



Islamabad POST

Saturday, March 12, 2022

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Pakistan-Hungary friendship day celebrated in Capital

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EU to boost mily support to Ukraine

Detailed News On Page-06



Allies to announce support soon

Detailed News On Page-08



Briefs

Chechen President lauds PM

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The President of Russia's Muslim-majority Chechnya region Ramzan Kadyrov has expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Imran Khan for his stance on Islamophobia in the United Nations and other world forums and said the Muslims in Russia see him with "great respect and honour." "Personally I was profoundly and eagerly looking forward to meet you to express my gratitude for the stance you adopt for our religion (Islam) in United Nations and at world forums," the Head of the Chechen Republic said in a letter to the Prime Minister. Imran Khan had met Ramzan last month in Moscow and appreciated the rebuilding of Grozny and the rapid progress of the Chechen Republic under his leadership.

Iran slams unilateralism in talks

DNA

TEHRAN: Iran's Minister of Foreign Affairs Hossein Amirabdollahian has underscored that conclusion of the Vienna talks cannot be decided based on a unilateral approach. Amirabdollahian described his Thursday discussion with Josep Borrell, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, as positive and constructive, stressing that the final decision on the talks in Vienna, Austria, to revive the 2015 nuclear deal and lift anti-Iran sanctions will be taken on the basis of collective consensus. Pointing to endeavors made in eight rounds of the Joint Commission meetings of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the Iranian FM tweeted: "Efforts to reach a good & durable agreement continue; it is within reach if US acts realistically & consistently."

Holiday Notice

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

Inside...

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PM Imran says 3 wickets on 1 ball his target

Says COAS General Bajwa told him not to refer to Fazl as diesel; refers to Opp. leaders as '3 stooges'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

LOWER DIR: Prime Minister Imran Khan addressed on Friday a huge public gathering in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Lower Dir, where he lashed out at all three party heads - PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif, PPP co-chair Asif Ali Zardari and Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam - Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman - who have joined hands to file a no-trust motion against him. Terming them the "three stooges", Imran recalled instances from the past when, according to him, these leaders had gone against Pakistan's national interest. He said he had been praying that they go ahead with their plan to file a no-confidence motion against him so that he was given an opportunity to

Continued on Page 06

J-10C fighter jets inducted into PAF fleet

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Air Force (PAF) on Friday formally inducted modern J-10C fighter aircraft in its fleet during a ceremony at the Kamra Air Base. Prime Minister Imran Khan, Chief of Army Staff Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmad Babar, Chief of Naval Staff Amjad Khan Niazi,

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan receives guard of honour at J-10C induction ceremony. (Inset) PM Imran Khan reviewing J-10C aircraft. - DNA

Think before you speak; PDM warns PM

Fazl says Imran Khan doesn't deserve to sit on PM chair

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Shehbaz Sharif said Friday that the activities that took place at the Bani Gala residence of Prime Minister Imran Khan was an open secret. Speaking to the media following his meeting with Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) President and Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman at his residence in Islamabad, he asked the prime minister to use refined language. "And if you don't do so, we will make you do that," he said, and warned, "We also have things to tell to the people. You will have no place to hide in case we make these secrets of your life public." Shehbaz said while on one hand Pakistan Army gave sacrifices in the war on terror, on the other PM Imran maligned it in London. He went on to say that he knew his (PM's) interior minister fully well. "Sheikh Rasheed is a criminal," PML-N president alleged. Speaking on the occasion, Maulana Fazlur Rehman, who was standing alongside Shehbaz, said that Imran Khan should bear this thing in mind that the JUI-F workers had jammed the entire country on his order yesterday. "And if we can bring routine life to a halt, then we can also teach you a lesson," he said categorically. "You call people names", Fazl said, and added, "Remember you don't deserve to be the prime minister of the country." He went on to say that it was his request to the ECP to seek explanation from him as to why he had addressed a public gathering in Dir.

Indian envoy summoned on missile issue

Pakistan has lodged a strong protest with India on diplomatic front

SUJUAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will invite the representatives of the permanent member (P-5) countries of the United Nations Security Council on India's recent violation of Pakistani airspace, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said on Friday. In a statement, the foreign minister said the Indian charge d'affaires had been summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the second time violation of the same kind. FM Qureshi said the act had endangered the human lives as the aircraft of Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the domestic flights of Pakistan could be hit by the missile. He said India would have to be answerable to its aggression, adding that Pakistan would always be ready to counter it. He mentioned that the ruling party in India was promoting Hindutva policies, adding that 21 members of the EU parliament had written a letter to the Speaker of Lok Sabha on the deteriorating human rights situation.

India says accidentally fired missile

NEWS DESK

NEW DELHI: India said on Friday it accidentally fired a missile into Pakistan this week because of a "technical malfunction" during routine maintenance, giving its version of events after long-time foe Pakistan warned the incident could have "unpleasant consequences". "On 9 March 2022, in the course of a routine maintenance, a technical malfunction led to the accidental firing of a missile," the Indian Ministry of Defence said in a statement.

Continued on Page 06

Russia to use volunteer fighters

Putin's decision comes during meeting of Russia's Security Council

CENTRELINE REPORT

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin gave the green light on Friday for up to 16,000 volunteers from the Middle East to be deployed alongside Russian-backed rebels to fight in Ukraine, doubling down an invasion that the West says has been losing momentum. The move, just over two weeks since Putin ordered the invasion, allows Russia to deploy battle-hardened mercenaries

Continued on Page 06

Russian forces regroup near Kyiv

DNA

LVIV: Russian forces bearing down on Kyiv are regrouping northwest of the Ukrainian capital, satellite pictures showed, in what Britain said

Continued on Page 06

OIC delegation heads to witness 23 March parade



KHAYAM ABBASI / DNA

ISLAMABAD: The heads of delegation from the member states of Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) will witness the Pakistan Day parade on March 23 as "Guests of Honour". Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood in a meeting with representatives of OIC resident missions said that invitations had been extended to dignitaries who

will be in the capital for the upcoming 48th Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers (OIC-CFM). Commending the important role of the OIC Missions in making the 17th Extraordinary Session of the OIC CFM in December 2021 a resounding success, the foreign secretary underscored that the 48th Session held special significance, since it coincided with the 75th anniversary of Pakistan's Independence. He added that the people of

Pakistan were looking forward to welcoming the honoured guests on this auspicious occasion. The foreign secretary highlighted the theme of the Session, "Partnering for Unity, Justice, and Development," represented Pakistan's commitment to promote unity within the Ummah, advance the cause of justice for all Muslims and promote inclusive and

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

- MARCH**
- March 01/ **Bosnia**
National Day
 - March 03/ **Bulgaria**
National Day
 - March 06/ **Ghana**
Independence Day
 - March 12/ **Mauritius**
National Day
 - March 17/ **Ireland**
St. Patrick's 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



Hotels & Restaurants

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



Airlines

- Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

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



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- Railway Inquiry.....117
- Railway Exchange 9270831-5
- WASA Rawalpindi.....5555489
- CAA.....9281092



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



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

Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Water Tank

- Islamabad.....0321-5744480



ISLAMABAD: Heads of European missions in Pakistan gathered to extend support to Ukraine. Ambassador of Ukraine is also seen in the picture. – DNA

Opp making hue and cry as defeat imminent: Farrukh

Farrukh Habib said that the entire nation had supported the prime minister's stance about "absolutely not", as he believed in dignity and honour of the nation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib on Friday said the opposition was making hue and cry over arrest and abduction of its members of National Assembly as it was unable to complete numbers for the success of the no confidence motion which was doomed to fail. Addressing a press conference along with Secretary PTI International Chapter Dr Abdullah here, he said that no JUI-F worker was arrested during its long march. Similarly Bilawal Bhutto Zardari led a long march from Karachi to Islamabad and none of the PPP workers was arrested



and no hurdles were created in its way as the government believed in democratic right of protest. On the contrary, he said that when PTI started its long march during PML-N era, an entire province was blocked and rubber bullets were fired on the participants. The minister said the government wanted that the opposition should bring a no confidence motion in the House so that their bluff of support should be exposed once for all. He said that the PTI government was fully confident of defeating the no trust motion as it enjoyed support of its allies. Farrukh said that it was a matter of routine to hold consultations and meeting with other party leaders and there was no reason to doubt any body's intentions. He said that despite many challenges, the government had always taken its allies on board and addressed their grievances, adding in future it would continue the same policy. The minister said that the prime minister

He reminded that when the PPP and PML-N were in power over 400 drone attacks were carried out in Pakistan's territory. Farrukh Habib said that the entire nation had supported the prime minister's stance about "absolutely not", as he believed in dignity and honour of the nation. The minister said the prime minister's stance on Islamophobia had been appreciated all over the world. He urged to take notice of the JUI-F workers attack on the Parliament lodges as the political parties were not allowed to train the armed activists. Farrukh said that the goons of JUI-F tried to harass the members of the parliament and their families residing in the lodges. He said that overseas Pakistanis sent \$ 30 billion in remittances last year which stood at \$ 18 billion per year till 2018. The minister said overseas Pakistanis had played an important role in making Imran Khan as Prime Minister. He hoped that record remittances would come this year in the country. In the past no government was ready to empower overseas Pakistanis, he said adding the biggest demand of the overseas was the right to vote. "Our government gave overseas the right to vote through legislation", Farrukh Habib said. Moreover, he said the process of power of attorney had been made online and 'Roshan Digital Account' was launched for the facilitation of expatriates.



ISLAMABAD: President Arif Alvi inaugurating first-ever Career Counselling Expo organized by ministry of federal education and professional training, at Pak-China Friendship Center. – DNA

AIOU organizes int'l conference on discourses of tradition

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open (AIOU) organized an international conference on 'Discourses of Tradition and Modernism in Islamic Thought' here at the main campus on Friday. Opening session of the conference was chaired by Prof Dr Zia Ul-Qayyum, VC, AIOU while Dr Qibla Ayaz, Chairman, Islamic Ideological Council was chief

guest at this occasion. Various prominent and distinguished scholars of foreign countries participated in the conference including Prof Dr Abu Sufyan Ishaq, Aligarh Muslim University, India, Prof Dr Israr Ahmad, Social Sciences University, Turkey and Prof Dr Jamal Malik, Erfurt University, Germany. Khurshid Nadeem, renowned national writer and columnist also participated in the conference and chaired the second session of the conference which was organized by the Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Studies. While addressing the participants, Prof Dr Zia Ul-Qayyum said that solution of our social issues and construction of new knowledge is embedded in the foundations of "tradition". If our ideological foundations remain deeply rooted in tradition, Muslim Ummah can face the challenges of the modern world effectively. He, further, added that such conferences serve to decrease the elements of extremism in our society. On the other hand, Dr Qibla Ayaz while addressing the conference said that Islam is neither absolute nor fixed in its interpretations rather it reflects fluidity and dynamism in its spirit and teachings. We can address any challenge of modern times by truly decoding the teachings of Islam. He, further, highlighted the need of reviving and sustaining the discourses of Islamic tradition. – APP

Promoting women entrepreneurs key focus of govt

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Advisor for Commerce and Investment Abdul Razak Dawood said that our women entrepreneurs are very talented and promoting them is the key focus of the government so that they could increase exports and play a more effective role in the economic development of the country. He said this while inaugurating Women Entrepreneurs' Exhibition at Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry. He then took a round of the exhibition and showed keen interest in the products. He appreciated the efforts of women entrepreneurs for producing quality products and assured that the government would work for their further facilitation. He also appreciated the initiative of ICCI for providing a good platform to the women entrepreneurs for display of their products and added that such exhibitions play an important role in business development, trade & exports promotion. Dr. Fehmida Mirza, Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination also visited the exhibition and appreciated the products displayed by the women entrepreneurs. She assured that the government would make more conducive policies for women entrepreneurs for better growth of their businesses.



WB approves \$435 mln for low income projects

WB has approved US \$85 million additional financing for Pakistan Housing Finance Project which would help to expand access to affordable mortgages to increase homeownership among low-income households, including women and informal workers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The World Bank's (WB) approved \$435 million in financing for three projects in Pakistan which would expand access to housing finance, particularly for low-income households, improve land tenure rights and facilitate affordable housing developments in urban Punjab. The three projects, approved by WB's Board of Executive Directors included Pakistan Housing Finance, Punjab Urban Land Systems Enhancement and Punjab Affordable Housing Program, according to a WB's press release.

"Affordable and accessible housing is in high-demand in Pakistan, which is home to over 200 million people and is the most urbanized country in South Asia," World Bank Country Director for Pakistan, Najy Benhassine, said. "These projects will contribute to addressing housing needs, particularly for low-income households, by leveraging the private sector and by facilitating access to mortgage options for those who currently cannot access financing to buy a home. They will also strengthen property rights and increase the supply of climate-resilient, affordable housing developments", he added. WB has approved US \$85 million additional financing for Pakistan Housing Finance Project which would help to expand access to affordable mortgages to increase homeownership among low-income households, including women and informal workers. The additional financing would scale up the credit risk-sharing facility launched in 2018, to provide partial credit guarantees to banks, in order to incentivize them to lend to borrowers traditionally excluded from commercial financing. This will benefit up to 70,000 first-time homebuyers in the country, who qualify for the government's

interest rate subsidy program – Mera Pakistan, Mera Ghar (My Pakistan, My Home). WB approved US \$150 million under Punjab Urban Land Systems Enhancement Project which would strengthen land administration and facilitate housing authorities' efforts to identify suitable areas and public lands for affordable housing developments in the Punjab province. The project would support the provincial government in upgrading its land registry by creating a digital, province-wide inventory of lands and deeds. The projects will help to secure land tenure and streamline procedures for land-related permits – which are essential for private sector investment, housing finance and tax revenue collection. The project will also generate geospatial data and risk information to inform urban planning and disaster risk management strategies for natural hazards such as floods. More than 38 million people are expected to benefit from land registration, which will not only improve tenure security, but also formalize land and property ownership. The US \$200 million Punjab Affordable Housing Program will increase the availability of affordable housing, particularly for low-income households in the province.

Govt taking measures to mitigate climate challenges

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister of National Food Security and Research Syed Fakhar Imam Friday said that per-capita contribution in the green house gas emissions by Pakistan was less than 1 percent and ranked at 135th position globally. However, with regard to vulnerability, Pakistan has been ranked in top ten most affected countries due to its geographical location. He expressed these views while addressing the Ministerial Roundtable on climate actions for resilience and sustainability of Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific Ministerial Session. The event was organized by FAO in collaboration with Government of Bangladesh, said a press release. Imam said that in the last 20 years, Pakistan has lost 0.5 percent of its GDP and has suffered substantial economic losses worth billion and has observed 152 extreme weather events. He said that climatic changes were expected to have wide-ranging impacts, such as: reduced agricultural productivity, increased variability of water availability, increased coastal erosion and seawater intrusion, and increased frequency of extreme weather effects. He said that governments were expected to have wide-ranging impacts, such as: reduced agricultural productivity, increased variability of water availability, increased coastal erosion and seawater intrusion, and increased frequency of extreme weather effects. Fakhar said that the governments efforts in restoring the degraded ecosystem and increasing the forest cover through its flagship mega project of Ten Billion Tree Plantation was worth-mentioning which appreciated and acknowledged globally. Such type of mitigation measures need to be expanded to reverse or reduce the negative impacts on the agriculture, forestry and its related sectors, he remarked. The minister said that in addition, there are number of initiatives which were under implementation by the Ministry of National Food Security and Research, the Ministry of Climate Change and various provincial governments.

Pakistan Post invites entries for writing competition

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Post has invited potential candidates under fifteen years of age to submit their work for the international letter-writing competition, an initiative of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) and the last date of submission is April 15, 2022. According to Pakistan Post, the theme for the 2022 competition was "Write a letter to an influential person explaining why and how to deal with climate change." The winners of the competition will be awarded Rs. 30,000, Rs. 20,000 and Rs. 10,000 for the first, second, and third positions respectively. The best letter (English version only) will be sent to UPU where a jury will select the winners for the gold, silver, and bronze medals which will include relevant inscriptions and their names as well as official stamp albums. The aim of the competition was to encourage children to demonstrate their abilities and to develop a passion for sharing their experiences. – APP

IRSA releases 65715 cusecs water

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) Friday released 65715 cusecs water from various rim stations with an inflow of 57027 cases. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1083.00 feet, which was 33.00 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 23822, 20709 and 30830 cases respectively. Similarly, from the Kabul River, a total of 5300 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 13573 cusecs released from the Chenab River at Marala.

Briefs

ANF recovers over 490 kg drugs; arrests two

RAWALPINDI: Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) in its operation on Friday recovered over 490 kg drugs including 447.6 kg charras, 38.4 kg opium and 4.2 kg Ice besides netting two accused. According to ANF Headquarters spokesman, ANF D I Khan and ANF Intelligence conducted an operation in Darband area on D I Khan road and recovered drugs which were tactfully concealed in fuel tank of a truck and arrested two accused namely Hafeez Ullah resident of Pishin and Jahangir. A case has been registered against the accused while further investigation is in progress. - APP

IESCO notifies power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Friday issued a power suspension programme for Saturday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work.

According to IESCO Spokesman, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period from 09:00 AM to 02:00 PM, Raja Sultan, TB Hospital, Bagh Sardar, Gulshanabad, Eid Gah, Pelpi, Blixar, Sohawa Court, Ghauri Dhamik, Kohsar Valley, Kallial, Gulshanabad, Dhok Noor, 502 Workshop, Adiala, Askari-14, Humayun-1, Humayun, Chara, Industrial, Al-Rizwan Mill, Feeders, From 10:00 am to 04:00 pm, NCL, Toba, Lilla Town, Ahmedabad, Sanghui Feeders, From 09:00 am to 04:00 pm, Beirut, Nambal, Sagharpur, Abdullapur, CWO, Jalalpur Sharif, Grand Hyatt-1, Orchard Scheme, Ahmednagar, KSB, Islampura, Gadol-1 & 2, Col. Sher Khan, Lala Rukh, Hussainabad, Fazal Rahbar & Steel Feeders, From 08:00 AM to 04:00 PM, Beirut Gala Darbar Mai Toti, Khoi Rata City, Charohi Express, Dana Bhal, Charohi Dongi, Siri, City, Kariala, Jandroot Dabsi, Dotot, Mojan, Charohi Feeders from 08:00 AM to 06:00 PM, Major Riaz, UC Lakhana, Dhanyal Road, Gulshan Saeed, Captain Amir Shaheed, Kamalabad Feeders and surroundings. - APP

PMPKL announces annual financial results

ISLAMABAD: Philip Morris (Pakistan) Limited (PMPKL) posted a profit after tax of PKR 2,307 million for the year ended December 31, 2021, compared to profit after tax of PKR 1,765 million for the same period prior year. The Company's net turnover during the same period stood at PKR 17,459 million reflecting an increase of 5.2% versus last year. PMPKL continued to extend its role for strengthening the economy through Company's contribution to the National Exchequer, in the form of excise duty, sales tax, and other government levies, stood at PKR 26,673 million, with an increase of 14.8% vs. last year, reflecting 60.5% of the Gross Turnover. The tax-paying cigarette industry continues to face challenges due to the lack of a level playing field due to the tax evasion and violations under tobacco control laws by the non-tax paid illicit cigarette manufacturers. The Govt has made efforts to curb the non-tax paid illicit sector to help strengthen the economy by improving the contribution to the National Exchequer. No change in excise rates for the last two fiscal years led to consumer price stability of the legitimate cigarette brands which is critical to ensure that the price gap with non-tax paid brands doesn't stretch further (current price gap between legitimate and non-tax paid brands is over 200%). This wide price-gap between tax-paid and tax-evaded cigarette brands has been the primary driver for the growth of illicit cigarette trade in Pakistan. Excise driven price increases have contributed to the growth of the illicit segment, which has been addressed by the FBR by not increasing excise duty on cigarettes during the federal budget. - APP

Pak-Indonesia efforts vital to counter Islamophobia: envoy

The Indonesian Ambassador visits Pakistan Institute of Developments Economics (PIDE)

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: His Excellency, Mr. Adam M Tugio, Ambassador of Indonesia to Pakistan, held a meeting with Dr. Nadeem-ul-Haque, the Vice-Chancellor, Pakistan Institute of Developments Economics (PIDE), in Islamabad today. The ambassador was accompanied by Mrs. Tugio and Mr. Pramudya Sulaksono, Minister-Counselor, Social Cultural Section of the Embassy of Indonesia. Ambassador Tugio spoke on countering Islamophobia. He said that the Indonesian embassy will be organizing a conference shortly to discuss the way forward and other issues such as women's rights and empowerment, through e-commerce platforms for instance, and the role the ulema can play in pushing the agenda forward.



ward. His Excellency also highlighted the prominent role women play in the Indonesian economy, and his government's efforts to improve internet connectivity across the country Ms. Durre Nayab, Pro-vice

Chancellor and Director, PIDE spoke on the positives of the Ehsaas program in this regard. There were positives out there, she continued, but challenges exist.

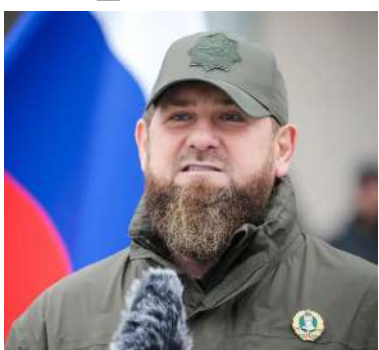
The Vice-Chancellor, PIDE, then spoke on Pakistan's employment landscape and the steps needed to improve Pakistan's unsatisfactory indicators. He pointed to poor internet connectivity and cost across the country as a hindrance to growth. The ambassador said afterward that PIDE has an enviable reputation for the quality of its research, which has contributed to public policy development. Indonesia and Pakistan are developing countries with similar challenges, he continued, and Indonesia was keen to tap this knowledge to answer the critical dilemmas facing Indonesia's policymakers.



ISLAMABAD: A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between Pakistan Baitul Mal (PBM) and Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) regarding establishment of a stitching unit vocational centre in F-9 Park. Ambassador Mustafa Yurdakul and Zlatomira Yurdakul graced the signing ceremony with their presence. - DNA

Kadyrov hails PM's stance on Islamophobia

ISLAMABAD: The President of Russia's Muslim-majority Chechnya region Ramzan Kadyrov has expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Imran Khan for his stance on Islamophobia in the United Nations and other world forums and said the Muslims in Russia see him with "great respect and honour." "Personally I was profoundly and eagerly looking forward to meet you to express my gratitude for the stance you adopt for our religion (Islam) in United Nations and at world forums," the Head of the Chechen Republic said in a letter to the Prime Minister. Imran Khan had met Ramzan last month in Moscow and appreciated the rebuilding of Grozny and the rapid progress of the Chechen Republic under his leadership. The Chechen President also expressed gratitude for meeting him during his recent visit to Russia and said three million Muslims in his country see him with "great respect and honour." "You [PM Imran] would be aware that Muslims in Russia esteemed you with great respect and honour." President Kadyrov said, "We are ready to make every service for you in Russia. We also pray to Allah Almighty to consider us among His dutiful and obedient humans. Whatever service is required for the cause, defence and struggle of Allah's Deen and its spread." "Once more, I would like to express my gratitude and thanks to you and your affection. We will wait anxiously for your next visit to Russia," Ramzan Kadyrov said. - APP



CG COMSTECH calls on WHO representative in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator General COMSTECH, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary called on WHO country representative in Pakistan, Dr. Palitha Mahipala at the office of World Health Organization in Islamabad. During the meeting Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary highlighted the role of COMSTECH in health, science, technology, higher education and climate in OIC member states. He said that OIC is a 2nd international organization after United Nations consisting of 57 member states from four continents. Prof. Choudhary

informed that COMSTECH is conducting about four training sessions monthly. These trainings/seminars/workshops are arranged for 57 countries including 22 countries located in WHO/EMRO region. Experts with international repute give lectures on different S&T fields including health sector. Prof. Choudhary said that COMSTECH is deeply involved in capacity building of OIC states in the cutting edge fields of science and technology. He said that COMSTECH has established a network of virology institutions consisting

on Biofarma Indonesia, Kayseri Eryneys University Turkey, NRC, Turkey Parexel, UAE and Pasteur Institute of Iran, NIH and ICCBS Pakistan. Prof. Choudhary explored the avenues of COMSTECH WHO joint initiatives in the areas of disaster management, training in health sector, and primary diagnostic surveillance. Dr. Palitha Mahipala appreciated the efforts of Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary for capacity building of EMRO region including Pakistan in the field of healthcare. He said that WHO and COMSTECH can work together

on telemedicine with respect to maternal and child health. He suggested that COMSTECH can initiate a programme of telemedicine for health, and can expand it to private sector for teleconsultation. Dr. Mahipala proposed that patient safety, research in primary healthcare and strengthening of operational research are the areas where both organizations can work together. It was also discussed that WHO (Pakistan) will work towards recognition of COMSTECH as WHO collaborating center in coming years. - APP

There is no room to compromise on rule of law: Sadaqat Abbasi

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) MNA Sadaqat Ali Abbasi Friday said that there is no room for compromise in the conflict with opposition over the rule of law and opposition should get ready for another defeat for no-confidence motion. Talking to a private news chan-

nel, he said that the opposition was bringing "mobs" into the Parliament which would never be allowed and so-called political pundits could not befool the masses by criticizing the government. He said that PTI do not believe in the politics of revenge and violence but any attempt to disrupt the state's law and order would not be tolerated at any cost. Government had the authority to take anybody into custody on doubts of being involved in any unlawful activity, he further mentioned. Replying a question, he claimed that PTI has emerged as the only national

party of Pakistan adding he said no corrupt element can defeat brave leader Prime Minister Imran Khan who is determined to change the fate of the country despite facing daunting challenges. PTI's parliamentarians will once again prove their loyalty and trust on the leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan, he said, adding, Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto has failed to gather even two thousand people in Islamabad which is shameful. He said the PTI would also defeat its political opponents in the next general election on the basis of performance. - DNA

Pakistan needs change in logistics under CPEC

He noted that the reforms carried out in Civil Aviation Authority, Pakistan Int'l Airlines, Pakistan Railways, and National Highway Authority were aimed at the improvement of consumer services

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: President, Arif Alvi, said that Pakistan eagerly needed a change in multi-modal logistics in view of the growing demand such as regional connectivity and the projects under CPEC. "The regional countries are eager to transport their goods to Gwadar port, and hence Pakistan needs to put in place a smooth supply-chain system at the earliest," he stated in his address here at the First Multi-modal Logistics Conference 2022. The President stressed that to fully tap the trading opportunities offered by increasing regional integration, Pakistan needed to reform its logistic infrastructure besides developing human resources. President Alvi mentioned that Uzbekistan had shown keen interest in transporting its commodities through Pakistan, while Turk-

menistan and Iran were interested in the supply of natural gas.

In this regard, he remarked that an efficient cargo system in Pakistan was vital to substantially improve the supply-chain system, thus benefiting both the producer and consumer countries. "Pakistan has immense opportunities knocking at its doorstep and we need to take advantage of the implementation of a multimodal logistic strategy," the President added. He contended that the government had done a splendid job in improving the farming, industry, and textile sectors during the pandemic,

however, mentioned the need for a smooth supply chain system.

To bridge gaps between the manufacturer and consumer, he opined, the policies needed to be formulated in consultation with government functionaries and the private sector. President Alvi emphasized that getting adjusted to changing trends, overcoming supply chain disruptions, and relying on two or more modes of transportation could substantially improve the logistics system. He maintained that multimodal transportation required more communication and collaboration and em-

phasized training to turn the country's huge youth bulge into a productive human resource to achieve the goals. Dr. Ishrat Hussain, former Adviser to Prime Minister on Institutional Reforms and Austerity on the occasion, said inefficiency of the supply chain could be overcome through the implementation of reforms in institutions.

He noted that the reforms carried out in Civil Aviation Authority, Pakistan International Airlines, Pakistan Railways, and National Highway Authority were aimed at the improvement of consumer services. To improve the efficiency of public organizations, he said it was important for the ministries to work on policies only, while the regulatory bodies could function autonomously. He stressed a level-playing field for all stakeholders, including the private sector, relating to the supply chain to benefit the consumer.

IHC serves notices on HEC's member appointment

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) Friday served notices to respondents in a case challenging the appointment of Dr. Ataur Rehman as member Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC). The petitioner had named Ministry of Education and Professional Training, Executive Director and Chairman HEC as respondents in his case. Justice Mohsin Akhter Kiyani heard the case filed by Barrister Umer Ijaz Gilani pertaining to the above matter. The lawyer pleaded that the court had reinstated Dr. Tariq Banori against the post of chairman HEC but the members had made the chairman's post as non functional. All this was happening under the supervision of Dr. Ataur Rehman, he claimed. He said that the HEC had removed the list from the website containing the persons involved in plagiarism. The decision was taken since the names of some HEC's persons were found in the list. The court remarked that it was shocking how a regulator institution was being run. - APP

Best health care services to be ensured

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination Dr. Faisal Sultan on Friday said that the government was committed to provide the best medical services at public hospitals for citizens across the country. During a surprise visit to Federal Government Polyclinic (FGPC) hospital, he said improving the health sector was among the top priorities of Prime Minister Imran Khan. Dr. Faisal said that innovative steps were being taken to further improve the facilities and the public-private partnership was essential in that regard. He said that the present government had paid special focus on the health sector by starting several mega projects. The SAPM said that effective measures were being adopted to achieve targets of universal health coverage (UHC). He said that the government was working for the expansion of UHC by investing in health systems, especially in PHC, and was committed to implement its agenda to achieve the target of UHC. - APP

24 students complete internship

ISLAMABAD: As many as 24 students of Capital University of Science and Technology (CUST) completed their internship with Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) here on Friday. The 13th batch of CUST students acquainted about traffic rules and road safety measures and functioning of various departments. The education wing of ITP was sensitizing the masses on traffic rules through various programs, said SSP Traffic Rai Mazhar. Addressing the concluding ceremony, the SSP (Traffic) said efforts were afoot to promote friendly policing in the city. He said that young generation is our asset and their cooperation as well as responsible attitude is crucial for safe road environment in the city. He distributed certificates among the students and hoped that they would further educate and brief their fellows and family members about road safety tips. - APP

Transporters directed to ensure cleanliness

RAWALPINDI: The transporters have been directed to ensure proper cleanliness at bus stands and provide more facilities to the passengers particularly in waiting areas. According to a district administration spokesman, chairing a meeting, Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Noor ul Amin Mengal directed the transporters to keep their waiting areas and washrooms neat and clean so that the people could be facilitated. He said, tuff tiles should also be installed in the waiting areas besides ensuring proper cleanliness arrangements at all the city bus stands. The meeting was attended by DC, Rawalpindi Tahir Farooq, Secretary Regional Transport Authority, Rashid Ali and all the transporters. - APP

Raid on the North Korean embassy

ISLAMABAD police raided the North Korean embassy a few days ago on the pretext that liquor was being sold illegally at the premises. The diplomatic circles have expressed concern and astonishment as to how police could conduct a raid on the embassy premises. Under the Vienna Convention embassy premises is considered a territory of the respective country therefore it cannot be raided or searched.

The police claimed they raided the embassy after getting news that the mission was involved in selling of liquor illegally. The Police pointed out presence of huge consignment of liquor in the premises. Whatever may be the circumstances under the Vienna Convention foreign missions cannot be raided in this manner. Reports further suggest that a fight between two local boot leggers led to this incident. When the fight incident was reported to the police, the boot leggers told the police they used to get liquor from the very premises. The police then raided the house and after entering the premises it was revealed that it was the North Korean embassy. The embassy wrote a letter to the police and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We have learnt that matter appears to have been resolved. However the incident has raised many a question. How police can raid the premises of a foreign mission, is the question the rest of the embassies located in Islamabad are asking now.

There is no denying the fact also that the North Korean embassy has been involved in selling liquor since long. Even in the past, some of the embassy staff had to face the music because of its involvement in unwarranted practices such as selling their liquor quotas to local vendors. Ostensibly, as per rules, the Embassy cannot sell its quotas but unfortunately selling of these quotas has become a profitable business these days. Here we have to admit as well that despite all temptations and lucrative offers the majority of embassies do not involve in such nasty practices. The embassies that seek to increase their revenue through such unfair means should know that their conduct not only earns disrepute for themselves but for the rest of the diplomatic fraternity as well. The Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs also needs to put its house in order for foreign missions simply cannot do this hanky-panky without consent of its officials.

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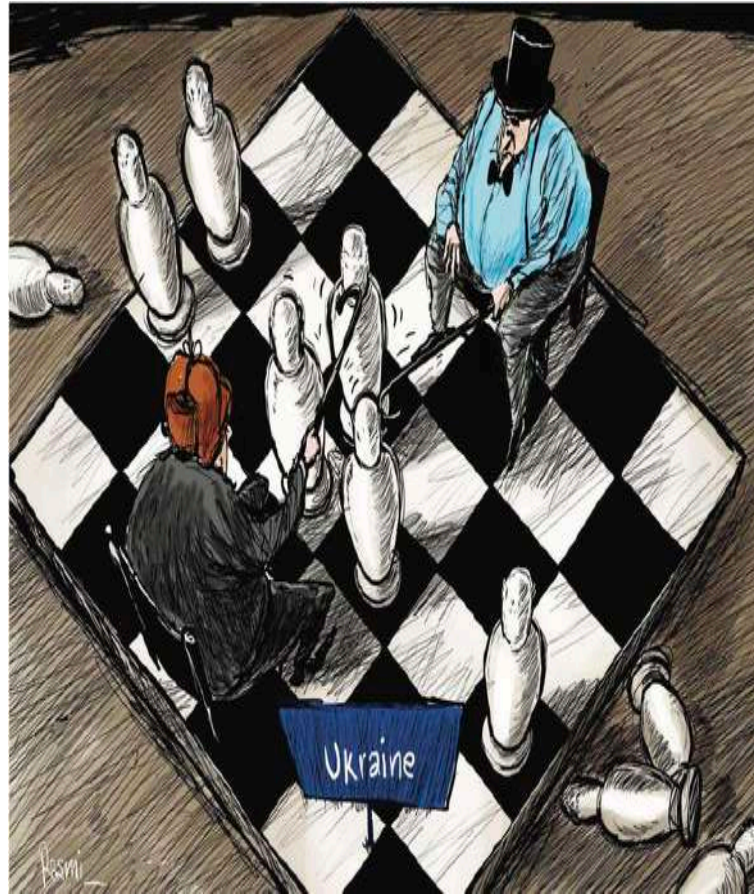
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West's double standards

WHILE the reaction of the world against Russian invasion of Ukraine is necessary, it also reflects the double standards of the west in its policies for Europe and rest of the world. It was not so long ago when the western allies invaded Middle Eastern countries on the pretext of fake reports. Not a single country dared to question those 'invasions'. There were no mainstream campaigns to end the bloodshed in Iraq and Syria, and even Israel faces no genuine or notable opposition when it continues its illegal atrocities and oppression in Palestinian lands. India has never been sanctioned in view of the crimes it has been committing in Kashmir. But suddenly the world has become the defender of human rights when some country or community other than Asia, and Africa is under attack. Talk about hypocrisy and shameful double standards.

On Pakistan's part, the country has sensibly taken a neutral role and abstained from voting on the issue in the UN General Assembly. This makes good sense as does the question on why Pakistan has been picked out for criticism by the West while India has not faced as much critique. But the truth is that Pakistan cannot hope to take on too many issues at one time and needs to ensure it does anything it can to ensure peace on all sides. While Prime Minister Imran Khan's visit to Russia was justifiably questioned for the timing, perhaps he can use whatever - if any - influence he has to reduce the tensions in a war that has already led to misery for millions. The fallout of the war between Russia and Ukraine will reach far and wide. This is morphing into an energy war between Russia and the West. Amid all this, a severe humanitarian crisis is unfolding. The only solution to this crisis is immediate attempts at negotiations.

Worthless Western values of hypocrisy

Raza Ali

A similar resolution "Combating glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance" was passed on 16th of Dec 2020

PEOPLE of Western origin and typically their rulers, lose breath chanting about their "values-based" system. They take pride in declaring their high moral standards and "human values". But, their actions tell a totally different story. For the last ten years the Russian Federation has been bringing forward a resolution against the glorification of Nazism in the World. Every year this resolution is passed, and just like all UN General Assembly resolutions it is recommendatory rather than mandatory. Every year this resolution is passed with majority support, but there always is at least one country, which votes against this resolution. The country that votes against is USA. A similar resolution "Combating glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance" was passed on 16th of December 2020. According to UN records, 130 countries supported this resolution, 51 countries abstained, and two countries voted against it. Take a guess, which were these two countries? They were USA and Ukraine. Please note that this resolution is not about combating fascism in Ukraine. It has global character, but USA and Ukraine favored the glorification of fascism and racism. Among the countries, which abstained are the countries, which were the first ones to raise hue and cry against the Russian special military

operation against Nazism in Ukraine. Such countries, withholding "high standards of morality", include Sweden, Estonia, Poland, Denmark, Germany, France, Latvia, Czech Republic, Australia, Austria, Georgia, and many more of the members of this wolf pack. A vast majority of this world (130 countries) want to act against the glorification of fascism, racism, xenophobia, and Nazism, but the flag carriers of "values-based" system are not with them. When Pakistan wanted to abstain from taking sides in case of a resolution against Russia, the diplomatic envoys of half of these abstaining countries (EU members, Canada, and Australia) tried to pressure Pakistan into taking sides. But did these countries ever have the courage to challenge Fascists, Nazis, and ultra-nationalists? The answer is NO.

Let me just tell you, how strong and legally protected are Neo-Nazi groups in these countries. In Latvia, the victory day parade, which glorifies the millions of people from various countries, who sacrificed their lives fighting against Hitler's Nazi Germany and the veterans of WWII, was cancelled and in its place Neo-Nazis hold a parade, every year, glorifying those Latvians, who were part of Hitler's SS or German Waffen SS or the Latvian Legion. This fascist SS comprised of ethnic Latvians, who fought for the cause of Hitler. And mind you after WW2 in 1946 this Waffen SS was declared as a criminal outfit. In Estonia veterans of the Nazi SS are free to march through the streets of its capital Tallinn. Swedish and Danish citizens make no secret of joining all and any white supremacist groups and travel feely to every nook and corner of the globe to participate in uprisings and attempted coups. Similar acts of glorification, in many of the countries, which always abstained from voting against the glorification of fascism, are recorded and the respective governments never take any legal action against such shows of support for Nazism.

We all remember how Collin Powell demonstrated a vile containing some powder and declared that Iraq was developing biological and chemical weapons. This shameless demonstration of baking soda, became the reason to legitimize NATO's invasion of Iraq. But, on the other hand USA is running biological weapon research facilities in Ukraine, and any claims in this regard are just "Russian

propaganda". Although, US undersecretary of state for political affairs, Victoria Nuland, confessed during a congressional hearing recently that US does have such labs and research facilities in Ukraine, and that they are making sure that Russians could not gain access to these facilities and obtain evidence of US criminal activities in Ukraine.

Can there be a more obvious double standard than this? US led NATO can invade sovereign Iraq on the basis of inexistent biological weapons facilities, but now the Americans and their "civilized" allies are doing their best to not allow Russia to discover their crimes against humanity.

In December 2013 Senator John McCain travelled to Kiev and addressed the protestors, in Maidan Square, inciting coup d'etat. McCain also congregated with known Neo-Nazis. The same Neo-Nazi leaders later also met Vice-president Joe Biden. One of the same neo-Nazi leaders later became a minister in the illegitimate Ukrainian junta and incorporated neo-Nazi militant groups like the AZOV battalion into regular Ukrainian army. Victoria Nuland travelled to Kiev and distributed cookies among the violent neo-Nazi hoodlums during the 2013-2014 uprisings. American ex-servicemen travelled to Ukraine during the 2014-2021 and trained the AZOV battalion gangsters. I think, now you can understand, why the United States of America, along with Ukraine, always opposed the ratification and implementation of a resolution: "Combating glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance".

As we are talking about hypocrisy and double standards, let me give you an example close to home. On the official UNESCO YouTube channel they have posted a documentary called "A journey of courage". This documentary is about freedom of speech, access to information and courageous journalistic work. But, the posting organization has turned off comments on this documentary. I can't help asking: "Why can't people express their opinions about this documentary, which is about freedom of speech?" As a popular Pakistani journalist used to say: "Kia yeh khulatazad nahin hai? (Isn't this an obvious double standard?)"

US paying the price for failing to address its history of genocide

Dr. Azeem Ibrahim

The Biden administration is correct in its analysis that the only way America's role in the world - and indeed its national security and global interests - will be protected and enhanced is if the world once again looks to us as a force for good and as the moral ...

TO justify Russia's invasion of Ukraine, President Vladimir Putin accused the Kyiv government of committing genocide in the Donbas region. Post-invasion, President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine has alleged that Russian attacks have "shown signs of genocide" and asked the International Criminal Court to investigate. The term genocide is often loosely used like this when the speaker is actually referring to mass killing or indiscriminate

murder. As evil and terrible as these acts may be, they do not in themselves constitute genocide, which has a very precise legal definition as articulated in the 1948 Genocide Convention: The intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group. Using genocide and mass murder interchangeably obfuscates the former's meaning and serves the interests of many countries that actually have a history of engaging in genocide that they do not wish to revisit. In the US, for example, getting Americans to engage with their own history in a serious and objective way is currently one of the most politically fraught tasks. From the history and legacy of slavery to Confederate monuments, hardly any call for an objective examination of the history of this country goes unchallenged.

But we pay a high price for refusing to engage with our past in an honest way. Domestically, this refusal means we are purposefully blind to the legacy of centuries of repression and human rights abuses. Over the past decade, more and more Americans are beginning to engage with the country's history of slavery and racism and are becoming more and more aware of the legacy that this still bears on the US and on Black Americans today. But no similar epiphany is being had about the

history and legacy of the genocide against the Native Americans, with the consequence that Indigenous American citizens remain marginalized, systematically excluded from the political process and from economic opportunity, and with their rights to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness routinely curtailed. A few casinos have brought financial benefit to some individuals and groups, but it has hardly settled the moral and political score for more than four centuries of oppression, erasure and physical and cultural destruction. The fundamental issue is that, until this history is properly excavated, reflected upon in the public political discourse and internalized by the general public, so many American citizens will remain marginalized, aggrieved and often still directly oppressed, and our Union will be so much less perfect for it.

Internationally, the price is even steeper. America's dominant place in the world after the Second World War was predicated on moral leadership. And this was not the mere rhetoric of the victor: The reason why America got itself the strong network of allies that propelled her to a hegemonic global postwar position was because all of those countries also saw us as a force for good. They believed in our "Manifest Destiny" as much as we did.

- Courtesy: Arab News

The spectre of the long 'War on Terror' hangs over Ukraine

Richard Mcneil-Willson

Latest appropriation of this language of counterterrorism has been to justify acts of imperialist violence by the Kremlin. Putin has cited "de-Nazification" as a reason for his military attack—playing on Western concerns over the rise of the far-right

OVER two decades after 9/11, the language of counterterrorism pervades both Russia's imperialist violence and the West's contradictory responses. Counterterrorism is threaded throughout the incursion into Ukraine. In Russia, it is weaponised against both the Ukrainian people and the Russians opposed to Putin. In the West, governments and media find themselves in great contortions, their contradictory responses highlighting the racialised policies that sit at the heart of the long 'War on Terror.' The War on Terror, kick-started by Western powers, initially responded to concerns over a "new" threat of terrorist-style violence through invasions in Afghanistan and Iraq. Over time, these have been overtaken by approaches that attempt to identify extremist tendencies in the West, turning the gaze of suspicion towards communities or individuals deemed "vulnerable" to violence. It has resulted in the massive growth of national policies, industries, and language in the West—and beyond—focused on identifying this threat, disproportionately targeting Muslim communities.

The latest appropriation of this language of counterterrorism has been to justify acts of imperialist violence by the Kremlin. Putin has cited "de-Nazification" as a reason for his military attack—playing on Western concerns over the rise of the far-right.

This framing is questionable in light of the political composition of Ukraine, where the far-right received a paltry two percent in the 2019 elections, and the president hails from the country's significant Jewish community. It is absurd in the context of the Russian bombardment of Ukraine's Babyn Yar Holocaust memorial. There are pervasive examples of neo-Nazism in Ukraine, but these are not unique to the region, nor to Europe. So, Russian justifications for the incursion that are based on "de-Nazifying" Ukraine are easily challenged. Yet, this language is still powerful, drawing on the recognisable framework of the global War on Terror. By invoking the spectre of the far-right in Ukraine and deploying Europe's own security language against it, Russia is attempting to both evoke sympathy and create confusion. Russia has also found a use for the global War on Terror in Crimea, clamping down on pro-democracy protests by magicking up threats of terrorism and "Islamic extremism." Tatar Muslims have found themselves subject to counterterror raids, arrests, and disappearances in response to activism.

Meanwhile, in Russia itself, those opposed to Putin and the military attack have found themselves designated "ter-

rorists and extremists." The language of "misinformation" and "fake news," interwoven with Western counter-extremism practice, has been recast by the Kremlin as a justification for sentencing voices of the opposition to 15 years in prison.

Implicit contradictions
The military attack on Ukraine shows us, once again, the knotty contradictions of the War on Terror. The vague security laws of Western powers, which often nakedly bypass human rights, have provided authoritarian regimes with valuable tools of repression and left Western governments contradicting their own policies.

One such example is that of foreign fighters. The UK Secretary of State Liz Truss publicly backed British volunteers travelling to Ukraine to join an international legion of fighters. Her comments were cited by foreign fighters travelling from Britain to Ukraine as the "green light" to volunteer.

This sits in stark contrast to how British individuals who travelled to Syria have been framed, even those who travelled before the establishment of Daesh or as vulnerable minors.

Joining the defence of Ukraine against Russian aggression is, clearly, vastly different from becoming a part of Daesh, and yet UK counterterror law theoretically treats them as the same.

As the UK's Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office has stated, travelling to Ukraine to fight or assist others in the conflict "may amount to offences against UK terrorism or other legislation" and lead to prosecution. The UK's Counterterrorism and Border Security Bill of 2019 explicitly forbids individuals from "travelling abroad to take part in or help sustain future foreign conflicts." Whilst significant numbers of foreign fighters—many of whom are or were young when they left Europe—have since faced the permanent loss of their citizenship, the UK government will soon face the question of how they should deal with the British fighters returning from Ukraine, as UK ministers contradict their own security laws.

Citizenship and border policing
The long War on Terror has also prompted a confusing array of contradictory laws regarding citizenship, borders, and migration.

Since the start of the conflict, over two million Ukrainians have been displaced, heading for Poland, Moldova, Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, and beyond. Governments throughout Europe have relaxed entry and visa requirements for Ukrainians in public displays of solidarity. Where minority refugees have been framed for years as security threats, white-European refugees are welcomed with open arms.

Refugees fleeing war zones in the Middle East and North Africa have long had to face the might of Fortress Europe: borders have been blocked, boats have been pushed back, and families left to drown in the Mediterranean.

British media have published statements encouraging the deployment of anti-migrant gunboats along English coastlines, whilst the BBC live-streamed footage of packed boats struggling for safety. Where refugees did make it past borders, many were subjected to barely habitable conditions and vilified as a threat to the European way of life. Security thinktanks and policymakers have released report after report on the threat of "jihadi sleeper cells" or hidden "radicalisers" within refugee communities.

- Courtesy: Trt World

Briefs

'Not impossible' to win La Liga: Xavi

MADRID: La Liga has adopted a familiar look with Barcelona and Atletico Madrid back in the top four and both teams might now begin to believe they can finish second as Sevilla continues to stumble.

Barcelona, in particular, look primed for a late surge after winning four games on the bounce, their January signings giving them a boost just when they needed it most.

They still have seven points to overturn to reach second but Xavi Hernandez's side do have a game in hand, as well as a meeting with Sevilla to come next month at Camp Nou.

Such is the optimism around Barcelona that Xavi was even asked on Wednesday if they could yet win the title, although for Real Madrid to spurn a 15-point advantage with 11 games to go, 12 in Barca's case, seems unthinkable.

"Mathematics say that we can win the league, so why not?" Xavi said. "The others are failing but not Real Madrid. They have time on their side. It's very difficult, but not impossible." — Web Desk

India says accidentally...

FROM PAGE 01

"It is learnt that the missile landed in an area of Pakistan. While the incident is deeply regrettable, it is also a matter of relief that there has been no loss of life due to the accident."

The ministry said the government had "taken a serious view and ordered a high-level Court of Enquiry" into the incident.

Russia to use volunteer...

FROM PAGE 01

from conflicts such as Syria without risking additional Russian military casualties. At a meeting of Russia's Security Council, Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu said there were 16,000 volunteers in the Middle East who were ready to come to fight alongside Russian-backed forces in the breakaway Donbass region of eastern Ukraine.

"If you see that there are these people who want of their own accord, not for money, to come to help the people living in Donbass, then we need to give them what they want and help them get to the conflict zone," Putin said from the Kremlin.

Shoigu also proposed that Western-made Javelin and Stinger missiles that were captured by the Russian army in Ukraine should be handed over to Donbass forces, along other weaponry such as man-portable air-defense systems, known as MANPADS, and anti-tank rocket complexes.

Russian forces...

FROM PAGE 01

could be preparation for an assault on the city within days. Ukraine accused Russian forces on Friday of bombing and shelling cities across the country, including hitting a psychiatric hospital near the eastern town of Izyum where hundreds of patients were sheltering in the basement.

In Russia, prosecutors asked a court to declare Meta Platforms (FB.O) an "extremist" organisation on Friday, after the owner of Facebook and Instagram allowed posts calling for the death of invading Russian troops.

Russia has been pounding Ukraine's cities while its main attack force north of Kyiv has been stalled on roads since the invasion's early days, having failed in what Western countries say was an initial plan for a lightning assault on the capital.

Images released by private U.S. satellite firm Maxar showed armoured units manoeuvring in and through towns close to an airport on Kyiv's northwest outskirts, site of fighting since Russia landed paratroopers there in the first hours of the war.

Other elements had repositioned near the settlement of Lubyanka just to the north, with towed artillery howitzers in firing positions, Maxar said.



WAZIRABAD: Group photo of officials of Sialkot, Gujranwala, Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industries and Pakistan Cutlery Association Wazirabad on the occasion of Golden Economic Triangle Cricket Festival. — DNA

Time to lift 'unjust' bans on Turkey's defense sector

Erdogan also told Biden that Turkey expects that its request to purchase 40 new F-16 fighter jets and modernize its existing fleet be finalized as soon as possible, according to a statement from the president's office

NEWS DESK

ANKARA: The time has come to lift the "unjust" sanctions on Turkey's defense industry, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan told his American counterpart, Joe Biden, in a phone call on Thursday. Erdogan also told Biden that Turkey expects that its request to purchase 40 new F-16 fighter jets and modernize its existing fleet be finalized as soon as possible, according to a statement from the president's office.

Ankara had initially ordered more than 100 F-35 jets, made by Lockheed Martin Corp., but the United States removed Turkey from the program in 2019 after it acquired Russian S-400 missile defense systems. Turkey has called the move unjust and demanded reimbursement for its \$1.4 billion payment. Last year, Ankara had reportedly made a request to Washington to

buy 40 Lockheed Martin-made F-16s and nearly 80 modernization kits for its existing warplanes.

Turkey's purchase of the S-400s has also triggered U.S. sanctions. In December 2020, Washington blacklisted the Presidency of Defense Industries (SSB), its chief, Ismail Demir, and three other employees. A readout of Thursday's call from the White House did not mention a discussion about sanctions or Turkey's request regarding the F-16s.

But it said Erdogan and Biden had talked about opportunities to strengthen ties, in addition to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The decades-old partnership between the NATO allies has gone through unprecedented tumult in the past five years over disagreements on many issues, including Syria and Ankara's closer ties with Moscow. In 2002, Turkey joined several other NATO allies who agreed to



buy the F-35, and five years later reached a deal to participate in its production, an agreement worth potentially billions of dollars to Turkish industry.

Ankara has said the U.S. should either deliver the F-35 jets that Turkey paid for, return the money or give another product instead, stressing it would consider other options if Washington fails to

resolve the issue about F-35s, or if the U.S. Congress blocks it. In broaching the F-16 idea, Erdogan earlier hinted that Turkey could turn to Russia for fighter jets if talks with the U.S. break down.

Last month, he said talks with the U.S. on the modernization of F-16 fighter jets were going well. He said the crisis between Ukraine and Russia had shown the neces-

sity of the S-400s purchase, given the security risks in the region. Washington argues that the S-400 air missile systems could be used by Russia to covertly obtain classified details on the F-35 jets and that they are incompatible with NATO systems.

Turkey, however, insists that the S-400 would not be integrated into NATO systems and would not pose a threat to the alliance. Ankara has said it intends to go through with the purchase of the second batch of S-400s from Russia, despite opposition from the U.S. The Biden administration is said to be supporting the F-16 deal. Yet, the matter could likely face challenges getting approval from the U.S. Congress, known for its anti-Turkey stance that has repeatedly damaged bilateral relations. A group of lawmakers in the U.S. Congress wrote a letter to Biden in October objecting to any F-16 sale.

All set for Markhor Cricket League third edition

SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: After the first two successful editions of Tape Ball Markhor Cricket League, the third edition will be starting from March 21 at Ayub Cricket Ground, Rawalpindi. Chairman of Markhor Cricket League (MCL) Sardar Saifullah Abbasi along with former test cricketer Muhammad Khalil and Marketing Director Ali Nawaz announced the details of the league as the overseas teams will also take part in the prestigious event. He said that twelve teams including four overseas teams Dubai Whales, UK Rams, Pak-Qatar Dyx and Eshaal Falcons are divided in two pools to compete in the Tape Ball Cricket Festival.

The organizer said the stadium was ready for the event and final touches were being given to facilitate the teams and spectators as Pakistani



cricket fans love to watch Tape Ball Cricket. A total of 34 matches will be played in MCL while the final of the event will be played on March 29 at

the same venue. Former Test cricketer Muhammad Khalil said that Season 3 will be an event full of entertainment.

Rawalpindi pitch loses one point

ISLAMABAD: The much criticized Rawalpindi pitch, where the first test match between Australia and Pakistan concluded in a draw on Tuesday, is termed below average by the International Cricket Council (ICC's) match referee. Match referee Ranjhan Madugalle explaining the reason said, "this did not represent an even contest between bat and ball. Therefore, keeping in view the ICC guidelines it is rated as below average."

Madugalle further elaborating on dropping one standard point of the surface said there was no change in its behavior and it did neither helped pace bowlers nor spinners during the entire test match.

According to the ICC's Pitch Report and Outfield Monitoring Process' revised policy one point is deducted for unsupportive pitch which is required to be equally beneficial for both the batters and bowlers. Chairman Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Ramiz Raja in his video message assured that the PCB was striving hard to make quality and result-oriented pitches in Pakistan. However, the effort would take some time as he has recently held the post of board's head and his team was working on it.

The PCB Chairman said some 50 to 60 pitches across the country would be prepared afresh once the current cricket season was over. On experimental basis different techniques were being used and import of soil from Australia was also in process to produce quality playing surfaces for ensuring result-oriented matches, he added. — APP

Pakistan's Ahsan enters IBSF World Championship final

KARACHI: Pakistan's 16-year-old Ahsan Ramzan set a final date with Iran's Amir Sarkosh in Doha at the IBSF World Championships, after beating compatriot and defending champion Muhammad Asif in the semi-finals.

Earlier, for the very first time Pakistan saw all three of its fielded players enter the semi-finals of the event.

The Pakistani trio had been impressive, but it is Ahsan Ramzan that shined through in the IBSF U-21 World Championships as well. He reached the quarters and even received the cash award of Qatari Riyal 10,000 from the Asian Confederation of Billiard Sports President Asian Snooker body, Mr Mohamed Salem Al-Nuaimi as a way of appreciation for registering a break of 147 in the quarter-final. He unfortunately lost 5-2, but made a mark through his talent. The break of 147 is rare for a 16-year-old to hit at the world stage and Ahsan became the youngest cueist to do it. In addition to the appreciation from the President of the Asian body he also bagged US\$600 on March 5, vowing to give a better show in the Men's World Championship.

Ahsan belongs to Lahore and had been playing snooker since 2017 on junior level, when he was not even 10-years-old. He is playing the IBSF World Championship in his international debut. "After the 147 break, I feel I had gained a lot of confidence," Ahsan told The Express Tribune.

The prodigy had been troubling national greats like Babar Masih and even Sajjad in the National tournaments, by defeating them. "I feel grateful for the opportunity. The ASBC President gave me the cash prize from his own pocket because he felt I have the talent that should be appreciated. I'm very grateful for that and then the Pakistan Billiards and Snooker Federation (PBSA) President Jawid Karim also supported me a lot. I just want to do my best with men's World Championship and the Asian Championship after that." — News Desk

European Union to boost military support to Kyiv

AGENCIES

VERSAILLES: European Union leaders said on Friday they will continue applying pressure on Russia by devising a new set of sanctions to punish Moscow for its invasion of Ukraine while stepping up military support for Kyiv.

The EU's top diplomat, Josep Borrell, said the 27 officials taking part at two-day summit outside Paris will agree to inject an extra euro500 million euros into the fund for military aid to Ukraine, as Russia widens its military offensive. On Friday, Russia struck near airports in the west of the country for the first time as troops kept up pressure on the capital, Kyiv. "I made the proposal to double our contribution," Borrell said. "This is what we are going to do, and I am sure that the leaders will approve it this morning. And it is going to be done immediately. Now it flows quickly."

The EU had previously agreed to spend 450 million euros (\$500 million) on military supplies for Ukrainian forces in an unprecedented step of collectively supplying weapons to a country under attack.

Since the war started last month, the EU has adopted massive sanctions targeting Russian president Vladimir Putin, Russia's financial system and



its high-maintenance oligarchs. Earlier this week, the bloc's nations agreed to slap further sanctions on 160 individuals and added new restrictions on the export of maritime navigation and radio communication technology. They also decided to exclude three Belarusian banks from SWIFT, the dominant system for global financial transactions. Altogether, EU restrictive measures now apply to a total of 862 individuals and 53 entities.

Borrell said the EU will continue elaborating new sanctions targeting oligarchs and Russia's economy. According to an EU official with direct knowledge of the talks at the Versailles Palace, the idea is to have sanctions ready that can be activated if Putin's war escalates further. The person was not authorized to speak publicly because of the sensitivity of discussions. Possible new sanctions against Russia and its ally Belarus could include cutting

3 wickets on 1 ball...

FROM PAGE 01

"take three wickets in one ball". "I am competing against these three dacoits and ... I will take all three wickets with one inswing yorker," the premier repeated. Earlier in his speech, the prime minister referred to Fazl as "diesel" but then went on to say that Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa told him not to refer to Fazl as diesel.

"I was just talking to Gen Bajwa and he told me not to refer to Fazl as diesel. But I am not the one who is saying that. The people have named him diesel," the prime minister said.

He also alleged that the opposition had been demanding an NRO from him.

They tell me that they will topple my government if I don't close corruption cases against them. But I tell them that I will not close the cases even if I have to give my life for it. I am not doing politics against you but fighting a jihad."

The prime minister further accused the opposition of trying to buy the votes of lawmakers from the PTI and its allied parties to make the no-confidence motion a success. He said he had called on people to gather at Islamabad's D-Chowk a day before the session for voting on the no-confidence motion, which is yet to be scheduled.

On that day, the premier said, there would be a sea of people at D-Chowk.

PM Imran said he had asked people to gather at D-Chowk to convey the message to the opposition that the nation was standing with the good and against the evil.

"Humans either side with the good or the evil. Only animals remain neutral," he commented. The premier termed voting on the no-confidence motion "a match in parliament" and said, "You will see what I do with them after winning this match."

J-10C fighter jets...

FROM PAGE 01

Peshawar Corps Commander Lt Gen Faiz Hameed as well as senior federal ministers attended the ceremony. According to media, the J-10C is larger and can be equipped with a bigger active electronically scanned array (AESA) radar than the one used by the JF-17 Block 3. The aircraft can carry more advanced, fourth-generation air-to-air missiles including the short-range PL-10 and the beyond-visual-range PL-15.

The military had in January confirmed the long-spectulated deal with China for the supply of J-10C jets. It had said that the acquisition was being done in view of the regional security matrix that required Pakistan's armed forces to continuously upgrade their capacity. Many think the J-10C deal is Pakistan's answer to Rafales bought by India from France.

OIC delegation...

FROM PAGE 01

sustainable development for OIC member states.

Guided by this vision, he said, Pakistan would seek to build bridges of cooperation and partnerships amongst OIC member states and beyond. He mentioned the decisions of the 17th Extraordinary Session of OIC-CFM on the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, and the ministers' decision to establish an OIC-led Humanitarian Trust Fund for Afghanistan, appoint the OIC Secretary General's Special Envoy and agreement to strengthen the OIC Mission in Kabul.

The foreign secretary underlined that the 48th Session would provide a valuable opportunity to review progress made since the adoption of that resolution. Welcoming the preparatory work undertaken by the Islamic Development Bank for the operationalization of the Humanitarian Trust Fund, the foreign secretary underscored the urgency of concrete pledges by member states and Afghanistan's international partners to the Trust Fund. Such announcements would be central to the OIC's collective goal of helping the Afghan people in their hour of need, he said. The OIC Heads of Mission were also briefed on CFM programme for March 22-23, 2022 and provided details of the administrative arrangements.

Briefs

Kazakh,
Turkish
carriers halt
Russia flights

MOSCOW: Kazakhstan's national airline Air Astana and Turkish budget airline Pegasus Airlines said Friday they were temporary suspending flights to Russia, after sanctions imposed on Moscow over its military incursion in Ukraine.

The companies made the decision because of uncertainties over insurance of aircraft bound for Russia, they said in separate press releases. Flights to Turkey and Kazakhstan have been some of the few routes out of Russia, since most European countries closed their airspace to Russian aircraft. Turkey's Pegasus told AFP it would be stopping flights from Saturday. The country's flagship carrier Turkish Airlines said flights to and from Russia will "continue for the moment." Prices for Moscow-Istanbul tickets soared in the last week, as many scrambled to leave Russia on one of the few routes left out of the country. Kazakhstan's Air Astana, which operates flights to several destinations in Russia said it was seeking to "restore flights as soon as possible".

The carrier's decision means there are no direct connections between Moscow and Kazakhstan's largest city, Almaty, representatives of two travel agencies in Almaty told media. - APP

Ukrainian
refugees
rises above
2.5M: UN

GENEVA: The number of refugees fleeing Ukraine since Russia launched a war on its neighbor has crossed 2.5 million, the UN refugee agency, UNHCR, said on Friday. "The UN estimates that there are now at least 2 million internally displaced people," in Ukraine, UNHCR spokesman Matthew Saltmarsh said at a press conference at Ukraine's border with Poland.

"The total number of refugees has just past 2.5 million ... an unprecedented flow of people in Europe, certainly the most since the Second World War."

UNHCR said that some of the refugees face the danger of landmines while fleeing. UN Human Rights Office spokesperson Elizabeth Throssell said her office has confirmed the deaths of 549 civilians and more than 9,000 injured since the war began, "although the actual figure is much higher."

"Civilians are being killed in what appears to be indiscriminate attacks," said Throssell. The World Health Organization said at the press conference that there have been 26 attacks on healthcare facilities in Ukraine. Russia's war against 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. - APP

China locks
down city
of 9 million

FOREIGN DESK

BEIJING: A northeastern Chinese city of nine million people has been ordered to lock down, as authorities scramble to halt a fresh Covid-19 outbreak that has pushed nationwide case counts to their highest in two years. Changchun, the capital of Jilin province and an important industrial base, on Friday ordered residents to work from home. One person will be allowed out every two days to buy "daily necessities", and said it would institute mass testing.

After the highly transmissible Omicron variant broke through China's defences, Covid cases across the country soared past the 1,000 mark this week for the first time since the pandemic's early days in 2020, from less than 100 just three weeks ago. There were 1,369 cases across more than a dozen provinces, according to the latest daily official count released earlier Friday.

Also on Friday, Shanghai ordered its schools to close and shift to online instruction. Covid-19 was first detected in China in late 2019 but the government has kept it largely under control with snap lockdowns and mass testing, while keeping its borders mostly closed. - APP

Yunnan enhances co-op
with Pak on pest control

Yunnan and Pakistan have similarities in climate, wheat variety characteristics, cultivation conditions, meanwhile confronted with shared challenges including stripe rust, drought, high temperature, etc

DNA

BEIJING: China and Pakistan are jointly deepening cross-border prevention and control of plant diseases and insect pests, with a joint research center in this field being planned, according to Yunnan Academy of Agricultural Sciences (YAAS), says a report published by China Economic Net (CEN) on Friday.

"Due to the special geographical location, many exotic pests enter China through Yunnan. Pakistan is

also the place where many major migratory pests including fall armyworms (Spodoptera frugiperda), desert locusts (Schistocerca gregaria), etc. occur, which provides important information for Yunnan and even China to predict whether the pests will enter China," Luo Yanjie, Head of YAAS International Cooperation Division, told CEN.

Wheat is Pakistan's dietary staple. Yunnan and Pakistan have similarities in climate, wheat variety characteristics, cultivation conditions, meanwhile confronted with shared challenges including stripe

rust, drought, high temperature, etc. Therefore, the two countries can directly share wheat variety resources and technologies. Since 2016, besides joint research on wheat production, wheat stripe rust has also been a specific focus. It's learned that an academic work named 'Wheat Stripe Rust in the Middle East and the Extended Himalayan Region' by Li Mingju, YAAS Research Fellow, and Pakistani scientist Dr. Sajid Ali is soon to be published.

Yunnan Academy of Agricultural Sciences has established a joint

agricultural pest control system with Pakistan, Myanmar, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Bangladesh, etc. for monitoring, early warning and controlling major migratory pests such as desert locust and meadow moth, epidemic diseases and invasive weeds.

Especially, in the research on the invasion of fall armyworm (Spodoptera frugiperda), Yunnan Academy of Agricultural Sciences has been cooperating with Pakistan to timely detect pests' migration route, feeding habits, growth rhythm, which is providing strong

technical support for pest prevention and control in both countries. The exchanges of agricultural experts between Yunnan and Pakistan also have been enhanced. "For instance, Dr. Muhammad Ashfaq from Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) successfully completed his research on rice planthopper in Pakistan and Yunnan when he was at YAAS. After returning to Pakistan, he has been keeping in close touch with us on agricultural pest control, effectively promoting Sino-Pak cooperation in this area," Luo said.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani exchanging views with Mitsuru Wada, ambassador of Japan at Parliament House. - DNA

UK sanctions
386 members of
Russian Duma

"This includes travel bans and asset freezes applied to 18 of Russia's leading oligarchs, with a combined worth in excess of £30 billion (\$39.3 billion)," it added

LONDON: Britain on Friday sanctioned the members of Duma, the lower house of the Russian parliament, a government statement said. Foreign Secretary Liz Truss has sanctioned 386 members of the Duma "for their support for the Ukrainian breakout regions of Luhansk and Donetsk," according to the statement. The new sanctions will "ban those listed from travelling to the UK, accessing assets held within

the UK and doing business here." The statement further said that Duma recognized the independence of the Luhansk and Donetsk regions, which are part of Ukrainian sovereign territory, and "authorised the permanent presence of Russian military there, acting as a pretext for Russia's invasion." "We're targeting those complicit in (Russian President Vladimir) Putin's illegal invasion of Ukraine and those who support this barbaric war," Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said. "We will not let up the pressure and will continue to tighten the screw on the Russian economy through sanctions." Reiterating UK's support to Ukraine, the statement from British Foreign Office said the "designations announced today build on yesterday's crack down on key oligarchs from Putin's inner circle, and the introduction of new UK powers to detain Russian aircraft and ban the export of aviation items." Since the start of Russia-Ukraine war, the UK has sanctioned more than 500 of Russia's "most significant and high-value individuals, entities and subsidiaries, bringing the total now covered by the UK's sanctions list to over 800," the government statement said. "This includes travel bans and asset freezes applied to 18 of Russia's leading oligarchs, with a combined worth in excess of £30 billion (\$39.3 billion)," it added. - Agencies

Azerbaijan, Russia eye fulfilment
of tripartite statements

NEWS DESK

ANKARA: Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov and his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov have discussed the implementation of tripartite statements earlier signed by Baku, Moscow and Yerevan after the end of the 44-day war in 2020. The meeting was held within the framework of participation in the Diplomatic Forum in Antalya on March

10. At the meeting, the ministers focused on the current regional situation, including the fulfillment of tripartite statements, creating opportunities for the normalization of relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia, unblocking the regional communication and transport lines and the border delimitation. During the meeting, the parties also considered topical issues on the bilateral agenda. The parties exchanged

views on the current situation in Ukraine, negotiations between Russia and Ukraine, and ways to resolve the crisis. Other issues of mutual interest were also discussed at the meeting.

The trilateral ceasefire deal signed by the Azerbaijani, Russian and Armenian leaders on November 10, 2020, ended the three-decade conflict over Azerbaijan's Karabakh region which along

with the seven adjacent districts came under the occupation of Armenian armed forces in the war in the early 1990s. The deal also stipulated the return of Azerbaijan's Kalbajar, Aghdam and Lachin regions. Before the signing of the peace deal, Azerbaijan liberated 300 villages, settlements, city centers, and historic Shusha city that had been under Armenian occupation for about 30 years.

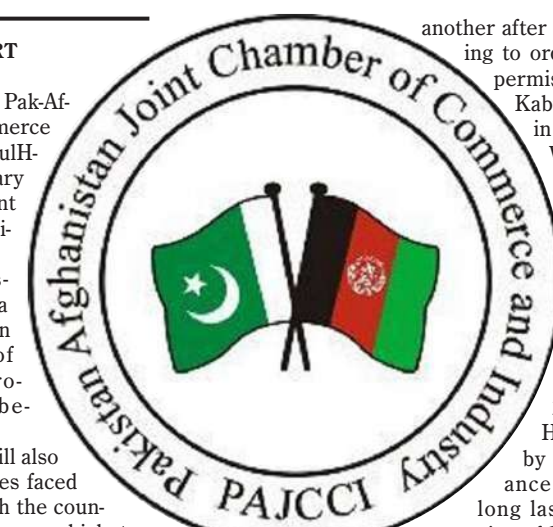
PAJCCI hails permission
of trucks movement

The decision, he continued, will also help in resolution of difficulties faced by business community of both the countries by shifting of goods from one vehicle to another after crossing border

BUREAU REPORT

PESHAWAR: Vice President Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI), Zia ul-Haq Sarhadi has hailed temporary permission for free movement of cargo trucks between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

In a press statement issued here on Friday, Zia Sarhadi said permission for free movement of trucks auger well for promotion of bilateral trade between the two countries. The decision, he continued, will also help in resolution of difficulties faced by business community of both the countries by shifting of goods from one vehicle to



another after crossing border. Zia said according to order, Afghan transporters can get permission from Pakistan Embassy in Kabul and from Consul General office in Qandahar.

While the Pakistani businessmen can get permission from Afghan Consulates in Peshawar and Quetta.

This is a historic development and will pave way for promotion of business not only in Pakistan and Afghanistan but in the whole region including Central Asian Republics (CAR), Zia Sarhadi expressed the hope.

He appreciated the role played by Commerce Ministry in issuance of this order and said it was a long lasting demand of business community of both the countries.

German
chancellor to
visit Turkiye
next week

BERLIN: German Chancellor Olaf Scholz will make his first official visit to Turkey next week, a deputy government spokesman announced on Friday. Speaking at a news conference in Berlin, Wolfgang Buchner said the chancellor will travel to Ankara on Monday for talks with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, but he did not give any further details about the visit.

Asked about Turkey's diplomatic efforts for a cease-fire between Russia and Ukraine, Buchner underlined the German government's support for these talks. "Of course, in principle, we're supporting every diplomatic effort to end Russia's war of aggression," he stressed. Andrea Sasse, a Foreign Ministry spokeswoman, also told reporters that German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock has been in close contact with his Turkish and Ukrainian counterparts in the last couple of days.

Following Turkey's efforts, Russian and Ukrainian foreign ministers met in Antalya on Thursday, for their first face-to-face meeting since the war started on Feb. 24, but talks have not yielded a breakthrough.

At least 549 civilians have been killed and more than 950 others injured in Ukraine since the beginning of the war, according to UN figures. Over 2.5 million Ukrainians have also fled to neighboring countries, the UN refugee agency said on Friday. - APP

Italian PM asks
Vladimir Putin to
end hostilities

Draghi said that they will discuss France's joint European bond proposal at the summit to reduce dependency on Russian gas and support economic efforts in terms of defense

NEWS DESK

ROME: Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi said Thursday he asked Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday to end hostilities and the bombing of civilians in Ukraine.

Draghi made the remarks before an unofficial EU leaders' summit in France - the term president of the EU. He said he had an opportunity to have a long meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron before the summit to discuss the consequences of the war for Europe and Italy.

Draghi said that they will discuss France's joint European bond proposal at the summit to reduce dependency on Russian gas and support economic efforts in terms of defense. He noted that Italy and France are on the same page in that regard. Russia's war on Ukraine, which began Feb. 24, has drawn international condemnation, led to financial sanctions on Moscow and spurred an exodus of global companies from Russia. At least 549 civilians have been killed and 957 injured in Ukraine, according to UN figures, with the real toll feared to be higher. More than 2.3 million people have fled Ukraine to neighboring countries, according to the UN refugee agency.

UNSC to meet on biological
weapons in Ukraine

NEW YORK: The UN Security Council will hold an emergency meeting on alleged manufacture of biological weapons in Ukraine at the request of Moscow, whose credibility on chemical weapons was questioned during a session on Syria. Russia on Thursday accused the United States of funding research into the development of biological weapons in Ukraine, which has faced an assault by tens of thousands of Russian troops since February 24. Both Washington and Kyiv have denied the allegations, with the United States saying they were a sign that Moscow could soon use the weapons itself. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky dismissed Russia's allegations in a video address on Thursday, saying, "No one is developing any chemical or any other weapons of mass destruction" in Ukraine. Western states have charged that Russia is employing a ruse by accusing their opponents and the United States of developing biological and chemical weapons to lay the ground for their possible use in Ukraine - something Moscow has been accused of doing in Syria. - APP

CONDOLENCE



APNS expresses profound grief

over the sad demise of its

former President

Mr. Farhad Zaidi

May Allah the Almighty rest his soul in eternal peace

and grant courage to the family to bear the loss.



All Pakistan Newspapers Society

Briefs

All measures introduced for economic growth: Tarin

LAHORE: Federal Finance Minister Senator Shaukat Tarin said on Friday that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government had introduced various initiatives for inclusive and sustainable economic growth by focusing on empowering youth/ common man, industrial expansion, increased agricultural yield, institutional reforms, increased revenue collection, broadening of tax base, and narrowing down the import-export gap. He said that during a recent visit to China, Pakistan had asked the Chinese authorities that it wanted support in four major areas, which would lead to speedy socio-economic growth. "With your (Chinese) support, we have established infrastructure, connectivity and SEZs (Special Economic Zones). Now we want you to help us in populating these SEZs," the all-weather friend was informed. "Help us in agricultural development and research; support us in IT sector development as five Special Technology Zones are being established in Pakistan; and the last but not least, it (China) should help maintain trade balance with Pakistan," he added. — APP

Relations with Japan unique, historic

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate M u h a m m a d Sadiq Sanjrani on Friday has termed relations with Japan as unique and historic and called for further deepening ties through frequent exchanges at social, political and economic levels.

Japanese Ambassador, Wada Mitsuhiko called on the Senate Chairman here at Parliament House and exchanged views on matters of bilateral significance. The two sides discussed a wide range of issues and expressed satisfaction at the positive growth in relations between Pakistan and Japan. The meeting agreed to continue to work together for strengthening cordial relationship between Japan and Pakistan, including realization of high-level political dialogues in the near future. They also exchanged views on strengthening the economic relationship, especially in the area of trade and investment. There are numerous Pakistani companies who want to go into joint ventures with their Japanese counterparts but due to the visa restrictions because of Covid-19 they cannot travel to Japan, he noted. The Chairman Senate exhorted the Japanese Government to consider opening business-related visas so that Pakistani business persons could visit Japan.

Pak-Hungary friendship day celebrated in Islamabad

Government of Hungary decorates President of Bank of Punjab Zafar Masood with its highest civil award

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Hungary to Pakistan Bela Fazekas has said relations between Hungary and Pakistan are deep-rooted and historical adding the world famous orientalist, Sandor Koreosi Csoma arrived to this part of the world what we call today Pakistan. The Hungarian ambassador expressed these views on the occasion of celebration of Hungary-Pakistan friendship day. Hungary also decorated President of the Bank of Punjab Zafar Masood with the highest civil award for cementing relations between the two countries.

Ambassador Fazekas further said arrival of Sandor Csoma was the first ever encounter between our two peoples. Korosi came here in his quest to find the descendants of the ancient Hungarian tribes scattering around in Central Asia eleven centuries ago. He never found them, instead he decided to stay on the subcontinent for the rest of his life.

He added, some Hungarian have spent years, some even decades but all of them have largely contributed to the intellectual, cultural scientific life of the 19th century Lahore. 'It is enough to mention the Punjab University, which was founded in 1882 by the Hungarian scholar, Vilmos Leitner. In 1887 Aurel Stein came to Lahore where he joined the Punjab University as Registrar and later on he was the Principal of Oriental College', he added.

The ambassador said the long list of Hungarians in Pakistan would not be complete without mentioning the name of August Schofft, the famous painter who came to the Punjab in the 1840s where he spent four years in the court of the Sikh ruler. Schofft has painted pictures one after the other portraying the members of the Sikh ruling family and the everyday life of the court. The paintings went through a very long journey from Lahore to Austro-Hungary from there to London, and then as part of the Princess Bamba Collection back to Lahore.

He said, after more than 150 years of exciting journey these extraordinary pieces of art badly needed a complete restoration. The initiative which came from our embassy became the largest ever cultural project in our bilateral history. 'The bottleneck of every project is always the financial background. I have to admit that to initiate the project was much easier than to find sponsors. I cannot emphasize enough the role of the Bank of Punjab in this project because without their generous financial support the Schofft paintings, these emblematic pieces of the Pakistani cultural identity could not have been restored back to their original splendor by the Hungarian restorers'.



ISLAMABAD: President of Bank of Punjab Zafar Masood posing for picture with his family after getting the Hungarian award. Ambassador of Hungary also present. — DNA



ISLAMABAD: President of Bank of Punjab Zafar Masood being decorated with Hungarian civil award by Ambassador Bela Fazekas. — DNA



ISLAMABAD: From left to right, Dr. Arshad Federal Secretary Culture and National Heritage, Editor Islamabad POST Ansar M Bhatti, Federal Secretary Railways Habib ur Rehman Gillnai and Nasser Jaffer. — DNA

of exciting journey these extraordinary pieces of art badly needed a complete restoration. The initiative which came from our embassy became the largest ever cultural project in our bilateral history. 'The bottleneck of every project is always the financial background. I have to admit that to initiate the project was much easier than to find sponsors. I cannot emphasize

enough the role of the Bank of Punjab in this project because without their generous financial support the Schofft paintings, these emblematic pieces of the Pakistani cultural identity could not have been restored back to their original splendor by the Hungarian restorers'.

mark of our cooperation and a permanent topic of the high-level meetings between the leaders of the two countries. He welcomed Zafar Masood the President and CEO of the Bank of Punjab, the man who was behind this generous support with his passion reborn. Zafar Masood survived recent PIA air crash in Karachi. Zafar Masood in his speech

thanked the President of Hungary and Hungarian government for bestowing upon him the highest civil award. He said it was a privilege for him and his institution to support the Hungarian project. He said BoK supported the project as part of its corporate social responsibility. It was the biggest ever project supported by BoK under its CSR initiative.

Indian troops killing innocent people in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD: Indian troops are continuously killing innocent people, particularly youth, during the so-called cordon and search operations (CASOs) and fake encounters in Indian illegally occupied Kashmir. In their latest killing spree in the occupied territory, the troops martyred three more youth in separate violent military operations in Pulwama and Srinagar districts on Thursday, said a report released by Kashmir Media Service, on Friday. It said, over 95980 people fell to Indian bullets during the last 32 years in IIOJK, adding that everyday killing of Kashmiris is testimony to the Indian brutalities in the territory. The report lamented that extrajudicial killings during violent CASOs had become a daily affair in the occupied territory, adding that the Kashmiris' lives were at the mercy of occupational troops. It said that the people of Kashmir had been bearing the cost of conflict for over seven decades. The report maintained the Modi-led fascist Indian government has broken all records of committing brutalities in IIOJK, stressing that India cannot subjugate and terrorize the Kashmiris by resorting to wanton killings and other repressive measures. — DNA

Iran nuclear talks paused after Russian demands

VIENNA: The EU announced a pause Friday in the talks it is chairing on the revival of the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, days after fresh Russian demands complicated negotiations which had appeared close to completion. The EU's foreign policy chief Josep Borrell tweeted that the pause was "due to external factors," despite the fact that "a final text is essentially ready and on the table". The current round of negotiations started in late November in the Austrian capital Vienna between Britain, China, France, Germany, Iran and Russia, with the US taking part indirectly. They had progressed most of the way toward their aim — the revival of the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which began unravelling when former US President Donald Trump withdrew from the

deal in 2018. The EU diplomat who has been personally chairing the talks, Enrique Mora, told reporters that delegations had got to the point of "negotiating footnotes". He praised in particular the United States and Iran for their "very constructive, very positive approach". However, last week Russia said it was demanding guarantees that the Western sanctions imposed on its economy following its invasion of Ukraine would not affect its trade with Iran. As with the original JCPOA in 2015, Moscow had been expected to play a role in the implementation of any fresh deal, for example by receiving shipments of enriched uranium from Iran. After he withdrew from the JCPOA, Trump went on to reimpose swingeing sanctions on the Iranian econo-

my, including on its vital oil sector. That prompted Iran to start disregarding the curbs laid down in the deal on its nuclear activity, including its stockpile of enriched uranium — now at more than 15 times the limit specified in the deal. The JCPOA's aim was to ensure Iran would not be able to develop a nuclear weapon, which it has always denied seeking. "Russia's gambit may be to delay the revival of the deal in order to avoid a flood of Iranian oil on the market" and the subsequent fall in prices, Clement Therme, Iran specialist at France's Paul Valery University told AFP. "In keeping prices high, the Kremlin can use energy as a weapon against the West," he added. As for Iran itself, "the Islamic Republic isn't in a position to counter the Russian strategy," Therme said. —APP

KSA committed to support Pak: envoy

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) Nawaf Bin Saeed Al-Maliki Friday called on National Security Adviser Dr Moeed Yusuf and said the Kingdom was committed to support Pakistan for becoming a prosperous and stable country. Both the dignitaries discussed important regional and global issues during the meeting, said a news release. The Saudi envoy and NSA stressed the importance of working together for the benefit and interests of both the countries. — APP

IHC seeks report in missing persons cases

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday instructed to provide the report of Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances (CoIED) to the lawyers in the missing persons' cases. The court also directed to present the report of Justice (ret'd) Kamal Mansoor Alam regarding the missing persons on next date of hearing. Chief Justice Athar Minallah issued the directives while hearing the case pertaining to the missing blogger Mudassar Naro and others. The Additional Attorney General informed the court of the parameters of CoIED. The CoIED officials informed the court that they used to issue the production orders as per the Commission's powers. They had issued production orders in some 550 cases. The court observed that main purpose of the Commission was to give suggestions to the Federal Government as to how the incidents of enforced disappearances could be stopped. However, had not forwarded any proposal since its inception in 2011, he added. — APP

Russia used cluster bomb in Ukraine: UN

WEB DESK

GENEVA: The U.N. human rights office said on Friday it had received "credible reports" of several cases of Russian forces using cluster munitions in populated areas in Ukraine, adding that indiscriminate use of such weapons might amount to war crimes. The U.N. agency has dozens of monitors in the country and more are expected to arrive once a commission established by the Geneva-based Council to probe possible war crimes is operational. It has confirmed at least 549 civilian deaths in Ukraine since the Russian invasion began on Feb. 24, although says the real figure is likely higher. "Due to their wide area effects, the use of cluster munitions in populated areas is incompatible with the international humanitarian law principles governing the conduct of hostilities," spokesperson Liz Throssell told journalists in Geneva.

Allies to announce support for PM soon

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain on Friday dampened aspirations of joint opposition for a no-trust move, by hinting at the formal announcement by all government's allies to extend full support to the Prime Minister. "Before summoning of the session on no-confidence motion, all the allies of PTI will formally announce to give vote of confidence to Prime Minister Imran Khan and the prevailing situation of uncertainty would come to an end," he said while talking to media after meeting with Punjab Speaker Assembly Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi. Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib also accompanied the minister. Fawad said that it was imperative to end the political uncertainty as on March 23 about 40 Foreign Ministers and 200 delegations of various countries would be in the Federal Capital to attend the Islamic Conference, being hosted by Pakistan. Answering a question about the meeting with Pervaiz Elahi, he said the current political situation was discussed in detail as Pakistan Muslim League Quaid-e-Azam (PML-Q) and



Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) were allies and had full unanimity of views and mutual trust. "PML-Q and PTI are on the same platform about the major decisions to be taken in future" he added. He said most of the reservations of the PML-Q had been redressed while remaining would be addressed soon. "PML-Q stands with the government as its members are part of the cabinet". To another question, the minister said the decision related to Punjab province would be taken after evolving consensus among the stakeholders and added Aleem Khan and Jahangir Khan Tareen were part of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf. During the meeting with the Speaker Punjab Assembly, he said Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA) and Pakistan Media Development Authority also came under discussion. Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi had been requested to mediate among the stakeholders for bringing improvement in the law, he added. Fawad said owners of newspapers today held a meeting with Pervaiz Elahi and the federal government representatives, and added the things were advancing in the right direction. The minister said the decision on PECA should be worked out on a political forum, adding it was the prerogative of the parliament, legislators and the government to draft effective legislations on multiple issues, and judiciary's responsibility was to implement the laws, enacted by the parliament. — APP

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