

# Islamabad POST

Wednesday, February 02, 2022

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

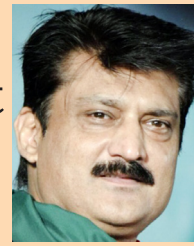
Price Rs. 20

**Putin discusses Ukraine crisis with visiting Hungarian PM**

Detailed News On Page-08

**Shahzad thanks allies for support in Senate**

Detailed News On Page-03



**Country-wide vaccination drive to start**

Detailed News On Page-08



## Briefs

### Saudi Minister to visit Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: On a special invitation of Interior Minister Sheikh Rashed Ahmed, Saudi Interior Minister Prince Abdul Aziz bin Saud bin Naif will arrive Pakistan on February 7 on a day long visit. Saudi Interior Minister would meet key government and security officials during his visit to Pakistan, said a statement issued by the Interior Ministry here on Tuesday. The Saudi Interior Minister would also meet President Dr Arif Alvi and Prime Minister Imran Khan. — APP

### All parties' funds must be scrutinized

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Faruk Habib said on Tuesday that the accounts of all political parties should be scrutinized in accordance with the decision of the Supreme Court and the law of the land. Talking to the media persons outside Election Commission of Pakistan he requested the ECP to expedite the process of scrutiny of the accounts of the PPP and PML-N. Faruk Habib said that the security committee had become inactive due to the retirement of a scrutiny committee member. — APP

### PTI 'bankrupts' Pakistan

DNA

CHAMAN: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman on Tuesday alleged that the leaders of ruling party of Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI) have bankrupted the country. Addressing a public convention in Chaman, the JUI-F chief alleged that State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) is under full control of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Taking a jibe at the PTI-led government, Fazl said that now the legislation is being bulldozed on the Parliament under the mounting pressure of the IMF.

Lifetime ban on Nawaz, Tareen

## Imran slams SCBA for review plea

PM assures South Punjab of facilities; inaugurated Health Card facility for Bahawalpur division

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BAHAWALPUR: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Tuesday slammed the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) over its decision to file a petition against life-long disqualification saying that the body has gone to court for a "thief" who ran to London by "lying". He said the government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf was committed to mitigating the deprivation of the people of South Punjab by ensuring their just share in development budget and employment opportunities. Addressing the launch event of Naya Pakistan National Health Card in Bahawalpur division, he said the people of South Punjab would be given their right of access to education, healthcare and development in accordance with the percentage of the population. The National Health Card, providing Rs one million medical coverage per household annually, will benefit around 10.5 million people belonging to the districts of Rahimyar Khan, Bahawalpur and

Continued on Page 06

**Pleased to have authored over 4,000 judgements, says CJP**

ISLAMABAD: Outgoing Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Gulzar Ahmed on Tuesday said he was pleased to have authored verdicts in 4,392 cases during his tenure as the country's top judge, pointing out that he had to a large extent reduced the backlog of cases he inherited after taking charge. He made these remarks while addressing a full-court reference organised in his honour at the Supreme Court on the eve of his retirement. In his remarks at the ceremony today, Justice Ahmed said at least 38,680 cases were pending when he took charge as the CJP and around 27,426 cases had been

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan distributing Naya Pakistan National Health Cards among the beneficiaries. — DNA

**Ready to host intra-Afghan talks, says Russia**

Taliban may send junior level officials to Afghan embassy in Moscow

DNA

KABUL: Russia is willing to host representatives of the Taliban government and opposition figures if both sides want to meet in Moscow. President Vladimir Putin's special representative for Afghanistan said in an interview: "We have repeatedly confirmed our readiness to demonstrate hospitality if they are interested in that." He said Russia did not rule out the possibility of the Taliban government sending junior and middle-level diplomats to the Afghan embassy in Moscow. Kabul added some of the diplomats, appointed by the Ashraf Ghani administration, had already resigned their jobs and left Russia. Last week, Qatar, Turkiye, and the Taliban-led interim government in Afghanistan agreed on "several key issues" over how to manage and operate Kabul's international airport — the landlocked country's main air link to the world. "The delegations of the State of Qatar, the Republic of Turkiye and the Afghan caretaker government concluded [on] Thursday in Doha a tripartite meeting on the management and operation of Kabul International Airport," a Qatari Foreign Ministry statement said.

**'Court will take stern notice of fake report'**

The Information Minister says that the purpose of such a report is to ridicule the legal system

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad on Tuesday said that the court will take stern notice of former premier Nawaz Sharif's fake medical report. Sharing his views regarding Nawaz Sharif's report on Tuesday, he said that the problem of former prime minister will not be resolved by lying. He must return the public's money. The Information



Continued on Page 06

**Doctor advises Nawaz Sharif against travel**

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: The latest medical report of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif has been submitted to the Lahore High Court (LHC), according to which the doctors have advised him to not travel,

Continued on Page 06

## Palestine welcomes AI statement against Israel

The UNSC and the General Assembly are obliged to heed the compelling evidence presented by Amnesty and other leading organizations and hold Israel accountable

NEWS DESK

RAMALLAH: The State of Palestine has welcomed the report by Amnesty International on Israel's apartheid regime and racist policies and practices against the Palestinian people. Amnesty International joins a long list of distinguished Palestinian, Israeli and international human rights organizations and experts in exposing Israel's colonial occupation for what it is: an institutionalized system of oppression and domination over the Palestinian people, designed to legitimize its colonial settlement expansion, deny the Palestinian people their inalienable right to self-determination, and erase Palestinian history, present, and future

in their homeland.

The report is a detailed affirmation of the cruel reality of entrenched racism, exclusion, oppression, colonialism, apartheid, and attempted erasure that the Palestinian people have endured since the Nakba. It is a reality in which the State is structured to maintain Jewish Israeli domination by ensuring the perpetual denial of the fundamental and national rights of the Palestinian people. This abominable reality of criminality and impunity is undeniable to the international community. It is also sustained and emboldened by the willful abandonment of principled obligations under international law through inaction and

Continued on Page 06

## Pakistan desires long term relationship with Canada

The Canadian High Commissioner appreciated Pakistan's role in Afghan situation



RAWALPINDI: High Commissioner of Canada Wendy Gilmour calls on Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa. — DNA

STAFF REPORT / DNA

RAWALPINDI: Canadian High Commissioner to Pakistan Wendy Gilmour Tuesday called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa at GHQ, said a statement issued by Inter

Services Public Relations.

During the meeting matters of mutual interest, bilateral cooperation in various fields, overall regional situation including Afghanistan were discussed. COAS said that Pakistan desires to maintain the tradition of bilateral engagement and wish for long term &

multi-domain enduring relationship with Canada. COAS appreciated special efforts taken by the Canadian High Commissioner for promotion of sports in Northern Areas.

The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's role in Afghan situation, efforts for regional stability and pledged to play her role for further improvements in diplomatic cooperation with Pakistan at all levels.

Later in the day, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Turkmenistan Vepa Hajiyev on Tuesday called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa at the General Headquarters (GHQ) to discuss matters of mutual interest, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a statement. According to the military's media wing, the meeting discussed matters related to bilateral cooperation in various fields with special emphasis on regional connectivity projects and Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline.

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Ukraine President Zelenskyy announces to boost army  
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Russia, US clash at UN over Ukraine crisis  
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# DC Faisalabad holds revenue awami katchri

Revenue Awami Khidmat Services a total of 81 applicants identified the problems in Tehsil City and Sadar out of which 62 were solved on spot while the remaining applications were directed to be processed and reported within three days

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: On the directions of Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar, the Revenue Awami Khidmat Katchri was held at DC Complex and Deputy Commissioner Ali Shahzad listened the public complaints regarding revenue matters and directed the revenue officers for speedy solution of the

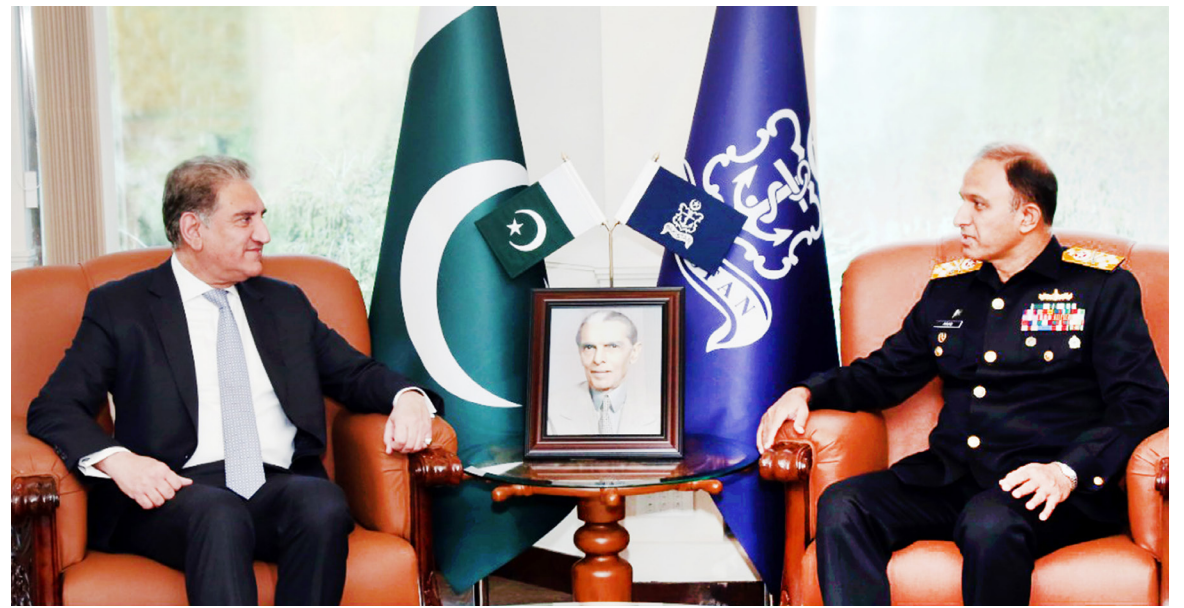


FAISALABAD: Deputy Commissioner Ali Shahzad listening the public complaints on Revenue Awami Khidmat Katchri. – DNA

applications. Deputy Commissioner said that the delay in the matters of public would not tolerated and responsible revenue officer and staff would accountable. He said that the Department of Revenue was at the forefront of public service and holding Revenue Awami Khidmat Katchri would not only solve the problems of the people but also increase their confidence.

Deputy Commissioner said that the problems of the people's under one roof are being addressed by listening to the problems related to the revenue department. He said that speedy solution of issues and grievances related to the revenue department including issuance of domicile, farad, registry, income certificate and other revenue matters are being solved on spot. He said that officers of the revenue department including Assistant commissioners and revenue officers and ADLRs were also directed to ensure attendance in the court. Citizens can approach the concerned Tehsil Office on the first and second working day of every month for resolving revenue related issues. He also went to the applicants and took feedback to them about solution of their complaint.

During the Revenue Awami Khidmat Services a total of 81 applicants identified the problems in Tehsil City and Sadar out of which 62 were solved on spot while the remaining applications were directed to be processed and reported within three days. The Revenue Awami Khidmat Katchris were also held at Tehsil Jaranwala, Samundri, Tandlianwala and Chak Jhumra. The second Katchri would be held on 2nd February at tehsil level.



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister of Pakistan Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi visited Naval Headquarters Islamabad and calls on Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi. – DNA

## FM Qureshi meets Naval Chief

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister of Pakistan Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi visited Naval Headquarters Islamabad and called-on Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi. On arrival at Naval Headquarters, the Minister was received by Chief of the Naval Staff and both dignitaries had a one-on-one meeting at CNS office. The Foreign Minister greatly appreciated the professionalism and operational readiness of Pakistan Navy and lauded PN significant contributions in achieving Pakistan Foreign Policy objectives through Naval Diplomacy. He assured all out support of the Government for Pakistan Navy to meet the evolving challenges in maritime domain. Afterwards, the Honourable Minister was given a detailed briefing on Pakistan Maritime Security Challenges geostrategic milieu by Deputy Chief of Naval Staff (Operations) Vice Admiral Naveed Ashraf. The Foreign Minister during his talk at the briefing session added that Government of Pakistan fully realizes the importance of maritime sector and its immense economic potential for prosperity of the country.

## MoFEPT, Telenor sign MoU to pilot Taleemabad

ISLAMABAD: Taking another leap towards fulfilling the Digital Pakistan ambition, Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Telenor Pakistan to pilot Taleemabad in six primary level public schools to be called Model Virtual Schools. The signing ceremony was held today at the Ministry of Federal Education and was attended by Federal Education Minister Shafqat Mahmood, CEO Telenor Pakistan, Irfan Wahab Khan and Chief Corporate Affairs Officer Telenor Pakistan, Kamal Ahmad. Under this partnership Telenor Pakistan aims at extending high-quality standardized digital education to the underserved students and schools in Pakistan through its award winning EdTech platform, Taleemabad, which is the country's first digital education platform based on the Single National Curriculum (SNC) and is endorsed by the Ministry of Federal Education. At the pilot stage Telenor Pakistan will be equipping six Model Virtual Schools with basic IT hardware and digital learning management system for teachers, students and administration while also providing them with the tools and skills necessary to cope with the new normal. – APP

# Sohail Altaf joins FTO as chief advisor

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The ceremony was well attended by Federal Tax Ombudsman Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah, FTO Officials, DC Islamabad Hamza Shafqat, FPCCI Vice President Qazi Akbar, Islamabad Chamber President Shakeel Munir, Former President ICCI, President of Islamabad Women's Chamber Ms Naema, Small Chamber President Asif Idrees, RCCI Senior Vice President Asim Malik, Vice President Talat Awan, Former Presidents, Executive Committee Members, Anjuman-e-Tajirana representatives, Shahid Ghafoor Paracha, Sheikh Hafeez, Arshad Awan, Sharjeel Mir, Tax Bar Association representatives and ISE Stock Exchange Chairman Zahid Latif Khan participated. Federal Tax Ombudsman Dr. Asif Jah assured

all kinds of cooperation and assistance for establishing the good relationship between the business community and the Federal Tax Ombudsman. He expressed hoped that Sohail Altaf will use his abilities as Chief Advisor to establish a good relationship between the business community and the Federal Tax Ombudsman. Group Leader RCCI and Chief Advisor FTO Sohail Altaf said that at present there is a lack of trust between the business community and the tax department which will be addressed. Steps will be taken to increase the number of taxpayers. Complaints will be addressed immediately. Earlier, Chamber President Nadeem Rauf said that the appointment of Sohail Altaf as Chief FTO Advisor to the entire country and especially to the Rawalpindi Chamber is welcome and an honor for the Chamber.



## 83 flood-affected reconstructed, work on 27 underway: PDMA

PESHAWAR: The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA-PaRRSA) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has reconstructed 83 Flood affected schools while work on 27 others was in progress in nine districts of the province. The media cell PDMA said the school buildings were designed keeping in view all the precautionary and safety measures against earthquakes and requirements for disabled persons. In this connection a project steering committee meeting was held under the chairmanship of Director General PDMA Mr. Sharif Hussain to review the progress on KP Reconstruction Program. The forum was briefed on overall ongoing progress and was told that provision of facilities and work completed till date was 202 out of 229 schools. Besides 13 healthcare facilities, equipment supplied to 49 health facilities, 56 drinking water schemes, 2 irrigation head works, 2 bridges, 5 roads and burn & trauma centers at Hayatabad by US-AID funds under KPRP.

It was further informed that work on establishment of 8 satellite stations for ERS 1122 was underway on major highways and motorways of the Province. USAID has also shown satisfaction on both the physical and financial progress which was almost 93 percent. It was noted that the program would be completed within the timelines. PDMA KP has recently reconstructed 52 schools in Malakand Division including 28 schools in Swat, 6 in Lower Dir, 8 in Upper Dir, 5 in Malakand, 5 in Shangla district while 31 schools in

other districts were completed including 18 in Nowshera, 5 in Charsadda 5, 02 in Peshawar and 06 in DI Khan district. Local community stated that the standard buildings of schools with facilities would help boost the education ratio, as more and more students were being enrolled in these facilities day by day. "These newly reconstructed schools were well equipped with modern facilities as required for an institution i.e. boundary walls, furniture, power supply and best designed buildings. – APP

## FESCO issues shutdown programme

FAISALABAD: Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) has issued shutdown programme for Wednesday for necessary repair, maintenance and expansion of electricity lines. According to the programme, power supply from Atomic Energy and Kausar Abad feeders emanating from 132-kV Jhang Road grid station, Paradise feeder originating from 132-kV Thikriwala grid station, Darul Ehsan feeder emanating from 132-kV City grid station, 466 Road, Naradada and Sain Wazeer Ali feeders originating from 132-kV Samundri grid station, Torianwala and Darya Bal feeders emanating from 132-kV Mureedwala grid station will remain suspended from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Feb 2, 2022. – APP

## Man arrested for burning his wife

FAISALABAD: Madina Town police have arrested a man for allegedly burning his wife over a domestic dispute. A police spokesman said on Tuesday that Muhammad Siddique, son of Ameer Ahmad, allegedly sprinkled kerosene oil on his wife Saba Bibi after a quarrel and set her on fire. As a result, the mother of two received serious burn injuries and was shifted to a hospital. Doctors said her condition was critical. The police arrested the accused and started investigation after registering a case vide FIR No 208/22 on the complaint of Muhammad Younus, father of the victim. – APP

## Man held with weapons

FAISALABAD: Kotwali police on Tuesday arrested a man with weapons from the premises of session courts. Police said that security staff spotted a suspected person in the premises of session courts and took him into custody. During search, the police recovered weapons from the accused identified as Abdur Rauf. The police locked him behind bars for further investigation. – APP

## KP Cabinet approves rules to end child labour

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa cabinet chaired by Chief Minister Mahmood Khan Tuesday approved Rules 2021 to end forced and child labor in the province. KP government spokesman Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif told a media briefing. He said that the cabinet also approved KP Maternity Benefits Rules 2021 to provide all benefits to women working in various institutions and factories during maternity, adding the proposed amendment in Police Service Rules (F / C) 1934 was also given nod. The cabinet was briefed on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pavilion and Agreements during Dubai Expo and it was said that MoUs worth eight billion dollars have been signed

at the expo for cooperation in the fields of tourism, hydropower, mines and minerals, the Special Assistant said. The Cabinet approved a supplementary grant of Rs 800 million for the financial year 2021-22 under the ADP and AIP program for the merged districts. The provincial cabinet approved amendments to section 19 of the Civil Servants Act, 1973 under which the Contributory Pension Fund will be introduced for employees recruited after July 1, 2021. A new fee schedule for all types of computerized driving licenses, including international driving permits and bills to regulate online riding and online goods riding companies were approved by the cabinet. – APP

## Government employees warn of resuming agitation



KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: All Government Employees Grand Alliance (AGEGA) observed Token Protest on Tuesday in front of Finance Ministry and the Parliament. Thousands of Federal Government employees of various departments and teachers demonstrated in favour of their demands to mark a token protest which may preclude the grand protest on 10th of February if their demands are accepted by authorities said various leaders and elected representatives of various professional groups and ministries. Leading a big delegation of teachers from the F G colleges, Dr Rahima Rahman, president of Federal Government College Teachers Association (FGCTA) addressed the protest rally and demanded that anomaly in pay structures and allowance should be abolished right away otherwise fair action will be taken. There should be a uniform

pay and privilege mechanism for the same grade employees. She reiterated her pledge that if the genuine demands of the Grand Alliance are not accepted by 10th of February, FGCTA will strongly participate in protests in front of Parliament which will turn into a sit in which may last until the demands are accepted by the authorities. The Chief Coordinator of AGEGA Rehman Ali Bajwa, "Government representatives made an agreement on February 11, 2021 that all ad hoc allowances will be a part of basic salaries, grade 1-16 scale employees will be awarded upgradation and time scale promotion. But promises are unfulfilled so far. He said, instead of focusing of privatization, there should be institutional reforms so that the productivity of the department should increase. He also demanded that contract employees should be regularized immediately. He warned if demands of AGEGA are not met till February 10, we will again be on roads.

## ICCI delegation visits NPC to congratulates new office bearers

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) led by Muhammad Shakeel Munir President here on Tuesday visited National Press Club to congratulate its newly elected office bearers. Anwar Raza was elected as President, Azhar Jatoti Senior Vice President, Khalil Ahmed Raja Secretary, Ms. Nayyar Ali Finance Secretary, Aslam Lurka, Waqar Abbas, Tallat Farooq and Ms. Shakila Jaleel as Joint Secretary of NPC. Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, ICCI said that journalistic community was rendering great service to the society by providing timely in-

formation and educating the people on various issues which was laudable. He urged the government to provide better facilities to the journalistic community so that it could serve the nation more effectively. He said that NPC should cooperate with ICCI in highlighting the key issues of the business community in print media that would help in redressing problems and facilitating better growth of business activities. Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice



President, Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President, ICCI and other members of delegation said that both organizations were working for common cause to promote the interests of their members and stressed for the need of closer cooperation between them to resolve the problems of their members and promote business & economic interests of Pakistan. Speaking at the occasion, Anwar

Raza President, Azhar Jatoti Senior Vice President and Khalil Ahmed Raja Secretary, National Press Club Islamabad thanked ICCI delegation for visiting NPC to congratulate them. They said that the business community was playing an important role in the economic development of the country and NPC would extend its support in highlighting key issues of trade and industry. Both sides discussed problems being faced by the economy and agreed to make joint efforts in order to raise voice for their redress. They also agreed to maintain close liaison to promote the larger interests of the national economy. – APP

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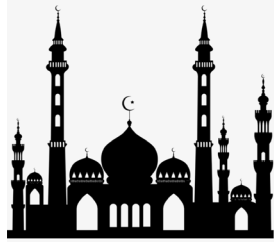
### LOST

My Original allotment letter of Plot No 628, Razi Road, Gulshan e Sahat E-18 Islamabad has lost. Owner Kamran Ali Afzal.

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03345421812




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




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Hospitals

CMH.....5611111  
MH.....561116  
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DHQ.....5556311-4  
RGH.....9290301-7  
Holy Family.....9290322-7  
PIMS.....9261170-79  
Polyclinic.....9218300-09  
Shifa International.4603666



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CDA.....9208301-04  
Met Office.....9250360-6  
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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 111-309309

**Islamabad Metropolitan**  
Corporation.....9209224  
Potohar Town.....9209224  
Rawal Town.....5773343

**Wasa Water Tank**  
Rawalpindi.....0331-5022125



ISLAMABAD: General Manager Islamabad Serena Hotel Michael A Galopin, Asma Rashid and others taking interest in paintings during an exhibition at Satrang Art Gallery. – DNA

# PIMS, ChildLife Foundation to modernize Child Emergency

Dr. Abid Malik commended ChildLife Foundation’s efforts for providing care to children in Sindh and Balochistan, where ChildLife operates 10 Emergency Rooms

DNA

ISLAMABAD: An agreement was signed between Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) and ChildLife Foundation to establish a state-of-the-art children’s Emergency Room (ER). This ER will provide world-class emergency care to children 24x7 absolutely free of cost. The agreement was signed by Dr. Abid Malik, Chairman Board of Governors FMTI PIMS, and Mr. Iqbal Adamjee, Chairman ChildLife Foundation, on behalf of their organizations. Dr. Abid Malik commended ChildLife Foundation’s



efforts for providing emergency care to children in Sindh and Balochistan, where ChildLife operates 10 Emergency Rooms.

“We believe this partnership will improve the quality of medical services for children in the federal territory of Pakistan,” Dr. Malik said.

He added that this new project will provide emergency care to children at Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS), which caters to

the underprivileged population of Punjab, KPK & Gilgit Baltistan, in addition to the federal capital. “ChildLife Foundation

treats a million children annually completely free of cost through its 11 ERs in major government teaching hospitals, and over 50 tele-medicine satellite centers in district hospitals across Sindh and Balochistan,” said Mr. Iqbal Adamjee. “This is our 12th project, under which the capacity of the existing children’s ER in PIMS will be doubled and the facilities will be aligned with international emergency care protocols,” he added. It is pertinent to mention that, since its inception in 2011, ChildLife Foundation has provided quality emergency care to over 4 million children across Pakistan.

## Pak to host 10th Youth Ministerial Conference

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Youth Affairs Muhammad Usman Dar said Pakistan would host the 10th Commonwealth Youth Ministerial Conference on the occasion of International Youth Day to be observed on August 12. Around 54 youth ministers of commonwealth countries were expected to attend the conference, where Pakistan would showcase the soft image of its youth to the world, the SAPM said while speaking at a media conference here on Tuesday. Dar said, “Pakistan will observe 2022 as the year of

youth. The federal government will assist the provincial youth departments in organizing youth engagement events during the current year.” Under the vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan, the government has been working on youth development initiatives and also ensuring best employment opportunities, he added. He said the Kamyab Jawan Programme has organized over 500 events of youth engagement like job fairs, sports and talent hunts and cultural shows. The SAPM said the government has allocated Rs100 billion for the disbursement of soft loans

under the Kamyab Jawan Programme and was distributing two to three billion rupees per month to around 2,000 young entrepreneurs. The Kamyab Jawan Programme has disbursed Rs8.1 billion in last three months for establishing 5,000 businesses and provided some 15,000 jobs to the youth, he added. He said that in the third phase of “Skills for All” (Hunarmand Pakistan) scholarships programme around 60,000 youth would be provided scholarships for various courses in traditional and high-tech trades. – APP

## Shahzad thanks allies for supporting SBP Bill

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Leader of the House in Senate Dr Shahzad Waseem Tuesday thanked allied political parties and senators of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for extending full support in the passage of the State

Bank of Pakistan (Amendment) Bill-2022. On a point of order in the Senate, he said, the whole state was unanimous on the content of the State Bank Bill. He said the Pakistan Peoples Party and Pakistan Muslim League in their tenures had made amendments in the SBP ordinance on the

directions of the IMF. “If the amendments made by you are correct, then why the amendments made by my party are incorrect,” he added. He disagreed with the stance of the opposition parties that the bill was against the state, saying “Nobody can go against the state”.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Shafqat Mahmood, SAPM on National Heritage and Culture Shahzad Nawaz, Parliamentary Secretary Education Ms. Wajiha Qamar witness the signing ceremony of MoU between Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training & Telenor Pakistan to pilot Taleemabad in six primary level public schools. – DNA

## Justice Bandial urges upon Performance Audit

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A Full Court Reference was held in the Supreme Court of Pakistan on the eve of the retirement of Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Gulzar Ahmed on Tuesday. The reference was attended by all the judges of the Supreme Court, the Attorney General for Pakistan, Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) President and a large number of lawyers. The Full Court Reference was addressed by nominated Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial, Attorney General of Pakistan and the SCBA representatives. Justice Gulzar said he had performed his duties honestly as a judge throughout his career and also authored verdicts in the 4,392 cases as an apex court judge. Nominated Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial said that on the issue of appointment of judges in the Supreme Court, Chief Justice Gulzar Ahmed proposed the names of independent judges and he was honoured to initiate the first woman judge to the Supreme Court. Justice Bandial said a Performance Audit must be conducted to identify weaknesses in the judiciary. He also urged that all stakeholders must come together to resolve the problems of poverty, unemployment, and population growth.

## Court adjourns references against Abbasi, Iqbal

ISLAMABAD: The accountability courts of Islamabad on Tuesday adjourned hearing in references against former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi and ex-minister Ahsan Iqbal. The LNG reference against Shahid Khaqan Abbasi adjourned without further proceeding till February 8, due to the leave of AC-I Muhammad Azam Khan. Ex-finance minister Miftah Ismail, Abdullah Khaqan Abbasi and other people had been named in the reference. However, AC-III Syed Asghar Ali postponed hearing on Naroval Sports City Complex reference against Ahsan Iqbal till February 10. The hearing was adjourned on the request of the defence lawyer. – APP

## Admin conducts 1,936 raids to check prices

RAWALPINDI: The administration conducted over 1,936 raids in four districts of the division to check prices of daily use items particularly rates of sugar during last one week. According to a Commissioner Office spokesman, 189 flour mills of Rawalpindi division were provided 852,712 wheat bags during the period. Total 2957 wheat flour sale points besides 127 DC counters were also set up in the division to facilitate the citizens. He informed that the Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Noor ul Amin Mengal had directed the administration officers that it was the responsibility of the district administration to provide vegetables and other food items to the citizens at official rates. – APP

## Yusuf Raza Gilani most compromised leader of opposition: FM Qureshi

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi Tuesday said Yusuf Raza Gilani was the most compromised leader of the opposition in the Senate as everyone knew very well how he [Gilani] secured the Senate seat. Speaking on the floor of the Senate, he said the House knew that the present leader of opposition had won the Senate seat by horse-trading and was still facing the case in the Election Commission of Pakistan. He said there were videos of Gilani’s son who had been making efforts to buy votes for his father in the Senate elections. He said it was the PPP that tricked the PML-N, which was a majority party in the Senate, and managed to win the slot of opposition leader through unfair means. Qureshi predicted that the opposition leader would withdraw his resignation as it was just a drama to hoodwink other parliamentarians. He warned the Senators that “the leader of the opposition is the compromised leader and do not rely on him,” and asked why the PPP ignored the seasoned parliamentarians like Mian Raza Rabbani and Sehrry Rehman for the slot of leader of opposition in the Senate. He said Yusuf Raza Gilani, being a senior parliamentarian, gave an irresponsible statement the other day, accusing the chair of facilitating the passage of the SBP amendment bill. He said leader of the House in Senate Dr Shahzad Waseem had clarified that the chairman Senate had exercised his right as per the rules and the law. Qureshi said the opposition leader had been giving clarifications about his absence from the House when the SBP bill was being passed, which was already on orders of the day. He said Gilani portrayed as he was unaware of the bill’s presentation despite the fact the PPP had been opposing it in the National Assembly and supposed to do the same in the Senate. – DNA

## Govt to revive PIA’s past glory, says Tarin

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Shaukat Tarin on Tuesday said that the government believed in reviving and regaining the past glory of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) and making it a profitable organization. Chairing a meeting on PIA’s Corporate Business Plan 2022-26 here, the minister stressed to focus on Pakistani diaspora, better customer services and consider possibility of direct flights in the business plan to make PIA a flourishing organization that may contribute for economic development of Pakistan and service our communities at home and abroad. While appreciating hard work done by the consultant, the chair emphasized that PIA is a national flag carrier and needs to be a world class airline.



## Briefs

## Cabinet approves design of CTBCM

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Ali Muhammad Khan on Tuesday informed the Senate that the Federal Cabinet has approved the design and implementation roadmap of the Competitive Trading Bilateral Contract Market (CTBCM). Responding to various questions during the Questions Hour, Ali Muhammad Khan said that the CTBCM is a complete framework that would initially provide the enabling mechanism for the sale by private generators and purchase of electric power by the Bulk power consumers (consumers having more than 1MW electric power connection). In a written reply by the Ministry of Energy said that it is envisaged that operations of CTBCM will start by May 1, 2022, which will mark the commencement of the multi-buyer and seller market in Pakistan.

## Senate refers three govt bills to committee

ISLAMABAD: The Senate of Pakistan here on Tuesday referred three government bills to the relevant committees for further consideration and deliberation. The bills include, The Pak University of Engineering and Emerging Technology University Bill, 2022, the Protection of Parents Bill, 2022, and the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (Amendment) Bill, 2022. All the bills were tabled by Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Ali Muhammad Khan in the House. Chairman Standing Committee on Interior, Mohsin Aziz presented a report of the committee on the subject matter of Starred Question No.56, asked by Senator Kamran Murtaza on December 29, 2021, regarding the policy of the Federal Government to control incidents of car lifting/ theft across the country in coordination with the provincial governments. The chairman, Standing Committee on Interior has also presented a report of the committee on a point of public importance raised by Senator AzamNazeerTara on December 27, 2021 regarding the incident of killing of Wajih Swati, a Pakistani origin US citizen. – APP

## IRSA releases 43165 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) Tuesday released 43165 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 47316 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1447.69 feet, which was 55.69 feet higher than its dead level 1392 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 16600 and 20000 cusecs respectively. The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1141.60 feet, which was 91.06 feet higher than its dead level of 1050 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded 7800 and 249 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 32258, 28964 and 20270 cusecs respectively. – APP

## 3rd Phase of RED drive kicks off

RAWALPINDI: The 3rd Phase of the RED drive kicked off Tuesday to vaccinate every district resident against the fatal coronavirus. Deputy Commissioner Tahir Farooq inaugurated the drive at District Health Authority Office Khayaban-e-Sirsayed and said that the purpose of launching the campaign was to provide the vaccination facility at the people's doorsteps. He said that the vaccine was mandatory for those above 12 years of age and safe for pregnant and other disease affected people. The DC said that a comprehensive plan had been devised to achieve the goals of the 3rd 'Red' Corona Vaccination Campaign, while 1556 teams were visiting go door to door to persuade the citizens of corona vaccination. – APP

## ICCI all praise for journalists role in national building

NPC should cooperate with ICCI in highlighting the key issues of the business community in print media

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry led by Muhammad Shakeel Munir President visited National Press Club Islamabad to congratulate its newly elected office bearers. Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President, Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President ICCI, Zafar Bakhtawari, Saeed Khan, Raja Imtiaz, Ch. Masood, Khalid Chaudhry, NisarMirza, Babar Chaudhry, Sheikh Abdul Waheed, Ch. Irfan and others were in the delegation. Anwar Raza was elected as President, AzharJatoi Senior Vice President, A. NazirCharan, Ghazanfar Abbas and Myra Azam Vice Presidents, Khalil Ahmed Raja Secretary, Ms. Nayyar Ali Finance Secretary, AslamLurka, Waqar Abbas, Tallat Farooq and Ms. Shakila Jaleel as Joint Secretary of NPC. Speaking at the occasion,



Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that journalistic community was rendering great service to the society by providing timely information and educating the people on various issues which was laudable. He stressed that the government should provide better facilities to the jour-

nalistic community so that it could serve the nation more effectively. He said that NPC should cooperate with ICCI in highlighting the key issues of the business community in print media that would help in redressing problems and facilitating better growth of business activities. Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President, Mu-

hammad Faheem Khan Vice President, ICCI and other members of delegation said that both organizations were working for common cause to promote the interests of their members and stressed for the need of closer cooperation between them to resolve the problems of their members and promote business & eco-

nomical interests of Pakistan. Speaking at the occasion, Anwar Raza President, AzharJatoi Senior Vice President and Khalil Ahmed Raja Secretary, National Press Club Islamabad thanked ICCI delegation for visiting NPC to congratulate them. They said that the business community was playing an important role in the economic development

of the country and NPC will extend its support in highlighting key issues of trade and industry. Both sides discussed problems being faced by the economy and agreed to make joint efforts in order to raise voice for their redress. They also agreed to maintain close liaison to promote the larger interests of the national economy.

## Govt making all out efforts to facilitate expatriates

ISLAMABAD: The incumbent government was making all out efforts to provide maximum facilities to expatriates and their dependents in the country. An official source told APP here on Tuesday that a series of projects and schemes was launched for the welfare and development of the Overseas Pakistanis in different sectors including health, education and social welfare by the current government. The number of projects launched for expatriates including Sohni Dharti, schemes of Modern Luxury Apartments, Roshan Digital Account, Prime Minister's Performance Delivery Unit, Call Sarameen, Naya Pakistan Calling Project, Visit Pakistan, internship, Complaint Cell, Ambulance Service, Investment Facilities

Centre, Reintegration of Returnee Migrant Workers and Foreign Exchange Remittance Card. He added that the government has directed to all provincial governments to upgrade all facilities at provincial airports to facilitate the Overseas Pakistanis. Advisor to the Prime Minister on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Muhammad Ayub Afridi had also visited different regional airports and inspected the facilities being provided by various government departments to facilitate passengers especially overseas Pakistanis. The Advisor visited international arrival and departure lounges to review the facilities and also interacted with the passengers to inquire their opinion regarding the facilities. – APP



ISLAMABAD: Minister of state for information and broadcasting, Farrukh Habib is talking to media in Islamabad. – DNA

## ECNEC approves Rs129.9bln road programme

ISLAMABAD: The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) on Monday approved Punjab Arterial Roads Improvement Programme (PARIP) worth of Rs. 129,944.15 million (US\$ 773.20) programme to improve road infrastructure in the province. The project sponsored by the government of Punjab envisages construction of 535 kilometers of dual carriageway highway sections between various cities in the province.

The executive committee, the meeting of which was chaired by Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue ShaukatTarin, also approved Punjab Rural Sustainable Water Supply and Sanitation Project (PRSWSSP) amounting to Rs. 96,202 million (USD 553.0). The project would be executed by Punjab Rural Municipal Services Company in 16 Tehsils of Punjab with directions to reduce its implementation time and carry out it initially as pilot project in some Tehsils and submit its report to the ECNEC for further consideration.

The project has been designed to provide basic civic amenities such as water supply, sanitation and solid waste management in the rural areas of selected Tehsils of Punjab. The executive committee also approved Greater Karachi Bulk Water Supply Scheme K-IV, 260 MGD Phase –I at a revised cost of 126,404.751 million. Initially, the project was approved with original capacity of 260 MGD in 2014 to be executed by Karachi Water and Sewerage Board, Government of Sindh. Later the project was revised and included in Karachi Transportation Plan (KTP) with the same 260 MGD capacity but change of sponsoring and executing agencies from government of Sindh to Ministry of Water resources and WAPDA in 2021. The project aims to meet growing water demand of Karachi and provide dependable and sustainable water transmission system from its more than 100 KMs away source of Keenjhar Lake to feed Karachi water supply and distribution network. – APP

## AIOU provides online adm fee submission

DNA

Islamabad: As a result of the digitization of Allama Iqbal Open University, students can now submit admission forms for any program from Matric to Ph.D. online, even facility of online fee submissions through Jazz Cash, EasyPaisa, and UPaisa mobile app \* 786 # USSD String / Retailer Agent / Franchise

and branches of Mobilink, Telenor and Ubank has also been provided to them. More information can be obtained from the University website or the helpline 051-111-112-468. It is pertinent to mention here that AIOU is now rapidly gaining popularity globally. For the first time, In the Fall Semester 2021,

the university has included international students in the network. As a result, many students from Malaysia, Italy, Canada, Africa, and America have enrolled themselves. AIOU has now set a target of 10,000 international students in the next three years. The University has offered admissions for the first phase

of Semester Spring 2022 for Secondary Overseas Pakistanis (Matriculation), Higher Secondary School Certificate (FA), and ICom admissions for Overseas Pakistanis and International students around the world. Different levels of educational programs for international students will be introduced in the second phase of admissions starting from March 1, 2022.

## India will have to pay for its Hindutva politics

ISLAMABAD, Feb 1 (APP): If India ever tried to be adventurous inside or outside the country it will only expose its own political and communal faultlines and eventually be devoured from within. Dr. Muhammad Mujeeb Afzal, Associate Professor, School of Politics and International Relations, Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad expressed these views while speaking at a guest lecture titled "Hindutva Particularism: A Threat to Indian Union" organized by the Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI). He also underscored the importance of socio-cultural processes in shaping ideologies and subsequently competing narratives that shape identities. Narrating the historical and social evolution of Hindutva in India, he mentioned the importance of culture and faith to Hindutva's upper political and social class. This notion of sustaining Hindu dominance over minorities has resulted in social, political and economic injustices, he said. Comparing the Nehruvian principles of secularism to the Hindutva ideology being pursued by the current regime Dr. Mujeeb said that the governance in India under the Hindutva ideology had transitioned from recognition of diversity in its legal and economic frameworks to a model which delegitimizes diversity as "non-Indian" and "Western" with no place in India. Speaking about the electoral success of the BJP and the Hindutva ideology it espouses, Dr. Mujeeb talked about the gradual and patient approach to political progress that has led the party to the top of Indian politics. He did however mention that the political cycle and India's own electoral system is quite dynamic which is likely to allow for the opposition to emerge as a serious challenger in the long term. – APP

## Artist conveys message of love, tolerance through art

The exhibition featured works by Najam Kazmi, Aftab Ahmed Chingizi, Azeem Iqbal, Abdul Rehman Tabani, Asif Hussain, Ashraf Heera, Rehmat Ali, Muhammad Hussain, Aiman Mahmood, Adil Mahmood and Mahmood Ali. Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Noor-ul-Amin

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Noor-ul-Amin Mengal has said that the artist is an ambassador of peace through which he conveys the message of love and tolerance through his art. He said this while addressing a function after inaugurating a joint painting exhibition at Punjab Arts Council Rawalpindi. The exhibition featured works by NajamKazmi, Aftab Ahmed Chingizi, Azeem Iqbal, Abdul RehmanTabani, Asif Hussain, Ashraf Heera, Rehmat Ali, Muhammad Hussain, Aiman Mahmood, Adil Mahmood and Mahmood Ali. Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Noor-ul-Amin Mengal said that it is a memorable experience to bring together the works of experienced and young artists in one place and it is a proof that there are renowned artists in every field of art in this



country. He said that many famous artists belong to Pothohar region and they have

displayed their creativity everywhere. Commissioner Rawalpindi expressed special in-

terest in calligraphy specimens and said that the old style calligraphy specimens that will be displayed in this exhibition have a unique place in the world and are appreciated. He saw more than 70 paintings and calligraphy by 11 artists in the art gallery and appreciated their creativity. Naheed Manzoor said that according to the vision of Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar, special attention is being paid to the promotion of arts and culture in the region. Punjab Arts Council has always been one step ahead in spreading Pothohar culture to the world. Director Punjab Arts Council Rawalpindi Waqar Ahmed said that Pothohar region is rich in art and culture. He said that Punjab Arts Council Rawalpindi has always encouraged young artists and played a significant role in teaching and promoting various arts. The exhibition featured landscapes, miniature, calligraphy, relief work, sculpture and cityscape.

## ISNET announces award program

ISLAMABAD: Inter Islamic Network on Space Sciences and Technology (ISNET) Secretariat has announced "Outstanding Award Programme on Implementing SDGs through Space Science and Technology" for the initiatives or best practices of member countries in the fields of space-based technologies and applications. According to an official source, the award programme will focus on actions that not only enhance existing knowledge, but also bring about positive transformation to the context of the subject that is being studies, however small it may be. The conclusions and results of this type of initiatives should lead to improvement of the studied contact and the betterment of society as a whole. The awards will be given to the initiative that holds the greatest promise for improving our understanding of harnessing space-based technology and applications for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and puts forth clear, articulate and well researched policy implications to address relevant areas. The three winning initiatives will receive cash prize worth US\$ 2,000, US\$ 1500 and US\$ 1,000. The winning entries will be uploaded on ISNET's webpage. The deadline for participating in the award programme is February 10. The details are available at [www.isnet.org.pk](http://www.isnet.org.pk). – APP

## Educational institution sealed after virus detection

RAWALPINDI: The District Health Authority has shut down three more educational institutions, including Government Waqar-un-Nisa Post Graduate College for Women, after detecting Corona-virus positivity among students and staff members. The health authority spokesman DrWaqar Ahmed informed Tuesday that Waqar-un-Nisa College was sealed as around eight cases were diagnosed with the fatal virus there. He added that two Girls schools were also closed down in TenchBhatta and KallarSyedan due to over detection of Coronavirus. The institutions would remain closed till February 8, the health officer said. DrWaqar informed that the health authority had sealed 86 educational institutions so far in the Rawalpindi district to contain the spread of the deadly virus. The health official said that 3rd phase of the Reach Every Door vaccination campaign was kicked off on Tuesday to cover all those who were still far away from the jabs, adding the vaccination was the only way to defeat this deadly disease. – APP

## PMD forecast light to moderate rain

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has predicted westerly to enter water, rain-wind with Thunderstorm in Upper and Central parts of the country from Wednesday. According to PMD light to moderate rain-wind with couple of thunderstorms are expected in Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Attock, Chakwal, Gilgit-Baltistan, Chitral, Dir, Swat, Malakand, Kohistan, Shangla, Buner, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Haripur, Swabi, Mardan, Nowshera, Peshawar, Charsadda, Bajaur, Kurram, Waziristan, Kohat, Sargodha, Faisalabad, Jhang, Mianwali, Khushab, Bhakkar, Layyah, Okara and Sahiwal on Wednesday evening or night to Thursday. Moderate rain-wind-thunderstorm with isolated hailstorm are also expected in Kashmir, Jhelum, MandiBahauddin, Hafizabad, Gujranwala, Gujrat, Sialkot, Narowal, Lahore, Kasur and Sheikhupura from Wednesday evening or night to Thursday. Light to moderate snowfall is expected in Murree, Galliat, Nathiagali, Naran, Kaghan, Dir, Swat, Shangla, Buner, Neelum valley, Bagh, Haveli, Astore and Hunza on Wednesday evening or night Thursday. Windstorm or dust raising winds are also expected along Sindh-Makran coast on Wednesday and Thursday. About the possible impacts of two-day rain spell, the PMD said that windstorm may cause damages to vulnerable structures in Sindh-Makran coast. – APP



## Digital wallet

THE National Database and Registration Authority (NA-DRA) is planning to make the leap towards developing digital wallets as part of the larger Digital Pakistan initiative. If successful, this will allow us to explore the possibility of a new financial system that is just as accessible as it is convenient. At the same time however, a strategy must be devised to counter problems like internet accessibility, ineffective system setups and instances of cyberattacks.

The digital wallet is being incorporated into the pre-existing app called Pak-Identity through which over 75,000 overseas citizens were able process their CNICs. This is an impressive achievement as procedures like recording biometric fingerprints, facial recognition and scanning documents are all available online. Users of the app could undergo the process effortlessly through their smartphones. This is the type of future that Pakistan needs and to expand it to creating digital wallets is the next step. Authorities claim that once the CNIC transforms into a digital wallet, financial inclusion would increase exponentially. There is no doubt that the NADRA database can reach the largest number of people across the country and to give them the tools needed to become integrated with the digital financial system is only going to lead to an ease of doing any kind of business. It is important to understand that this is still an idealistic idea right now; there is lots that goes behind setting up an entirely new system and NADRA will need advanced technology and manpower. Furthermore, all this would be redundant if the online system is just as inefficient as that of private and public banks.

Glitches, shutdowns, crashes, and countless cyberattacks are concerns that must be accounted for. The system has to be created keeping these trends in mind so that it can be tailored more effectively. The authorities must also educate citizens as well as employees about scams and how to protect against them. This is a good initiative so long as the authorities are comprehensive with their strategy in the planning and developmental phase.

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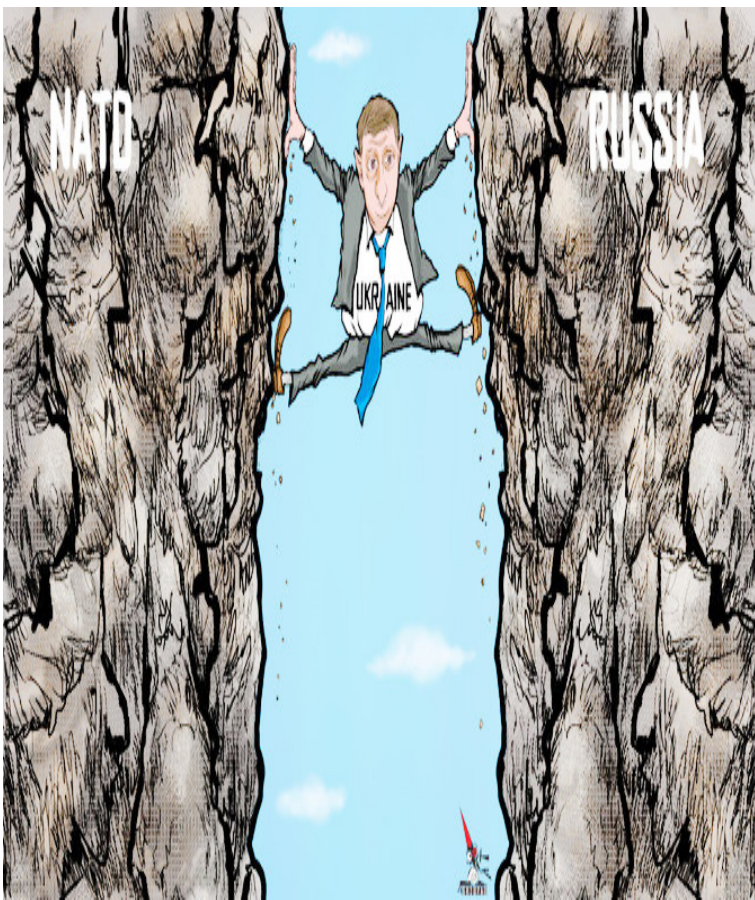
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## A successful visit

FOLLOWING NSA Moeed Yusuf's two-day visit to Afghanistan, it has been announced that Pakistan and Afghanistan have agreed to form a high-level committee to address border issues. The establishment of a national-level coordination mechanism will enhance facilitation at border crossing points and will also expedite ongoing negotiations to conclude a new trade agreement.

The statements regarding cooperation over the border mechanism are encouraging given the recent controversy caused by videos that were circulating from the Afghan side and the unfortunate rhetoric that ensued. All in all, based on the reports, this was a fruitful visit at a critical time where the two sides discussed the brewing humanitarian crisis and proposals to deepen bilateral economic engagement.

Though the 2010 Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA) expired on February 11, hopes are high about a new agreement being reached soon. Earlier on January 18, Pakistani Commerce Minister Abdul Razak Dawood revealed that the two sides are quite close to signing transit trade and trucking agreements that would facilitate Pakistani access to Central Asian markets.

There were other positives during the visit as well, as the two sides agreed to focus on social sector support and to initiate barter trade. Additionally, commitment to major connectivity projects such as CASA-1000, TAPI, and the Trans-Afghan Rail projects was also reiterated. Of course, the viability of these will be contingent on the security situation, but the successful realisation of these projects will be extremely beneficial for the economic stabilisation of Afghanistan. Most important however, is the conversation surrounding security issues. The assurance from the Deputy Afghan Prime Minister that Afghan soil will not be used against its neighbours is welcome, however, these words will have to be backed up with action since this has been promised in the past as well.

Since the Taliban takeover, there has been a spike in attacks conducted by the TTP—whose leadership is said to be based in Afghanistan. This is something that we will have to keep on the forefront of the agenda going forward because Pakistan's internal security is of the utmost importance, and given the sacrifices we have made over the years to fight the menace of terrorism, we cannot afford to lose any more precious lives.

# Iranian soccer's curse: Politics

James M. Dorsey

Although banned from attending men's domestic soccer matches, the presence of women for an international qualifier was evidence that some kinds of pressure on Iran work, at least when the pressure is aligned with popular domestic demands. That all sounds like good news

IRAN recently scored not one but two soccer successes. Fans celebrated after the country's national team qualified for the third consecutive time for the World Cup after beating Iraq 1:0 last week. It wasn't just men celebrating. It was men and women mingling freely in a Tehran square. That was after men and women, albeit segregated, egged on their team in Tehran's Azadi or Freedom Stadium.

Although banned from attending men's domestic soccer matches, the presence of women for an international qualifier was evidence that some kinds of pressure on Iran work, at least when the

pressure is aligned with popular domestic demands. That all sounds like good news. But there is bad news too, and that may be more consequential and contain a cautionary note for Iranian sports and sports globally, particularly in lands governed by autocrats and authoritarians.

For Iran, the bad news was the decision last month by the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) to expel from the 2022 Asian Champions League, the continent's major club tournament, three of Iran's top clubs, Persepolis FC, Esteghlal FC, and Gol Gohar Sirjan FC. Persepolis and Esteghlal long ranked among Asia's most popular squads.

The AFC penalized the clubs, two of which are owned by the Iranian youth and sports ministry, for failing to meet the group's managerial and infrastructural standards and its ownership rules.

That is true not just for Persepolis, Esteghlal and Gol Gohar Sirjan. Few, if any, Iranian clubs, many of which are state-owned with representatives of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) occupying board seats, meet the AFC's criteria. To meet AFC standards, Iranian clubs would have to develop youth academies, promote women's soccer, and establish marketing departments to help them become commercially sustainable.

Inevitably, that would require privatization, a political risk that so far has been one step too far for Iranian leaders. Too often, soccer in Iran, as elsewhere in the Middle East, a football-crazy part of the world, has been a catalyst for the venting of pent-up anger and frustration. Stadiums like Tehran's Azadi (Freedom) Stadium and Tabriz's Yadegar-e-Imam or Sahand

Stadium have at times turned from offering Karl Marx's proverbial opium to the people into venues of protest.

As a result, soccer, one of the few things that evoke emotions as deep-seated as religion does, is a sport authoritarian leaders feel they have to control. Credibly maintaining that control is where the rub is. Harsh US sanctions make it difficult for the government to invest in clubs whose debt burden makes them difficult to privatize even if the regime were willing to take the political risk of relinquishing control.

Conservative Iranian member of parliament Ahmad Rastineh said as much recently when he insisted that it would be "impossible" to grant independence to the Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the country's governing soccer body. Mr. Rastineh was responding to the AFC's reported demands that Iran starts privatizing clubs, lift the ban on women attending domestic soccer matches, and end government interference in the sport. The AFC demands indicate how dire the situation in Iran is. The AFC, like world soccer body FIFA, has long been a de facto pillar of support for Middle Eastern autocracy by acquiescing in political interference across the region.

The AFC's demands appear to have encouraged critics of government control to come out of the woodwork. "The whole problem today is the presence of politics in football," said Dariush Mostafavi, who was chairman of the Iranian football federation in the 1990s. Mr. Mostafavi was speaking on state television.

Mr. Mostafavi's frustrations appear to be shared by many in soccer as well as more implicitly by the federation's current

leadership. "If the structure of football improved, then Iran would be in the top 10 in the world, for sure," said Afshin Ghotbi, an Iranian-American coach who has worked with Persepolis as well as Iran's national team. "The current generation of players is the best yet, but they don't have the atmosphere in Iran to develop themselves as much as they could."

In a remarkable move, the Iranian federation's secretary-general, Hassan Kamranifar, came out swinging in support of Mehdi Mahdavi, a former national team captain, who caused a stir for wearing a jersey featuring the flags of all FIFA member countries, including Israel, during a friendly game in Qatar. Iranian athletes have in the past been sanctioned for refusing to compete against Israelis in international events in violation of globally accepted sports governance rules. Mr. Mahdavi is "one of the greats of Iranian football" and "a symbol of pride for the Islamic Republic of Iran," Mr. Kamranifar said in a statement on the federation's website. The expulsion of the Iranian clubs and the politics of Iranian soccer is the sharp edge of what is a global rather than a local problem: the incestuous and inseparable relationship between sports and politics and the insistence of international sports governors on maintaining the fiction that there is a Chinese wall between the two.

The refusal to acknowledge the relationship and establish an oversight regime that would properly govern it serves the purposes of autocratic governments and leaders of international sports associations.

The criticism expressed by the Iranian football association and Mr. Mostafavi fits an emerging trend among some ath-

letes and some club managers to stand up for various rights, including those of LGBT and labour in Qatar, this year's World Cup hosts.

Seven-time Formula One world champion Lewis Hamilton wore a helmet featuring the colours of the LGBTI Pride Progress Flag during the recent Grand Prix races in Qatar and Saudi Arabia as a challenge to the two Gulf states' refusal to recognise the rights of sexual minorities.

Similarly, the Danish Football Union (DBU), Denmark's governing soccer body, announced that its commercial sponsors had agreed to surrender space on training kits to allow for messaging critical of Qatar's treatment of migrant workers.

The union said it would also minimize the number of trips to Qatar by the Danish team that has already qualified for the 2022 World Cup to avoid commercial activities that promote the World Cup hosts' events. Pressured by human rights groups and trade unions, Qatar has significantly improved its labour regime since the 2010 awarding by FIFA of its 2022 World Cup hosting rights. However, many argue that Qatar needs to ensure that adopted reforms are properly implemented.

Unlike the issue of LGBT rights that has sparked fierce debate in the Gulf, the AFC's demands appear to resonate with Iranians. Said Iranian sports journalist: Behnam Jafarzadeh: "Most people agree with the AFC's decision and say they wish they had done this earlier."

— Dr. James M. Dorsey is an award-winning journalist and scholar and a Senior Fellow at the National University of Singapore's Middle East Institute.

# The Pakistan portrayal in Afghan peace development – 2

Fatima Iftikhar



The 9/11 incident and the role of U.S in dragging and connecting the two Islamic states of Afghanistan and Pakistan closer has always needed a discussion under each decade of policies

LARGE numbers of these unfamiliar warriors wedded nearby ladies and chose to remain in Pakistan, among them were revolutionary Muslims, for example, those of Saudi-drove Al-Qaeda and Egyptian Muslim Fellowship just as detainees from Middle Easterner countries. Relations between the two nations stayed unfriendly during the Soviet-Afghan Conflict. Afghan President Babrak Karmal would not further develop relations with Pakistan because of their refusal to officially perceive the PDPA government. Following the demise of Pakistani President Zia-ul-Haq in 1988, U.S. State Office accused WAD (a KGB-made Afghan mystery insight office) for fear-based oppressor assaults inside Pakistan in 1987 and 1988. With assets from the worldwide local area directed through the Unified Countries High Chief for Outcasts (UNHCR), Pakistan facilitated more than 3 million Af-

ghans at different exile camps, primarily around Peshawar in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Albeit the triumphant mujahideen framed an administration in 1992 through the Peshawar Accords, Pakistan stayed discontent with new pioneers Rabbani and Masoud, including their international strategy of keeping up with agreeable relations with India as during the socialist period. Pushing for a "trusted" amicable government in Afghanistan, the Pakistani knowledge began subsidizing Hekmatyar-the solitary mujahideen leader not to sign the Agreements to battle against the new Afghan government with the expectation that he would win and introduce another administration. Through Pakistani financing, Hekmatyar's powers attacked Kabul city with a great many rockets for a very long time, killing thousands. Notwithstanding, after understanding that Hekmatyar couldn't take power in Kabul, Pakistan looked somewhere else. The Taliban development had quite recently shaped with the assistance of then-Pakistani Insider, Naseerullah Babar, and the Pakistani knowledge tossed its weight behind the new movement. Around September 1994, the Taliban development caught the Afghan city of Kandahar and started its long triumph with assistance from Pakistan. The Taliban asserted that they needed to clean Afghanistan from the warlords and hoodlums. As per Pakistan and Afghanistan master Ahmed Rashid, "somewhere in the range of 1994 and 1999, an expected not many Pakistanis volunteers prepared and battled in Afghanistan" keeping the Taliban system in power. The job of the Pakistani military during that time has been portrayed by some worldwide eyewitnesses as a "crawling attack" of Afghanistan. In 1996, the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan arose and set up close relations with adjoining Pakistan. Nonetheless, the relations started to decrease when the Taliban wouldn't underwrite the Durand Line regardless of pressing factor from Islamabad, contending that there will be no

boundaries among Muslims.

**Post 9/11 Pakistan-Afghanistan Turnover**

The 9/11 incident and the role of U.S in dragging and connecting the two Islamic states of Afghanistan and Pakistan closer has always needed a discussion under each decade of policies. From the U.S lens Pakistan was a country bearing Afghan refugees and providing the Taliban a land to strategize terrorism act in U.S. The misleading perception however, brought the two neighbors comparatively closer. Pakistan since then played it's role to rescue the Afghan land from the U.S. war bases set in Afghanistan for the purpose of retaliation. Pakistan refused to provide land and road to U.S for waging war in Afghanistan. **Pakistan representation of preserving peace in and with Afghanistan**

As reported and informed by BBC, it affirms and asserts that the Taliban are accounted for to have raised their banner over a key line post among Afghanistan and Pakistan and guarantee it is currently influenced quite a bit by.

The Taliban - a fundamentalist Islamist volunteer group who were moved out of force by the US attack almost 20 years prior - has additionally held onto control of a few key streets as they look to remove supply courses to significant urban communities. The line post, what partitions the Afghan town of Twist Boldak in Kandahar area on one side and the Pakistani town of Chaman on the other, is the second most active going between the nations. It connects the city of Kandahar to Pakistan's ports and sees nearly 900 trucks go as the day progressed. The intersection would be a significant prize - emblematically and deliberately - if the Taliban keep on holding it, as indicated by BBC journalist Lyse Doucet. (bbc.com) Imran Khan the Prime Minister of Pakistan addressing to the American Press reaffirmed the decision of the state to ensure and work for peace with-in Afghanistan.

"I think the U.S. has truly wrecked it in Afghanistan," Imran Khan said in a meeting with PBS NewsHour broadcasted on Tuesday night. (voanews.com)

Expressing to Voice of America the Prime Minister of Pakistan says that America's sped up troop exit from Afghanistan has left Washington with no "bartering power" for orchestrating a harmony bargain between fighting Afghans. Khan focused on that the US and NATO partners had around 150,000 soldiers in Afghanistan and that was the point at which they should go for a political arrangement instead of attempting to militarily end the conflict with the Taliban revolt there.

Referring to the American President Joe Biden and his government, he said recently that they didn't go to Afghanistan to country construct. What's more, it's the right and the obligation of the Afghan public alone to choose their future and how they need to run their country. (voanews.com). The worldwide military drawdown has generally been finished and all American, just as associated troops, will have left Afghanistan before August ends compelled from Biden in the midst of fears of the Taliban's recapturing the country.

However, Pakistan with a positive approach under the leadership of Khan reflected onto "extended common conflict" that would present security threats to Pakistan and could trigger a new exile flood that his nation could sick manage because of its financial difficulties.

Khan speaking to America too stated that here was the U.S. for twenty years in Afghanistan attempting to compel a tactical arrangement. The motivation behind why we are in this position presently is that the tactical arrangement, unfortunately, (voanews.com) However, the following harmony talks between the Taliban and the U.S.-sponsored Afghan government have met with little achievement and to a great extent slowed down.

"Totally, there's nothing more we can do, with the exception of push them however much we can for a political settlement. That is all," Khan told the PBS show when inquired as to whether Pakistan needs to do more to press the Taliban to end their rough mission. (voanews.com)

When the American Press put forward that Afghan President Ashraf Ghani prior in the month claimed 10,000 jihadi contenders have as of late entered his country from safe-havens in Pakistan and different regions to join Taliban positions.

"This is outright drivell," Khan responded. "For what reason don't they give us proof of this? At the point when they say that Pakistan gave places of refuge, safe-havens to (the) Taliban, where are these places of refuge?" he inquired. The PM proceeded to clarify extremists could tuck away among the exile camps in Pakistan that actually have 3,000,000 Afghans, saying the Taliban comprise most of the evacuee populace. (voanews.com)

"(The) Taliban are not some tactical outfit. They are ordinary regular citizens. Furthermore, in case there are a few regular citizens in these camps, how is Pakistan expected to chase these individuals down? How might you call them safe-havens?" he inquired. (voanews.com). He shielded his choice to not permit the U.S. to set up army installations on Pakistani soil for hostile to psychological warfare tasks in Afghanistan after all American soldiers leave the adjoining country.

Pakistan keeping history in view holds the motive of peace and friendly bilateral relations with it's neighboring countries and that too with others. Pakistan holds a clear vision of not promoting any terrorist act and becoming the medium for harmony.

—Fatima Iftikhar is a Columnist. She is an IB English Language and Literature teacher. She is a US Certified School Manager. She is also an educationist holding multiple international certifications and awards.



## Briefs

**Nadal feels lucky to be part of dominant 'Big Three'**

## SPORTS DESK

MELBOURNE: Rafa Nadal said he was lucky to be part of an era of tennis that included Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic after the Spaniard won a men's record 21st Grand Slam title at the Australian Open to move one ahead of his two great rivals.

Nadal roared back from two sets down to edge Daniil Medvedev 2-6 6-7(5) 6-4 6-4 7-5 in a classic final on Sunday, only months after fearing his glorious career might be over because of a niggling left foot injury.

He then paid tribute to Federer, who missed the year's first Grand Slam to continue his rehabilitation from knee surgery and Djokovic, who was deported following a dispute over Australia's COVID-19 entry requirements and his unvaccinated status.

"At the end of the day, it's just a game and in some way we achieved more than what we ever dreamed of when we were kids," Nadal told reporters. "It doesn't matter that much if one is 21, one is 20, or the other finished 23 and the other with 21."

"I think we did very important things for our sport and we achieved our dreams and we enjoy it. I feel lucky to be part of this era that has been very special for our sport."

## Imran slams SCBA...

## FROM PAGE 01

Bahawalnagar. The prime minister termed the launch of the health coverage facility as the "landmark step" to accommodate the people bearing the burden of expensive medical treatment. He said universal health coverage was available in a few countries across the world, where the government fully covered the medical expenses. In Pakistan, he said, the philosophy behind the health card was in line with the goals of a socio-welfare State of Medina, adding that it would prove a phenomenal step in the improvement of healthcare services.

Imran Khan said the health card was a defining moment in encouraging the private sector to join the medical network especially in rural areas and creating an environment to compete for the public sector hospitals to improve their services.

He said a massive amount of over Rs 400 billion would be spent on health insurance programmes to meet the demands of the growing population.

He said the programme would address the problems including the unavailability of doctors and paramedic staff at hospitals, especially in rural areas. The prime minister announced that he would soon visit Bahawalpur in near future regarding the further administrative steps on South Punjab Civil Secretariat in the city.

Imran Khan said the government was taking steps to improve economic stability and mentioned that the credible 'Economist' magazine and 'Bloomberg' had ranked Pakistan among the top three countries that had effectively sustained economically during pandemic. He dismissed the "unreasonable" criticism of media that called the government as "inefficient", and said that economic growth of 5.37 despite the pandemic situation could absolutely not be termed as inefficiency. Instead, he pointed out that the international media including BBC had reported about the "stories of massive corruption" committed by the leaders of two previous governments of Pakistan.

He said Pakistan suffered immensely during these two tenures just like that 'even a factory can become bankrupt if a dacoit is appointed at the top'. The prime minister said the government was committed to bringing the corrupt answerable before the law and recovering the nation's looted money.

Chief Minister Punjab Sardar Usman Buzdar said the launch of health card in the Bahawalpur division will raise the number of people and households in the national health programme in Punjab by 65 percent.

# Multan Sultans beat United in a thriller



Multan Sultans' have posted a mammoth 217-run total on the board for the loss of five wickets in 20 overs courtesy of Tim David and Rilee Rossouw's sensational half-centuries in which they smashed the United bowlers

## SPORTS DESK

KARACHI: Multan Sultans have registered a thrilling victory by 20 runs over Islamabad United as they defended 23 runs from the last over.

Multan Sultans' have posted a mammoth 217-run total on the board for the loss of five wickets in 20 overs courtesy of Tim David and Rilee Rossouw's sensational half-centuries in which they smashed the Islamabad United bowlers to all part of the park.

Tim David played a blistering inning of 71 runs in just 29 balls with six fours and six towering sixes, while Rilee remained not out

after notching 67 runs off just 35 balls with six sixes as they forged a brilliant 110 run partnership before Tim was dismissed in the 18.4 overs.

Shan Masood played a 43-run knock of 31 balls, while Mohammad Rizwan scored 12 and Sohaib Maqsood scored 13.

Hasan Ali was the most expensive bowler for United with figures of 1-52 in four overs, other than Shadab Khan all the bowlers were taken to the cleaners.

It should be noted that the United skipper Shadab Khan won the toss and elected to field first in his team's second match against the in-form Multan Sultans' at the National Stadium in Karachi.

## China lashes out at Japan's 'concern' over HR

TOKYO: Japanese lawmakers on Tuesday urged their government to take action against a "serious human rights situation" in China, drawing a quick and angry rebuke from Beijing. The resolution passed by Japan's lower house stopped short of naming China, but expressed "concern about serious human rights conditions including the violation of religious freedom and internment in the Xinjiang Uyghur autonomous region, Tibet, Inner Mongolia and Hong Kong" — all of which are ruled by China. The parliamentary vote came days ahead of the Feb. 4 start of the Beijing Winter Olympics. Japan had announced a decision not to send a government delegation to the opening, following a similar U.S. move that cited China's human rights abuses. The resolution urged the Japanese government to further assess the human rights situation in China and cooperate with the international community to protect victims.

"Human rights hold universal values and are of a legitimate concern for the international community," the resolution stated. China denies allegations of human rights abuses, calling them the "lie of the century."

Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian bitterly criticized on Tuesday the resolution as "extremely vile in nature," and alleged it interferes with China's internal affairs. "This is a severe political provocation against the Chinese people," he added.

Noting WWII Japan's aggression and atrocities, Zhao said that Japan "has no authority whatsoever to make wanton remarks about other countries' human rights conditions." — Agencies



MINSK: Pakistan ambassador to Belarus Sajjad Haider meets with Rector of Belarusian National Institute for Higher Education Yuri Bondar and other senior leadership and discussed opportunities of cooperation in higher education between institutions of Pakistan and Belarus. — DNA

## Subh-e-Nau Ladies National Ranking Tennis starts

## SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Meheq Khokhar, Noor Mushtaq, Sheeza Sajid and Kainat Ali entered into the second round of the

Subh-e-Nau Ladies National Ranking Tennis Tournament 2022 here at SDA-PTF Tennis Complex, Islamabad on Tuesday.

Shahida Kausar Farooq, who is the chairperson Subh-e-Nau, wished all



the participants and good luck for the championship saying that Subh-e-Nau has always played an active role in the promotion of tennis in Pakistan, especially women's tennis.

Salim Saifullah Khan President Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) highly appreciated the efforts of Shahida Kausar Farooq for the promotion of tennis in Pakistan and her passion for the game of tennis.

On the first day of the tournament, Kainat Ali overcame Mariam Mirza 2-1 in the most exciting match which lasted three hours as she won the match 6-4, 1-6 and 6-4.

In another match, upcoming Amna Ali Qayum fought hard against Meheq Khokhar, who proved too strong in the end for her.

**Following are the results:**  
**Ladies Singles 1st Round:** Meheq Khokhar bt Amna Ali Qayum 7-5, 6-1; Kainat Ali bt Mariam Mirza 6-4, 1-6, 6-4; Noor Mushtaq bt Maryam Ubaid 6-0, 6-1; Sheeza Sajid bt Amara Khan 6-0, 6-2.

**Ladies Doubles 1st Round:** Noor Malik (Wapda) / Amna Ali Qayum bt Maryam Ubaid / Noor Mushtaq 6-0, 6-0.

## US watchdog warns over athletes' safety at Beijing Olympics

WASHINGTON: A US rights monitor sounded the alarm Monday over athletes' safety at China's upcoming Winter Olympics after the host threatened "punishment" for anti-Beijing comments. The Congressional-Executive Commission on China — a group of Washington lawmakers and White House officials — asked US Olympics authorities for an "urgent effort" to protect their sports stars' free speech rights at the February 4-20 event.

The commission spoke out after Yang Shu, a senior official in the Beijing Games organizing committee, told an online briefing on January 18 that "any behavior or speech that is against the Olympic spirit, especially against the Chinese laws and regulations, are also subject to certain punishment". "Given Yang Shu's statement and the Chinese government's documented behavior, we urge the USOPC to be vigilant and prepared to defend any Olympians who speak out," the commission said in a letter to the US Olympic and Paralympic Committee seen by AFP.

The United States, Australia, Canada and Britain announced in December that they would not be sending official representatives to Beijing, citing the alleged genocide and crimes against humanity against the Uyghur population, a minority Muslim group in the Xinjiang region.

The countries said their athletes would still participate, but China nevertheless responded angrily, warning Western nations that they would "pay the price" for the protest.

Advocacy groups have backed the boycott, with Human Rights Watch (HRW) China director Sophie Richardson calling it a "crucial step toward challenging the Chinese government's crimes against humanity targeting Uyghurs and other Turkic communities". — Agencies

## US \$6.4 mn grant for 30 cultural heritage projects

This landmark restoration was made possible through a \$140,000 U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP) grant to restore the building implemented by SEAS and facilitated by IVS

## NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: U.S. Consul General Mark Stroh joined Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture (IVS) Executive Director Dr. Faiza Mushtaq, Sindh Exploration and Adventure Society (SEAS) President Dr. Kaleemullah Lashari, SEAS Secretary General Dr. Asma Ibrahim, and other guests to celebrate the successful renovation of the historic Nusserwanjee Building.

This landmark restoration was made possible through a \$140,000 U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP) grant to restore the building implemented by SEAS and facilitated by IVS.

The United States has awarded more than \$6.4 million dollars (approximately 1.1 billion rupees) for 30 such cultural heritage projects across Pakistan. Consul General Stroh explained, "The U.S. Mission supports the preservation of heritage sites like the Nusserwanjee Building because we know these sites mean so much more than bricks and mortar. They strengthen communities, and they are an investment in building a stronger and more prosperous Pakistan. I am proud that with together with IVS, SEAS, and the U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation, the U.S. Consulate has played a part in ensuring that this piece of Karachi's history is now preserved for future generations." In addition to the Nusserwanjee Building, other U.S. AFCP projects in Sindh include therestoration of the tombs of Sultan Ibrahim



and Amir Sultan Muhammad at the Makli Hill necropolis, the conservation of Varun Dev Hindu Temple on Manora Island, and the recently inaugurated project

to restore Frere Hall. These projects exemplify the United States' commitment to work with Pakistan and Sindh province.

## Court will take stern...

## FROM PAGE 01

Minister said that the purpose of such a report is to ridicule the legal system for the country. The Sharifs must complete the task on legal basis, rather than making excuses, the Sharif family must return country's money.

He further added that he hoped the court will take stern notice of these fake reports and the country's dignity will be restored.

Medical report of Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PML-N) supreme and former Prime Minister (PM) Nawaz Sharif has been submitted in Lahore High Court (LHC).

## Doctor advices...

## FROM PAGE 01

media reported Tuesday. The report has been prepared by the Director of Interventional Cardiology Dr Fayaz Shawl which was submitted to the court through advocate Amjad Pervez.

According to the report, Nawaz Sharif should stay in London until his angiography as it could worsen his condition.

The report further said that Sharif should continue his medication and take walks in the fresh air, adding that, "he should take precautionary measures to protect himself from COVID-19 and should refrain from travelling or visiting crowded places as the virus can have severe effects on him due to his heart condition".

The report also revealed that the PML-N supreme is under severe stress after the death of his wife Kulsoom Nawaz and he is directed to continue activities without any mental stress. Nawaz Sharif had started taking Empagliflozin 10mg to control his diabetes which has affected his kidneys; therefore, his condition is to be taken seriously, said the report.

In the report, Dr Shawl said that he can be contacted in case any questions arise regarding Sharif's report.

## Pleased to have...

## FROM PAGE 01

decided by the end of his tenure. "As chief justice, I not only decided cases but also took charge of administrative matters," he said.

Justice Ahmed had taken oath as the country's 27th chief justice on December 21, 2019, replacing Justice Asif Saeed Khosa. Justice Umar Ata Bandial will take charge as the chief justice of Pakistan tomorrow (Wednesday).

Justice Ahmed said he had performed his duty with honesty even when he was serving as a judge of the Sindh High Court.

## Palestine welcomes...

## FROM PAGE 01

documented complicity. Amnesty International's report must compel those who have chosen appeasement and inaction to realign their actions with their stated positions and international obligations.

Allowing this wholesale and institutionalized brutalization and dehumanization of the Palestinian people to continue without consequence is a betrayal of the values and principles of universal human rights. Such a betrayal would also negatively impact the rights and lives of victims of injustice around the world. This would undermine the global fight for justice and universal application of human rights. It would be simply inexcusable. The United Nations Security Council and the General Assembly are obliged to heed the compelling evidence presented by Amnesty and other leading human rights organizations and hold Israel accountable for its crimes against the Palestinian people, including through sanctions. Equally and urgently, the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court must investigate Israel's crime against humanity of apartheid without delay.

Meanwhile, the Palestinian people will continue to exercise their legitimate right to oppose and resist all forms of occupation, colonization, dehumanization, racism, and apartheid until they achieve justice and realize their rights to self-determination, return, freedom, and independence.



## Briefs

Denmark  
returns to  
'life as we  
knew it'

COPENHAGEN: Denmark on Tuesday becomes the first European Union country to lift all of its Covid restrictions despite record numbers of cases, relying on its high vaccination rate to cope with the milder Omicron variant. After a first attempt at lifting all its restrictions between September and November, the Scandinavian country is once again ditching its face-masks, Covid passes and limited opening hours for bars and restaurants. "I'm so happy that this is all going to be over tomorrow. It's good for life in the city, for nightlife, just to be able to be out longer", 17-year-old student Thea Skovgaard told AFP the day before the lifting. Nightclubs reopen on Tuesday, when limits on the number of people allowed at indoor gatherings also come to an end. Only a few restrictions remain in place at the country's borders, for unvaccinated travellers arriving from non-Schengen countries. The easing comes as Denmark registers around 40,000-50,000 new Covid cases a day, or almost one percent of the country's 5.8 million inhabitants. "We have an extremely high coverage of adults vaccinated with three doses," epidemiologist Lone Simonsen of the University of Roskilde told AFP. More than 60 percent of Danes have received a third dose - one month ahead of health authorities' schedule - compared to an EU average of just under 45 percent. - APP

IMF, WB  
postpone  
Morocco  
meeting

WASHINGTON: The IMF and World Bank once again postponed the annual meetings set to take place in Morocco, pushing them back another year to October 2023, the institutions announced Monday. Citing "continuing uncertainty over the Covid-19 pandemic," and after consultations with the government, the statement said this year's meetings will be held in Washington. Marakesh, which originally was to host in 2020, will be the site of next year's event. The global development lenders hold their annual gathering of finance officials in October, moving every third year from Washington to a city in one of the member countries. With travel curtailed due to the ongoing risks of Covid-19, the 2020 meeting was held virtually, and the 2021 meeting in a hybrid format. The event takes place over a week and draws thousands of officials, bankers, activists and journalists to the dozens of conferences, seminars and discussions that occur on the sidelines of the official business. - APP

Eurozone  
jobless  
rate falls to  
historic low

BRUSSELS: The eurozone's unemployment rate fell to a historic low in December, official figures showed Tuesday, as hiring in Europe rode a solid recovery and shrugged off the explosive spread of the Omicron coronavirus variant. The seasonally adjusted jobless rate stood at seven percent in December, the lowest level since the official Eurostat statistics agency began compiling data in April 1998. In the 27-member European Union, which includes countries such as Poland not in the single currency bloc, unemployment fell to 6.4 percent in December, also a low since records began. "The eurozone ended 2021 - the year after the worst recession since World War II - with its lowest ever unemployment rate. A testimony to the success of our collective response to this crisis," said Paolo Gentiloni, the EU economics affairs commissioner. Previously, the lowest unemployment rates for both the 19 countries sharing the single currency and the EU-27 - of 7.2 percent and 6.5 percent respectively - had been recorded in March 2020. Year-on-year, the picture also improved significantly, with a drop from 7.5 percent in the eurozone, equating to 1.8 million fewer people seeking work. - APP

Ukraine President Zelenskiy  
announces to boost army

Ukraine's armed forces currently number about 250,000, compared to Russia's overall strength of around 900,000. Ukraine said it was working with Poland and Britain to strengthen cooperation "in the context of ongoing Russian aggression"

## FOREIGN DESK

KYIV: President Volodymyr Zelenskiy signed a decree on Tuesday to boost Ukraine's armed forces by 100,000 troops over three years and raise soldiers' pay, as European leaders lined up to back him in a stand-off with Russia. Zelenskiy urged lawmakers to stay calm and avoid panic, saying he ordered the increase "not because we will soon have a war... but so that soon and in the future there will be peace in Ukraine". Russia has massed more than 100,000 troops near Ukraine's borders, while denying plans to invade - an action that the United States and its allies

have warned would trigger tough sanctions. Ukraine's armed forces currently number about 250,000, compared to Russia's overall strength of around 900,000. Ukraine said it was working with Poland and Britain to strengthen cooperation "in the context of ongoing Russian aggression". On a visit to Kyiv, Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki said Warsaw would help Ukraine with gas and arms supplies, as well as humanitarian and economic aid. "Living close to a neighbour like Russia, we have the feeling of living at the foot of a volcano," said Morawiecki, promising Ukraine artillery ammunition, mortar bombs,

British Prime Minister  
Johnson in Ukraine

KYIV: Boris Johnson is in Kyiv Tuesday for talks with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskiy, as tensions with Russia rise and the British prime minister battles the biggest crisis of his premiership. "It is the right of every Ukrainian to determine how they are governed. As a friend and a democratic partner, the UK will continue to uphold Ukraine's sovereignty in the face of those who seek to destroy it," Johnson said in a statement. The trip comes as Johnson's position continues to hang in the balance, with police investigating reports of lockdown-breaching parties held at his London residence and office during Covid lockdowns. The prime minister apologised on Monday after a report by a senior civil servant criticised his government for "failures of leadership and judgment" over the rule-breaking. The affair - dubbed "partygate" - has cost Johnson the support of MPs from his Conservative party, sparked public outrage and led to opposition calls for his resignation. - Agencies

portable air-defence systems and surveillance drones. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson was due to meet Zelenskiy later on Tuesday as part of a Western show of support intended to convince Russian President Vladimir Putin he would pay a high price for any aggression. "We urge Russia to step back and engage in dialogue to find a diplomatic resolution and avoid further bloodshed," Johnson said in remarks released ahead of his arrival. "As a friend and a democratic partner, the UK will continue to uphold Ukraine's sovereignty in the face of those who seek to destroy it."

The West last week formally rejected Russian demands to bar Ukraine from ever

joining NATO and pull out NATO forces from eastern Europe, while expressing willingness to talk about arms control and confidence-building measures. Russia has not yet signalled its next move, and the Kremlin reiterated that Putin would respond "when he considers it necessary". Putin said last week the United States and NATO had not addressed Moscow's main security demands but Russia was ready to keep talking. He spoke on Tuesday by phone to Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi, whose office said the two leaders agreed on the need to find a "sustainable and durable" solution to the crisis and to rebuild a "climate of mutual confidence".

Mali junta  
expels  
French  
ambassador

BAMAKO: Mali on Monday said it was expelling the French ambassador in light of "hostile" comments, a move likely to ratchet up tensions with its former colonial ruler and ally following a military coup. A statement read on national television said "the ambassador of France in Bamako, his excellency Joel Meyer... was notified of the decision of the government asking him to leave the national territory within 72 hours". The move raises further questions over France's continued military support for Mali, a deeply poor country battling a nearly decade-long jihadist campaign. The French foreign ministry issued a brief statement saying it "takes note" of the announcement and expressed "solidarity with its European partners" - its allies in the anti-jihadist mission. "These comments question both the legality and the legitimacy of the authority with which the French ambassador is accredited," Mali's Foreign Minister Abdoulaye Diop told state television. "You cannot be accredited with authorities that you yourself do not recognise." Relations between the two countries began to fray after the army seized power in Bamako in August 2020, and worsened after the junta staged a second coup in May 2021. - APP

Sri Lanka  
food inflation  
hits record  
25 percent

COLOMBO: Food inflation in crisis-hit Sri Lanka hit a record 25 percent in January, the statistics office said Tuesday, with crop failures and difficulties in financing imports leading to widespread shortages. The island nation's economy has tanked since the onset of the pandemic, with the collapse in tourism revenue leaving traders unable to finance purchases of essential goods from abroad. The government last year banned the import of agricultural chemicals in a desperate attempt to shore up foreign currency reserves, drastically lowering crop yields and prompting many farmers to leave their fields bare. Supermarkets have rationed rice, lentils and other essentials, while power companies unable to pay for imported fuel have been forced to impose rolling blackouts. January's food inflation figure was the fourth consecutive record rise and nearly double October's figure of 12.8 percent. Overall inflation measured by the Colombo Consumer Price Index (CCPI) was also a record 14.2 percent in January. The government lifted its agrochemical import ban in October after intense protests by farmers, but banks are still short of dollars to finance imports. Sri Lanka was banking on a post-pandemic recovery in tourist arrivals to help replenish its foreign exchange coffers. But a resurgence of the coronavirus in the form of the highly contagious Omicron variant has dashed those hopes, with authorities now forecasting just over one million foreign holidaymakers this year. - APP

Turkey's  
tourism  
revenue  
doubled

ISTANBUL: Turkey's tourism revenue rose by 103 percent year-on-year in 2021 and reached 24.48 billion U.S. dollars despite setbacks, the Turkish Statistical Institute said on Monday. The country's tourism income increased significantly in the fourth quarter last year, registering a 95 percent surge to 7.63 billion dollars, the institute said in a statement. It added that personal expenditures constituted 19.68 billion dollars of income in 2021, while package tour expenditures earned 4.8 billion dollars. Turkey's tourism was hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic-related restrictions last year, particularly when Russia halted all flights to Turkey for about three months due to the soaring daily cases in the country. The Russian market was significantly important for Turkey's coastal regions, especially for the Mediterranean province of Antalya. - APP

Azerbaijani  
parliament approves  
Shusha Declaration

## DNA

BAKU: The Azerbaijani parliament has approved the Shusha Declaration signed with Turkey on June 15, 2021. Following the discussions, the parliament passed the bill "On approval of the Shusha declaration on allied relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey" on February 2. On June 15, Azerbaijan and Turkey signed the Shusha Declaration on Allied Relations, during Erdogan's first official visit to Shusha, eight months after Azerbaijan's victory in the war with Armenia in 2020. The document focuses on defense

cooperation, promoting regional stability and prosperity, and establishing new transportation routes. It affirms joint efforts by the two armies in the face of foreign threats. The declaration also pledges joint efforts for the restructuring and modernization of the armed forces. Moreover, the two nations affirm to encourage the execution of joint projects with the aim of developing capabilities in the field of sea, air, and space. Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev said that the Shusha Declaration on allied relations signed with Turkey on June 15, carries strategic importance for Eurasia and fosters peace and security in the South Caucasus region.

12 journalists killed in  
one month worldwide

## NEWS DESK

GENEVA: Expressing shock over the murder of a record number of 12 journalists in the first month of 2022, the global media safety and rights body Press Emblem Campaign demands justice and adequate compensation to the bereaved families. PEC laments that another journalist has been cowardly assassinated in Mexico. The slain journalist is Roberto Toledo, of 55 years of age, gunned down on Monday, January 31st, 2022, in the municipality of Zitacuaro, Michoacan. He worked for the Monitor Michoacan news outlet. Toledo is the 4th journalist killed in less than a month in Mexico. If the current continues, we could be having one journalist per week being killed in the county. It also condemns the murder of second Pakistani journalist within a week and urges Prime Minister Imran Khan to punish the perpetrators under the law.

Afghanistan  
seeks agri  
investment

## FOREIGN DESK

KABUL: The Afghan caretaker government's acting Deputy Prime Minister Abdul Salam Hanafi has chaired a cabinet meeting, reviewing the agriculture situation and discussing agriculture land survey for foreign investors, according to the country's General Directorate of Administrative Affairs on Tuesday.



**BANGKOK:** Pakistan ambassador to Thailand Sahebzada A. Khan, DHM Faiza Haseeb and first secretary Naila Israr visited the Thammasat University. The visit was aimed to revitalize association, after two years of COVID-19. - DNA

Pak IT exports set to  
grow to USD 3.5b

## DNA

OTTAWA: Pakistan's IT sector is poised to grow exponentially in the coming months and years with Pakistan's IT exports growing from USD 2.1 billion to an approximate USD 3.5 billion this fiscal year. The IT industry in Pakistan is burgeoning and the government is taking the right steps for its further growth, including enhancing number of IT graduates from 25,000 to 50,000, setting up software technology parks in large to 2nd tier cities, improving access to capital by IT companies, reducing tax disputes, enhancing financial structure of IT companies and listing them at the stock exchange. These were some of the views expressed at a webinar organised by the Consulate General of Pakistan Toronto

on the theme of "Pakistan Canada IT Cooperation: Connecting the Dots". The objectives of the webinar were to provide a platform for interaction between Pakistan origin ITC professionals in Canada and IT industry and academia from Pakistan. The panelists of the webinar included Mr. Osman Nasir, Managing Director, Pakistan Software Export Board, Mr. Barkan Saeed, ex-President Pakistan Software House Association, Mr. Hassan Naqvi, President, CM Inc., Canada, Dr. Shakeel Ahmad Khoja, Dean School of Mathematics & Computer Science, IBA, Karachi, Mr. Kewan Khawaja, Co-founder and Co-CEO, M/s Techlogix, Mr. Jahan Ali, CEO of Mobile Live, Canada, Mr. Raheel Qureshi, founder and Partner M/s iSecurity Consulting, Canada, and Mr. Hassan Ramay, Managing

Partner GoSaaS Inc. It was attended by a large no. of IT professionals/companies from Pakistan and Canada. In his opening remarks Mr. Abdul Hameed, Consul General of Pakistan, Toronto, stated that it is widely believed that Pakistan has the potential to claim a much higher share of the market than it currently enjoys. He also shared the statistics about the size and growth trajectory of ICT sector of Canada, and highlighted the key sectors within the ICT sector which witnessed high growth and the top ICT players in Canada. Mr. Osman Nasir, MD PSEB, said large technology parks are being set up in the mega cities, in addition to establishing software technology parks in second/third tier cities. He further mentioned that steps are being taken for increasing access to capital by IT companies, reducing tax disputes, enhanced understanding of the financial structure of IT companies and their listing at stock exchanges, through relevant stakeholders. Mr. Barkan Saeed, Ex-President PASHA, presented an overview of the ITC industry in Pakistan. He mentioned that the government plans to increase the number of IT graduates from current 25,000 to 50,000 in a couple of years.



**BAKU:** Pakistan ambassador to Azerbaijan Bilal Hayee meets with Abdelouahab Osmane, ambassador of Algeria to Azerbaijan. - DNA

## TRNC rejects any status in unified Cyprus

"The reality is that there are two different peoples on the island: Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots," said Tatar urging Greek Cypriots to "accept and reaffirm the sovereign equality of Turkish Cypriots"

## WEB DESK

NORTH NICOSIA: Turkish Cypriots neither want to be an authority under a so-called "Republic of Cyprus" nor a minority on the divided island, the president of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) has said. "We, Turkish Cypriots, don't want to be an authority under the Republic of Cyprus. We don't want to be a minority on the island," Ersin Tatar said in an interview with Greek Cypriot newspaper Fileleftheros. "The reality is that there are two different peoples on the island: Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots," said Tatar urging Greek Cypriots to "accept and reaffirm the sovereign equality of Turkish Cypriots." He said due to the EU membership and international

recognition of the Greek Cypriot administration there was an imbalance between the two sides on the negotiating table. "We aren't recognised, but we have a separate state. We want recognition of our sovereign equality and our equal international status," he added. Turkish and Turkish Cypriot officials have argued that a two-state solution would be the fairest way to solve the ongoing dispute on the long-divided island. Tatar said he had told UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres that formal negotiations could not begin as there was no common ground between the sides, stressing that despite this, he was ready to partake in informal dialogue. "I told the British ambassador, who was here a few days ago: 'Invite me and Anastasiadis to London for dialogue in a different environment

where we can speak and discuss," he said referring to his counterpart and Greek Cypriot leader Nikos Anastasiadis. "There may not be common ground today, but there maybe two years later. We must continue the dialogue for a better Cyprus with our hopes, which are revived constantly," he added. "If the adoption of our international recognition, sovereign equality is brought before the UN Security Council, it passed, and if Greek Cypriots do not object to this, we can negotiate the Cyprus problem in all its aspects," he emphasised, adding, that there have been two separate states on the island for 60 years and Greek Cypriots and the international community must accept this fact. Tatar explained the reasons why the Turkish Cypriot side insists on demanding sovereign equality and equal international status to

gether with the historical process, noting that the Greek leadership wanted to connect the island to Greece long ago. There are many documents indicating that this movement began from 1878 when the British arrived on the Island, he said. The Greek Cypriot side wrongly believes it owns all of the island and the rights to its exclusive economic zone in the Eastern Mediterranean, Tatar said, underscoring Turkish Cypriots only wanted their "fair share" of rights to hydrocarbons in the island's surrounding waters. "We don't want your share, we want our share," said the Turkish Cypriot leader, adding that the TRNC "trusts Turkey and moves with Turkey." He also noted that Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan had proposed to discuss these issues in a conference,

but that the Greek side had turned down this offer. The Mediterranean island has been mired in a decades-long dispute between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, despite a series of diplomatic efforts by the UN to achieve a comprehensive settlement. Ethnic attacks starting in the early 1960s forced Turkish Cypriots to withdraw into enclaves for their safety. In 1974, a Greek Cypriot coup aimed at Greece's annexation of the island led to Turkey's military intervention as a guarantor power to protect Turkish Cypriots from persecution and violence. As a result, the TRNC was founded in 1983. It has seen an on-and-off peace process in recent years, including a failed 2017 initiative in Switzerland under the auspices of guarantor countries Turkey, Greece and the UK.



## Briefs

UN chief urges  
N. Korea to stop  
provocative  
actions

UNITED NATIONS: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres condemns North Korea's launch of possible an intermediate-range ballistic missile on Sunday and urges Pyongyang "to desist from taking any further counter-productive actions," a U.N. spokesman said on Tuesday. "This is a breaking of the DPRK's announced moratorium in 2018 on launches of this nature, and a clear violation of Security Council resolutions. It is of great concern that the DPRK has again disregarded any consideration for international flight or maritime safety," deputy U.N. spokesman Farhan Haq said in a statement. North Korea's formal name is the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. – APP

Qatar reaches  
deal with Taliban  
to resume  
evacuations

## WEB DESK

DOHA: Qatar has reached an agreement with the Taliban to resume chartered evacuations out of Kabul airport, the Axios news website reported on Tuesday citing an interview with Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani. The agreement was for two flights per week, chartered by Qatar Airways, and would allow the United States and other countries to evacuate thousands more of their citizens and at-risk Afghans, Axios said. The minister spoke to Axios on Monday in Washington, during an official visit with Qatar Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani. A senior Qatar government source told Reuters on Jan. 27 that Qatar Airways has resumed operating passenger evacuation flights from Afghanistan, after a two-month halt. Qatar stopped operating evacuation flights in early December amid a dispute with the Taliban over which passengers were permitted to take the flights. Talks were under way to allow one flight per week operated by Ariana Afghan Airlines, Axios cited the Qatari minister as saying in the interview.

Myanmar  
protesters  
mark coup  
anniversary

YANGON: Opponents of the military rule have marked the one-year anniversary of the army's seizure of power with a nationwide strike to show their strength and solidarity amid international concerns. Streets have emptied and shops shuttered across Myanmar as people defy junta orders to go about their business with a silent strike on the first anniversary of the military coup. Security forces arrested dozens of people in a preemptive move to suppress plans for Tuesday's nationwide strike, state-run media reported. In addition, Myanmar's military rulers have threatened to jail the anti-coup protesters who take part in the strike. But the streets of commercial hub Yangon began emptying at 10am (0330 GMT), a scene that repeated in second city Mandalay and southern Tanintharyi region. Local media showed isolated flash-mobs in Yangon and Mandalay, where protesters unfurled pro-democracy banners and set off flares. In comments published on Tuesday, junta chief Min Aung Hlaing repeated the military's claim that it had been forced to take power following election fraud by Aung San Suu Kyi's party in 2020 elections that international observers said were largely free and fair. – APP

Russia, US clash at UN  
over Ukraine crisis

"If Russia further invades Ukraine, none of us will be able to say we didn't see it coming, and the consequences will be horrific"

## DNA

NEW YORK: Russia and the United States clashed over Ukraine at the UN Security Council Monday, as London and Washington threatened to slap sanctions on wealthy Russian oligarchs if the ex-Soviet state is attacked. French leader Emmanuel Macron and Russian President Vladimir Putin spoke by phone for the second time in four days amid intense efforts by NATO allies to deter a Russian invasion of Ukraine. With more than

100,000 Russian troops massed on its neighbor's borders, tensions soared as US Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield told the Council that Moscow is planning to increase its force in Belarus six-fold in the coming days. "We've seen evidence that Russia intends to expand that presence to more than 30,000 troops near the Belarus-Ukraine border, less than two hours north of Kyiv by early February," said Thomas-Greenfield. "If Russia further invades Ukraine, none of us will be able to say we didn't see it coming, and the conse-

quences will be horrific."

But Russia's ambassador to the UN, Vassily Nebenzia, rejected the allegations and said Washington was engaging "in hysterics" by calling the Council meeting on Ukraine. He said no Russian official had threatened to invade the former Soviet republic and that Ukrainians were being "brainwashed" by the "Russiaphobia" of the West. And he said that the troops in Belarus were there for joint exercises. The United States is "whipping up tensions and rhetoric and provoking escalation," Nebenzia said.

Lavrov, Blinken to  
hold phone talks

MOSCOW: Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and his US counterpart Antony Blinken will discuss Moscow's reaction to the US solutions on Russia's proposals in the security sphere in a phone conversation on Tuesday, the Russian Foreign Ministry told TASS, noting that following the conversation, a commentary by Lavrov for the media is expected. – APP

PTI's view of  
empowered  
local govt  
vindicated

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar Tuesday said the Supreme Court verdict with regard to the Sindh Local Government Act 2013 was similar to the stance of Pakistan Tehrik-i-Insaf (PTI). In a tweet, the minister said that the Supreme Court had ruled that specific features of the Sindh Local Government Act were not in accordance with the constitution and law. He said that the view of PTI and MQM that the Sindh local govt act was not in line with the constitution had been vindicated today. "Our struggle for the rights of Sindh citizens to have empowered local governments would continue," he resolved. Asad Umar said there was no other way than an independent and empowered local government system to ensure socio-economic development of the citizens.

FO rejects  
criticism over  
Masood's  
appointment

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office spokesperson on Tuesday said India was using fake news to run a "wider disinformation campaign" against Pakistan, including over the appointment of Sardar Masood as envoy to the United States. Spokesperson Asim Iftikhar Ahmad stated this in response to a question regarding the reports carried by Indian media on the appointment of Sardar Masood as ambassador to the US.

"This is a part of the wider Indian disinformation campaign to malign Pakistan and those who represent Pakistan, by using fake news to make scandalous claims and baseless allegations," he said. The FO spokesperson said that Ambassador Masood Khan was a highly accomplished diplomat with 40 years of experience in both multilateral and bilateral diplomacy. "His agreement is being processed in the US system," he said, regarding reports about delay in his approval by the US administration. – APP

Putin discusses  
Ukraine crisis  
with visiting  
Hungarian PM

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin discussed tensions over Ukraine with his visiting Hungarian counterpart on Tuesday, a day after Russian and U.S. diplomats exchanged sharp accusations at the U.N. Security Council. The Kremlin is seeking legally binding guarantees from the U.S. and NATO that Ukraine will never join the bloc, deployment of NATO weapons near Russian borders will be halted and the alliance's forces will be rolled back from Eastern Europe. The demands, rejected by NATO and the U.S. as nonstarters, come amid fears that Russia might invade Ukraine, fueled by the buildup of an estimated 100,000 Russian troops near Ukraine's borders. Talks between Russia and the West have so far failed to yield any progress. All eyes were on Putin as he hosted Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban in the Kremlin, telling the Hungarian leader he would brief him about the talks with the West on Russia's security demands. Putin has not spoken about the issue since late December. Orban, in turn, stressed that no European leader wants a war in the region. Washington has provided Moscow with a written response to Russia's demands, and on Monday three Biden administration officials said the Russian govt sent a written response to the U.S. proposals. – APP

Dutch FM phones FM Qureshi  
to discuss Afghan situation

FM also held telephonic conversation with Foreign Minister of Kyrgyz Republic

## SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi Tuesday received a telephone call from Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of The Netherlands Wopke Hoekstra wherein they discussed the bilateral relations as well as the situation in Afghanistan. Foreign Minister Qureshi congratulated his Dutch counterpart on assuming the office of foreign minister and renewed the invitation to him to visit Pakistan.

The two sides expressed satisfaction over the level of bilateral cooperation in diverse areas, particularly in the fields of trade and investment. Foreign Minister Qureshi noted increased bilateral interactions in the recent past and hoped that the upcoming Bilateral Political Consultations would provide both the sides with an opportunity to identify new avenues of cooperation and exchange views on issues of common interest. The two foreign ministers also exchanged views on the situation in Afghanistan. Foreign Minister Qureshi highlighted Pakistan's facilitative role in the evacuation efforts of foreign nationals from Afghanistan. He also highlighted Pakistan's outreach efforts to sensitize the international community about the need for urgent measures to prevent a



ISLAMABAD: Turkish Deputy Foreign Minister Sedat Onal meets Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi at Foreign Ministry. – DNA

humanitarian crisis and economic meltdown in Afghanistan. He reiterated Pakistan's commitment to work together with regional and international partners in support of the efforts for durable peace and stability in Afghanistan. The Dutch foreign minister thanked Pakistan for its support in the evacuation of Dutch staff from Afghanistan and agreed to work together to enhance bilateral cooperation. He also invited Foreign Minister Qureshi to visit The Netherlands.

Qureshi meets with  
Turkish Deputy FM

ISLAMABAD: FM Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi received Ambassador Sedat Onal, Turkish Deputy FM, at the Foreign Office. FM Qureshi, conveying cordial greetings for Foreign Minister Cavusoglu, noted with satisfaction the excellent bilateral relationship between Pakistan and Turkey. He reaffirmed commitment to further deepen and broaden cooperation in all areas, adding that the forthcoming 7th Session of HLSCC, co-chaired by the two leaders, would further strengthen the strategic partnership. – APP

Govt to start country-wide  
vaccination drive: Dr Faisal

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination Dr. Faisal Sultan on Tuesday said that 55,000 mobile teams will start vaccination of citizens across the country in the coming two weeks in a follow-up drive. In a media briefing, Dr. Faisal Sultan appealed to the citizens to support these mobile teams as the COVID-19 vaccine is very effective to protect them from medical complications from virus variants. He said that with the start of this drive many citizens who could not get the vaccine earlier will have now the opportunity to avail this free facility to protect themselves from several medical complications in case of carrying this disease like admission to hospital, oxygen issues, or other health problems. "Only vaccine can protect you from all such complications. I advise country people to must go for vaccination against the virus to avoid facing more complications and hospitalization." He recommended the citizens to also



go for a booster on completing six months of their second dose of vaccine as per scientific evidence this practice enhances immunity against the virus, he added. He added these booster shots were also being provided by the government free of cost as like two normal vaccine doses in the country. He urged citizens to get the maximum benefit of the government's this initiative, which will not only protect them against the new Omicron variant but ensure free from other restrictions due to the increasing number of cases like wearing masks etc..

He said that the only option to avoid carrying this disease and living a normal life was ensuring vaccination. He said that the vaccination against Covid-19 was continued for the last one year in the country while the government was facing several challenges in fighting against the disease for the last two years. He said that the government was making sincere efforts to ensure the availability of the COVID-19 vaccine at all vaccination centers. He said that a large number of citizens have been vaccinated in the country. He advised citizens to strictly follow COVID-19 Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) in offices and markets to prevent the disease. He said that COVID-19 is a deadly virus but we can control it just as we controlled it by following the SoPs during the previous waves. He said that the government is seeking full cooperation in adhering to the SoPs. "We can save precious lives including those of our near and dear ones by taking preventive measures. Wear a mask, maintain social distance, wash hands with soap frequently and avoid crowded places."

## KP signs \$8bn MOUs at Dubai Expo

Barrister M Ali Saif said, the cabinet approved Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Censorship of Motion Picture Rules 2021

## FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has signed more than 8 billion dollars MoUs at Dubai Expo which will boost Tourism, Hydro-Power, Economic Zones and Mines and Minerals Sector Investment, besides attracting huge foreign investors and will create jobs leading to economic revolution in the province. Advisor to Chief Minister on Information & Public Relations, Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif, while briefing the media about 64th cabinet meeting decision said the Chief Minister has issued directives to the concerned departments to provide every possible facility to the foreign investors to attract more business entrepreneurs. The cabinet, he said, also has approved Rs.800 million supplementary grant for the uplift of newly merged districts under ADP and AIP. The meeting besides the cabinet members was attended by Provincial Chief

Secretary, Additional Chief Secretary, Senior Member Board of Revenue and Administrative Secretaries of various Government Departments. Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif said, the cabinet approved Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Censorship of Motion Picture Rules 2021 (Film, CDs, Stage, Drama & Show). According to the new rules there would be complete ban on airing of any material against injunction of Islam, solidarity and security of Pakistan, against public order and negative propaganda spoiling Pakistan's relation with friendly countries. Any such material will not be allowed to telecast on private media channels, cables, CDs and other means of dissemination. The Chief Minister, he said, its utmost need to preserve the Pakhtun Culture which is often negatively portrayed in films and CDs. Barrister said, the provincial cabinet has also approved issuance of Computerized Driving Licenses including International Driving Permits and approved the new

fee schedule for it. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Transport department has established a new Web-based License System at Directorate of Transport and Mass-Transit which will in collaboration with Police and Transport Departments issue licenses for different categories of vehicles. Muhammad Ali Saif said, the provincial cabinet has also approved the law which will regulate Online Riding and Online Goods Trading Companies. This new law will regulate issuance and cancellation of Online Transport Companies Licenses, issuance of Fitness Permit and Driver Registration besides other affairs. After the amendment, EATA Board of Governors has also been re-constituted. The Board headed by CM KPK will include Minister Higher Education, Secretary Higher Education, Secretary Law, Health, MD Information Technology Board, University Chancellor Engineering, Chairman Peshawar Board and ED will be its members.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Japan Wada Mitsuhiro called on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Shaukat Tarin at the Finance Division. – APP