



# Islamabad POST

Saturday, February 19, 2022

**Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily**

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## 15th anniversary of Romania's accession to the EU marked

Detailed News On Page-07

## Pak stands with UAE to protect its interests

Detailed News On Page-08



## Leading world organisations commend NAB

Detailed News On Page-08



## Briefs

### Moeed pleased to host Bill Gates

ISLAMABAD: National Security Adviser (NSA) Dr Moeed Yusuf on Thursday expressed his pleasure to receive Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates and his colleagues at the Afghanistan Inter-Ministerial Coordination Cell (AICC). The NSA in a tweet on his official Twitter handle shared his views on receiving the Microsoft co-founder who made his maiden day-long visit to Pakistan on the invitation of Prime Minister Imran Khan. Dr Moeed further wrote, "We had a very productive conversation with international organizations and Pakistani experts." Earlier, Bill Gates held a one-on-one meeting with the Prime Minister and also visited the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC). — APP

### FATF proposals completed

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Office says Pakistan has faithfully complied with all technical requirements of Financial Action Task Force, hoping the world body will also take decisions in accordance with the technical standards. At his weekly news briefing in Islamabad on Friday, Foreign Office Spokesperson Asim Iftikhar said there are issues of politicization in the FATF by some countries wherein technical requirements are set aside and political considerations take the forefront. He, however, said Pakistan is a strong and important country and it knows to defend its interests. Responding to a question, the Foreign Office Spokesperson said Pakistan has faced and confronted the menace of terrorism with a lot of courage and success. He said India has a track record of supporting terrorism in Pakistan. We are aware of the threat and we will take all necessary steps to halt it.

### Holiday Notice

The offices of daily Islamabad POST shall remain closed on Saturday on account of weekly off therefore there will be no newspaper on Sunday.  
— Editor

# 'A mistake to allow Nawaz go'

"If Shahbaz Sharif is innocent, then why is he running away from courts?" the Premier questioned

YOOSUF BHUTTA

MANDI BAHAUDDIN: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Friday said that letting PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif leave Pakistan was a "major mistake" of the incumbent government. The prime minister, addressing the rally in Mandi Bahauddin, lashed out PML-N, PPP, and other Opposition parties for "looting the country's wealth and stashing their money abroad". Turning his guns towards PML-N President Shahbaz Sharif, the premier said that he had a "weak heart and knew he would not be able to escape if his case (of being a guarantor in Nawaz Sharif's case) is heard". "If Shahbaz Sharif is innocent, then why is he running away from courts?" the prime minister questioned. The prime minister said since he did not run away from the court whenever he was summoned and provided every document that the judiciary demanded. "Why are you (Shahbaz) running away from courts? Ask for a day-to-day hearing," he advised the leader of the Opposition. Taking a jibe at PML-N Vice President Maryam Nawaz, he said Nawaz's daughter claims she has "tapes" on government officials. "Have you ever heard a politician blackmail (others) via tapes," he asked. PM Imran blamed PML-N for

Continued on Page 06

## Fawad laughs off long march talk

GULZAR NOSHI

MANDI BAHUDDIN: Taunting the opposition parties for their planned 'long march' on Islamabad, Federal Minister for Information Fawad Chaudhry said on Friday that not to speak of a 'march', the opposition parties could not even walk. The minister was of the view that governments could not be changed through the tactics being employed by the opposition right now. "In order to bring about regime change, parties must have an ideology; they must have the support of masses," he said, adding that it's a pity that Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman brought seminary students with him to participate in the march. "Is this the way, the governments are sent packing," he questioned?

Continued on Page 06

# East Ukraine sees its worst shelling in years

Head of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic announced evacuation plan

CENTRELINE REPORT

MOSCOW/KYIV: Russian-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine said on Friday they planned to evacuate their breakaway region's residents to Russia, a stunning turn in a conflict the West believes Moscow could use to justify an invasion of Ukraine. Announcing the move on social media, Denis Pushilin, head of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic, said Russia had agreed to provide accommodation for those who leave. Women, children and the elderly should be evacuated first. There was no immediate comment from Russian officials or from Kyiv. Millions of civilians are believed to live in the two rebel-held regions of eastern Ukraine; most are Russian speakers and many have already been granted Russian citizenship. The eastern Ukraine conflict zone saw the most intense artillery bombardment for years on Friday, with the Kyiv government and the separatists trading blame.

Continued on Page 06

## 'Build-up most significant since WW2'

GENEVA: Russia's build-up of troops along the Ukrainian border is "the most significant military mobilisation in Europe since the Second World War", the US delegation to the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) has said. "Rather than provide transparency and engage in risk reduction, Russia has chosen to provide disinformation and engage in denial and deception", Michael Carpenter said, adding that there are now 169,000-190,000 Russian troops "in and near Ukraine". "It cynically tries to portray Ukraine, NATO, and the United States as aggressors at the same time as it positions a massive strike force, threatening to invade its neighbour." — News Desk



MANDI BAHAUDDIN: Prime Minister Imran Khan addressing a public rally in Mandi Bahauddin, on Friday. — DNA

## Army Chief calls on Belgian Defence Minister

Belgium appreciates Pakistan's sincere efforts for peace and stability in the region



DNA

BRUSSELS: General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS), on official visit to Belgium, called on Mrs Ludvine Dedonder, Minister of Defence, Admiral Michel Hofman, Chief of Defence and Major General Pierre Gerard, Chief of Staff of the Land Component, Belgium. During the meetings matters of mutual interest, overall regional security situation and bilateral relations were discussed. COAS expressed that Pakistan values its bilateral relations with Belgium. Both sides agreed to further optimize military-to-military ties particularly in defence production, training, Counter Terrorism and intelligence domains. Belgian dignitaries acknowledged the professionalism of Pakistan Armed Forces. They also appreciated Pakistan's sincere efforts for peace and stability in the region and reiterated earnest desire for enhancing bilateral cooperation in all domains.

# Pak wants justice for Samjhauta Express victims

The Indian Charge d'Affaires was summoned and was conveyed Pakistan's severe disappointment

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Friday marked the 15th anniversary of the horrific terrorist attack on the Samjhauta Express that claimed the lives of 68 innocent passengers including 44 Pakistani nationals. The Indian Charge d'Affaires in Islamabad was summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was conveyed Pakistan's severe disappointment at Indian Government's callousness towards the plight of the families of the Pakistani nationals who await justice even after the passage of fifteen years. The Indian diplomat was further conveyed our alarm that the Hindutva extremism and "Saffron terror" that had motivated the

Continued on Page 06

## Minorities in India suffer hardships: FM

NEWS DESK

DUBAI: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi says Hindutva ideology has dominated India and minorities including Christians, Muslims and Sikhs were facing hardship. Talking to media in Dubai, he said that nobody had right to put restrictions on the culture, traditions and values of Muslims in India. He said that Indians themselves were raising voice against the RSS ideology.

# Palestine welcomes UN decision on Israeli violations

DNA

RAMALLAH: The State of Palestine has welcomed the decision by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to set up an Ad Hoc Conciliation Commission to report on Israel's continued and gross violations of the Convention and its provisions. Israel's discrimination and racism against the Palestinian people violate the basic tenets of international law and humanity as a whole. The fight against racism and discrimination must be universal. The State of Palestine deplors Is-

rael, the occupying Power, refusal to cooperate with the Commission and affirms that it is obligated to facilitate the mission of the Commission. The State of Palestine calls on the States Parties to CERD and the international community as a whole to support the work of the Commission and its members and assume their moral and legal obligations to end all forms of discrimination. The State of Palestine stands ready to fully and effectively cooperate with the Commission, in accordance with its obligations and responsibilities, in order to ensure the efficacy of both the Convention and the international legal order.

## Inside...

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Multan Sultans outclass Quetta Gladiators by 117 runs  
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# Taliban's 6 months in Power: HR violations continue

Governing Afghanistan after departure of President Dr. Ashraf Ghani was a test for Taliban in which they seem to have failed

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: Instead of materializing its commitments or demands of international community regarding Human Rights, the Taliban rulers are still making their best to settle scores with the political rivals and common people who remained part of previous government installed according to Bonn Accord. Though thousands of people have abandoned the country and slipped into different countries yet still leading politicians including former President, ex-Chief Executive and several other politicians are stranded in Afghanistan. The incumbent Taliban rule now entered into seventh month but they are yet to frame strategies aimed at addressing wishes and expectation of international community, who has huge concerns regarding Human Rights

situation. In last six months, almost members of international community demonstrated firm belief in return of "peace and stability" in war-devastated Afghanistan, which is possible only by empowering a "broad based and acceptable coalition government." But the Taliban leaders are reluctant to do so. Though after getting a letter from Saudi Arabia, the Taliban leaders and officials are behaving with common people but they are yet to facilitate political rivals or those who remain part of previous governments. All of them are very indifferent in attitude with politicians and leaders like Hamid Karzai, Dr. Abdullah, Engineer Gulbadin Hekmatyar and others. Taliban are not only treating these politicians as rivals but even calling them as puppets. Like past, Taliban have again converted Afghanistan into a prison whereas one can enjoy security but he is de-

prived of his basic human and political rights, remarked an Afghan journalist. Besides political hardships, the economic disorder, growing unemployment and nonpayment of salaries in government organs are compelling people to abandon country and fly abroad. Almost all banks have ceased to function. Only two to three international flights are operating from Kabul Airport. Girl schools from 6th to 12th classes are still shuttered whereas Universities and professional colleges are functioning with separate classes for male and female students. The teachers have been paid only three months salaries. A large number of schools, colleges and universities teachers were either left for foreign countries or have adopted other jobs due to fears of aggression, violence and denial of salaries. The situation is worsening for

Continued on Page 06

## Ex-Official house attacked, three killed

BUREAU REPORT

PESHAWAR— Some unknown armed persons attacked house of former First Deputy Chief Executive Engineer Muhammad Khan at Kabul and killed three persons including a woman. Engineer Muhammad Khan told a Radio late on Thursday night that in the attack, his wife, young son and a security guard have been shot dead. He timely reported the violent act to Taliban. In his Radio talk, Engineer Muhammad Khan said that after coming into power, Taliban raided his home and Hujra for a couple of times. They seized arms and made disarmed his own personal security guards. The attackers, he said, were "portraying them as Taliban." Engineer Muhammad Khan is younger brother of Abdul Hadi Arghaniwal, former minister in Hamid Karzai cabinet. Arghandiwal is leading a faction of Hizbe Islami Afghanistan. Earlier he remained an ally of Hamid Karzai and later on joined Dr. Abdullah Abdul in 2014.



## Briefs

Pesco  
notifies  
power  
suspension

PESHAWAR: PESCO authorities on Friday have notified power shutdown in various areas of provincial metropolis due to maintenance work.

According to PESCO, power supply would remain suspended from 132 KV Jamrud-Hayatabad Transmission Line on Feb 20 from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM resultantly load management would be carried out on 132 KV FF Steel mill and Jamrud grid.

Power supply would remain suspended from 132 KV Warsak Power House New Warsak Transmission Line on Feb 21 from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM resultantly load management would be carried out on 132 KV New Warsak and Shahi Bagh Grid Station.

Similarly, power supply would remain suspended from 132 KV Peshawar City Grid Station on Feb 19, 22 and 24 from 9AM to 2PM, resultantly consumers of 11 KV Nishtarabad, Chughal Pura, Zaryab, Yousaf Abad, Ring Road, Sethi Town feeders will face inconvenience. Power supply would remain suspended from 132 KV Peshawar Fort Grid Station on Feb 19, 22 and 24 from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM, resultantly consumers of 11 KV Karim Pura, Chowk Yagdar, Wazir Bagh, Qissa Khwani feeders will face inconvenience. — APP

Five more  
die of Corona  
in KP

PESHAWAR: Five more persons died of coronavirus (Covid-19) as 515 new cases were confirmed in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the last 24 hours, said Corona updates shared by the Health Department here on Friday.

With five more deaths, the toll from the disease in the province has climbed to 6182 while due to decline in new cases and recoveries of the patients; the number of total active cases has been decreased to 11670, while 654 patients have been recovered from the disease during the same period.

As many as 11025 tests were conducted, out of which 515 proved positive for coronavirus. — APP

Imparting  
digital skills  
to youth top  
priority

PESHAWAR: Minister for Science and Information Technology, Atif Khan on Friday said that IT department has introduced a series of courses for youth across the newly merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to master digital skills to expand their employment opportunities and know-how of the ever-evolving digital world.

In a statement, he said that under the employable digital skills for the youth of merged districts hundreds youth would be trained in skills like, graphics design, wordpress design and development, social media marketing, mobile application development and blogging and content writing.

The minister said that easy and fast employment opportunities for youth are possible through promotion of digital industry in the province.

He said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Technology board (KPITB) has set up eight IT labs so far in the government schools of newly merged districts of under early age programming & IT essentials for the children of government schools of merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in order to improve quality of ICT education in government schools of newly merged districts. The Science Technology and Information Technology (ST&IT) department has also started Early Age Programming & IT Essentials for the Children of Government Schools of Merged Districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Project with a total budget of Rs.38.78 million. The IT labs have been setup GHS Kohi Sher Hider Bara, GHS Jan Khan Kali Bara, GGHS mawaz Kali Bara snf GGHS Gulab Jamrud, Khyber district, GHS Tooti Bag, GHS Ghiljo, GGHS Mirobak and GGHS Sarobi of Orakzai district. — APP

DC Gujrat inaugurates  
Panah Gah of 200 beds

Panah Gah has been constructed under Public-Private partnership by a renown real estate business tycoon, Panah Gah will be run by Social Welfare Deptt. Punjab

YOOSUF BHUTTA

GUJRAT: Deputy Commissioner Gujrat and a philanthropist Choudhary Ijaz Warraich has formally opened the newly constructed Panah Gah in Aziz Bhatti Shaheed Hospital here Thursday. Following the prime minister's policy, a big Panah Gah with a capacity of 200 beds has started functioning here in Aziz Bhatti Shaheed Hospital.

According to details a big Panah Gah has been constructed under Public-Private partnership by a renown real estate business tycoon Mr. Choudhary Ijaz Warraich. It is re-

ported that Panah Gah will be run by Social Welfare Deptt. Punjab. DC Gujrat Dr. Khuram Shehbaz told the press that the Panah Gah will entertain at least 200 persons at once who will be provided food twice a day. He further told that the attendants of admitted patients in ABS Hospital who come from remote areas will also enjoy this facility. Residential rooms for men and women have been separately constructed with all facilities of light, fans, air conditioners and wash rooms, he added.

**Retired accountant committed suicide**  
A retired accountant of Health Department

Gujrat Raja Fazal ur Rehman committed suicide due to domestic problems here Friday. It is reported that Raja Fazal ur Rehman was depressed since some time due to domestic problems.

He wrapped himself in a blanket, He sprayed petrol on the blanket and set himself on fire. He succumbed to serious injuries and died on the spot.

The heirs of the deceased have refused to take any legal action.

**New AC appointed**

Mr. Umer Daraz Gondal has been appointed new Assistant Commissioner of tehsil Gujrat.

He was replaced with Mr. Faisal Mangat who has been transferred to Sargodha.

**Five bikes stolen within 24 hours**

Five motorcycles have been stolen in Gujrat within 24 hours. According to details these motorcycles were owned by Zahid Usman, Jaan Alam, Naeem Iqbal, Saghir Akhtar and Tanzeem Akhtar which were stolen from Makiana, Qamar Sialvi Road, Rangpur, Kheewa and Mohla Langrian respectively. FIRs were registered in Civil Lines, Lorry Adda, Rehmania and Saddar Jalalpur Jattan police stations.

Huge  
potential for  
investment in  
AJK: Sardar  
Tanveer

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan

Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) president and

the most senior cabinet minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas said that there was a huge potential for business, trade and investment in AJK. Giving priority to the public interest and playing a role in resolving fundamental issues is part of the PTI's manifesto and we will provide relief to the people by taking practical steps. This he said while talking to a media in Islamabad.

Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan said that PTI had won the elections in AJK with a huge mandate and it was a time to meet the expectations of the people. He further stated that only a stable Pakistan was the guarantor of security in the region. "It is an honour for us to be the only nuclear power in the Islamic world. Pakistan has been unbearable from day one for a cunning enemy like India. In view of such ambitions of India, Pakistan can go to any lengths to make its defense invincible," he said.

Markhor  
saved from  
poachers

PESHAWAR: The Wildlife Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Friday saved Markhor, a wild goat with beautiful spiraling long horns, from poachers in Chitral district.

According to details, the Wildlife Department officials in Chitral received reports about attempt by poachers of hunting Markhor in hilly terrain. They conducted raid and caught the culprits red-handed by recovering instruments used in hunting of the animal.

The arrested hunters who are identified as Wazir son of Muhammad Azam, Akbar Shah son of Muhammad Zahir Shah were fined a sum of Rs. 250,000 on the spot. The arrested persons during investigation, admitted selling of hide of Markhor besides horns which is used in making of some jewellery items. — APP

2 illegal  
colonies  
sealed

FAISALABAD: The Faisalabad Development Authority (FDA) has sealed two illegal housing colonies and demolished their structures and sales offices.

An FDA spokesman said on Friday that Estate Officer Intiaz Ali Goraya checked status of two housing schemes, Intiaz Villas and Crown Enclave, Chak No 222-RB, and found them illegal. Along with the enforcement team, he sealed premises of the illegal colonies and demolished their structures including sales offices, main gates and boundary walls. — APP

FESCO issues  
shutdown  
programme

FAISALABAD: FESCO has issued shutdown programme for Saturday for repair, maintenance and expansion of electricity lines. According to the programme, power supply from Sir Syed, Kutchehry Road and Rehmania Road feeders emanating from 132-KV Chiniot Road grid station and Scarp-1 feeder originating from 132-KV Chak Jhumra grid station will remain suspended from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. while Momin Abad, Gausahla, People's Colony, New Dost Street and Tata Bazaar feeders emanating from 132-KV Factory Area grid station, New Sabzi Mandi, FIG, Loona, Al-Fareed, Kamal Fabrics, Malik Abad, Hussain Abad and Mujtaba Saood feeders originating from 132-KV Thikriwala grid station, New Darul Ehsan, Gate Chowk Bilal Road, Khwaja Garden, Khan Street, Sarfraz Colony, Data Street and LCM feeders emanating from 132-KV Faisalabad City (GIS) grid station and Babar Chowk feeder originating from 132-KV Khannuana grid station will observe shutdown from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, Feb 19. Similarly, electricity supply from Al-Murtaza and FAST National University feeder emanating from 132-KV Kamalpur grid station will remain suspended from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. whereas Marzipura, Raza Abad, Subhan Abad, Kashmir Road, GM Abad, Aminpur, Langrana, Qadir Abad, Madina Abad, Ahmad Abad, Faiz Abad, Siddhupura, Sindhu, Rehman Abad, Shehbazpur, Khurdpur, Lyallpur Oil Refinery, Parokianwala, Elyas, Siddique Abad and Masha Allah feeders originating from 132-KV Narwala Road grid station will observe load shedding from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on February 19. Meanwhile, power supply from Jhang Bazaar, Gol Karyana, Dr Tariq Rasheed (DHQ) and Imam Bargah feeders emanating from 132-KV Factory Area grid station, DHQ and Civil Line feeders originating from 132-KV Old Thermal grid station, Hayat Chemia, Time Surmax, Ghani Surmax, Daily JW, Karas Paint, Hyundai Nishat, Coca Cola and FIEDMC feeders emanating from 132-KV FIEDMC grid station will also remain suspended from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Feb 19, 2022. — APP



FAISALABAD: Deputy Commissioner Ali Shahzad putting garbage in dust bin along with students for creating clean environment. — DNA

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Deputy Commissioner Ali Shahzad inaugurated the spring tree plantation campaign after sapling the plant at MC Boys Higher Secondary School Allama Iqbal Road (Kotwali Road) under the arrangements of District Education Authority. AC City Sahibzada Muhammad Yousaf, CEO DEA Ali Ahmad Siyan and Principal Rao Iqbal also sapled the plants. Educationist Akhtar Butt, Education Officers, Teachers and Students were also present. The Deputy Commissioner

said that for protection of environment, tree planting is essential for this purpose tree plantation campaign has been started. The aim of the campaign is to spread the message of two trees for every human being so that citizens can also plant trees and the environment can be refreshed. He said spring tree planting campaign would also be implemented in full swing and the target of planting millions of trees will be achieved. He said that plantation is necessary for clean, neat and pleasant environment to the next generation and district govt would committed in this regard. He said that the tree

plantation campaign was being successfully implemented and in this regard, the officers were also involved in tree planting in the Clean and Green Campaign. He asked the citizen to participate in the campaign so that a clean and green Pakistan can be seen by planting as many trees as possible. Later, Deputy Commissioner also spoke to the students and stressed them for clean environment. He lifted the garbage and put into the dust bin along with students and said that clean environment should be intact so that houses, schools, roads, city and country looks beautiful.

Over 7.4 mln  
people vaccinated  
in Faisalabad

FAISALABAD: Over 7.4 million (7,413,604) people have so far been vaccinated against COVID-19 in the district.

District Health Officer (DHO) Dr Ataul Mun'im said on Friday that 4,387,446 citizens were injected first dose while 2,949,940 were administered the second dose of vaccine.

He further said that 39,822 health workers were also given first dose while 36,396 received the second dose of vaccine. He said that 194,889 first doses and 129,926 second doses were in the stock in the city.

He said that 37 vaccination centres and 20 mobile vaccination camps were operational in Faisalabad where registered people were being vaccinated. In order to facilitate the people, these centres had been established in various areas of the city including Allied Hospital, District Headquarters (DHQ) Hospital, Government General Hospital G.M Abad, Faisalabad Institute of Cardiology, Government General Hospital Samanabad, Children Hospital, Sports Complex Samanabad, Tehsil Headquarters (THQ) Hospital Jaranwala,

Samundri, Tandlianwala, Chak Jhumra, Sports Complex Chak Jhumrah, Sports Complex Jaranwala, Government General Hospital Chak 224-RB, New Building RHC Khurrianwala, New Building THQ Samundri, New Building THQ Tandlianwala, Social Security Hospital Medina Town, Wapda Hospital, Rural Health Centres Mureed Wala, Chak 174-JB, Chak 134-JB, Chak 229-RB, Chak 65-GB, RHC Lundianwala Jaranwala, RHC Khurrianwala Jaranwala, Pindi Sheikh Musa, Kandjwani, Mamukanjan, RHC Chak 400-GB, RHC Chak 153-RB, RHC Chak 374-GB and Chak 469-GB, he added. He further said that timing of these vaccination centres was 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. except Sports Complex Samanabad centre which would remain open round the clock. — APP

Qaumi Sehat  
Card 'one  
of a kind' in  
world: Awan

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to Prime Minister and the Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Zaheer-ud-din Babar Awan in a distribution ceremony of Qaumi Sehat Card (National Health Card), on Friday, said that the initiative was one of a kind in the world. Speaking at the ceremony here, marked with on spot registration of 100 lawyers of Murree Bar Association, Awan said that the universal health coverage provided under the Sehat Sahulat Programme was a unique initiative of PM Imran Khan. No other country, he claimed with full confidence, provided such facility to its citizens. Awan said that even in the countries where such amenity was provided, it was linked to the tax contribution of the individuals. — APP



PESHAWAR: Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif SACM KP for information briefs media on BRT Gold Standard Service Award. — DNA

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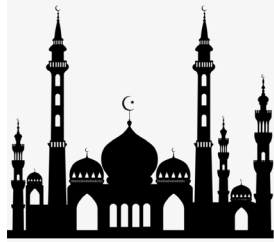
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# COMSATS being run sans Executive Director

At present, COMSATS has 27 Member States and a Network of 24 International Science and Technology Centres of Excellence that facilitate pursuit of its mission of South-South cooperation

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: Appointment of Executive Director COMSATS is still pending. The govt is yet to appoint an ED despite the lapse of more than one year since the departure of the then ED Dr. Junaid Zaidi. The Commission on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development in the South (COMSATS) was established in 1994, as an intergovernmental organization (IGO) of the developing countries with its headquarters permanently based in Islamabad, Pakistan. It is an apex forum of the developing countries having Heads-of-State/ Government of the Member States as Members of the Commission. South-South cooperation is the major mechanism adopted by the organization to achieve its objectives. Hon. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo,

President of Republic of Ghana, is the incumbent Chairperson of COMSATS. At present, COMSATS has 27 Member States and a Network of 24 International Science and Technology Centres of Excellence that facilitate pursuit of its mission of South-South cooperation. The Executive Director is the head of the International Secretariat of COMSATS. The post of the Executive Director is vacant for the last one year (February 2021). The affairs of the Intergovernmental International Organizations are being run on ad-hoc basis by the Secretary, Ministry of Science and Technology having look-after charge of the post of the

Executive Director COMSATS. It is worth mentioning that during the last one year, 4 Federal Secretaries, namely Dr. Arshad Mahmood, Mr. Nadeem Irshad Kiyani, Dr.Nazir Akhtar and the incumbent Ms. Humaira Ahmed, have assumed the look-after charge of the post of Executive Director COMSATS in their capacities as Secretaries of the Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of Pakistan. This very non-serious, casual approach of the MoST regarding appointment of the Executive Director has very badly suffered working of this only International Organization having permanent International Headquarters in Islamabad, Pa-

kistan. The Prime Minister of Pakistan is the appointing authority of the Executive Director COMSATS. The Prime Minister categorically directed the MoST that the post must be filled within three months time. The Prime Minister office has also conveyed serious concern of the Prime Minister over delay in appointment of the Executive Director COMSATS. However, the post of is still vacant due to un-known reasons. As mentioned earlier that it is an inter-governmental organization, but due to non-professional attitude of MoST, the organization is suffering badly in absence of a regular Executive Director. No activity is being under taken due to non-availability of Head of the organization. The Secretary is also very much busy as Ministry has its own 15 subordinate offices including three universities i.e. NUST, NUETECH and COMSATS University.

## AIOU celebrates milestone

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: 'Allama Iqbal Open (AIOU) has successfully accomplished its goal of digital transformation of entire academic, administrative and financial operations of the university ensuring transparency and accuracy. The next target is to raise quality standards of the education imparted and strengthen academic structure of the university. We will exclusively focus on image building of the university', these views were expressed by Prof Dr Zia Ul-Qayyum, VC, AIOU while addressing the participants of digital transformation celebration ceremony. He, further, added that university is specifically focusing on establishing and strengthening students support system on the modern parameters. He admired and thanked the entire team of digital transformation project for their untiring efforts and unwavering support.



ISLAMABAD: Woulter Plomp, Ambassador of Netherlands witnesses art work during exhibition at Gallery 6. – DNA

## India heading towards genocide: experts

Intimidation of minorities part of BJP's election strategy: experts

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: Hindutva majoritarianism is heading in the direction of genocide, and the world's leaders must try and prevent that from happening, no matter their strategic inclinations, stated participants at a roundtable organized by Jinnah Institute on Thursday. The recent controversy over hijab across universities in Karnataka, followed by mobs breaking into classrooms demanding that Muslim girls remove hijabs or go home, demonstrate the accelerated pace at which India is turning into a Hindu-supremacist polity that seeks to drive out other identities and customs. Participants stated that the plight of Kashmiri Muslims, long before the revocation of Article 370, was known to

all across the world, but the usurpation of political rights and wave of tyranny unleashed by the Modi government in its second term is unprecedented even by Indian standards. Marginalization of all religious identities, especially the onslaught against Muslim communities is a daily occurrence, especially in the wake of electoral campaigns in Uttar Pradesh and other states, where communal politics is routinely used to intimidate minorities. Some pointed out that Hindutva is by no means a recent political movement, and its bold new iteration has emerged from decades of sidelined radical activism, that could not demonstrate its extremist power under secular governments. It always stayed under the surface, until 2014 when the mainstream embraced political Hindutva under the BJP-RSS steer, showing how long India's Hindu polity had waited for this moment, and had never bought into the secularism of its constitution. Participants cited judgments of the Indian courts over thirty years that show how legal precedents enabled the marginalization of Muslims and Christians, and how far Hindutva has permeated India's state institutions. The few Indian voices calling out atrocities in Kashmir, or moves against schoolgirls wearing the hijab, or attacks against Muslim street vendors, are few are far between. Other than a handful of journalists who report at high risk to their personal security, the media services BJP's project of spreading communal hatred and disunion.

## Rice valuing \$1.286 bln exported

ISLAMABAD: Rice exports from the country during first 07 months of current financial year increased by 11.16% as compared the exports of the corresponding period of last year. During the period from July-January, 2021-22, over 2.179mln tons of rice valuing \$1.286bln exported as against the exports of 2.179mln tons valuing \$1.157bln of same period last year. According the trade data released by Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the exports of Basmati rice also increased by 28.58% in last 07 months as 414,190 metric tons of Basmati rice valuing \$362.183mln exported as against the exports of 293,761 metric tons worth \$281.675mln of same period last year. Meanwhile, country earned \$924.668mln by exporting about 2.138 mln tons of rice other then Basmati as against the exports of 1.886mln tons worth \$875.959mln of same period last year. – APP

## Chairman CDA holds 55th CDA DWP meeting

**STAFF REPORT**

ISLAMABAD: The 55th meeting of Capital Development Authority DWP was held CDA at CDA Headquarters. The meeting was chaired by Chairman CDA and participated by officers of concerned departments. Different projects were presented for approval in the meeting which were approved after a detailed deliberation. According to details, CDADWP approved PC-1 of modern traffic management solution project of Rs. 1385 million on Kashmir Chowk, Murree Road. Similarly, the meeting also approved PC-2 of Rs. 70 million for Conducting Survey and Proposal Development/ Zoning Planning in Islamabad. In addition, PC-1 worth Rs. 800 million was also presented for the establishment of Geospatial Technology Wing in the institute which was approved. The project will be completed in 36 months. The purpose of this project is to maintain planning and estate management in Islamabad city. This technology will also help make CDA's internal departmental facilities more efficient and robust. And by implementing it, the CDA will improve self-reliance in physical planning, land acquisition and infrastructure. In addition, a PC-1 of Rs. 95 million was also approved for enhancing the efficiency of city sewerage division and purchase of modern equipment and overall maintenance of city sewerage . Similarly, the meeting also approved PC-1 of Rs. 99 million for construction and installation of entry and exit doors in Diplomatic Enclave in Sector G-5 of Islamabad.

## USAID HESSA Project inaugurated at NUST

ISLAMABAD: USAID's Higher Education System Strengthening Activity (HESSA) project has been inaugurated at the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST). HESSA is a project of the governments of the United States and Pakistan, launched from the platform of USAID. The project aims to reinforce the country's higher education system by capacity building of HEIs. Launched in October 2021, the five-year project will serve as an impetus to enhance graduate employability and improve relevance, adequacy and inclusivity vis-vis the higher education ecosystem of Pakistan. HESSA's approach hinges upon engaging a wide array of stakeholders to introduce feasible, relevant, viable and sustainable reforms. The project will encompass baseline studies, strategic plans, international higher education summits, study tours to the US universities, and an inclusive financial aid system for students, to name a few. Speaking at the occasion, Lt Gen (Retd) Javed Mahmood Bukhari, Rector NUST, expressed gratitude to the US government, its international development agency, USAID, and the University of Utah for establishing HESSA at NUST. – APP

## To resolve public grievances top priority: IGP

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Police is committed to resolve public grievances on priority and to protect the lives and property of the citizens. It was stated by the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Muhammad Ahsan Younas while listening issues and grievances of public as well as retired and serving officials during khuli kacheri held at Central Police Office on Friday. The IGP strictly directed all zonal officers to listened public complaint and resolve them purely on merit. "No laxity would be tolerated in this regard" he maintained. During the khuli kacheri, Islamabad Police chief listened the grievances of the citizens and marked their applications to the concerned officers for timely action on merit.

## IESCO notifies power suspension programme

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Friday issued a power suspension programme for Saturday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to IESCO Spokesman, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period from 09:00 AM to 02:00 PM, Chawa Syedan Shah, Basharat, Chakri, Arsalan Poultry Farm, SPD, Padial, Gagan, Chahan, Mahuta, Ghaufi Garden, Soudran Road, Khanna-II, Al-Noor Colony-II, Khanna East, Khanna Dak, Azad Shaheed, New Waheedabad, Burma, Kashif Gul, Model Town, Mix Industry, Industrial Estate, Sarka, Shadi Khan, Ara Bazar, Line Park, Millat Chowk, KSM-II, Islamia Chowk, Main Bazar, Qadir Mill, Raja Sultan, Nomanpura, Charohi Feeders and surroundings.

## Proud of traffic officers for not sparing anyone: Faisal

ISLAMABAD: Leader Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Senator Faisal Javed Khan on Friday said he was proud of traffic police officers for not sparing anyone who violates the rules. Reacting on issuance of a ticket on violation, he tweeted, "had to little speed up as was getting late to Mandi Bahawdin Jalsa -extremely sorry for that". "Good-they issued me the ticket despite recognizing me", said adding, "everyone must obey the rules". – APP

## COMSTECH focal center in Lebanon discussed

Mr. Khatib appreciated COMSTECH programmes and the visionary leadership and thanked for offerings of research fellowships for Lebanon nationals and the membership of COMSTECH Consortium of Excellence offered to five Lebanese universities

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of Lebanon, H.E. Mr. Ghassan El Khatib visited COMSTECH on Thursday to discuss and explore the avenues of mutual cooperation in the area of science and technology in Lebanon. Coordinator General COMSTECH, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary offered the membership of COMSTECH Consortium of Excellence to five leading universities of Lebanon. He also offered research fellowships and technician trainings to the students of Lebanon at the prestigious member universities and institutions of COMSTECH

Consortium of Excellence. Both the dignitaries discussed the possibilities of the establishment of COMSTECH focal center in Lebanon for Arab region to coordinate COMSTECH activities and enhance further science and technology cooperation among OIC Arab member states. Mr. Khatib appreciated COMSTECH programmes and the visionary leadership and thanked for offerings of research fellowships for Lebanon nationals and the membership of COMSTECH Consortium of Excellence offered to five Lebanese universities. He welcomed the establishment of COMSTECH focal center for Arab region in Lebanon and assured full support from his office for this initiative.





## Briefs

## Govt. introduces reforms

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law and Justice Barrister Dr Farogh Naseem on Thursday said that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf led government had introduced reforms in the criminal justice system. He expressed these views while addressing virtually at the conference "Social Opportunities and Challenges in Building Community Resilience". He said that the government had taken steps to ensure the provision of right of inheritance to women. The women Ombudspersons had been given all the powers, he said and added that the women Ombudspersons would ensure provision of right of inheritance for women in federal capital Islamabad, Punjab and KPK in three months. He said that the government would provide legal assistance to women and children who were unable to hire a counsel in criminal cases. He said that civil procedure laws were also being reformed and cases which used to take 30 to 40 years would be resolved in one to one and half years. He said that if a woman did not get property rights, the Ombudspersons could provide the same. The government had proposed several reforms in the criminal justice system, he added.

## Asghar Mall's girls clinche top positions in PU's exams

ISLAMABAD: The female students of Government Post Graduate College Asghar Mall Rawalpindi have achieved top positions in University of the Punjab's annual examinations 2021 of Masters in Geography part one and two while setting new records of distinction. Over a century old almatam of the garrison city of Rawalpindi has a history of getting higher positions in final examinations of the University of the Punjab in various disciplines of Geography, English and others being taught at the Post Graduate College. Head of the Geography Department, Associate Professor Sajid Mehmood Farooqi told APP that the Department has produced 100% result in Annual 2021 examinations at Part-I and Part-II which is also a record in itself. He said the students despite COVID-19 pandemic, lockdowns and online classes' fatigue and pressure strived well to get good results in the final examination. The HOD of Geography Department also appreciated the efforts of his faculty for their hard work to produce such marvellous results. The first three positions at MSc Geography Part-II level were secured by Zainab Bibi 975/1200, Asma Tabasum 959/1200 and Mudassar Ali Abbas 938/1200. The students passing MSc Geography Part-I with distinct koon are Ayesha Khan 479/600, Syeda Zara Batool 477/600 and Zainab Zia 472/600 securing 1st, 2nd and 3rd positions respectively and Kainat Safdar secured 418/600 marks. – APP

## IRSA releases 118226 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: The Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 118226 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 30352 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1406.96 feet, which was 14.96 feet higher than its dead level of 1,392 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 8600 and 49800 cusecs respectively. The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1138.00 feet, which was 88.00 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 8326 and 55000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 64193, 53941 and 28030 cusecs respectively. Similarly 3800 cusecs water was released from the Kabul River at Nowshera, and 9626 cusecs from the Chenab River at Marala. – APP

## Thailand keen to promote trade ties with Pakistan

M Shakeel Munir, President, ICCI briefed the Thai Ambassador about potential of foreign investment in various sectors of Pakistan's economy and urged that Thai investors should take benefit of these opportunities investing in Pakistan

## STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Thailand was keen to promote trade ties with Pakistan as both countries have great potential to do trade in many items that would be beneficial for the economies of both countries. This was stated by H.E. Chakkrid Krachaiwong, Ambassador of Thailand while interacting with the business community at Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI). The envoy said that Thailand was waiting for a response on FTA from the Pakistani side as its last chapter was yet to be finalized that would help boost trade between the two countries. He highlighted seafood, pharmaceuticals, gems & stones, IT infrastructure, tourism, agro products including fruits as potential areas of trade cooperation between the



two countries. He said that Thailand was constructing many high rise buildings and Pakistani marble & granite as good potential in the Thai market. He said that Thai investors were interested to invest in food processing and food chain business in Pakistan. He said that Pakistani people

were very generous & hospitable and many Thai tourists were keen to visit Pakistan. He said that post-Covid, both countries should focus on promoting people-to-people contacts that would help in improving trade relations as well. Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Shakeel Mu-

nir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry briefed the Thai Ambassador about potential of foreign investment in various sectors of Pakistan's economy and urged that Thai investors should take benefit of these opportunities investing in Pakistan. He said that many Pakistani

products including marble & granite, medicines, surgical instruments, sports goods, leather products, mangoes and others could find a good market in Thailand and it should focus on Pakistan to meet its import needs. He said that bilateral trade of around USD 1.6 billion was not up to the

real potential of both countries and both sides should facilitate their private sectors for improving two-way trade volume. He said that Pakistan was producing all varieties of marble and granite with mechanized mining and Thailand should import these products from Pakistan to meet the needs of its construction sector. He assured that ICCI would like to work with the Thai Embassy for further improving trade and economic relations between Pakistan and Thailand.

Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President ICCI, Zafar Bakhtawari, Muhammad Naveed Malik, Faseeh Ullah Khan, Hafiz Bilal Munir, Muhammad Shakir, Akhtar Hussain and others also spoke at the occasion and shared useful ideas to improve business linkages between the private sectors of Pakistan and Thailand for trade promotion.

## Kazakh envoy calls on Director PIPS



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Yerzhan Kistafin met with Mr. Muhammad Anwar, the Executive Director of Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services-PIPS. During the meeting, the Ambassador informed about the current agenda of bilateral relations

between Kazakhstan and Pakistan, the events held and planned for the upcoming period under the auspices of the 30th Anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations between two countries. Y. Kistafin drew attention to the need to develop parliamentary diplomacy and cooperation between the legislative bodies of two countries. On his part, Muhammad

Anwar told the Ambassador about the history and activities of the institute, expressed interest in establishing cooperation with the leading think tanks of Kazakhstan. As a result of the meeting, the parties agreed to hold a few events this year, as well as to start a dialogue between the Kazakhstan Institute of "Parliamentarism" and the Pakistani Parliamentary Service Institute.

## Prevention of fake news need of the hour: Fawad

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain Friday regretted that the attitude of tendering no apology after publishing fake news by any daily was against the principle of the freedom of expression. He, in a tweet, stressed the need for preventing the spread of fake news based on bogus social media accounts and contents.

He was of the view that it was not for the first time that the Daily Dawn had filled the front page with a story based on fake social media contents, referring to an item about fuel prices published on February 17. "Till to-date no apology has been tendered, and this attitude is against the freedom of journalism," he said and remarked, "See the (fake) news on the front page and see where the apology is published." It is pertinent to mention here that the daily had published a story on the front page based on the fake account of the Finance Ministry's spokesman. Earlier, the minister said the daily had also published a fake media law and an editorial. – APP

## Haider Rahi all set to revive Sultan Rahi's legacy

ISLAMABAD: The famous film star Haider Sultan Rahi is all set to revive the legacy of legendary superstar Sultan Rahi of Maula Jutt fame in his upcoming pictures as the movie star claims to follow his father's acting style for the first time. Haider Rahi was excited to reveal that his new movies' producers and directors were happy on his efforts to try Sultan Rahi's style with a touch of contemporary art skills, the film star told APP in an exclusive chat while breaking silence on his recent work for the film industry. Rahi expressed his hope that the films fans would also love to watch him in his new style and role in the new movies to be released soon. He informed that he was currently working in Punjabi films and his five movies were ready for release. Haider Rahi is the eldest son of the most famous Punjabi actor and action hero Sultan Rahi who dominated the cinema screens for decades without any failure. While sharing the release schedule of his new movies, Haider Rahi told that it was expected that two of his movies would be released on Eid-ul-Fitr. He said that many actors have tried to copy Super Star Sultan Rahi's style but failed, adding, "now film fans would enjoy to see me in my father's style." Haider Sultan so far has worked in more than 70 different films. He claimed that he tried hard to preserve the legacy of his father. He said that his father Sultan Rahi was not only a great actor but also a man of character and integrity. Haider Sultan Rahi said there was a lot of room for improvement in the film industry. – APP

## Shahbaz Gill slams Marriyum Aurangzeb



ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Political Communication, Dr Shahbaz Gill said on Friday that the script of oppression and political revenge on the question of theft was outdated. Responding to a statement of PML-N Secretary Information Marriyum Aurangzeb, he said the Sharif family had always considered itself above the law. He said Sharifs had even been treating heads of state institutions and esteemed judges as their private servants. He said issuing statements against national institutions while being on bail and trying to become fake revolutionary leaders was an old stunt. Dr Gill said those who caused Rs. 213 million losses to the national exchequer in Ashiana Housing Scheme were the most corrupt people. He said Sharifs' incompetent courtiers were a detailed description of shamelessness, arrogance and hypocrisy. Those who have created properties through fake telegraphic transactions and bank accounts have hired some servants in the media for their advocacy, he added. He said Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was fulfilling its responsibility of accountability adding that Sharif brothers and courtiers should know that barring the accountability there was no other option left. – DNA

## Obesity ups kidney disease risk: Study

ISLAMABAD: Obesity is likely to cause an increased risk of kidney disease, according to a study. Chronic kidney disease affects more than 10 per cent of adults worldwide and is predicted to become a global threat to public health. The findings of study, published in Cardiovascular Research, suggest that tackling obesity could have a powerful impact on kidney health. Researchers from the UK's University of Manchester were able to show that the causal effect of obesity on the kidney is only partly mediated by high blood pressure and Type 2 diabetes, Medical Daily reported. – APP

## ANF seizes over 2784 kg drugs in 64 operations; arrests 59

RAWALPINDI: Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) Pakistan has seized 2784.293 kg drugs and 780 liters prohibited chemical worth US\$ 412.229 million internationally, arrested 59 culprits including three women, two foreign nationals and impounded 16 vehicles while conducting 64 counter narcotics operations throughout the country. According to an ANF spokesman, the seized drugs comprised 536.791 kg heroin, 1671.5 kg Hashish, 212 kg Opium, 7.12 kg Amphetamine, 258.823 kg Methamphetamine (Ice), 2.530 kg Cocaine, 491 Ecstasy Tablets (0.283 Kg), 134 Intoxi-

cated Tablets (0.090 Kg), 95.156 kg Suspected Substance, 600 Liters Acetic Anhydride and 180 Liters Hydrogen Peroxide. ANF Balochistan recovered 760.09 kg drugs and 780 Liters prohibited chemical in 7 operations and arrested 3 accused including 2 women and seized 3 vehicle. The seized drugs comprised 495 kg Hashish, 215 kg Methamphetamine (Ice), 134 Intoxicated Tablets (0.090 Kg) and 50 kg Suspected Powder. ANF Punjab recovered 18.2 kg drugs in 13 operations while arrested nine accused and seized two vehicles. The seized drugs comprised 13.474

kg Heroin, 0.500 kg Hashish and 4.226 kg Methamphetamine (Ice). ANF KPK recovered 311.421 kg drugs in 10 operations while arrested five accused seized a vehicle. The seized drugs comprised 50.991 kg Heroin, 121.17 kg Hashish, 112 kg Opium and 27.26 kg Methamphetamine (Ice). ANF Sindh recovered 1472.244 kg drugs in 17 operations while arrested 24 accused and seized 3 vehicles. The seized drugs comprised 414.058 kg Heroine, 1002.13 kg Hashish, 10.62 kg Methamphetamine (Ice), 486 Ecstasy Tablets (0.280 Kg) and 45.156 kg suspected substance. – APP

## Population rate poses high socio-economic risks

The President also urged the media to broadcast public service messages besides using their platforms to raise awareness about the alarming population growth rate in the country

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi on Friday said Pakistan's rapid population growth was resulting in implications on the socio-economic development of the country and called for a broad-based campaign at the national level to raise awareness among the people. In an interaction with senior journalists here at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, the president highlighted the media's key role in addressing the issues and challenges related to population and health. The meeting was held in line with the recommendations of the Council of Common Interests (CCI) for an engagement with media to encourage them to spread the message on population management, as the country faces a population explosion of 285 million by 2030.



President Alvi stressed that media could play an important role in shaping up public opinion and behaviours regarding family planning. He mentioned that focusing on the population issue in television talk shows and drama serials could also prove effective in conveying the message to the public.

The president also emphasized the need for political will with an active input by parliamentarians to lead a mass movement of advocacy on population management. He also advised to properly highlight the discussion of the parliamentary caucus on population growth for public consumption.

The President also urged the media to broadcast public service messages besides using their platforms to raise awareness about the alarming population growth rate in the country. He acknowledged the positive role of Ulema in raising awareness on family planning and mentioned his initiative of the Friday sermons

by scholars using the platform of the Presidency's Mosque to highlight various social issues. He added that Islam emphasizes that mothers breastfeed their children for two years, which could help achieve adequate birth spacing and overcome the problem of stunting and malnourishment. Prime Minister's Special Assistant on Health Dr. Faisal Sultan said unplanned population growth could become an issue of national security, where the future generation grows in absence of proper education and health facilities. He said the government was sensitizing the masses at all levels involving political leaders, academia, executive, ulema, civil society, and youth. It was highlighted that there occurred 4 million unwanted pregnancies in Pakistan due to lack of guidance and the unavailability of contraceptives.

## PTI leadership working for rule of law: Kanwal

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI), leader Kanwal Shauzab on Thursday said that Prime Minister Imran Khan was working for strengthening the rule of law in the country. Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI) government was making all out efforts to ensure supremacy of law in the country, she said while talking to a private television channel. "No one is above the law in Pakistan," She said. Commenting on a local journalist's issue, she said the journalist was found involved in challenging writ of the State. She said every citizen should obey and respect the law. She said, it is the responsibility of the citizen to adopt legal forum for registration of any grievance. The federal investigation agency, she said is a national institution operating across the country. She said FIA holds the right to take action after registration of a complaint against the violators of the law.

## Knowledge Platform launches first educational device

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Knowledge Platform, a leading ed-tech organization in Pakistan, has launched Pakistan's first educational device in collaboration with GSMA and CreditPer, a leading digital lending platform that provides easy access to digital credit to under-served and un-served market segments. Launching such a device and facilitating access to it on easy installments via CreditPer is a game changer that is expected to eliminate the digital divide in education in Pakistan. This device offers everything a student required to study. One can easily get the device of their choice recommended by Knowledge Platform, on installments through CreditPer with instant financing options. The device comes pre-loaded with learning solutions powered by Knowledge Platform, a library of content including videos, games, and assessments and mobile data Only 1 million out of 49 million students in Pakistan have access to dedicated educational smart devices. This means that 98% of students are significantly affected and disadvantaged when it comes to education and learning opportunities. Knowledge Platform, a pioneer in ed-tech, has therefore stepped up to bridge the digital divide in education with Pakistan's first-ever educational device. The device comes with Learn Smart Pakistan's state-of-the-art learning solutions, which include curriculum-aligned digital content for K-12 students. It is also preloaded with Parhai Buddy (Pakistan's first AI-powered learning coach), Exam Prep Master (Learn Smart Pakistan), 1-on-1 competitions, and teacher-led trainings.

## Mother Languages Literature Festival

ISLAMABAD: The two-day "Pakistan Mother Languages Literature Festival" will be held at the Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL) in Islamabad from February 19 to 20 with the aim to promote linguistic and cultural diversity and to preserve, protect and promote the languages of the country. The event will have parallel sessions on both days. The festival would be organized by Indus Cultural Forum (ICF) in collaboration with PAL. The opening ceremony of the festival will take place at PAL in which the Federal Minister for National History and Literary Heritage Shafqat Mahmood is likely to be the chief guest, an official of PAL Raza Mehmood told APP on Thursday. The well-known scholars and language experts would participate in two-day festival. The festival will provide a platform for celebrating 70 plus languages of Pakistan and encourage language communities to take action for saving their languages from extinction. – APP



## The oil imbroglio

THE petroleum scene is heating up way faster than any Pakistani can handle. With oil ready to touch a new historic high (the term has started to lose its oomph given the frequency with which it is used) of Rs 159.86 per litre, the alarm has been sounded as the state asks its people to pay an excruciatingly painful price. And while the long, long list of government spokespersons ready themselves with a backbreaking exercise of defending this whole new can of worms using buzzwords like international market and global trend, the unleashing of yet another round of across-the-board inflation and its daunting impact on the struggle to bring food to the table cannot and should not be sidelined. Rest assured, the failure to mitigate a common man's pain would serve as a hail-mary-pass to the opposition determined to use every crack in the wall to build its fortress. However, the debate is no longer of politics but pure economics; something none of the big shots are ready to come to terms with. Yes, petrol prices are shooting up across the world but in the earnestness to pass the blame on others' shoulders, the government conveniently forgets the staggering differences in purchasing power parity. Broadcasting skewed data and ill-advised statements can only earn a pat on the back from the headquarters but the public is neither blind nor living under a rock. More worrisome is the constant but seemingly hollow blaring of war horns against the mafia behind the runaway hike in essential items, which are not dependent on international prices. The shalwar kameez-clad sugar barons and the seemingly invincible wheat seths still manage to operate with full impunity despite the tabdeeli drums pounding loud enough to wake the dead. Instead of churning out an unbelievable spin on the imminent rattling of its own inflation calculations, Islamabad would be better off conveying the actual ground realities to its people. Otherwise, trying to take a bite much bigger than it can chew serves neither those waiting for a respite from these pressing times nor the government itself.

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## Rising storm

THE animosity and use of force against those who oppose the PTI government, and notably Prime Minister Imran Khan, appears to be gaining greater force. In the latest development Mohsin Baig, the owner of an online news agency, was arrested after the FIA raided his home in Islamabad and took him into custody – despite the fact that they had no arrest warrants. The matter arose from remarks made by Baig regarding Minister Murad Saeed on a TV show. Amidst debates on whether Baig is a journalist or not, and what transpired in this is the manner in which the FIA made the arrest. This is not the way to deal with an accused – any accused, no matter the alleged transgression. The highhanded style in which the FIA and police raided Baig's home should be condemned without reservation. Mohsin Baig was produced before an anti-terrorism court, which has handed him over for custody for three days and asked police to present details of the investigation. The case highlights the way the FIA has been operating: swift action one day, absolutely nothing the next – apparently depending on who the complainant is. According to Geo TV, the company has lodged over 2600 complaints. Out of these, the FIA has picked out only 84 for further questioning and on none of these has action been taken. Women journalists have been filing complaints about harassment they face, but the FIA has failed to make much headway. Which is why the swift action in the Mohsin Baig case suggests to observers that the government is extremely determined to silence any critics. Baig – ironically, a former cheerleader of PM Imran Khan and his Naya Pakistan – has been divulging some uncomfortable facts regarding the ruling party and has said he had received threats before. Other journalists, it is thought, may be under threat of state action as well. This is an extremely dangerous state of affairs. During the past three years there have been numerous incidents in which journalists were abducted, attacked, beaten, and tortured. There have also been murder attempts. After each such incident there has been widespread condemnation both internationally and nationally, but the government appears to have not learnt any lessons. Then there is an ever-worsening role of online trolls who malign and use abusive language against journalists, women in particular. If any government is able to use law-enforcement authorities to carry out its demands, regardless of the law and regardless of normal procedure, this demonstrates a state where rule of law no longer applies. The PTI and PM Imran Khan have shown a desire to still any criticism from the very start of the government's stint in power. This tendency has grown over the years. Its continuation is dangerous for Pakistan, as is the use of federal agencies to carry out raids and arrests, without following due process, simply because the powerful remain strong in the country. The PTI – the party of 'justice' – seems to have little use for the term when it comes to its own behaviour and way of governance.

## Hijab ban is the latest result of India's Hindutva laboratory

Ruben Banerjee



**“Karnataka is unfortunately and irreversibly hurtling towards its new position as the Gujarat of the South”**

ANTI-Palestinian assault in German media comes as no surprise. The far-right Bharatiya Janata Party and its Hindutva ideology are becoming more deeply entrenched in the country's south, with sinister consequences for Muslims and other minorities. Gauri Lankesh was a feisty journalist who wrote acerbic pieces against religious hatred, bigotry and social inequalities. Her words stung those at the receiving end of her criticism, and a plot was hatched to silence her. In one of the pieces she penned years before being shot dead by assailants suspected to be affiliated with a right-wing Hindu group in 2017, Lankesh lamented the rapidly deteriorating communal situation in her home state of Karnataka. “Karnataka is unfortunately and irreversibly hurtling towards its new position as the Gujarat of the South,” she concluded, writing on what she felt was the systematic targeting of minority groups – particularly Muslims – for the purpose of establishing the dominance of majority Hindus in the state. The comparison she drew with Gujarat had unmistakable political overtones. Gujarat, once ruled by Narendra Modi before he became the Indian prime minister, had witnessed blood-curdling anti-Muslim riots in

2002. It led to hundreds of deaths and left Modi facing accusations of deliberate indifference from critics like Lankesh. No matter the political nature of the parallel drawn – and despite the fact that Modi was never found guilty in a court of law – many now find what Lankesh wrote more than a decade ago prophetic. Though famous for several things – including its temperate climate, abundant natural resources and above all, its regional capital Bengaluru, touted as India's Silicon Valley for hosting IT giants – the southern state is hitting the headlines for all the wrong reasons. Right now, it's the indecent assault on the hijab or headscarves worn by Muslim women and girls that has pitchforked the province into global notoriety. It started in December 2021, with six girls being mysteriously stopped from entering their government-run school one day. The girls protested and stood outside the school gate for several weeks. Then, the Karnataka government, run by Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), entered the scene, formally banning the girls from attending classes on the grounds that the hijab was not part of the school uniform. Right-wing groups rallied in support of the government. They mobilised students – both boys and girls – across the state who then marched to their respective schools, sporting saffron caps and scarves identified with Hindu religion. The whataboutery had the desired result. The government banned those wearing the saffron scarves too, giving the impression that they were being even-handed and that all students had to abide by the school uniform. Tempers rose, and students came dangerously close to a face-off before all schools in the state were hastily shut. But the administrative intervention followed what seemed to be only unabashed instigation by those in power in the state. The state's chief minister Basavaraj Bommai made all the politically correct statements, insisting that none would be allowed to disrupt law and order. Other ministers, however, gave away whose side they were on. One questioned the need

to wear a hijab, while another said wearing one amounted to school indiscipline. The closure of schools helped matters cool down. While the right to wear the hijab has always been a matter of debate in India, Karnataka high court judges are now deliberating whether it should be allowed in schools. But the present reprieve seems only temporary, mainly because the state has been a communal cauldron for a long time. Already, several schools – citing an interim court observation – are forcing girls to take off their hijab while entering. Those who refuse to comply are being turned back. Some two years before Lankesh was gunned down, scholar MM Kalburgi was killed in his hometown of Dharwad in the state. He was killed because his demand for his Lingayat sect to be considered a separate religion was seen as anti-Hindu. Women were beaten up, and their faces blackened by right-wing goons for daring to visit pubs in the city of Mangaluru in 2008. This periodic violence has now grown more frequent, with the BJP government in the state contributing in no small measure to deepening the wedge between religious communities. Beef eating is associated with Muslims, and the Karnataka government has brought in laws prohibiting slaughter and trade in cattle in recent months. It is in the process of legislating against religious conversions, including interfaith marriages, ostensibly to stem so-called Love Jihad – a term used by radical Hindus to accuse Muslim men of converting Hindu women by marriage. Right-wing vigilantes have possibly never had it this good in the state. So much so, that when they recently threatened to disrupt a church congregation, the police asked the church management to cancel the programme instead of reining in the mob. The public was outraged, and the police roundly criticised. But what mattered most was that the mob was never chastised. They remain as emboldened as ever in Karnataka, a state which many say has evolved as Hindutva's laboratory. Whether Karnataka is another Gujarat or not, it does not change the facts on the ground.

– *Courtesy: TRT World*

## When Canada's siege ends, a reckoning is due

Andrew Mitrovica

**I suspect that 99.99 percent of Canadians do not know who Vigneault is or what he does for a living**

THIS too shall pass – eventually. And once the latest expression of consequence-free, far-right-mob entitlement recedes into the rear view, there had better be a hard reckoning. Oh, yes, there had better be a hard and honest reckoning about why and how these smug, mostly white, surplus-store-camouflage-gear-wearing louts have been given easy reign to infect Canada with another, this time man-made pandemic of lawlessness by their enablers, apologists and not-so-secret admirers – in and out of uniforms. A note of warning before I go any further. If the word “louts” rankles your fragile sensibilities or prompts you to accuse me of – horror of column-writing horrors – name-calling, I plead guilty. This bunch of 1/6 wannabes has earned the epithet in spades. Among the first of a long ledger of powerful men in blue and suits who have earned a stern visit to the principal's office or worse is David Vigneault, the director of Canada's so-called domestic “intelligence” agency, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) headquartered in Ottawa – Canada's capital that is, as I write, still under “siege”. I suspect that 99.99 percent of Canadians do not know who Vigneault is or what he does for a living. I also suspect that, like his predecessors, Vigneault prefers it that way. Better that the cops take the Bunsen-burner-like heat, rather than the invisible spooks when a “siege” – that is ex-lout-loving Ontario Premier Doug Ford's word for it, not mine – grips the country.

Vigneault's job is to protect Canada's national security. That should include, I reckon, helping to prevent a “siege”; or, at minimum, warning his boss, the Public Safety Minister, who then, in turn, can warn his boss, the prime minister, that a “siege” is about to “paralyse” the country. From the prime minister and company's stunned, stuttering reaction to the ongoing “siege”, it appears that Vigneault and his army of counter-terror officers did not have so much as a whiff of what was in the offing. That is not surprising. Not only does CSIS “operate” in the dark, but it stays there – habitually. After that supposed national-character-disfiguring security breach, CSIS whined: Prime Minister, it is tough finding and stopping “lone wolves”. We need more money and powers. CSIS got both. What has been happening in Canada lately is not the product of a “lone wolf”. It is a broad, well-organised, well-financed, right-wing “siege” to dispose of a sitting government, using “freedom” from vaccine mandates as a convenient and PR-palatable fig leaf to do it. Where is CSIS? Answer: In the dark. Another part of Vigneault's job is to identify and stop “bad actors” – inside or outside the country – from disrupting or damaging Canada's “vital economic infrastructure”. For days and weeks, hostage-takers in big rigs, tractors, and, of course, pick-up trucks, have been allowed, carte blanche, to block key land border crossings where lots of stuff and people are supposed to flow between Canada and its biggest and most important trading

partner, the United States. The damage done is calculated to be in the billions. Given the ease with which they achieved their giddy success, I doubt Vigneault et al had even an inkling of the hostage-takers' plans on this score, as well. Here is why. Canada's AWOL spies have, for years, been too busy spying on Canadians who want to stop wars and oil pipelines and keeping covert tabs on Indigenous “activists” to have been bothered, apparently, with twiggling to this nation's legion of 1/6 fans and wannabes and their costly, metastasising “siege”. Vigneault has some explaining to do. So do big city, provincial and federal police chiefs who have shown remarkable, but not surprising, restraint in dealing with right-wing “protestors” who want to bag a prime minister, overthrow – by their own admission – his government, and lay “siege” to a country until their demands are met. If the poor, homeless, and Indigenous Peoples or Canadians of colour tried to do all of the above, I doubt the cops or mayors would be “negotiating” with the “protestors” or inviting them to use police cruisers to take selfies because they want to avoid “provoking” violence. Nope. The cops would be donning their “riot” gear even if there were no riot, deploying SWAT teams, mounting police-trained horses, getting their truncheons and Tasers at the ready before charging into the “left-wing anarchists”. What do you think would have happened?

Do you think columnists writing for Canada's two allegedly “national” newspapers or some of their deluded readers would have dismissed the threat by praising how peacefully and politely the “left-wing anarchists” and their loveable kids in prams and on bouncy castles had been behaving? Not likely. Do you think the familiar gallery of former spooks and national security “experts” – who once went on TV to say a mysterious tunnel in Toronto might have been the subterranean work of phantom terrorists planning an attack on innocents – would have been urging patience and for everyone to keep calm and move on? Not likely. Do you think Premier Ford – who knows a thing or two or three about louts – would have gone snowmobiling at his cottage and waited weeks before declaring a “state of emergency” in response to a state of “siege”? Not likely. Do you think preening Conservative politicians, like the sneering apostle of “populism”, Pierre Poilievre, would have continued to extend their thanks and gratitude to Canadians for defending their rights and freedoms? Not likely. The ideological patron saint that the hostage-takers pay ultimate allegiance to is Donald Trump, not Poilievre – even if he becomes the next Tory leader. You can see and hear Trump in every incoherent speech the hostage-takers make, in their me-first “demands”, in their cocky, wrapped in a flag rejection of the unifying sense of purpose most Canadians have adopted – voluntarily and eagerly – to fight an insidious and lethal virus. Rather than denouncing Trump and his ugly and divisive modus operandi as president, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau sought to mollify him instead. By his silence, Trudeau has encouraged the sinister forces he belatedly condemns. He and Canada are now paying a stiff, indelible price for that appeasement. Trudeau must be required to reckon with that too.

–*Courtesy: Al Jazeera*

## The world must support Afghan refugee education in Pakistan

Evan Jones

**The UN estimates that almost 80 percent of school-age Afghan refugees are currently not enrolled in or accessing formal primary education**

STRENGTHENING access to refugee education has an untapped potential to create a generation of youth that can contribute to the development of both Pakistan and their homeland Afghanistan, when the situation improves. Pakistan is home to 1.44 million registered Afghan refugees, and a further 600,000 unregistered Afghan refugees, many of whom have been in the country since the 1970s, having left Afghanistan in search of safety and security. The UN estimates that almost 80 percent of school-age Afghan refugees are currently not enrolled in or accessing formal primary education. Given the Taliban takeover and recent developments in Afghanistan, education for Afghan youth in host countries like Pakistan is more important than ever, especially for young girls and others with special needs. Whilst Pakistan does not have any formal le-

gal framework protecting refugees, there has been a general historical willingness by Pakistani authorities to allow Afghans to remain in the country until conditions at home improve. For registered Afghan refugees – known officially as Proof of Registration (PoR) cardholders – this status has importantly extended to them being able to access basic services, including primary education. As is the case anywhere in the world, education is a core human right that provides the foundation for individuals to live sustainable and fulfilling lives. Access to primary-level education for refugees in Pakistan is actually enshrined in law and policy. In practice, however, the ability for Afghan youth to access schooling is far from straightforward. Due to a multitude of barriers – which poor Pakistani children also face but is compounded for refugees – such as tuition costs, transportation expenses, the distance of schools from refugee housing, and outdated teaching practices amongst others, large numbers of Afghan refugee children remain without an education. Challenges to education access and quality were compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic. During March 2020 to February 2021, schools in Pakistan were closed for 137 days, per government directives. With limited access to online learning platforms, many refugees not only missed out on significant amounts of education, but also dropped out completely. Remedies include the construction of ad-

ditional girls' schools, eliminating physical infrastructure barriers for disabled children and girls, reducing the distances that refugees must travel to school, investing in teacher training, and, developing reintegration programmes for students that may have been compelled to drop out of school. Importantly, it is also incumbent upon all actors supporting education for Afghan refugee children to ensure that Afghan refugees themselves are front and centre in decision making. This can be done through inclusion of Afghan refugees in critical decision-making, improving the effectiveness of Parent-Teacher Committees, as well as ongoing engagement with parents. Only with the direct inputs of affected persons themselves, can parents make informed decisions of their child's specific needs. Having generously hosted Afghan refugees for decades, Pakistan cannot and should not be expected to remedy the current situation alone. Only with the support of the international community, donors, and civil society will Afghan refugee children be able to fully realise their right to access high-quality education. With technical support, capacity building of government staff, investment in physical infrastructure, and a long-term commitment by donors and international actors, can the government deliver much-needed education reforms for refugees.

–*Courtesy: TRT World*



## Briefs

## Karachi beat Qalandars by 22 runs

DNA

LAHORE: Lahore Qalandars have bowled out Karachi Kings for 149 runs in 19.5 over courtesy of four wickets each from star leggie Rashid Khan and young pacer Zaman Khan in the 26th match of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) 2022 at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore. Karachi, who came in today's match on the back of eight successive defeats in this year's event, didn't get a good start to their innings as opener Joe Clarke was removed with 12 runs on the board. Twelve runs later Sharjeel Khan also followed him when Shaheen Shah got him lbw.

## Pak wants justice...

FROM PAGE 01  
inhuman attack fifteen years ago has intensified manfolds under the current regime in India. The Charge d'Affaires was asked to convey to Government of India in the strongest terms, Pakistan's condemnation of the shameless acquittal and exoneration of all accused in dastardly terrorist attack, including Swami Aseeman and, an RSS activist, who publicly confessed of being the mastermind of the heinous attack. This was just another manifestation of the brazen impunity and full state protection that perpetrators of terrorism enjoy in the BJP-ruled India. The Charge d'Affaires was also asked to convey to Indian government, Pakistan's demand for a fair trial and for bringing the perpetrators and abettors of Samjhauta Express terrorist attack to justice. The families of the innocent Pakistani nationals, mercilessly killed at the hands of the Hindutva-motivated extremists deserve closure.

## Taliban's 6 months...

FROM PAGE 01  
academicians with each passing day. The irony is that, Taliban soldiers are working as volunteers. They have not been paid but they getting money and other edible items from common. The former personnel of armed and police forces now are returning on duties but with fears. The most serious issue before Taliban is "getting recognition" from the international community. Now it is crystal clear that some of the powerful members of International community are building up pressure against Taliban to review its internal and external policies. And Taliban are divided in this respect as some of them want to make them free from clutches of neighbouring Pakistan. However, majority of those who are entering Pakistan with Visas are reluctant to go back as they are adjusting them with relatives and friends. Majority of them prefers sheltering in urban cities of Lahore, Rawalpindi, Karachi and even interior Sindh and Punjab where they can easily camouflage their identity. Since August 15th, 2021 the Taliban leaders seems desperate regarding their internal and external policies. They are visibly divided into several groups. The two visible groups are considered Qandahari and Haqqanis. The Qandaharis are considering them as most martial and supreme on the grounds of Mullah Omar's origin whereas the Haqqanis are proud of playing key role in armed resistance against US led allies." In fact, Pakistan as inheritor of previous British colonial system having stakes in Afghanistan and its civil military establishment is making its best for its wellbeing since mid of previous 20th century. No doubt to mention that particular mind-set dominated Pakistan civil military establishment fearing threats from Pushtoons having a dominant position in South Asia since long. Governing Afghanistan after departure of President Dr. Ashraf Ghani was a test for Taliban in which they seem to have failed. The only benefit for Afghans with empowering of Taliban is "an end to terror and violence" but still uncertainty and panic persists throughout Afghanistan. Common people are uncertain about their future.

## Multan Sultans outclass Quetta Gladiators by 117 runs

Mohammad Rizwan, Rilee Rossouw and Shan Masood struck electrifying half-centuries as Multan Sultans scored 81 runs off the last five overs to post 245 for three in 20 overs

## SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: Defending champions Multan Sultans qualified for the 23 February Qualifier of the HBL Pakistan Super League 2022 with a punishing 117 runs victory over a hapless Quetta Gladiators in front of an almost full-house at the Gaddafi Stadium on Friday. Mohammad Rizwan, Rilee Rossouw and Shan Masood struck electrifying half-centuries as Multan Sultans scored 81 runs off the last five overs to post 245 for three in 20 overs, second-highest total in the HBL PSL history, after electing to bat first in perfect batting conditions. In turn, Umar Akmal and Jason Roy provided entertainment to a festive and cheerful crowd but the 246-run target proved to be an uphill task as Quetta Gladiators were bowled out for 128 in 15.5 overs. Umar scored a 23-ball 50 (two fours and six sixes), while Roy scored a 19-ball 38 (seven fours and a six). Friday afternoon's match result means Multan Sultans are now on 16 points and irrespective of how their last league match against Islamabad United on 20 Feb pans out, they will finish in the top-two of the six-team tournament. Sultans' victory also ensured Lahore Qalandars and Peshawar Zalmi also progressed to the play-offs. In contrast, the only way the Quetta Gladiators (currently on six points from nine matches) can keep alive their slim chances



of qualifying for the play-offs is: Islamabad United (presently on eight points from eight matches) badly loses both their matches against Lahore Qalandars (19 February) and Multan Sultans (20 February) Quetta Gladiators wins their last league match convincingly against Karachi on 20 Feb. Rizwan continued with the sparkling form with

the bat with a 54-ball 83 not out that included seven fours and three sixes. Rizwan added 119 runs for the first wicket with Shan (57 off 38 balls with six fours and a six). Rizwan then featured in a blistering 103-run second-wicket partnership in just 33 balls with Rossouw as the latter creamed Quetta Gladiators bowling at will to all parts of the park.

Rossouw dominated the stand as he slapped nine fours and four sixes in a 26-ball 71. He reached his half-century from 20 balls. Shan has now aggregated 453 runs from nine matches, while Rizwan has scored 428 runs in as many matches. Fakhar Zaman of Lahore Qalandars sits ahead of the two on 469 runs in seven matches.

## Kazakh athletes win int'l tennis tournament



## STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: In the international tennis tournament final in Islamabad,

Kazakhstan athletes Taira Adilbayeva and Tatyana Shcherbakova won in doubles against tennis players from the Republic of Korea, having won the first place in international compe-

tion for the first time in the history of Kazakhstan tennis. The Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Pakistan congratulates our athletes on a brilliant victory!

## Spurs face acid test at Man City

## NEWS DESK

LONDON: Tottenham Hotspur face a daunting trip to Manchester City this weekend, desperate to arrest a losing streak that threatens to derail their season as Manchester United brace themselves for a hostile reception at Leeds.

Newcastle can pull further clear of relegation trouble and West Ham's top-four ambitions as they seek their fourth straight league win while Norwich, Watford and Burnley are all in desperate need of points. AFP Sport takes a look at some of the talking points ahead of the weekend action. Antonio Conte has made no secret of his dissatisfaction over Tottenham's dealings in the transfer market in January, saying his team has been "weakened". The former Chelsea and Inter Milan boss started his reign in north London brightly, going unbeaten in the Premier League from November until January, but three straight league defeats have set alarm bells ringing. Spurs sent Tanguy Ndombele, Giovanni Lo Celso, Bryan Gil and Jack Clarke out on loan last month, while Dele Alli signed for Everton on a permanent deal. They brought in Rodrigo Bentancur and Dejan Kulusevski from Juventus but Conte was underwhelmed by the club's business, telling Sky Sport Italia he needed more experienced players to push for the top four. Tottenham are not yet out of contention for a place in next season's Champions League - they are seven points behind fourth-placed Manchester United with three games in hand - but they face an uphill task. Spurs will seek to draw confidence from their home victory against Pep Guardiola's men in August, when Nuno Espirito Santo was still at the helm, but few would tip them to interrupt City's march towards a fourth title in five years.



## Fawad laughs off long...

## FROM PAGE 01

Fawad said he wondered how could the opposition parties table a no-trust move in the National Assembly when members of their own families did not 'trust' them. He went on to add that the end of former prime minister and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif's politics was near. He also said he was sure that PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif would not be able to escape punishment in corruption cases against him by making 'lame' excuses. He said through the no-confidence motion the opposition leader only wanted to evade corruption cases, which the government would never let happen. He said it was only Prime Minister Imran Khan who could reform the country's system and bring about a change. He said the incumbent government allocated a record Rs 30 billion for development projects in Mandi Bahauddin. The Information Minister advised both PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and PML-N Vice President Maryam Nawaz to first contest the election for the seat of a mayor before dreaming of becoming the country's prime minister.

## East Ukraine sees its...

## FROM PAGE 01

Western countries have said they think the shelling, which began on Thursday and intensified in its second day, is part of a pretext to invade. The United States said Russia - which says it has started drawing down troops near Ukraine this week - had done the opposite: ramping up the force menacing its neighbour to between 169,000 and 190,000 troops, from 100,000 at the end of January. "This is the most significant military mobilisation in Europe since the Second World War," US ambassador Michael Carpenter told a meeting at the Vienna-based Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. A diplomatic source with years of direct experience of the conflict described shelling in eastern Ukraine as the most intense since major combat there ended with a 2015 ceasefire.

## Senate Committee urged better coordination between IPC Ministry &amp; POA

## AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on Inter-Provincial Coordination has urged for better coordination between Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC) and Pakistan Olympic Association (POA) for development sports in the country and for hosting upcoming edition of South Asian Games (SAF) to be held in Pakistan March next year. The meeting of Senate Standing Committee on Inter-Provincial Coordination was held under the Chairmanship of Senator Mian Raza Rabbani at Parliament House which attended by Senator Jam Mahtab Hussain Dahar, Senator Rana Maqbool Ahmad, senator Irfan-ul-Haq Siddique, Secretary IPC Mohsin Chandana, President of Pakistan Olympic Association Lt. Gen. (R) Syed Arif



Hasan and other senior officers of POA. President of Pakistan Olympics Association (POA) Lt. Gen. (R) Syed Arif Hasan briefed the Committee about the working, functions and overall performance of POA. He said that POA has to follow International Olympic Committee (IOC) charter and that it is clear that no one can interfere in the internal affairs of the federations, adding that

POA constitution has been approved by its general council and IOC. "The body of the Pakistan Olympic Association not be formed by will as its supreme authority of General Council", he said adding that IOC gives us an annual grant of 0.075 million dollars and federal government does not provide any funding to the POA while it is the responsibility of the POA to get the

players accredited to participate in the International Games. Arif said that sports personalities should be represented in the board and executive board of Pakistan Sports Board (PSB). The role of Pakistan Sports Board is clear in their constitution while according to UN resolutions National Olympic Council should be an independent body.

## Suri vows to expand bilateral ties with Iran

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Deputy Speaker of Pakistan's National Assembly stressing importance of stronger ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially the policy of the Islamabad government to strengthen bilateral trade vows to play a role in expanding cooperation between the two countries. Qasim Khan Suri made the remarks during a meeting with the Ambassador of Iran Seyyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini here in Islamabad on Friday, the eve of his official visit to Iran. During the meeting, the two sides discussed the latest developments in Iran-Pakistan relations, the development of trade on common borders, including setting up of border markets, parliamentary cooperation, the Islamic world, and the region, as well as developments in Afghanistan.

The Deputy Speaker who is a senior member of the Tehreek-e-Insaf ruling party said he was looking forward to his next visit to Tehran. Qasim Khan Suri who belongs to

Balochistan province, which borders Iran's Sistan and Baluchestan province, said the Parliament of Pakistan supports all initiatives to strengthen relations with the

brotherly country and neighbor of the Islamic Republic of Iran. He said the exchange of high-level delegations between the two countries, especially the visit of

parliamentary officials, will be an effective step to strengthen brotherly relations and help remove obstacles to enhance cooperation. The Iranian ambassador to Pakistan recalled the numerous visits of Iranian officials to Islamabad, including the visit of the chairman and members of the Iran-Pakistan parliamentary friendship group to the Islamic Consultative Assembly in mid-October last year, and last week's visit to Pakistan by the Iranian interior minister, terming them effective to help develop mutual cooperation. Expressing satisfaction with the upcoming visit of the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan to Iran, Hosseini said that the presence of Qasim Khan Suri in the Parliament and the political community of Pakistan is important in strengthening bilateral relations in all fields. He stressed the need to expand parliamentary interactions and exchange of delegations between the two countries.





## Briefs

## Oscars to require Covid vaccinations

WED DESK

NEW YORK: Face covering requirements will vary at the 94th Oscars ceremony, to be held on March 27 at the Dolby Theatre in Hollywood. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences will require attendees of the 94th Oscars ceremony in March to show proof of Covid-19 vaccination and at least two negative results from PCR tests. Performers and presenters at the film industry's highest honors also must undergo polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing, but will not need to show proof of vaccination, the source said. Face covering requirements will vary at the event on March 27 at the Dolby Theatre in Hollywood, according to the source.

Nominees and their guests in lower sections of the theater will not be required to wear masks. They will be seated with more distance than usual between groups, the source said. The Dolby seats 3,317 people and 2,500 people will be invited. Those seated in the mezzanine may be required to wear masks, as they will sit shoulder-to-shoulder. Covid-19 cases are declining in Los Angeles County and organizers are consulting with government officials and infectious disease experts. The vaccination policies were first reported by the New York Times.

Comic actor Amy Schumer, actress Regina Hall and fellow comedian Wanda Sykes, will host the awards, the first time three women will emcee the Oscars.

## UK warns people to stay home

LONDON: Millions of people in the U.K. were urged to cancel travel plans and stay indoors Friday as the second major storm this week prompted warnings of high winds and flying debris across northern Europe.

Britain's weather service said Storm Eunice, known as Storm Zeynep in Germany, was likely to cause significant disruption and dangerous conditions, with gusts that may exceed 90 miles per hour in highly exposed coastal areas. The Met Office later said a 122 mph gust was recorded on the Isle of Wight, provisionally the strongest ever recorded in England. Authorities in the U.K. took the unusual step of issuing "red" warnings — indicating a danger to life — for parts of southwest England between 7 a.m. and noon and for southeast England and London from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. A lower level amber warning for gusts up to 80 mph covers the whole of England from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Eunice is the second named storm to hit Europe in two days, with the first storm killing at least five people in Germany and Poland. Peter Inness, a meteorologist at the University of Reading in England, attributed the storms to an unusually strong jet stream over the eastern Atlantic Ocean, with winds close to 200 mph at high altitudes. — Agencies

## Protests grow in Puerto Rico

SAN JUAN: Four men walked to the parking lot before dawn, then sat down blocking the entrance and linked their arms to await the arrival of hundreds of federal and state employees for the work day.

Protesting years without pay raises, the four employees of Puerto Rico's Authority of Roads and Transportation refused to budge. A specialized police unit finally moved in to remove them, and as they were put in handcuffs, one of the men yelled: "Fair salary! Give us what you owe us!" It's a cry that has echoed across Puerto Rico in recent weeks as government employees and supporters take to the streets, emboldened by thousands of public school teachers who abandoned classrooms in early February to demand raises and better pensions.

Protests are multiplying, with union leaders calling another demonstration for Friday, and social unrest is posing one of the biggest challenges for Gov. Pedro Pierluisi a year into his term. — Agencies

## 15th anniversary of Romania's accession to EU marked at Lahore

European expertise and funding have made their mark in almost all economic fields, whether we are talking about rehabilitation and infrastructure projects at local or regional level, about supporting the development and modernization of Romanian agriculture, about participation in research projects



LAHORE: A special event marking the 15th anniversary of Romania's accession to the European Union was held on Friday, 18th of February 2022 in Lahore, at the Governor's House. The event was organized by the Embassy of Romania with the support of The Friends of Romania organization based in Lahore. The event was honoured by the presence of H.E. Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar, Governor of Punjab and other important Pakistani dignitaries. To mark this occasion, the Ambassador of Romania to Pakistan, His Excellency Mr. Nicolae Goia addressed the following speech:

"We mark this year 15 years since Romania's accession to the European Union. On January 1, 2007, our country became part of this unique European project, the most formidable political project of the mankind of all times, which ensured and continued to ensure the stability and prosperity of our continent. The entry into the European Union took place through the joint effort of the Romanian people, political class and diplomats. Therefore, Romania's belonging to the EU is not a given but is being built on the grounds of common solutions, solidarity in difficult times and further protection of the European way of life, democracy and rule of law. After being admitted to the European Union, Romania has representatives in all the European institutions and Romanian citizens benefit from the rights conferred by the European citizenship. The Romanian

language has become one of the official languages of the European Union, and all Community documents have also been translated into Romanian. The measure of the success of our accession to the EU is confirmed both by the maintenance of a wide support of Romanian citizens for the Union and by the well-being brought about in the 15 years of membership of the Union. Romania's Gross Domestic Product tripled after joining the EU reaching 547 billion US \$ (PPP), and the GDP per capita (PPP) became almost four times higher reaching close to 30,000 US \$. Thus, according to the World Bank, Romania has become a high income economy, a status hard even to imagine before our country integration in the EU. European expertise and funding have made their mark in almost all economic fields, whether we are talking about rehabilitation and

infrastructure projects at local or regional level, about supporting the development and modernization of Romanian agriculture, about participation in research projects. European funds of tens of billions of euros have entered the country. And it continues to come, contributing to investments that raise the level of quality of life and bring closer to us the Western standards to which we relate. Another more than EUR 90 billion is made available to us by the European Union in the coming years through the National Recovery and Resilience Plan and the multi-annual financial framework. But perhaps the most important gain was that of free movement for people, goods and services. Millions of Romanians work, learn or spend their holidays in other European Union countries. The majority of Romanian exports are in EU Member States. The European Single

Market is open to Romanian entrepreneurs, who benefit from free access and support provided through European funding. All this allowed Romania's integration into the EU in a lasting and profound manner. Projects financed with European funds, the absorption of which must increasingly be streamlined, are undeniably contributing to our economic and social development, supporting reforms and advancing measures at national level that are difficult to achieve alone. Romania is more connected, innovative and prosperous than ever before in its history, constantly being among the fastest growing economies in the EU. The European solidarity, also marked by the historic decision to adopt, in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, the European Recovery and Resilience Plan, will allow the support of the reforms necessary for an in-

clusive development course, which will benefit all Romanians, regardless of whether they live in urban or rural areas, in any part of Romania, if they want an education adapted to the innovative requirements of the economy of the future or access to better health services. As solidarity and unity are a two-way course, Romania remains firmly committed to supporting the objective of strengthening the European Union. For Romania, membership of the Union represents the solid framework for democratic, economic and social development for Romanian citizens and for the Romanian society. Also, Romania's action at European level will continue to be guided by full respect for the rule of law, for the Union Treaties and for the principles and values enshrined in the Treaties, as basic pillars of the Union, as well as for European law in general. — DNA

## Russian, Belarusian presidents meet in Moscow amid tensions over Ukraine

FOREIGN DESK

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin met his Belarusian counterpart Alexander Lukashenko in Moscow on Friday as tensions with the West mount over Ukraine. Opening the meeting, Putin said bilateral trade is increasing and progress is being made on the Union State, a concept aimed at greater integration of the two countries.

Putin said he will discuss with Lukashenko the regional situation and military cooperation, and both the leaders will oversee planned military drills on Saturday. Lukashenko said the West has panicked the world by saying that Russia and Belarus will attack Ukraine, but neither Moscow nor Minsk "have ever even considered it." Western countries have accused Russia of amassing more than 100,000 troops near Ukraine, prompting fears that it could be planning a military offensive against its ex-Soviet neighbor.

Denying that it is preparing to invade, Moscow has accused Western countries



of undermining its security through NATO's eastward expansion. The Kremlin says it has pulled back some of its troops following mili-

tary exercises, but Western leaders argue they have yet to see any evidence of that. Russia also demanded a rollback of troop deployments

from some ex-Soviet states, and guarantees that NATO would not accept some of those states into the military alliance. NATO, how-

ever, said its "door remains open" and any decision on membership is for allies and aspirant countries to take, and nobody else. Be-

larus has moved closer to Russia since a disputed presidential election in August 2020, in which Lukashenko won a sixth term.

## Pakistan govt working hard to promote people's welfare: Nakai

NEW YORK: The visiting Pakistan parliamentary delegation leader, Sardar Talib Hasan Nakai, MNA, told a gathering of Pakistani community activists that Prime Minister Imran Khan's government was working diligently to ensure the people's welfare, and it's success in combating the coronavirus pandemic was recognized internationally. Speaking at a well-attended reception hosted for the delegation by Pakistan Consul General in New York, Ayesha Ali, he said that Pakistani people were greatly benefitting from the Ehsaas and Benazir Income Support programmes — part of the measures being implemented for the uplift of masses.

Another important government's initiative is the health cards which have initially been distributed in Punjab and KP that Nakai said were of huge advantage for the people. The delegation is here for the 2022 Parliamentary Hearing, a joint initiative of the IPU (Inter-Parliamentary Union) and the UN General Assembly president.

Nakai told the gathering that his delegation consisted of different political parties which have strong differences of opinion back home and here they were united in advancing the interests of our homeland — Pakistan. He paid tributes to Pakistan UN Ambassador Munir Akram and Consul General Ayesha Ali for their hospitality and the way they and their staff were looking after the delegation. He especially praised Ayesha Ali and her staffers for the critical services they were rendering to the Pakistani community. Senator Farooq Naek, a member of the delegation from Pakistan People's Party, also lauded the work being done by the Consul General and her team. In his remarks, he stressed the need for cooperation between the government and opposition for resolving the problems of the people, especially as inflation was hurting the common man. Unity at home would also project a positive image of the country abroad. — Agencies

## French first lady sues two women

PARIS: Brigitte Macron, France's first lady, has filed a lawsuit against two women who claimed she was transsexual, sparking a wave of online rumour-mongering weeks ahead of her husband's expected re-election campaign, a legal source said Friday. A first hearing in the case has been set for June 15 in Paris on claims of a violation of privacy and fundamental personal rights, and illicit use of her image. A lawyer for Brigitte Macron declined to comment on the suit that was first reported by M6 television, which said it was co-filed by Brigitte Macron's three children from a previous marriage as well as her brother. — APP

## Twelve on int'l wanted list over Garadaghi killings

BAKU: Twelve people have been named as defendants on the international wanted list for crimes against peace and humanity, as well as war crimes, in connection with the Garadaghi tragedy under some articles of the Azerbaijani Criminal Code. Kanan Zeynalov, the senior prosecutor of the Azerbaijan Prosecutor-General's Office press service, made the remarks. He said that an investigative-operational group had been formed to investigate crimes against peace and humanity, as well as military and other crimes committed against civilians on Azerbaijani territory by Armenian separatists and the Armenian Armed Forces.

"The Military Prosecutor's Office continues to conduct investigations based on the relevant articles of the Criminal Code," Zeynalov added. Armenian armed formations launched an attack on the village of Garadaghi in Khojavand region beginning in early February 1992. It was a large village with over 800 houses. Back in 1991, the village was surrounded by Armenians, and the residents' power and roads were cut off. Armenians did everything they could to get Azerbaijanis out of their homeland. This year Azerbaijan marked the 30th anniversary of the Garadaghi massacre committed by Armenian terrorists against Azerbaijanis in 1992. — Agencies

## Philippines, like NZ, rejects Myanmar in trade pact

MANILA: The Philippines has followed New Zealand's decision to reject the inclusion of Myanmar in the world's largest free trade pact as international opposition to the military takeover that sparked violence and democratic setbacks in the Southeast Asian nation broadened into trade and diplomatic sanctions.

Foreign Secretary Teodor Locsin Jr. told his Southeast Asian counterparts in a Thursday meeting in Cambodia that the Philippines will not accept Myanmar's accession to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, a 15-nation free trade agreement that went into effect Jan. 1.

In Locsin's speech released to journalists in Manila on Friday, he did not cite any reason for the Philippine decision and added he was ready to yield if that stance would get in the way of a collective position by the 10-nation regional bloc, which includes Myanmar. — APP

## Nuclear deal possible within days: US

WASHINGTON: The United States said Thursday that "substantial progress" during negotiations in Vienna to save the Iran nuclear deal had been made, deeming an agreement possible within days "if Iran shows seriousness" on the matter. "We can and should reach an understanding on mutual return to full implementation of the JCPOA within days," a State Department spokesperson told AFP, referring to the 2015 accord that was supposed to prevent Iran from acquiring an atomic bomb. — APP

## Experts stress ISO certification of Pak products

Hasnain Khurshid stressed the ISO certification is essential to bring the export-oriented local items to international quality and compete them in the global market. He called for the modernization of ISO certification and simplifying the process of certification to facilitate the business community

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: Experts have underscored the need of ISO certification to bring Pakistani manufacturing products, especially export-oriented items up to international standards to enhance country's export and ensure maximum access to the global market. This, they stated during an awareness workshop/seminar on 'ISO Standard Certification' jointly organised by Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) and Riphah International University Islamabad here at the Chamber's House on Friday. The session was presided over by the SCCI president Hasnain Khurshid Ahmad while the Riphah International University Islamabad Principle Investigator Prof. Dr Nawar Khan acted as moderator and keynote speaker on the occasion. ISO certification is a seal of approval from a third party body that a company runs to one

of the international standards developed and published by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). Hasnain Khurshid stressed the ISO certification is essential to bring the export-oriented local items to international quality and compete them in the global market. He called for the modernization of ISO certification and simplifying the process of certification to facilitate the business community. Besides, the chamber's senior vice president Imran Khan Mohmand, vice president Javed Akhtar, executive members Pervez Khan Khattak, S Minhajuddin, Ejaz Khan Afridi, Naeem Qasmi, and Rashid Iqbal Siddique, Ishtiaq Muhammad, Akbar Khan, Irshad Iqbal, Bilal Mirza, a large number of traders and industrialists were present during the awareness seminar. Emphasizing the need of quality-improvement and focusing on standardized, the speakers called for bringing Pakistani man-

ufacturing products up to international standards to compete at the global market that would not only enhance the country's export but Pakistani exporting items also gain high recognition at world level. Dr Nawar Khan while delivering a lecture briefed the participation of different categories of ISO standardization, significance of ISO certification and Pakistan's national and international position in this regard. Senior official said that there is huge potential of ISO, which should be exploited efficiently and that can help to compete Pakistani manufacturing products in the global market in a befitting way. He viewed the tendency regarding ISO as increasing in the country. As the novel coronavirus pandemic had badly hit all sectors in Pakistan, Dr Nawar said it has witnessed that the process of ISO certification was also slowed down during pre and post the Covid-19 scenario. The experts stressed the need of bringing

improvement in technical, financial and managerial efficiency to meet international standards for competing and obtaining world recognition of Pakistani export-oriented items at world level. The policy would not only enhance local exporting items to the EU, US and rest of the global market but also boost up their demand as well, the experts said. Dr Nawar Khan said Pakistan had signed on a number of international protocols/treaties regarding Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), wherein reflection of ISO was also seen. Therefore, he said the importance of ISO certification is increasing with the passage of time. The SCCI chief thanked the RIU Islamabad for organising an awareness session on such a crucial theme. He expressed hope that the business community would have learnt many things about ISO certification after attending this awareness event that can also increase tendency among members about ISO certification.



## Briefs

### G20 vows careful post-pandemic recovery: Indonesia

#### NEWS DESK

JAKARTA: The world's biggest economies are committed to taking a careful approach to unwinding support introduced during the coronavirus pandemic, Indonesia said Friday at a meeting of G20 finance chiefs. Some central banks, including in the United States, are moving towards hiking rates and withdrawing stimulus as economies rebound strongly from Covid-induced downturns and inflation surges. But there are concerns that aggressive policy tightening could knock a fragile recovery off course, and send shockwaves through developing countries. At the end of a two-day meeting of finance leaders from the Group of 20 major economies in Jakarta, Indonesia's central bank chief said the approach would be cautious. "The G20 countries are committed to have well-calibrated, well-planned, and well communicated normalisation policies," Bank Indonesia governor Perry Warjiyo said. "It's important, so that these policies have a minimum impact on global financial markets, and on developing countries in terms of spillover effect."

### Dutch to send sniper rifles, helmets to Ukraine

THE HAGUE: The Netherlands will send Ukraine military equipment including sniper rifles and helmets to defend itself against a possible Russian attack, the foreign minister said Friday. The move by the NATO member comes despite neighbouring Germany being mocked by the mayor of Kyiv for sending helmets to Ukraine in the face of any Russian invasion. "Ukraine must be able to defend itself against a possible Russian armed attack on its own territory," foreign minister Wopke Hoekstra said in a statement. "That is why the cabinet has decided to supply these military goods to Ukraine." The only lethal weaponry the Dutch government will send Ukraine consists of 100 sniper rifles with 30,000 rounds of ammunition, the foreign ministry said. It will also supply 3,000 combat helmets and 2,000 armour plated vests "for personal protection of vital body parts", it said. The Netherlands will further supply 30 metal detectors, two robots for detecting naval mines, two battlefield surveillance radars and five weapon location radars that help troops tell where incoming fire has come from, it said. - APP

### PPP nominates Nisar Khuhro for vacant seat in Senate

#### STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) on Friday nominated provincial president Nisar Khuhro for the vacant seat in the Senate following the lifelong disqualification of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Faisal Vawda. According to the sources, Nisar Khuhro has received orders from the party leadership to submit the form on the vacant seat. He has left for Karachi to collect nomination forms from the Provincial Election Commission. PPP senior representative Nisar Khuhro is from Larkana, Khuhro has been elected 7 times as a member of Sindh Assembly. He has also been the Minister and Advisor of various departments including the Speaker Sindh Assembly.

# Pak stands with UAE to protect its interests: FM

- Pays rich tribute to UAE leadership for hosting successful Expo 2020

#### DNA

DUBAI: Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi has said the UAE and Pakistan have developed strong relationships over a period of time and it will further strengthen in future. In an interview with Khaleej Times after visiting the Pakistan Pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai, Qureshi said the UAE is a time-tested friend and Pakistan is committed to support its sovereignty and safety. "We are strategic partners and will remain strategic partners on all fronts. Either it is economy or diplomacy or politics or defence, we stand with the UAE and will protect its interests on all fronts," Qureshi told Khaleej Times. He said Pakistan has already condemned Yemen's Houthi rebels' attacks on UAE, calling the act a violation of the principle of state sovereignty while demanding an end to such military strikes. "Such acts of terrorism are a violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the UAE. They also pose a serious threat to the overall peace and stability in the region and must be stopped immediately," Qureshi said. The foreign minister paid rich tribute to the UAE leadership for hosting a successful Expo despite the challenges in the wake of Covid-19 pandemic.

"I'm impressed to see the first Expo in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia. All credit goes to the UAE leadership for hosting such a huge show with a success," Qureshi said. Qureshi invited foreign ministers of Organisation of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC) for Islamabad Summit next month to discuss important issues such as Palestine, Kashmir, Islamophobia and climate change, among others. "I have invited the UAE foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan to attend the OIC Islamabad Summit on March 22 and 23. He has prior commitments for Expo 2020 that will conclude on March 31st, but still he will try to attend the two-day event or send his representative," Qureshi said. "I will be visiting the national pavilions of some friendly nations today. I will also go to OIC Pavilion at the Expo 2020 to extend the Islamabad Summit invitation to all OIC foreign ministers," he said. The Pakistan foreign minister also highlighted Afghan humanitarian crisis at his media briefing and said the inter-



national community must act to address severe shortage of food and medicine in the war-hit nation. "World should help Afghanistan and must pay attention to resolve its crisis as 38 million Afghan popula-

tion has been facing serious issues due to sanctions and blockage of its foreign exchange reserves," he said. "We have been hosting four million Afghan brothers and sisters for the past four decades and now don't have capacity to receive another influx of refugees. If we will not address the Afghan concerns, then economic migrants will knock the European door," the foreign minister said, adding that the sanctions on Afghan government should be eased and gradual steps should be taken to resolve the crisis. Qureshi also shed light on Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan visit to Russia next week and said it will be a historic to propel bilateral economic and defence relations as well as pave the way for trade with central Asian states. "We have taken gradual steps to build

up our relations with Russia and the Prime Minister visit on February 24 and 25 will unlock opportunities to boost economy, trade and investment as well as defence ties," the foreign minister said. In reply to a question about the Prime Minister's recent visit to China, he said it was very successful and further strengthen our bilateral economic and diplomatic ties. "We have decided to accelerate work on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor as well as promote industrial transformation and agricultural development in Pakistan. It was one of the fruitful visits and results are beyond our expectations," Qureshi said. Later, the Foreign Minister also visited the pavilions of the UAE, Saudi Arabia, China and Turkey. Pakistan's Ambassador to the UAE Afzal Mahmood, Consul General of Pakistan in Dubai Hassan Afzal Khan, and Director of Pakistan Pavilion, Rizwan Tariq, also accompanied with Qureshi. Earlier, Tariq briefed the Foreign Minister on the design and features of the Pakistani Pavilion, which is divided into seven different sections, including Pakistan's history, culture and tourism. So far, about one million people have visited the Pakistani Pavilion. Due to its unique design, it is among the top five pavilions at Expo 2020 Dubai.

## Fazl plans long stay in capital

#### DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) President and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman has decided to set up a base camp in Islamabad in order to ensure the success of the no-confidence move, the opposition parties plan to bring against Prime Minister Imran Khan in the National Assembly (NA). According to a private television channel report Friday, after addressing a public gathering in Hangu, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) day after tomorrow (Wednesday, February 20), Maulana will arrive in the federal capital and hold meetings with politicians and leaders of different political parties there in order to win their support for the no-trust motion. They added that the PDM president planned to stay in the capital city until and unless the motion was passed and the government was sent home. Besides that, JUI-F chief had also convened his party's meeting in Islamabad on February 22, the sources said, adding he would hold consultations with the leaders of other opposition parties for the formation of a committee, which would muster the support of maximum number of MNAs in order to show the government the door.

## PML-N dares NAB to give proof against Shehbaz Sharif

#### ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Repeating her claim that Leader of the Opposition and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Shehbaz Sharif was completely 'innocent', party spokesperson Marriyum Aurangzeb on Friday asked the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) to give proofs to substantiate its corruption charges against him. Talking to the media outside an accountability court (AC) in Lahore, she urged the government officials not to become servants of Prime Minister Imran Khan. "Shehbaz was implicated in false and fabricated cases on the order of 'the selected' prime minister," she alleged. PML-N spokesperson counselled people to be patient since it was time for what she called 'the gang of thieves' to go home. "Not only will these people go home, but also to jail," she claimed. Marriyum accused PM Imran of 'patronizing' the extortion mafia. "Corruption in Punjab has broken all records," she claimed.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Defence Production Ms. Zobaida Jalal presenting a souvenir to Oybek Arif Usmanov Ambassador of Uzbekistan. - DNA

## Mali asks France to pull out troops 'without delay'

BAMAKO: Mali's army-led government asked France on Friday to withdraw its forces from the Sahel state "without delay", calling into question Paris' plans to pull out over several months. A government spokesman added in a statement announced on public television that the results of France's nine-year military engagement in conflict-torn Mali were "not satisfactory". On Thursday, French President Emmanuel Macron announced that he was withdrawing troops from Mali after a breakdown in relations with the nation's ruling military junta. France first intervened in Mali in 2013 to combat a jihadist insurgency that emerged one year prior. It currently has thousands of troops stationed across the Sahel, with the majority in Mali. However, relations between the two countries deteriorated sharply after Mali's army seized power in a coup in 2020, and later defied calls to restore civilian rule swiftly. - Agencies

# Senior TV journalist shot dead during robbery bid

PM asks authorities to track down, give exemplary punishment to killers | CM Murad condemns killing, demands report from additional IG police | Bilawal says culprits will be arrested soon

KARACHI: Senior journalist Athar Mateen, who was working as a producer in a private news channel, was shot dead on Friday over trying to save a citizen from robbery bid in North Nazimabad, area of Karachi. Unidentified gunmen targeted a private television channel's senior producer Athar Mateen and sprayed his car with bullets near Haideri in North Nazimabad. He received three to four bullets on his body which caused his death. The tragic incident happened at 8:29am when the journalist was coming back after dropping his daughters at school. On the road, he saw that two dacoits were trying to snatch a motorcycle from a citizen. A car rider hit the muggers who fell down on the road and the rider drove away. Athar Mateen too did the same and hit them. But this time round, the street criminals opened fire on the car and the journalist was hit by their bullets. In a severely injured condi-

tion, he was taken to the Saifi Hospital where he breathed his last. Later, his body was shifted to the Abbasi Shaheed Hospital for the post mortem. According to the doctor, Athar Mateen got a bullet in his chest which proved fatal and took his life. It could be seen in the CCTV footage that one criminal was wearing helmet and the other was putting on cap. The outlaws could also be seen running along with the motorcycle. Karachi Additional IG Police Ghulam Nabi Memon informed that police were in possession of some material which might lead them to the accused. Police said that they recovered a shell of 30-bore pistol from the crime scene and it was sent for the forensic analysis. DIG West Nasir Aftab and the DIG CIA also visited the crime scene. Police recorded statements of four eye witnesses and started trying to track down the accused after seeing the CCTV footage. Slain

Athar Mateen was the younger brother of anchor person Tariq Mateen. He is survived by a widow and two daughters. After the news of his murder, a large number of people including his relatives and journalist community reached his place. Prime Minister Imran Khan expressed his sorrow over the sad killing of journalist Athar Mateen. He ordered the authorities to hunt the criminals and give exemplary punishment to them. Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah took notice of the killing of TV producer Athar Mateen. He summoned immediate report from the Additional IG Police. He expressed his condolences with the heirs of the deceased and journalist community as well. Federal Minister for Interior Sheikh Rashid Ahmed took notice of the incident and ordered the Chief Secretary and IG of Sindh police to submit the report as early as possible. - DNA

## Singapore PM angers India with his remarks

"Ben-Gurion's Israel has morphed into one which can barely form a govt, despite four general elections in two years

SINGAPORE CITY: Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong has claimed that "almost half" of the parliamentarians in India's Lok Sabha - the lower house of parliament - have criminal charges against them, prompting New Delhi to summon the country's ambassador to explain the remarks. "Nehru's India has become one where ... almost half the MPs in the Lok Sabha have criminal charges pending against them, including charges of rape and murder," Lee said. Loong made the comment in Singapore's parliament on Wednesday during a debate about accusations of lying levelled at a member of the opposition. According to a report in The Straits Times, the prime minister spoke about how a democratic system needs MPs with good norms and values to function, the importance of public trust in the government, and other things. "Most countries are founded and start off on the basis of high ideals and noble values. But more often than not, beyond the founding leaders and the pioneer generation, over decades and generations, gradually things change. Things start off with passionate intensity. The leaders, who fought for and won independence, are often exceptional individuals of great courage, immense culture, and outstanding ability. They came through the crucible of fire and emerged as leaders of men and nations. They are the David Ben-Gurions, the Jawaharlal Nehrus, and we have our own too," he said. However, successive generations struggled to maintain that momentum, he said, giving the example of Israel and India. "Ben-Gurion's Israel has morphed into one which can barely form a government, despite four general elections in two years. Meanwhile, a stream of senior politicians and officials in Israel face a litany of criminal charges, some have gone to jail. While Nehru's India has become one where, according to media reports, almost half the MPs in the Lok Sabha have criminal charges pending against them, including charges of rape and murder." - APP

# Leading organisations laud NAB's strategy: NAB Chairman

ISLAMABAD: Chairman National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Javed Iqbal on Friday said the NAB's people awareness strategy about the ill effects of corruption has been appreciated by the World Economic Forum (WEF) and other reputed leading national and international organizations which is an honor for Pakistan due to the Bureau's efforts. Chairing a meeting to review awareness policy of NAB, he said that Transparency International Pakistan, Global Peace Canada, PILDAT and Mishal Pakistan not only appreciated NAB's efforts for eradication of corruption and as per Gallup and Gilani recent survey, 59 percent people have shown confidence on NAB, testifies people's confidence and their trust on NAB's performance across the board as per law. NAB was mandated to carry out Awareness and Prevention functions against corruption in pursuance of Section 33-C of National Accountability Ordinance (NAO). NAB's Awareness and Prevention strategy remained very ex-

cellent in order to make people aware about the ill effects of corruption. Under NAB's Awareness and Prevention Strategy, NAB has been engaging different Governmental, Non-Governmental Organizations, media, civil society and other segments of society in order to join hands with NAB's awareness and prevention efforts in order to aware people especially students in universities and colleges at an early age. As per positive feedback received from various segments of society, NAB's Awareness and Prevention efforts have been effectively highlighted by NAB's media wing free of cost in print, electronic and social media throughout the country considering it as their national duty which has been appreciated by all segments of society. He said that the present management of NAB has taken various measures to check corruption in order to nab big fish, proclaimed offenders and absconders. Due to vigorous prosecution of NAB

during the last more than four years from 2017 to Dec 2021, the accountability courts have convicted 1405 accused persons besides recovering Rs 584 billion directly and indirectly which is pride for NAB as compared to other anti corruption organizations. The recovery made by NAB was then returned to some federal government departments, provincial department, affectees of housing/cooperative societies etc but not a single rupee has been received by any NAB officer/official as NAB officers are considering eradication of corruption from the country as their national service, he expressed. He said that NAB's top most priority was logical conclusion of white collar mega corruption cases of money laundering, assets beyond known sources of income, fraud /cheating public at large through illegal housing societies/cooperative housing societies and modarba/musharka scandals by adopting "Accountability for All" policy to eradicate corruption as per law. - APP

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