



# Islamabad POST

Thursday, March 03, 2022

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

### Azerbaijan vows to further contribute to international peace

Detailed News On Page-07

### Bilawal vows to fulfil Benazir's promises

Detailed News On Page-08



### Babar Azam retains top spot in T20 ranking

Detailed News On Page-06



## Briefs

### Coalition parties are with PTI

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Wednesday has clarified that coalition parties are supporting Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government. In a statement, the foreign minister told that Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) leaders Chaudhry Pervez Elahi and Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain have pledged to stand with Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan. All the conspiracies of opposition parties have failed, he added. FM Qureshi further criticized PPP Chairman Bilawal and said that his political training needs more time.

### Fuel price reduction upsets opp.

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain on Wednesday said the opposition and some of its like-minded in media were extremely disturbed over the relief given to the masses in the fuel and electricity prices despite the global inflation. "It is strange that the opposition and its sympathizers in the media are furious over the reduction of petrol and electricity prices," he said in a tweet. The minister said it was a welcoming sign that the inflation in Pakistan was witnessing a significant decline contrary to the prevailing trends in the international market. - APP

### Pak embassy in Algeria's social media hacked

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office on Wednesday said the social media accounts of Pakistan's embassy in Algeria had been hacked and the posts did not belong to the mission. "The Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram accounts of the Embassy of Pakistan in Algeria have been hacked," the FO spokesperson said on twitter. The tweet mentioned that all messages being posted through these accounts were not from Pakistan Embassy in Algeria. - APP

### President Shavkat arrives today

# Pak-Uzbek PTA to boost mutual trade

### It will be historic step; as per the PTA many Pakistani products will have duty free access to the Uzbekistan markets and vice versa



ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Uzbekistan are set to sign historic Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) during the visit of the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev who will arrive today (Thursday) on a two-day visit. It will be his first-ever visit to Pakistan after taking charge as the President of Uzbekistan. Both sides will ink PTA in order to further promote and increase trade activity between the two countries. The development indeed a major development with regard

to bilateral relations given the fact that Uzbekistan has signed PTA with only some countries and Pakistan will be among those countries. As per the PTA many Pakistani products will have duty free access to the Uzbekistan markets and vice versa. Both sides are also expected to solidify cooperation in the aviation field as well. Uzbek air used to fly from Lahore to Tashkent directly however due to the pandemic the flight was halted. Now both sides have agreed to resume these flights. Frequency may also be increased depending upon the load. Prime Minister Imran Khan in July 2021 visited Uzbekistan and signed a number of MoU. It was agreed during that meeting that the Uzbek President will visit Pakistan. Both countries are expected to give final touches to the railway line from Termez to Kabul and then Peshawar. Once completed, this project ostensibly would usher in a new era of progress in the region. Pakistan and

Continued on Page 06

# Pakistan wants peaceful, close ties with neighbours

### Gen Qamar Bajwa expressed these views in a meeting with Iranian air chief

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa said on Wednesday that Pakistan wanted peaceful and close ties with its neighbours, the military said. According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the COAS expressed these

Continued on Page 06

# PM, mily brass discuss security

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan and top military brass on Wednesday sat together to mull over strategy in the wake of regional

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan distributing cheques among the beneficiaries of Kamyab Pakistan Interest Free Loans at Faisal Mosque. - APP

# PM starts Rs 407bn loans programme

### Loans would be interest-free; would contribute towards making low-income groups self-reliant

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Thursday launched the country's mega interest-free loan programme worth Rs 407 billion, saying the step would contribute towards making low-income groups financially self-reliant. He was addressing a large number of people belonging to low-income group here at the Faisal Mosque, gathered for the launch of interest-free loans under Kamyab Pakistan Programme. Under Kamyab Pakistan Programme - a component of the prime minister's vision for poverty alleviation, the loans will be disbursed among the youth, women, farmers and for the construction of low-income houses during the next two years. The prime minister said 4.5 million families would benefit from the interest-free loans to start small

# PM lauds FBR performance

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD, Prime Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday said the robust revenue growth of 28.5 per cent by the Federal Bureau of Revenue (FBR) had enabled the government to subsidize petrol and electricity. "Because of this performance of FBR we are able to subsidize petrol, diesel and electricity and give relief to our people," he said in a tweet. The prime minister mentioned the revenue collection of February that surpassed the target of Rs441 billion. FBR has successfully knocked down February revenue target of Rs441 billion.

Continued on Page 06

# US embassy projects colors of Ukraine flag

### The European missions in Islamabad sent a signed letter to the Government asking it to condemn Russian aggression

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The U.S. Embassy in Islamabad projects the colors of the Ukrainian flag to demonstrate solidarity with the Ukrainian people and government. The US embassy building was illuminated with the Ukraine flag. It may be mentioned here that a few days ago the European and American

Continued on Page 06

# 3 cops martyred, 25 injured in Quetta blast

DNA

QUETTA: Three policemen were martyred while 25 people were injured in a blast near a police van at Quetta's Fatima Jinnah Road, officials said on Wednesday. Quetta Civil Hospital Spokesperson Dr Waseem Baig confirmed the casualties, adding that the injured were being transported to the hospital for medical treatment. TV footage showed rescue workers dousing tall flames at the site of the blast. The nature of the blast has not yet been ascertained. Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Abdul Qudoos Bizenjo, in a statement, strongly condemned the incident. He also directed hospitals to impose an emergency and for all doctors and

paramedical staff to ensure their presence. "Cowardly terrorists targeted innocent citizens in a terrorist attack," he said. "Efforts are being made to disrupt peace in Quetta and the province under a planned and well-thought-out conspiracy." The chief minister said terrorists and their sponsors were receiving "external support", directing the IG to submit a detailed report of the incident. "All resources should be utilised to bring those responsible for the incident to justice," the chief minister said in his directives, also telling officials to make security arrangements in the city more effective. Meanwhile, Karachi Administrator Murtaza Wahab prayed for those killed and injured in the incident. "Terrible news coming from Quetta," he said on Twitter.

## Inside...

CM KP announces treatment of more diseases under SCPS - Page 02

Lord Mayor of Birmingham for utilizing trade potential - Page 03

ICT police inaugurates a women police station in G-7 - Page 04

'Wolfowitz Doctrine' and Ukraine - Page 05

Pakistan, Australia to lock horns for Benaud-Qadir Trophy - Page 06

Azerbaijan to further contribute to int'l peace - Page 07

Ukraine war hearings at UN court next week - Page 08

# Russia to continue talks amid intense fighting

### Russian forces landed in Ukraine's second-biggest city and triggered clashes in the streets of Kharkiv

CENTRELINE REPORT

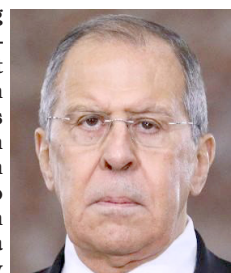
MOSCOW: The Kremlin said on Wednesday that a Russian delegation was ready to continue peace talks with Ukraine as Moscow's invasion of the pro-Western country entered its seventh day. "Our delegation will be ready to continue talks," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said, adding that Moscow's delegation expected the talks to resume on Wednesday evening. He said that President Vladimir Putin's aide Vladimir Medinsky remained Russia's top negotiator on Ukraine but did not say where the next round of talks would take place. A first round of talks between Russian and Ukrainian delegations took place on the Ukrainian-Belarusian border, but brought no results. Meanwhile, Russian forces landed in Ukraine's second-biggest city and triggered immediate clashes

Continued on Page 06

# Russia will not let Ukraine obtain nuclear weapons

NEWS DESK

MOSCOW: Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has said Moscow will not allow Ukraine to obtain nuclear weapons, according to a report by the country's TASS news agency. Lavrov's reported remarks came a day after he alleged at a Geneva disarmament meeting that Kyiv has been seeking to acquire nuclear weapons. "Ukraine still has Soviet technologies and the means of delivery of such weapons," he told the Conference on Disarmament in a pre-recorded address. "We cannot fail to respond to this real danger." Lavrov delivered his speech to a thin crowd after diplomats from many countries staged a walk-out to protest against Russia's invasion. Moscow has moved to put its own nuclear forces on high alert in recent days. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said that if a third World War were to take place, it would involve nuclear weapons and be destructive, the RIA news agency reported. Lavrov has said that Russia, which launched what it calls a special military operation against Ukraine last week, would face a "real danger" if Kyiv acquired nuclear weapons.



# UNGA adopts resolution to deplore Russian invasion

DNA

WASHINGTON: The United Nations General Assembly adopted on Wednesday a resolution rebuking the Russian invasion of Ukraine and calling Moscow to immediately withdraw all forces from Ukraine, a move that aimed to politically isolate Russia. The resolution, which won support from 141 of the 193-member body, came at the end of a rare emergency session of General Assembly called by the Security Council and as Russian forces pounded Ukraine's cities with air strikes and bombardments, forcing hundreds of thousands of people to flee. Meanwhile, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) says 874,026 people have left Ukraine since Russia launched its invasion last Thursday. Poland has received more than half that total, it says. The UNHCR has appealed for nearly \$2bn (£1.5bn) for its relief operation - but says its original prediction that up to four million Ukrainians could end up fleeing the country might be an underestimate. In Biden's first State of the Union address, he hailed the resolve of the Western alliance and voiced solidarity with Ukraine as lawmakers in the US Congress gave a standing ovation to the Ukrainian people. Since Russian troops rolled into Ukraine last week to achieve Putin's mission of overthrowing the pro-Western government of President Volodymyr Zelensky, hundreds of civilians have been reported killed.



### National Days and Armed Forces Days

- FEBRUARY**
- Feb 04/ Sri Lanka National Day
  - Feb 06/ N. Zealand National Day
  - Feb 06/ Uganda Army Day
  - Feb 11/ Iran Revolution day
  - Feb 16/ DPR Korea National Day
  - Feb 16/ Lithuania National Day
  - Feb 18/ Gambia National Day
  - Feb 19/ Nepal Democracy Day
  - Feb 23/ Uzbekistan National Day
  - Feb 23/ Brunei National Day
  - Feb 23/ Guyana National Day
  - Feb 23/ Russia National Army Day
  - Feb 23/ Tajikistan Armed Forces Day
  - Feb 25/ Kuwait National Day



### Hotels & Restaurants

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



### Airlines

- Turkish Airlines.....8494949



### Emergency

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



### Enquiry

- Edhi Ambulance.....115
- PIA Flight Info.....114
- PIA Cargo.....9280979
- Railway Inquiry.....117
- Railway Exchange 9270831-5
- WASA Rawalpindi..5555489
- CAA.....9281092



### Hospitals

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



### Departments

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

### Islamabad Metropolitan

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

### Water Tank

- Islamabad.....0321-5744480

## Lord Mayor of Birmingham for utilizing trade potential

Lt. Gen. (R) M Afzal, former Chairman NDMA said that Pakistan's IT sector as the potential to enhance IT exports from US\$ 100 to 200 billion, which should be realized to improve the financial and economic sovereignty of the country

### DNA

ISLAMABAD: Lord Mayor of Birmingham Councillor Muhammad Afzal said that Pakistan and UK have great potential to promote bilateral trade and the Pakistani private sector should step up efforts to capitalize on this unrealized potential for achieving beneficial outcomes. He said this while addressing the business community during his visit to Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry. Lt. Gen. (Retd) Muhammad Afzal, former Chairman National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) also accompanied him. Lord Mayor of Birmingham said that after Brexit, the UK was interested in promoting trade relations with various countries including Pakistan. He said that Birmingham was the 2nd largest city of the UK with a GDP equal to that of Portugal, which showed its economic potential for Pakistan. He said that a strong Pakistani community of around 0.3 million people was living in Birmingham who could play a role in strengthening Pak-UK trade relations. He said that construction was a booming industry in Birmingham, which offered



good scope of cooperation to Pakistan. He assured that he would encourage close cooperation of ICCI with Greater Birmingham Chamber of Commerce (GBCC) for improving business linkages between the private sectors of both countries. Lt. Gen. (Retd) Muhammad Afzal, former Chairman NDMA said that Pakistan's IT sector as the potential to enhance IT exports from US\$ 100 to 200 billion, which should be realized to improve the financial and economic sovereignty of the country. He stressed that the business community should develop its strong internal systems for sustainable growth instead of looking towards the public sector. He

also shared his experiences of developing financial models to support CPEC and develop FWO into a strong business entity. Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Shaheel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry appreciated the services of Lord Mayor of Birmingham Councillor Muhammad Afzal for the Pakistani community and Pakistan. He said that Pakistan offered great opportunities to foreign investors in CPEC and in many other sectors of its economy and emphasized that the Lord Mayor of Birmingham should encourage investors from the UK to explore JVs and investment in Pakistan. He also lauded the services of Lt. Gen. (Retd) Muhammad Afzal former Chairman NDMA and said that ICCI would like to take benefit from his experiences for promoting SMEs. Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President, Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President ICCI, Khalid Iqbal Malik Chairman Founder Group, Zafar Bakhtawari, Ejaz Abbasi, Malik Sohail Hussain, Fatma Azim, Muhammad Naveed Malik and others also paid tributes to the services of Lord Mayor of Birmingham and former Chairman NDMA.

## OGRA notifies increase in gas prices

### DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) has increased the average gas prices by up to 16.37 per cent for Sui Southern Gas Company Limited (SSGC) and Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) consumers. In two separate decisions on the petitions regarding the review of its estimated revenue requirement for the fiscal year 2021-22, filed by the state-owned gas companies SNGPL and SSGC, the regulator has jacked up the prescribed gas prices by 16.37 percent or Rs. 94/mmBtu for the consumers of SNGPL and 6.32 percent or Rs. 50/mmBtu for the consumers of SSGC. According to the notification, the average price of gas for the SNGPL consumers has been fixed at Rs670.37/mmBtu, while the per mmBtu price for SSGC consumers has been fixed at Rs829.48 after an increase of Rs50. The new prices will come into effect from July 1, 2022, after the approval from the federal government, the OGRA said.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Aviation Ghulam Sarwar Khan meeting with Zafer Bakhtawari & Ijaz Abbasi Former Presidents of ICCI at his office regarding Direct Air links of Pakistan to the World. - DNA

## Direct flights to Central Asia soon

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Civil Aviation Ghulam Sarwar Khan has said that a series of direct flights from Pakistan to Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan will start in March, followed by Britain, France, Denmark, Norway and the United States. Direct flights to Spain and Italy will also be started, he said during a meeting with former presidents of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industries Zafar Bakhtawari and Ijaz Abbasi in his office. Zafar Bakhtawari and Ejaz Abbasi urged the Federal Minister that Pakistan Airlines as well as other countries should be provided facilities for direct flights to Pakistan. They said that direct flights are of utmost importance for development and progress in the modern world. Federal Minister Ghulam Sarwar Khan said that direct flights would also be launched to Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Egypt, Nigeria and South Africa. He invited the ICCI to start its own airline like Sialkot Chamber and take the work forward on its own. - DNA

## Murad slams opposition over negative reaction

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Communications and Postal Services Murad Saeed on Wednesday said that the mega relief package announced by the Prime Minister has put the opposition in a fix as they have made a practice of criticizing the people friendly government for the sake of criticism. Addressing press conference regarding Pakistan People's Party long march and current political situation, he said that government had announced historical mega relief package for the poor despite inflation at the global level. The minister said that soon after announcement of the relief, the implementation process was started. The minister said he was quite surprised on statements of opposition which was criticizing the government on reduction in oil and electricity prices instead of commending the initiative. He said that there was difference in the priorities of Prime Minister Imran Khan and Opposition, adding that PM Khan has been focusing on facilitating the poor while the agenda of the opposition was to safeguard their money earned through unfair means. He said that there was increase in the petrol prices at the global level but the government decided to slash the prices by Rs 10 with sole objective to accommodate and provide relief to the masses. - DNA

## Pakistan Envoy in Niger calls on CG COMSTECH

### DNA

ISLAMABAD: The head of the mission of high commission of Pakistan in Niger, H. E. Mr. Ahmed Ali Sirohey called on Coordinator General COMSTECH Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary on Tuesday at COMSTECH Secretariat, in Islamabad. Both the dignitaries discussed recently held COMSTECH eye camps in Niger and Gambia and further elaborated on neuroscience activities for Niger. Mr. Sirohey appreciated the COMSTECH programme for Africa. COMSTECH programme for Africa includes research grants for young scientist, research fellowships programme, technicians training program, technical cooperation, eye camps, and training in ophthalmology. COMSTECH in collaboration with LRBT and IsDB recently organized two eye camps in The Gambia and Niger and conducted more than 500 cataract surgeries, maintained medical equipment and conducted training workshops which were highly appreciated by the governments of both countries. Mr. Sirohey also discussed the sustainability and expansion of the current initiatives of the government of Pakistan in Niger. They discussed the increase of initiatives by Pakistan in the African region to further enhance the diplomatic presence of Pakistan in Africa.



## Officials review security plan for series

RAWALPINDI: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Punjab Rao Sardar Ali Khan and Chief Secretary Kamran Ali Afzal Wednesday visited Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium to review security arrangements made for Pak-Australia cricket series where a high-level meeting was held to take stock of the measures. On the occasion, the RPO and CPO Rawalpindi briefed the IGP Punjab and Chief Secretary on the security arrangements, said a news release. The IGP Punjab issued important directives for ensuring peaceful conduct of cricket matches during the series. "The security of cricket fans should be taken into consideration along with the players and match officials," IGP Rao Sardar Ali Khan added. He also directed the Police officials that an effective traffic management plan should be formulated for the convenience of the citizens and uninterrupted flow of traffic during the scheduled matches. "Senior Police officers should regularly go out into the field to monitor security and traffic arrangements," he said while directing the Police officials. The IG mentioned that revival of international cricket matches in Pakistan was very welcoming step, and the Punjab Police would provide the best security in the style of PSL arrangements. - APP

# کامیاب پاکستان

پروگرام کامیابی سے حبابی

- کامیاب کاروبار
- کامیاب کسان
- نیا پاکستان سستا گھر سکیم
- کامیاب بنر مند
- صحت مند پاکستان

تاحال ہزاروں لوگوں کو اربوں روپے کے بلاسود قرضہ جات کا اجراء  
رواں مالی سال مزید 100 ارب روپے کے قرضے مختص  
بلاسود قرضہ کیلئے اپنی اہلیت جاننے کیلئے اپنا قومی شناختی کارڈ نمبر

5771

مزید تفصیلات کیلئے QR کوڈ سکیں کریں یا ویب سائٹ [www.kamyabpakistan.gov.pk](http://www.kamyabpakistan.gov.pk) وزٹ کریں حکومت پاکستان











**Briefs**

**IMF to review PM's relief package this week**

**WEB DESK**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are meeting this week to review the relief package Prime Minister Imran Khan announced to lower POL and electricity prices in the face of a difficult international environment. Both sides will talk about the benefits of the package, media reported. The IMF team will kickstart virtual parleys with Pakistani authorities on March 4, 2022, and these talks will continue for two weeks for the completion of the 7th Review under the \$6 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF) program. When contacted about the relief package announced by PM Imran Khan, the IMF's Resident Chief in Pakistan, Esther Perez Ruiz, said that Pakistani authorities and the IMF would discuss during the upcoming 7th review of the EFF the merits of the recently-adopted relief package and other measures to promote macroeconomic stability amidst a challenging external environment.

**Ukraine crisis: Arab refugees see double standards**

**MONITORING DESK**

SIDON: Syrian refugee Ahmad al-Hariri, who fled the war in his country for neighbouring Lebanon 10 years ago, spent the last decade hoping in vain to escape to a new life in Europe. Watching European nations open their arms to hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians in less than a week, the father of three can't help but compare their fates. "We are wondering, why were Ukrainians welcome in all countries while we, Syrian refugees, are still in tents and remain under the snow, facing death, and no one is looking to us?" he told Reuters in a refugee centre where 25 families are sheltered on the edge of the Mediterranean city of Sidon. In the Arab world, where 12 million Syrians have been uprooted by war, critics ranging from Hariri to activists and cartoonists contrast the Western reaction to the refugee crisis triggered by Russia's invasion of Ukraine with the way Europe sought to hold back Syrian and other refugees in 2015. Some recalled images of refugees walking for days in harsh weather, or losing lives in perilous sea crossings as they tried to breach Europe's borders.

**China will not join sanctions**

BEIJING: China will not join in sanctions on Russia that have been led by the West, the country's banking regulator said on Wednesday, adding that he believed the impact of the measures on China would be limited. China, which has refused to condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine, has repeatedly criticised what it calls illegal and unilateral sanctions. "As far as financial sanctions are concerned, we do not approve of these, especially the unilaterally launched sanctions because they do not work well and have no legal grounds," Guo Shuqing, chairperson of the China Banking and Insurance Regulatory Commission, told a news conference. "We will not participate in such sanctions. We will continue to maintain normal economic and trade exchanges with relevant parties," he said. China and Russia have grown increasingly close in recent years, including as trading partners. Total trade between the two jumped 35.9 per cent last year to a record \$146.9 billion, according to Chinese customs data, with Russia serving as a major source of oil, gas, coal and agriculture commodities, running a trade surplus with China. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhary Fawad Hussain and Sardor Umurzakov, Deputy Prime-Minister, Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade - Government of Uzbekistan inaugurating an exhibition 'Uzbekistan National Dress and Fabric' being held at Pak-China Friendship Centre. - DNA

**Ukraine war hearings at UN court next week**

The US trusts "the Court is taking into consideration the dire circumstances and rapidly unfolding events," the State Department said in a statement Tuesday

**AGENCIES**

THE HAGUE: The International Court of Justice said Tuesday it would hold genocide hearings on March 7 and 8 over the war in Ukraine, as fighting intensifies. The Hague-based ICJ, the United Nations' top court, will open the public hearings after Ukraine lodged a complaint with the court to order Russia to stop its invasion. "The hearings will be devoted to the request for the indication of provisional measures submitted by Ukraine," the court said in a statement. More than 660,000 people have already fled abroad, the UN refugee agency said, estimating that a million people are displaced within ex-Soviet Ukraine, which has a population of 44 million. The UN estimates that up to four million refugees may need help in the coming months and 12 million more will need assistance within the country. The ICJ, which is based in the Netherlands' seat of government in The Hague,

**Ukraine refugees given right to live in EU for 3 years**

**WEB DESK**

BRUSSELS: Ukrainian refugees will have the right to live and work in the European Union for up to three years, under an emergency plan in response to what is becoming Europe's biggest refugee crisis this century. Nearly 836,000 people have fled Ukraine since Russia launched its brutal attack less than a week ago, according to the UN refugee agency, which has warned that 4 million could leave the country in the coming weeks and months. More than half (454,000) have fled

to Poland, while 116,000 have gone to Hungary, 67,000 to Slovakia, 38,000 to Romania and 65,000 to non-EU Moldova, Europe's poorest country. The EU plan, which is expected to be approved on Thursday by the bloc's 27 member states, would grant Ukrainian nationals and permanent residents the right to live, work, access healthcare, housing and education immediately for up to one year, without the requirement to go through lengthy asylum procedures. If the conflict continues, or refugees cannot return safely, that status could be extended for a further two years.

does not have a mandate to bring criminal charges against individual Russian leaders behind the invasion. But it is

the world's top court for resolving legal complaints between states over alleged breaches of international law. Interna-

tional Criminal Court prosecutor Karim Khan had already announced he was launching an investigation on the "situation in Ukraine" following Russia's invasion. "I am satisfied that there is a reasonable basis to believe that both alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity have been committed in Ukraine" since 2014, Khan said in a statement Monday. Russia has defied international bans, boycotts and sanctions to press ahead with an offensive it says is aimed at defending Ukraine's Russian speakers and toppling the leadership. The United States trusts "the Court is taking into consideration the dire circumstances and rapidly unfolding events," the State Department said in a statement Tuesday. Spokesman Ned Price said Washington hopes the court "will act with utmost urgency on Ukraine's request for provisional measures" in the hearing. "Each day that Russia is unconstrained in its aggression is a day that brings more violence, suffering, death, and destruction in Ukraine," he said.

**Journalist associations challenge PECA ordinance in IHC**

KARACHI: Pakistan Broadcasters Association (PBA), All Pakistan News Papers Society (APNS), Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors (CPNE) and Association of Electronic Media Editors and News Directors (AEMEND) has filed a writ petition in Islamabad High Court challenging the Prevention of Electronic Crimes (Amendment) Ordinance 2022. The petition states that the Impugned Ordinance under the pretence and disguise of fighting fake news and disinformation will in reality shutter discussion and comment on the working of public figures, officials and institutions which discussion and comment is vital to good governance and a functioning democracy. Parliament lacks legislative competency to shutter such discussion and comment and as such the Impugned Ordinance is colourable legislation liable to be struck down. "That the Sections 2 and 3 of the Impugned Ordinance curtail the right to information and is against the fundamental rights as provided by Article 19-A of the Constitution. The petition is filed through Mr. Muneer A. Malik, Senior Advocate Supreme Court and Barrister Rabi Bin Tariq. - DNA



LAHORE: Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov presenting a piece of art to Speaker Punjab Assembly Ch Pervaiz Elahi. - DNA

**Fawad seeks clear SCBA stance on PECA**

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain on Wednesday rejected the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA)'s criticism on the Pakistan Electronic Crime Act (PECA), saying its demands were contradictory and it must come up with a clear stance on the legislation. The minister, in a tweet, said the SCBA wanted to have an action against those running sham social media campaigns and on the other hand they were against the existence of this law. "Let's clearly decide what we want," Fawad invited the SCBA.

**Bilawal vows to fulfil Benazir's promises**

**DNA**

GHOTKI: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Wednesday addressed the people of Ghotki and said that he would fulfil the promises which his late mother Benazir Bhutto made during her lifetime. The PPP chairman's statement came during a public rally in Ghotki on the fourth day of PPP's long march against the incumbent government. Bilawal thanked the citizens of the city and said that Prime Minister Imran Khan faced defeat because they stood against him. "The PM promised us a change but only brought an economic crisis in the country," he said. Talking about the current situation in the country, the chairman said that there is a lack of jobs as people are going through the worst economic situation. The chairman said that the nation will have to fight for its right and for the future of the upcoming generation, adding that "he will fulfil the promises made by late Benazir Bhutto." He reiterated that the Opposition will topple the government following democratic tactics and that "it's time to bring about a no-confidence motion against PM Imran Khan as his time is over."

**Pressure grows in India to condemn Russia's**

NEW DELHI: India's opposition on Wednesday stepped up pressure on the government to condemn the Russian invasion of Ukraine, a day after an Indian student died during shelling in the eastern city of Kharkiv. India is yet to criticise long-standing arms supplier Russia publicly, instead urging both sides to cease hostilities, causing frustration among its other allies including the United States. Thousands of Indian students remain trapped in Ukraine, leading to calls for the government to step up pressure on Russia to assist evacuation efforts. "The government of India should stop its verbal balancing act and sternly demand that Russia stop immediately the bombing of key cities in Ukraine," said P. Chidambaram, a lawmaker from the opposition Congress party, in a tweet. India abstained in a United Nations Security Council vote condemning the invasion last week, though in recent days it has subtly shifted tone. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi "stressed upon the importance of respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations" during a call with Polish president Andrzej Duda, a statement by India's foreign ministry said late on Tuesday. In addition, India has taken a critical stand privately with Russian president Vladimir Putin, an Indian foreign ministry source said. Russia has long supported India internationally on critical issues including IIOJK, as well as provided the bulk of its military capability. New Delhi has for decades attempted to lessen its reliance on Russian-made weapons, while keeping the relationship close enough to avoid Moscow aligning more with rival Asian power China. - Agencies

**US renews Lincoln Corner Partnership with IMS**

"The Lincoln Corner Peshawar partnership is aimed at improving educational standards and access to international resources for the youth in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, enabling them to gain skills and confidence by taking part in different skill development programs," said Consul General Riley

**SHAMIM SHAHID**

PESHAWAR: The United States Consul General Richard H. Riley and the Institute of Management Sciences (IMS) Joint Director, Dr. Usman Ghani, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to renew the partnership of overseeing the Lincoln Corner Peshawar (LCP) for another two years from March 2022 to March 2024. The representatives signed the MOU during a virtual ceremony in the presence of students, faculty, and diplomats from the U.S. Mission to Pakistan. Established in 2014, LCP is a partnership between the U.S. Consulate General Peshawar and IMSciences. "The Lincoln Corner Peshawar partnership is aimed at improving educational standards and access to international resources for the youth in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, enabling them to gain skills and confidence by tak-



ing part in different skill development programs," said Consul General Riley. LCP is equipped with Maker Space technology including a 3D printer and STEM education kits for visitors to explore high tech tools and develop entrepreneurial and innovative skills. In the near future, LCP will be equipped with a state-of-the-art digital studio for tech entrepreneurs. The Corner also hosts a variety of programs on English language learning, career development, higher education, and American culture and history. The U.S. Mission to Pakistan operates 18 Lincoln Corners across Pakistan, and the Lincoln Corners are part of a network of more than 600 American Spaces across the world. Lincoln Corners are resource centers and event spaces hosted in partnership with Pakistani institutions - in public libraries, universities, and cultural centers. Visitors can access a large collection of databases, scholarly journals, e-books, newspaper articles, and multimedia content.