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Bilateral cooperation will be taken to new horizons: Mirziyoyev

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Donald Blome new US envoy to Pakistan

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PM Imran 'not worried at all', says Elahi

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Preferential Trade Agreement signed Pakistan, Uzbekistan friends for ever: PM

Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev says bilateral cooperation will be taken to new horizons

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Uzbekistan have expressed commitment to revive the traditional cooperative partnership through improved connectivity. At a joint press stakeout with Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev in Islamabad on Thursday, Prime Minister Imran Khan said it is matter of satisfaction that trade between the two brotherly countries increased by 50 percent in last one year while joint ventures between the business communities of the two countries enhanced by 5 percent. The Prime Minister said we have decided to resume direct flights between the two countries that will not only improve connectivity but will help promote tourism and trade. He said train route with Uzbekistan will help boosting linkages with Central Asian States which will also



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan and Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev shaking hands after signing of agreements. - DNA

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Bilawal gives PM five days to step down

Says that the mission of Benazir Bhutto will be continued and fulfilled

STAFF REPORT

BAHAWALPUR: Chairman Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari gave Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan an ultimatum of five days to resign from office and dissolve assembly. Addressing the public in Bahawalpur on Thursday, the PPP Chairman said that people want to get rid of PM Imran Khan. He added that the mission of Benazir Bhutto will be continued and fulfilled. We will solve the problems of the people by forming a people's government. Allies should not side with puppets, we will hold transparent elections this year. Bahawalpur has proved that the public does not hold confidence in the Prime Minister. All parties should support PPP in the no-confidence motion.



Bilawal went on to say that if the public of the country is at the side of PPP, we are not afraid of anything. The youth wanders astray after holding degrees. PM Khan used to say that if the price of petrol and electricity rises, it means the PM is thief. The PM has broken the record of past three years in corruption. Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Thursday has told that no-confidence motion is the only democratic way to send Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government packing. In a statement, the PPP chairman said that limited time setup will come after Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan. Giving vote to Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Shehbaz Sharif for the premiership post will be difficult task for PPP, he added. Bilawal Bhutto said that Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) will not vote for no-confidence motion until they are provided with some solid offer.

Opposition claims support of 38 govt members

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) on Thursday claimed that 38 government members would support the no-confidence motion against Prime Minister Imran Khan. According to sources, the list of 38 government members of the assembly was sent to former prime minister and PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif. The PML-N has also assured 10 parliamentarians of giving party tickets in the next elections. A senior leader of the PML-N claimed that 16 members of the National Assembly were with him. The senior PML-N leader also claimed that the PML-N has divided the like-minded members of the government in three phases. Earlier, opposition parties had finalized the draft of no-confidence motion which had been signed by the over 80 Members of the National Assembly (MNAs). According to sources, lawmakers belonging to Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Awami National Party (ANP), Balochistan National Party-Mengal (BNP-M) and others have signed the motion. As per draft, the country is in a state of economic crisis and there is no road map to get the country out of this. There is also political instability and uncertainty in the country and government has also failed at foreign policy front. The draft states that the Leader of the House has lost the confidence of the majority of the members.

Briefs Will stop Ukraine from joining NATO

DNA

MOSCOW: Lavrov has said Moscow's attack on Ukraine is aimed, among other things, at ensuring that its neighbour does not join the NATO transatlantic military alliance. Lavrov told Russian state television that the country's forces were attacking military targets but added that the term "collateral damage" has been in use since military campaigns waged by Washington and its Western allies in Iraq and Libya. He added that Western powers were aware of Moscow's concerns and said they would have to address them at some point, before referring to sanctions imposed on Russia over its invasion as a "tax on independence".

Opposition to fail again

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Faruk Habib on Thursday said that Opposition party leaders would fail again in bringing no-confidence move against the ruling party of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). The PTI government would complete its five years tenure as all the coalition partners were supporting the prime minister, he said while talking to a private television channel. The Opposition leaders had been unsuccessful in the long march and they would again face disappointment, he stated. The Pakistan Peoples Party and Pakistan Muslim League-N, he said were trying to save the corruption money through no-confidence move and the long march. "We have no worries about the no-confidence movement," he said. The people would not support the Opposition parties because the leaders of PPP and PML-N, were struggling to protect themselves from the corruption cases, he added.

KSA hopeful to reach agreement with Iran

MBS says doesn't care if Biden misunderstood him; Saudi Arabia will remain monarchy

CENTRELINE REPORT

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia intends to continue "detailed talks" with Iran in order to reach a satisfactory agreement for both, Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman said, while stressing the need for a strong nuclear deal between Tehran and world powers at talks in Vienna. He said in remarks to The Atlantic carried by Saudi state media on Thursday that direct talks with Iran would enable reaching "a good situation and mark a bright future" for the region's Sunni Muslim and Shi'ite powers, which have been locked in a rivalry playing out in



Continued on Page 06

Pak signs 2 agreements with Saudi Fund

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has signed two agreements with the Saudi Fund for Development amounting to 846 million dollars under the G-20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative Framework. Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan Nawaf bin Saeed Al-Malkiy witnessed the signing ceremony held in Islamabad (Thursday). Director General for Asia Saud Ayid R. Alshammari represented the SFD

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FM, EU top diplomat discuss Ukraine situation

The two sides also focused on the Emergency Session of the UNGA



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi and Josep Borell, Vice President of the European Commission and High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy in a telephonic conversation discussed the current situation in Ukraine. The two sides also focused on the Emergency Session of the United Nations General Assembly, the Foreign Office said. The foreign minister recalled that prime minister Imran Khan had regretted the latest situation between Russia and Ukraine, and had shared Pakistan's hope that diplomacy could avert military conflict. Underscoring the adverse effects of conflict on developing countries, he mentioned that the prime minister had been stressing the importance of diplomatic solution. Expressing deep concern at the recent turn of events, the foreign minister apprised the EU High

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for national food security and research, Syed Fakhar Imam presenting a souvenir to Ambassador of France, Nicolas Galey. - DNA

Russia takes control of key Ukraine city of Kherson

Putin calls meeting of Russian Security Council

NEWS DESK

KYIV: Russian troops have seized Kherson, the first major Ukrainian city to fall in a devastating week-old war that has already created one million refugees. The capture of the Black Sea city of 290,000 people, which just last year hosted Nato-supported war games, appeared a significant boost for Moscow as it readied for potential ceasefire talks on Thursday. Russian "occupiers" were in "all parts" of Kherson, Ukrainian regional official Gennady Lakhuta conceded late on Wednesday. After a three-

EU ministers meet on refugees

BRUSSELS: The European Union's interior ministers met Thursday to discuss a scheme offering protection to refugees fleeing the Russian invasion of Ukraine. As of Thursday, over 1 million people have fled Ukraine into neighboring countries, according to the

Continued on Page 06

day siege that left Kherson short of food and medicine, and struggling to collect and bury its dead, the town's mayor also announced he was in talks with "armed guests." He had "made no promises" to the invading forces, but agreed to a night curfew and restrictions on car traffic. "So far so good. The flag flying above us is Ukrainian. And for it to stay that way, these requirements must be met," he said in a Facebook post. Stalled elsewhere, Russia continues to make significant advances on the southern front, with troops breaking

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Briefs

Target of 5 lakh trees' plantation will be achieved

YOOSUF BHUTTA

GUJRAT: Deputy Commissioner Dr. Khurram Shehzad said that a target has been set to plant more than 1.3 million saplings in the district during spring tree plantation. Twenty Miyawaki forests will be planted while trees along the both sides of 100 kilometers of highways will also be planted.

He expressed these views during a meeting on tree plantation campaign here Thursday. District Forest Officer Mr. Rashid Chatha, Deputy Director Local Government Mr. Mahmood Iqbal Gondal, Secretary Road Transport Authority Miss Aqsa Riaz were also present on the occasion.

DC Dr. Khurram Shehzad said that 538,000 saplings would be planted on 360 acres of forest land, 100 acres in Garhi Bahu, 110 acres in Handa and 140 acres in Dhol.

He further said that trees will also be planted along the avenues of Shahbazpur road, Small Industrial Estate road, Sargodha road and in the median.

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He further said that trees will also be planted along the avenues and in the median of Shahbazpur road, Small Industrial Estate road, and Sargodha road. The Deputy Commissioner directed the Forest Department to select the places along under-construction parts of GT Road and other areas for Miyawaki forests.

"Free plants will be provided to the Department of Education and the Department of Health", he added. DC continued that plants would also be provided to farmers at low prices for tree plantation in villages. The Deputy Commissioner said that during the tree plantation campaign, 250,000 plants will be planted in Gujrat Tehsil, 150,000 in Kharian Tehsil and 100,000 in Sarai Alamgir Tehsil.

He concluded, "Work hard, take special care of your plants and irrigation."

Women day celebrations at Darul Aman

Dr. Shahzana imtiaz was the chief guest

KAMRAN GUJRAT

JHELUM: World women's day celebrations started at shelter home Darul Aman Jhelum. In which the department of social welfare and the main social and political figures of the area participated.

In this event advocate committee, Darul Aman, Dr. Shahzana imtiaz was the chief guest. She was accompanied by all members and other women. On this occasion, deputy director social welfare department, Jhelum Wajid Hussain Chaudry and all other officers attended the ceremony.

The superintendent addressed the audience on the occasion. "International women's day is intended not for indecency but to recognize their rights. Our master prophet Muhammad (PBUH) declared Prophet hood, so the first one who brought Islam and supported you was his wife. They established examples of love and high capacity. Our master Hazrat Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ended the ritual of raising girls alive in the early period of Islam and gave women the balance of rights and duties. Deputy Director social welfare department Wajid Hussain addressed the audience and said: it is not bad to celebrate women's world day.



ISLAMABAD: President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev inspecting Guard of Honour at Prime Minister House. – DNA

SCCI hails KP govt initiatives toward promotion of tourism

The SCCI chief commented that it is unfortunate that, as KP recovered from the consequences of terrorism, the onset of the COVID pandemic stalled tourist activity again

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: President, Sarhad Chamber of Commerce & Industries, Hasnain Khurshid Ahmad praised the provincial government's efforts toward uplift of the tourism sector, which is contributing enormously in the development of the national economy. He noted KP is highly famous regarding scenic tourist attractions sites, particularly historic/ancient archaeological areas, through which religious tourism is being promoted in Pakistan, he noted. Mr. Khurshid was addressing a consultative session on Transforming the Tourism Industry in KP, jointly organised by organised by the FCDO-funded Sustainable

Energy and Economic Development (SEED) programme in joint collaboration with Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), provincial government and relevant stakeholders here at the local hotel.

The session was aimed at engaging in a productive discussion on transforming the tourism industry in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The participants agreed that the tourism industry in Pakistan has a massive potential, which is barely being utilized today. Particularly in KP, the geography of the province makes it an attractive tourist destination.

Provincial Minister for Information Technology and Food, Atif Khan was chief guest during the session, while secretary tour-

ism Amer Sultan Tareen, SEED Team Leader Dr. Omer Mukhtiar Khan, representatives, members business community, government high-officials were present during the consultative seminar.

The SCCI chief commented that it is unfortunate that, as KP recovered from the consequences of terrorism, the onset of the COVID pandemic stalled tourist activity again. While the government has significantly improved the infrastructure in recent years, further assistance is needed from the government in developing the country's railway system. He assured that the private sector, facilitated by the chambers, will play its part in promoting tourism, both locally and globally.

Atif Khan, remarked on the occa-

sion, "There are large untapped markets for tourism in KP which can produce huge dividends for the federal and provincial governments and the private sector.

Our focus should be on recreational activities, to attract more tourists and generate higher rates of return for the investors and government, making tourism a holistic and memorable experience for the tourist, the minister stressed. On this note, the Secretary Tourism, Mr. Amer Sultan Tareen also appraised the participants of the recent changes in the legal framework, including the Tourism and PPP Acts, which provide a friendly mechanism for the private sector stakeholders to bring forth their proposals to the government for mutually beneficial public-private

partnerships. He urged all participants to work together with the government in identifying the implementation and infrastructure gaps and jointly develop viable solutions for these. SEED Team Leader, Dr. Omer Mukhtiar Khan thanked all participants and government officials for participating in the session from all sectors of the industry and from across KP.

Stressing the importance of this industry, he mentioned, "tourism is a comparative advantage for KP and its god-gifted resource. SEED will facilitate the industry by ensuring all the challenges highlighted today are brought to the government's attention and liaison between the private sector and the provincial government."

TUF organizes seminar on prevention of drugs

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: The University of Faisalabad (TUF) has been already declared as smoke and drug free institution, three years ago by the Drug Advisory Training Hub (DATH), a non-government organization working on abuse of drugs.

In this context, Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was renewed between both the institutions witnessed by Zahid Hussain, Commissioner Faisalabad division and Mr. Muhammad Haider Amin, Chairman Board of Governors TUF. Syed Zulfiqar Hussain Consultant Anti Drug/Narcotics, Chairman DATH and Ms. Zahida Maqbool, Additional Registrar, TUF signed the agreement. The agreement was renewed with aim to restrain youngsters from the consumption of drugs which is increasing at an alarming pace.

On this occasion an awareness seminar on "Drug abuse prevention among youth" was also organized in Mukhtar Auditorium of the University. Mr. Imran Baloch, Director Focus Rehabilitation, Syed Mohsin, Coordinator Education Program (DATH), Heads



of Departments, faculty members and large number of students attended the seminar. Addressing the audience Zahid Hussain, Commissioner said that that new trends of drug addiction are increasing among the youth particularly students which is an alarming situation. He said that the government is fully aware of the gravity of the problem and we are making all efforts to control drug menace in the society. Commissioner also appreciated the efforts of the University Management under the auspices of Madinah Foundation in health and education sector. Mr. Muhammad Haider Amin in his ad-

dress stressed the need for collective efforts aimed at creating awareness of the harmful effects of drugs use among the youth. TUF with collaboration of its affiliated Madinah Teaching Hospital is already taking measures for the rehabilitation of drug addicts, he added. Syed Zulfiqar Hussain highlighted the issue of drug usage among students. He said that a comprehensive planning should be introduced about use of drugs in educational institutions because our youth is our future in the country. Mr. Zahid Hussain also planted a sapling in the University and launched spring plantation drive of TUF.

Muslim hands organizes seminar

STAFF REPORT

WAZIRABAD: Minister for Religious Affairs of AJK, Hafiz Hamid Raza addressed a seminar at Muslims Hands Educational Complex Sohdra. It was conducted to pay tribute to Peer Bashir Ahmed who had been an activist and remained at the forefront of leading Tehreek Pakistan Movement.

While addressing to a ceremony of gratitude where the government not only recognized the services of Peer Syed Ahmed Khurshid but also awarded him with the gold medal against his services.

Hafiz Hamid Raza highlights the multiple roles of his personality. Peer Syed Ahmed Khurshid was an active member of Freedom Movement of Kashmir. While addressing a large number of people, he shed light on the services rendered by Peer Syed Ahmed Khurshid. Hafiz Hamid Raza said

"Peer Syed Ahmed Khurshid devoted his whole life for the welfare of the humanity.

His main objective was to follow the teachings of the saints of ALLAH.

His descendants' mission is also to alleviate the sufferings of humanity. Such are the blessed people who have been given guidance from their Lord.

They always remain alive in the hearts of the people. The virtuous personalities like these, reform the lives of other people. They also serve as role model to enlighten people's faith.

Their lives serve as learning hub for all of us in the moral and social aspects of life."

British Council launches "Pak-UK New Perspectives" programme

ISLAMABAD: British Council Chief Executive Officer, Scott McDonald hosted a launch event for the Pakistan/UK: New Perspectives programme in Islamabad today, to mark the 75th anniversary of Pakistan. Artists, cultural, education and business leaders were among those who attended. This Pakistan/UK: New Perspectives programme recognises the deep cultural ties between Pakistan and the UK and focus on bridging relationships between the emerging generation of artists and young leaders of both countries and exploring contemporary cultural identities and artistic expressions with established artists and changemakers. Running from March to August 2022, the programme

has diverse activities and initiatives planned in Pakistan and the UK, in close collaboration with artists and institutions from both countries. This includes initiatives like the 'Infinity': what is seen, what is not' by Osman Yousefzada, which is creating a symbolic bridge between both countries; and the New Perspectives Open Call earlier this year which awarded grants to artists and organisations working together on creative projects. Also announced under the programme is the Scholarship for English Language Teacher in Pakistan, which offers the six scholarships for English language teachers from government schools to attend face-to-face and distance learning programmes from select universities in the



UK. All these initiatives aim to showcase both countries' cultural wealth and contemporary identity and creativity, facilitate professional collaboration and engagement for arts and education sectors, and inspire conversations that build a shared future for younger generations. A full list of initiatives under Pakistan/UK New Perspectives is available on the British

Council website. At the launch, Scott McDonald, CEO of the British Council said:

"I'm very pleased to be here to launch Pakistan/UK New Perspectives and I look forward to the exciting programme line-up over the next few months. The British Council has always aimed to reinforce strong people-to-people connections, and I am delighted to be here in Pakistan to see the incredible work we're doing with people and institutions in Pakistan in education, arts and culture, English and more. Many congratulations Pakistan on its 75th anniversary - with so much talent and potential the future of Pakistan looks very bright."

Speaking at the event, Mari-

ya Afzal, Director Pakistan/UK: New Perspectives said: "Through collaborations, the PK-UK Season will be delivering 14 large scale programmes which includes over 20 sub-projects and several activities engaging 27 PK partners and 28 UK partners, spread across all 4 Pakistan provinces and 4 nations of the UK, reaching millions across both countries. Programming includes innovative interventions that address key global challenges such as climate, and women's empowerment and inclusivity through the arts, culture and education sectors. The Season will be a platform for both Pakistan and UK creative sectors, and inventiveness that our partners will apply in a wide variety of sectors."

More than 2 lakh children vaccinated for polio, EDO health

STAFF REPORT

GUJRAT: Chief Executive Officer Health has disclosed that more than two lakh children were vaccinated against polio during the first two days of Anti-polio drive in Gujrat district. This was disclosed by the CEO Health Dr. Naem Akhtar Janjua in a meeting held under the chair of Deputy Commissioner Gujrat Dr. Khurram Shehzad here Tuesday. He maintained that the health department staff will meet their target within the current drive without any difficulty.

PESCO notifies power suspension

DNA

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar Electric Supply Company (PESCO) on Thursday notified that due to maintenance work power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Jamrud Grid Station on 5th, 7th, 9th, 12th and 14th March From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KV Hayatabad 2 feeders will face inconvenience. It said the power supply will also remain suspended from 132 KV Jamrud Grid Station on 5th, 12th and 19th March From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KV Shaukat Khanum, North West, RMI, PIDC, Mohmand Steel, Northern Bottling, Express 1,2,3,4, Kacha Ghari, Karkhanoo feeders will face inconvenience. The power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Peshawar University Grid Station on 5th, 7th, 9th, 12th and 14th March From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. due to which consumers of 11 KV University Campus, Canal Town, Malakandher, Engineering, Regi, Taj Abad, Gulabad, Agriculture, Old Hayatabad, Ring Road, Danish Abad, Gharib Abad, Rahat Abad, CMB, Abdara, Achini 1,2, Rahat Abad, 1,2, Sufaid Dheri, Old Bara Road, Academy Town, Circular Road, DHA feeders will face inconvenience.

The power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Hayatabad Phase 7 Grid Station on 5th, 12th, 19th March From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KV Hayatabad 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, Hayatabad Surgical, Shaukat Khanum, Deans Heights, feeders will face inconvenience. The power supply will also remain suspended from 132 KV PESCO Colony Grid Station on 5th, 7th and 10th March From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KV Warsak 2, Warsak Road, Express, Shahi Bagh Express, ICF 2 feeders will face inconvenience. The power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Sakhi Chashma Grid Station on 5th, 7th, 10th March From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KV Pir Bala, Nishat 1,2, Benazeer Women University, Industrial, Pajagail, 2, Kaniza, Chagharmati feeders will face inconvenience.

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

Table listing national days for various countries like Sri Lanka, Zealand, Uganda, Iran, etc., with their respective dates and themes.



Hotels & Restaurants

Table listing hotels like Serena Hotel, Marriott, and Monal with their contact numbers.



Airlines

Table listing Turkish Airlines with contact number 8494949.



Emergency

Table listing emergency services like Police, Fire Services, and Motorway Police with their contact numbers.



Enquiry

Table listing enquiry services like Edhi Ambulance, PIA Flight Info, and Railway Inquiry with their contact numbers.



Hospitals

Table listing hospitals like CMH, MH, Cantt Hospital, DHQ, and Holy Family with their contact numbers.



Departments

Table listing medical departments like CDA, Met Office, and TMA with their contact numbers.

Islamabad Metropolitan

Table listing Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation, Potohar Town, and Rawal Town with their contact numbers.

Water Tank

Table listing water tank services in Islamabad with contact number 0321-5744480.



ISLAMABAD: RCCI President is presenting a souvenir to Chairman Railways Habib ur Rehman. - DNA

President ICCI appointed as Hon. Business Advisor

Kashmala Khan said that President ICCI as Honorary Business Advisor would advise FOSPAH on matters to curb harassment in the Chambers all over Pakistan for better protection of women at workplaces

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry has been appointed as Honorary Business Advisor in Federal Ombudsman Secretariat for Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace (FOSPAH), Islamabad.



Speaking at the occasion, Kashmala Khan said that President ICCI as Honorary Business Advisor would advise FOSPAH on matters to curb harassment in the Chambers all over Pakistan for better protection of women at workplaces.

She said that he would also act as a bridge between FOSPAH and the private sector for the economic empowerment of women by ensuring

private sector organizations to form a three-member Committee to deal with harassment cases and cautioned that non-compliant organizations would face fines.

nir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) thanked Kashmala Khan, Federal Ombudsman for Protection against Harassment for appointing him as Honorary Business Advisor in FOSPAH and assured her that he would work closely with the private sector to ensure safer workplaces for women in industrial and commercial establishments.

He said that women were almost half of our total population, but only 25 percent were in the workforce due to which the country could not realize its full economic potential.

Consultation imperative for competitive electricity market: Experts

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Implementation of Competitive Trading Bilateral Contracts Market (CTBCM) model in Pakistan would provide transparency, predictability, accountability, and a level playing field by creating competition between multiple buyers and sellers in the energy sector of Pakistan.

Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI). Delivering his keynote speech, Dr Fiaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Werner-Von-Siemens Chair, LUMS Energy Institute (LEI), informed the participants about the design of CTBCM model for Pakistan and how relevant stakeholders contributed to its implementation.

Director General, Licensing Department, National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) highlighted that through introduction of CTBCM, Pakistan has introduced a framework for market reforms in the country.

Bids for development in Sector E-12/4 opened

ISLAMABAD: The management of the Capital Development Authority is paying special attention to the construction and development of the city, particularly the sector development. In this regard, the bids received for the development works of Sector E-12/4 have been opened.

AIOU inks MoU with Ibne Khaldoun University Turkey

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Ibne Khaldoun University, Turkey to collaborate for higher education and promote research culture at both the universities.

Gill terms money launderers as real impersonators

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister for Political Communication, Dr Shabbaz Gill has said that money launderers who through fake accounts have taken the country's money outside were the real impersonators.

Short story: Vengeance and Crime (1)

M.ABDUR-REHMAN

It wasn't really a pleasant afternoon in the women's section of Kaunas prison. Every prisoner wished to spend her time by and by, just to get by. One was Karolina Rolandas, who was sentenced to death for killing 17 men.

the gallows were located. She was taken with several other death row prisoners. When asked for her final words, she said nothing and gave a diabolical grin. Within a few seconds she hung by the rope, as life choked out of her. It was a horrifying spectacle, but was soon over.

the first few days roaming around, mingling with the common people and visiting the palaces of aristocracy and other monuments (and places). He met a mad-man who gave him a broken watch and said, "bad times are on their way".

it? You could see by the weariness in the eyes of Mr. Mikhael. He spent almost half of his life figuring this out. However, he still went on to giving an answer. "That's a great question, Lukas. The law is the guarantee to maintaining the functionality of a society, supporting public opinion, and giving the right sanctions. In other words it provides justice, or at least that's how it should be.

The winter months of the Baltic city were relentless; therefore Lukas took some of his precious time out and went to see his family for a few days. It was an emotional reunion. He met with Natalia and discussed on shifting to Vilnius once he completes his education. She was happy as long as he was.

To be continued

Briefs

Microsoft signs agreement with Sindh

ISLAMABAD: Microsoft on Thursday signed an Educational Transformation Agreement (ETA) with two major departments of the government of Sindh, the School Education and Literacy Department (SELD) and Sindh Education Foundation (SEF). The agreement is based on Microsoft Educational Transformation Framework (ETF) under which Microsoft is committed to make digital transformation of the educational sector more successful and organized, said a news release. The aim of this alliance is to strengthen the education sector across Sindh by unleashing the potential of Information Communication Technologies (ICT) at every level. Under this agreement, Microsoft will conduct several workshops, training sessions, webinars and other joint activities in Sindh involving the key stakeholders. The first step of collaboration is to work with leadership of the Sindh education to discuss and develop tailor-made digital transformation strategies. In this context, a number of change management workshops with the leadership will be conducted to help smoothen out the digitization process in the Sindh education sector. The Microsoft specialists are also committed to train the Sindh Government in designing, planning, and implementing cloud solutions through its cloud certification programs and producing MIE Master trainers who will impart technology learning on the behalf of Microsoft. - APP

MoST, PM Office sign performance agreement

ISLAMABAD: A performance agreement has been signed between Prime Minister Office and Ministry of Science and Technology to ensure ownership and improved delivery. A ceremony was held in Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST) to mark the inclusion of 28 new targets in the Performance Agreement, said a press release. The event was witnessed by Special Assistance to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Establishment Shahzad Arbab and Federal Minister for Science and Technology Senator Shibli Faraz. The agreement was signed by Secretary Ministry of Science and Technology, Madam Humaira Ahmed while heads of various organizations of MoST were also present on the occasion. This was the first time a tier-two performance agreement was signed between heads of attached departments and the Secretary of a Ministry. Eight heads of organizations were present, including Rector NUST, Chairman PCSIR, Chairman PSF, DG NIO, DG NIE, DG PSQA and DG PCRET. - APP

'Arts and Film' promoting cultural heritage

ISLAMABAD: The Nomad Art Gallery (NAG) programme 'Arts and Film' for social change attracting emerging talent aimed at promoting rich cultural heritage of the country and to empower women. Talking to APP, Head NAG Nageen Hayat said, "the programme has contributed to creating awareness and economic opportunities for the emerging talent of the country specially women in the society". The aim of Nomad Art Productions is to facilitate the development of new artworks, expand market opportunities and provide management support for artists and art workers nationally. She said Nomad Art Collections currently operates as an online gallery specialising in limited edition prints and works on paper by artists from Aboriginal owned art centres from Australia. Nageen Hayat added that since inception Nomad Art has become a leading outlet for quality Aboriginal prints on paper and hand printed fabrics in Australia. Nomad Art focuses on art that involves cross-cultural collaborations between artists and master practitioners. - APP

Unseen war by India is a major challenge: Farrukh

Ambassador Asif Ali Khan Durrani said that the very foundation of India was secular and literally non-religious in its entirety. 'Article 25 to 28 of Indian constitution provide all its citizens a right to practice his or her own religion, he added

DNA

ISLAMABAD: While addressing at a panel discussion on 'India: A Largest Democracy or a Fake Union?' organized by the Institute of Regional Studies, Farrukh Habib, State Minister for Information and Broadcasting said that 'India's official news agency has now become a mouthpiece of BJP that consistently spreading false and misleading information about Pakistan'. Commenting on Indian's discriminatory attitude towards minorities, he said that "it was the very reason the Sikh community is demanding separation from India". Referendum by Sikhs, in this regard, clearly demonstrate Sikh community's resolve to have a separate state for them where they could enjoy religious, political and social freedom, he stressed. He further continued saying that

even pro-Indian Kashmiri leadership in IIOK have expressed their anger over New Delhi's unilateral action of sabotaging Kashmir's autonomy. Mr Habib also told that participants that the Muslims girls in India especially in Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Karnataka were not feeling secure after the incidents of harassments cases of Hijab wearing girls appeared on media. Concluding his talk, State Minister said that Pakistani youth, academicians, journalists and people from all walks of life need to work in tandem to dislodge Indian propaganda against Pakistan. While speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Asif Ali Khan Durrani said that the very foundation of India was secular and literally non-religious in its entirety. 'Article 25 to 28 of Indian constitution provide all its citizens a right to practice his or her own religion, he added. Ambassador Durrani



argued that it was India's constitution that kept the people of India united for a very long time but today the situation has changed altogether. He also said that the Babri mosque was the symbol of religious freedom and equality in India that was unfortunately succumbed to hyper-nationalist forces. Ambassador Durrani warned that rising racism in India would

further consolidate polarization in Indian polity and society which ultimately affect the whole region in a considerable manner. While concluding his speech he said that 'India could be everything but not a democracy, it is an autocracy'. The session moderator, Dr Salma Malik, Asst. Professor at QAU said that 'India as union has undergone many changes since the rise of Modi in India that have challenged the very basis of Indian democracy'. Dr Arshi Saleem Hashmi, Associate Professor and Head of Department of Peace and Conflict Studies at NDU, argued that a kind of autonomy that Indian unions were enjoying have significantly gone down in recent years. 'Today, the Centre is overstepping unions' authority by passing resolutions that constitutionally come under union's jurisdiction, she added. Dr Hashmi warned that the unprecedented rise of corporate-Hin-

duwa alliance that was basically engineered to prevent indigenous revolts against India's racist policies, was bringing a major shift in political discourse wherein the opposition parties were finding it hard to promote their traditional ideological manifestations. Dr Hashmi argued that 'India does not have a positive peace and thus cannot claim to be a democracy'. She emphasized that the sharp decline in India's ranking in religious and press freedom, judiciary, and human rights indexes speak volumes about polarization in Indian polity and society. Syed Muhammad Ali, Director Strategic Defense, Security and Policy at Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies (CASS), said that India's massive investment in building a global information network in the last fifteen years, has made it able to not only hide but also justify its racist policies to the world.

Festival to promote centuries-old traditional sports begins today

ISLAMABAD: Twin cities residents will be welcomed in the first-ever traditional sports festival here Friday to enjoy and be introduced to the diminishing centuries-old games once played in the Sub-Continent. The Directorate of Sports, Culture and Tourism Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad and Capital Development Authority have joined hands to celebrate Pakistani traditional sports at Rose and Jasmine Garden from 10:00 a.m to 4:00 p.m from March 04 to 05. According to focal person MCI Dr. M. Abdullah Tabasum, "This is the first time such a sports festival is going to be held. We hope to reignite the memories and love for our centuries old traditional games, which are rarely played in some rural parts of the country but a generation's huge majority's memories are associated with them. The event will be open to participation for all with wide variety of decaying games arranged to be played that include Rassa Kashi (tug-of-war), Pittu Garam (seven stones), Kokla Chapaki Jumaiyrat Ai Ay (drop the handkerchief), and Stapu (hopskotch) for women. Rassa Kashi, tug-of-war in English, is played between two teams, with each at one end of the rope contest to pull the rope towards their end and drag the opponents and the one who succeeds wins the game. Pittu Garam, known as seven stones in English, is a South Asian game dating back to some 5,000 years, which is usually played by two teams in a large area involving a pile of stones and a tennis ball. The aim is to break the pile of stone with a tennis ball and hit the opponents till they rebuild the tower. - DNA

16 new Covid-19 cases in RWP

RAWALPINDI: Around 16 more people were tested positive for fatal coronavirus during the last 24 hours, raising the tally of confirmed cases to 46,284 in the Rawalpindi district, while five persons lost their battle of life against the deadly disease. As per the latest data released by the District Health Authority here Thursday, among the new patients, seven belonged to the Potohar town, two each from Rawal town, Rawalpindi Cantonment and Kallar Syedan, while one of each case has arrived from Gujar Khan, Taxila and Dera Ismail Khan. "Presently, 15 patients are admitted to five health facilities, including nine in the Institute of Urology, two in the Fauji Foundation Hospital, and Benazir Bhutto Hospital, while one each in the Bilal and Holy Family Hospital. "As many as 5,591,737 people, including 44,663 health workers, had so far been vaccinated against the fatal disease since the start of the vaccination drive from March 10, 2021", it informed. The report updated that two patients were on ventilators in critical condition, two stable and 11 were on double oxygen support. District Health Authority added that 192 were quarantined, including 177 homes and 15 isolation centres. In addition, the report updated that during the last 24 hours, 1,444 samples were collected, out of which 1,429 were declared negative, while the positivity rate was recorded at 1.04 per cent. - APP

IMCG I-8/4 elects management committee

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Model College for Girls (IMCG), I-8/4, Thursday elected new office-bearers of its management committee for the 2022-24 term. The election process continued from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm in the auditorium of the college under the supervision of Principal Dr. Firdous Zahra Bashir in which parents, guardians and college teachers voted to elect new members of the committee, said a press release issued here. In the polling process, two senior teachers assisted the presiding officer as the polling officer. On behalf of the parents and guardians, the participants elected Asif Ali as President, Muhammad Sayyad Khan as Finance Secretary and Tahir Mehmood Awan and Sana Rehan as Executive Members. Samina Tahira will be the general secretary, Saeed Awan and Sahikra Saeed as executive members from the college staff's side. After the completion of the election process, Committee Chairperson Dr. Firdous Zahra Bashir administered oath to the newly elected officials. The committee will work under the chairmanship of Professor Javaid Iqbal Mughal. The CMC has been established to bring together parents and teachers to support the college and assist it to provide quality education to the students. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Establishment Division, Mohammad Shehzad Arbab addressing during signing ceremony of the Performance Agreement between PM office and Ministry of Science and Technology at Ministry S&T. - DNA

RWMC cleanliness operation continues despite the rain

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Waste Management Company (RWMC) was busy removing waste from the city areas despite the rain that started in the city Thursday morning. According to the RWMC spokesman, the RWMC carried out the cleanliness of nullahs and choked drains during continued rainfall to ensure sanitation in several city areas. He informed that Managing Director Awais Manzoor Tarrar had directed the officials to ensure cleanliness from where some sanitation-related problems were pointed out. The spokesman said that the company had deputed additional sanitary workers for cleaning and dredging major drains to avoid any flood-like situation. He said RWMC workers removed hundreds of tons of waste in the Rawalpindi city areas despite severe cold and rain. He said that the drains, blocked during the rain, had been opened immediately to have no problem with drainage in the city, while complaints received on social media platforms were also being addressed instantly. However, he urged the citizens to cooperate with the company in keeping the city clean. In case of any complaint, citizens were asked to register their complaints on helpline number 1139, which would be rectified immediately, he added. RWMC has appealed to the citizens not to throw garbage and plastic bags in nullahs and drains, which cause obstruction, adding that RWMC would utilize all its resources to keep the city clean. - APP

PAJCCI proposes fiscal reforms for Budget 2022-23

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: PAJCCI while presenting its high impact issues report and budget proposal in Senate's Standing Committee on Commerce informed the august committee that "SBP trade discouraging policies, obsolete fiscal policies including tariff, double taxation, lack of cohesive barter trade, investment, joint venture and transit trade policy are contributing to revenue loss and leaving gap for hostile elements to take Pakistan's share. Due to silo approach by different governmental entities, transit goods re-enter Pakistan and damage local industry causing huge

loss to national exchequer, giving opportunity to parallel trading routes and elements". PAJCCI recommended that fiscal reforms are need of the time and one of most important factors to be given due consideration in Budget 2022-23. Fiscal reforms are the only tool to curb unscrupulous elements not only in trade but also in transit (that would control influx of illegal re-entry of transit goods in Pakistan; damaging local industry). PAJCCI's research shows that there is a difference of 12-14% that makes informal trade lucrative, hence, preemptive adjustments in this context will make parallel trade not viable. It is suggested that in this budget as an experiment, at least the

top 20 trading items (that comes under transit to Afghanistan) shall be evaluated for duty rationalization and its impact be seen on formal trade balance. Customs along with relevant institutions and representative of PAJCCI shall jointly conduct one time exercise to rationalize duties & taxes. Unilateral actions result in negative reaction from Afghan Authorities. Representatives of both countries shall derive process to address double taxation affecting investments and joint ventures. Removal of double taxation is required to foster the environment of investment and growth. In present state, Afghan regime is in dire need of trained technical resources, Government of

Pakistan can form a technical working group which can conduct meetings with relevant Afghan authorities and support them in formulation of trade policies, fiscal and banking reforms. Ms. Robina Ashraf; Chairperson National Tariff Commission was requested to call urgent meeting with relevant stakeholders and technical team of PAJCCI to deliberate fiscal reforms and develop working document on duty rationalization of identified top 20 items to be made part of Budget 2022-23. Zubair Motiwala; Chairman PAJCCI appreciated the standing committee for giving the opportunity to present the report and giving credence to PAJCCI's input and efforts.

1405 accused convicted by accountability courts

Zahir Shah, Deputy Chairman NAB, Syed Asghar Haider, Prosecutor General Accountability (PGA), Masood Alam, DG Operations, other senior officers of NAB besides all DG's, Regional Bureaus of NAB attended the meeting via video link

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Honorable Mr. Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB chaired a meeting to review overall performance of NAB especially convictions made during the tenure of Honorable Mr. Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB from October 10, 2017 till Dec 31, 2021 under Section 10 of National Accountability Ordinance (NAO)-1999 and under Section 25 (b) of NAO-1999 at NAB Headquarters. Zahir Shah, Deputy Chairman NAB, Syed Asghar Haider, Prosecutor General Accountability (PGA), Masood Alam Khan, DG Operations, other senior officers of NAB besides all Director General (DG's), Regional Bureaus of NAB attended the meeting via video link. The Honorable Mr. Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB appreciated the excellent performance of all Regional Bureaus of NAB for putting excellent work in bringing the corrupt elements to justice as per law where the Learned Accountability Courts of

the country convicted 1405 accused persons due to vigorous prosecution of all Regional Bureaus of NAB NAB in coordination with Operations and Prosecution Divisions, NAB Headquarters. Chairman NAB said that NAB always believes in working in accordance with Law. The effective National Anti Corruption Strategy and Accountability for All policy of NAB have started yielding remarkable excellent results as compared to previous years. During the meeting, it was informed that 10x accused persons were convicted in 2021 till Dec 31, 2021 by learned Accountability Courts Rawalpindi/Islamabad on the basis of solid evidence through vigorous prosecution of NAB Rawalpindi under section 10 of NAO-1999 through vigorous prosecution. Similarly in the year 2020, 13x accused persons, in the year 2019, 09x accused persons, while in the year 2018 and 20x accused persons were convicted by learned Accountability Courts under section 10 of NAO-1999. It was further informed that during 2021, 24x

accused persons were convicted by different learned Accountability Courts Rawalpindi/Islamabad on the basis of solid evidence through vigorous prosecution of NAB Rawalpindi under section 25(b) of NAO-1999. Similarly in the year 2020, 21x accused persons, in the year 2019, 23x accused persons while

prosecution of NAB Lahore in learned Accountability Courts, Lahore under section 10 of NAO-1999. Similarly during the year 2020, 12x accused persons, in the year 2019, 03x accused persons, in the year 2018, 28x accused persons, while in the year 2017, 12x accused persons were convicted by learned

25(b) of NAO-1999. In the year 2020, NAB Lahore got 26x accused persons convicted, in the year 2019, 59x accused persons and similarly in the year 2018, 62x where as in the year 2017 from Oct 10, 2017 to Dec 31, 2017 13x accused persons were convicted by different learned Accountability Courts under

section 10 of NAO-1999. In the year 2020, 24x accused persons, in the year 2019, 56x accused persons, similarly in the year 2018, 72x accused persons while from October 10 to 31 December 2017, 13x accused persons were convicted by different learned Accountability Courts under section 10 of NAO-1999. DG Operations further informed that during 2021, 23x accused persons were convicted by learned Accountability Courts of Karachi on the basis of solid evidence through vigorous prosecution of NAB Karachi under section 25(b) of NAO-1999. Similarly in the year 2020, 32x accused persons were convicted, in the year 2019, 94x accused persons, 44x accused persons in the year 2018, while from October 10, 2017 to Dec 31, 2017, 53x accused persons were convicted by different learned Accountability Courts under section 25(b) of NAO-1999. During the meeting, DG Operations informed that during 2021, 53x accused persons were convicted by different learned Accountability Courts of Karachi on the basis of solid evidence through vigorous prosecution of NAB Lahore under Section

Accountability Court, Sukkur on the basis of solid evidence through vigorous prosecution of NAB Sukkur under section 10 of NAO-1999. Similarly during the year 2020, 04x accused persons, in the year 2019, 10x accused persons, in the year 2018, 16x accused persons, while in the year 2017 from Oct 10, 2017 till Dec 31, 2017, 26x accused persons were convicted by learned Accountability Court Sukkur under section 10 of NAO-1999. During the meeting, it was further informed that during the year 2021, 43x accused persons from learned Accountability Court, Sukkur on the basis of solid evidence through vigorous prosecution of NAB Sukkur under Section 25(b) of NAO-1999. In the year 2020, 82x accused persons, in the year 2019, 112 x accused persons, in the year 2018, 55x accused persons and similarly in the year 2017 from Oct 10 to Dec 31, 2017, 41x accused persons were convicted by learned Accountability Court Sukkur under section 25(b) of NAO-1999.



in the year 2018, 08x accused persons were convicted by different learned Accountability Courts under section 25(b) of NAO-1999. During the meeting, it was informed that 7x accused persons were convicted in the year 2021, on the basis of solid evidence through vigorous

Accountability Courts under section 10 of NAO-1999. During the meeting, it was further informed that 23x accused persons were convicted by learned Accountability Courts, Lahore during 2021 on the basis of solid evidence through vigorous prosecution of NAB Lahore under Section

section 25(b) of NAO-1999. During the meeting, DG Operations informed that during 2021, 53x accused persons were convicted by different learned Accountability Courts of Karachi on the basis of solid evidence through vigorous prosecution of NAB Karachi under

Interest free loans initiative of govt

P RIME Minister Imran Khan has 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. 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 businesses, construction of homes, farming and learn technical education. PM Khan said so far Rs 2.5 billion had been disbursed among the low-income groups in various welfare schemes and mentioned that the banks had also given loans of Rs 55 billion after the government encouraged them to facilitate common man. Pakistan had been envisioned as a socio-welfare country in line with the golden principles of Islam's first State of Medina. National health insurance programme launched by the government would help expand medical set up in the public and private sector across the country. Providing free medical treatment worth Rs one million to every household annually was a proud step taken by the government.

Prime Minister Khan said that all the tax money collected by the government would be spent on the welfare of the general public. There is no denying the fact that the Prime Minister himself has an earnest desire to really change the fate of this country. He often quotes the Madina model in this regard. The problem lies in the execution of his orders. The bureaucracy unfortunately still is loath to execute his orders in letter and spirit. And that is where the shoe actually pinches.

There is a perception that the loans and for that matter the distribution of funds under the Ehsas program do not reach the genuine needy people. The prime minister has announced plans to launch a countrywide helpline where people could launch complaints about any of the services including the Ehsas funds distribution and loans etc. However people fear that the helpline may not yield desired results since it will be manned by the same people. It can only render positive results provided a trained and highly motivated staff is deputed to look after the helpline etc.

Loans initiative is no doubt a praiseworthy step but real challenges lie in its smooth execution. Let us hope that the deserving people are able to benefit from this scheme.

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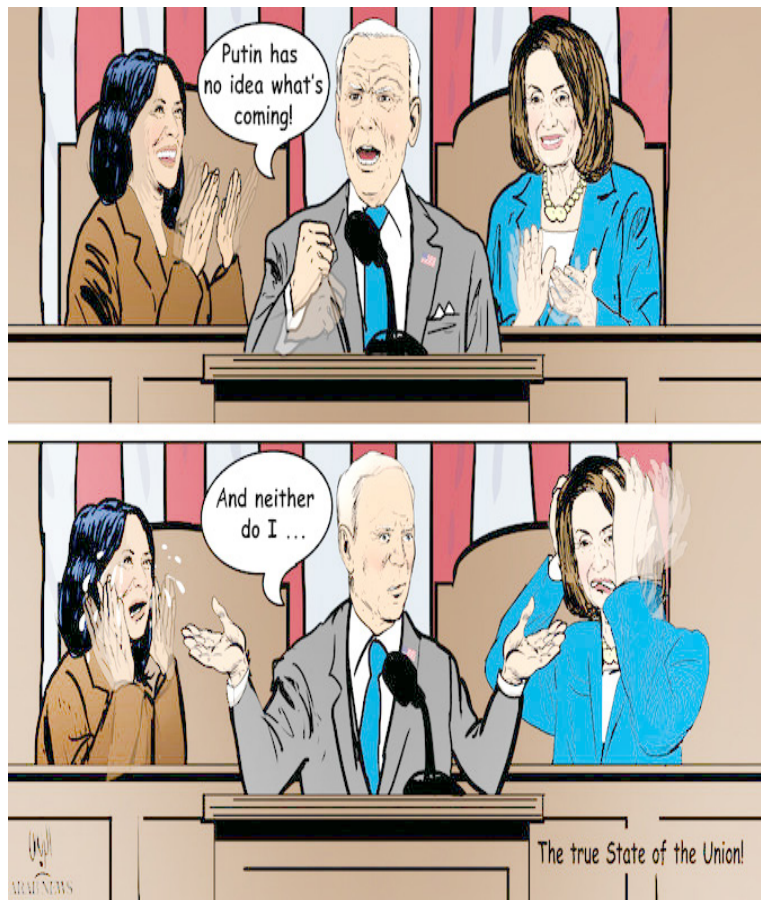
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Development of G-14 Sector

T HE government, in past few years or ever since its coming into power had focused a lot on the development of new sectors. A number of housing schemes both in public and private sector have been announced. Ostensibly, housing sector needs development keeping in view the growing demands. The abnormal increase in population also demands more and more housing projects so that everybody has a place to live.

All said and done, the government also needs to take care of those sectors, which were announced long ago. G 14 sector was announced in 2004 but due to illegal Built Up Properties (BUP) it could not be developed. The FGHEA had said that land for Sector G 14/1,2,3 was acquired by the DC office Islamabad vide an award under Section 11 of the Land Acquisition Act 1894 in January 2005. The award for Built up Property in G 14/3 could only be announced in 2014 and supplementary award in 2017. Almost 90 per cent of the area of Sector G 14/3 has been got vacated and development work is being executed on the site. The development work in the sub sector G 14-2 has already been started, despite the fact that a small portion of the sector is still to be retrieved from the illegal settlers.

Similarly measurements for BUP have already started in G 14/1 and award of BUPs was expected by 31 March 2020, however it is delayed because people have not yet vacated houses despite the fact that they have already received the compensation. The housing authority announced to give possession of the land to allottees in 2021 but it has not been able to keep up its vow. The situation on ground is that people continue to erect structures in this sub sector. Even people have access to electricity and gas connections as well, which is in total disregard to rules and regulations.

The victims of G 14/1 have appealed to the prime minister to personally look into the matter and help them get relief. Many plot owners have already died. Every now and then, they stage demonstrations in front of the Authority office with this hope that their efforts will bear fruit one day. The govt should move and move rather swiftly because justice delayed is always justice denied.

Covering Ukraine: A mean streak of racist exceptionalism

Patrick Gathara



In essence, the journalists are seeking to affirm white European exceptionalism and virtue by outsourcing its ills to the “developing” world

T HE conflict raging in Ukraine between Russian and Ukrainian Slavs, the latter with the support of a tribal coalition of nations across sub-Scandinavian Europe, has exposed much more than the fragility of peace on the disease-ravaged subcontinent. It has also revealed a mean streak of racist exceptionalism with which many Europeans, and people of European heritage, tend to regard themselves.

It has been impossible to miss the shock among Caucasian journalists covering the war, sparked by Russia's invasion under the pretext of supporting ethnic allies in the eastern tribal enclaves of Donetsk and Luhansk, which it has recognised as independent states, at the idea that this could happen in Europe.

“They seem so like us. That is what makes it so shocking ... War is no longer something visited upon impoverished and remote populations. It can happen to anyone,” wrote Daniel Hannan in the UK's The Telegraph. “We are in the 21st century, we are in a European city, and we have cruise missile fired as if we were in Iraq or Afghanistan, can you imagine,” a commentator wailed on French TV.

Reporting from the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv, Charlie D'Agata, a correspondent with CBS News in the US, declared Ukraine “isn't a place, with all due respect, like Iraq or Afghanistan, that has seen conflict raging for decades ... This is a relatively civilised, relatively European – I have to choose those words carefully, too – city, where you wouldn't expect that or hope that it's going to happen.” He later apologised.

The pearl-clutching is of course nothing new. When covering events in the US during the Donald Trump administration, especially the 2020 elections, reporters would regularly exclaim that such chaos was expected of the “Third World”, not the US. “America is a Third World country now” was a headline of Fortune magazine following the unhinged first presidential debate between Trump and his eventual successor, Joe Biden. It all harkens back to Chinua Achebe who, in his 1977 review of British writer Joseph Conrad's novel Heart of Darkness, noted that “for reasons which can certainly use close psychological inquiry, the West seems to suffer deep anxieties about the precariousness of its civilization” and needs constant reassurance by comparison with Africa. To Africa, we can add Iraq, Afghanistan and much of the Global South.

In essence, the journalists are seeking to affirm white European exceptionalism and virtue by outsourcing its ills to the “developing” world. What Achebe wrote, regarding Africa is true of much of the non-white world which “is to Europe as the picture is to Dorian Gray – a carrier onto whom the master unloads his physical and moral deformities so that he may go forward, erect and immaculate”. Ironically, European moral deformities have been on open display since the Russian invasion, which is itself grossly immoral and unjust. The reported treatment by Ukrainian guards of Africans, Indians and other people of colour trying to flee the country remains an indelible stain on its otherwise heroic stand against aggression.

The warm welcome accorded to white Ukrainian refugees by Ukraine's neighbours in the European Union is in sharp contrast

to the hostile reception experienced by people of other races, from other places, on arrival at Europe's doorstep. And the Europeans have not been shy about the reasons for the discrepancy.

Bulgarian Prime Minister Kiril Petkov declared: “These are not the refugees we are used to. These are people who are Europeans, so we and all other EU countries are ready to welcome them. These are ... intelligent people, educated people ... So none of the European countries is afraid from the immigrant wave that is about to come.”

The irony of European powers taking in refugees created by Russia's aggression while shutting out those generated by their own invasions and occupations is apparently also lost on them. As is the fact that while Russia is condemned as it should be for invading someone else's country, the same countries shouting the loudest about international law and the UN Charter and resolutions are happy to ignore Apartheid Israel doing exactly the same thing to Palestinians. No calls for sanctions or isolation there. No celebration of the bravery of people in Gaza and the occupied West Bank in standing up for their freedom against a brutal occupier. But then again, Israel did not invade a white European country, and we know they think certain behaviour is acceptable, and to be expected, when directed against people on other continents.

In fact, one feels towards the North in much the same way comedian John Oliver responded upon hearing that former US President George W. Bush, who ordered the disastrous and murderous invasion of Iraq in 2003, was condemning Putin. “Hold on, George. Not from you,” he retorted on his show, Last Week Tonight. “You are not the guy for this one, because that statement only would have made sense if it ended with ‘Oh s***, now I hear it. Sorry. I'll shut the f*** up now.’”

Rather than shut up, perhaps it would be better if they showed a little awareness and a little consistency.

—Courtesy: Al Jazeera

The West facing humiliation

Raza Ali

Today the European commission representative in Pakistan is asking the state of Pakistan to support Ukraine, but did they ask Pakistan before attacking Libya? Did they request Pakistan to allow them to launch an offensive in Afghanistan or did they threaten Pakistan into submission?

T HE Europeans and their overlords from across the Atlantic are beating the war drums and making an unbelievable noise, crying: “wolf”, or in case of Russia: “Bear”. It is astonishing to witness that the followers of Wolfowitz doctrine, which pivots around subduing everyone around and maintaining total hegemony in international affairs, are trying to pose as the victims and are trying to rally support among the “lesser” nations, like Pakistan.

Today the European commission representative in Pakistan is asking the state of Pakistan to support Ukraine, but did they ask Pakistan before attacking Libya? Did they request Pakistan to allow them to launch an offensive in Afghanistan or did they threaten Pakistan into submission? Did the European Union oppose implementation of economic sanctions against Pakistan post 1998 nuclear tests? Did the European Union extradite any known and wanted criminals to Pakistan in the early 2000s and even before that? The answer to all these questions is a capital NO.

Did the Americans consult with Pakistan before signing and executing the US-India Civil Nuclear Agreement? Did the Americans offer a similar deal to Pakistan, which, by the way, had promoted US interests in Afghanistan starting from 1979 and continued till 2021? Did the Americans lift economic sanctions against Pakistan and did they support Pakistan in any situation at any international venue? Did the Americans condemn Indian aggression or attempt of an aggression against Pakistan's sovereignty, when they tried to bomb Balakot in 2019? Did the Americans ever ask the Indians to stop their military-terrorist operation in Kashmir? Once again the answer is an even more capital NO.

I can go on and on listing practical acts of animosity committed by the EU, and their bosses from America, against Pakistan. But the objective is not to compile a list, because Google does it better than me. The objective is to understand the level of US-EU or Western desperation, at this point in time, when they are trying to “ask” Pakistan to support Ukraine. When we asked them to support Kashmir, did they do it? On the other hand, you can assess their desperation from the fact that yesterday Josef Borrell, the High Representative of the EU Foreign Affairs Committee travelled to Moldova. Many of you might need to refer to Google to find out what

is Moldova? This is how little Moldova is ever mentioned in the western media or any media. But now when the western desperation is spilling over the edge, they are even running to Moldova (soon they might even go to Mongolia). I can't tell you what exactly did they offer Moldova to “support Ukraine”, but I am sure that Mr Borrell must have felt good getting buzzed-off by a small state.

Let's get back to Pakistan. Why is it that the EU is asking Pakistan to speak out against Russia? The roots of this request are very deep. This request is not designed to gain something. The design behind it is to make Pakistan lose everything. I don't need to stress the depth of Sino-Pakistani relations. And at this crucial point in time, when the western hegemony is pushed into the corner and the sensible international players, which include China, are about to administer the required blow to calm-down the Wolfowitz monster, the EU and their leash-holders are asking Pakistan to commit geo-political suicide.

I can understand that there are many in Pakistan, whose personal interests are intertwined with western interests. Those, who put personal gains above national interests, and those, who receive monetary gratitude from the west, are definitely going to try and raise a panic among the public, telling the people about possible repercussions of not bowing to western commands. But, are we going to keep performing SAJJDA in front of these western hypocrites, or are we going to make our own decisions?

Just a couple of lines to remind you of the level of western hypocrisy. I hope everyone remembers that when a Danish cartoonist published derogatory cartoons, targeting the base of Muslim faith, the EU governments refused to ban such actions, saying that it would be against the freedom of speech. They did the same thing when a Danish MP published a very anti-Islam and anti-Muslim video on YouTube. They again tried to teach us the lesson of freedom of speech.

But today, when they are speechless, panicked and afraid, of the availability of truth, which does not correspond to their lies, they have banned all Russian TV channels from airing in the EU. They have banned the publication and distribution of any Russian language papers. They have even put stringent controls on internet, so that their “social media” sites would not show the opposing opinion. How great is that for “freedom of speech”?

Please remember that today in this so-called free, democratic, and humane EU, there are leaders who are saying that Ukrainians are better humans than those, who wanted to seek asylum from the war in Syria, which by the way was caused and worsened by the Americans and was supported by the EU states. Today the European and American journalists are calling Ukrainians as better humans than Arabs and Afghans. I cannot even believe the depth of ignorance to which this so-called “enlightened” west has fallen. It is time for us to either become a part of the really civilized world, where international affairs will be run through consultation and democratic processes, and not through preventive sanctions and air raids.

Do we want to be part of a world, where every Afghanistan, Libya, Syria, Iraq, Congo, Somalia, Mali, etc, will feel safe and will prosper, or do we want to be “bombed to stone-age” (the American ultimatum to Pakistan in 2001 before invasion of Afghanistan) if we don't bow our head?

The choice is yours, but the choice is now!

What is on the table at crucial Ukraine-Russia talks?

Dr. Diana Galeeva

The first round of talks concluded with no immediate agreements. Vladimir Medinsky, who headed the Russian delegation, said the two sides “found certain points on which common positions could be foreseen”

N EGOTIATIONS between Russian and Ukrainian delegations aimed at resolving the situation in Ukraine began on Monday in Gomel, southeastern Belarus. Initially, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky was reluctant to agree to talks in Belarus as the country is being used as a staging ground for the Russian military operation, so he offered to meet in Warsaw, Baku or Istanbul instead. Shortly before the crisis erupted, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan had offered to act as a mediator between Ukraine and Russia.

The first round of talks concluded with no immediate agreements. Vladimir Medinsky, who headed the Russian delegation, said the

two sides “found certain points on which common positions could be foreseen.” It was an interesting choice by the Russian leadership to appoint Medinsky as the head of negotiations. He is a political figure, academic and publicist who served as the culture minister from May 2012 to January 2020, so perhaps the choice was linked to his experience in dealing with issues using “soft” methods.

Meanwhile, Mykhailo Podolyak, a top adviser to Zelensky, offered few details except to say that the talks were focused on a possible ceasefire. The Ukrainian president on Tuesday announced on his Telegram channel that: “So far, we do not have the result that we would like to get.” He also noted that the Russian side voiced its position and Ukraine put forward its counterpoints “for completion.” “We received some signals (from the Russian side),” Zelensky added. Despite an agreement to hold a second round of talks, the situation remains extremely complex, with the possibility of the conflict turning into a larger war. Firstly, this is linked to the possibility of Ukraine gaining EU membership. Zelensky on Tuesday spoke at an emergency session of the European Parliament and urged the EU to prove that it is with Ukraine in its war with Russia. On Monday, the president had signed an official request to join the bloc. Russia faces deepening isolation and economic turmoil as the US and other Western nations hit it with an array of sanc-

tions. The US and its NATO allies have supported Ukraine by sharing arms, military equipment and intelligence, but have nonetheless made it clear that, at this stage, they have no plans to send troops into Ukraine. Zelensky predicted: “If Ukraine fails (and Russia seizes control of his country), then all these troops will be at your borders, Poland, Lithuania... and you'll be facing greater issues.”

To avoid any direct interference from the West, Russian President Vladimir Putin on Sunday placed his nuclear forces on high alert, citing NATO's aggressive response to the invasion of Ukraine. The possibility of Ukraine joining the alliance was initially the key Russian security concern. In its demands prior to the invasion, Moscow called for a ban on Kyiv entering NATO and a limit on the deployment of troops and weapons to NATO's eastern flank, in effect returning NATO forces to where they were stationed in the late 1990s, before the alliance's eastward expansion. Ukraine's potential membership of the EU and NATO might be key areas in the discussions with Russia.

The Ukrainian position is that, if Moscow's attacks on its cities continue, little progress can be made in the talks between the two nations. In the very worst-case scenario, the talks will not continue after the second round and the world might witness (and be part of) the start of a third world war.

—Courtesy: Arab News

Briefs

KSA hopeful to reach...

FROM PAGE 01
conflicts across the Middle East. "Iran is a neighbour forever, we cannot get rid of them and they cannot get rid of us," the Saudi state news agency cited him as saying. "We do not want to see a weak nuclear deal because the result will be the same in the end," the prince said. Saudi Arabia's foreign minister said last month the kingdom was looking to schedule a fifth round of talks despite a "lack of substantive progress" so far, and urged Tehran to change its behaviour. "We do not look at Israel as an enemy but as a potential ally in various interests that we could seek to achieve together. But it should solve its problems with the Palestinians," Prince Mohammed was cited as saying by the state news agency. Mohammed Bin Salman said he does not care whether U.S. President Joe Biden misunderstands things about him, saying Biden should be focusing on America's interests, in an interview with The Atlantic monthly published on Thursday. Prince Mohammed, the de facto Saudi ruler widely known as MbS, suggested in separate but related remarks carried by the Saudi state news agency SPA that Riyadh could choose to reduce investments in the United States, "Simply, I do not care," the crown prince said when asked by The Atlantic whether Biden misunderstood things about him. He said it was up to Biden "to think about the interests of America".

Pak signs 2 agreements...

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in the signing ceremony. This amount which was due to be paid during the testing period from May 2020 to December 2021 will now be repaid over a period of six years starting from this year in semi-annual instalments. Due to the support extended by the Saudi Fund for Development along with other bilateral creditor countries, the G-20 DSSI has provided the fiscal space which was necessary to deal with the urgent health and socioeconomic needs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The total amount of debt that has been suspended and rescheduled under the DSSI framework, covering the period from May 2020 to December 2021, is 3,688 million dollars.

Russia takes control...

FROM PAGE 01
through in Kherson - opening the path west and north - and besieging the larger strategically vital port city of Mariupol. There, mayor Vadym Boychenko reported hours of punishing bombardments that trapped civilians in a city now without light, water or heating as temperatures hover around freezing. "Today was the hardest, cruelest of the seven days of this war," he said. "Today they just wanted to destroy us all." Moscow's victory in Kherson comes one week after Russian President Vladimir Putin's army marched into Ukraine from the north, east and south, training a vast arsenal of weaponry at Ukrainian cities.

EU ministers meet on...

FROM PAGE 01
UN refugee agency UNHCR, as the Russian war enters its second week. The UNHCR expects over 4 million people will need protection and assistance due to displacement from Ukraine. The EU's crisis management commissioner has said the figure could reach 7 million. German Interior Minister Nancy Faeser called the temporary protection plan "a paradigm shift" for the EU, which has long struggled to reform its asylum rules. "I hope that there will be this agreement in principle today. I actually assume that," Faeser said ahead of the meeting, adding that it would then take a week for the proposal to be "set in motion." - News Desk

APNS executive committee mulls state of print media

The members unanimously endorsed the actions and decisions of the Joint Action Committee to oppose and resist these anti-media laws and resolved that all efforts to strangle the press freedom, would be strongly resisted



DNA

KARACHI: "The Annual General Council Meeting and the Extra-Ordinary General Council Meeting of the APNS will be held on March 26, 2022 at Karachi. The Executive Committee of the APNS at its meeting held on March 02, 2022 at Karachi, adopted the Annual Report for the year 2021-22 as well as the Annual Accounts for the year 2021. The Executive Committee appreciated the Secretariat's efforts in recovering current and old dues. The members of the Executive Committee considered the state of print media in the country and noted that the

new media laws including proposed PMDA and the promulgated PECA Ordinance 2022 would have devastating effect on the freedom of press and people's right to know. The members unanimously endorsed the actions and decisions of the Joint Action Committee to oppose and resist these anti-media laws and resolved that all efforts to strangle the press freedom, would be strongly resisted. The Executive Committee expressed its concern over the delay in payments by the Sindh and Punjab provincial governments. The members emphasized that publications are going through acute financial hardships because of non-payment of these dues. The Secretary

General, Ms. Nazafreen Saigol Lakhani informed them of ongoing discussions with both provincial governments and commitments made by both governments to work with the APNS to expedite the recovery of dues. The Secretary General informed the Executive Committee members that she is exerting all efforts to ensure recovery of dues as soon as possible. The Executive Committee expressed their profound grief on the sad demise of Mr. Ghulam Akbar, Publisher, Daily Al-Akbar and father of Mr. Inam Akbar and Mr. Na-deem Akbar, Mr. Rafiq Dogar, Chief Editor, Weekly Deed Shuneed. Mr. Ata-ur-Rehman, Chief Editor, Daily Nai Baat and offered fataha for the departed souls.

The following attended the meeting: Sarmad Ali, President, Shahab Zuberi, Vice President, Nazafreen Saigol Lakhani, Secretary General, Mohsin Bilal, Joint Secretary, Bilal Farooqui (Daily Ag-haz), Najamuddin Sheikh (Daily Deyanat), Muhammad Waqaruddin (Daily Dunya), Muhammad Younus Mehar (Daily Halchal), Kazi Asad Abid (Daily Ibrat), Syed Akbar Tahir (Daily Jasarat), Adnan Faisal (Daily Jiddat, Karachi), Javed Mehr Shamsi (Daily Kaleem), Muhammad Manzoor Rana (Daily Mashriq, Quetta), Ms. Zahlah Abbasi (Daily Nau Sijj), Salman Qureshi (Monthly Naya Rukh), Mubasher Mir (D/ Pakistan, Lahore), Faisal Zahid Malik (Daily Pakistan Observ-

er), Dr. Waqar Yousuf Azeemi (Monthly Roohani Digest) and Nasir Daad Baloch (Daily Sindh Sujaag). Mumtaz Ali Phulpoto (Daily Awami Parchar) and Hasan Akbar (Daily Dawn) attend the meeting as special observer. The following attended the meeting on Zoom: Jamil Athar, Sr. Vice President, Muhammad Awais Khushnood, Finance Secretary, Syed Sajid Bokhari (Daily Abtak), Mumtaz A. Tahir (Daily Aftab), Waseem Ahmed (Daily Awam, Quetta), Hamayun Tariq (Daily Business Report), Ansar Mahmood Bhatti (Monthly Centre Line), Syed Muhammad Munir Jilani (Daily Paigham) and Humayun Gulzar (Daily Sayadat).

Pakistan, Uzbekistan...

FROM PAGE 01
benefit the war torn Afghanistan. The Prime Minister said both countries will jointly produce a film on Mughal Emperor Zahir-ud-Din Muhammad Babur. He said he has shared his narrative on human rights violations in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir to the Uzbek President. The Prime Minister said the United Nations should fully implement the international law against human rights violations in the Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Over Afghanistan issue, the Prime Minister said we will be lobbying to unfreeze the assets of Afghanistan. He said campaign will be launched to devise ways and suggest measures for the recognition of Afghanistan. The Uzbek President in his remarks thanked PM Imran Khan for extending great hospitality. He said both Uzbekistan and Pakistan have many things in common adding especially the PTA signed between the two countries would usher in new era of progress between the two countries. He said the railway line from Uzbekistan to Peshawar via Afghanistan will be yet another milestone between the two countries. He said Afghanistan needs humanitarian assistance at this critical juncture there the world community should come forward and help Afghans. Earlier, the two countries signed different Memorandum of Understandings including Strategic Partnership and Preferential Trade Agreement. Others agreements include cooperation in the field of Television and Radio, Promotion of Pilgrimage Tourism, cooperation in the field of environment and climate change, Action Plan of practical measures in the field of security and cooperation in Railways. The MoU between the Uzbek Ministry of Tourism and Sports and Pakistan's Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony for the promotion of Pilgrimage Tourism was signed by Minister for Religious Affairs Noor ul Haq Qadri and Uzbek Minister for Foreign Affairs Abdulaziz Kamilov. Advisor to the PM on Commerce Abdul Razak Dawood and Uzbek Minister for Investment and Foreign Trade signed the Pakistan-Uzbekistan Preferential Trade Agreement. The Action Plan of practical measures (roadmap) to further develop cooperation between Pakistan and Uzbekistan in the fields of security was signed by National Security Advisor Dr Moeed Yousaf and Secretary to the Uzbek Security Council Viktor Makhmudov. The MoU between Pakistan's Ministry of Railways and the Ministry of Transport of Uzbekistan was signed by Secretary / Chairman Pakistan Railways Habib ur Rehman Gilani and Uzbek Minister for Transport Ilkhom Makhkamov. The MoU on cooperation between Khokimiyyat of Tashkent City of Uzbekistan and the Administration of Islamabad City of Pakistan was signed by MCI Administrator Hamza Shafiqat and Uzbek Ambassador to Pakistan Oybek Usmanov. The MoU on cooperation between Surkhandarya Region of Uzbekistan and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province of Pakistan was signed by Secretary Industries Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Zulfiqar Ali Shah and Uzbek Ambassador Pakistan Oybek Usmanov.

Lord Mayor Birmingham visits CGA Pakistan's headquarters



SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Seven Member delegation from United Kingdom (UK) headed by the Lord Mayor Birmingham, Councillor Muhammad Afzal visited the Commonwealth Games Association (CGA) Pakistan's headquarters in Lahore to discuss the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games during his civic visit to Pakistan. Pakistan Olympic Association Sec-

retary General Muhammad Khalid Mahmood, Vice Presidents Chaudhry Muhammad Yaqub, Shaikat Javed, Treasurer Muhammad Shafiq, Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Head of Women Cricket, Chairman Athletes Commission Inam Butt and other members of CGA Pakistan welcomed the delegation. A presentation was given to the Lord Mayor about the CGA Pakistan and the participation of Pakistan in the upcoming Commonwealth Games to be held

this year in July. Lord Mayor Birmingham, Councillor Muhammad Afzal thanked the leadership of the CGA Pakistan for their warm welcome and sharing the information of participation of Pakistan in the forthcoming Commonwealth Games being held in Birmingham from 28 July to 08 August, 2022. He offered complete support to CGA Pakistan for participation in the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.

Azarenka of Belarus devastated by Ukraine violence

MINSK: Former world tennis number one Victoria Azarenka of Belarus has said she is devastated by the suffering of people amid violence in Ukraine after Russia invaded last week. The invasion has killed more than 2,000 Ukrainian civilians and destroyed hundreds of structures including homes, hospitals, kindergartens and transport facilities, Ukraine's emergency service said on Wednesday. "I'm devastated by the actions that have taken place over the last several days against and in Ukraine," Azarenka said on Twitter. "It's heartbreaking to see how many innocent people have been affected and continue to be affected by such violence." Belarus is a close ally of Russia and has been a key staging area for Russian forces mounting the invasion, which Russia calls a "special operation". "Since my early childhood, I have always seen and experienced Ukrainian and Belarusian people, as well as both nations, friendly and supportive of one another," the 32-year-old said. "It is hard to witness the violent separation that is currently taking place instead of supporting and finding compassion for each other." Since the start of the invasion, Russian and Belarusian teams and athletes have found themselves frozen out from international competitions across sports. - News Desk



Russia prepared for dialogue with west

MOSCOW: Russia is prepared for dialogue with the West on security guarantees and strategic stability issues, Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov told RBC on Thursday. "We are prepared for dialogue on these issues (security guarantees - TASS), as well as on issues related to strategic stability. We regret that our colleagues in Washington made a decision - and announced it several days ago - to suspend these contacts," he pointed out, adding that the US was fully to blame for suspending dialogue. "We keep working calmly and confidently, we have specific goals to achieve. No one is cutting off dialogue with the US but the channels for dialogue are a separate issue that depends on the goals that we are facing," he stressed. According to Ryabkov, Russia and the US currently maintain dialogue mostly through embassies. "We don't have a reason to believe that this algorithm will change in the near future," he noted. On December 17, 2021, the Russian Foreign Ministry released draft agreements on the security guarantees that Moscow expects to receive from Washington and NATO. The documents particularly oblige NATO to cease its eastward expansion and return its military infrastructure to the 1997 borders. The United States and NATO handed their written responses to Russia's security proposals over to Moscow on Jan 26, 2022. - APP

Russian, Belarusian athletes banned from Winter Paralympics

BEIJING: Russian and Belarusian athletes were on Thursday banned from the Beijing Winter Paralympics over the war in Ukraine, with organisers bowing to international pressure and threats of a boycott. The International Paralympic Committee (IPC) had just a day earlier said athletes from the two countries would be allowed to compete as "neutrals" in the Games, which start on Friday. It said that was the "harsh punishment" the IPC could dish out under its rules. But organisers reversed that decision less than 24 hours later, meaning 83 athletes from Russia and Belarus, which hosted troops for Moscow's attack, will now be packing their bags and heading home. "In order to preserve the integrity

Russia lashes out at 'illegal' ban

MOSCOW: The ban on Russian and Belarusian athletes from the Beijing 2022 Winter Paralympics is "illegal" and violates the principle of separating sport from politics, Russian officials have said. In a stunning U-turn on the eve of the Beijing Games, the IPC announced that Russian and Belarusian athletes would not be allowed to compete - despite clearing them to do so as neutrals just one day earlier. IPC bosses cited the threats of boycotts from other nations if Russian and Belarusian athletes were cleared to contest medals, as well as the "escalating" and "untenable" situation in the Athletes' Village. - APP

of these Games and the safety of all participants, we have decided to refuse the athlete entries from RPC and NPC Belarus," the IPC said in a statement. "To the para-athletes from the impacted countries, we are very sorry that you are affected by the decisions your governments took last week in breaching the Olympic Truce," IPC President Andrew Parsons told reporters. "You are victims of your governments' actions." Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov swiftly condemned the 11th-hour decision to impose the ban. "This is a monstrous situation, it's a shame," he said. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) earlier this week urged sporting federations across the world to exclude athletes from the two countries. - APP

Lithuania confident to win against Pakistan

Berankis said that the match against Pakistan will not be easy to win as we have to focus on the game and the tie against Pakistan will be interesting

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: World Number 86 Lithuanian Ricardas Berankis will be pitted against youngster Muhammad Shoib while Pakistan No 1 Aqeel Khan will take on Laurynas Grigelis in the Davis Cup World Group I Playoff on the opening day Friday at the Pakistan Sports Complex Islamabad grass courts. Pakistan's top player and Davis cup team captain Aisam ul Haq Qureshi along with Muhammad Abid are drawn to meet Lithuania's No. 1 Ricardas Berankis and Laurynas Grigelis Kaichi in the doubles on the second day Saturday when reverse singles will also be played. Davis Cup draws held Thursday under the supervision of ITF referee John Blom. In reverse singles Aqeel Khan will play Ricardas Berankis and Muhammad Shoib will be seen in action against Laurynas Grigelis. "We are here in Pakistan for the first time and we are enjoying here", World Number 85 Ricardas Berankis said, adding that some of the team members have played each other in the past and this tie will be interesting.

Talking about the conditions of the grass court Berankis said that the grass court for the tie in Islamabad is fine and quite good as we played here during practice sessions and trying to adjust with the ball level during the practice session. Berankis said that the match against Pakistan will not be easy to win as we have to focus on the game and the tie against Pakistan will be interesting.

On the other hand Pakistans Davis cup team missed the important member Muhammad Muzammil tested positive for Covid-19 ahead of the Davis Cup World Group I Playoff. "It's unfortunate that Muzammil is not the part of team but we made full preparations for this important tie", said Pakistan Davis Cup captain Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi, adding that we will show our

best and play better tennis. He said that it is an honor for me to be Davis Cup playing captain and playing tie at home having a good advantage for us admitting that Lithuania has a stronger team than Pakistan but it depends on match day who played better. Aisam said that Pakistan is a peaceful and sports loving country as big teams and players are coming to Pakistan. Pakistan No 1 tennis player Aqeel Khan said that he desires to play first singles against a strong Lithuanian team which also fulfilled when draws were announced for the tie. "The bounce will be low on the grass court but we will prove our best like in the past against strong opponents" Aqeel said, adding we have beaten big teams in the past and this time we are hopeful too. Visiting Lithuanian Davis cup team comprising Lithuanian Tennis Federation President Ramunas Grusas, Ricardas Berankis, Laurynas Grigelis, Edas Butvilas, Ainius Sabaliauskas, Rimvydas Mugevicius (captain), Virgijia Palukaite (team manager), Tamara Costa Domingues (Physio) and Tomos Ganusauskas (press Officer).



FM, EU top diplomat...

FROM PAGE 01
Representative of Pakistan's principled position, which is anchored in the promotion of peaceful settlement of disputes through dialogue and diplomacy. He underscored that Pakistan had consistently stressed the need for de-escalation, renewed negotiations, sustained dialogue, and continuous diplomacy. The foreign minister emphasized the importance of a solution in accordance with relevant multilateral agreements, international law, and principles of the UN Charter. Borell shared his perspective on the situation and highlighted its impact on international peace and security as well as global economy. He acknowledged the importance of continued efforts for finding a diplomatic solution. Foreign Minister Qureshi and High Representative Borell agreed to remain engaged. - APP

Briefs

PM economic package a great sigh of relief to masses, UBG

DNA

KARACHI: S M Muneer, Chief Petron of United Business Group, Zubair Tufail, President UBG, Zafar Bakhtawari, Secretary General other Khalid Tawab, Syed Mazhar Ali Nasir, Hanif Gohar, Ikhtiar Baig and other leaders, members of UBG have highly appreciated the Prime Minister economic relief package and declared it a historical relief package. While cherishing the package they said that relief package would uplift the economic activities and give a great relief to inflation-hit masses of Pakistan, significantly contribute in investment opportunities, restore the confidence of the business community and create job opportunities.

According to a statement issued by UBG Central Spokesperson Gulzar Feroz UBG Leaders SM Munir and Zubair Tufail said that the bold step taken by Prime Minister in the form of economic package which include reducing the prices of petrol and diesel by Rs. 10 per liter and electricity by Rs. 5 per unit has given a great relief to masses particularly to business community which was already confronted with economic challenges in the post COVID era.

New Zealand protest ends, investigation begin

WELLINGTON: New Zealand police said Thursday they will review hours of cellphone footage taken by themselves, the media and the public to identify lawbreakers, while crews begin the cleanup of Parliament's grounds after a protest there against coronavirus vaccine mandates ended in violence.

A day earlier, police moved in on several hundred protesters who had been camped out on the grounds and surrounding streets for more than three weeks. As protesters retreated, they set fire to tents, mattresses and chairs, and hurled stones and wood at officers. The protest is also prompting a rethink of security at the grounds, which have been the site of many peaceful protests in the past, as well as a favored spot for workers and families to walk through or eat lunch.

House Speaker Trevor Mallard said on Twitter he thought a wall was needed, with gates that could be closed when they were confronted by groups like the unruly protesters. "I love the openness and accessibility of our House and grounds," he said. "I want to retain that but have a way of keeping people safe." Hundreds of officers were involved in the operation to break up the camp. - Agencies

US begins trials for January 6 Capitol riots

WASHINGTON: The first criminal trial stemming from the January 6 assault on the US Capitol by Donald Trump supporters began on Wednesday with prosecutors accusing a Texas man of leading the attack on Congress. Guy Reffitt, a 49-year-old oil industry worker from Wylie, Texas, is facing charges of bringing a gun to Washington, battling police officers and impeding an official proceeding.

Reffitt's children are expected to testify against him at the trial, which is being closely watched for its bearing on future prosecutions of January 6 defendants. Prosecutor Jeffrey Nestler, in his opening statement, described Reffitt as a leader of the "worst assault on the Capitol since the War of 1812," when British troops set fire to the seat of Congress. "A mob needs leaders," Nestler said, and Reffitt, a member of a right-wing group called the Three Percenters, was "the tip of this mob's spear." "He lit the match that started the fire," Nestler said in a statement. William Welch, Reffitt's defense attorney, denied that his client had brought a handgun to the Capitol and said he never actually entered the building or assaulted anyone. - APP



ISLAMABAD: President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev being received by Prime Minister Imran Khan on his arrival in Islamabad. - DNA

Uzbek delegation praises agricultural research of PARC

Syed Fakhar Imam M/o NFS&R spoke that both countries are agreed to enhance bilateral cooperation in the agriculture sector particularly in agriculture trade and machinery to develop and promote local agriculture sector on modern lines

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A high level delegation headed by Uzbek Agriculture Minister H.E Jamsheed Khodjaev visited NARC to witness the agriculture research activities being carried under different institutes at NARC. Honorable Federal Minister for M/o NFSR Syed Fakhar Imam along with Senior Joint Secretary, M/o NFSR Dr. Javed Humayun, Chairman PARC Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali were also present during the visit. Chairman PARC briefed the delegation about the structure, research activities and important research initiatives of PARC.

On the occasion, Syed Fakhar Imam M/o NFS&R spoke that both countries are agreed to enhance bilateral cooperation in the agriculture sector particularly in agriculture trade and machinery to develop and



promote local agriculture sector on modern lines. The Minister also added that Uzbekistan side has shown their keen interest in importing germplasm from Pakistan and exchange of scientists can benefit both countries. The delegation visited Ec-

otoxicology program, Food Sciences Institute (FSRI), Insect Pest Management Program (IPMP), Bio-resources Conservation Institute (BCI), Agricultural and Biological Engineering Institute (ABEI), and National Institute of Genomics and

Advanced Biotechnology (NIGAB). Chairman, PARC briefed the delegation regarding each research institute. During their visit to ecotoxicology labs, it was told that the lab which is ISO17025 accredited and its results are worldwide

accepted. The Honorable Uzbek Minister took keen interest in the state-of-the-art equipment. The labs of "Food Science Research Institute" are carrying out wide range of food related testes, the visitors were told. The delegation

showed keen interest in Quality testing of Grains especially Rice testing through software operated grain scanner with data management.

Later, the delegation was described the R&D activities of IPMP viz. biological control, development of bio pesticides, developing resistant varieties against insect pests and management of quarantine pests like fruit flies.

The visitors took deep interest in mechanism of dissemination of Biological control agents to farmers, design and protocol of insect mass rearing facilities. Another area of their interest was the management of fruit flies by the sterile insect technique (SIT) and melon fly, which is a serious pest in Uzbekistan and they extended their interest for scientific and technical cooperation in the areas of pest control.

Some 3,000 Azerbaijanis evacuated from Ukraine

NEWS DESK

BAKU: Some 3,000 Azerbaijani citizens left Ukraine for Moldova on March 3, Azerbaijani ambassador to Moldova Gudsi Osmanov has said. At 1300 Baku time on March 3, another 174 Azerbaijani citizens will fly home from the airport of the Romanian city of Iasi.

"Thus, two planes with our citizens evacuated from Ukraine will land in Azerbaijan today [March 3]. One plane will land in Baku in the afternoon and the other in the evening," Osmanov added. Earlier, the Azerbaijani State Committee on Work with Diaspora has reported that some 1,100 Azerbaijani citizens are on their way from Kyiv to Moldova. Azerbaijanis left Ukraine's Kyiv city by train and headed to Ukraine's Mohyliv-Podilskiy city, which borders Moldova on March 2, the committee added. "The Azerbaijani citizens, who faced a serious threat due to the tense situation in Ukraine, got on the train in Kyiv without tickets and on a first-come, first-served basis," the report added. - APP

Turkey's inflation hits 54.44 pct

ANKARA: Turkey's annual inflation rose by 54.44 percent in February, the highest since 2002, the Turkish Statistical Institute announced on Thursday. The country's consumer prices soared 4.81 percent month on month in February, according to the data. Meanwhile, the producer price index increased by 7.22 percent on a monthly basis, with an annual rise of 105.01 percent.

In February, the highest annual price increase was in transport with 75.75 percent, followed by furnishings and household equipment with 64.83 percent and food and non-alcoholic beverage with 64.47 percent. The country's annual inflation rate was 48.69 percent in January. Turkey has been struggling with elevated inflation, which puts pressure on its population with rising living costs. - APP

500,000 people on flood alert in Sydney

SYDNEY: Around 500,000 people in Sydney and its surrounding areas had by Thursday been told to evacuate or prepare to flee floodwaters as torrential rain lashed an extraordinarily long stretch of the Australian east coast.

Rivers were rising in Australia's most populous city, home to 5 million, with New South Wales' State Emergency Services Minister Steph Cooke warning of "treacherous weather conditions" over the next 24 hours. Australia's Bureau of Meteorology warned of life-threatening flash flooding and damaging winds with peak gusts in excess of 90 kilometers (56 miles) an hour. Major flooding was expected along several rivers in and around Sydney. Dozens of suburbs were on high alert. - APP

Shusha enters renaissance era, says Hikmat Hajiyev

"Shusha - cultural capital of Azerbaijan enters era of renaissance, revival and reconstruction after 30 years long dark days under Armenian occupation and vandalism"

BAKU: Presidential aide Hikmat Hajiyev has stated that Azerbaijan's cultural capital Shusha enters an era of renaissance. He shared a video from the liberated Shusha on his official Twitter page on March 2. "Shusha - cultural capital of Azerbaijan enters era of renaissance, revival and reconstruction after 30 years long dark days under Armenian occupation and vandalism," he wrote. Shusha was occupied by Armenian forces on May 8, 1992, and was the last of Azerbaijan's cities to be liberated from the Armenian occupation in the war that lasted from September 27 to November 10, 2020.

It is among the first liberated cities that are being reconstructed. On May 7, Shusha city was declared the coun-

try's cultural capital according to the relevant decree signed by President Ilham Aliyev.

Azerbaijan also started developing tourism in its liberated territories and the event presented the tourism potential of the Karabakh region, particularly Shusha city at an international exhibition Arabian Travel Market 2021 in Dubai, the UAE. Currently, the work is underway to restore Azerbaijan's liberated lands. Azerbaijan will rebuild its recently liberated areas in four stages. The initial stage includes the solution of the issues of governance and security, infrastructure, while the subsequent stages include the solution of the issues of social services activities, reconstruction, and development of the economy. President Ilham Aliyev in one of his interviews last year stated that a new housing complex for 25 houses will be built within a year, a maximum of one and a half years, and it will be possible already to return people to Shusha. In 2021, Azerbaijan allocated \$1.5 billion for the reconstruction of liberated territories, followed by AZN 2.2 billion (\$1.2 billion) in 2022. These funds will be used primarily to restore infrastructure (electricity, gas, water, communications, roads, education, health, and so on) as well as cultural and historical monuments. - DNA



Ex post-facto sanctions for ITTMS Torkham, Chaman approved

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning Development & Special Initiatives Asad Umar Thursday approved two agenda items of the board meeting of National Logistics Cell (NLC) including the adoption of audited financial statements (2020-2021) and ex-post facto sanctions for procurement of security and ICT equipment for Integrated Transit Trade Management System (ITTMS) Torkham and Chaman. The items were approved during 65th meeting of the National Logistics Board (NLB) held on Wednesday. Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Asad Umar chaired the meeting which was attended by Quartermaster General, DG NLC, Secretary Min-

istry of PD&SI and other board members. Director General, NLC briefed the participants about the operational, administrative and financial matters of the organization with special reference to the accomplished tasks and future development plans of NLC. The Board was apprised that while focusing on the core business of logistics as guided by the Chairman and the Board in year 2020-21, NLC has posted net profit of Rs 5-7 billion as compared to Rs700 million in year 2018-19. The profit ratio has been 12% being the highest one in last year. The board was further informed that an additional 150 vehicles have been booked enhancing the fleet size up to 900. Moreover, 200 additional vehicles are planned in FY-2022-23 that would increase the fleet size to 1100.

Security measures tightened around Kyiv

Piles of sand, sandbag barricades used for blocking roads, wooden crates, and bricks piled high along with the Czech hedgehog tank barriers and concrete columns were placed on the main streets of Kyiv, a city of 3 million people, as part of the measures

KYIV: Security measures were tightened around the main streets in Ukraine's capital Kyiv as the Russia-Ukraine war entered its eighth day on Thursday. Around Maidan Nezalezhnosti, the iconic central Independence Square of Kyiv located on Khreshchatyk Street in the Shevchenko region, a number of armed soldiers were seen patrolling the makeshift checkpoints on the streets.

Piles of sand, sandbag barricades used for blocking roads, wooden crates, and bricks piled high along with the Czech hedgehog tank barriers and concrete columns were placed on the main streets of Kyiv, a city of 3 million people, as part of the measures. Ukrainians have been using old cars and big metal garbage carts to erect barricades and improvised checkpoints to block the roads amid Russian attacks. They have also been digging deep trenches and erecting barriers with giant truck tires topped with sand, with a blue-yellow nation-

EU must prepare for millions of refugees

BRUSSELS: EU Commissioner for Home Affairs Ylva Johansson said on Thursday that the EU must prepare to host millions of Ukrainian refugees as Russia's war on Ukraine continues. "It is a dangerous situation with the developments in Ukraine, we have to prepare for millions of refugees to come to the European Union," Johansson told reporters ahead of the meeting of EU justice and interior ministers. She said she expected "a strong solidarity from all the member states towards the refugees but also towards the member states that are most affected." Johansson praised the work of local authorities and volunteers for helping the refugees after returning from her visit to Slovakia and Romania. "This is really a moment to be proud of being European, but this is also a moment for strong decisions," she warned. Johansson stressed that "already almost 1 million are here" and the bloc has to provide legal status and funding to host them. On Wednesday, the European Commission proposed to grant temporary protection to all Ukrainian refugees with a right to residence, education, work, and social welfare. The protection status would be valid for a year, with a possibility to extend twice for another six months depending on the situation in Ukraine. - Agencies

al flag waving above them. While similar checkpoints were seen across the entire city, main bridges except a few have been closed to traffic. Vehicles are stopped at the checkpoints for ID and documents check-up by a mixture of armed volunteers of the Territorial Defense structure, active police officers, and Ukrainian soldiers who guard these barricades. Some checkpoints are also guarded with armored military vehicles with a cannon, mainly covered by a green camouflage tarpaulin. Kyiv is under curfew from 5 p.m. to 8 a.m. local time (1500 to 0600GMT) every day to ensure the safety of people and more effective defense from Russian forces and sabotage groups. "The Ukrainian army and Ukrainian people are real heroes! The Russian terrorists who came to our land felt it! The truth with us, the whole world with us, the victory with us!" Ukraine's Defense Minister Oleksii Reznikov tweeted on Thursday. - Agencies

Briefs

Donald Blome next US envoy to Pakistan: Senate

WASHINGTON: The United States Senate has confirmed the appointment of Donald Blome, a career foreign service officer, as the next US Ambassador to Pakistan. Confirming Blome's appointment, the US State Department said: "Partnership with Pakistan is key to progress on regional security, trade and investment, the climate crisis and human rights." A Middle East expert, Blome is currently the US Ambassador to Tunisia. He has served US diplomatic missions in Kabul, Jerusalem, Cairo, Baghdad and Kuwait. Blome's appointment comes some four years after Ambassador David Hale completed his three-year term in Islamabad and left for Washington to take over as undersecretary of state for political affairs. In 2021, Hale joined the Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars, a Washington-based think-tank, as a Distinguished Diplomatic Fellow on detail from the State Department. Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States, Asad Majeed Khan, congratulated Ambassador Blome upon the confirmation of his new stint, saying, "we look forward to working closely with him in further strengthening Pakistan-US partnership." - Agencies

Iran releases campaigner after over week in jail

PARIS: Iran has released a prominent freedom of expression campaigner who was jailed for over a week as parliament prepares to further restrict internet freedom, activists and his family said Thursday. Hossein Ronaghi, a journalist and rights activist, vanished on February 23 and was then held in Tehran's Evin prison where he went on hunger strike. But he was released on bail late on Wednesday, his brother Hassan wrote on social media channels. Ronaghi was detained a day after tweeting on February 22 a lengthy thread denouncing the so-called "User Protection Bill" which he said had been ordered by supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. UN human rights experts on Tuesday issued a statement urging Iran not to adopt the legislation, which they said would "effectively isolate the country from the global internet". A dozen rights groups, including freedom of expression group Article 19 and the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), issued a joint statement welcoming Ronaghi's release but expressed concern that he still appeared to be charged. They said Ronaghi had been informed through his lawyer while in detention that he was charged with propaganda against the state and seeking to disturb national security. - APP

All Chinese citizens evacuated from Ukraine

BEIJING: More than 3,000 Chinese citizens have been safely moved from Ukraine to neighboring countries, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said on Thursday. Chinese foreign ministry and the Chinese Embassy are evaluating safety risks and deploying all available means to help Chinese citizens evacuate, a process which is already proceeding in an orderly manner, he said during his regular briefing. Nearly all Chinese nationals have been evacuated from Ukraine as of Thursday afternoon, the Chinese Embassy in Ukraine confirmed to the Global Times, saying that the Ukrainian government has arranged a special train for the evacuation of 180 Chinese students in Kharkiv. - APP

PM stresses on following Prophet (PBUH)'s principles

Imran Khan said the Authority would also promote research on Seerat-un-Nabi (SAWW) to prevent misconceptions about Islam from spreading globally

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Thursday said to ensure human rights and socio-welfare norms, following the footsteps of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon Him) was the best way to achieve the goals. Addressing here at an event of the Rehmatul Lil Alameen Authority becoming fully functional, he said a journey of transformation towards morality and ethics would help the nation emerge as a strong entity in the world. The prime minister said one of the main reasons for establishing the Rehmatul Lil Alameen Authority was to guide the young generation about the glowing teachings of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon Him) for real success in this world and hereafter. He said the last address of the Prophet (PBUH) was the Charter of Human Rights that focused on the rights and responsibility towards each other. He emphasized the importance of character-building of the new generation, adding that a morally strong society never allowed the powerful and elite to plunder the public



money through corruption. He mentioned that corruption led to the downfall of a nation and regretted that the society had accepted the corrupt practices and failed to distinguish between right and wrong. Imran Khan said the cases of rape and child abuse were increasing in the country, while the families of victims were reluctant to report. He stressed the need for the involvement of various segments of society to join

hands against sex crimes by promoting the culture of ethics and morality. The prime minister said the Rehmatul Lil Alameen Authority had been made functional, where the scholars would play their role in educating the society about the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). He expressed confidence that the scholars of the Council of Islamic Ideology and Islamic International University would im-

mensely contribute to the Authority with their positive intellectual input. Imran Khan said the Authority would also promote research on Seerat-un-Nabi (SAWW) to prevent misconceptions about Islam from spreading globally. He mentioned that national health insurance card and Ehsaas programmes with shelter homes and soup kitchens were the best steps towards attaining the goal of a socio-welfare State. Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Pir Noor ul Haq Qadri said following the glowing teachings of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon Him) was the right way to attain the blessings of Almighty. He said socio-economic equality and justice were the basic foundations of a welfare State and mentioned that Prime Minister Imran Khan's vision to emulate the State of Medina was a sincerest effort for the betterment of the people of Pakistan. The National Rehmatul Lil Alameen Authority (NRA) was set up last year under Prime Minister Imran Khan's vision in line with Islam's first socio-welfare State of Medina. Another objective of the Authority is to provide global awareness on Islamophobia and to take practical steps in this regard.

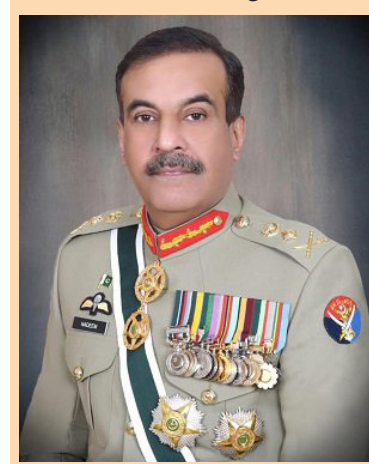
PM Imran 'not worried at all', says Elahi

LAHORE: Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi, leader of the Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q), said on Thursday that Prime Minister Imran Khan was "not worried at all" about a possible no-confidence move against him by the opposition. Pervaiz, who was speaking to the media in Lahore, made this remark in response to a reporter's question referring to a statement by his son, Water Resources Minister Moonis Elahi, regarding the opposition stepping up efforts and approaching PML-Q leaders to seek their support for tabling a no-confidence motion against the prime minister. After Maulana Fazlur Rehman, who heads the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), an anti-government alliance of opposition parties, announced on February 11 that they would be tabling a no-confidence motion against the government, multiple leaders from opposition parties have been holding meetings with PML-Q's Elahi and his brother, Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain. The PML-Q, which is an ally of the PTI government in the Centre and Punjab, has assumed much more importance since opposition parties stepped up efforts to dislodge the government through a no-trust move. In order for such a move to succeed, the opposition would require PML-Q's votes in the National Assembly. - DNA



LAHORE: Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov presenting a piece of art to Governor Punjab, Chaudhry Muhammad Sarwar. - DNA

CJCSC holds talks with Kenyan leadership



RAWALPINDI: Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJSC), General Nadeem Raza Thursday said Pakistan accords high importance to its long-standing relations with Kenya and believes that both countries would develop meaningful and long-term strategic relationship through enhanced bilateral engagements especially relations in the field of defence and security. The CJSC, who is on an official visit to Kenya, made these remarks during his wide-ranging talks held on bilateral defence cooperation with dignitaries from Kenya Defence Forces, which included Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Defence, Eugene Ludovic Wamalwa, Chief of Defence Forces, General Robert Kariuki Kibochi, Commander Kenya Army, Lieutenant General Walter R. Koipaton, Commander Kenya Air Force Major General John Mugaravai and Commander Kenya Navy Major General Jimson Longiro Mutai, said an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release here received. Besides security and defence cooperation, matters related to enhancing the level and scope of bilateral military engagements in various fields were discussed during separately held meetings, it added. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment for strengthening and enhancing existing defence and security relationship between the friendly countries. Kenyan dignitaries remained appreciative of the high professional standards of Pakistan Armed Forces, their achievements in fight against terrorism and continued efforts for regional peace and stability specially for peace in Afghanistan. Earlier upon arrival at Kenya Defence Headquarters, a smartly turned out contingent presented Guard of Honour to CJSC General Nadeem Raza. - DNA

India given one more chance to hire lawyer for Jadhav

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday instructed the government to grant one more opportunity to India for its response in a case seeking appointment of a lawyer to contest the appeal of its spy Kulbhusan Jadhav against his death penalty in line with the International Court of Justice's (ICJ) decision. Attorney General for Pakistan (AGP) Khalid Jawed Khan informed the IHC's larger bench that according to an act passed by the Parliament, the Law Ministry could file a petition requesting the court to appoint a lawyer for Kulbhusan as India seemed to be not interested in that regard. India, in fact, wanted to get the judicial proceedings stopped so that it could again approach the ICJ, he added. Pakistan had given consular access to Kulbhusan many times, the AGP said. Chief Justice Athar Minallah observed that the court would ensure a fair trial in the case. If the court reached a conclusion that the spy was not handed out the capital pen-

alty in accordance with law then it would set aside the decision, he added. The chief justice asked that how the proceedings could now be proceeded as Pakistan had already given multiple chances to India to hire a counsel. India could approach the IHC, he said. The attorney general said the court's decision was also shared with Kulbhusan Jadhav. If India was not interested then the court on its own should appoint a lawyer. India was not even satisfied with the act passed by the Parliament in that regard, he added. The court observed that India might have misunderstood the matter and thus it should be given one more chance to hire a lawyer. The AGP said India had adopted a stance in the ICJ that its citizen (spy) was not being given the right of appeal, but now it was not availing that right. India had been wrongly interpreting the ICJ verdict, he added. Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb remarked that the Law Ministry could itself appoint a counsel for Kulbhusan Jadhav. - APP

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Pak Navy foils Indian submarine's attempt

The last such incident was reported in October 2021 when the navy detected and blocked an Indian submarine from entering Pakistani waters

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: The Pakistan Navy intercepted and tracked an Indian submarine on March 1 (Tuesday), the military's media affairs wing said on Thursday. In a tweet, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Director General Maj Gen Babar Iftikhar said that the navy's anti-submarine unit intercepted and tracked the "latest Kalvari class Indian submarine". "The recent incident being the fourth detection in [the] last five years is [a] reflection of Pakistan Navy's competence and resolve to defend maritime frontiers of Pakistan," he said on Twitter, sharing video footage of the submarine. In a detailed statement, Gen Iftikhar said the Indian Navy deployed its submarine against Pakistan with "ulterior motives". "However, yet again through continuous vigilance and professionalism, Pakistan Navy has foiled [the] Indian submarine's attempt of entering into

Pakistani waters," he said. "During prevailing security environment and ongoing Pakistan Navy Exercise SEA-



SPARK-22, the possibility of Indian unit lurking into Pakistan maritime zone for reconnaissance and gathering informa-

tion on exercise was anticipated. "Therefore, strict monitoring watch and stringent vigilance procedures were enforced. Resultantly, Pakistan Navy anti-submarine warfare unit took the lead and prematurely intercepted and tracked the latest Indian submarine Kalvari on March 1," he said. The last such incident was reported in October 2021 when the navy detected and blocked an Indian submarine from entering Pakistani waters. The UN Convention on Law of Sea does not allow a state to carry out manoeuvres or exercises in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and in the continental shelf of another coastal state without its consent. EEZ signifies an area of coastal water and seabed within a certain distance of a country's coastline that cannot be entered without permission or prior information. The area of Pakistan's territorial waters is 12 nautical miles while its seabed territory (EEZ) grew to 290,000 square kilometres in 2015.

Pakistan, India vow to implement Indus Water Treaty

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: The 117th meeting of the India-Pakistan Permanent Indus Commission (PIC) was held in Islamabad from 1-3 March, 2022. Under the relevant provisions of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) 1960, the meeting takes place alternatively in Pakistan and India annually. The Indian delegation comprising ten members was headed by the Indian Commissioner for Indus Waters Mr. P. K. Saxena, while Pakistan's delegation was led by Pakistan Commissioner for Indus Waters, Syed Muhammad Mehar Ali Shah. The entire gamut of water-related issues between Pakistan and India were discussed in the meeting. Pakistan reiterated its observations on the Kiru Hydroelectric project (HEP) located upstream river Chenab and India's new run-of-the-river small HEPs on Western rivers. Response to Pakistan's objections to Indian projects including Pakal Dul and Lower Kalnai was also sought. The Indian side was also urged to communicate advance flood-flow information as per the provisions of the Treaty and the practice in vogue since 1989 until 2018. Both sides reiterated their commitment to implement the Indus Waters Treaty in its true spirit and expressed the hope that the next meeting of the Commission would be held at an early date in India.

'Kulbhusan's arrest 'testimony' of India's terrorism'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain Thursday said India's involvement in carrying out terrorist activities in Pakistan was confirmed once again when its spy Kulbhusan Jadhav, a serving Navy officer, was arrested from Balochistan six years ago. In a tweet, the minister said Pakistan Army had arrested Kulbhusan six years ago this day, who was the mastermind behind the incidents of terrorism that took place in different areas of Balochistan province and Karachi. "This arrest proves once again that there is India's hand behind terrorism in Pakistan," the minister said. In November 2021, Pakistan's Parliament enacted a law to give Jadhav the right to file a review appeal against his conviction by the military court. The International Court of Justice (Review and Reconsideration) Act of 2021 of Pakistan allowed Jadhav to challenge his conviction in the high court through a review process which was a requirement of the ICJ verdict. India has said the law "simply codifies" the "shortcomings" of a previous ordinance and that Islamabad has "failed" to create an atmosphere to ensure a fair trial in the case.

Romanian helicopter, fighter jet crashes kill eight

BUCHAREST: Romania's military was mourning Thursday separate helicopter and fighter jet crashes in bad weather near the Black Sea that killed eight personnel in its deadliest incident in years. The EU country is on the front line in strengthening NATO's eastern flank following Russia's invasion of neighbouring Ukraine and has seen US and European military reinforcements arrive in recent weeks. The IAR 330-Puma helicopter crashed on Wednesday in the area of Gura Dobrogei, 11 kilometres (seven miles) from an airfield, the defence ministry said. All seven aboard, aged between 27 and 53, were killed. The helicopter had been searching for a missing Soviet-era MiG 21 LanceR fighter jet, which lost contact and disappeared from the radar while on air patrol. The missing jet was found overnight, having crashed near Cogealac, an uninhabited area near the Black Sea, the defence ministry said. The 31-year-old pilot died, it added. - APP