growth and resilience serves as an inspiration for nations around the world." "The journey of Turkiye over the past century showcases the strength and unity of its people, and President Erdogan's vision has positioned Turkiye as a leader in development and prosperity," Naqvi added.

Reflecting on his recent visit to Turkiye, the Interior Minister said he had productive discussions with Turkish officials, focusing on areas of mutual interest that promise to deepen Pakistan-Turkiye relations.

"Our discussions aimed to reinforce our shared goals and explore new avenues for collaboration, particularly in trade, defense, and cultural exchanges," he said, underscoring the significance of the Pak-Turk friendship.

Naqvi concluded by reaffirming Pakistan's pride in its historic bond with Turkiye, built on mutual respect and shared cultural and historical values.

He expressed optimism that the enduring friendship between the two countries would continue to thrive, contributing to regional peace and prosperity.

SC bar elects best person as its President: Tarar

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Tuesday felicitated Asma Jahangir Group's candidate Mian Rauf Atta on getting elected as the President of the Supreme Court Bar Association.

The minister, in a news statement, also congratulated Head of the Asma Jahangir's Group Ahsan Bhoon for the achievement.

The best person has been elected as the President of the Supreme Court Bar Association, the minister remarked. Lawyers are the defender of democracy, human rights and the constitution, he said, adding the fraternity had a crucial law in upholding the rule of law, supremacy of the constitution and democratic norms. He said the lawyers always acted as a bridge between the Bar and the Bench. Tarar hoped that the newly elected President and other officials would continue to play their positive role for the supremacy of the Constitution and the rule of law. The winning panel would also play an effective role in solving the problems of the lawyers' community.

Russian Deputy Minister for Defence calls on Naval Chief at NHQ

ISLAMABAD: Russian Federation's Deputy Minister for Defence, Colonel General Alexander V. Fomin called on Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf at Naval Headquarters here on Tuesday.

During the meeting, professional matters of mutual interest including bilateral collaboration and regional maritime security were discussed, a Pakistan Navy news release said.

The Naval Chief expressed that Pakistan greatly values its relations with the Russian Federation and desires to forge a long-term, multi-dimensional partnership with Russia. Various avenues including bilateral training, exchange of visits and conduct of bilateral naval exercises between the two Navies were



also focused. The visiting dignitary appreciated and acknowledged the Pakistan Navy's efforts and commitments in support of collaborative maritime security. Both the leaders agreed to further strengthen and diversify the scope of existing bilateral defence relationship particularly in maritime domain and naval technologies. PR

Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal reviews draft plans

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Prof Ahsan Iqbal here Tuesday chaired a review meeting of the focal groups constituted by the Prime Minister to analyze recommendations made by the Chinese working team. The meeting was attended by Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmad Sheikh; Secretary Planning, Awais Manzoor Sumra; Chairman of the National Highway Authority and high-ranking officials from various ministries and divisions, including Communication, Investment, Petroleum & Natural Resources, National Food Security, Power, Commerce, Economic Affairs, Interior, and Railways. This was the third meeting chaired by Minister Ahsan Iqbal, following the

Prime Minister's directives, to review the draft plans prepared by the focal groups. The Minister emphasized the need for action plans for implementation with timelines. He further stressed the need to highlight where Pakistan has already made progress. During review of agriculture sector, the Ministry of Food Security highlighted that Pakistan lacks a long-term, comprehensive, and independent development plan for the sector. Minister Ahsan Iqbal directed the Ministry to engage all provinces, private sector stakeholders, and form a task force to draft a national agriculture development plan "Green Revolution 2.0", which should be shared with the Chinese experts for their input. He also directed that CPEC five-year plan be finalized at the earliest. The meeting also reviewed the progress on Gwadar's connectivity. The concerned authorities reported



that the M-8 Gwadar-Hoshab (200 km) and Khuzdar-Rato Dero (250 km) sections have been completed, with work on the Hoshab-Awaran-Naal section ongoing. The Minister emphasized that while

billions of rupees have been invested in infrastructure development, efforts must also be made on creating economic benefits for backward areas through new connectivity. He also highlighted the importance of

creating transshipment activities at Gwadar Port and directed the relevant authorities to expedite the feasibility study for the second phase of the Eastbay Expressway. While reviewing the mega CPEC project ML-I the Minister Ahsan Iqbal directed the authorities to fast-track the ML-I railway project in coordination with the Chinese side, following the Chinese Premier's commitment to advancing the project. He stressed the need for Pakistan Railways to enhance its organizational capacity, citing global examples where railway departments generate revenue through commercial utilization of valuable real estate. He noted that railway land worth trillions of rupees remains underutilized and directed that an action plan be developed within 10 days for optimising commercial benefits of this land. The Minister also proposed that a

plan to utilize the skills of pensioners by offering them an extra allowance. He emphasized that a significant portion of the national treasury is allocated to pensions, and it is essential to benefit from the expertise of capable individuals who are currently receiving hefty pension and sitting at home idle. He directed that a mechanism be established to benefit from experience of pensioners particularly in education and health sectors. In the information technology sector, Minister Ahsan Iqbal underscored the importance of emerging technologies and called for expedited efforts to promote student exchanges in IT and Artificial Intelligence (AI) with China. The meeting also reviewed the ongoing efforts to ensure a consistent supply of clean drinking water and electricity to Gwadar.

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Climate for change

MUHAMMAD MOIN AAMER PIRZADA AND FARIS AHMED

On October 22, the Climate Refugees Rights and Protection Bill, 2024 was tabled in the National Assembly. If passed into law, Pakistan will become the first country to formally recognise climate refugees as a distinct category, allowing for more targeted resource allocation.

Pakistan is on the frontlines of climate change. Millions of our displaced fellow citizens – our climate refugees – are not just victims of environmental destruction but of an invisible crisis, unrecognised by law and unprotected by the system.

This bill puts these vulnerable individuals front and centre, offering them the legal protections and dignity they deserve.

It breaks new ground by officially defining climate refugees and acknowledging their need for protection. By giving climate refugees legal status, we open the door to a host of previously out-of-reach rights and services.

The Climate Refugee Centers established under the proposed legislation would provide essential services such as emergency healthcare, sanitation, waste management, and temporary housing in the district nearest to their damaged homes. These centres will offer immediate relief to the displaced, ensuring they do not end up in unlivable and hopeless conditions.

This bill also calls for the early and safe return of climate refugees to their homes or their integration into new communities, where possible. Displaced Pakistanis should not be stripped of everything they own just because the climate crisis forced them to flee. The bill proposes that lands, homes, commercial properties left behind by refugees are protected, cataloged, and safeguarded.

The Pakistani Climate Refugees Rights and Protection Act would ban discrimination against displaced individuals and set up systems to prevent exploitation and harassment, especially for women and children. It would also provide guardrails for the infirm and elderly.

For too long have climate refugees been invisible – caught in a legal limbo, stigmatised,

and often left to fend for themselves. This act would change that. It would ensure that climate refugees have access to vocational training, employment, and education, helping them rebuild their lives and contribute to society.

By empowering these individuals, Pakistan is sending a clear message: climate refugees are not a burden; they are part of the solution to our nation's future.

The bill goes further than offering protections, it builds in accountability as well. A national database will be created to register all climate refugees. This database will incorporate biometric data and medical records, offering a complete view of each displaced person's needs.

Moreover, a board of governors will oversee the proposed Climate Refugee Centers, ensuring transparency and accountability at every level. This body, which would include representatives from the federal government, civil society, and key ministries, will ensure that the centers are run effectively and fairly. By providing regular updates to refugees on their prospects of returning home, we are offering them the certainty and clarity they need during times of upheaval.

Pakistan is not just responding to its own crisis. We are setting a precedent for the world. While nations like Bangladesh and the Pacific Islands face similar climate-induced displacement, Pakistan will be the first country to introduce a formal legal framework to protect climate refugees. We hope this action will serve as a beacon of leadership for other nations to follow.

Climate change is a global crisis, and it demands a global response. But we cannot wait for the world to act. Pakistan must lead the way and this bill is our bold first step.

The Pakistani Climate Refugees Rights and Protection Bill, which is now in committee, is a statement of intent, a promise that we will protect our people, and an acknowledgment that climate change is already reshaping our world.

Muhammad Moin Aamer Pirzada is an elected member of the National Assembly from the *Muttahida Qaumi Movement*. He shaped and tabled the abovementioned bill. Faris Ahmed contributed research and development energies to the proposed legislation.



BARIA ALAMUDDIN

Netanyahu has run out of excuses to extend his wars

The much-anticipated Israeli strike against Iran has ended, and so it appears the current showdown between the two countries – for now. Israel has claimed to have hit selected military sites related to Iran's ballistic missile assembly and solid fuel manufacturing in a night raid on Saturday involving tens of fighter jets that flew over Syrian and Iraqi airspace. Iran said the damage from the strikes was minimal, but added it will respond when the time is right.

US President Joe Biden hoped that the Israeli retaliatory strike for Iran's Oct. 1 ballistic attack on Israel meant the end of the face-off, but warned Tehran against responding. US media argued that weeks of White House pressure on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to avoid targeting Iranian oil and nuclear facilities had worked, thus avoiding a regional conflagration.

And so both sides will now stand down as they await the outcome of next week's US presidential elections. However, that does not mean the shadow war between the two regional parties will subside. Iran has not indicated it is putting pressure on its Lebanese ally Hezbollah to accept a conditional truce. However, behind-the-scenes talks may have dealt with the prospects of Israel's land incursion into southern Lebanon and its heavy aerial strikes in the south, as well as in Beirut and the Bekaa Valley.

A seemingly elated Netanyahu delivered a defiant speech on Monday at the opening of the Knesset's winter session. He did not indicate that the war in Gaza was close to an end,

while promising to end Hezbollah's threat to northern Israel. He also vowed to undermine Iran's regional network through its proxies, as well as prevent Tehran from developing a nuclear bomb.

He called Israel's multi-frontal conflicts since October 2023 a "war of revival," likening it to the country's "war of independence" in 1948. There was no mention of the Palestinians, while he promised to push for "peace in return for peace" deals with Arab countries under the Abraham Accords.

Netanyahu did not mention a day-after scenario to end the wars. He ignored his critics in Israel, including families of the Israeli captives, opposition leaders, the coalition, and even Israeli President Isaac Herzog, who demanded an open inquiry into the Oct. 7 Hamas attacks.

But despite the hubris and the arrogance, Netanyahu's speech failed to masquerade itself as a victory. His objectives for the war remain largely unfulfilled, even though an increasing number of tired and emotionally drained Israelis want the conflicts to end. Netanyahu is yet to admit that despite using brutal force in both Gaza and Lebanon, Israel is far from achieving a decisive victory. Hamas is weakened and may never rebuild itself as a potent militia again, but Israel is facing an insurgency in Gaza that could go on for years.

The killing of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar in Rafah has been seen as an opportunity for Netanyahu, the US, and the West to end the war, which has become a major political liability for all parties involved.

Hezbollah, which suffered massive blows following the assassination of its top leadership, including Hassan Nasrallah, has managed to regroup, and is now firing tens of missiles daily across northern Israel and as far as Tel Aviv. More importantly, it is

exacting a heavy toll on the Israeli army in southern Lebanon. Hundreds of Israeli soldiers have been killed or injured in the first two weeks of the land incursion. What Netanyahu has stubbornly refused to admit is that Israelis are not as united today as they were 12 months ago. More than 300,000 soldiers have been deployed in Israel's longest war since its creation. The economy is suffering, while hundreds of thousands of Israelis remain internally displaced with no sign that they will soon go home.

Israel's international reputation has been damaged beyond repair. It is committing war crimes and crimes against humanity daily. While seemingly defiant, it will have to face severe charges of genocide and breaches of the Geneva Conventions, as well as international laws and UN Security Council resolutions, in the near future.

Netanyahu is pursuing his wars for ideological and personal reasons. He has done more damage to Israel than any of its foes ever envisaged doing. But more importantly, he has failed to realize that Israel can never score a final victory over its perceived enemies as long as it continues to ignore the core of the decades-old conflict: the Palestinians.

Netanyahu's disregard for international law has undermined Israel's allies in Washington and other Western capitals. The atrocities Israel's soldiers are committing in Gaza and south Lebanon have upended the US-led world order. Against Israel's wishes, the Palestinian cause has gained unprecedented support and sympathy among young Westerners, pummeling Israel's skewed narrative about the core of the conflict, which it has been building for decades.

Ironically, such an awakening among young voters in the US has pushed the Gaza conflict to the forefront of

election issues, especially for Democrats and the Democratic candidate Kamala Harris. She could lose her bid over her weak and patronizing stand on Gaza, especially in the critical swing state of Michigan.

This harsh reality, among other things, is probably what prompted Biden on Monday to announce that the time had come for forging a ceasefire in Gaza. He said that his team would be working to fulfill this aim. Previous attempts to make this happen have been foiled by Netanyahu. But now Biden believes he has many reasons to force Israel into accepting a ceasefire.

Under domestic pressure, Netanyahu may now accept a brief truce, suggested by Egypt, to carry out the exchange of Israeli captives with Palestinian prisoners. The US hopes such a two-day pause in the war may evolve into a lasting one. Hamas wants to see a process where Israel would eventually withdraw entirely from Gaza. That is something that Netanyahu will never accept.

The sliver of hope emerging now may be extinguished sooner than expected. But one thing is certain: Israel is far from pacifying all of Gaza, and it is far from containing Hezbollah. Netanyahu is losing the argument for an endless war.

Regardless of who wins the US presidential election, Israel will have a tough time justifying a war that has no day-after scenario. Netanyahu is wrong to assume that a second Trump presidency will allow him to carry on with a conflict that has lost its meaning for most Israelis and has become unpopular all over the world. His victory lap is unlikely to take place, ever.

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Disclaimer: Views expressed by writers in this section are their own and do not necessarily reflect The Asian Telegraph's point-of-view

Today in History

History of Pakistan



Minor earth tremors are common throughout the region. However, a number of earthquakes have been severe and highly destructive, given the fact that many buildings are poorly constructed and that those in the mountains are often precariously perched. Historically recent major quakes in Pakistan include those in 1935, 1945, 1974, and 2005. The latter two were in the far north of the country, and the 2005 quake – centred in the mountainous border region of the North-West Frontier Province (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) and Azad Kashmir – killed some 80,000 to 90,000 people and left the entire area devastated. The population in this inhospitable northern region is generally sparse, although in a few favoured places it is

dense. In most of the tiny settlements of this region, the usual crop is barley; fruit cultivation, especially apricots, is of special importance. Timber, mainly species of pine, is found in some parts, but its occurrence varies with precipitation and elevation. Many slopes have been denuded of cover by excessive timber felling and overgrazing. Wildflowers blooming in the Hindu Kush, in the Chitral district of northern Pakistan.

In far northern Pakistan the Hindu Kush branches off southwestward from the nodal orogenic uplift known as the Pamir Knot. The ridges of the Hindu Kush generally trend from northeast to southwest, while those of the Karakoram run in a southeast-northwest direction from the knot. The Hindu Kush is made up of two dis-

tinct ranges, a main crest line that is cut by transverse streams, and a watershed range to the west of the main range, in Afghanistan, that divides the Indus system of rivers from the Anu Darya (ancient Oxus River) drainage basin. From the Hindu Kush, several branches run southward through the areas of Chitral, Dir, and Swat, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. These branches have deep, narrow valleys along the Kunar, Panjkora, and Swat rivers. In the extreme northern portion, the ranges are capped with perpetual snow and ice; high peaks include Tirich Mir, which rises to 25,230 feet (7,690 metres). The valley sides are generally bare on account of their isolation from the precipitation-bearing influences. Toward the south the region is largely covered with

forests of deodar (a type of cedar) and pine and also has extensive grasslands.

The Khyber Pass, on Pakistan's north-western border with Afghanistan.

The Safid Mountain Range, lying south of the K bul River and forming a border with Afghanistan, trends roughly east to west and rises throughout to an elevation of about 14,000 feet (4,300 metres). Its outliers are spread over Kohat district, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. South of the Safid Range are the hills of Waziristan, which are crossed by the Kurram and Tochi rivers, and even farther south is the Gumal River. Comparatively broad mountain passes are located south of the K bul River.

To be continued....

Showbiz

Tech

Blake Lively marks return to fashion awards after 'It Ends with Us' drama

Blake Lively was bullied over her poor acting performance in her new movie 'It Ends with Us'



Blake Lively has recently marked a stunning appearance at the 2024 CFDA Fashion Awards.

According to Daily Mail magazine, the 37-year-old actress attended the star-studded event after a decade on October 28, 2024. The fashion gala took place at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City.

For the awards show, Blake donned a long white thigh-high dress, which she paired with matching blazer.

To elevate her look, the Gossip Girl star carried stunning silver jewellery and white heels.

For the event, the mother-of-three was accompanied by Michael Kors, Kylie Jenner, Katie Holmes, Carter Gregory,

Carolina Herrera, Lance LePere and Ciara. As per the reports, Blake presented the Positive Change Award to her close friend and designer Michael. Blake's red carpet appearance came after controversy surrounding her poor performance in *It Ends With Us* film adaptation and recent bullying accusations.

The Town actress was also targeted by fans on social media for behaving rudely with her co-star, Justin Baldoni, during the promotions of the film.

It is worth noting that the romance-drama film was released in August 2024. The movie stars Blake, Justin, Brandon Sklenar, Jenny Slate, Isabela Ferrer and Alex Neustaedter.

Apple releases AI features across devices

SAN FRANCISCO: Apple rolled out its first set of artificial intelligence features, dubbed Apple Intelligence, across its premium iPhone, iPad, and Mac devices on Monday marking the tech giant's major push into generative AI. The release, which was first previewed by the company in June, marks Apple's foray into an AI race that has seen US tech giants rush into ChatGPT-style technology. Google, Microsoft, Amazon and Apple are convinced that generative AI's powers are the next chapter of computing and have ramped up spending so as not to be left behind. "Apple Intelligence is generative AI in a way that only Apple can deliver, and we're incredibly excited about its ability to enrich our users' lives," Apple CEO Tim Cook said in a blog post. Apple's new features include enhanced writing tools, improved photo searching capabilities, and a more conversational Siri virtual assistant. The company also plans to integrate ChatGPT's capabilities into its services by December. Additional features planned for Decem-



ber include the ability to generate custom emoji and create images from text descriptions. The features are largely being limited to the latest iPhones and iPads as well as Mac computers. The powers of Apple Intelligence are for now only available in US English.

Versions in Chinese, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Korean and other languages will be released in the coming year.

At the launch event in June, Apple had postponed the launch of Apple Intelligence in the European Union indefinitely, due to "regulatory uncertainties" linked to new laws. It now said that most offerings will be available in the EU on Mac computers in US English and will begin to be deployed on iPhones and iPads from April.

Apple Intelligence features also include system-wide writing tools that can rewrite and proofread text, and the ability to remove unwanted objects from images. Overall, the features are similar to tools recently released by Meta, Microsoft and Google.

Chinese doctors develop AI breast-cancer screening on smartphones

BELJING: A team of Chinese doctors has been developing an artificial intelligence-based infrared thermography (AI-IRT) system for breast-cancer screening, enabling users to easily check their levels of cancer risk through an app by linking infrared cameras to their smartphones.

According to the research team from the Beijing-based Peking Union Medical College Hospital (PUMCH), the system is composed of an infrared camera, an AI algorithm, and a big-data platform.

After linking the infrared cameras to their smartphones, users can use the cameras to capture thermal images of their breasts. These are then uploaded to a phone app and automatically processed by the AI algorithm, with the results showing different levels of cancer risk.

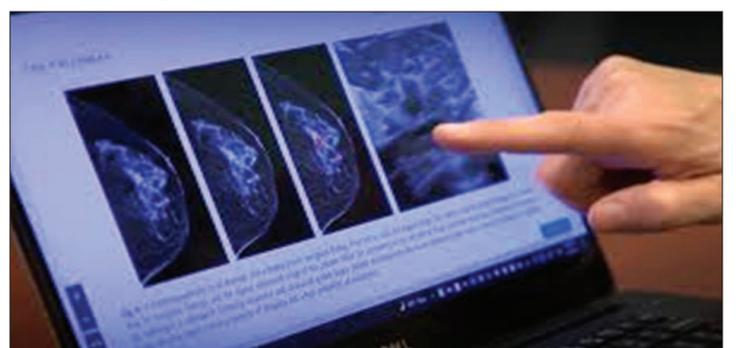
The research team expects the system to serve as a more convenient, accurate and cost-effective

breast cancer pre-clinical screening solution for Chinese women. Currently, breast self-examination is the main pre-clinical screening method, yet most women do not perform breast self-examinations regularly or employ the correct techniques. Breast cancer is a major female health issue in China. In 2022, China recorded 357,200 new cases of breast cancer, the second most prevalent malignancy among females in that year, and 75,000 deaths from the disease. "Early screening and diagnosis are key to the treatment of breast cancer," said Sun Qiang, a chief breast physician at the PUMCH and a core member of the research team.

Compared with major clinical screening methods such as ultrasound examination, mammography and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), the AI-IRT system as a large-scale pre-clinical screening method has the advantages of being non-invasive,

radiation-free, quick and more affordable. IRT is also regarded as an effective technique in screening dense breasts, which are more common among Asian women. "It is a Chinese solution for breast cancer pre-clinical screening for Chinese females," said Zhou Yidong, director of the breast surgery department of the PUMCH.

Based on their current findings, the researchers hope to introduce the AI-IRT system to the public for use at home and in community health centers in the future, saving the trouble of making hospital appointments in advance and waiting for days to have clinical screenings. Wang Xuefei, an attending physician for the PUMCH breast surgery department and a core member of the research team, said that although the research results require higher-quality prospective validation studies for further confirmation.



Health

Maritime Minister lauds China's economic model, strengthens bilateral ties

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmad Sheikh, on Tuesday emphasized China's economic model as a global example during a recent conference, underscoring the strengthening partnership between Pakistan and China. Addressing the conference "China at 75: A Journey of Progress, Transformation & Global Leadership," organized by the Pak-China Institute, Qaiser Ahmad Sheikh praised China's economic approach, which he said surpasses Western liberal and neo-liberal models. He highlighted the Chinese economic model as an ideal for other countries, adding that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is also inspired by this approach.

The minister discussed the strengthening strategic partnership between Pakistan and China, noting that the two nations consistently support each other in international fora, a reflection of their close ties. He expressed optimism about the completion of Phase II of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) with China's continued support and thanked the Chinese government for prioritizing Pakistan within South Asia.

Sheikh pledged to elevate Pakistan's maritime sector to meet the standards of China's port and shipping industry. He emphasized that terrorism and actions by hostile groups would not weaken the longstanding friendship between the two nations. He also assured that Pakistan's federal government is addressing the concerns of the Chinese government and investors.

The minister reiterated the importance of CPEC for the development of Balochistan and other provinces, stressing Pakistan's commitment to seeing all CPEC projects through to completion.

IHC grants two-day extension in PTI focal person's recovery case

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday granted a two-day extension following a request from Attorney General Mansoor Usman, who promised progress on the case concerning Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) missing focal person, Advocate Intazar Panjtoha.

The hearing, presided over by Chief Justice Aamer Farooq, addressed a petition submitted by Ali Ijaz Butt seeking Panjtoha's recovery. During the proceedings, Attorney General Usman, representing the government, informed the court that efforts to locate Panjtoha are ongoing. He requested additional time to provide a substantial update and expressed optimism about delivering positive news by Friday.

"We are coordinating with Ali Bukhari, and I am hopeful to report some good news," Usman stated. In light of this, the court granted the two-day extension and scheduled the next hearing for November 2. APP

CAS Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu emphasises on strengthening military ties with Russia



ISLAMABAD: A high level delegation led by Colonel General Aleksandr V. Fomin, Deputy Defence Minister of the Russian Federation, called on Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force at Air Headquarters, Islamabad. According to a statement issued by the

ISPR, the meeting remained focused on bolstering military cooperation and industrial collaboration between the two sides while exploring new avenues to fortify existing ties through joint military exercises and technical support for PAF equipment.

Air Chief emphasised on strengthening military ties with Russia, focusing on collaborative training programs, joint military drills and industrial collaboration.

Colonel General Aleksandr V. Fomin commended the recent impressive advancements in Pakistan Air Force under the current leadership. The Russian Deputy Defence Minister reiterated his resolve to play his role in further consolidating the existing collaborative defence partnership with Pakistan through military to military cooperation and technical support for PAF equipment. PR

NA Deputy Speaker refers four bills to concerned committees

ISLAMABAD: The Deputy Speaker National Assembly Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah has referred four bills to the concerned committee including the Civil Servnet Amendment Bill 2024 which was introduced by Sahibzada Sibghatullah and two other bills were introduced by Shaista Pevza Malik (The Islamabad Healthcare Regulation (Amendment) Bill, 2024) and (The Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (Amendment) Bill, 2024).

Ms Shaista Pevza proposed amendment to the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (Amendment) Bill to provide speedy justice to the people, besides tightening rules to allow the practice of physiotherapy to only qualified persons. She quoted the example of the Islamabad murder case where Zahir Jaffer, a mentally ill physiotherapist murdered a girl Noor Muqaddam. The parents of Noor still were in search of justice.

Another bill introduced by Ms Aliya Kamran was referred to the National Assembly Committee on Rules of Procedures and Conduct of Business. The bill pertains to amend sub-rule (5) of rule 293 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the National Assembly, 2007. Dr Zulfiqar Bhatti also presented a report on The Nippon Institute of Advanced Sciences Bill, 2024 in the House on behalf chairman of the committee Azim Uddin Zahid. APP

ADB issues first biodiversity, nature bond

ISLAMABAD: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has issued its first biodiversity and nature theme bond to finance a pool of eligible projects across Asia and the Pacific. The \$150 million (equivalent to US\$100 million), 10-year issue was purchased by the Dai-ichi Life Insurance Company, Limited of Japan and arranged by Credit Agricole CIB, according to ADB press release received here. The bond was issued under ADB's Theme Bonds for Sustainable Development program, in coordination with its Environment group, it added. "Investing in nature is emerging as one of the most impactful ways to combat climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. Through ADB's first biodiversity and nature bond, we are pleased to mobilize additional private sector capital to protect, restore and enhance sustainable management of biodiversity and nature mainstreaming," said ADB Treasurer Tobias Hoschka. ADB's theme bonds for sustainable development act as a key vehicle to mobilize private capital

in support of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework while offering investors with a safe and attractive investment opportunity through ADB's AAA credit rating. "Dai-ichi Life is pleased to have invested in the first Biodiversity and Nature Bond issued by ADB. We are committed to creating a positive impact on society by investing in assets that contribute to solving social issues," said Dai-ichi Life Managing Executive Officer and Chief General Manager, Investment Kazuyuki Shigemoto. "We strongly support ADB's Biodiversity and Nature Bond that will finance projects aimed at nature-based solutions, including biodiversity protection, nature mainstreaming, as well as supporting the livelihoods of the communities," Dai-ichi added. ADB has long been committed to protecting biodiversity and nature. It is a founding partner of the Coral Triangle Initiative established in 2009, safeguarding one of the world's most critical marine ecosystems.

At the Glasgow Climate Community of Practice in 2021, ADB along with nine other multilateral development banks, issued the Joint Statement on Nature, People, and Planet. In 2023, ADB launched the Nature Solutions Finance Hub along with partners, as well as the Natural Capital Fund, in partnership with the Global Environment Facility. The new ADB's Biodiversity and Nature Bond was announced at the 16th Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Cali, Colombia. ADB will soon launch its Environment Action Plan 2024-2030: Towards a Nature Positive Asia and the Pacific that will create a road map for its activities to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. "Credit Agricole CIB is very pleased to assist ADB in its sustainable finance journey since its inception. We assisted ADB through Green Finance and other theme bonds over the last years, said Credit Agricole CIB Global Head of Sustainability Tanguy Clauin. APP



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar and Ambassador of Turkiye, Dr. Irfan Neziroglu, and others cutting the cake during the 101 Anniversary of Turkish National Day at a local hotel in Federal Capital. ONLINE

At least five dead, two injured in Panjgur as unknown assailants open fire on dam construction workers

President Zardari, PM Shehbaz, Mohsin Naqvi, Sarfraz Bugti strongly condemn the incident of firing in Panjgur

PANJGUR/QUETTA/ISLAMABAD: At least five people were killed and two injured after unknown gunmen opened fire at a dam construction site in District Panjgur's Paroom area, officials said on Tuesday.

The incident occurred early Tuesday morning, killing workers tasked with maintenance work of the dam, according to Balochistan government spokesperson Shahid Rind.

"The dead and injured were shifted to a local hospital," Rind said, adding that the two injured were reportedly out of danger. He added that district administrative officers were present at the spot, and an investigation was underway.

President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif strongly condemning the incident of firing in Panjgur, have expressed deep grief over the loss of precious lives in the terrorist attack. In their separate statements, they expressed solidarity with the heirs of those, who were killed in the incident and prayed for high

perpetrators will be brought to justice. ranks of departed souls. The President said terrorists are enemies of the development of the country and prosperity of the province and they do not want the province to be prosperous.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif instructed the authorities concerned to identify people involved in attack and award them exemplary punishment.

He said the miscreants through their cowardly acts cannot shake the government resolve for development of Balochistan.

Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has strongly condemned the attack on a construction company's camp in Panjgur, resulting in the loss of precious lives. Mohsin Naqvi expressed deep sorrow over the incident, extending heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families. He also prayed for the swift recovery of the injured. The Interior Minister emphasized that those who target innocent people deserve no mercy, and will be dealt with iron hands. He assured that the

perpetrators will be brought to justice. Meanwhile, in a statement, Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Khan Bugti said terrorists involved in the incident will be dealt with iron hands. He condemned the incident and expressed sympathy with bereaved families and prayed for departed souls.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti termed the incident "condemnable and unforgivable". "Terrorists are followers of anti-national elements against development and peace," he said. "The enemy is irked by the peace and development of Balochistan."

He further said that terrorists can never succeed in their nefarious purposes, and that they were cowards who targeted innocent people in the dark of the night. "Terrorists will not be spared, unjust bloodshed must be accounted for," the statement said.

CM Bugti expressed his condolences to the families of the deceased, and expressed good wishes for a speedy recovery of the injured. SABAH

Pak, China writes a new chapter in agricultural industry development

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan, China are writing a new chapter in agricultural industry development," said Khalil Hashmi, Pakistan's Ambassador to China. "We hope both parties seize the opportunity to further expand cooperation in agriculture, food, and related fields, and work together to write a new chapter in agricultural industry development," said Khalil Hashmi, Pakistan's Ambassador to China. According to Gwadar Pro, he stated this on the occasion of a promotional and matchmaking conference for Pakistan's agricultural enterprises took place in the Yangling Demonstration Zone. The event served as a pilot for the 31st Yangling Agricultural High-Tech Fair, Gwadar Pro reported on Monday.

Key officials from both Pakistan and the Yangling Agriculture Demonstration Zone, along with representatives from various enterprises, gathered to discuss development and explore collaborative opportunities. "China and Pakistan have a long-standing partnership in the agricultural sector. The recent promotional event provided a robust platform for enterprises from both sides to engage, fostering deeper understanding and collaboration. Pakistan sent a high-profile government delegation to the Yangling Agricultural High-Tech Fair, which included the establishment of a national pavilion showcasing the country's agricultural achievements.

This pavilion featured 11 participating companies, highlighting Pakistan's agricultural advancements, the outcomes of Sino-Pakistani agricultural cooperation, and a range of agricultural products and handicrafts, all aimed at promoting trade collaboration between the two nations. The Yangling Demonstration Zone serves as a base for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in agriculture and has established strong cooperative ties with several Pakistani institutions. Collaborations with institutions such as Quaid-i-Azam University and Faisalabad Agricultural University have led to the creation of the Sino-Pakistan Bio-Health Agricultural Overseas Technology Demonstration Park and the Sino-Pakistan Agricultural Bio-Resource Research Center.

During the event, officials from the Pakistani government presented insights into the country's investment environment and agricultural incentives. Representatives from companies including GIGI Industrial Company, Ubka Group, Sichuan Pujin Holding Group Co., Ltd., Shaanxi Zhaojin Xianheng Agricultural Technology Co., Ltd., and Yangling Zhenghefeng Agricultural Technology Co., Ltd. shared their proposals.

"At the SCO Agricultural Exhibition in Yangling, Sichuan Litong is showcasing its successful cooperation in the BRI and CPEC agricultural projects. This effort sets a strong example for Chinese agricultural companies looking to expand internationally," remarked Duan Hongjun, Deputy General Manager of Sichuan Pujin Holding Group Co., Ltd. DNA

NDMA dispatches 17th relief consignment for Palestine, Lebanon

KARACHI: National Disaster Management Authority has dispatched 17th relief consignment for the war affected people of Gaza and Lebanon. On the directives of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) continues to provide humanitarian aid to the war-affected people of Palestine (Gaza) and Lebanon, spokesman said in a statement.

The 17th consignment of aid was dispatched from Karachi to Lebanon on Tuesday morning. This aid shipment, sent by NDMA in collaboration with Al-Khidmat Foundation, comprised approximately 17 tons of supplies, including tents, food tins, dry milk, rice, clothes, hygiene kits and medicines.

The aid was dispatched via chartered flight from Jinnah International Airport, Karachi, to Beirut, Lebanon. The send off ceremony held at Jinnah International Airport was attended by MNA Dr. Farooq Sattar, representatives from NDMA, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Al-Khidmat Foundation.



He reaffirmed the government commitment to supporting the brothers and sisters in distress and stressed the importance of collaboration with welfare organizations and the Pakistani public in strengthening these efforts. The government has sent 17 aid consignments to Gaza, Palestine, with a total volume of 1610 tons. On instructions of the Prime Minister, a special account named the "Prime Minister's Relief Fund for Gaza and Lebanon" is established for collecting donations from the public to aid their brothers and sisters in Palestine and Lebanon who are facing war emergencies. DNA

5th Pak-Russia Joint Military Consultative Committee meeting held in Defence Ministry



ISLAMABAD: The 5th Pak-Russia Joint Military Consultative Committee (JMCC) meeting was held in Ministry of Defence, here on Tuesday. Secretary Defence, Lt Gen Muhammad Ali (Retd), led the Pakistan side where as Colonel General Alexander V. Fomin Deputy Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation led the Russian side, a news release said. During today's meeting, which are scheduled from October 28-31, matters of mutual interest

including whole spectrum of bilateral defence cooperation was discussed. Both sides showed satisfaction on various areas of common interest in strategic and defence matters. Further, matters relating to training and exchange of visits were also discussed. Talks were held in a most cordial and congenial environment. Delegation leaders resolved to work together for enhanced cooperation in defence and security related fields.