



# Islamabad POST

Tuesday, January 25, 2022

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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### Pakistan is keen to enhance bilateral ties with Morocco

Detailed News On Page-01

### Saad Hariri suspends political career

Detailed News On Page-08



### Shaheen wins ICC cricketer of the year 2021

Detailed News On Page-06



## Briefs

### Shahzad Akbar resigns

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to the Prime Minister on Accountability and Interior Shahzad Akbar announced on Monday that he had resigned from his post, but said that he would still remain associated with the PTI. Talking to Twitter, Akbar said that he had tendered his resignation to Prime Minister Imran Khan. "I sincerely hope the process of accountability continues under the leadership of PM Imran as per the PTI's manifesto. I will remain associated with the party and keep contributing as a member of the legal fraternity," he said.

### PM should stop hurling threats

DNA

LAHORE: Commenting on prime minister's live programme on television, the PML-N has mocked his assertions asking him don't try to become a political martyr and told him to stop hurling threats. Addressing a presser in Lahore on Monday, PML-N spokesperson Murrizum Aurangzeb lashed out at Prime Minister Imran Khan over his talk during a TV programme on Sunday. Fumed at premier's remarks about PML-N President and Opposition leader Shehbaz Sharif whom he called a 'criminal', she dared PM Khan to come on roads and people would hold him by neck.

### Economy going in right direction

PESHAWAR: Defence Minister Perviz Khattak has said due to prudent economic policies 5.37 percent GDP has been achieved which reflects the country's economy is going in the right direction. Addressing a Workers' Convention in Timergara on Monday, he said that inflation is a global phenomenon which has hit many rich countries including Pakistan. Khattak said that the Sehat Insaf card scheme, interest free loans and youth programs are the achievements of PTI government. - APP



RAWALPINDI: Mohamed Karmoune, Ambassador of Morocco to Pakistan called on General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) at GHQ. - DNA

## Pakistan keen to enhance ties with Morocco

### The Army Chief expressed these views during a meeting with the Moroccan ambassador

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Ambassador of Morocco to Pakistan Mohamed Karmoune called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa at General Headquarters on Monday. According to a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), matters pertaining to bilateral defence, security cooperation & regional security including Afghanistan discussed came under discussion during meeting. The COAS said that Pakistan values its relations with the Morocco and earnestly look forward to enhance mutually beneficial multi-domain relations based on common interests. The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's role in Afghan situation, efforts for regional stability and pledged to play his role for further improvement in diplomatic cooperation with Pakistan at all levels.

Last year, The Pakistan-Morocco Bilateral Joint Exercise 2021, the first ever between the two countries, was held at the National Counter Terrorism Center in the northwestern Pakistani town of Pabbi. "During the exercise, Special Forces of Morocco and Pakistan practiced various drills involved in counter terrorism operations including cordon and search, compound clearance, close quarter battle, fast roping, rappelling and combat medics," the Pakistan army's media wing said. "The training was aimed at sharing mutual experience in counter terrorism domain, rehearsing / adopting best practices and enhancing cooperation between the two armies." Pakistan and Morocco have had cordial ties since the fifties, soon after Pakistan was created. Pakistan's exports to Morocco currently stand at \$11.5 million, while Moroccan exports to Pakistan stand at \$147 million.

## PM, Abu Dhabi Crown Prince discuss region

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan received a telephone call from His Highness Mohamed Bin Zayed, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces. The Crown Prince strongly condemned the terrorist attack in Lahore on 20 January 2022, which claimed three lives and left several injured. He offered deepest condolences to the families of all the victims and prayed for speedy recovery of the injured. The Crown Prince expressed solidarity with the leadership, government and people of Pakistan. The Prime Minister thanked the Crown Prince for his condolences and strong expression of support. Reaffirming Pakistan's firm resolve to fight terrorism



in all its forms and manifestations, he said that the perpetrators of terrorist attacks will be brought to justice. The Prime Minister expressed Pakistan's desire to work with the UAE for further strengthening of bilateral ties, enhancing cooperation in the multilateral fora and continue close coordination on regional and global issues of mutual interest. Frequent and cordial interaction between the leaderships of the two countries is a hallmark of fraternal ties between Pakistan and the UAE.

## Taliban hold talks with West in Norway

### The international community has however insisted the Taliban must respect human rights

OSLO: On their first visit to Europe since returning to power, the Taliban held landmark talks with Western diplomats in Oslo on Monday over the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, where hunger threatens more than half population. The international community has however insisted the Taliban must respect human rights before aid can be resumed to Afghanistan. Having accepted a controversial invitation from Norway, the Taliban were holding talks with representatives of the United States, France, Britain, Germany, Italy, the European Union and Norway. The closed-door discussions were being held at the Soria Moria Hotel, on a snowy hilltop outside Oslo, with the Taliban delegation led by

Continued on Page 06

## Monetary policy: Interest rate at 9.75%

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: In line with market expectations, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on Monday maintained the status quo and left the benchmark interest rate unchanged at 9.75% for the next two months. Financial pundits had anticipated no change in the policy rate as the SBP strongly hinted in monetary policy statements for December 2021 that it might maintain the rate at the current level of 9.75% to analyse the effects of the tightening we have already done. This was the first monetary policy committee (MPC) meeting of the calendar year 2022. According to traditional practice, the central bank revises its monetary policy rate up or down or keeps it unchanged over the inflation reading and economic activities.

## Shehbaz case should go live: Fawad

### Information Minister says that recovery from Sharif brothers is "very important"



RANA FARRUKH / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Fawad Chaudhry on Monday said the government has requested the Chief Justice of Pakistan to broadcast Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly Shahbaz Sharif's case live for the public to see. Addressing a press conference in Islamabad, the minister said that the government wants the public to witness what evidence Shahbaz produces in the court proceedings to prove his claimed innocence. Speaking about the attorney-general of Pakistan's (AGP) letter to Shahbaz, he said that Shahbaz has been asked to report to the committee formed to monitor PML-N supreme Nawaz Shahbaz's case, explaining to them the reasons behind the delay in his return. "The Sharif brothers - Nawaz and Shahbaz - used to say that the Pakistani law does not apply to their children," he said, adding that if the allegations against

Continued on Page 06

## AGP wants Nawaz's medical reports

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The attorney-general for Pakistan (AGP) has written a letter to the Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly Shahbaz Sharif to bring back PML-N Supreme Nawaz Sharif to Pakistan, media reported Monday. The AGP has instructed Shahbaz to submit Nawaz's medical reports within the next 10 days; in case he fails to do so, contempt of court petition will be filed against Shahbaz. On November 16, 2019, the Lahore High Court (LHC) allowed Nawaz Sharif to go abroad for medical treatment, the letter read, mentioning that according to the doctors' instructions, Nawaz was allowed to leave for four weeks. The AGP also mentioned that according to media reports, Nawaz is in good health, while when he was leaving the country, his condition was described as critical. The letter further said that as soon as Nawaz reached London, "his condition improved." "After reaching

Continued on Page 06

## Justice Ayesha takes oath as SC judge

### PM Imran Khan, French embassy greet Justice Ayesha



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Justice Ayesha Malik on Monday took her oath as a Supreme Court judge and formally became the country's first-ever female judge to reach the apex court. Chief Justice Gulzar Ahmed administered the oath to Justice Malik in a

ceremony held at the ceremonial hall of the Supreme Court. Prime Minister Imran Khan in his Tweet on Monday greeted Justice Aysah Malik and wished her best of luck. Embassy of France in its social media message also congratulated Justice Ayesha Malik. The French embassy message says "as we celebrate

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## US, Western countries pull out from Ukraine

### The move does not reflect an easing of US support for Ukraine

NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

WASHINGTON: The US, UK and Australia have told the families of its diplomats in Kyiv to leave Ukraine amid concerns about a potential Russian invasion. Germany said it would also help its citizens leave if they wish. Several Western countries cautioned against travel to Ukraine and moved to pull the families of their diplomatic staff out of the country on Monday, following a similar move by the United States. The growing list of countries calling on citizens to leave the country comes amid mounting tensions over Russia's military buildup on the border with Ukraine. On Sunday, the US State Department told the relatives of diplomatic staff stationed at the embassy in Kyiv to start leaving Ukraine. US officials advised against traveling to Ukraine due to "increased threats of Russian military action" and COVID-19. In a travel advisory published on its website, the State Department

said that there were reports Russia is planning significant military action against Ukraine. Besides ordering the departure of eligible family members of the Kyiv embassy staff, Washington also authorized the voluntary departure of embassy employees. According to the Associated Press (AP), their departure is at the US government's expense. "The security conditions, particularly along Ukraine's borders, in Russia-occupied Crimea, and in Russia-controlled eastern Ukraine, are unpredictable and can deteriorate with little notice," the State Department's travel advisory said. "Demonstrations, which have turned violent at times, regularly occur throughout Ukraine, including in Kyiv." News Agency cited State Department officials as saying that the embassy will remain open and the announcement does not constitute an evacuation. They added that the move does not reflect an easing of US support for Ukraine and had been under consideration for some time.

## Boris warns Russian invasion would be disastrous

LONDON: Prime Minister Boris Johnson has warned Russia that invading Ukraine would be "disastrous" and a "painful, violent and bloody business". Speaking as the Foreign Office pulled some embassy staff out of Ukraine, the PM said the situation is "pretty gloomy" but war was not inevitable. He said the UK was "leading on creating a package of economic sanctions" against Russia. Defensive weaponry is being supplied to Ukraine, Mr Johnson said. He added that the UK stood "four-square with the people of Ukraine". Russia has denied plans for military action, but tens of thousands of troops have amassed on the border. Mr Johnson said: "The intelligence is very clear that there are 60 Russian battle groups on the borders of Ukraine, the plan for a lightning war that could take out Kyiv is one that everybody can see." We need to make it very clear to the Kremlin, to Russia, that that would be a disastrous step." Officials say there have been no specific threats to British diplomats but about half of the staff working in Kyiv will return to the UK. The US has ordered relatives of its embassy staff to leave, saying an invasion could come "at any time". The embassy moves were described as precautionary, and nothing specific is thought to have occurred in the past 24 hours to have triggered the decisions of the US and UK. - DNA



The United States has led a diplomatic push to dissuade Russian President Vladimir Putin from attacking Ukraine and to marshal its allies to prepare swingeing economic punishment for Moscow if he does act. Blinken has committed to provide a written response this week to Moscow after it laid down a series of security demands that would stop Ukraine joining NATO and roll back Washington's influence in eastern Europe. EU foreign ministers gathering in Brussels will look to sound out the United States over its plans as Europe frets it has been left on the sidelines of discussions about its own security arrangements. Washington and EU have threatened Moscow with "massive consequences" if it sends in its forces - but getting consensus for hard-hitting measures among the bloc's 27 nations is a complex task. EU officials have been consulting with member states in a bid to draw up a raft of punishing sanctions in case Putin invades.



## Briefs

## Excise recovers 15kg hashish in 2 actions

PESHAWAR: The Excise police Peshawar Region in its ongoing drive against drug peddlers on Monday recovered 15kg hashish in two separate actions. According to Excise police spokesman, the excise police Peshawar region on a tip-off stopped a suspected car bearing number plate (FSH 6969) near Gole Chowk Ring Road, and after searching recovered 12000 grams of hashish from the car. They arrested two drug peddlers identified as Bilal Ahmad of Tarlai, Islamabad and Asif Hussain, resident of Namak Mandi Peshawar. In another action at Northern Bypass, 3000 gm hashish was recovered from the petrol tank of a car bearing number plate (LED 4977). The involved accused identified as Tayyab and Imran, residents of Hashtnagri were taken into custody and shifted to Excise police station for further interrogation. — APP

## Shujaat advises PM to be wary of his advisers

## DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League - Q (PML-Q) representative Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain on Monday advised the Prime Minister Imran Khan to be wary of his advisers. The PML-Q leader said that for the first time, I am advising Prime Minister Imran Khan to beware of the wrong suggestions of his own political associates and ministers. Whenever PM's advisers give him any advice, there is something in it. They bounce things according to their own thinking which only harms PM Imran Khan. He added that the premier's statement may have been made by an enemy-friend in which he said that I am not allowed to speak in the assembly. I come to the media and talk, if I am removed, I will become more dangerous than before. The Chaudhry Shujaat went on to say that if we ask for the correction in any kind of statement, the illiterate advisers immediately convey to PM Khan that he should not take any lenient attitude. He added that the advisers know about the reality, but they are always looking for opportunities to advise the Prime Minister according to their own benefit.

## Crime reporter killed in gun attack

## DNA

LAHORE: Unidentified assailants have gunned down a crime reporter named Husnain Shah outside Lahore Press Club. Two assailants have opened fire on the vehicle of a crime reporter, Husnain Shah, of a private television channel in Lahore. Following the gun attack, a large contingent of police reached the incident. Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Operations Abid Khan has directed Senior Superintendent Police (SSP) Operation Mustansar Feroz to immediately rush to the crime scene. The spokesperson of the operations' wing said in a statement that a journalist from a private news channel was killed in firing at his vehicle. A special team has been constituted to investigate the incident. Police said that the attackers will be traced through the Safe City cameras. Inspector General (IG) Punjab Rao Sardar Ali Khan took notice of a journalist's killing in Lahore and sought a report from the CCPO Lahore. He directed police authorities to immediately arrest the culprits. The provincial police chief directed DIG Investigation Lahore to supervise the investigation. He also instructed police officers to remain in contact with the slain journalist's family.



KARACHI: A group photograph with President Dr. Arif Alvi in front of PN Sea King helicopters at Pakistan Navy Dockyard. — DNA

## CS inaugurates 2nd phase of anti-polio drive in KP

Coordinator EOC Abdul Basit informed the media that the first round of January campaign has been successfully completed in Bannu and D.I.Khan Divisions while the second round has been kicked off today in 19 districts of the province

## BUREAU REPORT

PESHAWAR: Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Dr Shahzad Khan Bangash said on Monday that every campaign is an opportunity to stop virus transmission in the region by reaching out to the vulnerable communities at their doorsteps. He said this while inaugurating 2nd phase of the first anti-polio drive of the year here at Sifat Ghayoor Children hospital wherein over 3.4 million children will be inoculated against polio. Additional Secretary Health & Coordinator Emergency Operations Center Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Abdul Basit, Deputy Commissioner Peshawar Capt @ Khalid Mehmood, Additional Deputy Commissioner (Relief),

Imran Khan, Assistant Commissioner, Dr Ahtisham, representatives of partner staff and hospital administration was also present on the occasion. Talking to media on the occasion, Dr Shahzad said that the province has made a good progress in the battle against polio despite multiple challenges as no wild polio virus case has been reported in the province for over 18 months now. However, he went on to add that Peshawar and South KP particularly Bannu and D.I.Khan Divisions still present highest risk in the Province and needs maximum focus and peak performance. "I appeal to the parents and caregivers to support the government's efforts in stopping WPV transmission by vaccinating their children in every anti-polio campaign", he added.

The top provincial bureaucrat said that the district administrators have been directed to provide foolproof security to teams, ensure quality campaign and to bring the poor performers to task. He hoped that with the current level of ownership by the government, motivation and hard work of the frontline workers and support of cross segments of society, remaining challenges in polio eradication will be overcome and the last endemic region will be purged of the virus soon. Earlier, Coordinator EOC Abdul Basit informed the media that the first round of January campaign has been successfully completed in Bannu and D.I.Khan Divisions while the second round has been kicked off today in 19 districts of the province.

He informed that the 2nd phase of the January campaign will be carried out in Peshawar, Nowshera, Charsadda, Khyber, Mohmand, Mardan, Swabi, Kohat, Hangu, Karak, Orakzai, Kurram, Dir Lower, Bajaur and in Union Councils with Afghan Refugees Camps in Haripur, Mansehra, Buner, Malakand and Chitral. Likewise, Abdul Basit said that 14887 total teams have been constituted for phase two of the January campaign out of which 13287 are mobile teams, 953 fixed teams, 611 roaming teams and 36 transit teams. He said that 4949 area in-charges and 1156 Union Council polio Eradication chairmen have been deployed to monitor quality of the campaign and rectify existing gaps at the grassroot level.

## DC urges all depts to be vigilant against dengue



## STAFF REPORT

LODHHRAN: Deputy Commissioner Captain (R) Shoaib Ali said that all departments should play their role effectively for proper prevention of dengue, 100% coverage of all hotspots should be ensured, especially rooftops of tyreshops should be checked, surveillance of nurseries, dairy farms, service stations including parks should be done, he added that all platforms of publicity should be utilized to spread awareness among citizens regarding dengue prevention and preventive measures. He expressed these remarks while presiding District Emergency Response Committee for dengue prevention's meeting. In the meeting dengue preventive measures taken by Health and other relevant departments were reviewed. Deputy Commissioner said that all users should keep their android phones functional and upload their performance on daily basis and in this regard people uploading fake data should correct themselves. He said that for the public awareness organized dengue prevention campaign's effective

results should be attained, strict surveillance of sensitive places where dengue larva hatches should be done. He added that all relevant departments should observe their responsibilities diligently for dengue prevention. He said that for eradication of dengue larva all departments including Health Department should take thorough preventive measures, indoor and outdoor hotspots should be especially monitored. He directed MS DHQ and THQ Hospitals to ensure recording the CNIC, Cell numbers and Union Council while filling the details of suspected dengue patients. He said that surveillance for dengue in graveyards should be improved, he directed Municipal Officers to set the targets of surveillance of graveyards and cleaning of parks and access their performance. It was told during the meeting that collectively throughout the district 279 indoor teams and 73 outdoor teams have been deployed for vector surveillance, in Tehsil Lodhran for dengue surveillance 93 indoor, 28 outdoor, in Tehsil Kehror Pakka 85 indoor, 23 outdoor while in Tehsil Duniyapur 101 indoor and 22 outdoor teams have been deployed.

## SHC disposes of Vawda's case

## DNA

KARACHI: The Sindh High Court has disposed of Senator Faisal Vawda's case after the withdrawal of the petition challenging the election commission's proceedings against his dual nationality. The Sindh High Court held a hearing on the petition filed by Senator Vawda's against the election commission's inquiry into senator's dual nationality which he had concealed at the time of submitting his nomination papers on June 11, 2018 to the election commission. The counsel for the petitioner told the court that his client wanted to withdraw his petition. He stated that the ECP was not holding proceedings as per the law.

## Impersonator arrested

FAISALABAD: The police on Monday claimed to have arrested an impersonator. A police spokesman said a shopkeeper in his complaint to Satellite Town Jhang police said Mumtaz Hussain demanded money from him. To which, the police arrested Mumtaz and his accomplice Rabnawaz who were wanted to the police in six cases of fraud, extortion money and forgery, etc. A new case was registered against the accused and investigation had been started, the spokesman added. — APP

## Time to hold govt accountable, says Hamza

LAHORE: Opposition Leader of Punjab Assembly Hamza Shahbaz Sharif on Monday said that it is time for holding the current government accountable for putting national security at stake, strangling the nation's economy and making inflation rise sky high. While talking to the media, the opposition leader said that Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan and his incompetent Chief Minister (CM) Usman Buzdar have done nothing other than taking credit for the projects initiated by former CM Shehbaz Sharif. Hamza Shahbaz further said that their only focus is bullying, intimidation and political revenge. Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader said that the previous day the PM seemed like a person who has already lost and is now only covering up his failures whereas Shehbaz Sharif got a clean chit from Britain's National Crime Agency. — DNA

## Illegitimate students nabbed

## DNA

LAHORE: Fifty illegitimate students of Punjab University (PU) who belong to Islami Jamiat Talba (IJT) were arrested on Monday. Jamiat workers gathered in the sports department to ensure the expelled students took exams. The department's management refused to conduct exams of the expelled Jamiat workers. Police acted on a report from the university administration. It is pertinent to mention that the arrested Jamiat workers were wanted by the police in various FIRs. The IJT Nazim in PU Abdul Qadir said the police attacked their demonstration that was being conducted to solve the problems of the students.

## Federal Ombudsman decides 106,794 complaints in 2021

"The doors of Wafaqi Mohtasib are open for people round the clock for speedy resolution of their complaints and grievances. I have directed my officers to ensure merit, transparency and timely disposal of the office work"

PESHAWAR: Federal Ombudsman (Wafaqi Mohtasib), Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi on Monday said that 110,397 complaints have been registered last year out of which decisions on 106,794 complaints were delivered within a time-frame of 60 days. "You will be pleased to know that Wafaqi Mohtasib had received 110,397 complaints in 2021 and delivered judgments on 106,794 complaints within a time frame of 60 days. Out of the registered complaints, 42,240 complaints were received online, which shows keen interest of complainants in the use of modern technology," he said in a statement here on the occasion of completion of 39 years of the Wafaqi Mohtasib here.

He said Wafaqi Mohtasib was established on January 24, 1983 through a President's Order and today, it has successfully completed 39 years since its establishment. During this period, he said this institution was led by renowned and distinguished personalities. "I am thankful to Allah Almighty for giving me an opportunity to serve my country and people as Wafaqi Mohtasib. This is the only official institution, which provides speedy and free relief to people, who have complaints against Government's departments." He said, "the doors of Wafaqi Mohtasib are open for people round the clock for speedy resolution of their complaints and grievances. I have directed my officers to ensure merit,

transparency and timely disposal of the office work." "On the occasion of Establishment Day of the Wafaqi Mohtasib, I consider it necessary to acknowledge and pay tributes to my predecessors for their valuable services, dedication and hard work, which made it a highly respectable institution." He said they provided relief to people at large-scale against mismanagement of the official departments and prepare study reports for bringing improvement in the system of organizations and departments, which immensely helped in reformation of jails, provision of facilities to prisoners particularly juvenile, women and resolution of grievances of the pensioners and overseas Pakistanis. — APP

## Smart lockdown imposed in Labour Colony

PESHAWAR: The district administration on Monday imposed smart lockdown in Labour Colony Mardan for a minimum period of 10 days after the number of positive Coronavirus cases increased in the area. The notification issued by the district administration says that controlled entry to and exit from the identified area will be permitted for persons supplying essential commodities and for those responsible for delivery of essential services. Similarly all types of gathering within these localities will be strictly banned. The District Health Officer will ensure provision of health services to the residents of locked down localities/houses. Similarly WSSM/TMA shall be responsible for general cleanliness, disposal of infectious waste and disinfection of the localities on regular basis. — APP

## RO and AROs for the LB elections in Mansehra

MANSEHRA: Election commission of Pakistan (ECP) Monday during the second phase of KPK local body election notifies the name of Returning Officer (RO) and Assistant Returning Officer (AROs) for district Mansehra and grant them the powers of magistrate. The second phase of the LB election would be held on the 27th of March 2022. The ECP regional office for district Mansehra notified the names of RO and AROs for the five Tehsils including Balakot, Mansehra, Bafa Pakhal, Darband and Tehsil Oghi. For the elections of Tehsil Mansehra Assistant Commissioner Mansehra Marwi Malik has been appointed as RO while Ishtiaq Khan Jadoon as ARO, For Tehsil Bafa Hasrat Khan appointed as RO while Chanzeb Khan and Saqib Khan have been appointee as AROs. Similarly for Tehsil Council Oghi Mrs. Alveena Riaz as RO while Fazal Qadir and Abid Shah as AROs, for Tehsil council Darband Amjad Iqbal has been appointed as RO while Maroof Khan and Naeem were AROs and for Tehsil Council Balakot Asif Ali RO and Ghulam Geelani as ARO. — APP

اسلام آباد ایکسپریس سٹیٹ (پبلیک) لیمیٹڈ  
INVESTMENT CORPORATION OF PAKISTAN (ICP)

**INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)**  
(TENDER No. IESCO/PMU/CIVIL/NCB-100/2022)

1. IESCO invites sealed bids from the contractor Registered with Pakistan Engineering Council and renewed for the year 2021-22. Single Stage - Two Envelops Bidding procedure, under National Competitive Bidding (NCB) basis in accordance with Provisions of PPRA Rules.

**CONSTRUCTION OF CONTROL HOUSE BUILDING, ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT FOUNDATIONS, TRANSFORMER WAY, SWITCHYARD FENCE WALL, CABLE TRENCHES, RETAINING WALL ETC. MITIGATION MEASURES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING PLAN (EMMP) AT 132KV GRID STATION DHA PHASE IV RAWALPINDI UNDER COST DEPOSIT BASIS (ESTIMATED COST PKR. 105.777 MILLION)**

**ELIGIBILITY:**

- This Invitation for Bids is open to all Bidders meeting the following requirements:
  - Pakistan Engineering Council Registration renewed for year 2021-22 with at least **Category C-4** having Specialization Code of **CE-10 & EE-05**.
  - The bidder/JV must have demonstrated at least five year experience in the field of construction as per registration categories of PEC.
  - A Bidder/JV may be a natural person, private entity, or government-owned enterprise or any combination who is active tax payer.
  - The bidder/JV shall have furnished income tax returns for last three years duly verified by FBR.
  - PEC registered contractor must demonstrate at least five experience in construction industry.
  - Bidder/JV must demonstrate at least two (02) No. contracts that have been successfully completed within the last five (05) years similar to this work as per ITB Clause 3.2.2 (I). However, value of each contract agreement/Work Order should not be less than **Rs.43 Million** for the purpose, the bidder/JV shall provide relevant Work Order/Contract agreement & Completion certificates etc. Bidder/JV must demonstrate satisfactory performance of previous completed works.
- The bidder/JV shall demonstrate at least the following financial criteria for last three (03) years duly certified from audited financial statements:
 

|                                     |                |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| AATO (PKR)                          | 160.00 Million |
| Financial Resources/Cash Flow (PKR) | 30.00 Million  |

**Terms & Conditions:** National Competitive Bidding (NCB) will be conducted in accordance with Single-Stage, Two-Envelope method.

- A complete set of bidding document may be purchased interested bidder on submission of a written application to the office of Chief Engineer (Development) IESCO, on any working day during office hours upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **Rs.5,000/-** (Rupees Five Thousand only).
- Bidding document will be issued to authorized representative holding the Authority letter of the firm.
- All the bids must accompany 3% of total bid price as bid security for this tender in the shape of Bank Guarantee/CDR/Bank Draft from any scheduled bank for this tender in favor of Chief Engineer (Development) IESCO, Islamabad. Bid security shall be valid for **28 days** beyond bid validity and bid shall be valid for **150 days**.
- Bid must be delivered to Chief Engineer (Dev) IESCO Street No 40, Sector G-7/4, Islamabad on or before 1030 Hour, on **11.02.2022** and Technical Proposal will be opened at 1100 Hours on the same date in the presence of participants or their authorized representative (bearing Authority letters) who choose to attend IESCO Head Office (Manager Procurement Office) G-7/4 Street No. 40, Islamabad, while Financial Bid shall remain unopened in the custody of undersigned. Financial Bids shall be opened of those bidder(s) who will stand technically responsive. Financial Bid of technically Non-responsive bidder(s) shall be returned un-opened.
- The bids covering partial and incomplete works as well as not in shape of book binding shall be rejected.
- No conditional/E-mail bids will be accepted.
- This advertisement is also available at Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) website: www.ppra.gov.pk
- IESCO reserves the right to accept or reject all the bids as per PPRA Rule-33 (1).

**Chief Engineer (Development)**  
IESCO, Head Office, Street No 40, Sector G-7/4, Islamabad  
کرونا ویکسینیشن کو یقینی بنائیں  
PID (I) No. 5047/21



## SERVICES



## Namaz Timings

|              |          |
|--------------|----------|
| Fajr.....    | 05:43 am |
| Zohr.....    | 12:20 pm |
| Asr.....     | 03:53 pm |
| Maghrib..... | 05:31 pm |
| Isha.....    | 06:57 pm |



## Hotels &amp; Restaurants

|                   |              |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Serena Hotel..... | 111 133 133  |
| Marriott.....     | 051-2826121  |
| Monal.....        | 0334-5421812 |



## Airlines

|                       |         |
|-----------------------|---------|
| Turkish Airlines..... | 8494949 |
|-----------------------|---------|



## Emergency

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Rescue (Police).....                                 | 15        |
| Bomb Disposal.....                                   | 15        |
| Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....             | 1122 & 16 |
| Emergency Ambulance..1122 & Rescue Services..4451122 |           |
| Motorway Police.....                                 | 9266044   |
| Motorway Police.....                                 | 927060120 |
| Women Police Stations Islamabad.....                 | 9222596   |
| Rawalpindi.....                                      | 927060120 |



## Enquiry

|                       |          |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Edhi Ambulance.....   | 115      |
| PIA Flight Info.....  | 114      |
| PIA Cargo.....        | 9280979  |
| Railway Inquiry.....  | 117      |
| Railway Exchange..... | 92708315 |
| WASA Rawalpindi.....  | 5555489  |
| CAA.....              | 9281092  |



## Hospitals

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



## Departments

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



## Complaints

|                                 |             |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| Water Tanker Service            |             |
| E-7, F-10 & F-11.....           | 9204654     |
| G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8.....         | 9203883     |
| G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8..... | 9266316     |
| Wapda Islamabad.....            | 9217579     |
| Wapda Rawalpindi                | 111-309-309 |

## Islamabad Metropolitan

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

## Wasa Water Tank

|                 |              |
|-----------------|--------------|
| Rawalpindi..... | 0331-5022125 |
|-----------------|--------------|

## Sri Lanka keen to further enhance trade ties with Pak

Ms. Asma Kamal, Trade Secretary, Pakistan High Commission to Sri Lanka said that Pakistan wanted to increase bilateral trade with Sri Lanka as the current level of trade was not reflective of their actual potential

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Bandula Gunawardhane, Trade Minister of Sri Lanka said that Pakistan was a longstanding friend and key trading partner of Sri Lanka in South Asia and his country was keen to further strengthen bilateral trade and economic ties with it to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes for both countries.

He said this while addressing the business community at Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI). He visited ICCI leading a Sri Lankan trade delegation to hold B2B meetings with the local business community. Tharaka Balasuriya State Minister of Regional Cooperation, Prof. Dr. Saj Mendis Director General of the Economic Affairs Division, Ms. Asma Kamal, Trade Secretary Pak High Commission to Sri Lanka, U.L.Niyas Acting High Commissioner of Sri Lanka to Pakistan also accompanied the Sri Lankan delegation. Dr. Bandula Gunawardhane



said that Pak-Sri Lanka FTA has contributed to expanding bilateral trade but more efforts from both sides were needed to maximize its benefits. He said that top Sri Lankan exports to Pakistan included betel leaves, women fabrics, coconut products, MDF & fibre boards, textiles articles, electrical & electronic products whereas major Pakistani exports to Sri Lanka included woven fabrics, mineral products, cereals, pharma products and potatoes. He stressed that

both sides should focus on diversification of products to improve bilateral trade. Tharaka Balasuriya State Minister of Regional Cooperation, said that Pakistan was a time-tested friend of Sri Lanka and both countries have good potential to enhance cooperation in pharmaceuticals, IT, tourism, minerals and electrical vehicles. He said that Pakistani investors should take advantage of investment in SEZs in Sri Lanka. Ms. Asma Kamal, Trade Secretary, Paki-

stan High Commission to Sri Lanka said that Pakistan wanted to increase bilateral trade with Sri Lanka as the current level of trade was not reflective of their actual potential. She said that both sides should address tariff and non-tariff barriers to take maximum benefit from FTA for trade promotion. Welcoming the delegation, Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that Sri Lanka was the first country with whom

Pakistan had signed FTA in 2005, but both countries have not taken full benefit of it for trade expansion. He stressed for removing trade barriers and hurdles to the implementation of FTA that would enable Pakistan and Sri Lanka to improve bilateral trade to USD 3 billion from the current level of USD 440 to 450 million. He said that many Pakistani products including marble & granite, Basmati rice, textiles, cement, fruits & vegetables and others could find a good

market in Sri Lanka and Sri Lanka should import these products from Pakistan. Jamsaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President, Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President ICCI, Zubair A. Malik former President ICCI and others also spoke at the occasion and stressed for frequent exchange of trade delegations to explore all untapped areas of mutual cooperation. Both sides held B2B meetings to discuss business collaborations in areas of mutual interest.

## HEC, PEC discuss service structure

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A meeting was held on Monday at HEC Secretariat between Engr. Muhammad Najeeb Haroon MNA, Chairman, Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) and Mr. Tariq Banuri, Chairman, Higher Education Commission (HEC) regarding the service structure of engineers and technologists. Both the organizations expressed their commitment to work expeditiously for finalization of respective service structures for both engineers and technologists.

It was expressed by the Heads of PEC and HEC that demand for separate service structures by engineers and technologists in their respective domain/cadre is a legitimate requirement to play their intended role in the engineering profession and thereby the socio-economic development of the country. It was stressed to take all important and necessary actions in the country's interest. Both organizations reiterated that the interests of engineers and technologists would be safeguarded in a balanced and nuanced manner.

## 41st AEO education expo attracts hundreds of students



ISLAMABAD: With world gradually moving back to normal, it is heartening to see that the international borders of top study destinations of the world have reopened. It is time that the students gear up and start preparing themselves to re-

alize their dreams to study at top ranked international universities. With over 5000 alumni and 300,000+ IELTS registrations, AEO Pakistan over the past two decades has established itself as Australian & Global Educa-

tion Specialists, the most trusted IELTS Official Test Centre and now the official OET Test Centre in Pakistan. AEO Pakistan operates as the official Liaison office for over 40 leading Australian Universities/Institutions and facilitates the enrolment of international students at these Universities / Institutions. Since 2002, AEO Pakistan has been conducting Australian Education Expos providing an excellent opportunity to Pakistani students planning to Study in Australia. Over the years thousands of students have benefitted from AEO expos held twice annually, across all major cities of Pakistan. - DNA

## Fawad lauds Shahzad Akbar's performance

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Husain on Monday appreciated the performance of Shahzad Akbar as PM's Advisor on Accountability. In a tweet tagging the tweet of Shahzad Akbar he said it was not easy to take on mafia but his handling of the cases was admirable. The minister said: "You worked under tremendous pressure, it was never easy to take on mafia. But the way you worked and handled cases is admirable. More important work is now awaiting you Inshallah". - APP

## Iftikhar, Khalid re-elected as President, Secretary of PBF



## OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Brig (r) M Iftikhar Mansoor and Muhammad Khalid Bashir unanimously re-elected as President and Secretary General of Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBF) for the next term of four years during the general council meeting held at Olympic House. Pakistan Olympic Association (POA) representative Muhammad Jehangir (Deputy Secretary General POA) also attended the meeting, which was presided over by Brig (R) M Iftikhar Mansoor. The house unanimously elected Brig (R) M Iftikhar Mansoor as president, M Khalid Bashir as General Secretary and Din Muhammad as Treasurer. Imtiaz Rafi Butt was elected as senior vice president,

Ghazi M Salahuddin, Ch Al-Mustansar Cheema, Ch Sagheer Ahmed, M Rajmil Khan as elected vice presidents while the elected associate secretaries were M Yaqoob Qadry, M Faqeer Awan and Ouj E Zahoor. The executive committee comprises representatives from Quetta, Hyderabad, Faisalabad and Karachi. The selection committee consists of Col (R) Shujaat Ali Rana, M Riaz Malik, Syed Moudood Jaffry, Malik Ijaz and Imran Afzal. The referee's board includes Siraj Ul Haq Qureshi (Secretary), Tariq Nawaz, M.Yaqoob Qadry, Ouj E Zahoor and Saadat Jehangir Khan. The coaches board has M Riaz Malik (Secretary), Emmanuel Nazarat Lal, M Khalid Ch, Munawar Hussain and Umer Mahmood. The house also constituted

committees to look after various affairs that needed immediate attention. The house endorsed the last annual general council meeting minutes and agreed on taking drastic measures to improve the game of basketball all over the country as well as championships, tournaments, coaches and referees courses were also allotted to various interested Units. Various disciplinary cases were also discussed in the meeting and the house unanimously ruled on the judgment for these cases while offering feteiha khawani for the recently passed veteran Basketball legends Mian Iqbal Fareed (former President), Maj. (R). A W Qureshi (former Army and National Coach). Ghulam Fareed, Mahmood butt and Mr. Zubair butt.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman CDA Amir Ahmed Ali inspecting 7th Avenue interchange work progress. - DNA

## PM Imran showing mirror to opposition parties: Dr. Shahzad

ISLAMABAD: Leader of the House in the Senate Dr. Shahzad Waseem on Monday said that Prime Minister Imran Khan has shown a mirror to the incompetent opposition parties. Responding on point of order in the Upper House, he said how the government is threatening such an incompetent opposition. He said that courts have declared them disqualified, adding that soon after the court decisions, they were distributing sweets but later started hue and cry "why he was taken out". Dr. Shahzad Waseem said that the government Kisan (Farmer) Card was an initiative towards modern agriculture and would bring prosperity to the country. He said that the Opposition was using non-parliamentary language in the Assembly, now they were unhappy with Prime Minister for showing mirror to them. Opposition in the Senate staged token walk-out



from the House. Earlier, the Leader of the House proposed to move the motion to discuss the increasing incidents of terrorism in the country. Senators Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani, Leader of the Opposition, Mian Raza Rabbani, Farooq Hamid Naek, Sardar Muhammad Shafiq Tareen, Mushtaq Ahmed, Azam Nazeer Tarar, Muhammad Tahir Bizinjo, Mushahid Hussain Sayed, and Saadia Abbasi moved a motion that the House may discuss the increasing incidents of terrorism in the country. The Motion was read by Senator Mian Raza Rabbani. - APP

## JANUARY 2022

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## Briefs

## AIUO begins enrollment of continue students

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIUO) has started enrollment of continuing students of different academic programs offered in the first phase of Semester Spring, 2022. According to Director Admissions, Syed Zia-ul-Hasnain Naqvi, continuing students of Matric, FA and ICOM programmes can apply online till February 22 whereas the students of BS, MSc, MS / M.Phil and PhD can enroll themselves till February 14. Students will submit their application form online and after completing the admission form online, the challan form will be generated automatically. Students will deposit the fee in designated banks and must keep copy of the paid challan with them. It is pertinent to mention here that the University has a special focus on increasing students facilities, in this connection, University has directed all regional offices to provide all possible assistance to the applicants. The University's website has also been upgraded to keep the students informed about the new developments relating to admission, examination and mailing of books.

## SSP orders for immediate repair of faulty vehicles

ISLAMABAD: Senior Superintendent of Police (Traffic) Rai Mazhar Iqbal has directed all police officials to ensure repair of faulty vehicles as well as bikes and properly use them for efficient policing. The SSP (Traffic) inspected the police assets at traffic police headquarters and directed for immediate repair of faulty bikes and vehicles. He directed all zonal DSPs to submit report to him in this regard and ensure efficient policing through proper use of available resources. He said that report should include details of all available resources including machinery. The SSP (Traffic) said that special steps were also being taken for provision of more bikes, latest vehicles and machinery to traffic police, which would help to further improve performance. On the occasion, SP (Traffic) Arif Shah, all zonal DSPs and traffic police inspectors were also present. The SSP (Traffic) urged the police officials to work hard for efficient policing as those showing good performance would be rewarded. - APP

## Over 43.5 million children received Polio vaccine so far

The Sehat Tahhafuz Helpline 1166 and 24/7 WhatsApp Helpline 0346-777-65-46 helped parents and caregivers report missed children

ISLAMABAD: More than 43.5 million children had received Polio vaccine and vitamin-A during the fourth nationwide immunisation campaign held in December. According to official sources, the Polio Programme also facilitated the process of COVID-19 vaccination in collaboration with the National Expanded Programme of Immunization (EPI) and the National

Command Operations Center (NCO) in 31 high-risk districts identified by the NCO.

The campaign was launched on December 10 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and on December 13 in other parts of the country. More than 290,000 frontline Polio workers along with other team members worked in collaboration to ensure vaccination of

children, including those living in hard-to-reach areas. Dr. Shahzad Baig, Coordinator of the National Emergency Operations Centre, Polio Eradication Initiative (PEI), warmly thanked and congratulated federal and provincial government leadership, frontline workers, parents and caregivers, including all sections of the society, for playing an instrumen-

tal role in vaccinating children during the campaign. "The unique approach of facilitating COVID-19 vaccination by the Polio workers during the campaign helped families to get essential COVID-19 vaccine," Dr Baig said. Dr. Faisal Sultan, the Prime Ministers Special Assistant on National Health Services added, "We will continue using targeted, concerted efforts and fo-

cusled immunization campaigns to stop the virus circulation and ensure every child is safe from this vaccine-preventable disease." The Polio Programme is optimistic about controlling the poliovirus despite the complex challenges. Recent epidemiological data indicate the declining trend of polio cases and decreased detection of viruses in environmental samples com-

pared to previous years, suggesting the Programme is on track. The Sehat Tahhafuz Helpline 1166 and 24/7 WhatsApp Helpline 0346-777-65-46 helped parents and caregivers report missed children. The repeated polio vaccination campaigns are imperative for building immunity among children and preventing possible death or lifelong paralysis. - APP

## MBZAN likely to be functional by April

ISLAMABAD: The development work of Sheikh Muhammad Bin Zayed Al Nahyan (SMBZAN) Institute of Cardiology Quetta has been completed and it is expected to be functional by April this year, said a senior official of Balochistan government on Monday. Talking to APP, he said the government had already provided required and modern equipment to the first-ever cardiac institute of 120-bed was developed in Quetta in collaboration with the government of United Arab Emirates (UAE). The official said the project was initiated in 2019 after Prime Minister Imran Khan laid down its foundation. He added that it had a capacity to treat hundreds of patients on daily basis. He said currently, the cardiac patients were being referred to the different hospitals of the country, which was putting extra burden and causing problem for the locals, as well. - APP

## IRSA releases 45186 cuseces water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) Monday released 45186 cuseces water from various rim stations with inflow of 69842 cuseces. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1448.03 feet, which was 56.03 feet higher than its dead level 1392 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 14600 and 5000 cuseces respectively. The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1137.80 feet, which was 87.08 feet higher than its dead level of 1050 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded 15171 and 115 cuseces respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 20492, 15003 and 28050 cuseces respectively. - APP

## 'Egypt, Pak achieved growth despite Covid-19'

ISLAMABAD: Spokesperson Finance Ministry Muzammil Aslam on Monday said that Egypt and Pakistan were among those countries that had achieved almost 100% economic growth despite the impact of Covid-19 pandemics. Talking to the PTV news channel, he assured that the government was fighting crises with determination as to the provision of relief to the people, affected by the outbreak of coronavirus pandemic, which is the government's topmost priority. He hoped that Pakistan's economy was growing strong and stable, despite the multiple challenges, particularly Covid-19. - APP



ISLAMABAD: A view of the stall during an expo organized by the Islamabad Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry. - DNA

## Government trying to minimize impact of inflation: Farrukh

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib said on Monday that PTT-led government under the leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan was trying to minimize the impact of global inflation on common people. Talking to PTV News, he said that Pakistan was among those countries which kept agricultural, industrial and services sectors functional and intact amid the corona pandemic, adding that inflation is on the rise globally in the post Covid-19 scenario and every country is dealing with its economy according to its resources. Farrukh said that government was committed to control inflation and provide immediate relief to the masses, adding that government was taking all possible steps to improve the national economy, which would create employment opportunities in future. - DNA

## 856 fresh Covid cases reported in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: Health officials on Monday said that 856 new Coronavirus cases were reported in the federal capital during the last 24 hours. According to an official of the National Command and Operation Centre (NCO), as many as 1,497 cases were reported on Sunday while 892 cases were reported on Saturday. He said so far 118,292 cases were reported from the federal capital and 976 deaths were reported from Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) while 108,884 patients had been recovered completely. Meanwhile, the government has waived off the booster shots fee for those visiting abroad, and now they can get free booster while showing their documents. This booster was already free for the general public. On the direction of the Ministry of National Health Services, the district administration of Islamabad continued surveillance of different areas of the capital to reduce transmission of the infection in the selected streets and other sectors. They also started taking action on violation of standard operating procedures (SOPs) related to the coronavirus while visiting marriage halls, markets, and petrol pumps by its inspection teams. The administration had been asked to take action on the violation of SOPs at shops, workshops, and restaurants. The inspection teams had been directed to issue notices to marriage halls besides imposing fines on owners of different shops in case of violation of SOPs. Commenting on the situation, an official of the Ministry of National Health Services said that several local-level administrative decisions were made to control the disease. He advised the citizens to continue to follow the social distancing, use of masks, and other precautionary measures to stop the increasing transmission of Covid-19 in the city. - DNA

## Online workshop on "Cyber Technologies, AI and Security"

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Arms Control and Disarmament Centre (ACDC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) organised a Two Day Online Workshop on "Cyber Technologies, Artificial Intelligence and International Security" in collaboration with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), Geneva on January 24-25. On Day 1, the opening session was moderated by Ms Molihi Makumane, Researcher, UNIDIR while Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Director General ISSI, made the opening remarks and said that with global arms races picking up, arms control collapsing, there could be efforts to weaponise these emerging technologies and effective regulations are vital. India is rapidly weaponising the technologies that pose a threat to regional security.

In his welcome remarks Dr Robin Geiss, Director, UNIDIR, said that digital transformation is a key driver of military affairs and international security. While the field of new technologies is limitless - two key issues that are prominent at the UN and most challenging need particular attention are - Artificial Intelligence (AI) and cyber technologies. Ambassador Khalil Hashmi, Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva, made remarks where he said that while

cybersecurity and IA stand out in discussion at the UN for many years, progress remains elusive. These technologies provide huge multiplier effects to existing and new military capabilities. Pakistan has followed a preventive approach whereby it has highlighted that international regulation should be developed promptly. Session I on "Cybersecurity 101" was moderated by Dr Andraz Kastelic, Researcher, UNIDIR, while speakers were Dr Mehreen Afzal, Associate Professor, Department of Cybersecurity, Air University Islamabad and Dr Samuele Dominioni, Researcher, UNIDIR. Dr Afzal said that key concepts of cybersecurity are espionage and sabotage. The use of technology has made espionage and sabotage easier. She recommended a hybrid approach to deal with cyber threats - a combination of education and effective security controls. Dr Dominioni said that tremendous global digitisation is also increasing cyber risks. Cybersecurity is a complex domain due to security paradox where it is impossible to distinguish between offensive and defensive capabilities, opacity, asymmetry, the problem of attribution. Session II on "Cybersecurity and UN" was moderated by Dr Tughrul Yamin Dean CIPS, NUST, and speakers were Mr Usman Jadoon, Director General, UN Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Pakistan and Ms Molihi Makumane, Researcher, UNIDIR.



## Faisalabad Serena Hotel, a Class of Punjab

MUNAZA KAZMI

PUNJAB, the cultural and traditional rich land of Pakistan, mostly famous of lofty cuisine, flamboyant bazars, green pastures and the Punjabis, known around the world for their tasty food, happy faces, colorful attires, stunning art and handicraft, the culture and the history full of romantic tales. Faisalabad previously known as Lyallpur; that you must have read this in school days, while memorizing dates and event of pre and post colon era, is the center of Punjab or the interior Punjab. The city is famous for its markets, from where you can have quality product in lesser prices, beside it is Pakistan's largest textile producer, hence a glittering place for all the ladies. For a traveler, beside shopping, the main attraction is Lyallpur Museum, Clock Tower, Jinnah Garden, Gumti Fountain, Wild life Park, and nearby NankanaShib. Am a travel writer and always ready to experience something new to writeup a new story. This time it was a Traditional Punjabi Style Hotel, Faisalabad Serena Hotel. A friend of mine recommended and portrayed a lavishly artistic photo of it, that is no doubt found to be true. Faisalabad Serena Hotel located in the prime location of Faisalabad, in close proximity from bus stand and airport, nearby the Central Business District and famous Clock Tower. Stylish brick colored building stretching on a massive area of land, with extended front and back lawns, filled with numerous blossoms and ever flowing fountains, marvelous handpainted ceilings, Punjabi styleelegant furniture, colorful corridors with smiling faces always ready to assist you and on top the traditional and of local dishes, that makes you come back again. The hotel reflects class of hospitality and luxury, distinguished for quality accommodation and guest services, this luxury hotel meets all the demands of today's discerning traveler while reflecting the true essence of Punjabi heritage. Let's visit with me to have a grander view of Faisalabad Serena Hotel. In the busy city of Faisalabad, where alluring lights and active shopping never stop. Faisalabad Serena Hotel is an escape to the serenity. On the Club Road reflecting the remains of British Raj, you would be finding Serena, a huge, carefully guarded, walled structure resembling of a guarded fort. After security clearance, you would be heading towards the parking, where along with cars you would be encircled with huge old trees, distant sound of a fountains, cheering of birds leaving their nests and an occasional play of the squirrels. Then comes a sophisticated brick colored building, giving an air of Punjabi Haveli standing overlooking the immense lawns. And you would find yourself entering into the glittering mansion from a giant door operated by a smiling turban man; the long kaftan and turban emits a true picture of Punjab. By stepping inside the classy and luxurious interiors of the hotel

you would be treated to the polished and nurturing ambience reminiscent of the old mansions of Faisalabad. Chimioi sofas with vibrant floral tapestry made by local artisans are placed alongside traditional ceramic lamps representing local culture in its full spectrum. A huge, brass lamp hangs in the lobby, offsetting the brick walls as a magnificent centerpiece. The courtyards and lush gardens, are another treat for guests, providing a haven of peace and serenity in the bustling city. On the right-hand side form the main entry is the reception from where you can take the keys of your room. The hotel has two floors the lower or ground one is standard floor and the 1st is executive floor, the facilities and rates are different for both. Hence, you can tailor your stay as per your needs. The hotel has total 140 beautifully appointed guest rooms, where Punjab's rich culture and Faisalabad's textile heritage is carefully woven into the design of each room. Lavish textures, hand-woven carpets and ornate woodwork are complemented by modern amenities designed to provide you the utmost in elegance, comfort and convenience, including a handsome living and dining area, writing table, powder room, marble bathroom stocked with the hotel's own brand of complimentary toiletries, complimentary high-speed internet, minibars, 24-hour room service and flat screen TVs, while large soundproofed windows keep out any noise and allow plenty of sun light in. Also, most of rooms afford inspiring views of the hotel's gardens and courtyards. Twin, queen-sized or king-sized beds are dressed in soft snow-white linens, embroidered cushions, offset by an embellished dark wood intricately carved head frame. Moreover, bedroom's traditional color palette is complemented by a luxurious wool carpet and rich fabrics, giving a feel of true home away from home. At Faisalabad Serena Hotel you can reside gracefully in Punjabi style, among a haven of peaceful gardens that provide a welcoming calm oasis. The hotel also offers exclusive Executive and Presidential suites, each reflecting warmth, tradition and culture.



Food, the lifeline of Punjabis, ranging from sarso ka saag, makaeki roti to jalebi, and the good news is in the Hotel you can enjoy all the appetizing and mouthwatering food. In the restaurants at lunch and dinner, you can enjoy an opulent assortment of dishes, ranging from typical Pakistani cuisine to international delicacies from China, Thailand, Europe and beyond. Since Faisalabad Serena Hotel is home to some of the best restaurants and cafes in the city, whether you can seek la carte dining under the stars or a casual family meal, business lunch or a large celebration, the restaurants and bars at the Hotel can make your every meal time memorable. Combining the essence of Pakistani cooking with cuisines from other cultures around the world, the hotel offers you to traverse the culinary globe via the hotel's collection of high-quality restaurants and cafes.

## LYALLPUR COFFEE SHOP

For the in-house guests breakfast is complimentary and is served in a buffet style at the Lyallpur Coffee Shop. Steps from the hotel's main lobby on the ground floor, the Lyallpur Restaurant caters for breakfast, lunch, high tea and dinner buffets. It is perfect for a long lunch with family and friends, a sophisticated evening meal or business meetings. Where you would be treated to a tempting array of specialty dishes, ranging from traditional Pakistani flavors using the best local produce to popular continental cuisine.

## RAKAPOSHI

Next to the hotel lobby, its Rakaposhi café, from where you can choose from a tantalizing array of freshly baked breads, homemade cakes and pastries, light snacks and beverages including freshly squeezed juices, flavored teas, specialty coffees and refreshing "mocktails". The café and terrace are open throughout the day and evening for informal business meetings, family time or a relaxed catch up with friends, hence you can enjoy it on any time of your choice.

## RAKAPOSHI COURTYARD

It is just outside Rakaposhi, that offers the sizzling flavors of wood-fired brick oven pizzas, authentic Arabic wraps and pasta dishes.

## BASANT COURT

The Basant Court prides itself on offering the freshest local produce and seasonal delicacies straight from the grill. Particularly popular amongst the locals, the mouth-watering barbecue is served accompanied by live traditional music, further adding to the experience.

## POOL BAR

The Pool Bar is a delightful place, where you can relax while enjoying a scenic view and light poolside snacks, salads, refreshing juices and specialty "mocktails".

## EXECUTIVE LOUNGE

The Executive Lounge is a welcoming space, which you would find in the main lobby, where you can socialize over refreshments including coffee, tea, soft drinks and delicious homemade snacks.

## XUELIAN

The Xuelian Restaurant, however its under construction now a days, is elegantly located on the lobby level of the hotel, celebrates the eclectic mix of flavors from China, Japan and Thailand. Here you can choose from a sumptuous buffet or from a wonderful selection of a la carte favorites at both lunch and dinner.

## ROOM SERVICE

Feeling lazy or tired, you can dine in the comfort of your room or suite at any time of day or night with our 24-hour in-room dining.

## EVENT CATERING

At Serena Faisalabad Hotel you can arrange receptions, dinners and other large-scale events, from 20 to 3,000 guests. However, if you are here for only check-ins I would recommend you request someone to get there, since the ceilings of the halls are marvelous, specially the Nakash Hall, and that's all is hand painted which makes it quite a treasure. Beside this the hotel have some beautiful gardens, loaded with flowers and huge old trees, where you can capture some memorable photos, or an escape from everyday life by sitting beside the fountains. In the meanwhile, you would also come across some kitchen garden, where I had seen for the first time a black pepper plant. Moreover, the hotel offers health club but unfortunately spa facility is not available, which I believe is a part of luxury hotel. However, stylishly appointed rooms stunning gardens and courtyards, unrivalled security and a wide choice of restaurant offering local and international delicacies, the friendly and caring staff make the Faisalabad Serena Hotel one of the city's premier hotels for business and leisure that reflects the true class of Punjab.





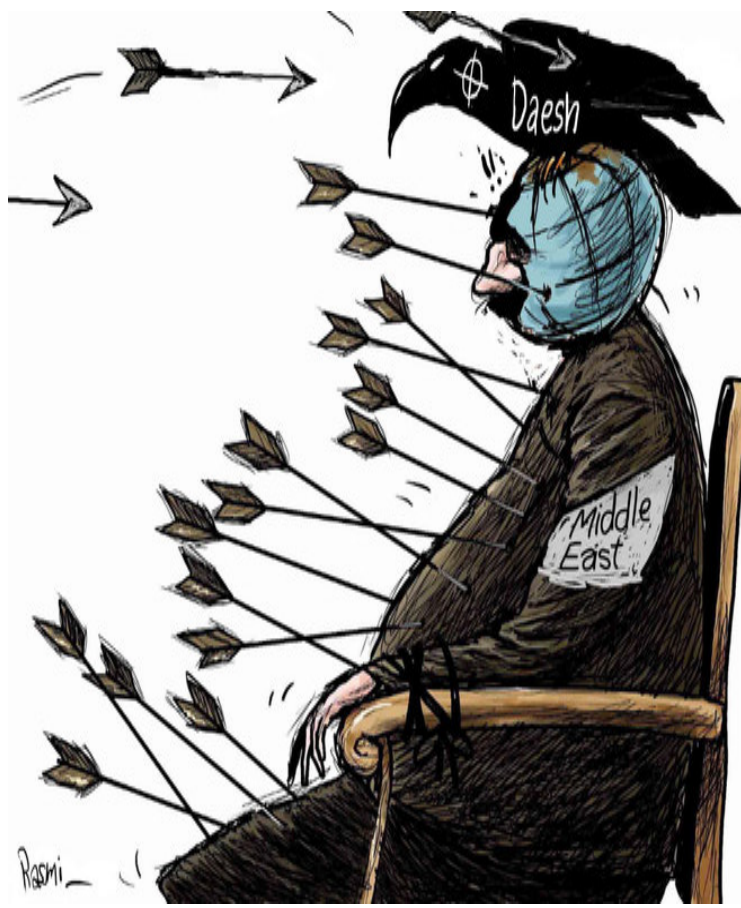
## Eradicating Polio

**T**HE first anti-polio drive of the year has been launched with the objective of vaccinating over 22.4 million children against the crippling virus to build upon the stark progress made previously. Having only reported one case all of 2021, it is important for the authorities to remain vigilant so that the disease can be eliminated entirely and Pakistan can join the ranks of all other polio-free countries of the world.

The Sub-National Immunisation Days (SNIDs) campaign supports at least 150,000 trained and dedicated individuals who will go to remote areas to vaccinate children. Targeting high-risk areas is the first objective and door-to-door vaccinations is the approach being taken so that accessibility is not a problem for any segment of society.

The only problem that might persist is some resistance to the vaccine which can only be tackled through creating awareness about its benefits and highlighting the depravity that comes with suffering from polio. However, this is something that the government has been consistently doing which is reflected in the fact that only one case was reported last year and the majority of the population remains protected.

Pakistan and Afghanistan were the only two countries in the world where polio was being reported but now, we are at the brink of terminating the disease entirely. This is the time where we have to be a little more proactive than before so that we can finally overcome this challenge that has been keeping us back for decades. We are on our way of building strong immunity against the virus and we can ill-afford any missteps at this juncture.



## Releasing Afghan funds

**T**HE people of Afghanistan are in dire peril, now more than ever perhaps. The biggest reason for the near extermination threat facing more than half of the population stems not directly from the Taliban government, but because of the heavy US sanctions against Afghanistan, including the freezing of about \$9.5 billion of the Afghan government's reserves in US banks since August, which threatens to bring about famine, starvation, malnourishment and pneumonia to the people. Fortunately, this crisis appears to be recognised by some parts of the international community. UN chief Antonio Guterres has made an appeal to the US and the international community to unfreeze Afghanistan's funds to avoid an economic and humanitarian crisis, who warned that a "nightmare (is) unfolding in Afghanistan" and the world was "in a race against time to help the Afghan people."

The UN chief is right—this is indeed a global humanitarian conflict, which if not resolved could potentially lead to absolute devastation and deaths in millions in Afghanistan. This is not a strong stance or use of foreign policy against the Taliban government; this is a cruel move that would impact Afghan women and children the most, the population the US claims to fight for. The UN chief's advocacy at this time was necessary—all factions globally should be doing all they can to persuade the US administration to avoid this crisis.

Pakistan is also doing the right thing in amplifying the need to release Afghan funds. However, it must be noted that the messaging on this issue, which can be considered divisive in the US, is done in an accurate and well-thought-out way. Prime Minister Imran Khan's recent calls to the US and the UN to act on this issue were appreciated; yet invoking ideas like the UN Responsibility to Protect principle in the case of Afghanistan is a regrettable move and shows a lack of research. The R2P calls for the use of necessary steps, including military intervention to stop large-scale violence—this is not what is needed, and perhaps not what the Prime Minister wants. If we are to take up this issue and back the UN Chief in persuading the US administration to release funds, we cannot afford mistakes like these.

## Looming threat of terrorism

Shujaat Hamza



It raises so much questions on how we are dealing with the terrorist organization. Just weeks ago, we announced a 'welcome' milestone in the start of negotiations, and now they are bold and strong enough to successfully target police personnel in the heart of the capital. Were the relevant authorities unaware of this gruesome attack at all? Or the threat was just not taken seriously? There must be a thorough investigation on the failures which led to the Taliban striking this deep into the country

**A** new wave of terrorist attacks has begun in Pakistan since the reports of negotiations with Tehreek-e-Taliban (Pakistan) came. Earlier, it was gloriously announced that the government has 'triumphed'

in reaching a ceasefire agreement with the proscribed organization. The Afghan Taliban were said to be the 'third party' engaged in the talks as guarantor. However, the ceasefire agreement lasted only a month. And since then, a worrisome wave of attacks on armed forces and civilians has started.

While the terrorist attacks on armed forces in the merged districts and Afghan border are rather common, two recent incidents have surely been alarming. First, Taliban claimed the responsibility of an attack on Islamabad Capital Police team, which resulted in a cop being martyred and two others getting injured. Both the attackers were killed in the encounter.

It raises so much questions on how we are dealing with the terrorist organization. Just weeks ago, we announced a 'welcome' milestone in the start of negotiations, and now they are bold and strong enough to successfully target police personnel in the heart of the capital. Were the relevant authorities unaware of this gruesome attack at all? Or the threat was just not taken seriously? There must be a thorough investigation on the failures which led to the Taliban striking this deep into the country. Speaking after attending the funeral of martyred Head Constable Munawar Hassan, the interior minister said this was the first such incident of the New Year and said that all law enforcement agencies needed to raise their guard. Sheikh Rashid confirmed that this was a terrorist attack. Another incident pertinent to mention is Lahore Anarkali blast, which killed three persons and injured dozens. The occurrence of a blast of this caliber, in the commercial area of Lahore, is not something to be ignored. It is a very alarming situation, which could lead to disastrous consequences in future if the threat is not properly dealt with.

It was late 2000's when the terrorists were easily targeting big cities of Pakistan on weekly basis. The consequences of Pakistan's participation in the Afghan war led to major unrest and

violence in Pakistan itself.

However, our people and armed forces have rendered countless sacrifices and managed to thoroughly curb the threat of terrorism. The relative calm that most of the country has enjoyed for the past years is a result of major offensive operations that led to the destruction of terrorists' infrastructure, their networks and safe havens.

They must not be allowed to have their anti-state and anti-people objectives brought into force.

It's far too dangerous for the country which is just redeeming itself to the world as a land of peace.

The government and relevant authorities must also keep in check the role of the de facto Afghan government in this case. Though the Afghan Taliban have said they have no links to the Pakistani Taliban, still many of notorious TTP leaders have been residing there. The government must push the Afghan Taliban to stem out those who are masterminding the attacks on Pakistani people from safe havens in neighboring countries.

That's the least they can offer against Pakistani tireless efforts for getting them recognized.

The reports of Afghan Taliban halting the work on border fencing have already tarnished much of their 'Pro-Pakistan' image that the incumbent Pakistani government has been eagerly building at home. The terrorist attacks further threaten to damage the mutual good-will.

The Pakistani government, military and all stake holders need to be on the same page on how to deal with the rising threat of terrorism. Government must not keep other stakeholders at bay if it really wants to devise a comprehensive plan to counter the threat. The negotiations were started without the consent of national political leadership or the Parliament.

Now the Parliament must be taken into confidence before any new adventure with the Pakistani Taliban.

— The writer is a staff member. (shujaat.hamza@gmail.com)

## The Taliban are finding friends hard to come by

Luke Coffey



The Taliban has been accused of allowing Ansarullah, a Tajik extremist group with the stated goal of overthrowing the government in Dushanbe, to patrol the Afghan border with Tajikistan

**M**ONTHS after taking power the Taliban is having difficulty gaining the international recognition it desperately desires. The group has also made no progress at the UN in its attempts to secure Afghanistan's seat in the General Assembly. No country in the world has recognized the Taliban as the legitimate government of Afghanistan, and even its relationship with Pakistan is beginning to sour. Taliban relations with the three states that border Afghanistan in the north — Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan — are also proving to be challenging. Each of these three states has unique national interests at stake and is developing its approach to the Taliban accordingly. Turkmenistan has tried pursuing pragmatic engagement with the Taliban and there are two major issues involved in the relationship: Border security and the completion of a long-delayed gas pipeline. For years, Ashgabat has feared that fighting in Afghanistan could spill over into Turkmenistan. These concerns are not unfounded; it has happened in the past. Last week there was an uprising by ethnic Uzbeks against Pashtuns in Afghanistan's Faryab province, which borders Turkmenistan. Other than incidents in Panjshir province, this is the first major uprising against the Taliban. There is no doubt that the security situation in Faryab is making Ashgabat nervous. Another priority for Turkmenistan is getting the long-planned Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India pipeline constructed and operational. Ashgabat is desperate to find new export markets for its energy. The plan is for this proposed 1,700km pipeline eventually to carry natural gas from Turkmenistan to India. This would help the former break the Russian and Chinese hegemony over the region's energy market. Construction of the TAPI pipeline has been delayed by more than a decade as a result of security concerns in Afghanistan. Even though the Taliban seem to be on board with the project, it remains to be seen whether it can finally get off the ground. Uzbekistan has been the most proactive of the three northern neighbors in dealing with the Taliban. Uzbek officials have been meeting informally with members of the Taliban for a few years, so when the group took over in August, Tashkent was ready to engage with them. Although Uzbekistan does not formally recognize the Taliban as Afghanistan's legitimate government,

Tashkent prides itself on what it sees as a pragmatic relationship with the group. Soon after the Taliban took Kabul last year, one senior Uzbek official even told me that Uzbekistan could be seen as a leader and a model to follow in Central Asia when it comes to dealing with the Taliban. However, Uzbek-Taliban relations are more complicated than they seem. Trade between the two totaled \$776 million in 2020 and before the Taliban takeover there were plans to boost this to \$2 billion by 2023. With the Taliban in charge of Afghanistan this seems unlikely to happen. One of Afghanistan's most important links to the outside world is the Hairatan border crossing with Uzbekistan. Most of the companies involved in trade between the two countries use Afghan nationals who have Uzbek visas as drivers. However, these Afghan drivers are now reluctant to cross into Afghanistan out of fear that they will not be allowed to return to Uzbekistan. Therefore, trade has slowed to a trickle. Tajikistan has been the most critical of the Taliban among the three countries and has given tacit support to the National Resistance Front of Afghanistan. The predominantly ethnically Tajik NRF emerged in the Panjshir Valley in the wake of the Taliban takeover in August.

There is a history of extremist groups emerging from the region to threaten Tajikistan's security. In recent months, there has been an increase in the presence of Tajik security forces mobilized along the border with Afghanistan.

The Taliban has been accused of allowing Ansarullah, a Tajik extremist group with the stated goal of overthrowing the government in Dushanbe, to patrol the Afghan border with Tajikistan.

Tajik President Emomali Rahmon recently told members of the Russian-backed Collective Security Treaty Organization: "According to the Tajik intelligence services, the number of camps and training centers for terrorists bordering the southern borders of the CSTO in the northeastern provinces of Afghanistan totals more than 40, and their numerical strength is more than 6,000 militants."

Mohammed Yaqoob, Afghanistan's de facto defense minister and the son of the late Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar, recently warned Tajikistan and Uzbekistan "not to test our patience and not to force us to take possible retaliatory steps" to reclaim the aircraft.

Considering that both Tajikistan and Uzbekistan provide free electricity to northern Afghanistan, now is not the time to make threatening statements. In recent years, the international community has made efforts to strengthen ties between Afghanistan and Central Asian states. Rail links were built to connect Afghanistan with Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Trade corridors were created linking Afghanistan to the outside world.

For example, the so-called Lapis Lazuli route connected Afghanistan to European markets via Turkmenistan, the South Caucasus and Turkey. Even further to the north, Central Asian states such as Kazakhstan invested greatly in enhancing economic ties with Afghanistan.

With the Taliban in charge, the situation has drastically changed. At a time when the Taliban is trying to gain international recognition, it should start by trying to improve its relations with neighbors closer to home.

—Courtesy: Arab News

## A New Era For Pakistan Navy

Hassan Zeb

Pakistan has witnessed a diverse geopolitical landscape and heightened situation in the region. To cope up with the emerging challenges, the Pakistan Navy accorded top priority to its combat readiness and resolve to thwart nefarious designs of adversary. Pakistan Navy had been operating with major surface ships which constrain country's regional footprints and influence

**P**AKISTAN Navy, while keeping in view the security challenges at Indian Ocean Region (IOR), stepping up to modernize its fleet in order to maintain a formidable force

at sea. During the recent years, Pakistan has witnessed a diverse geopolitical landscape and heightened situation in the region.

To cope up with the emerging challenges, the Pakistan Navy accorded top priority to its combat readiness and resolve to thwart nefarious designs of adversary. Pakistan Navy had been operating with major surface ships which constrain country's regional footprints and influence. To increase naval strength, the fleet size comprising of more ships was envisioned by Pakistan Navy.

To augment maritime power, Pakistan Navy has acquired latest and one of the most technologically advanced platforms of Surface Fleet. Named as Pakistan Navy Ship TUGHRIL, it is the 1st ship this was built at Chinese Shipyard, Shanghai, China. Three more ships of same class will be commissioned to serve Pakistan Navy for decades as force multipliers. It is a multi-mission capable ship, fitted with potent weapons like Surface to Air (SAM) and Supersonic Surface to Surface Missiles (SSM).

Weapons and Sensors installed on-board ship make it a state-of-the-art platform which can perform variety of Maritime Operations.

An over 4000 tons potent platform will provide requisite deterrence and means for averting threats which contributing towards protection of Sea Lines of communications (SLOCs). Pakistan believes in promoting peace and harmony in the region and has remain committed to maintain stability and to curb maritime crimes in all forms.

Pakistan is proactively contributing in collaborative maritime security initiatives as partner to international navies besides own initiative of Regional Maritime Security Patrol (RMSP) for a secure maritime milieu in the region and beyond.

The new ship induction will strengthen PN's deterrence in the region to achieve desired objectives. PNS TUGHRIL will indeed help PN in boosting its efforts especially in IOR. PN will continue to play its role in contributing to government's efforts for peace and stability in the region.



## Briefs

Faisal Javed  
felicitates  
Fatima Sana  
on winning  
ICC award

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Senator Faisal Javed Khan on Monday congratulated Fatima Sana upon becoming the first Pakistani woman cricketer to win an International Cricket Council (ICC) award. In a brief statement, he congratulated, Fatima Sana for achieving ICC's Emerging Cricketer of the Year award for 2021. Senator Faisal also congratulated Justice Ayesha Malik for making history in country's judicial system after being sworn in as the first female judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan. — APP

Australian  
Olympic team  
finalised for  
Beijing

SYDNEY: The Australian Olympic Committee (AOC) on Monday announced 44 athletes across 10 disciplines to compete at the Beijing Olympic Winter Games in 2022.

The announcement finalized the country's third-largest Olympic Winter team, with 23 women and 21 men, a record high female representation in Australian Olympic Winter history.

AOC said the athletes will compete in 10 disciplines, including bobsleigh, skeleton, luge, curling, freestyle skiing, short track speed skating, figure skating, cross-country skiing, alpine skiing and snowboard. "We saw the impact an Australian Olympic Team can have on the nation last July and I know millions of Australians will be inspired and uplifted by this Winter Team," said Geoff Lipshut, Chef de Mission of the Australian Olympic Team for Beijing. "These 44 athletes are fantastic ambassadors for our country and for winter sport."

Among the team, snowboarder Scotty James and mogul skier Britt Cox will compete at their fourth Olympics, joining "rare air" of just six previous Australian winter athletes who have attended four or more Games. Another 12 athletes will compete at their third Olympics, 10 athletes return for their second while 20 athletes will make their Olympic debut.

With an average age of 25, the team features four teenagers, with snowboarder Valentino Guseli the youngest at 16.

Freestyle skiing, which incorporates moguls, aerials, free ski and ski cross, is the largest team with 13 athletes, followed by snowboard with 11. Tahli Gill and Dean Hewitt will make history as Australia's first Olympic curlers in the mixed event, while Bree Walker will contest the women's monobob as the sport makes its Olympic debut.

"Our job is to get the athletes to the Games and give them the opportunity to have their best day on their biggest day," Lipshut said. — APP

Taliban hold  
talks with  
West in  
Norway

FROM PAGE 01

Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi. Afghanistan's humanitarian situation has deteriorated drastically since last August when the fundamentalists stormed back to power 20 years after being toppled. International aid came to a sudden halt, worsening the plight of millions of people already suffering from hunger after several severe droughts. Thomas West, the US special representative for Afghanistan, tweeted on Sunday: "As we seek to address humanitarian crisis together with allies, partners, and relief orgs, we will continue clear-eyed diplomacy with the Taliban regarding our concerns and our abiding interest in a stable, rights-respecting and inclusive Afghanistan." The Taliban meanwhile hope that meetings of this kind will help legitimise their government. — APP

## Shaheen Afridi, Babar Azam bag top ICC awards

Afridi burst into life during the home series against South Africa, after a difficult start to the year in Test cricket in New Zealand

SPORTS DESK

DUBAI: Shaheen Shah Afridi has been named the winner of the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for ICC Player of the Year in 2021. Mohammad Rizwan, England captain Joe Root and New Zealand captain Kane Williamson were also nominated for the prestigious award.

Throughout 2021, Shaheen Shah Afridi demonstrated exceptional bowling, dismissing some of the top batters in all three formats. He had a standout year in Tests and T20Is, peaking during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup in the UAE, where he dazzled everyone with his sheer speed and order. He would take seven wickets in six matches during Pakistan's progress to the semi-finals of the tournament. Throughout the calendar year, he dominated the shortest format, taking 23 wickets in 21 matches, with his bowling attack improving by great strides. Afridi burst into life during the home series against South Africa, after a difficult start to the year in Test cricket in New Zealand. He maintained his outstanding form throughout the year's away tours to Zimbabwe, the West Indies, and Bangladesh. In total, he took 47 wickets in nine matches at an astounding average of 17.06. Meanwhile, International Cricket Council (ICC) has declared Pakistan skipper Babar Azam as the ODI Cricketer of the Year for his spectacular performance in the calendar year 2021.

Apart from Azam, the ICC had nominated



Bangladesh's Shakib Al Hasan, South Africa's Janneman Malan, and Ireland's Paul Stirling for the award. This is the third consecutive honour for Babar as ICC had earlier picked him as the captain for ODI Team of the Year and T20I Team of the Year.

In his acceptance speech, the skipper thanked fans, family, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), the ICC, and his team for supporting and boosting his morale. Babar Azam said he believes his best knock in the year was against England at Edgbaston, which was also his career-best.

"I was actually struggling there, but that knock gave me a lot of confidence," he said. On the South Africa tour, Babar praised the performances of Fakhar Zaman and Imam-

ul-Haq — and did not leave himself out. "My aim is to score runs in every country and at the home of the opponents. It was my goal and that series [against South Africa] was quite helpful for us," he added.

Babar Azam might have played only six ODIs in 2021, but he made vital contributions to the two series that Pakistan played this year.

He was the second-highest run-scorer with 228 runs and was the Player of the Match in both of Pakistan's wins in the 2-1 series victory against South Africa. The architect of Pakistan's chase of 274 in the first ODI, Babar made a century and laid the foundation with an 82-ball 94 in the final ODI where the visitors posted 320 batting first.

Farrukh  
congratulates  
Babar Azam on  
winning ICC  
award

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib on Monday congratulated Pakistan cricket team's captain Babar Azam on winning ICC ODI Cricketer of the Year award. In a statement, he said that Babar Azam always played the best game and made the country proud. He said that stars like Babar Azam were pride of the nation and our national hero. It is worth mentioning here that Babar Azam scored 405 runs in six matches including two centuries. — APP

He was the lone warrior for Pakistan when they were swept by England 3-0. He accumulated 177 runs in three games but found no support none of the other batters managed to score more than 100 in the series.

Azam's best performance this year came in a losing cause in the final ODI against England. With the series already lost, Pakistan were playing for pride as well as crucial ICC Cricket World Cup Super League points in the third ODI at Birmingham.



KABUL: Pakistani ambassador to Afghanistan Mansoor Ahmad Khan had a productive meeting with President Afghan Chamber of Mines & Industries Sherbaz Kaminzada and other members/office bearers of Chamber. — DNA

Pakistani skier  
determined to win  
hearts during Olympics

BEIJING: Muhammad Karim, a skier from Pakistan's northern Gilgit-Baltistan region, is all set to represent his country at the Beijing Olympic Winter Games schedule to start in February. The 26-year-old is hopeful that he will give his career's best performance at the mega event to win the hearts of the Pakistani people and Chinese spectators. Karim who is currently in Pakistan's capital Islamabad in preparation for his trip to China, told Chinese media that he has been training for the event for the last three years during which he practised at his hometown Naltar and by participating in several international tournaments. Karim started skiing at the tender age of four when he used to play the sport for fun with small toy skis made by his father, and later adopted it as a profession under the patronage of the Pakistan Air Force which also sent him to Austria for training, and provided him the opportunity to participate in competitions in different countries.

He said that the Beijing Winter Olympics will play a significant role in his career and boost his confidence as it is a mega event and will help him polish his skills and give him the chance to compete with the world's best sportsmen.

"The Winter Olympics is a major event, and athletes from many countries are trying to improve their skills to hold a good position in the Olympics," he noted.

Lamenting the United States' intention to politicize the Winter Olympics, Karim said that politics should not be involved in sports, adding that the Beijing Winter Olympics will be a success story with support from different countries. "The U.S. has done a very bad thing, but it will not have any effect. Pakistan as a close friend of China fully supports it (Beijing Winter Olympics), and we are very excited about the event." — APP

Bismah Maroof back as  
Pakistan women captain

Asmavia Iqbal-led selection committee that includes Saleem Jaffar and Taufeeq Umar has called up leg-spinner Ghulam Fatima, who last played for Pakistan in 2018

LAHORE: Bismah Maroof will lead the national side in the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup in New Zealand as the national women's selection committee announced the squad for the tournament to be played from 4 March till 3 April.

The event will mark Bismah's return to international cricket after two years as she took break from the game for the birth of her first child in December 2020. She will be accompanied by a support person, as part of the Pakistan Cricket Board's parental policy, to help her look after the newborn, while keeping her focus on cricket.

Asmavia Iqbal-led selection committee that includes Saleem Jaffar and Taufeeq Umar has called up leg-spinner Ghulam Fatima, who last played for Pakistan in 2018, and opener Nahida Khan, whose last outing in Pakistan colours was last January, after impressive performances in practice matches during the recent Karachi camp. Experienced all-rounder Nida Dar has



been appointed as the vice-captain for the World Cup.

Batter Iram Javed, all-rounder Tuba Hassan and wicketkeeper Najha Alvi are the travelling reserves.

Chair of women's national selection committee Asmavia Iqbal said here on Monday: "I want to congratulate every player who made it to the squad for the

ICC Women's Cricket World Cup. We considered the conditions and challenges our team will encounter in New Zealand along with the current form of players and the team's balance while putting together this squad.

"While we have retained majority of the players who have been on the national duty recently, we have called back Nahida Khan and Ghulam Fatima. Nahida brings with her experience that every team seeks going into a World Cup and Fatima has had an incredible run in Karachi. She has done well to enhance her fitness and has been in good form in domestic cricket of late. "Tough luck to those who missed out. I hope they will continue to work hard on their skills and fitness and push their cases for national return with strong performances."

Bismah Maroof said: "It is a great honour for me to lead my country into another World Cup. I am thrilled to be back in action and do what I love and have dedicated my life to. — APP

PCB confirms  
amendments to PSL  
playing conditions

LAHORE: Pakistan Cricket Board on Monday confirmed playing conditions of the HBL Pakistan Super League 2022, which will be played in Karachi and Lahore from 27 January to 27 February. A spokesman of the PCB said here that some of amendments to the playing conditions, which are sitting on the corporate website under Documents/Men's Playing Conditions, are: If a team loses players due to positive results, it can seek the Technical Committee's approval for replacement players from the reserve pool of players (Clause 1.2.5.1)

For a match to go ahead, a team must have, at least, 13 players who are Covid-19 negative (Clause 1.2.5.2)

Playing line-up must comprise a minimum of seven and a maximum of eight local players including an emerging player. However, if a team is affected by Covid to the extent that it is impossible for it to create a playing 11 in accordance with the relevant requirements, the requirements will stand waived to the necessary extent (Clause 1.2.5)

Fielding side must be in position to bowl the first ball of the final over of the innings by the scheduled or rescheduled time for the end of the innings. If they are not in such a position, one fewer fielder will be permitted outside of the 30-yard circle for the remaining overs of the innings (Clause 13.8) There will be a reserve day for the final. If no result is achieved on the reserve day, then the side finishing on top of the points table after 30 league matches will be declared champion (Clause 16.11.1)

TV umpire to call no balls (Clause 21.5). — APP

Shehbaz case  
should go  
live: Fawad

FROM PAGE 01

them are false, they should be acquitted. The minister added that recovery from them is "very important".

Taking a jibe at the PML-N leaders, Fawad said that a child in their family is born later but a palace on his/her name is bought beforehand. The federal minister was of the view that under the 18th amendment, powers were transferred to the provinces; however, the Sindh government now wants the power to be transferred to districts. "The Sindh government did not participate in reforms," he said, complaining that it has deprived its citizens of basic facilities, like health cards. Fawad further added that the provincial government is not providing its capital Karachi with its due share in resources.

"Under National Finance Commission (NFC), funds will be transferred to provinces from the Centre which will then be transferred to the districts," he mentioned, adding the Sindh government has deprived its citizens of this right.

The minister said: "Prime Minister Imran Khan had put an end to corruption by introducing the local government system."

Speaking about the PPP, Fawad said that former president Asif Ali Zardari and Company has also looted billions of rupees and recovery from them is also very important.

"Daily court proceedings should be held against them as they have looted the money of Pakistanis," he said.

The minister further added that the whole world is now following Pakistan's strategies in its fight against COVID-19. "Our economy grew during the pandemic; although the country has witnessed inflation, it should be noted that revenue has also increased during this period," he said.

"Pakistan is moving in the right direction," he added.

AGP wants  
Nawaz's...

FROM PAGE 01

London, Nawaz did not stay in the hospital for a single day and remained involved in his political activities," the letter stated.

The AGP highlighted that the affidavit and the court order was "violated as Shahbaz did not submit Nawaz's medical reports."

Per the letter, the Punjab government has formed a committee to examine the medical reports of Nawaz. The committee submitted a report on January 17, which mentioned that no medical report has been submitted to the medical board by Nawaz's doctors; therefore, the committee said that a final opinion cannot be given in this regard.

The attorney-general further wrote that before approaching the LHC in this regard, he has contacted the PML-N president to submit the medical report.

Justice  
Ayesha...

FROM PAGE 01

the international day of education the induction of Justice Ayesha Malik in Supreme Court proves that an investment in knowledge gives the best results and helps shatters the glass ceiling". In a brief interaction with reporters after the oath-taking ceremony, the chief justice said that Justice Malik was competent enough to become a Supreme Court judge and that no one deserves any credit for her elevation.

The top judge was then asked if Justice Malik was considered for elevation to the top court for being a woman or her standing as a judge. It is pertinent to mention here that Justice Malik was fourth in the seniority of the LHC judges and the bar councils and associations had opposed her elevation to the Supreme Court for ignoring the principle of seniority.

The Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) held earlier this month approved Justice Malik for elevation by a majority of five to four during a heated session that had lasted nearly three-and-a-half hours. The JCP held another meeting afterwards to decide on Justice Malik's elevation. A lack of consensus during an extended meeting of the JCP on Sept 9 last year had forced the commission to reject her elevation.

## Pak-India games bigger than Ashes: Vaughan

India vs Pakistan cricket rivalry was back in the spotlight after the International Cricket Council (ICC) announced the fixture list for the Men's Twenty20 World Cup 2022, to take place in Australia from October 16 to November 13

ISLAMABAD: Former England Skipper Michael Vaughan believes Pakistan vs India was the biggest game and not the Ashes.

For the longest time many have thought of the Ashes between England and Australia as the biggest rivalry in cricket. However, Pakistan-India cricket matches have usurped that title. The one-sided nature of the recently-concluded Ashes in Australia, only proved that point further. The sort of buzz that Pakistan vs India matches create and the viewership it pulls in, few sporting events can match it. Despite the numbers and the interest that Pak-India matches generate, not

many Australian or England cricketers would admit that the Ashes rivalry was now inferior to it. Vaughan, however, did so and said that the Ashes was "not" the biggest game in world cricket. "I think, we being England and Australia ex-players, we all kind of think of the Ashes as the biggest game in world cricket, it's not! India vs Pakistan is the biggest game. Looking forward to Rohit Sharma being the captain, probably the first time he's going to be under real pressure. It's going to be an epic event," Vaughan said on a Star Sports show as quoted by sports.ndtv.com.

India vs Pakistan cricket rivalry



was back in the spotlight after the International Cricket Council (ICC) announced the fixture list for the Men's Twenty20 World

Cup 2022, to take place in Australia from October 16 to November 13. Like 2021, Pakistan and India have been clubbed together in the same group. India would, in fact, open their T20 World Cup 2022 campaign against Pakistan on October 23 at the famed Melbourne Cricket Ground.

Speaking about the Pakistan-India matches, former Australia wicket-keeper-batter Adam Gilchrist said that India would be fired up for the game. "Huge rivalry. We all know about that. India will be particularly fired up given what happened back in November where Pakistan registered a 10-wicket victory. So, the rivalry just grows and what a

venue to have," Gilchrist said.

It's going to be a repeat of the 2021 T20 World Cup as India and Pakistan met in their tournament opener in Dubai.

India were hammered by 10 wickets as Pakistan captain Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan gunned down a 152-run target with an unbeaten opening stand. India were never able to recover from the defeat as they were thrashed by New Zealand in their 2nd Super 12 game. India crashed out of the T20 World Cup without managing to reach the knockout stages of an ICC event for the first time since 2012. — APP



## Briefs

## Istanbul airport shuts as snow blankets Europe

ISTANBUL: Europe's busiest airport shut down in Istanbul while schools and vaccination centres closed in Athens as a rare snowstorm blanketed swathes of the eastern Mediterranean region, causing blackouts and traffic havoc. The closure of Istanbul Airport affected flights stretching from the Middle East and Africa to Europe and Asia. Travel officials told AFP it marked the gleaming glass-and-steel structure's first shutdown since it replaced Istanbul's old Ataturk Airport as the new hub for Turkish Airlines in 2019. The winter's first snow created a jovial atmosphere across the squares of Istanbul's ancient mosques, where children built snowmen and tourists posed for selfies. But it dealt a major headache for the 16 million residents of Turkey's largest city, which ground to an effective halt. The main highway leading to the capital Ankara briefly closed to traffic over the weekend because of fog and heavy snow. The Istanbul governor's office warned drivers they would not be able to enter the city from Thrace - a region stretching across the European part of Turkey to its western border with Bulgaria and Greece. Traffic officials also closed roads across large parts of central and southeastern Turkey, a mountainous region first hit by a snowstorm last week. Istanbul Airport serviced more than 37 million passengers last year, becoming one of the world's most important air hubs. - APP

## CDNS vows to promote digital investments

ISLAMABAD: The Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has started working to increase new investment opportunities and promote digital investment through many new projects. The CDNS in collaboration with State Bank of Pakistan is developing digital Prize Bonds, which will be available through online electronic channels, a senior official of CDNS told APP here Monday. He said the CDNS is in process of launching its first Mobile App for online purchase and encashment of National Savings Schemes. The official said that for better and efficient transfer of funds electronically, the CDNS is going to adopt RAAST in the current month of January for speedy flow of funds through its financial tributaries, he said. Initially, the CDNS has opened three separate accounts in State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) to avoid/stop direct access to the Non-Food Account-1 for its Alternative Delivery Channel (ADC) operations, iLink Payment, UPI Payment and RAAST payment. The Finance Division will allocate budgetary ceiling on a daily basis and the CDNS will operate within the allocated funds limit. - APP

## PSO strengthens partnership with Railways

LAHORE: The country's leading energy company Pakistan State Oil (PSO) further strengthens its strategic partnership with Pakistan Railways by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for supply of POL products, transportation and other businesses. The MoU was signed by Managing Director PSO Syed Taha and Senior General Manager Pakistan Railways Nisar Ahmed Memon signed the MoU at the PSO head office in Karachi in the presence of Federal Minister for Pakistan Railways Azam Khan Swati, who attended the ceremony as chief guest, said a press release issued here on Monday. Federal Minister Azam Khan Swati said, "I congratulate both PSO and Pakistan Railways on this momentous occasion. This strategic alliance between the two national flag bearers will enable the growth of our country's economy and also contribute to the national exchequer. - APP

## Syria battle between IS, Kurdish forces kills 135

More than 100 insurgents late Thursday attacked the Kurdish-run Ghwayran jail in Hasakeh city to free fellow militants, in IS' most significant military operation since its self-declared caliphate was defeated in Syria nearly three years ago

## WEB DESK

HASAKEH: The death toll from fighting between US-backed Kurdish forces and Islamic State group who attacked a prison in northeast Syria four days ago reached 136 Sunday, a war monitor said. More than 100 insurgents late Thursday attacked the Kurdish-run Ghwayran jail in Hasakeh city to free fellow militants, in IS' most significant military operation since its self-declared caliphate was defeated in Syria nearly three years ago. Intense fighting both inside

and outside the jail saw the militants free detainees and seize stored weapons, according to the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, in what experts see as a bold IS attempt to regroup. And while the ferocity and expanse of the battle diminished late Sunday, concerns mounted about the fate of hundreds of children inside the prison, where the militants were holding out. "At least 84 IS members and 45 Kurdish fighters, including internal security forces, prison guards and counter-terrorism forces, have been killed" since the

start of the attack, the Observatory said. Seven civilians have also died in the fighting in the city, the largest in northeastern Syria and controlled by a semi-autonomous Kurdish administration, it added. Helped by US-led coalition air strikes, the largely Kurdish Syrian Democratic Forces said Sunday they had sealed off the area around the jail and that "IS fighters located within the gates of the prison can no longer escape". The coalition said that "the SDF have contained the threat," while

the Observatory reported that the intensity of fighting had died down. But the militants were holed up in a prison dormitory housing hundreds of detained children with suspected links to IS, the SDF said in a later statement. Inmates under the age of 18 were being used as "human shields," to stymie advances against the militants, it said, adding that it would hold "the terrorists accountable if the children are hurt." UNICEF, the UN's agency for children, on Sunday called for the protection of 850 minors detained in Ghwayran. "As fighting con-

tinues, the risk for children increases, including to be harmed or forcibly recruited," it said. The battles triggered a civilian exodus from areas around the prison. Kurdish authorities say thousands of people have fled in the harsh winter cold. IS fighters entered "homes... killing people," said a civilian in his thirties who fled on foot on Sunday. "It was a miracle that we made it out," he told AFP, carrying an infant wrapped in a wool blanket. Hamsha Sweidan, 80, a resident who had been trapped near the jail, said civilians were left without bread or

water as the battle raged. "We have been dying of hunger and of thirst," she said, adding that she had no idea where to go. IS has carried out regular attacks against Kurdish and Syrian government targets in the country since the rump of its once-sprawling proto-state was overrun in March 2019. Most of their guerrilla attacks have been against military targets and oil installations in remote areas, but the Hasakeh prison break could mark a new phase in their resurgence, in a country rife with insurgent groups after more than a decade of civil war.

## Contract of Gilgit-Shandoor Road goes to Chinese firm

DNA

ISLAMABAD, January 24 ): Ningxia Communications Construction Co. Ltd has won the construction contract of Package-2 of Gilgit-Shandoor Road, which is a part of Gilgit-Shandur-Chitral Road, providing an alternative route to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Gwadar Pro reported on Monday. "Overseas Division of Ningxia Communications Construction Co. Ltd has received Letter of Acceptance for Construction of Package -02 (61Km) of Gilgit-Shandoor (216 Km)", according to the official statement of the company. "The winning of the bid is of great significance for the company to stabilize the Pakistani market and has laid the foundation for healthy and orderly development," according to Ningxia Communications' Overseas Business Division.

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (NEC) has approved Gilgit-Shandoor Road 216 KM's project in June 2021. The National Highway Authority (NHA), a statutory body under the Ministry of Communications, is the procuring agency of the project. On January 19, NHA published the Evaluation Report for Gilgit Shandoor Road 216 Km (Package. 01). According to the evaluation report, five companies were qualified for the bidding while three companies were disqualified. However, as per the report, the most advantageous bidder is M/s NXCC-RA-DC JV (Joint venture of M/s Ningxia Communications Construction Co. Ltd; M/s Rustam Associates & M/s Dynamic Constructors.)

The Gilgit-Shandoor Road project is located in the north of Pakistan and one of the important branch roads connecting Karakoram Highway, which has significant meaning for improving the traffic capacity of the existing roads in the region.

## Sri Lanka sees rise in tourist arrivals in January

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka attracted nearly 59,000 tourists during the first 22 days of January, local media reported Monday. According to the country's tourism ministry, this was a significant increase over the 1,682 arrivals recorded in January last year. According to official figures, Russia recorded the highest number of arrivals in January with 9,697 tourists, followed by India, Ukraine, Britain and Germany. Sri Lankan Tourism Minister Prasanna Ranatunga said that in an effort to increase the month-on-month growth rate of tourist arrivals, promotions will be launched by the tourism ministry and the national carrier SriLankan Airlines for foreign cities this year. The minister said these promotions will be carried out through social media, and at international conferences and exhibitions as well. - APP

## Number of Turkish jobseekers in Uzbekistan revealed

BAKU: The number of trips of Turkish citizens to Uzbekistan for employment greatly increases in 2021, Turkey's Employment Agency (ISKUR) told. According to the message, the number of Turkish citizens who visited Uzbekistan through ISKUR increased by 3.3 times compared to 2020 up to 885. A total of 13,171 Turkish citizens traveled abroad via ISKUR in 2021, which is 29.9 percent more compared to 2020. Some 87,681 Turkish citizens were provided with jobs through ISKUR in 2021, 58.7 percent of them are men, 41.3 percent are women. At the same time, 98.9 percent of applicants got a job in the private sector. Meanwhile, the number of unemployed in Turkey reached 3.2 million in 2021, 49.8 percent of them are women and 50.2 percent are men. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Interior Sheikh Rashid Ahmed chairing a meeting of the Ministerial Committee of the Cabinet to finalize draft of Agreement on Returns and Readmission between Pakistan and UK. Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mehmood Qureshi and Minister for Human Rights Dr. Shirin Mazari are also present. - APP

## WHO chief says pandemic at 'critical juncture'

UNITED NATIONS: The coronavirus pandemic has reached at "critical juncture," and if nations work together the global health emergency can end this year, the World Health Organization's chief said Monday. WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said it is dangerous to assume that omicron will be the last variant, or that we're "in the endgame." Tedros said that 85% of the African population has not received even one dose of vaccine. "Vaccines alone are not the golden ticket out of the pandemic," Tedros said. "But there is no path out unless we achieve our shared target of vaccinating 70% of the population of every country by the middle of this year." The pandemic has shown that the world must elevate protection and promoting health as a top priority, Tedros said. "Health is not a by-product of development, an outcome of prosperous societies, a footnote of history," he said. "It's the beat, the foundation, the essential ingredient without which no society can flourish." Tedros, who was addressing the WHO's executive board in Geneva, said since the omicron variant was identified just nine weeks ago, more than 80 million Covid cases had been reported to the WHO - more than reported in the whole of 2020. Last week, on average 100 cases were reported to the WHO every three seconds, Tedros added, and someone lost their life to the virus every 12 seconds. - Agencies

## ECC approves MIP for tobacco crops during 2022

ISLAMABAD: The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) on Monday approved Ministry of National Food Security and Research proposals for Minimum Indicative Prices (MIP) of various types of tobacco crops for the year 2022. A special meeting was virtually presided over by Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Shaikat Tarin, considered and approved Minimum Indicative Prices (MIP) for the year 2022 for further submission to the Cabinet for its approval/ratification, said a press statement issued by the Finance Ministry. The committee approved MIP of Flue Cured Virginia (FCV) includes Plain Area at Rs240 per Kg and Sub Mountainous Area at Rs281.13 per kg. The committee also approved MIP of Dark Air-Cured Tobacco (DAC) of Rs149.09 per kg, White Patta (WP) Rs123 per kg, Burley Rs178.50 per kg and Naswar/Smuff/Hookah and other tobacco and its products at Rs123 per kg. Among others, the meeting was attended by Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research, Syed Fakhar Imam, Federal Secretaries and senior officers. - DNA

## PM Khan wins praise from int'l community for economic boom

BEIJING: Prime Minister Imran Khan has won full recognition and praise from the international community for taking people out of hardships and making great economic achievements in the country. Despite serious Covid-19 pandemic and various natural disasters, the Pakistani government and people, under the wise leadership of PM Imran Khan, have braved hardships and difficulties and made great achievements for booming economy, which has won full recognition and praise from the international community. These views were expressed by Cheng Xizhong, visiting Prof. at Southwest University of Political Science and Law, and former Defence Attache in South Asian countries in an article on Monday. The Chinese scholar noted that The Economist published a normalcy index and for the third consecutive time, Pakistan stood in the top three. The revised Gross Domestic Products (GDP) growth reached 5.37% in Financial Year 2021, the second best in the last 14 years. Bloomberg recognized that Pakistan is entering the decade of sustainable growth. He remarked that earlier, Pakistani economy was a service-based economy with focus on imports, but

now Pakistan's economy is standing firmly on its own feet with a significant rise in exports, especially textiles and Information Technology (IT) services. Prof. Cheng analyzed that the biggest contribution of PM Imran Khan in power for more than three and half years lies in his unremitting exploration and finally having found a development path suitable for his own national conditions. Secondly, PM Imran Khan puts the interests of the people above all else, is committed to improving people's livelihood, which fully embodies the new concept of governing for the people. Third, he has unswerving-

ly cracked down on corruption and won the heartfelt support of people from all walks of life and the whole country. He said that in international affairs, especially in upholding regional and global peace and stability and alleviating the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, Pakistan has been playing a greater role due to the incumbent government's solid foreign policies. Therefore, Pakistan has regained respect at the international level. From his performance in office for more than three years, PM Imran Khan is a well-deserved great leader of the Pakistani people, he added. - APP

## TRACECA eyes upon launching new pilot project

BAKU: The Trade Lanes project for land transit of goods along the Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia (TRACECA) is planned to be implemented in the first quarter of 2022. Permanent Representative (National Secretary) of the Permanent Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Commission (PS IG) TRACECA Rufat Bayramov told Trend. According to Bayramov, under this project, a number of meetings of the working groups have already been held, and the concept has been presented. "It's planned to organize a pilot cargo transportation. This initiative was developed by the International Center for Transport Diplomacy (ICTD) together with the IBM Corporation," he said. "This system is taking part in the process," the national secretary also said. "There is a preliminary agreement with the International Union of Road Workers and Georgia. We have already worked out an action plan year we'll be able to carry out a pilot transportation. This system was also applied in the countries of Georgia, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan. Azerbaijan applied it jointly with Iran. Central Asia - Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan four permits to transport goods from Tajikistan to Turkey, and following implementation of this agreement a single electronic document will be used," he added. He stressed that last year Permanent Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Commission TRACECA accepted a report on the implementation of the strategy plan on the Europe-Caucasus-Asia corridor for 2018-2021 and approved an action plan on the above strategy for 2022-2026. - Agencies

## Azerbaijan keeps receiving US military aid

Joe Biden, like his predecessors, suspended the section last May, implying that Azerbaijan will continue to receive direct American military assistance in 2022. Despite promising the Armenians during his election campaign that he would put an end to this, Joe Biden did not keep his word

DNA

BAKU: This year marks the 30th anniversary of the adoption of Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act by the American Congress, 20 of which it remained inactive due to a suspension by U.S. President George Bush at the time in 2002. The amendment was adopted with the phrase "until Azerbaijan takes obvious steps to eliminate all types of blockades and offensive forms of force against Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh". Joe Biden, like his predecessors, suspended the section last May, implying that Azerbaijan will continue to receive direct American military assistance in 2022. Despite promising the Armenians during his election campaign that

he would put an end to this, Joe Biden did not keep his word. Following Biden's declaration of Ottoman Turkey's events in 1915 as "genocide", Armenians have decided that the time has come to seize the U.S. support for Azerbaijan and reactivate Section 907. Armenia hoped that problems would arise between Washington and Baku as a result of these statements. The failure of these hopes is especially noticeable given that, during the amendment's 20-year inactivity, Azerbaijan has received twice as much U.S. military aid as Armenia. This disparity was especially pronounced during Donald Trump's presidency when Azerbaijan received \$105 million while Armenia received only \$16 million. It should be noted that the new administration, like the previous one,

shows no signs of deterioration in relations with Baku and Ankara. In a commentary to Day.az, American analyst, lawyer, and human rights activist Irina Tsukerman said that Biden's motives for promising the Armenians a refusal of military aid to Azerbaijan before the elections are unknown, but it is understandable that he needed to throw a bone to the Armenian diaspora in California, where Kamala Harris lives, for the sake of appearance. "It is understandable that during election campaigns, candidates make many contradictory and unfulfillable promises to garner the most support from various segments of the population... It also happens that candidates simply do not understand the gravity of the consequences of their promises,

and after taking their long-awaited seat, they revise their policies," she explained. According to her, Biden could not abandon the Democratic Party's loyalists and important political allies in the upcoming elections, though it is unlikely that Armenian lobbyists would have sided with Trump even if Biden had not rushed with words. "Biden is already in place, and the Armenian lobby will not go away in the next three years, but Azerbaijan can assist Biden with Europe, green energy development in the Caucasus, and even the restraint of aggressive Iranian policy. And, while Yerevan is willing to make some concessions on democracy issues, it is still very close to Moscow and will be unable to separate itself from it. Continuing military assistance to Azerbaijan, Biden is

attempting to strike a balance 'for both ours and yours'," according to Tsukerman. Back in late September 2021, President Ilham Aliyev explained very clearly and concisely the principles standing behind Section 907 passed by the U.S. Congress. "After all... the decisions that were made by some countries, they simply defy any logic. While it was Azerbaijan territory that was occupied, the U.S. Congress passed the notorious amendment to the Freedom Support Act, Section No. 907, which deprived Azerbaijan of direct military assistance, direct US assistance, not only military. And we, the affected country, we were essentially discriminated against," Aliyev said in an interview with Russia's Natsionalnaya Oborona magazine.



**Briefs**

**US move to withdraw diplomats' families 'premature'**

KYIV: Ukraine on Monday said it was "premature" of the United States to evacuate the families of its diplomatic staff in Kyiv due to fears of a looming Russian invasion. "We consider such a step by the American side premature and a display of excessive caution," Ukrainian foreign ministry spokesman Oleg Nikolenko said in a statement. On Sunday, the US State Department told the relatives of diplomatic staff stationed at the embassy in Kyiv to start leaving Ukraine. US officials advised against traveling to Ukraine due to "increased threats of Russian military action" and COVID-19. In a travel advisory published on its website, the State Department said that there were reports Russia is planning significant military action against Ukraine. Besides ordering the departure of eligible family members of the Kyiv embassy staff, Washington also authorized the voluntary departure of embassy employees. According to the Associated Press (AP), their departure is at the US government's expense. - APP

**Covid numbers continue to climb fast in Pakistan**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan recorded more than 7,000 coronavirus cases for the second straight day in the last 24 hours, the National Command and Operation Centre's (NCOC) statistics showed Monday morning, as the country continues to witness an uptick in its daily numbers amid the Omicron surge. As many as 7,195 coronavirus cases were recorded during this period, which were down from 7,586, after 57,401 tests were conducted, with the positivity ratio reaching 12.53%, which has remained above 10% for the fifth consecutive day, the NCOC's data showed. Following the detection of new cases, the overall cases reached 1.37 million, while eight more deaths from coronavirus pushed the death toll to 29,105, the statistics showed. As many as 1,113 patients are on critical care, while 833 more people have recovered from the pandemic in the last 24 hours, taking the total recoveries to 1.269 million, the official figures showed. Meanwhile, the active cases stand at 76,617. The forum last week revised protocols for mosques amid the rising number of coronavirus cases, with the NCOC only allowing fully vaccinated people to enter places of worship. The body leading Pakistan's COVID-19 response also announced last Friday that all schools with a high COVID-19 positivity ratio would remain closed for one week across the country. Meanwhile, as the cases move up, so are rumours of a lockdown. The NCOC keeps updating citizens about such fake notifications and news. Two days back, a notification was circulating on social media that a lockdown was going to be imposed, which the forum rebutted. - APP

**NATO sending planes, ships to eastern Europe**

BRUSSELS: NATO allies have put forces on standby and sent ships and fighter jets to bolster Europe's eastern defences as tensions soar over Russia's military buildup around Ukraine, the alliance said Monday. "NATO will continue to take all necessary measures to protect and defend all Allies, including by reinforcing the eastern part of the Alliance. We will always respond to any deterioration of our security environment," NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said in a statement. The Western alliance pointed to decisions in recent days by Denmark to send a frigate and warplanes to the Baltic states, Spain bolstering naval deployments and the Netherlands putting a "ship and land-based units on standby" for its rapid response force. The statement also highlighted a recent offer from France to send troops to Romania and said "the United States has also made clear that it is considering increasing its military presence". Tensions are mounting as the West accuses Moscow of threatening to invade Ukraine by massing over 100,000 troops on its border. Russia denies it is planning an incursion. NATO's eastern members have been calling for reinforcements. - APP

**PPP to oust govt legally, constitutionally: Bilawal**

Addressing a rally in Hyderabad, Bilawal said that the PPP has always stayed by the poor's side

**WEB DESK**

HYDERABAD: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Monday said that the inflation and unemployment rate in the country has reached historic levels because of the "incompetent government," so the PPP will march from Karachi to Islamabad to get rid of it "constitutionally and legally," media reported. Addressing a rally in Hyderabad, Bilawal said that the PPP has always stayed by the poor's side and farmers were provided with their rights during Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's tenure. Criticising the PTI-led government, he said that owing to the growing inflation in the country, "farmers go to sleep on an empty stomach and they want us to solve their issues," adding that the

PPP has always had the stance that "a prosperous farmer means a prosperous country." He went on to say that the prime minister has "distributed the water throughout the country unjustly" and that the "economic slaughter of the farmers is intolerable." The PPP chairman further said: "During every budget meeting, we draw the government's attention towards the economic policies and stress that it will result in the economic slaughter of the farmers but the government does not pay heed". Bilawal urged the public to rebel against the economic system to bring land reforms. Calling Imran Khan



a "puppet", he said that the country was self-sufficient during Zardari's stint in power but has now become "helpless". "The only way to save the farmers and the country's agriculture sector is to oust the PTI-led government," he added. Talking about PPP's long march that is set to take place on January 27, Bilawal said that the party will march from Karachi to Islamabad to get rid of the government "constitutionally and legally." While addressing the jalsa, he said that people will not be able to fight for their rights as long as ethnic and linguistic conflicts don't end in the country, add-

ing that the "PPP will ensure everyone - whether they speak Sindhi, Pushto or Urdu - will not be treated unjustly". He also said that the members of the incumbent government belonging to Sindh are trying to harm their own province. "People are aware of the PTI's reality and those who are not faithful to their leader will not be faithful to the country either," he added. Talking about PTI leaders, Bilawal went on to say that "they were involved in terrorism and are enemies of this city and province." "Our local government will bring economic stability," said Bilawal, adding that, "those who call it a black law will have their image tarnished". Bilawal assured the masses that tax will be taken from people who live in big houses and that he wants a "mayor for Hyderabad".

**UAE intercepts 2 ballistic missiles**

ABU DHABI: Two ballistic missiles fired by Yemen's Houthi rebels have been intercepted and destroyed over the United Arab Emirates, the defence ministry said on Monday. "The attack did not result in any casualties, while the remnants of the intercepted and destroyed ballistic missiles fell in separate areas around the Emirate of Abu Dhabi," a statement said. The ministry added that it was "ready to deal with any threats" and was "taking all necessary measures to protect the state from all attacks". The strike comes just a week after Yemen's Houthi rebels claimed responsibility for missile and drone attacks on Abu Dhabi that triggered a fuel tank blast and killed three people. Yemen's civil war began in 2014 when the Houthis seized Sanaa, prompting coalition forces to intervene to prop up the government the following year. In Saudi Arabia, meanwhile, state media said late on Sunday that a Houthi ballistic missile had fallen in the kingdom's south, injuring two residents - a Bangladeshi and a Sudanese citizen - and damaging workshops and vehicles in an industrial area. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi receives the Minister of Trade of Sri Lanka, Dr. Bandula Gunawardhana at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. - DNA

**8 die, 16 injured in rain incidents in KP**  
The highest number of casualties occurred in Shangla district where five persons including three children were killed while a house was completely destroyed

PESHAWAR: At least 8 people have died and 16 others injured in rain and snowfall related incidents in different parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, said a Provincial Disaster Management Authority's (PDMA) report issued here on Monday. According to the report 29 houses were partially damaged while one was destroyed completely. KP Chief Minister Mahmood Khan has directed all the concerned district administrations and authorities to accelerate the relief operation in affected areas. The highest number of casualties occurred in Shangla district where five persons including three children were killed while a house was completely destroyed. Similarly, one child each died in Charsadda, D I Khan and Hangu districts. Four houses were partially damaged in Khyber, 3 in Charsadda and two each in Buner, Upper Dir districts and one each house in D I Khan, Hangu, Karak, Peshawar and Tank respectively. PDMA has started distribution of relief goods including tents, kitchen kits, hygiene sets, water coolers, tents and plastic sheets among the affected families in Charsadda and Karak districts. Similarly, the district administration and other authorities concerned were busy in taking steps for re-opening of the closed roads. According to the PDMA, relief goods have also been distributed in Charsadda, Charbagh and Karak districts among the rain-affected people. It said the authority was in close contact with all the district administrations to cope with any emerging situation. The authority has also directed for immediate payment of compensation to all the affected families as per policy of the provincial government. It said that the Emergency Operation Centre of the PDMA was fully operational for 24/7 and has directed the tourists to take precautionary measures before visiting tourists' spots in the province. - DNA

**FM underscores expansion of Pak-Sri Lankan cooperation**

**STAFF REPORT**

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi Monday underlined the need to capitalize on the immense goodwill that exists between Pakistan and Sri Lanka by expanding cooperation across diverse areas, including trade and investment, tourism, culture, education, defence and agriculture, etc. The foreign minister received Minister of Trade of Sri Lanka, Dr. Bandula Gunawardhana and State Minister for Regional Cooperation Mr. Tharaka Balasuriya at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Dr. Gunawardhana along with an important trade delegation is visiting Pakistan from January 20-27, Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release. The foreign minister also highlighted the importance of strengthening the existing fraternal relations between the two countries through high-level exchanges. Recalling the prime minister's visit to Sri Lanka in February 2021, Qureshi said that all efforts must be made to enhance bilateral trade relations through

optimal utilization of the Pakistan-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (FTA), particularly by expanding interaction between the business communities on both sides, and joint ventures and investments in high potential sectors. The foreign minister noted that deepening economic cooperation through proactive economic diplomacy was a top priority for the government in the context of its policy focus on geo-economics. Both sides also agreed to continue close collaboration in multilateral fora and to strengthen regional cooperation. Reciprocating the sentiments, Dr. Bandula Gunawardhana thanked the Government of Pakistan for warm hospitality and the goodwill towards Sri Lanka at all levels. He appreciated Pakistan's consistent friendship and support for Sri Lanka and noted that his visit was aimed at further advancing mutually beneficial economic and trade relations. Sri Lanka was keen to expand ties in the whole range of sectors including ICT, pharmaceuticals, minerals, textiles, logistics, shipping, education and tourism, he added.

**No compromise on solidarity of Pakistan**  
Sheikh Rashid urges opposition to reschedule their protest march

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed says neither terrorism will be allowed in the country nor any compromise be made on the solidarity of Pakistan. Responding to a motion in the Senate on Monday, the Interior Minister said the government is ready to talk to any person within the ambit of the Constitution and law. He, however, made it clear that no talks with anyone are taking place at the moment. Keeping in view the recent incidents of terrorism, upcoming meeting of the OIC, and surge in Covid cases, Sheikh Rashid Ahmed urged the opposition to reschedule their protest march from 23rd of March this year to any other appropriate date. He said there will be a very high profile movement on the Pakistan Day falling on 23rd of March this year, including parade of the armed forces

and OIC Foreign Ministers meeting, and the opposition should reschedule its protest march. "There will be a very high profile movement on the Pakistan Day falling on 23rd of March this year, including parade of the armed forces and OIC Foreign Ministers meeting, and the opposition should reschedule its protest march," he remarked. The minister said that the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) would be given befitting response if they want to clash with Pakistan, adding that no talks are being held with the TTP now. The Afghan Taliban has said that our land will not be used against Pakistan. "Indian doesn't want Paki-



stan to have better relations with Taliban and Iran but New Delhi suffered a major defeat in Afghanistan," he said and added Muslims are being beheld in Maharashtra, UP and Uttar Pradesh. Rashid went on to say that Indian RAW has hired Pakistani people to carryout terrorist activities in Pakistan and the government is aware of it and is taking appropriate steps in this regard. "Neither terrorism will be allowed in the country nor any compromise be made on the solidarity of Pakistan," he said, adding that the government is ready to talk to any person within the ambit of the Constitution and law. He, however, made it clear that no talks with anyone

are taking place at the moment. Talking about the fence along the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan, Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said around 200 kilometres of the frontier in Balochistan has yet not been fenced. He said Counter Terrorism Department is monitoring the terrorist activities in Sindh and Punjab, while this job is being looked after by 10 and 11 corps of the Pakistan Army in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He said Counter Terrorism Department is monitoring the terrorist activities in Sindh and Punjab, while this job is being looked after by 10 and 11 corps of the Pakistan Army in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The House passed two resolutions. The first resolution recommended that on the analogy of the pilot project of construction of one kilometre of plastic road in Islamabad, the Federal Government should take steps to construct plastic roads under the domain of National Highways throughout the country.

**Assange wins permission to appeal US extradition decision**

LONDON: WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange was on Monday given permission to appeal a decision to extradite him to the United States where he could face a lifetime in prison. Washington wants to put the 50-year-old Australian on trial in connection with the publication of 500,000 secret military files relating to the US-led wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The High Court in London in December overturned a lower court's ruling not to send him to the United States on the grounds he would be a suicide risk. But lawyers for Assange then challenged the decision, arguing that the country's highest court should rule on "points of law of general public importance". "The respondent's application to certify a point of law is granted," said judges Ian Burnett and Timothy Holroyde in a written ruling. The judges stated that they themselves were not granting him a right of appeal at the Supreme Court but Assange had the right to do so himself. It is now for the Supreme Court to decide whether to take the case. - APP

**56 new colleges will be in function in next 3 years**

**OUR CORRESPONDENT**

PESHAWAR: A total of 56 number of colleges including 28 male and 28 female would be completed in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the next 3 years having a total enrollment capacity of over 48 thousand students. During the last one year, 14 colleges including 8 female and 6 male colleges have been operationalized whereas a total of 35 number of colleges including 15 females and 20 males would be operationalized by the end of this year having an expected enrollment capacity of over 30 thousand students. This was told in a progress review meeting of Higher Education department held here with Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan in the chair. Provincial Minister for Higher Education Kamran Bangash, Secretary Higher Education Dawood Khan, Special Secretaries to CM Masood Younas, Mohammad Khaliq and other concerned high ups attended the meeting. The participants were briefed about the new colleges to be established in the province and progress made so far on development activities being carried out in the existing colleges of the province. It was told in the meeting that a total of ten colleges including four for females and six for males would be operationalized in merged districts adding that around 8,600 students from merged areas would be enrolled in those colleges. It was further informed that new blocks were being established to launch BS Program in different colleges of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa adding that so far BS Program had been launched in 120 colleges of the province. Besides recruitment process against 1900 newly created positions of lecturers was in progress in order to overcome the shortage teaching of in colleges on priority basis. The meeting was also told that a feasibility study was also underway for solarization of colleges in merged areas. The chief minister on this occasion, directed the quarters concerned to submit proposals for the solarization of colleges in settled districts so that supply of uninterrupted electricity could be made possible in the colleges. He further directed them to have special focus on the projects which are due for completion. He termed quality education as the priority of his government and said that all available resources were being utilized to overcome the shortage of teaching staff in colleges on priority. He also directed the quarters concerned to take necessary steps to launch second shift in colleges as well where needed.

**Lebanon's Saad Hariri suspends political career**

BEIRUT: Former Prime Minister Saad Hariri has announced that he will suspend his involvement in political activities and will not run in upcoming parliamentary elections. The Hariri family has dominated Lebanon's Sunni political landscape for more than three decades since the end of the country's civil war in 1990. In Lebanon's sectarian system, where parliamentary seats are allocated based on a sectarian quota, the vast majority of Sunni lawmakers are part of Hariri's Future Movement party. "I'm convinced there is no room for any positive opportunities to Lebanon due to the Iranian influence, our indecisiveness with the international community, internal divisions, and sectarian divisions, I'm suspending work in political life and so is the Future Movement. And I'm not running in the elections, nor will the Future Movement," Hariri said in a televised address on Monday. "We are staying in service of our people and nation, but our decision is to suspend any direct role or responsibility in ruling, representation, or politics in the traditional sense," he added. - APP