

Samahar

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Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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NATO says Russia's war must not escalate beyond Ukraine

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Iran won't back down on its 'red lines'

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UN rights chief to visit China's Xinjiang

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Govt days numbered: Opposition

PM Imran faces no-trust motion

Speaker to call session within seven days; voting may take place in the last week of this month

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Opposition bigwigs on Monday appeared confident about the success of the no-trust motion against Prime Minister Imran Khan, which was submitted to the National Assembly Secretariat earlier in the day. The Speaker would call the Assembly session within seven days after submission of the motion. It is likely that voting takes place at the end of this month. Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman, PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif and PPP co-chair Asif Ali Zardari held a joint press conference in Islamabad, seeming certain that the days of the PTI government were numbered. Shehbaz kicked off the press con-



ISLAMABAD: Opposition leaders addressing a press confernece, on Tuesday. - DNA

the no-confidence motion."What has been done to the country's economy [...] there is no other example of such destruction in Pakistan's history," he said, adding that the rise in inflation was the biggest concern. He also lamented foreign policy failures, regretting the fact that "friends" that had supported the country during tough times were angered. "What type of foreign policy is it to upset China," he asked, pointing towards criticism and "baseless allegations" against Chinese funded development projects.

A sister publication of **CENTRELINE & DNA News Agency**

The PML-N said PM Imran had criticised the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor before his election to the office of the prime minister.

He further censured PM Imran for lambasting European Union (EU) countries over asking Pakistan to vote against Russia during a recently held special session of the United Nations General Assembly. This, he lamented, had angered EU nations. Meanwhile, Rehman regretted the state of affairs over the past three-and-a-half years, reiterating that the 2018 election was

Continued on Page 06

RAWALPINDI: PM Imran Khan distributing certificates of excellence among the high achievers from various fields during Women's Day ceremony held at Fatima Jinnah Women University. - DNA

Monal re-opens

Diplomats, general public hail court decision

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court has ordered to re-open Monal. The decision came on Tuesday. The apex court observed in its judgment that if all other restaurants in the area are operational then why only Monal was closed. People have hailed the decision and are happy that they will again enjoy traditional and mouth-watering delicacies of Monal Similarly the diplomatic communiso welcomed the dec Some of the diplomats talking this newspaper told that they have already planned to take their delegations to Monal during the upcoming OIC event in the capital.

Qureshi holds phone talks with Chinese FM



STAFF REPORT / APP

ISLAMABAD:):Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Tuesday spoke on telephone with China's State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi. The two Foreign Ministers discussed bilateral ties and exchanged views on the regional and global situation. State Councilor Wang Yi conveyed his condolences on the loss of precious lives in the cowardly terrorist attack in Peshawar and sympathies with the families of the victims. The Foreign Minister underlined that the terrorist act was an attack on the

Continued on Page 06

Asks Buzdar to continue

Imran Khan says ready to counter Opp

"No matter what planning such corrupt do, I am ready to thwart their attempts," Khan says

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD, Prime Minister Imran Khan on Tuesday said he was ready to thwart all designs and tactics by some corrupt politicians against the government. The prime minister said a skipper in a match was always ready to counter the attack of his opponent. He asked Punjab Chief Minister Usman Buzdar to continue in his office. "No matter what planning such corrupt do, I am ready to thwart their attempts," he said in his address at an event in connection with International Women's Day at Fatima Jinnah Women University (FJWU).

Imran Khan said Pakistan on its creation, was envisioned as a country with the rule of law and that he would not give

Continued on Page 06

Fawad slams 'political dwarfs'

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain said on Tuesday that many political pygmies have become "big leaders" in Pakistan which was sick-

ening. In a tweet, the minister said that Senator Kamran Murtaza of JUI-F has submitted a motion in the Senate that the House should hold debate on the harsh statement of the Prime Minister against the European country. - APP

Pakistanis repatriated via Poland arrive home

This is a joint effort of Embassy of Pakistan in Warsaw, Embassy of Poland in Islamabad and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Poland

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The first group of Pakistanis evacuated from Ukraine to Poland have been repatriated by the special Warsaw-Islamabad through PIA airplane. Flight number PK 7788 landed in Islamabad last night bringing the

first batch of evacuated Pakistanis. This is a joint effort of Embassy of Pakistan in Warsaw, Embassy of Poland in Islamabad and Ministry of Foreign Affairs , Poland. Mr. Piotr Opalinski, ex Ambassador to Pakistan and currently serving as a a Minister

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

West also responsible for deaths

KIEV: Growing increasingly

with what he perceives as a lack of Westaction, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has accused his allies of sharing responsibility for casualties. "While Russians are to blame for the killings, responsibility is shared by those who for 13 days in their Western offices haven't been able to approve an obviously necessary decision, who didn't save our cities from these bombs and missiles although they can," The Kyiv Independent newspaper quoted Zelenskyy as saying Tuesday. Zelenskyy has repeatedly called for Western powers to enforce a no-fly zone over Ukraine to prevent more Russian attacks.

"We repeat every day: close the sky over Ukraine. Close for all Russian missiles, for Russian combat aircraft, for all their terrorists," Zelenskyy said on Sunday. - APP

Farrukh blasts PPP

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Far-

rukh Habib on Tuesday said that leaders of Pakistan Peoples Party are responsible for damaging governance in Sindh province. The PPF could not provide better ser vices in hospitals of Sindh besides clean drinking water and modern transport facility to the people of Karachi, he said while talking to a private television channel. Shahbaz Sharif and Nawaz Sharif, he said had been ruling in Punjab for many years but they also failed to bring improvement in health sector. The PPP and PML-N, he said could not formulate a clear foreign policy for Pakistan. Farrukh Habib said both the political parties had been unsuccessful in raising Pakistan's image in the comity of nations. He said PM's government after coming to power had made efforts to highlight the issue

of Kashmir. - APP

7 terrorists killed during IBO in Turbat

A significant cache of arms and ammunition has also been recovered



DNA

RAWALPINDI: Security forces Tuesday killed seven terrorists during an operation against miscreants in Gorchop, Turbat. "Based on information of presence of a Terrorists' Hideout in general area Gorchop, Turbat, Balochistan, Security Forces conducted IBO today to apprehend externally sponsored enemies of peace in Balochistan," said a handout issued by the ISPR. "Once the troops started clearance operation in the area, Terrorists tried to escape from their camp and opened indiscriminate fire onto security forces," said the statement. "Seven Terrorists including

Continued on Page 06

Commanders Hasil Doda and Washdil have

5 security personnel martyred in Sibi blast

News Desk

SIBI: At least five security personnel were martyred and 19 people injured in a blast near Thandi Sarak in district Sibi of Balochistan, officials said. Medical Superintendent Civil Hospital Dr Sarwar Hashmi told Dawn.com that 16 of the 19 injured were security personnel. He had earlier said that among the injured who were initially brought to the hospital, five were in critical condition and shifted to Quetta.

Meanwhile, Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo strongly condemned the blast and directed authorities to provide the best possible medical treatment to those injured in the blast.

Bizenio said the blast was an attempt to sabotage the annual festival and overall peace in the province. He vowed to thwart "all conspiracies against the province".

US, UK and EU move against Russian oil

The measures are meant to hurt Russia, with its economy dependent on energy; US says Russia suffered 2000-4000 casualties

News Desk / DNA

WASHINNGTON: The US and UK are poised to ban Russian oil and the EU is sharply reducing gas imports as countries harden their response to the invasion of Ukraine.

President Joe Biden announced Tuesday that the U.S. will target "the main artery of Russia's economy" by banning the import of Russian energy products.

"We're banning all imports of Russian oil and gas and energy," Biden said in remarks from the White House. "That means Russian oil will no longer be acceptable at U.S. ports and the American people will deal another powerful blow to Putin's war machine.

The president warned that the move would probably increase gas prices in the U.S., but that it was necessary to ramp up sanctions pressure on Russia's

economy for its war on Ukraine. "Putin's war is already hurting American families at the gas pump," Biden said. "I'm going to do everything I can to minimize Putin's price hike here at home." The move has political support. On Monday senior Republicans and Democrats in Congress announced a bipartisan agreement to suspend normal trade relations with Russia and Belarus.

"Taking these actions will send a clear message to Putin that his war in unacceptable and the United States stands firmly with our Nato allies," they said. "We are committed to using the tools at our disposal to stop Russia's unconscionable and unjust war." About 8% of US oil and refined product

imports come from Russia. The European Commission has announced it will reduce demand for Russian gas by two-thirds - the EU gets 40%

of its gas from Russia.

NATO says war must not escalate beyond Ukraine

CENTRELINE REPORT

RIGA: NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said on Tuesday there were credible reports that Russia was targeting civilians in Ukraine and urged Moscow to end the conflict, also vowing not to let it spread.

"We have a responsibility to ensure the conflict does not escalate and spread beyond Ukraine," Stoltenberg said. "We will protect and defend every inch of all allied territory," he added. Speaking alongside Latvia's President Egils Levits, Stoltenberg said Russia's invasion was causing horrific suffering and that the humanitarian impact was devastating. Earlier, Volodymyr Zelensky has warned that Russia will next target Nato member nations unless they do more to protect Ukraine. The Ukrainian president's chilling warning comes as Russia continues its bombardment of Ukrainian towns and cities, while Nato rules out imposing a no-fly zone over the country under siege. He said: "When the limits of rights and freedoms are being violated and stepped on, then you have to protect us. "Because we will come first, you will come second."

The measures are meant to hurt Russia, with its economy dependent on energy. But such action could also send prices soaring. Investor fears of an embargo drove Brent crude oil to \$139 (£106) a barrel at one point on Monday - its highest level for almost 14 years.

Russia earlier warned it may close its main gas pipeline to Germany if the West bans Russian oil. Meanwhile, Russia has suffered between 2,000 and 4,000 casualties in Ukraine, the head of the US Defence Intelligence Agency has told a US Congressional hearing.

"They had a bad plan", Scott Berrier said, while estimating, with low confidence, the deaths based on intelligence and open source reporting.

The details follow earlier reports, from the Ukranian defence ministry, that a senior Russian military commander was killed in a battle on the edge of the eastern Ukrainian city of Kharkiv.



SIBBI: President Dr Arif Alvi being presented with bouquets on his arrival at the closing ceremony of Annual Sibbi Mela. - DNA

Int'l Women day observed in Kharian region

Anwar Chohan

KHARIAN: March 8 is being celebrated all over the world, including Pakistan, as International Women's Day (especially for the empowerment of rural women). The main purpose of celebrating this day is not only to make women aware of their basic rights but also to highlight their social significance.

Nearly a hundred years ago today, women who worked for more than ten hours in a row in a New York textile factory called for a reduction in their working hours and an increase in wages. He was tied to horses and dragged through the streets.

These brave women led an active movement against the state, the result of their everlasting sacrifices. The first international conference of women was held in Copenhagen in 1910 with the participation of nearly 100 women from more than 17 countries. It was decided to celebrate the International Day

On International Women's Day, this year's theme, "Empowering Rural Women," accounts for 63% of women farm workers, and the share of women in agriculture is still high in Asian countries.

At present about 43% of rural women in Pakistan are involved in agricultural work in the fields. While the number of women working in households is different. A conservative estimate is that 25% of women work on the farms as family workers and 75% as part-time farms, while they receive no reasonable compensation for all day work and lack of proper care and medical facilities. This causes women to suffer from various diseases.

The majority of rural families have been found to be against women's education and despite this the deficit is being met by the so-called education policies of the government in which majority of rural women are deprived of the jewel of education.

Barrister Saif condoles deaths of policemen



DNA

PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to Chief Minister on Information, Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif on Tuesday expressed grief and sorrow over the deaths of police personnel in a road accident in Shangla district.

He conveyed his heartfelt condolences to families of the martyrs and added that the best medical facilities would be provided to the

He prayed for the departed souls and early recovery of

Chinese technology makes KP's Jaggery (Gur) exportable

The districts of Mardan, Charsadda and Swabi are amongst the main sugarcane growing districts of KP

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The sugarcane growers living in the proximity of Rashakai Special Economic Zone (RSEZ), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), are optimistic that with the latest Chinese agricultural machinery and with the establishment of SEZ, they can export different products of Jaggery (Gur) to international markets in the near future.

According to a Gwadar Pro's report, Jaggery, locally known as Gur, is a sweetener made from sugarcane that is unrefined and produced without filtering molasses

The districts of Mardan, Charsadda and Swabi are amongst the main sugarcane growing districts of KP. The Rashakai SEZ is located at the center of these sugarcane growing districts, which is one of the main crops the local farmers grow. The growers either produce Gur while exercising the labor-intensive traditional methods or sell the sugarcane to mills for sugar (white) productions. The sugarcanes are crushed in crunchers run by generators; after extracting, the juice is collected and boiled. The concentrated liquid is allowed to cool in a big bowl made of clay; as the concentrated syrup solidifies, it is converted into lumps via hands.

The sugarcane growers use decade-old methods to obtain jaggery, which not only are labor-intensive but also result in pre-and-post labor losses.

However, the use of the latest machinery can change the whole scenario. "Jaggery in KP has immense export potential; however, farmers must be equipped with advanced technologies for agriculture," Irfan Khattak, a sugarcane grower, told Gwadar Pro.

Mr. Khattak grows sugarcane in the Lundkhwar area of Mardan. Mostly for making Gur, his family uses tools for making tea and Sharbat (juice), especially in the month of Ramadan. Jaggery in these areas is available in

lumps without a definite shape. Gur is usually transported in large-sized sacks of jute. "We don't have the technology to make our jaggery presentable items in the market," Mr. Khattak said, adding that the farmers need equipment for making proper cubes, slabs, and proper packing materials for them. "Latest Chinese tools and equipment can help us overcome this issue," he said.

Raza Shah of Charsadda said like other neighboring countries, sugarcane growers of this region can produce different jaggery products like liquid jaggery, jaggery juice, jaggery powder, and jaggery cubes. "However, for doing so, we need tools to shape the jaggery properly and packing and packaging units as well," he added. During the second phase of CPEC, besides other areas of collaboration, the agriculture sector has been focused to boost Pakistan's agriculture-based exports.

The sugarcane growers living in proximity with Rashakai SEZ are optimistic that China will not only help them increase the yield of sugarcane but also set up units helping them export their jaggery to different destinations of the world. "Chinese help regarding seeds and technology would be highly appreciated," said farmer Abdullah.

The jaggery, which is usually found in light golden to dark brown color with rich fiber, has great medicinal value, and day by day its demand is increasing

It has been used in foods and beverages, bakery products, confectionery, organic health products, and natural dyeing of fabrics as well. If Pakistan starts producing quality jaggery products, China can be one of the top destinations for Pakistani exporters.

In a recent interview, Abdul Karim Tordher, Special Assistant to CMPK on Industries had told Gwadar Pro that in the priority the government would provide space to industries and food processing units that process local raw



WAZIRABAD: Women leaders are addressing a function organized by Jamaat-e-Islami (women's wing) Wazirabad in connection with International Women's Day. - DNA

Women empowerment vital for socio-economic development

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Pakistani society is facing gender discrimination for which ensuring women rights and women empowerment are inevitable to make the socio-economic development. It was stated by University of Agriculture Faisalabad Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Igrar Ahmad Khan while addressing the celebrations in connection with International Women's Day at Igbal Auditorium as the Chief

The UAF took out a rally, arranged a seminar, art exhibition and inter-hostel sports gala.

Prof Dr Igrar Ahmad Khan said that half of the population of the country consists of women. We cannot pave the way of development without gender mainstreaming. He said that the university students consist of more than 50 percent women and steps are also being taken to increase women participation at the faculty level. He said that UAF launched a bicycle program for women a decade ago to overcome the travel difficulties of female students. Now, we see women on cycle/bicycle across in different areas of city.

Government College Women University Faisalabad Vice Chancellor Dr. Rubina Farooq called for increasing the participation of women in professional education. She stressed upon the need of women increased participation in the mainstreaming of political, social and administrative affairs. She said that for a better society, it is necessary to ensure women's education.

MPA Firdous Rai said that ensuring women rights is one of the top priorities of the government for which all possible measures are being taken. The dream of national prosperity cannot be materialized without the development of women.

Former MPA Najma Afzal said that in order to build self-confidence, women should participate more in all fields of life. She said that development can be achieved only by providing equal opportunities to women. Dr Attiva Awan said that an empowered and educated woman can become the best mother and raise the generation in a better way that is a guarantee of a bright future. She said that the purpose of celebrating Women's Day is to pay homage to the role of women in the development of the country as well as to raise the awareness about their rights. She said that Islam gives the best rights to women. Unfortunately, we are not implementing the golden principal of the Islam in our lives. There is a tendency in society to deprive women of their rights. Dean Food Nutrition and Home

Sciences Dr. Masood Sadig Butt said that the best facilities are being provided to the UAF students. He said that without women participation, we could not compete with the rest

Principal Officer Dr. Jalal Arif said that under the visionary leadership of Vice Chancellor Dr. Jurar Ahmad Khan, all efforts are being made to equip women in the university with better environment and facilities. He urged the women to build confidence and fight the odds in the life for progress.

Progressive farmer Sapna Kavita said that in villages, women are standing side by side with men in the agriculture sector. Shazia George, Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce Representative Qurat Ul Ain, Institute of Home Sciences Director Dr. Ayesha Riaz, Associate Professor Dr. Bushra Sadia, Lecturer Hira Iftikhar and others also spoke.

FCCI fixes membership target

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) has fixed a target of membership renewal for the year 2022-23 at 90% and evolved a 3-layered strategy to achieve it, said Mr. Atif Munir Sheikh President FCCI.

He was addressing an emergent meeting to discuss the pace of renewal and take appropriate decisions to expedite this process. He said that Rana Sikandar Azam Khan Chairman FCCI Standing Committee on Liaison with Trade Associations was looking after the renewal related matters for the last many years

and hence, he has been entrusted this job in view of his previous experience. He said that the current renewal campaign will continue up to March 31 and only 23 days have been left. During this process, we are also organizing a 3-dayPakistan Economic Conference (PEC) and we must equally focus on the renewal as well as on the PEC to achieve the given targets. He said that last year we had achieved 84% renewal targets but this year we would make best efforts to convince 90% members to renew their membership positively before March 31, 2022. He said that we have a total 7142 members out of which 265 corporate and 603 associates have so far renewed their

membership. "The renewal ratio is only 12.15%", he said and added that we must expedite it in collaboration with the executive and chairmen of the standing committees. He said that if the remaining members are distributed among 30 executive members, each will have to contact 200 members. "If these members are divided among the 83 chairmen of the standing committees, their numbers would further reduce", he said and added that a comprehensive monitoring system would also be added to overview the process of membership on a daily basis. He disclosed that the next meeting of the chairmen of the standing committees would also be held immediately after PEC on March 22.

Auditors' role vital for department

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Auditors perform pivotal roles to save the department from possible financial irregularities and embezzlement, said Director General (DG) Audit Power Sheikh Nadeem Amjad, he was addressing a review meeting held here at FESCO Headquarters today.

He said that it is the respon sibility of the audit department to establish the audit standard in accordance with international audit principles. He also appreciated the performance of FESCO audit and finance and said that FESCO steps for reducing line losses and satisfaction of consumers are imitative.

Earlier, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) FESCO, addressed the meeting and said that FESCO has achieved the recovery and line loses targets set by National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA). He further said that FESCO is striving hard for the promotion of the corporate culture in the company; in this connection, utilization of the latest technology is FESCO priority.

UNODC launches TB, Hepatitis and HIV services in Sindh prisons

NAZIR SITAL

KARACHI: Today, UNODC Country Office Pakistan, in coordination with the Sindh Prisons Department, held a ceremony on the Coordination and Strengthening of HIV, TB, and Hepatitis Services in Prisons in the IG Prison Sindh office.

During the ceremony, the formal control and implementation of the HIV, TB, and Hepatitis Module of Prison Management Information System (PMIS) along with the equipment for HTC centre was handed over to Sindh Prisons De-

The equipment will be used in the newly established HIV Testing and Counseling (HTC) Center for HIV, Hepatitis B and C, and TB testing and treatment services at the District Prison Malir in Karachi.

The HIV, Hepatitis, and TB Module has been designed to help prison authorities and the Health Department Sindh in maintaining data on the health of the prisoners with regards to HIV, Hepatitis, and TB during their time in prison. This will help keep track of, and support people, after their release from prison. This pilot project also aimed at strengthening coordination between the Prisons and Health De-



Kazi Nazir Ahmed, Inspector General of Prisons praised UNODC Pakistan, Health Department Sindh,

issuing free-of-cost CNIC to prison-

ers suffering from HIV, Hepatitis B,

and all the stakeholders for their continuous support of the project and its implementation. He noted UNODC's exponential efforts in providing PMIS in 22 prisons throughout Sind.

Dr. Jeremy Milsom, Representative UNODC, thanked the Prisons, Health Department, Sindh, and stakeholders for their support and ownership of this important initiative. He appreciated UNAIDS for its generous support and underscored the importance of having strong collaboration between departments that can help in improving the quality of life of prison inmates. Director General Health Services Sindh was also in attendance and

appreciated the support of UNODC and UNAIDS in capacity-building of the staff and provision of equipment. He assured that the health department will continue to provide health care services to the prison department and support the post-re-

lease referral mechanism. These prison interventions were made possible with the financial support from UNAIDS under the Country Envelops and HIV Section of the UNODC Headquarters.

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

MARCH

March 01/Bosnia National Day

March 03/ Bulgaria

National Day

March o6/Ghana

Independence Day

March 12/ Mauritius National Day

March 17/ Ireland

St. Patricks Day March 20/ Tunisia

Independence Day March 21/ Namibia

National Day

March 25/ Greece

National Day

March 26/ Bangladesh National Day

March 27/ Myanmar Armed Forces Day



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



Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

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



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RGH	9290301-7	
Holy Family	9290322-7	
PIMS	9261170-79	
Polyclinic	9218300-09	
Shifa Internation	nal.4603666	



Departments

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

Islamabad Metropolitan

Corporation......9209224 Potohar Town......9209224 RawalTown......5773343

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

International Women's Day

Serena Hotels host networking breakfast

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Serena Hotels hosted a Networking Breakfast on the 8th of March 2022, celebrate International Women's Day and honour, recognise and applaud the talented women. This year the Women's Day celebration was also part of the Islamabad Serena Hotel's 20 year anniversary celebrations.

Women from all walks of life including the Guests, Associates, Entrepreneurs, and representatives of the Civil Society along with a large number of Diplomats and their spouses joined the celebrations. Mrs. SaminaAlvi, the First Lady was the Chief Guest.

Aziz Boolani, the CEO of Serena Hotels, said, "At Serena, we believe that investing in women is the most effective way to improve the standards of living of communities and most of our CSR initiatives are focused on empowering the women resulting in social and economic upliftment".

The objective of celebrating International Women's Day is to break the bias, stereotypes and discrimination, and to celebrate a world that's diverse, equitable and inclusive. A world where difference is valued and celebrated.

this occasion, various stalls featuring Pakistani handicrafts and traditional items, made by differently abled children, women artisans in underprivileged homes and other arts and crafts were displayed by women organisation represented byIndus Heritage, Andaaz, Mashal Association, Air Organics, Behbud Crafts, Care for







fice Women's Association, the crafts. Aga Khan Economic Planning Board, and Chann Mahi Handi-

The First Lady also visited var-

in items displayed there. She also praised the work of artiious stalls and evinced interest sans. The guests thoroughly

enjoyed live music and an entertaining trivia session in a well decorated Sheesh Mahal.

Diplomat launches 'Handbook on Economic Diplomacy'

Ambassador Sirohey said that aim of the diplomacy is to nurture good relations with other nations and if you are economically connected with other nations, relations would automatically go better and strong

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The launch ceremony of "A Handbook on Economic Diplomacy" written by Ambassador Mr. Ahmed Ali Sirohey, Pakistan envoy in Niger, held at COMSTECH on Tuesday in collaboration with Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Pakistan.

In his introductory lecture, Ambassador Sirohey said that the aim of the diplomacy is to nurture good relations with other nations and if you are economically connected with other nations, relations would automatically go better and strong.

Mr. Sirohey said that the pioneer in economic diplomacy in the world is Netherland and in Asia is Japan. He mentioned that today geographically and demographically small countries are influencing policies of large countries due to their economic power and best economic diplomacy. He said that the diplomates of economically advanced country spend their 90% time to meet business communities to enhance the exports of their countries and 10% of time allocate for other activities.

Mr. Sirohey suggested to achieve economic deterrence by adopting creative and innovative attainable action plans. He advised to make achieveable time bound goals to get excellence in economic development.

Speaking at the occasion the Coordinator General COMSTECH, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary said that a handbook on "Economic Diplomacy" by Ambassador Mr. Ahmed Ali Sirohey is an excellent addition to the literuature on economic diplomacy. He said that I found it as a crashcourse for myself to understand the economic diplomacy and it must be read by all particularly those who are in the foreign service. Prof. Choudhary said that Ambassador Sirohev is one of the most seasoned and effective diplomates of Pakistan and he is certainly a role model. He said that his vast experience of working in different countries and international organizations is deply reflected in his book. He has addressed contours of economic diplomacy in the modern world, and contextualized them with Pakistan, Prof. Choudhary mentioned. Prof. Choudhary also mentioned that the world's economy is now linked with science, technology and innovation, and economic diplomacy is linked with science and technology capacity building and linking innovation with production sector.

He said that Ambassador Sirohey presented examples of best practices and advocated a focused approach toward economic diplomacy in Pakistan. Prof. Choudhary said that this handbook is well suited for everyone interested in the global diplomacy, and economic

'No place for corrupt system in Naya Pakistan'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Political Communication Dr Shahbaz Gill on Tuesday said there was no place for a corrupt system and its beneficiaries in Naya Pakistan. While responding to PML-N leader Shahid Khaqan Abbasi's statement, he said Prime Minister Imran Khan had seized doors of the corrupt system and its beneficiaries and those incompetent were unable to accept the change. "Half of the PML-N is running away from the country while half was in courts dealing for their wrongdoings," he said in a statement

NPO's webinar on Thursday

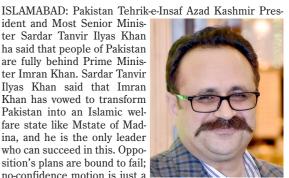
issued here.

ISLAMABAD: The National Productivity Organization (NPO) is going to organize a webinar on "Conflict Resolution and Management Techniques" on March 17. The training provide information about what is conflict resolution, why, when and how you resolve conflict, types of conflict, steps in conflict resolution, basic strategies for resolving conflicts and conflicts management styles, according to NPO document. - APP

PM to defeat all Opposition plans: Tanvir

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ident and Most Senior Minister Sardar Tanvir Ilyas Khan ha said that people of Pakistan are fully behind Prime Minister Imran Khan. Sardar Tanvir Ilyas Khan said that Imran Khan has vowed to transform Pakistan into an Islamic welfare state like Mstate of Madina, and he is the only leader who can succeed in this. Opposition's plans are bound to fail; no-confidence motion is just a



hype which will eventually be failed. He said Prime Minister Imran Khan has set Pakistan on the road to prosperity, and Pakistan is once again respected worldwide, thanks to the policies of incumbent premier. He further said that Prime Minister Imran Khan will not back down against the corrupt mafia and will rid Pakistan of their corruption.

He termed the talk of Molana Fazal ur Rehman immoral and substandard and said that the talk of Molana had embarrassed all the religious parties. He further said that Prime Minister Imran Khan was setting the direction for the next generation of Pakistan which some elements were not digesting. He expressed full confidence in the leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan. He added that the Kashmiri people had full trust in Prime Minister Imran Khan's foreign policy and his sentiments and views regarding Kashmir. Even as the Opposition mobilises no-confidence motion against the Imran Khan government, the ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) exuded confidence that his party has sufficient numbers in the National Assembly.

PHA's rainwater harvesting project

RAWALPINDI: The construction of the first underground water tank with a storage capacity of nearly 100,000 gallons which is part of the rainwater harvesting system project worth Rs 50 million, has been completed in Rawal

The project is being executed by the Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) Rawalpindi to reduce the use of clean water in parks. According to Director General PHA, Zaheer Ahmed Jappa, the project would enable the authority to collect rainwater in various parks of Rawalpindi city which would be used for irrigation in parks and other plantation sites of the city.

Water supply systems would also be installed in the parks besides constructing water filling stations to fill water tankers, he said.

"The second such tank is under construction at Liaquat Bagh while two others would be built in Commercial Market and Allama Iqbal Park. All four tanks would have a capacity of over 300,000 gallons." The underground water tanks are being constructed to conserve rainwater through this eco-friendly project, he said.

The project would help save clean water being used for irrigation proposes, he said adding, PHA Rawalpindi was installing rainwater harvesting system to reduce the use of clean water. Over 300,000 gallons of underground clean water would be saved through this project, he added. - APP

Pak-US relaunch Trade, Investment Framework Agreement

ed States (US) have relaunched the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) process to promote trade and investment for the benefit of both the countries, Assistant US Trade Representative (AUSTR) for South and Central Asia, Christopher Wilson said. "We succeeded in re-launching the TIFA... we feel quite satisfied," AUSTR said in a virtual

with ministry of commerce.

He said that a number of challenges in the relationship and difficulties that needed to be overcome were discussed in the meetings. "There was a very positive dynamic in the discussion," he remarked. He said the purpose of their visit to Is-

lamabad was to principally cover some meetings related to TIFA mechanism that US had negotiated with Pakistan

some years ago. The mechanism provides a structure to both the governments to engage in future trade and investment. He was of the view that there had not been lot of activity under the TIFA for several years, so it was important to revive and effectively relaunch the process.

Wilson said, during the meetings, issues related to trade, market access, workers' rights and regulatory practices were discussed. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Turkish Ambassador Ihsan Mustafa Yurdakul along with his spouse and MD PBM, Malik Zaheer Abbas Khokhar in a group photo with trainees of PBM's Women Empowerment Centre, during a ceremony. – DNA

4 burnt to death as

car falls into

gorge

DNA

ISLAMABAD: At least four people were burnt to death

when a car caught fire after

falling into a deep gorge in

Rawalpindi on Tuesday.
According to details, Res-

cue 1122 sources said that a

speeding car fell into a ditch

on GT Road and caught fire

as a result of which 4 per-

sons were burnt alive, a pri-

vate news channel reported.

Police along with Rescue

1122 officials reached the site

immediately after they were

being informed and shifted

the body to a nearby hospital.

Rescue sources said that

the victims have not been

identified yet.

PIA starts airlift operation in Ukraine

ISLAMABAD: A Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) plane, Boeing-777, left for Poland on Tuesday to airlift the Pakistanis stranded in Ukraine following the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

From Lahore airport, the PK-7787 has left for Warsaw, the capital of Poland, at 7:23 a.m. [today], and will land there by 10:00 am as per the local time," PIA spokesman Abdullah Hafeez Khan said in a press release issued here.

He said the plane, dispatched on the directives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, would bring back around 300 Pakistanis to the country and land at the Islamabad International Airport, while "more flights will also be operated on the instructions of the government of Pakistan," the PIA spokesman said. – APP

AIOU to hold Int'l Islamic conference

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) is organizing an international Islamic conference on "Discussions of Tradition and Modernity in Islamic Thought" on Friday (March 11). The inaugural session will be chaired by the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum, while Prof. Dr. Abu Sufyan Islahi of Aligarh Muslim University, India, Prof. Dr. Israr Ahmed of the University of Social Sciences, Ankara (Turkey), and Prof. Dr. Jamal Malik of Erfurt University, Germany will be the guests.

The conference is being organized by the Department of Islamic Thought, History and Culture, Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Studies. According to the Dean Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Prof. Dr Shah Mohyuddin Hashmi, researchers and philosophers will present their research papers and articles at this conference. Speakers will provide a comparative overview of the basic requirements and interactions of 'Science, Muslims and Technology' in the context of modernity so that scholars, intellectuals, and scientists can play their part in creating a universal and authoritative Islamic

Command & Control center to be inaugurated at NHMP

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General National Highways and Motorway Police (NHMP) Inam Ghani has said that state of the art Central Command and Control center would soon be inaugurated at NHMP Headquarters in Islamabad. In a statement issued here. he said that everything happening in the field would be visible and supervised 24/7 from the Central Police Office. He said that the use of modern technology is the need of the hour and all possible steps were being taken to make the Motorway Police more efficient.

He said that the initiative aimed to improve efficiency of patrolling and performance all regions to ensure safety and security of commuters. During a visit to the site, the IG Motorway Police reviewed the development work on the Command and Control center at Headquarter. - APP

5th Int'l PATS competition commences

RAWALPINDI, Mar 08 (AP-P):The Fifth International Pakistan Army Team Spirit (PATS) competition commenced on Tuesday at National Counter Terrorism Center (NCTC).

As many as eight teams from Pakistan Army and eight International military teams including Jordan, Kenya, KSA, Morocco, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Turkey and Uzbekistan have arrived to participate in one of the toughest team competitions, said an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release here received. - APP

Briefs Italian embassy hosts event to promote women's self-reliance

"The event is held to coincide with the international women's day to provide an opportunity for women entrepreneurs to flourish and contribute to the journey of women's economic empowerment"

ISLAMABAD: The Italian Embassy in Pakistan on Sunday hosted an event of various brands run by women for promoting women's economic self-reliance and empowerment.

"The event is held to coincide with the international women's day to provide an opportunity for women entrepreneurs to flourish and contribute to the journey of women's economic empowerment", said wife of Italy's Ambassador to Pakistan Andreas Ferrarese, Mrs. Albana Planeja here. Today is International Women's Day, which reaffirms our commitment to the economic, social and political rights of women around the world and the need for women to unite in this regard, she said this while talking to the media.

Mrs. Albana Planeja said that equality and diversity are an important aspect for the society's growth. People from all over the world are joining hands for equality, diversity and inclusion through various events. In Pakistan and Italy, women are emerging in business and they need to move forward together to advance their business, she said. She said that women are a symbol for peace and humanity in the world and they have a vital role to play in making this world beautiful and developed. She said that the role of women is very important in family and society and women have a very important role in strength-

ening the family. Mrs. Albana Planeja said that women should come forward all over the world and play their full role in all fields of business, politics and development. "The Italian embassy and our government intend



to hold similar exhibitions in the future to promote women's business," she said. She said that Pakistani women should

businesses as there are huge business opportunities in it. She said Pakistan was an emerging e-commerce market and had the potential to excel in the international market and also emerge as a global player in the coming years.

Replying to a question, Mrs. Albana was asked if she finds any similarity between the Pakistani and Italian women. To which she answered that many Pakistani women are very successful in their careers as well along with having the perfect home life. Both in Italy and Pakistan the women never ignore the fundamental values in life. Various entrepreneurs and clothing brands attended the event and appreciated the efforts of the Italian Embassy and underlined the need to create similar programs in the future to promote women's business.

Shortage of

hostels worries

students

ISLAMABAD: Shortage of major issue which almost

adequate and affordable

hostels in twin cities is wor-

rying students coming from

the far flung areas of the

country. Moreover, these fa-

cilities are marred with lack

of security, quality food and

sufficient water supply. Sar-

fraz came all the way from

Rajanpur to Islamabad after

he secured admission in a

reputed public sector uni-

versity here. He told APP

that there was no hostel

within the university prem-

ises. "I had to look for pri-

vate accommodation nearby

which was a Herculean task

for me as I had come to the

city for the first time and

had no connections here to

guide me. So much so even

the university did not offer

any guidance into finding a

Another student shared his

experience that a few public

universities with their own

hostels offered rooms on

the basis of political affilia-

the student chapters of vari-

ous political parties in these

institutes. However, an offi-

cial of the university denied

this saying that it was not

possible to accommodate

every student in universi-

ty hostel, and rooms were

given on a first come first

serve basis or to the most

Girls coming from remote

areas to Islamabad and

Rawalpindi in hope for bet-

ter education faced numer-

ous challenges even after

finding a place to stay. One

deserving.

suitable accommodation.

every hostel girl raised was

the lack of proper security.

Mehwish who came from

Kharian said that there was

no check on who was com-

ing in and going out of hos-

tel. She further said, "The

facility is substandard, and

we are not provided the ser-

vice that was promised and

marketed by the hostel man-

ager." A few girls reluctant-

ly spoke of being harassed

by the hostel staff as well

as individuals in the nearby

Saad who had come from

Faisalabad tried three dif-

ferent options during his

two-year degree program.

First, he was in university

hostel, but was fed up of

strikes, and fights between

different student groups.

Then, he went to a private

hostel, which too he had to

leave soon after witness-

ing the drug culture there.

His third accommodation

was a flat which he rented

friends. "Here, I did expe-

rience water shortages at

times, but apart from this it

was a much better and safer

place than the two before

universities are planning to

build more hostels to facil-

itate the growing number

of students after repeated

demands from students.

Meanwhile, private hostels

continue to exploit students

left at their mercy due to

the shortages or lack of hos-

tels within the university or

college campus. - APP

Some

this", he recalled.

markets.

Spices' exports increase 22.94%

ISLAMABAD: The exports of spices from the country witnessed an increase of 22.94 percent during the first seven months of financial year (2021-22) as compared to the corresponding period of last year. Pakistan exported spices worth US \$64.900 million during July-January (2021-22) as compared to the exports of US \$52.792 million during July-January (2020-21), showing growth of 22.94 percent,

according to the PBS. In terms of quantity, the exports of spice also rose by 17.69 percent as the country exported 15.525 metric ton of spices during the period under review as compared to the exports of 13,191 metric ton during last fiscal year. - APP

Police arrests man involved in killing

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Police have arrested a man allegedly involved in killing of his wife, father-in-law, brother-in-law and another man on Tuesday morning. According to the Police, the suspect, identified as Abdul Raheem, shot them dead

a family dispute The suspect first gunned down his wife and a hospital technician at Maternal and Child Healthcare Center in G-6 area of Islamabad, within the limits of Aabpara police station.

Then, the suspect went to his in-laws' and killed his father-in-law and brother-inlaw. While in the meantime, a neighbour of the victims shot and injured the suspect. The deceased were identified as Shoaib Aziz, Raheela Bano, Aziz-ur-Rehman and Naeem Akhtar. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani exchanging views with Aybek Arif Usmanov, ambassador of Uzbekistan at Parliament House. - DNA

Education only key to liberate empower women: Kashmala

ISLAMABAD: Federal Ombudsperson for Protection against Harassment Kashmala Tariq Tuesday on the eve of International Women's day said that she believes that education was key to emancipation and empowerment of women and educating of girl child was the best investment in future.

Talking to a private news channel, she said the celebration of March 8 as International Women's day is to honor and recognize the contributions women made in the world. "I firmly believe that inclusive and

sustainable socio-economic development can only be ensured by providing equal opportunities and a conducive environment of education to every women", she added. She urged that women should de-

mands their more rights rather than creating a conflict atmosphere in society, adding, women should raise their voices and report any act of abuse or violence.

The government was making all-out efforts to create awareness among

Govt takes various steps to provide a conducive environment to women

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Human Rights Dr. Shireen Mazari on Tuesday said that government has taken various steps to provide a conducive working environment for women and girls. Addressing the launching ceremony of National Gender Policy Framework here in the Ministry of Planning Development & Special Initiatives, she said that Ministry of Human Rights is only talking about

women regarding existing laws and their implementations which can positively impact society.

she added. She said that education made women independent and helped them to achieve their dreams, adding, the issue of harassment of women at workplace was a sensitive matter and ombudsman was dealing this matter

effectively with the complaints, but

women rights. The minister said that legislation has been enacted for the rights and protection of women and children in the country. She said that government has a responsibility to protect the rights of its citizens.

Dr Mazari said that government has taken steps to address the issues facing women. The event was held in connection with International Women's Day, 2022. - APP

there was need for creating more awareness and training of women. "On Women's day, we pay tribute to every women who stood steadfastly beside the men in the struggle for country's progress", she added. We reaffirm our commitment to en-

suring women a secure and enabling

environment to play their rightful

role in our nation's development,"

she mentioned. - APP

Pakistan should support non-bloc politics: Fatemi

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's former Adviser on Foreign Affairs Ambassador Tariq Fatemi urged the Government of Pakistan to support non-bloc policies in coordination with other likeminded developing states. He also observed that foreign policy pronouncements are far more credible and effective when couched in nuanced and conciliatory expressions. He made these remarks while speaking at an event titled 'Ukraine Crisis: What Next?' organised by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) here on Monday.

Ambassador Fatemi argued that the US has pursued a policy of insisting on its own sphere of influence in the American hemisphere, ever since the early 19th century, referring to it as the Monroe Doctrine. At the same time, the US was in the habit of denying the pursuit of a similar policy of spheres of influence to other states, which had resulted in friction with competing powers. Ambassador Fatemi maintained that Ukraine has had longstanding historical, religious and cultural links with Russia since the time of the Tsars and, consequently, Moscow has always viewed it in its sphere of influence and deemed Western plans to include it in NATO as in breach of the US and the West's solemn promises, particularly as it is



convinced that the US wants to bring Ukraine in NATO, a development that would seriously threaten Russia's core national security interests.

Ambassador Fatemi was of the view that Russian intervention in Ukraine could have long-term consequences for Europe, as the US had re-established its presence in the continent with renewed resolve and determination, convincing the Europeans, in particular the Eastern European countries, that it alone was in a position to protect them from Moscow's ambitions. Germany too, had already made major changes in its policy towards Russia, while also announcing its plans for large-scale defence procurements. NATO membership had thus become the single biggest source of comfort for the Europeans, which meant increased dependency on the US. He was also of the view that China was pursuing an extremely wise policy in which it was confirming its continued strategic concern for the well-being and safety of Ukrainians. Some may want China to play a role in diffusing the conflict in Ukraine owing to its good relations with Russia and its interest in peace and stability in Europe, but China was likely to keep a low profile on this issue, as its interests lay in maintaining meaningful ties with all sides. Ambassador Fatemi said that the

West might have been disappointed over the non-committal attitude of India over Ukraine. This was on account of India's long history of close and highly advantageous relations with Russia. At the same time, India greatly valued its growing strategic cooperation with the US, especially after the US sought India out as an important pillar in the Western policy of 'containment' of China. In fact, the success of the policy of containment of China depends on the success of US's relations with India, he said. Therefore, Indian abstention in the UN General Assembly's vote against Russia on Ukraine may have come as an unpleasant surprise for some in the West, but it confirmed, once again, the fact that the Indians have long mastered the game of playing both sides and, therefore, refrained from annoving Russia by not voting in favour of the Western-sponsored resolution against it, despite Western urgings.



The West's headache

HE ongoing conflict in Ukraine has changed the perception about many of world's powers. Specifically, the west and European Union countries have been left exposed as none of their threats and counter measures have so far been effective in stopping Russian aggression.

The west has started to realize that their sanctions have had no effect on Russia's plans as Russia is surprised at the stiff resistance from Ukrainians. As a result more people are dying than can be justified or handled properly and prices of all sorts of essential commodities like oil, gas and grain have shot through the roof.

And that, in turn, is giving global central bankers severe headaches because another round of cost-push inflation at this point raises the very ugly spectre of international stagflation. Interest rates are finally on their way up all over the world after the extraordinary situation presented by the Covid pandemic, which saw a rush in reducing rates all the way to zero in some cases. Now, though, as they are being raised again, with growth unlikely to respond because of the fallout of the war in Ukraine, crucial things like employment and earnings are vulnerable all over the place; and nobody knows when things are expected to get any better.

Things look particularly grim for countries like Pakistan. It's not just that oil is up and rising; it's also that the prime minister's recent 'relief package' locks local retail prices of oil products all the way to the next budget, which is still more than a quarter away. Then there's the diplomatic pressure following the PM's trip to Russia. These factors are combining to cast a very long, dark shadow over the country, especially the economy, even though Islamabad has taken the wise stand of staying neutral and reiterated its position favouring a negotiated end to the conflict.

Despite all the claims and counter-claims, at the end of the day this war is about who blinks first - Russia or Nato. Things are more or less deadlocked for now, but if this war of economic attrition lingers much longer, the whole world will be poorer because of it.

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Women's day

HE International Women's day was celebrated nationwide on Tuesday. Various ceremonies were organized in this regard. In Islamabad, a ceremony was held in Serena Hotels to shed light upon the role of women in development and economic progress.

For the last few years, the women's day in Pakistan has been a subject to various debates. It has been noticed that a certain women rights group has gotten into limelight by the use of somewhat degradatory and insulting slogans. While some defend their controversial slogans, majority of the people think they are drifting the attention away from the actual problems women face, like right to education and underage marriage. The organizers of the famous march however, gain media attention by showcasing unorthodox and unprecedented slogans, which has nothing to do with the problems most of the women face.

In today's world, women are a crucial part of economic progress of any society. In Pakistan, the issue of women rights is being brought up and as a result, various development programs have been started for women. Successful steps in the form of Women's Parliamentary Caucus, Human Rights Cells in Courts, Women Police Stations, nationwide help lines, national and provincial commissions on the status of women, provincial women development departments and directorates as well as a Women's Bank and establishment of National Human Rights Complaint Cell are examples of how institutional framework in Pakistan to protect women rights has been formulated.

There is a great deal of evidence that societies that discriminate on the basis of gender pay a price in more poverty, slower growth, and a lower quality of life, whereas gender equality enhances development. Empowered women and girls can become a powerful force and contribute to the well-being of their families and communities. The nonexistence of gender equality entails enormous loss of human potential as well as for development.

Pakistan and Russia are shaping new era of relationship

Dr. M Akram Zaheer



Russia is interested in Pakistan because of its strategic location being right next to Afghanistan and close to the Central Asian states

AKISTAN and Russia have a past of being adversaries, but today both are welcoming the idea of building and stimulating a strategic relationship. Pakistan wants to build a better relationship with Russia to reduce dependency on the United States. Islamabad wants to prove to Washington that it has as another strategic option if any tension happens between Pakistan and United States. Washington never liked Moscow's influence in Islamabad. There are differences between Pakistan and the United States over drone attacks. According to some analysts, American hegemony is about to end in the region and Pakistan does not want to become too close of an ally with the United States and dependent on it. In fact, the increasing relationship between India and America motivates Pakistan to look for new friends and alliances. Pakistan also likes to drive a wedge between Pakistan also has an eye of Russian military equipment supply and technology assistance that is better than China's. Pakistan wants to gain much commercial incentive from Russia, for example, the Karachi to Lahore Pipeline, and Russia is also interested in the renovation of the Pakistan Steel Mills. According to some reports, Russia may join the CASA-1000

energy project providing electricity to Afghanistan and Pakistan.

On the other hand, today Russia is interested in Pakistan because of its strategic location being right next to Afghanistan and close to the Central Asian states. Although both the countries do not share borders but have same geopolitical space between them, Moscow has long considered Islamabad as a troublemaker for Russia and a supporter of terrorism in the region. The Russian motivation is to convince Pakistan to be moderate and subdue Islamic radicalization and militancy in the region. Pakistan is a Muslim state which has great influence in the Muslim world and Russia also has a large Muslim population. Russia thinks that Pakistan can play a vital role for stabilizing Afghanistan. Moscow hopes, after the withdrawal of American forces, that Russia will find strategic place in the region and then it will be able to play a better role in the Indo-Pacific region. Russia also hopes that its understanding with Pakistan will decrease terrorism in Afghanistan and the region. It is also building relations with Pakistan to counter alignment between India and United States. The Pak-Russia relationship can impede India from getting close to the United States. The Indian tendency toward Israel and the United States for advanced weapons and technology encourages Russia to look for new markets for her arms sale. In Moscow's proposition to Islamabad, Pakistan can be a part of Russian strategy by playing a significant role in the region. On the issue of Ukraine, Russia is being isolated and has few friends in the international sphere. In the aftermath of the Ukraine issue, Russia is looking for new friends who may help her challenge the West.

Islamabad and Moscow noticed each other for the first time in 2009 when Afghanistan, Pakistan, Russia, and Tajikistan floated the idea of promoting regional security and economics. This quadrilateral idea held three meetings but did not take off due to the cancellation of Putin's expected visit to Pakistan for the fourth meeting in 2012. President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari had visited Russia in 2011 and the Army Chief visited Moscow during 2012. There were reciprocal visits continued by ministers and high-level officials of both the countries. Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu visited Pakistan in 2014, which was the first time that someone of his position had done so in the last 45 years. During this visit, both countries agreed on information exchange on political-military issues; cooperation for promoting international security, counterterrorism, and arms control actives: collaboration in various military fields and other areas of education, medicine, topography, hydrography, and culture; and sharing experiences in peacemaking efforts. In August 2015, Moscow agreed to provide Mi-35M helicopters to Pakistan. Pakistan wished to buy 20 Mi-35Ms over the next year and got four helicopters in 2017. In addition, both countries enhanced military relations and joint military exercises were made between the two armies under the slogan of Druzhbha (Russian word meaning friendship). Russian naval forces also participated in the Aman-17 international exercise in the Arabian Sea hosted by Pakistan in 2017. Further, both countries agreed about coordination against terrorism and drug trafficking. Russia had already cooperated in outer-space exploration and helped in launching the Pakistani telecommunication satellite AlBadar in 2001. It also had refurbished the only Pa-

kistani steel mill. An agreement of \$2 billion for the North-South gas pipeline was signed in October 2015, which would connect Lahore to the Karachi terminal. This agreement was signed on the first visit to Pakistan by a Russian Energy Minister. The 1100kilometer pipeline was anticipated to be completed in 2018, but construction has yet to begin because of unexpected disagreements over the project. According to the original plan, the Russian company will complete this project and use it for 25 years. In the energy sector, both states are collaborating as well and have signed a Memorandum of Understanding in Moscow between Russia's Gazprom International and Pakistan's Oil and Gas Development Company Limited on July 3, 2017. The project will fulfill the energy requirements of Pakistan. This understanding was for mutual cooperation and joint ventures and use of state-ofthe-art technology that would aid exploration and development in Pakistan.

between these two countries.

The increasing cooperation between Pakistan and Russia should be viewed in the context of the Afghan scenario which had created challenges for Moscow. Pakistan is considered an important country for the stabilization of Afghanistan. Without the constructive involvement of Pakistan, stability there is a dream. During the last six decades, very few Pakistani leaders and officials visited Russia. Whenever whoever visited, it yielded positive results such as the Tashkent Declaration in 1966 and the agreement on the Pakistan Steel Mills in the 1970s. Pakistan has revisited her foreign policy during the 21st century and gave impotence to neglected states. When the President of Pakistan visited Russia in 2002, a joint working group on strategic stability, counterterrorism, and an inter-governmental commission was established. Regular meetings of these groups have been held since then. Russia also seems to be accommodating Pakistan. Russia condemned the Salala attack by NATO on November 26, 2011 and issued a friendly public statement, and it also supported Pakistan on its decision to stop supplies to NATO in Afghanistan through its territory at the time. Russia has supported Pakistan becoming a member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and being part of this Russian security mechanism. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is an important initiative to counter American influence and to bring peace and stability in the region. Membership in the SCO will enhance the strategic and regional impor-

tance of Pakistan. There is a strong potential of Pak-Russia relations in steel production, communication, space technology, and the energy sector. Pakistan should embrace these choices because it has much learned from past errors and mistakes. There is common perception in Pakistan that its policy of ignoring nearer countries and aligning with distant ones cost her politically, economically, and strategically. These alliances could not become successful in achieving all the goals of Pakistan such as politically resolving the Kashmir issue and ensuring security against India. Washington has enhanced its relationship with India and is projecting it as a regional power. It did not fulfill the promise which

it had made in the beginning of the relations. It also did not make Pakistan a progressive and modern society, but turned it into a radical and fragmented one. In fact, the ideal of choosing the democratic west against the authoritative east resulted in a long and consistent spell of dictatorship in Pakistan. Comparatively, India chose the other way around and has always had a stable and functional democracy in the country.

Although Pakistan and Russia are becom-

ing close, Pakistan will never jeopardize its relations with Washington. Washington is providing military aid and financial assistance to Pakistan but is getting concerned by the Pak-Russia romance. Russia understands Indian concerns and believes that Moscow and Islamabad's rapproche ment will normalize the hostile situation between India and Pakistan. The historical background of the India-Russia relationship is very strong and Russia would never like to lose India. However, it is expected that there will be a period of much more intensive and extensive interaction between these two countries. The Pak-Russia rapprochement should not surprise the regional powers due to the current geopolitical churn in global politics. The Pak-Russia relationship may become a true strategic partnership in the future. If Russia improves strategic relations with Pakistan, it might be able to influence Pakistan to play a constructive role in Afghanistan and not act against India. This would be a regional interest as regional powers like to see stability in Afghanistan. If Russia goes ahead with defense cooperation with Pakistan, it would be to the detriment of the Indo-Russia relationship, and Pakistan is a smaller market than India for Russia. Russia may lose some major contracts which it has made with India recently. Both India and Russia have a long history of relations and India has never openly criticized Russian policies over Ukraine. Both of the countries are also members of several multilateral organizations like BRICS, RIC, and the SCO. Although India has expressed its concerns about growing cooperation between Pakistan and Russia several times, Russia believes that this rapprochement will normalize the hostile Indo-Pak attitude. It seems that Pakistan and Russia are going to forge a true strategic partnership.

Women empowerment is need of the hour

This is the beginning of commercial ties

Altaf Kumail



History has shown that in developed countries, both men and women have participated. Women have played a significant role in the development and prosperity of the United States, United Kingdom, China, Japan, and Malaysia

OMEN'S Day is being celebrated all over the world today. The purpose of this day is to pay trib ute to the women who have made great sacrifices for their rights in Europe and the West. And finally convinced Western society that they are human beings just like men and have equal rights in the pursuit of all rights and resources. However, within the Islamic world, the concept of celebrating International Women's Day is different. Islam has innately given honor and dignity to women in the form of mother, daughter, sister, and wife. Therefore, it was not the turn of any feminist moment for them to assert their rights in the style of Western women. From the Islamic point of view, a woman, if she is a mother, has heaven, comfort in the form of a wife, honor in the form of a sister, and mercy in the form of a daughter. A woman is the part of the universe that completed the creation. However, our society has so far failed to fully understand and implement this position regarding the woman of Islam. Due to the lack of education in the patriarchal society, outdated traditions, and tribal culture, Pakistani women are still forced to live

in a world of cosmopolitanism. However, over time, that is likely to change. And women's personal, social, economic, and political conditions are improving, which is welcome. The role of women in the development and prosperity of Pakistan has been key from day one. From Fatima Jinnah to Benazir Bhutto, Asma Jahangir and SharmeenObaid Chennai to ArfaKarim and MalalaYousafzai, women have made Pakistan famous in every field. However, the country still needs a conducive environment for women's rights and better development resources. Which, of course, made the video an overnight sensation? Even today our women have many problems. And many rights remain. And this is possible only when we, like other nations, come to the fore for the legitimate rights of women; just as in 1908 15,000 American women were oppressed and enslaved, with long working hours and low wages, and the right to vote. She took to the streets of New York.

The slogans of these women were Bread and roses, which were meant to improve living standards and economic security.

This echo, which rose in 1908, has not diminished since the turn of the century, but its echo has spread from the developed world to the developing world.

Pakistan also celebrates International Women's Day on March 8 with renewed vigor and enthusiasm in which seminars, events, and rallies in favor of women are organized at the level of government, semi-government, NGOs, and civil society. And they seem to point out women's issues.

History has shown that in developed countries, both men and women have participated. Women have played a significant role in the development and prosperity of the United States, United Kingdom, China, Japan, and Malaysia.

But it is a pity that in an Islamic country like Pakistan where there are many laws for the protection of women. Where NGOs are making a lot of money in the name of women. But an ordinary woman is still struggling to convince herself. Today's woman is far ahead of men in education. But in our society, she gets a job for less than men. Where does a woman get a job? Young girls who are educated in private schools and colleges are easily getting jobs. Institutions where education is being offered at very high prices. But female teachers are paid less than a day laborer. MA / MSc girls are recruited in many private educational institutions with a salary of five to ten thousand rupees.

Where their job is permanent. Nor are they paid regularly. Many reputable educational institutions charge "tuition fees" for children during the holidays. But they do not pay teachers during holidays. Today's woman is intimidated in many ways. Even today, women in our beloved Paki-

stan are victims of domestic violence. The rape of women is reported daily. 4 to 6 girls get burnt every day due to the explosion of a stove in the house. Not only this, some inhumane customs such as Vani, vita Satta, Karo Kari, marriage to the Qur'an, burial in the ground, abandonment of dogs, cutting off the nose, ears, and other organs also happen.

If Pakistan is to make progress, we have to make women stand side by side with men and give them development opportunities and we have to formulate such women-friendly policies that can restore the status of women in society and their social and economic hardships can be reduced. Every aspect of women plays a key role in society. No society is on the path of development unless women are included.

Briefs

Hungary bans weapons passage to Kyiv

BUDAPEST: Prime Minister Viktor Orbán has signed a decree allowing NATO troops to move through and be stationed in the country.

Orbán approved the move on Monday in the wake of Russia's invasion of neighbouring Ukraine.

But he also banned the shipment of weapons and lethal equipment to Kyiv.

Non-lethal aid - such as personal protective equipment, medical supplies and humanitarian materials - is still permitted to cross the Hungarian border to Ukraine. The government decree reaffirmed Orbán's earlier insistence that Hungary would only allow NATO forces to transit across Hungary into other NATO member countries. Orbán - a nationalist leader - has not asked NATO to help defend Hungary's border, unlike other countries. Hungary's foreign minister Péter Szijjártó had previously told Euronews that Budapest would not accept additional NATO troops on its soil. - APP

PM Imran faces...

From Page 01 "stolen and rigged". He also lashed out at the PTI government for weakening the country's economy.

"We have submitted the no-confidence motion in the NA secretariat. Their days are numbered," he exclaimed, adding that the government "deceived" the nation. Rehman also castigated the premier for "threatening and cursing" at opposition leaders during a recent public gathering.

He continued that the opposition did not have an "enmity" with anyone and only had a difference of opinion which should be discussed in a "political and democratic" manner. Zardari began his address

on a lighter note by apologising for the delay in holding the press conference, which was originally sup posed to start at 4:30pm. He attributed the delay to traffic and the PPP's ongoing anti-government march. He said that the opposition decided at one point that it was "now or never". "This [destruction] is continuing and it will worsen to such an extent where no one will be able to rectify it."

Zardari said that the opposition consulted each other and came to the conclusion that a single party could not take the country out of this "difficult situation". "We will all have to work togeth er." The PPP co-chair also invited "distant friends" to help the opposition work together to rid the country and coming generations of this difficult situation.

Zardari also assured the media that the opposition had the numbers it needed, saying: "We will get more than 172 votes."

7 terrorists killed...

From Page 01

been killed in ensuing heavy exchange of fire. These terrorists were involved in recent firing and attacks on security forces in Makran the statement added

In addition, a significant cache of arms and ammuni tion has also been recovered which was intended to be used in terrorist activities. "Operations to eliminate such perpetrators of terrorist acts in Pakistan will continue and they will not be allowed to sabotage peace, stability and progress of Balochistan," the handout concluded.

Pakistanis repatriated...

From Page 01 Plenipotentiary for Asia, has played a great role in coordinating and assisting together with Malik Muhammad Farooq, Ambassador of Pakistan in Poland to make sure that Pakistanis are evacuated safely.

It is pertinent to mention that Mr. Opalinski has been in Pakistan for over a period of 12 years and his current contribution in assisting in evacuation of Pakistanis is worth being highlighted.

Historic Pak-Australia Test ends in a draw

Imam and Shafique also created history by their opening partnership stands in both innings. They provided a 105 partnership in the first innings while 252 runs in the second one

SPORTS DESK

RAWALPINDI: Pakistani batters Imam ul Haq and Abdullah Shafique grabbed centuries to end the draw first Test against Australia on a high note at the Pindi Stadium on Tuesday.

Pakistan finished the second innings on 252 for none on day five, making a lead of 269 runs as the play was called off by both teams. Imam who was named Player of the Match had made a comeback in Tests after more than two years, hit 157 in the first innings while remained unbeaten on 111 in the second which included 7 fours and 2 sixes.

Shafique who went unlucky in the first innings on 44, got a chance to hit his maiden Test century in the second innings. He remained not out on 136, hitting 15 fours and a six.

Imam and Shafique also created history by their opening partnership stands in both innings. They provided a 105 partnership in the first innings while 252 runs in the second one.

Marnus Labuschagne tried to

News Desk

MOUNT MAUNGANUI:

Australia underlined their

status as Women's Crick-

et World Cup favourites

Tuesday with a convincing

seven-wicket win over Pa-

kistan in Mount Maunga-

In-form opening batter

Alyssa Healy led the way

for the six-time champions

with 72 off 79 balls, sup-

ported by 35 from skipper

Meg Lanning and 34 from

Pakistan captain Bismah

Maroof scored 78 as her

team made 190-6 after los-

ing the toss and being put

Despite a much-improved

performance on their

first-round loss to India.

Pakistan paid the price for

Allrounder Aliya Riaz

made a creditable 53

but it came off 109 balls,

while Australia's top order

scored at almost a run a

ball. The result puts Aus-

tralia top of the tourna-

ment's eight-team leader-

a sluggish run rate.

Rachel Haynes.

into bat.

CWC: Australia

beat Pakistan



hook Shafique on lbw in the 17th over which looked tight but was given not out. However, Pat Cummins went for the DRS but replay

board but leaves Pakistan

bottom with a struggle to

make the final four after

"Everyone's in really good

form, we all got starts and

I guess we're all feeling in

good nick," Lanning said.

"Pakistan did extremely

well and made it hard for

us to take wickets so we

were disciplined and kept

that run rate in check." Pa-

kistan's total never looked

enough against Australia's

formidable big hitters,

who overhauled the target

with 15.2 overs to spare.

Maroof said Pakistan were

unable to exert pressure

'We could have stopped

them, they gave us chanc-

es but we didn't capital-

"In fielding we could have

Defeat left Pakistan with

out a win against Australia

Pakistan face South Africa

on Friday while Australia's

next challenge is against

hosts New Zealand on

finishing on 193-3.

in the field.

ise," she said.

done much better."

in 13 ODI matches.

two losses.

showed that the ball pitched and turned away. Earlier when Australia started the day five with 449 for 7, Skipper

AGENCIES

BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jin-

ping on Tuesday urged joint support

for the peace talks between Russia

and Ukraine, and stressed the need to

encourage the two sides to keep the

momentum of negotiations, overcome

difficulties, keep the talks going and

Xi made the remarks while attending

a video summit with French President

Emmanuel Macron and German Chan-

Xi said that the current situation in

Ukraine is worrisome, and the Chi-

nese side is deeply grieved by the out-

break of war again on the European

China maintains that the sovereignty

and territorial integrity of all countries

must be respected, the purposes and

principles of the UN Charter must be

fully observed, the legitimate security

concerns of all countries must be tak-

en seriously, and all efforts that are

conducive to the peaceful settlement

of the crisis must be supported, he

said. The pressing task at the moment

is to prevent the tense situation from

escalating or even running out of con-

China commends the mediation ef-

forts by France and Germany on

bring about peaceful outcomes.

cellor Olaf Scholz.

trol, Xi stressed.

Pat Cummins and Mitchell Starc came for some action as pacer Shaheen Shah Afridi took the ball to bowl the first over on the day. Cummins hit a boundary in the same over but was unable to materialize his innings any further as spinner Nauman Ali who was searching for a five-wicket haul after bagging wickets of Usman Khawaja, Steven Smith, Travis Head, Cameron Green had some plans in mind. Cummins was out for 8 runs as he was taken by Imam ul Haq to give Nauman his fifth wicket.

Australia was eight down and to add more agony, Afridi bold Michell Starc (13) in his very second over of the day bagging two wickets in the first Test in 30 overs.

The last wicket was also picked by Nauman making it a career-bestsix for him, when he trapped Nathan Lyon on lbw on 3. Lyon called for the review but it hit middle and off. Australian was all gone for 459 in 141 overs. Pakistan and Australia resumed Test battle in Pakistan after a gap of 24 years, with Babar Azam and Pat Cummins leading their sides in the first Test of the three-match Benaud-Qadir ICC of how to tackle the spinners."

Xi calls for 'maximum

restraint' in Ukraine

Ukraine, he said, adding that China

will stay in communication and coordi-

nation with France, Germany and the

European Union (EU) and, in light of

the needs of the parties involved, work

actively together with the internation-

We need to call for maximum restraint

to prevent a massive humanitarian

crisis, Xi said, adding that China has

put forward a six-point initiative on the

humanitarian situation in Ukraine, and

stands ready to provide Ukraine with

We need to work together to reduce the

further humanitarian aid supplies.

al community.

World Test Championship series. After the first Test, the tour of Australia includes two Tests, three ODIs and a Twenty20 International from March 12 to April 5. Rawalpindi would also stage three ODIs and a T20 while Karachi and Lahore will host one Test each. The next Test would take place in Karachi from Saturday. Both teams would fly out from Islamabad and will reach Karachi on Wednesday.

Speaking after finish of the first Test, opener Adbullah Shafique said the maiden test century against Australia was a confidence booster for him.

"Australia has a lethal bowling attack and scoring a century against them has given me a lot of confidence," he said.

To a question, he said learned a lot along with the team. "I saw many international matches and improved my technique," he said. About him and Imam scoring partnership century stands and making history, he said, "As we played the momentum began and we scored centuries. Imam and I were having words in the innings

Imran Khan says ready...

From Page 01 any relief to the corrupt elite who had plundered the national wealth.

"Once again, I make it loud and clear that I will not extend the gang of thieves and dacoits any relief in the form of NRO (national reconciliation ordinance)," he said. He vowed to continue the war against corrupt politicians in the country.

He pointed out that a 'powerful thief' was more detrimental to the country for blatantly quashing the sanctity of rule of law. He said that the corrupt pol-

iticians, owning exponentially expensive apartments in London, were reluctant to surrender before the law. PM Khan said his government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf would be remembered for the historic steps and initiatives, taken for the empowerment of women in the country. He mentioned that Islam

ensured inheritance rights to women over 1400 years ago, however, regretted that a large population in Pakistan was being denied such obligatory rights.

Imran Khan said his government enacted powerful amendments in inheritance law to ensure ownership of property to women.

He urged the university students to raise awareness among women to get a realization about their rights.

He emphasized the role of educated women in the refinement of society and recalled how his mother helped him grow in life.

The prime minister mentioned that his government was providing an increased number of scholarships and stipends to girls than boys with a ratio of 60 to 40 percent. In his address, Federal Minister for Law and Justice Dr Farogh Naseem said Islam provided rights to women including ownership of property.

He said during four years of government, structural amendments were made in laws relating to women to avoid delay in the dispensation of justice.

Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, in his address, recalled that his efforts in the 90s led to the establishment of FJWU as the country's first woman university, besides opening up a number of schools for girls. He announced to donate his residence Lal Haveli to be turned into an educational facility for women in the future. Parliamentary Secretary for Law and Justice Maleeka Bokhari said the government was focusing on ensuring the rights of women, including economic empowerment.

She urged the students of FJWU to raise awareness about the campaign regarding the protection of women's property rights and help the victim in filing an application in case of denial of her such rights.

A documentary film, highlighting the importance of the inheritance rights of women, was screened on the occasion.

Swedish premier hesitates over NATO referendum



News Desk

STOCKHOLM: Citing Russia's war on Ukraine, Sweden's prime minister said on Monday she was hesitant about holding a referendum on her country joining the NATO alliance. Speaking to TT News Agency, said according to the latest opinion polls, the rate of Swedes who support NATO membership has almost doubled since the Russia-Ukraine war began, from 25% to 49%.

Andersson said she understood the concerns of the people and that Sweden's security situation in the country changed since Feb. 24, when Russia launched its war on Ukraine. "It's understandable that in the current situation, more

people are thinking about security issues. The security situation has changed dramatically in the last week," said Andersson. "Despite this, I have hesitations about holding a referendum for NATO membership. Not every issue should be brought to the public," she added.

Russian President Vladimir Putin cited NATO expansion as an issue in launching the war. Russia has warned of military consequences if either Finland or Sweden were to join the alliance. Stating that they will develop security cooperation with the US and neighboring countries, Andersson stated that they will strengthen their defense with the US and Finland due to Russia's aggressive attitude towards Ukraine and European security.

Since Russia began its war against Ukraine on Feb. 24, it has drawn international condemnation, led to financial sanctions on Moscow, and spurred an exodus of global firms from Russia. At least 406 civilians have been killed and 801 others injured in Ukraine since the beginning of the war, according to UN figures.

Erdogan hails women's rights, vows action against violence

negative impact of the crisis, Xi said,

adding that relevant sanctions will affect

global finance, energy, transportation

and stability of supply chains, and damp-

en the global economy that is already rav-

aged by the pandemic. And this is in the

interest of no one. We need to actively

advocate a vision of common, compre-

hensive, cooperative and sustainable

security, Xi said. China supports France

and Germany in promoting a balanced,

effective and sustainable European secu-

rity framework for the interests and last-

ing security of Europe, and by upholding

its strategic autonomy, he said

ANKARA: President Recep Tayyip Erdogan hosted female village mukhtars from across the country on Tuesday on the occasion of International Women's Day. Addressing the event held at the Presidential Complex in the capital Ankara, Erdogan lauded Turkey's progress in terms of women's rights and decried acts of violence toward women. "Women are one-half of a whole. We can never accept women to be discriminated against due solely to their gender and be exposed to violence. Our faith, our culture, our Constitution require us to attach the value they deserved to women. Unfortunately, we have seen practices contradicting these," he told hundreds of female administrators of neighborhoods and villages. He was referring to discrimination toward headscarf-wearing women before, during and after the notorious 1997 coup. The president noted that they restored the right to education for women who were deprived of this right for wearing headscarves. "Though the Constitution gives the right to work to everyone regardless of gender, women were deprived of this right in the public sector but we reinstated this right," Erdogan said, noting that they made affirmative action for women a part of the Constitution. Domestic violence and violence toward women dominated the president's address as he denounced lenient sentences for perpetrators. "We are naturally on the side of women in cases of violence. Domestic violence is no

More than 1.7 million people have also fled to neighboring longer a crime that is investigated only if the plaintiff files a countries, the UN Refugee Agency said. complaint," he noted. – **Agencies** EU to evaluate membership applications of Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia

WEB DESK

BRUSSELS: The EU is preparing to consider the membership applications of Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia, three ex-Soviet republics, EU term president France said Tuesday - an announcement made on day 12 of Russia's war on Ukraine.

In recent years both Georgia and Ukraine have had Russian-backed separatists on their territory, with Russian troops crossing into Georgia in 2008 and into Ukraine in 2014 and now, during the current war. Moscow has opposed former

Soviet territories joining the EU and other Western institutions. On Feb. 28, days after the current war began, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy asked for the EU to waive normal procedures and grant his country "immediate" membership.

On Monday the ambassadors of the member states agreed to provide an opinion to the EU Commission on the applications of the three countries - the first step in the process - according to a statement by France.

At the end of this step, which is the beginning of a long process for EU candidacy, member states



can make nominations by making decisions at the highest political EU countries is required.

level. For this, the approval of all But in recent years some EU

countries have been skeptical of further expansion, so it is possible that the EU Commission may propose to the three countries something like a "privileged partnership" instead.

After a country gets candidacy status, it must meet the EU's economic and political criteria.

It can take many years for many countries to meet these criteria before joining. Turkiye, for instance, became an EU candidate in 1999, and its membership negotiations began in 2005, but in the 2010s its accession process

stalled. It is expected that the applications

of the three ex-Soviet countries will be discussed by the leaders of the member states when they meet at Paris' Versailles Palace on Thursday and Friday.

Russia's war on Ukraine, which began on Feb. 24, has drawn international condemnation, led to financial sanctions on Moscow, and spurred an exodus of global firms from Russia.

At least 406 civilians have been killed and 801 others injured in Ukraine since the beginning of the war, according to UN figures. More than 1.7 million people have also fled to neighboring countries, the UN Refugee Agency said.

Qureshi holds phone talks...

From Page 01

peace-loving people of Pakistan who had rendered tremendous sacrifices to eliminate the scourge of terrorism from the country. He shared the resolve of

the government to continue its unrelenting counter-terrorism efforts and bringing the perpetrators to justice, a press release issued here by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said.Recalling successful visit of Prime Minister Imran Khan to China in which various important decisions were taken to advance bilateral practical cooperation, Foreign Minister Qureshi stressed the importance of close coordination between the two sides for early realization of agreed ventures and projects. He expressed satisfaction

on the high-quality development of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and accelerating industrial relocation and investments to Pakistan. The Foreign Minister con-

veyed Pakistan's concern at the situation in Ukraine and underscored the need for a diplomatic solution in accordance with the relevant multilateral agreements, international law and provisions of the UN Charter. Maintaining the principled position based on respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states, Pakistan had called for de-escalation and resolution of disputes through dialogue and diplomacy.

Business / World



Briefs

Azeri positions come under **Armenian fire**

DNA

BAKU: Azerbaijani military positions have come under Armenian fire in Aghdam and Nakhchivan regions, the Defence Ministry reported on March 8.

In a statement published on its website the ministry said: "Members of the illegal Armenian armed detachment in the territory of Azerbaijan, where the Russian peacekeepers are temporarily stationed, using various caliber weapons subjected to fire the positions of the Azerbaijan Army in the direction of the Papravend settlement of the Aghdam region, at 1845, on March 7."

Furthermore, on March 8, at 0730, Armenian armed forces fired on Azerbaijani army positions in the direction of the Kilid settlement of Ordubad region of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic on the state border.

The Azerbaijan army force es stationed in these directions responded appropriately. The situation in these directions is currently stable, with the Azerbaijan army units in command of the operational situation, the ministry said.

About 2,000 Russian peacekeepers have been deployed for five years in Karabakh under the trilateral ceasefire deal signed by Baku, Moscow and Yerevan on November 10, 2020. The signed agreement obliged Armenia to withdraw all its troops from the Azerbaijani lands that it had occupied since the early 1990s.

2M people fled Ukraine since war began

News Desk

NEW YORK: Top UN refugee official said on Tuesday 2 million refugees have fled Ukraine since the war began on Feb. 24.

"Today the outflow of refugees from Ukraine reaches two million people," Filippo Grandi, the UN high commissioner for refugees, wrote on Twitter.

The number is rising steadily, up from 1.7 million as of Monday.

According to UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) figures, as of March 7 at least 406 civilians have been killed and 801 others injured in Ukraine since Russia launched the war on its neighbor. Among the 406 killed were 27 children, according to the UN.

The international body has said the real toll is much higher as conditions on ground make it "difficult to verify" the exact number of civilian casualties. A temporary cease-fire between the forces of Moscow and Kyiv was declared on Tuesday to evacuate civilians from five major cities in Ukraine including the capital.

Shell abandons Russian oil and gas

BERLIN: Shell is set to withdraw from its involvement in all Russian hydrocarbons, including crude oil, petroleum products, gas and liquefied natural gas (LNG) in a phased manner, aligned with new government guidance, the company announced on Tuesday. As an immediate first step, the company will stop all spot purchases of Russian crude oil, it said, adding that it will also shut its service stations. aviation fuels and lubricants operations in Russia.

"We are acutely aware that our decision last week to purchase a cargo of Russian crude oil to be refined into products like petrol and diesel - despite being made with the security of supplies at the forefront of our thinking - was not the right one and we are sorry," Shell Chief Executive Officer, Ben van Beurden, was quoted as saying.Van Beurden stressed that Shell's actions to date have been guided by continuous discussions with governments about "the need to disentangle society from Russian energy flows while maintaining energy supplies." - Agencies

Portal for Pakistani students to enhance cooperation: envoy

"In this portal, another important area is to post their CVs and we will circulate that information to the Chinese enterprises. So, if there's any opportunities for our professionals to get jobs here, that can be facilitated through this portal"

BEIJING: Pakistan Ambassador to China Moin ul Haque said that launching a portal to facilitate the Pakistani students and professionals would enhance linkages among Pakistani students, experts, and Chinese professionals, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Tuesday.

He further said that it's a portal connecting Pakistani professionals in China as well as students and the main objective is to give them a platform where they can come together to discuss various issues they are facing, what they are doing in China, what their achievements are in China and can share their experiences.

The ambassador mentioned that it is the first portal of this kind to gather Pakistani scholars, academicians, professionals and intelligentsia in general on one platform for constructive sharing of innovative thought.

"I hope the participants will seize the opportunity to build a



better community. Learning and growing in wisdom and tolerance is what being here is all about, and I encourage the visitors to take a glimpse of the portal - a space filled with research innovations, artistic explorations and community celebrations," he added.

It is to be noted that Pakistani



Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi and the Pakistani ambassador inaugurated this portal named "Portal for Pakistani Students and Professionals in China" on February 6 to facilitate the Pakistani students and professionals in China. The Portal is a pioneer initiative

of the Pakistan Embassy in Bei-

jing. The participants can visit Pakistan Embassy's website as well as https://studentsinchina. pk for updates. "In this portal, another impor-

tant area is to post their CVs and we will circulate that information to the Chinese enterprises. So, if there's any opportunities for our professionals to get jobs here, that can be facilitated through this portal", Moin stated. "I have been told that in this one

month, almost 1000 students already had registered in this portal. We are very happy that this portal has been well received, supported and facilitated by the community", the Pakistani ambassador told CEN.

Ukraine claims killing Russian General

KYIV: Another Russian military general has been killed in fighting near Ukraine's northeastern Kharkiv city, the Ukrainian intelligence claimed on Tuesday.

According to a statement by the Intelligence Directorate of Ukraine Defense Ministry, Maj. Gen. Vitaly Gerasimov, chief of staff and deputy commander of the 41st Army of Russia, was killed. The statement said that Gerasimov had taken part in the second Chechen War, Russia's operations in Syria and the annexation of Crimea.

Last week, Maj. Gen. Andrei Sukhovetsky, a deputy commander of the 41st Army, was reported to have been killed. Russia's war on Ukraine, which began on Feb. 24, has drawn international condemnation, led to financial sanctions on Moscow, and spurred an exodus of global firms from Russia. The West has also imposed biting export restrictions on key technologies that are now prohibited from being sent to Russia. At least 406 civilians have been killed and 801 others injured in Ukraine since the beginning of the war, according to the UN, while also cautioning that conditions on the ground make it difficult to verify the true number. – **Agencies**

Ensuring women rights vital for prosperous society

In order to further increase the number of women working in the field of entrepreneurship, the Women in Business program will be adopted, within which funds in the amount of 8tn soums will be allocated



News Desk

TASHKENT: A festive event was held at the International Congress Center in honor of 8 March - International Women's Day. The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev cordially congratulated the women and expressed his deep respect to them.

"From time immemorial, our people have revered the sacred image of the Mother, a woman as an incomparable creation of the Almighty, surrounds her with love and care," the head of state said. As you know, the measure of humanity and justice of any society and state is, first of all, the attitude and attention to a woman. To achieve such a lofty goal as to ensure a peaceful and prosperous life for our people, special attention is paid to ensuring the legitimate rights and interests of women. The conditions for their work, education, health promotion, and the well-being of their families

are improving. This work has been identified as one of the most important areas of the Development Strategy. A 1 March videoconference identified even greater opportunities for women. In order to ensure the systematic and effective implementation of these tasks, the corresponding post of Deputy Prime Minister was re-established, and the State Committee for Family and Women Affairs was created.

The structure of the committee will also include deputy chairmen for women and family issues of almost 9.5 thousand mahallas operating in the republic, in each mahalla the position of a person responsible for resolving women's issues is reintroduced. In this way, a fair and effective system will be formed that will deal with women's problems and their daily concerns on an ongoing basis.

The National Program to Support Women's Education for 2022-2026 will be adopted. At the initiative of the President, the Women Mentors movement is being created, which unites authoritative and respected women in its ranks, which will be able to influence the formation of public consciousness and the upbringing of the younger generation. At the same time, women's councils are being set up in order to effectively address women's

problems in all labor collectives. In order to further increase the number of women working in the field of entrepreneurship, the Women in Business program will be adopted, within which funds in the amount of 8 trillion soums will be allocated

Also this year, women will receive a 40 percent subsidy for mortgage loans. This will provide needy women with 12,000 modern apartments.

Funds in the amount of 15 trillion soums are allocated for the implementation of this unprecedented for our country large-scale work.

- Women and family issues are a key task that determines our not only today, but also tomorrow. Every good deed in support of our women, the keepers of the family hearth, personifying love and selfless devotion, will undoubtedly return a hundredfold to-

morrow," said Shavkat Mirziyoyev. The President addressed all the women of the republic and called on them to actively participate in the huge transformations:

"Today we have entered a new historical era of comprehensive development of our country. Introducing children to great goals, educating them on the basis of noble ideas is the main duty of all mothers in Uzbekistan.

Undoubtedly, the upbringing of a young generation with high human qualities, courageous and courageous, devoted to the Motherland, depends primarily on you. This is the most important investment in the future, our greatest wealth.

France's presidential race heats up

WEB DESK

PARIS: As the race for France's presidency enters its final weeks, the list of contenders continues to grow and has a breadth of personalities that's just about as wide as one could imagine. The first round of France's 2022 presidential election is set for April 10, with a second-round, a runoff vote, on April 24. Believe it or not. as of March 2, as many as 40 hopefuls have tossed their hat into the ring for residency at the Elysee. Only one, however, can unseat Emmanuel Macron from his Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honore address. Elections in France are held every five years and always on a Sunday, an oddity for a country that still resembles its former very-Catholic self, where many entities and businesses remain shuttered on the day of rest. The dates are fixed in France's

constitution. The president is also elected by popular vote, as has been the case for the past 56 years.

A number of women crowd the field, such as current Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo and veteran far-right leader Marine Le Pen, along with many men who have taken the center stage before, not least among them current President Emmanuel Macron, the Green Party's Yannick Iadot and far-right pundit Eric Zemmour. Getting on the ballot isn't a snap: Contenders must

receive the endorsement of 500 elected officials around France, who back their run on the record with France's Constitutional which must happen by March 4. In a move that was thought to be a high strategy more than hedging of any sort, President Macron was the last to announce his candidacy on the evening of

Italian PM calls Azerbaijani President Aliyev

BAKU: On March 8, President of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Republic Mario Draghi made a phone call to President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev. During the phone conversation, the sides noted that this year marks the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Italian Republic. They hailed the fact that during this period relations between the two countries have reached the level of strategic partnership. During the conversation, the sides noted that Azerbaijan and Italy established fruitful cooperation in economic, trade and energy spheres. They stressed the importance of the Southern Gas Corridor and its integral part Trans Adriatic natural gas pipeline in energy cooperation. It was noted that Azerbaijan ranks first in oil supply and third in gas supply of Italy. During the phone conversation, the sides discussed successful cooperation projects implemented in the fields of culture and education, and underlined the significance of establishing an Italy-Azerbaijan University in Baku. The sides agreed to continue high-level political dialogue and exchange of reciprocal visits in order to strengthen strategic partnership between the two countries. -Foreign Desk

Libya appoints ambassador to Qatar

WEB DESK

DOHA: Libya has appointed an ambassador to Qatar for the first time in six years, according to a Libyan source on Tuesday.

Mohamed Al-Lafi, one of the notables in al-Zawivah city in the country's west, was named ambassador to the Gulf nation, the source told Anadolu Agency.

Al-Lafi has been a delegate in the UN-sponsored Libyan Political Dialogue Forum since 2020, which contributed to the formation of the current interim executive authority in Libya.

He also held various government positions, including the head of staff of the High Council of State and the undersecretary of the Ministry of Local Government.

Last July, Qatar appointed Khaled Al-Dosari as its ambassador to Libya for the first time since 2014 following the closure of its embassy in the wake of the emergence of rival administrations in the oil-rich country.

Libya, meanwhile, did not have an ambassador in Qatar since October 2016.

Libya is witnessing a deep political rift as the Tobruk-based parliament on Thursday gave confidence to a new government headed by former Interior Minister Fathi Bashagha while Abdul Hamid Dbeibeh insists on continuing with his post and duties as Prime Minister.

As a result of differences over the electoral law and the role of the judiciary in the electoral process, it was not possible to hold presidential and parliamentary elections that were scheduled for December 24, 2021. The Dbeibeh government warned that it would consider any attempt to storm its headquarters as an "attack against the government."

Our survival depends on construction of water reservoirs

MUMTAZ AHMED BHATTI

ATER scarcity in Pakistan is becoming alarming. Underground ter is going down every day. Residents of all major cities of Pakistan including Lahore,

Quetta, Rawalpindi and Islamabad are facing severe water shortage. Quetta's underground water has gone below a thousand feet. Residents of all major cities of Pakistan use the water brought by tanker by buying it at high prices. The water shortage is increasing day by day and the situation is getting serious but the government is not paying attention to The serious situation of water shortage can be improved only by preventing wastage of water, Construction of check dams to recharge underground water and Con-

water scarcity but is not paying the attention it needs. The federal and provincial governments are taking the same steps that are being taken worldwide to prevent

struction of water reservoirs. The gov-

ernment is taking steps to overcome

the water crisis, but how serious are the federal and provincial governments in implementing these measures and is this one of their priorities? Governments' priorities have always been their next election, so every government focuses on link roads, Soling and drains. Construction of water reservoirs to prevent water crisis. Awareness raising, lining of canals and watercourses and repair of barrages are done to prevent wastage of water and this is done on an emergency basis. And this is how it works for the water crisis in Pakistan. About the projects that were started by the federal government. Irrigation System Rehabilitation Project, (Phase-I) this project approved by ECNEC on 7.01.2004, the estimated cost was Rs. 19519.000 million. 7501.359 million Funds were released till 30 06 2021 Less than half the funds were released

in 18 years. If funds were released at this speed, the project would be completed in 40 years. Lining of Irrigation Channels Distributaries & Minors This project for Punjab was approved by ECNEC on 07.01.2004 at an estimated cost of Rs 30996.200 million and Rs. 7012.230 million were released till 30.06.2021.Rs 7012.230 million were released in eighteen years. If

funds were released at this speed then this project would be completed in 75 vears. The project for Lining of Distributaries and Minors in Sindh was approved by ECNEC on 30.03.2009 and its esti-

mated cost was Rs. 13828.322 million. Rs. 11807.754 million were released till 30.06.2021. When the PTI government came, it stopped the funds of this project and issued an order to close this project. Many experts said that all the work done so far will be ruined and such a large amount of money will be lost, but no one listened to the experts. Rainee Canal Project (Phase-I) Ghotki Sukkur and Khairpur was approved by ECNEC on 18.02.2004. Its estimated cost was Rs. 20533.836 Million. Due to the slow release of funds, this project has been under construction for more than 18 years. No one still knows when it will be completed. Rehabilitation of Irrigation System in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was approved by ECNEC on 24.08.2006. The estimated cost was Rs. 8484.230 million and Rs. 5392.029 million were released till 30.06.2021. This project has been ongoing for 16 years. Construction of 100 Small Dams in Baluchistan Package (3) was approved by ECNEC on 03.09.2016 with an estimated cost of Rs. 7829.874 million and Rs. 5551.454

million were released till 30.06.2021. This project has been ongoing from six years. Construction of Ghabir Dam Chakwal was approved by ECNEC on 04.09.2015 and its estimated cost was Rs.5655.493 million. Rs.1587.252 million were released till 30.06.2021. According to this calculation, this project will be completed in 30 years. Construction of 20 Small Dams 9 approved schemes in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were approved by ECNEC on 11.04.2005. The estimated cost was Rs. 4363.062 million and Rs. 4122.236 million were released till 30.06.2021. The project has been under construction for 17 years. Construction of Mangi Dam, Quetta was approved by ECNEC on 08.03.2016. The estimated cost was Rs. 4667.039 million. 3920.760 million have been released till 30.06.2021. Construction of Small Storage Dams, Delay Action Dams, Recharge Weirs and I.S.S.O Barriers in Sindh Project were approved by CDWP on 12.01.2009. The estimated cost was Rs. 12211.000 million. on 30.06.2021, Rs. 8931.465 million were released. It has been thirteen years since this pro-

10 Small Storage Check Dams Orange Area, Wadh District Khuzdar, 100

Dams in Districts / Districts of Baluchistan, 100 Small Dams in Dobandi Tehsil, GulistanQila Abdullah, 200 Dams in Qila Abdullah, District in Gulistan and Dobandi Tehsil, Dale Area Quetta, Khattak Banda Dam, ShakarDaraKoha District, Makh Banda Dam, Karak District, Wonder Dam, Lasbela District, Daroga Dam Project Jamshoro / Dadu, Garuk Storage Dam District Kharan, NaiGaj Dam Project Dadu Sindh, Knowling Storage Dam All these small dams are under construction. Apart from these small dams, the four provincial governments are also constructing small dams. Neither the federal government nor the provincial governments are releasing funds on time for any of the small dams projects nor are they providing the required funds. The number of PSDP projects in Baluchistan is also high and the provision of funds is a bit better here due to the struggle of Coordinator PSDP Projects Chief Engineer Bashir Khan Tareen. The situation of water crisis is eye-opening. The government should immediately pay full attention to water crisis. Provide funds to all small and large water reservoirs that are under construction to complete them on time and start work wherever it is feasible to construct water reservoirs.



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Briefs

Hammad, **UAE envoy** discuss mutual cooperation

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to Pakistan Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Monday called on Federal Minister for Energy Hammad Azhar in which both discussed global inflation and current geo-political scenario.

During the meeting, both sides exchanged views on rising oil prices in the global market and agreed that the world over inflation and deteriorating conflict situation was a matter of worry for all the countries.

According to the Energy Ministry's news release, Hammad welcomed the interest of UAE government to reach a comprehensive economic agreement with Pakistan on the lines of Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and ensured his full support for this positive development in the historic UAE-Pakistan bilateral relations.

Such an agreement would not only pave way for Government-to-Government initiatives but also help create a conducive environment for the business community, he added. The Ambassador appreciated the efforts of Pakistan in successfully hosting the Australian cricket team after 24 years. He further expressed his good wishes for the upcoming OIC meeting in Islamabad. The Minister lauded the long-standing relations of both the countries and reiterated the resolve of this government to further strengthen them. In this regard, the upcoming visit of Prime Minister Imran Khan to UAE was of utmost importance, he added. - APP

Capital reports lowest Covid tally since Dec 19

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Health officials on Tuesday reported only 19 new coronavirus cases in the Federal Capital - the lowest single-day tally since December 19, 2021. According to an official of the National Command and Operation Center (NCOC), the figure remained high during the period with 23 new coronavirus cases reported on Monday and 37 on Sunday.

The official said so far 134.662 cases had been reported from the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), with 1,019 deaths and 133,262 patients recovered completely. Meanwhile, on the direction of the Ministry of National Health Services, the district administration of Islamabad had continued surveillance of different areas of the capital to reduce transmission of the infection in the selected streets and other sectors

They also started taking action on a violation of standard operating procedures (SOPs) related to the coronavirus while visiting marriage halls, markets, and petrol pumps by its inspec-

Expo Dubai visit numbers surge past 17mn mark

ISLAMABAD: There has been a rush of visits to Expo 2020 Dubai - with numbers crossing the 17 million mark as the mega event nears the finish line.

The total number of visits has reached 17,434,222, with organisers describing this as "phenomenal increase" of 1.4 million visits in a single week.

"We have said from the start that the numbers typically ramp up towards the end of Expo," said Sconaid McGeachin, senior vice president of communications at Expo 2020 Dubai, on Tuesday. "We have been talking about the 'now or never'. Clearly that message is landing with people." The last minute surge of about 1.5 million visits per week is likely to bring numbers closer to the original 25 million target, The National reported. - APP

ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

NAB achieves many milestones under Chairman

NAB being the signatory to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), has set up a cell for combating money laundering and terror financing

ISLAMABAD: The Honorable Mr. Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB chaired a meeting to review overall performance of all regional bureaus of NAB at NAB Headquarters. Zahir Shah, Deputy Chairman NAB, Syed Asghar Haider, Prosecutor General Accountability (PGA), Masood Alam Khan, DG Operations and 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 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.

During the meeting, it was informed that NAB under the dynamic leadership of Honorable Mr. Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB from Oct 2017 to Dec 2021 has recovered Rs. 584 billion directly and indirectly after complete overhauling, perfecting its procedures and taking new initiatives besides introducing a comprehensive and effective anti corruption strategy comprising Awareness, Prevention and Enforcement with commitment of "Accountability for All" with a slogan of NAB's faith-Corruption free Pakistan. As per Gillani and Gallup Survey, 59 percent people have shown trust upon NAB besides NAB's performance have been appreciated by reputed National and International organizations like; Transparency International, World Economic Forum, Global Peace, Canada, PILDAT and Mishal Pakistan.

Moreover, the Government of Pakistan has appreciated NAB's efforts in improving Pakistan's position among FATA/APG members especially during the preparation of post observation period Report/follow up



Reports which helped FATF Coordination Committee of Pakistan to complete their work within the deadline. It is important to note here that NAB under the dynamic leadership of Honorable Mr. Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB apprehended untouchables for the first time in the history of Pakistan and brought them to justice. Currently, 1237 references of NAB are under trial in the learned Accountability Courts throughout the country. The total worth of under trial references is approximately Rs.1335.019 Billion. NAB's overall conviction ratio in Accountability Courts is about 66.8 percent. It was further informed that NAB, has introduced a new concept of Combine Investigation Team (CIT) in order to benefit from the experienced and collective wisdom of its senior supervisory officers in order to further improve the standards and quality of inquiries/investigations on the basis of solid evidence as well as statements of witnesses and documentary evidences. NAB has itself prescribed a timeframe of 10 months in which complaint verifications in two months, inquiries in four months and investigations in four months on alleged allegations of corruption and corrupt practices. Moreover, NAB has established a state of the Art Forensic Science Laboratory with the aim to facilitate $\ / \ assist$ in investigation and prosecution.

Furthermore, NAB has established its own Pakistan Anti-Corruption Training Academy at NAB Headquarters with the purpose to train and equip NAB investigation officers/Prosecutors with modern techniques in order to investigate white collar crimes and vigorously NAB cases in the learned Courts. NAB has also established Witness Handing Cells besides Complaint Cells in all its regional bureaus. Due to this reason, NAB is pursuing its cases in the learned Courts very vigorously on the basis of solid documentary evidence. Apart from

its national obligations while keeping in view that Corruption in the present times, surpasses geographical boundaries with ill gotten money being stashed abroad, NAB has also contributed towards the country's international commitments.

NAB being the signatory to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), has set up a cell for combating money laundering and terror financing. Furthermore, Pakistan is the first chairman of the SAARC Anti-Corruption Forum. Moreover, NAB has also signed a unique Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with China to extend cooperation in tackling corruption and to oversee CPEC projects currently under process in Pakistan. NAB under the chairmanship of Honorable Mr. Justice Javed Igbal, Chairman NAB has shown its firm resolve and commitment of "accountability for all" to eradicate corruption from the country by adopting a policy of zero tolerance and self-accountability.



ISLAMABAD: French embassy officials interacted with talented women from various walks of life on the occasion of International Women Day. DNA

UN rights chief to visit China's Xinjiang in May

WEB DESK

GENEVA: The UN human rights chief said Tuesday she would make a long-delayed visit to China in May, including to Xinjiang, where Western lawmakers have accused Beijing of genocide. "I am pleased to announce that we have recently reached an agreement with the government of China for a visit," Michelle Bachelet told the UN Human Rights Council.

She said that the UN rights agency,

concrete preparations for a visit that is foreseen to take place in May.' Nearly 200 rights groups meanwhile

demanded Tuesday that Bachelet's office release its long-postponed report on the rights situation in Xinjiang. "The release of the report without further delay is essential - to send a

message to victims and perpetrators alike that no state, no matter how powerful, is above international law or the robust independent scrutiny of your office," the 192 groups, including Human Rights Watch and Amnesty, wrote

in an open letter. There have long been calls for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to visit Xinjiang and to publish her office's findings on the situation there. Rights groups say that at least one million mostly Muslim minorities have been incarcerated in "re-education camps" in Xinjiang, a far-western region where China is accused of widespread human rights abuses including forced sterilisations of women and

Tareen group advocates 'minus Buzdar' strategy

LAHORE: The group of lawmakers led by estranged PTI leader Jahangir Tareen announced on Tuesday that it would only move forward on a "minus Buzdar" strategy. Speaking to the media in Lahore, Punjab MPA Nauman Langrial said that Tareen was currently in London and was apprised of the current situation via video link.

"During the meeting, we gave Tareen full authority to take decisions on behalf of the group," he said, adding that different political parties had and were continuing to contact the group.

"However, I want to make it clear that all members of the group are united on the stance that we will move forward on the minus Buzdar [strategy]," he said, reiterating that they would accept the decisions taken by Tareen.

Langrial said that the group was also listening to things being said by the political parties getting in touch with them and updating Tareen about the developments. He said that an important meeting would be held tomor-

row to take decisions regarding the group's future under the current circumstances. "We will look at this evolving situation and will draft a plan." When asked about possible candidates for the post of

chief minister, the Punjab MPA asserted that the Tareen group was a "united front" and a "family". "We know that all members of this group will accept the

decisions taken by Tareen." He also refused to comment on whether Aleem Khan - who had joined the group a day earlier - had been selected for the job, saying that the group was united under Tareen's leadership. "We told Aleem Khan sahab the same, that if you are a part of this group then you will

have to follow the decisions taken by Tareen.' When pressed about PML-Q's Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi as a possible nominee, he said: "Tareen has the right to take all decisions. We will follow whatever he says.

Over 6 mn people have died from Covid

PARIS:Over six million people have died worldwide from Covid-19 since the pandemic began, according to a tally from official sources compiled by AFP on Tuesday. A total of 6,003,081 people have succumbed to the virus, AFP counted at 1100 GMT. The milestone comes as the number of infections and deaths continues to plummet in most regions of the world, except in Asia, where Hong Kong is suffering its worst-ever outbreak, and Oceania, where New Zealand has recorded a jump in cases. Average global daily deaths over the past seven days have fallen to 7,170, down 18 percent in a week, continuing a trend seen since the peak of the Omicron wave in early February despite many countries relaxing restrictions. - APP

Iran won't back down on its 'red lines', says Raisi

Monitoring Desk

DUBAI: Iran will not back down on its red lines in nuclear talks with major powers, President Ebrahim Raisi said on Tuesday, after the European Union said the time had come for Washington and Tehran to take political decisions needed to reach an accord. Eleven months of negotiations to revive the 2015 nuclear deal which lifted sanctions on Iran in return for curbs on its nuclear programme have reached their final stages.

Iran has sought to remove all sanctions and it wants guarantees from the United States that it will not abandon the deal once more, after then-U.S. President Donald Trump walked out of the deal in 2018 and reimposed sanctions.

Iran's top negotiator, Ali Bagheri Kani, returned to Tehran on Monday for consultations. "The government pursues nuclear negotiations in full accordance with the principles and framework set by the Supreme Leader," Raisi said, referring to Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who has the final say in Tehran's decision.

"It has not and will not back down on any of these red lines," the semi-official Fars news agency quoted Raisi as saying.

PIA flight diverted after passenger suffers heart attack

DNA

KARACHI: A man suffered a severe heart attack during Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) Toronto-bound flight. According to details, a passenger, identified as Syed Waseh was travelling to Canada from Karachi by a PIA flight PK-783 on Tuesday when he suffered a massive heart attack. According to airport authori-

ties, he suffered a heart attack as the flight took off from Jinnah International Airport, Karachi. The ambulances of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and a team of doctors immediately rushed to the airport after landing. Later, the passenger was shifted to the hospital for medical treatment.

Pakistan committed to protection of women's rights

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is fully committed to the promotion and protection of women's rights, both nationally and internationally, the Foreign Office said Tuesday.

In a special message on International Women's Day, the Foreign Office said through various policy measures and legislation, Pakistan continued to make utmost efforts for women empowerment and their equal participation for building an inclusive society.

"The government will continue to fulfill its obligations under Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action as well as United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 5 and its related targets,' it said. The FO said the foundations of Pakistan were laid on the contributions of men and women alike.

"Our Constitution and legal framework provide guarantees for equal participation by women in all spheres of life including, social, economic and political", it said.

The Foreign Office said Pakistan paid tribute to the women around the world whose resil-

ience, sacrifices and efforts have made it possible for humankind to progress and build a better future for all. No society or nation can succeed and achieve sustainable development without realization of gender equality and women empowerment, it said. The FO said the recovery from COVID-19 pandemic was only possible by creating inclusive political systems, workforce, economies and societies. Pakistani women have contributed immensely to national development and progress, it said. "We are proud that today Pakistani women participate in every facet of public life. They have held prominent positions, including as Prime Minister, Governor of State Bank of Pakistan, Speaker of National Assembly, Judge of the Supreme Court, Chief Justice of High Court, and important portfolios in the Cabinet as well as Federal and Provincial Secretaries, Generals, fighter pilots and UN peacekeepers," it said. The FO also paid special tribute to the remarkable Pakistani women in diplomacy for their exemplary service, hard work and dedication in contributing to the foreign policy objectives and ably representing Pakistan across the world. – APP

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