



Islamabad POST

Saturday, March 19, 2022

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Detailed News On Page-08

Kazakhstan summit for Pak companies

Detailed News On Page-03

Waseem ready for flyweight IBF world title

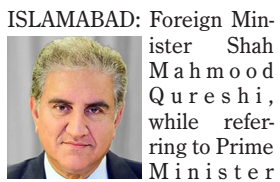
Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

No room for minus Imran in PTI

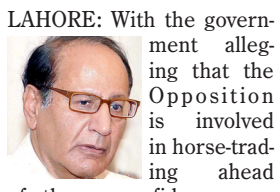
DNA



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, while referring to Prime Minister Imran Khan, said on Friday that there was "no room" for minus one in the PTI. Addressing a press conference alongside Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry and Planning and Development Minister Asad Umar in Islamabad, he said there was a rumour going on that "everything is okay but Imran Khan. Everything can be saved if we go towards minus one." The minister declared emphatically that there is "no room for minus one" in the PTI, adding that if anyone had any misunderstanding, they should remove it. Qureshi advised dissident MNAs, including those staying at Sindh House in Islamabad, to rethink their decision. Calling them "sensible" people, Qureshi said the MNAs were aware of the law and the Constitution, as well as, the PTI's mandate.

'No one buying or selling votes'

ABID RAZA



LAHORE: With the government alleging that the Opposition is involved in horse-trading ahead of the no-confidence motion, the ruling party ally - PML-Q leader Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain - has said that this is the "first" no-trust move in which "no one is buying or selling votes", adding that such reports were nothing short of a "propaganda." In an official statement, the PML-Q leader said that he had been observing it in newspapers and on TV that "bundles of notes" are being distributed ahead of the no-confidence motion. He added that even Prime Minister Imran Khan had mentioned that "bundles of notes" were being distributed in Sindh House.

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

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Taliban welcomes UN's Afghanistan presence - Page 08

PTI people storm into Sindh House

Following the incident, two PTI MNAs and 12 PTI members have been arrested

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: PTI supporters on Friday forcibly entered the Sindh House in Islamabad after protesting outside for hours against dissident MNAs who are staying in the building. Television footage showed PTI workers climbing over the walls of Sindh House with some of them later breaking down the doors to enter the building. They also carried lotas in protest against "turncoats". Following the incident, two PTI MNAs - Attaullah Niazi and Faheem Khan - and 12 PTI members have been arrested by the Islamabad Police for partaking in the protest. Addressing the violence outside the Sindh House, Interior Minister Sheikh Rasheed had issued orders to arrest the PTI supporters who were involved in the "unfortunate incident." Meanwhile, the PTI and Insaaf Student Federation (ISF) workers in Faisalabad also protested against MNA Raja Riaz at the Zila Council Chowk. The protesters

Continued on Page 06

Zardari, Bilawal condemn attack on Sindh House



STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Former President of Pakistan and President Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians Asif Ali Zardari condemned the attack of PTI workers on

Continued on Page 06

PPP, PTI trade barbs over governor's rule

Bilawal challenges PM Imran to impose governor's rule in Sindh province

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: A day after Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed advised Prime Minister Imran Khan to impose governor's rule in the province of Sindh, Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Friday challenged the premier to impose the governor's rule "if he had the courage". "Not tomorrow, impose it (governor rule)

Continued on Page 06

PM has no authority: Fazl

ISLAMABAD: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman on Friday claimed that Prime Minister Imran Khan has no authority to impose an emergency or governor's rule as he has 'lost the support of the majority'.

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Human Rights Shireen Mazari along with Turkish Ambassador Ihsan Mustafa Yurdakul witnessing photo exhibition on occasion of a ceremony for "Çanakkale Victory and Martyrs' Day" and "101st Anniversary of Acceptance of National Anthem". - DNA



ISLAMABAD: Major General (R) Bashir Salihi Magashi, Minister for Defence of the Republic of Nigeria calls on Prime Minister Imran Khan. - DNA

PM lauds Pak-Nigeria growing cooperation

Prime Minister Imran Khan held a meeting with Nigeria's defence minister Maj. Gen. (ret'd) Bashir Salihi Magashi

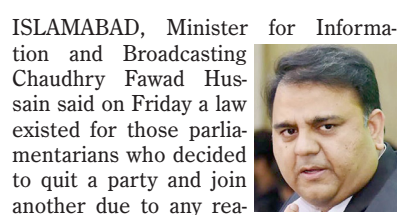
MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Friday in a meeting with Nigeria's defence minister Major General (ret'd) Bashir Salihi Magashi lauded the growing cooperation between the two countries in defence, security and counter-terrorism. Underlying common history, culture and values, Prime Minister Imran Khan appreciated the strong positive trajectory of bilateral relations. Lauding the Nigerian economy on assuming the top position in Africa since March, the Prime Minister called for further deepening of bilateral trade and business ties. Highlighting Pakistan's long-standing services and contributions to promoting peace in Africa under the auspices of UN Peacekeeping Operations, the prime minister shared his vision of 'Engage Africa' policy, which aimed at expanding diplomatic footprint and advancing trade and investment partnerships. The prime minister lauded the unanimous adoption of landmark resolution by the UNGA on declaring March 15 as the 'International Day to Combat Islamophobia.' The prime minister stated that this recognition by the General Assembly would help combat the contemporary challenges of racism, discrimination, and violence against Muslims, and promote interfaith harmony. The prime minister recalled his earlier telephonic conversation with President Muhammadu Buhari and expressed the hope to welcome him to Pakistan at the earliest opportunity.

Vote of defected MNAs not to be counted: Fawad

Says that Sindh CM has sent the public money to buy legislators' conscience

SHUJAAT HAMZA



ISLAMABAD, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain said on Friday a law existed for those parliamentarians who decided to quit a party and join another due to any reason. In a tweet, he said that according to Article 63-1A, the vote of the members quitting a party would not be counted in the no-trust move after the letter of the party chief to the speaker for disqualification of the dissidents. Some members themselves have said about leaving the party, Chaudhry Fawad said, vowing to take action against such MNAs and their disqualification would be for the lifetime.

Continued on Page 06

Rashid urges PTI dissident MNAs to come back

ISLAMABAD: Inviting the dissident MNAs of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to come back, Minister for Interior Sheikh Rashid Ahmad Friday reiterated the ministry would not carry out any raid at the Sindh House despite the fact that it was made a stock exchange by the opposition. Addressing a press conference here, he assured the dissident PTI MNAs that no one would say

Continued on Page 06

Putin vows Russia will prevail in Ukraine

NEWS DESK

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin justified the invasion of Ukraine before a packed soccer stadium on Friday but coverage of his speech on state television was unexpectedly interrupted by what the Kremlin said was a technical problem with a server. Speaking on a stage at the centre of Moscow's Luzhniki Stadium, Putin promised to tens of thousands of people waving Russian flags and chanting "Russia, Russia, Russia" that all of the Kremlin's aims would be achieved. "We know what we need to do, how to do it and at what cost. And we will absolutely accomplish all of our plans," Putin, 69, told the rally from a stage decked out with slogans such as "For a world without Nazism" and "For our

president". Many of the Russian slogans used at the rally incorporated the "Z" symbol that Russian forces have used as a motif in Ukraine. One read "Za Putina" - "for Putin". Dressed in a turtleneck and coat, Putin said the soldiers fighting in Ukraine had demonstrated the unity of Russia. "Shoulder to shoulder, they help each other, support each other and when needed they shield each other from bullets with their bodies like brothers. Such unity we have not had for a long time," Putin said. As he was talking, state television briefly cut away from his speech mid-sentence and showed earlier pre-recorded footage of patriotic songs, but he later appeared back on state television.

Pakistan not to take part in bloc politics: FO

"We believe these principles should be applied consistently and universally," he stressed

STAFF REPORT / DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office on Friday said Pakistan had taken a principled decision not to be part of the bloc politics and stressed that the position on the Ukraine situation was driven by an imperative of protecting its vital interests. "Pakistan will only be a partner in peace, not in conflict," Foreign Office Spokesperson Asim Iftikhar said at the weekly press briefing here at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The FO spokesperson said Prime Minister Imran Khan had alerted about the adverse consequences of the conflict for everyone, especially the developing countries, and added that the situation was "clearly evident today". He said Pakistan had also consistently emphasized the fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter, including self-determination of peoples, non-use or threat of use of force, respect for sovereignty and territorial

integrity of states, pacific settlement of disputes and equal security for all. "We believe these principles should be applied consistently and universally," he stressed. Spokesperson Iftikhar said Pakistan remained "deeply concerned over the continuing military conflict. "We are calling for immediate cessation of hostilities, establishment of humanitarian corridors and provision of humanitarian assistance, and continuation of talks between Ukraine and Russia and persistent efforts for a diplomatic solution," he added. The FO spokesperson said Pakistan had engaged both Ukraine and Russia, the neighbouring countries, key partners in Europe and others, and was willing to make all possible contribution to reinforce efforts for a diplomatic solution. He mentioned that Pakistan had also dispatched humanitarian assistance for the Ukrainian people, in keeping with its close relations with Ukraine. On the upcoming 48th Session of OIC Council of Foreign Ministers on March

Pakistan rejects Indian Home Minister's remarks

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan categorically rejects the unwarranted and gratuitous remarks made by Indian Home Minister Amit Shah, during a recent event, questioning the partition and location of Kartarpur Sahib in Pakistan. Pakistan also reiterates its serious concern over the BJP leadership's increasing tendency of dragging Pakistan into its domestic affairs. A statement from foreign office read, "It is deeply regrettable that distortion of historical facts has become the hallmark of the BJP government along with its ideological fountainhead RSS. The resort to such delusional thinking by the Indian leadership has been strikingly frequent over the last couple of months in the wake of the elections in several states in India. Recently, the Indian Prime Minister also made similar remarks questioning well-established historical facts." Clearly, such denial mentality or revisionism can neither change historical facts nor the established realities. It is also worth remembering that it was Pakistan which had brought to fruition the idea of Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur Corridor, while India kept dragging its feet, and completed the project in record time as a gift to the Sikh community in India and worldwide.

22-23, he said Pakistan was set to receive the participating foreign ministers and delegations. He said the foreign ministers would also witness the Pakistan Day Parade as guests of honour, in a show of solidarity with Pakistan and its people. Under the theme of the OIC Session, 'Partnering for unity, justice, and development', he said the country was committed to foster unity within the Ummah, advancing the cause of justice for all the Muslim peoples, and promoting prosperity and sustainable development for the member states of Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). "We will seek to build partnerships and bridges of cooperation across the Islamic world to address the myriad of challenges confronting us and to seize the multiple opportunities that present themselves to promote the collective interests of the Ummah," he said. He mentioned that Prime Minister Imran Khan would make a keynote address at the inaugural session.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Norway Per Albert Ilaas calls on Chairman PTA, Maj General Amir Azeem Bajwa (R). — DNA

34 Price Magistrates to check profiteering

YOUSUF BHUTTA

GUJRAT: Deputy Commissioner Dr. Khuram Shehzad has told the media that 18 more officers have been given the powers of Price Magistrate to ensure implementation of food prices in the district and to curb artificial inflation and hoarding. With the approval of the Home Department, the number of Price Control Magistrates in the district will increase to 34, he said. He further said that earlier 16 officers were performing their duties as price control magistrates in the district. In order to effectively curb illicit profiteering in the district, request was made to the Home Department to appoint more officers as price control magistrates and the approval was granted. DC said that 18 officers have been appointed as price control magistrates. Deputy Commissioner Dr. Khuram Shehzad said that the 18 officers who have been appointed as Price Control Magistrates include Secretary RTA Aqsa Riaz, Deputy Director Livestock Dr. Rizwanullah, Deputy Director Livestock Sarai Alamgir Dr. Rashid Nasrullah, MO (I & D), Metropolitan Corporation Liaqat Ali Ansari, MO (Regulation) Malik Tariq Zia, MO Finance Rauf Warraich, DO Regulation District Council Faraz Mehdi, DO Finance District Council Kashif Javed-Virk, DOI & S District Council Ehsanullah, CO Unit Kunjah Muhammad Ali, CO Unit Jalalpur Jattan Israr Chatha, MO Finance, CO Kharian Syed Mahmood-ul-Hassan, MO Regulation Unit Kharian Khawaja Khalid Waleed, MOI & S Unit Kharian Muhammad Usman, CO Unit Lala Musa Umair Dildar, MO Finance Unit DingaArbAbArifWarrach, MO Unit DingaLuqman Arshad and CO Unit Sarai Alamgir Syed Naveed Haider.

ram Shehzad said that the 18 officers who have been appointed as Price Control Magistrates include Secretary RTA Aqsa Riaz, Deputy Director Livestock Dr. Rizwanullah, Deputy Director Livestock Sarai Alamgir Dr. Rashid Nasrullah, MO (I & D), Metropolitan Corporation Liaqat Ali Ansari, MO (Regulation) Malik Tariq Zia, MO Finance Rauf Warraich, DO Regulation District Council Faraz Mehdi, DO Finance District Council Kashif Javed-Virk, DOI & S District Council Ehsanullah, CO Unit Kunjah Muhammad Ali, CO Unit Jalalpur Jattan Israr Chatha, MO Finance, CO Kharian Syed Mahmood-ul-Hassan, MO Regulation Unit Kharian Khawaja Khalid Waleed, MOI & S Unit Kharian Muhammad Usman, CO Unit Lala Musa Umair Dildar, MO Finance Unit DingaArbAbArifWarrach, MO Unit DingaLuqman Arshad and CO Unit Sarai Alamgir Syed Naveed Haider.

FESCO adds 700 new transformers

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: For improvement of the distribution system and provision of uninterrupted power supply to consumers, FESCO has added 700 new transformers in different parts of the region. Similarly, transformer trolleys have also been provided to the Sub Divisions Offices to restore power supply immediately in case of any emergency, said Chief Executive Officer (CEO) FESCO, Engr. Bashir Ahmed while addressing the E-court on Facebook at FESCO Headquarters. He further said that provision of the best services to the consumers is FESCO top priority. He said that in the light of the government's vision, holding of E-courts was proving to be helpful in resolving the problems of consumers of electricity.

He also directed the FESCO officers and officials for immediate redress the consumers electricity related issues so that the image of FESCO could emerge as consumer friendly company. He appealed to the consumers to cooperate in crackdown against power pilferage so that power theft from FESCO could be completely eradicated. He further said that FESCO monitoring cell 118 and toll free number 0800-66554 are working round the clock for redressal of electricity complaints.

DC holds open court to resolve problems

PESHAWAR: Deputy Commissioner Bannu Capt (retd) Muhammad Zubair Khan Niazi held an open court at Tehsil Domail to resolve problems of people at their doorstep. Additional Assistant Commissioner Zaman Khan, Chairman Tehsil Domail Israr Khan, TMO Domail Umar Hayat Khan, Tehsildar Naik Nawaz Khan and Tehsildar Kashif Khan and a large number of people and elders of the area attended the forum. Following complaints, the DC Niazi suspended Patwari and directed an inquiry against him. He said that if the allegations against the Patwari were proved, he would be dismissed from service. He also directed the TMO to provide tractors for constructing retaining areas to prevent floods in Payenda Khel locality besides constructing bathrooms, waiting areas and tube-wells in Tehsil Domail. — APP

NAB meeting discusses prosecution of cases in Sindh

Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB has said that NAB is committed to bring corrupt elements especially big fish to justice on the basis of solid documentary evidence as per law

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Honorable Mr. Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB chaired a meeting to review performance of NAB especially convictions prosecution wing at NAB Headquarters. The meeting was attended by Zahir Shah, Deputy Chairman NAB, Syed Asghar Haider, Prosecutor General Accountability, Masood Alam Khan, DG Operations and the senior officers of NAB at NAB Headquarters. During the meeting, it was informed by Mirza Sultan Muhammad Saleem DG NAB Sukkur that the Learned Accountability Court Sukkur passed judgment in reference No 10/2017 whereby 23 accused persons including 6x officials of Government of Sindh were convicted due to vigorous prosecution of NAB Sukkur. Out of 23x accused persons, 19x accused person have been awarded rigorous imprisonment seven years each, while remaining 4x contractors have been awarded five years imprisonment individually. The Court also imposed a collective fine of Rs.7, 433,556/- against all the accused persons. During the meeting, DG NAB Rawalpindi Irfan Naem Mangi informed that the Learned Accountability Court Rawalpindi passed judgment in reference No 02/2019 titled State vs. Qayyum (Cheating Public at Large whereby the accused person was convicted/sentenced 3 years R.I. with fine of Rs. 2.79 million under 489-F PPC, 3 years R.I. with fine of Rs. 2.55 million

under section 406 PPC, 14 years R.I. with fine of Rs. 373.24 million under section 10 r/w 9(a)(iii) & (ix) NAO and 14 years R.I with fine of 373.24 under section 10 r/w 9(a)(iii) & (x) NAO by the Learned Accountability Court Rawalpindi due to vigorous prosecution of NAB Rawalpindi. Honorable Mr. Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB has said that NAB is committed to bring corrupt elements especially big fish to justice on the basis of solid documentary evidence as per law. He said that logical conclusion of mega corruption cases is the top most priority of NAB. NAB has adopted a Combined Investigation Team (CIT) policy in order to benefit from the collective wisdom of senior supervisory officers which is lending quality in conduct of inquiries and investigations. He said NAB is the focal institution of Pakistan under the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). NAB is

Chairman of SAARC Anti-Corruption Forum as NAB is considered a role model organization in SAARC countries due to its excellent results. The Chairman NAB said that due to vigorous prosecution of NAB, 1405 accused persons were convicted by various learned Accountability Courts of the country from Oct 10, 2017 to Dec 31, 2021 with overall conviction ratio of 66% which is a record achievement as compared to other organizations which shows a commitment and dedication of NAB officers towards performance of their national responsibilities in eradication of corruption from the country. He said that NAB's anti corruption strategy has proved very successful which has been lauded by reputed national and international organizations like Transparency International, Pakistan, World Economic Forum, PILDAT and Mishal Pakistan.



Admin sets up 4 new Ehsas Kafalat centers

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: District Administration has setting up four new Ehsas Kafalat centers at Sports Complex Samanabad, Dijkot, Khurri-anwala and Mamukanjan for fast payment of financial assistance to deserving registered women under Ehsas Kafalat program while already 9 disbursement and 6 registration centers are functional and 5 extra counters of HBL has established at Ehsas center outside Metropolitan Corporation. This was stated by Deputy Commissioner Ait Shehzad while visiting Ehsas Kafalat Centers and reviewing the available facilities, administrative and security matters and overall arrangements for managing the rush of women. The Deputy Commissioner visited Al-Fatah Sports Complex Saleemi Chowk, Dijkot Road Sports Complex and Ehsas

Kafalat Center outside Metropolitan Corporation and checked all the arrangements. He also urged the management of Benazeer Income Support Program to work with HBL Bank to take effective measures to increase the number of counters in the centers. He said that immediate plans should be made to provide speedy services to the women waiting for the registration process. Expressing satisfaction over the relief received in the process, he also inquired from the staff present at the HBL counters about the payment of financial assistance to the women and appreciated the steps taken to improve the arrangements. He went to Sports Complex Samanabad and checked the availability of place for establishing new Ehsas center and directed the AC and BISP in charge to take immediate measures for setting up center.

DCC reviews community development programs

STAFF REPORT

JHELMUM: District Coordination Committee Jhelum meeting was held under the chairmanship of member provincial assembly Chaudhry Zafar Iqbal. In which member provincial assembly Raja Yaur Kamal, Deputy Commissioner Jhelum Noman Hafeez and District Police Officer Rana Tahir ur Rehman were also

present. In addition, the heads of all government departments including assistant commissioners of the tehsils attended. The meeting reviewed the progress made so far on community development program, annual development program and local government schemes, detailed review of annual development projects including district wide mega projects, Jalalpur irrigation, law and order situation, restora-

tion of Fort Nandana and Talla Jogis, removal of barriers in construction of DHQ Trauma Center. Chaudhry Zafar Iqbal said providing public welfare and basic amenities to them is the top priority of the government, all departments work for public service under integrated strateg People are trying to solve problems. Problems of electricity, water, gas, road and infrastructure will be resolved on priority basis.



ANF recovers hashish from passenger at BKIA

PESHAWAR: Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa here Friday recovered 1.41 Kilogram hashish from a passenger on Bacha Khan International Airport (BKIA). According to ANF, the recovery was made from a passenger, Gul Noor Khan of Waziristan who was trying to board Abu Dhabi bound flight. The contraband was concealed in secret cavities of his luggage. Meanwhile, ANF and Frontier Constabulary recovered 9.6 kilogram hashish and arms from a car on Shin Qamar check post. The smuggler was a resident of District Khyber and identified as Abdul Wakil. Cases have been registered against arrested smugglers under Control of Narcotics Substance Act and investigation is underway. — APP

Results start of clean and green Pakistan index competition

There were five basic pillars, including clean drinking water, solid waste management, Shikarari, liquid waste management, hygiene health and sanitation

KAMRAN GUJJAR

JHELMUM: The results of the clean and green Pakistan index phase two competition were started, in this regard, 3-member team reached Jhelum under the leadership of Punjab local council academy Najib Aslam, the data verification provided by 36 cities of the country, including Jhelum nominated for clean and green competition, has been started, which is being examined. The names of the cities receiving the position after the data verification will be announced. Director local council academy Najib Aslam, along with additional deputy commissioner revenue Kashif Mahmood Dogar, chaired the meet-



ing in the deputy commissioner's office, saying that the program was

launched on March 15, 2021, which continued till September 15, 2021.

AC takes action against profiteers

ANWAR CHOCHAN

KHARIAN: Assistant Commissioner Kharian Sajid Munir Kalialar's action against that shopkeepers who were selling their items more than fix charges and he fines of Rs. 50,000.

According to the details, Assistant Com-

missioner Kharian Sajid Munir Kalialar visited Lala Musa. He was fined Rs.50,000 While an FIR was also registered against a shopkeeper. He directed the shopkeepers to ensure the supply of food items at the official rates, adding that strict action would be taken against the shopkeepers who would charge more than the official rates.



Disbursement center for women

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: One more disbursement center for providing financial assistance to women is being set up in Faisalabad district under the government's Ehsas Kafalat program, while the number of counters for registration and disbursement at existing centers in the division is also being increased so that the rush could be rectified. This was stated by Divisional Commissioner Zahid Hussain during a high level meeting with administration of Benazeer Income Support Program and with the HBL. The Divisional Commis-

sioner asked the Deputy Commissioners to ensure the provision of shade for the women in the Ehsas Kafalat Centers with seating, fans and drinking water and cleared that there should be no shortage of such arrangements. He urged the police to deploy female police staff at the centers and asked them to use Civil Defense volunteers in this regard. He said that high ups should also be contacted for additional workforce.

The commissioner told the HBL representatives that all possible services would be provided by the divisional and district administrations at the centers but they should immediately in-

crease the number of counters so that women could be dispersed quickly and the rush could be managed. He said that five additional counters should be set up in the center set up in the metropolitan corporation from March 18 while the number of machines in the center of Al-Fatah Sports Complex should also be increased.

Youm-e-Tashkur observed in KP with enthusiasm

PESHAWAR: Like others provinces, the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also observed Youm-e-Tashkur after the United Nations has finally recognized the grave challenge of Islamophobia confronting the world. From Chitral to DI Khan and Kohistan to South Waziristan districts, people of all 35 districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa marked Youm-e-Tashkur after adaptation of a landmark consensus resolution by the United Nations, designating 15th March as International Day to combat Islamophobia. The UN comprising 193 members states, had adopted a landmark resolution introduced by Pakistan on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), declaring to mark March 15 as International Day to combat Islamophobia. During Friday sermons at all central mosques at villages and towns, the Khatteeb and Ulema Karam highlighted the grave challenge of Islamophobia and its impact on the society. Thanking PM Imran for highlighting the grave challenge of Islamophobia at international forums including UN General Assembly, they said Islam was the religion of peace and laid great emphasis on tolerance, brotherhood and respect for humanity. — APP

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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



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Airlines

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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
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MH.....5611116
Cantt Hospital.....9270907-11
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Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Kazakhstan to host summit for Pak companies: Envoy

Speaking on the occasion Yerzhan Kistafin showed keen interest in importing rice from Pakistan and said that that Kazakhstan already imports rice from Russia and so it would be beneficial for them to directly import from Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Kazakhstan will host a trade summit for Pakistan in Atakent Expo Centre, Almaty in May this year to provide opportunity for Pakistani companies to show case their products to business community of Kazakhstan. This was stated by Ambassador of Republic of Kazakhstan to Pakistan Yerzhan Kistafin, who called on the Federal Minister of National Food Security Syed Fakhar Imam on Friday. The Ambassador informed that over 60 Pakistani companies from various sectors such as agricultural machinery, agricultural products sports goods, surgical instruments, handicrafts, confectionary to attend the expo. Fakhar welcomed the Ambassador of Kazakhstan and said that Pakistan looks forward to taking the relationship with Kazakhstan to the next level, adding that the current trade between Kazakhstan and Pakistan is the most Pakistan has with any Central Asian country however, it is far below its true potential. Pakistan and Kazakhstan should take advantage of the opportunity at hand and ensure maximum cooperation, Imam said adding that the bilateral cooperation between the two countries can be of immense benefit to Pakistan and Kazakhstan. Both sides also discussed the MoU signed between the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Ministry of National Food Security and Research on the cooperation in the field of agriculture. Fakhar stressed cooperation in the field



of livestock breeding and plant cultivation, agricultural products trade, quarantine and plant protection, veterinary medicine and agricultural research. He said that Pakistan has excess rice and potato which can be exported to Kazakhstan. Speaking on the occasion Yerzhan Kistafin showed keen interest in importing rice from Pakistan and said that that Kazakhstan already imports rice from Russia and so it would be beneficial for them to directly import from Pakistan. Both sides also agreed to conduct an online meeting in April of this year between the officials of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Ministry of National Food Security and Research to further enhance cooperation. Yerzhan Kistafin informed the minister that during the 10th session of Joint Intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technical and Cultural Cooperation between Kazakhstan and Pakistan which occurred in November, 2021, both governments agreed to increase turnover of agriculture products between the two countries. Fakhar Imam said that collaboration in scientific research can be a cornerstone in increasing trade potential of the two countries. Yerzhan Kistafin said that Cotton Research Institute of Multan and Kazakh Research Institute of Cotton Growing can work together for exchange of cotton germplasm, training of scientists, joint breeding programs and to promote joint publications and seminars which was welcomed by the federal minister.

PRCS, NDMA ink MoU to boost cooperation



STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) and the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Friday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance humanitarian co-

operation between the two organizations. The MoU was signed in presence of Chairman PRCS Abrar ul Haq and Chairman NDMA Lt Gen Akhtar Nawaz. PRCS Secretary General Dr Adeel Nawaz and NDMA member DRR Muhammad Idrees Mehsud signed the

MoU on behalf of their respective organizations at a ceremony held here at the NDMA head office. The partnership agreement will provide the broad framework for cooperation between the two organizations in enhancing mutual interest and understanding particularly in areas of

Communities Based Disaster Risk Management (CB-DRM), Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), collaboration in tacking disasters and other emergency situations in the country through efforts focusing on preparedness, mitigation, risk reduction, relief and rehabilitation. Speaking on the occasion, Abrar ul Haq said that both organizations will work together to promote a culture of prevention, mitigation, better & enhanced coordination among key stakeholders involved in Disaster Risk Management (DRM). "The collaboration between PRCS and NDMA on community-based disaster risk reduction (CBDRR) will not only help disaster-struck communities in an organized manner but also make service delivery quicker and efficient", he added. Abrar ul Haq said PRCS has a huge volunteer base and its nationwide presence puts it in a unique place vis-à-vis effective handling of disasters or emergency situations.

COMSTECH organizes 3-day online workshop

Students, experienced investigators, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty members from the OIC member states are participating in the workshop

ISLAMABAD: COMSTECH, International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS), and Sindh Innovation Research and Education Network (SIREN) jointly organized a 3-day online workshop on scientific writing during March 17-19, 2022 at Latif Ebrahim Jamal National Science Information Center, University of Karachi. The workshop consisted on lectures delivered by a renowned expert Prof. Dr. Rafat Ali Siddiqui, Senior Investigator at the Methodist Research Institute, and Professor of Cellular Biochemistry, Indiana University School of Medicine, USA. Each lecture followed by extensive exercises, tutorials, and discussion sessions. Prof. Rafat started from defining scientific writing and answering the question of why one should write, and covered each and every topic of scientific writing in detail from taking notes in the lab to writing abstract and research paper. He taught how to tabulate data, make figures, insert pictures and write their captions as well. He also discussed writing styles and referencing methods in great detail. Prof. Rafat's lectures encompassed taking laboratory notes, presenting conference paper, writing research paper, thesis, research proposal, review article, book chapter, editorial and commentaries. Students, experienced investigators, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty members from the OIC member states are participating in the workshop. - DNA

Mr. Castillo said, "Our collaboration on climate change and your participation in this master class is just one of many steps to ensure a safer, healthier planet for future generations." As an indication of the urgency of the problem, Dr. Rizwan Riaz, Pro Rector of Research Innovation & Commercialization at NUST, noted during the ceremony that poor air quality caused six percent of the deaths in Pakistan. He called for greater awareness and urged increased action to find solutions to a shared problem that affects us all. - DNA

US Embassy partners with PUAN and NUST

ISLAMABAD: Twenty-two environmental professionals from across Pakistan completed a U.S.-funded three-day master class on "Approaches to Air Quality and the Environment." The Pakistan-U.S. Alumni Network (PUAN) and the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad organized the event in collaboration with the National University of Science and Technology (NUST) and the university's Professional Development Center. The participants, all alumni of U.S. government-funded exchanges, engaged in a multidisciplinary course on the scientific, technological, economic, and regulatory aspects of air quality management. Through academic and hands-on training, participants learned about air-quality laws and regulations, how to calculate the health and economic impacts of air quality, and how to monitor and manage air pollution sources by identifying pollution hotspots. The three-day training marked the second phase of the master class program. Last year, the

same group focused on theoretical approaches to analyzing air pollution and quality. Mr. Ray Castillo, Minister Counselor for Public Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, congratulated the participants on successfully completing the program and urged them to act as catalysts of change to improve air quality and the environment through coordinated efforts. "This year marks the 75th anniversary of U.S.-Pakistan bilateral relations, and together we can work to improve air quality to mitigate the most severe impacts of climate change,"



Farrukh wants ECP action against turn coats

Farrukh Habib appealed to the ECP to decide case against Yousuf Raza Gilani and immediately stop vote sale and purchase practice once for all. He said votes of Members of National Assembly were purchased in Senate election and video of Gilani's son was its evidence

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib on Friday appealed to Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to take notice of the ongoing horse trading at Sindh House and take action against turn coats to end this ugly practice. Talking to media outside the Election Commission of Pakistan along with Parliamentary Secretary for Law and Justice Malika Bukhari, he said that Election Act was clear that loyalties of a voter could not be bought with money.

The ECP had an opportunity to end this unholy practice by disqualifying Yousuf Raza Gilani, the minister said. He said that Sindh House has been turned into an "auction house", and all fraudsters were there. In connection with NFC, he said the Sindh government was given Rs 2000 billion but no body knew where that huge amount was spent. Taking a jibe on the revolting MNAs of the PTI he said those who could not become councilors, begged Imran Khan for PTI tickets before 2018 elections. "But now seeing the shine of currency notes they have sold their conscience", the minister said.



Farrukh Habib appealed to the ECP to decide case against Yousuf Raza Gilani and immediately stop vote sale and purchase

practice once for all. He said votes of Members of National Assembly were purchased in Senate election and video of Gilani's son was its evidence. "We have not done anything wrong by saying 'Absolutely not', we are ready to face the consequences", he said. He said the "captain" will fight hard and will not be blackmailed by dirty tactics and he will not make any compromise on principles. "Today all the corrupts are on one side and Imran Khan is standing firm against them", Farrukh Habib said. To a question, he said, in coalition set up all allies were taken along,

though there may be some difference of opinion on certain issues. "We will not allow Pakistan's democracy to become an 'auction house' and will resist and stand against such shameful acts", he said. He said that Article 63A was clear, the laws are made to be feared and the people should not be able break it. He challenged the revolting MNAs to come out of Sindh house, tender resignation and seek re-election. He said that the people of their respective constituencies would teach them a lesson as they would lose badly against Imran Khan's candidates.

PM Khan standing firm: Gill

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister for Political Communications Dr. Shahbaz Gill on Friday said Prime Minister Imran Khan was standing firm on his principles and for the self-determination of the country. Shedding light on the ongoing circumstances in the country between the government and opposition, he in his tweet said, "Whatever is happening today had to happen. I knew this three years ago that these thieves (opposition) can't see the Captain (Khan) in power. He said some were giving excuses of unfaithfulness while some of betrayal. "But the real thing is that Khan will stand firm on his principles and for Pakistan's self-determination," he said.

CDA to organize 'Islamabad Marathon'

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) will organize 'Islamabad Marathon' on March 26 in order to provide healthy activity to the residents of the federal capital. According to CDA spokesman, the regular registration was started through an online form available on CDA's official website. The marathon will have three categories - 42km, 21km and 10km, with separate competitions for men and women. The cash prizes will be given to winners of each category. A committee was formed to ensure that the marathon was up to international standards. "All expenses of this marathon will be borne by the CDA, and it will be widely advertised so that not only people from within the country but also from abroad can participate," the spokesman added. - APP

Police hold flag march

RAWALPINDI: mPolice, on the directives of City Police Officer, Rawalpindi Umar Saeed Malik on Friday held a flag march in Chontra areas to provide security to the dwellers and to maintain peace. According to the informed a police spokesman, the flag march was led by Senior Superintendent of Police SSP Wasim Riaz. The flag march was attended by SP Sadder, SDPO Sadder, Elite Force and Rawalpindi district police along with other law enforcement personnel. SSP said that purpose of the flag march was to exhibit commitment to ensure law and order. He made it clear that Rawalpindi Police were ready at all times to protect lives and property of citizens. Rawalpindi Police would use all available resources for the integrity and security of the country, he added. He said that Qabza mafia would also face the music. No one can be allowed to challenge writ of the government and the criminals would be dealt with iron hand, he said. - APP

LSM growth jumps 7.6 pc in 7 months

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Large Scale Manufacturing Industries (LSMI) production grew by 7.6 percent during the first seven months of the current fiscal year as compared to the corresponding period of last year, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday. The LSMI Quantum Index Number (QIM) was recorded at 120 points during July-January (2021-22) against 111.5 points during July-January (2020-21), showing growth of 7.6 percent, according to latest PBS data. The highest increase of 9.7 percent was witnessed in the indices monitored by the Provincial Board of Statistics (BOS), followed by 6.9 percent increase in indices monitored by Ministry of Industries and 0.5 percent increase in the products monitored by the Oil Companies Advisory Committee (OCAC).

Briefs

Humayun
praises
'Shad Rahay
Pakistan'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani superstar Humayun Saeed has praised the new national song 'Shad Rahay Pakistan' released by Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR). The 'Mere Paas Tum Ho' star took to twitter and wrote, "This song Shad Rahay Pakistan is a celebration of the resolve of the nation to stay united and steadfast on the path to prosperity" he ended the note with 'Shad Rahay Pakistan's YouTube link. Pakistan Army's media wing released "Shad Rahay Pakistan" in connection with Pakistan Day that will be observed on March 23.

The composition of this song was done by leading Pakistani composer Shuja Haider. The melodious voices of YashalShahid and ShujaHaider have made this song even more mesmerizing. Shuja Haider was behind the song lyrics while YasirJaswal directed the music video. The music video was beautifully made and featured drone footage of Pakistan's historic sites as well as the diverse landscapes the country has to offer.

Footwear
exports
increase
17.70%

ISLAMABAD: The footwear exports witnessed an increase of 17.70 percent during the first eight months of financial year (2021-22) as compared to the exports of corresponding period of last year. Pakistan exported footwear worth US \$103.633 million during July-February (2021-22) against the exports of \$88.050 million during July-February (2020-21), showing growth of 17.70 percent, according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS).

In terms of quantity, the exports of footwear also increased by 9.08 percent by going up from 11,092 thousand pairs to 12,099 thousand pairs, according to the data. Among the footwear products, the exports of leather footwear rose by 12.76 percent as it surge from \$73.720 million last year to \$83.129 million during the current year. The canvas footwear exports of the country stood at \$ 0.716 million during the current year against \$ 0.254 million during last year, showing an increase of 181.895 percent. Likewise, the exports of all other footwear goods increased by 40.58 percent during the period under review as these went up from \$14.076 million last year to \$19.788 million during the current fiscal year.

Meanwhile, year-on-year basis, the footwear export increased by 42.75 percent during the month of February 2022 as compared to the same month of last year. - APP

NCSW
committed to
ensure women
empowerment

ISLAMABAD: National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) committed to ensure the development projects for empowering women in the society. Talking to APP, Chairperson NilofarB akhtiar NCSW said, "The projects mainly establish a structure and path for the commission, dealing with thematic areas related to violence against women, the political representation of women, and ensuring empowerment of women in the public and social sphere". Adding she said NCSW's role in generating knowledge, and women-friendly legislation has been significant. Moreover, the role of NCSW is ensuring the inclusiveness of women from all spheres of life was stressed in these projects. She said the recommendations included in these projects increasing the representation of special-needs women, transgender, and senior citizens to guarantee that their voices and concerns were represented in the formulation of laws. - APP

Int'l moot unveils contribution of vegetable oils towards SDGs

Ambassador of Republic of Indonesia to Pakistan, Adam M. Tugio along with Prof. Dr. Iqrar Ahmad Khan, Vice Chancellor UAF inaugurated the Pak-Indonesia Food and Nutrition festival 2022



DNA

ISLAMABAD: The two-day international conference on "Contribution of Vegetable oils towards sustainable development goals" at Faculty of Food, Nutrition & Home Sciences, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad (UAF) was concluded with some important recommendations to scientists working on Agricultural economics. The International conference unveiled the potential of vegetable oils in Pakistan in terms of contribution towards socio-economic development. Ambassador of Republic of Indonesia to Pakistan, Adam M. Tugio along with Prof. Dr. Iqrar Ahmad Khan, Vice Chancellor UAF inaugurated the Pak-Indonesia Food and Nutrition festival 2022 at the National Institute of Food Science and Technology (NIFSAT). Ambassador Tugio opened the inaugural technical session on

"Contribution of Palm Oil on Sustainable Development Goals and Trade Relationship" at the conference. He said strong bilateral links in agriculture, academia, and industry would benefit both Indonesia and Pakistan in learning from each other's experiences and combating common challenges. Agricultural specialists of both countries need to intensify their efforts to promote oil seed crops, he communicated. He stated that Vegetable oil production is vital to Indonesia's economy because the country is one of the largest producers of Palm Oil. He further noted that due to efficient cultivating of palm oil in term of land uses, low use of water and pesticides, Indonesia's vegetable oil receives negative campaign. These campaigns are continuously evolving from degradation of environment to climate change, and from human rights abuses to health issues - all of them unproven and unsubstantiated with

scientific findings. The International science gathering was jointly organized by The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia & Faculty of Food, Nutrition & Home Sciences, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad. Prof. Dr. Iqrar Ahmad Khan, Vice Chancellor UAF shared his thoughts that both countries should take benefit from each other experiences and meet the modern era's challenges like Food security. Scholars from several countries, including Indonesia, UK, China, Spain, Canada, United Arab Emirates and Pakistan participated in the conference. A number of brainstorming sessions and invited presentations were held in the international conference. During the conference, foreign speakers from Indonesia, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Firdaus, SP, MSI from Faculty of Economic and Management, Institute of Agriculture Bogor (IPB) and Mr. Djono Albar Burhan, S. Kom, MMgt, (Intl. BUS),

CC. CL. from Indonesian Palm Oil Smallholders Association presented their productive research in Vegetable oils to participating students and researchers. Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Firdaus from Indonesia pointed out that there is a dire need to have more research on vegetable oils as various SDGs could be fulfilled by developing effective strategies to enhance production of vegetable oil crop. He said that Palm oil needs more attention and growth in developing countries as Palm oil is the massive source for battling major issues like Food and energy security. During his presentation, he said that Palm oil industry can bring significant impact on Pakistan's economy if Pakistan is transformed to a trade and investment hub for Palm oil supply to South and Central Asia. He finalized his presentation by communicating further studies on rational choice of vegetable

oil consumption is needed to strengthen palm oil positive image from both industry and households. Mr. DjonoAlbarBurhan shared with the audience that Palm oil industry employs around 6.8 million workers directly and 12 million indirect workers contributing 3.5% to Indonesia's total GDP. He told the audience that Indonesia will be the main driver for increasing use of vegetable oil as feedstock for biodiesel in the coming decade reducing the importing of diesel in Indonesia. Mr. Djono explained about the Indonesian Sustainable Palm Oil (ISPO) Certification that is mandatory for Private & Government parties to follow for good agricultural practices and sustainability. Concluding his presentation, he said that 13 SDGs including Climate action and zero hunger are achievable through Palm oil production and "If There Is No Palm Oil, there will be no SDGs".

Both in-person and online panel sessions provided an opportunity to multiple presenters to speak on a common theme of the conference. Prof. Dr. Basma Elahi from, University of Chester, UK, Prof. Dr. Jordi Saldo Periago from Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain, Prof. Dr. Zeng Xin An from University of Technology, Guangzhou, China, Prof. Dr. Aizad Ahmad from Yorkville Univ. & Conestoga College, Canada and Mr. Shahid Hafeez Khan from Tate & Lyle DMCC, UAE were among the prominent online panelists. Online presentations by the panelists were followed by questions and answers. Together with academic exercise and exchange of research papers, the conference hosted a Food festival featuring exhibition of Indonesian cuisine and craft. In the festival, local and Indonesian students displayed around 130 food stalls helping students build entrepreneurship skills.

Ease of doing business essential for sustainable business: Dr Alvi



STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi said ease of doing business and use of innovative strategies by incorporating digital technology was essential to ensuring sustainable business activities in the country. Addressing at an event of Asaan Karobar Programme, the president emphasized a regulatory yet conducive environment that facilitated the businessmen to easily launch and operate their activities.



President Alvi said a country's prime interest was to promote business activities and stressed the importance of taking on board the stakeholders for a successful policy formulation. He mentioned that the government's effective strategy of holding consultations with the relevant traders and businessmen helped revive the textile industry. He lauded the online portal launched by the Ministry of Commerce aimed at identifying regulatory obstacles and problems through ac-

tive involvement of private sector and business associations. He congratulated the State Bank of Pakistan, Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan and Federal Board of Revenue for their coordinated efforts in ensuring a business-friendly environment in the country. Dr Alvi also pointed out a few hiccups in the smooth flow of processes and the reasons for bureaucratic red-tapism, however stressed the need for changing mindsets and improving

attitude towards work or businesses for better efficiency and deliverance. In this regard, he said, minimizing the human factor, increasing dependence on technology and adhering to time lines could prove helpful. President Alvi also urged offering women in the country the opportunities of ease of business through digital setups, adding that an across the board inclusion of population could lead to vibrant and emergent middle class. Abdul Razak Dawood, Adviser to Prime Minister on Commerce highlighted the reforms that had been implemented by Board of Investment (BOI) to reduce compliance burden on businesses and to promote ease of doing business specifically in small and medium enterprises. He said the government had taken effective steps to facilitate the businessmen and traders that helped ensure economic growth in the country.

Buddhist monks visit Jaulian stupa

TAXILA: At least 18 Buddhist monks from different countries, who came to Pakistan to attend an international Buddhist conference, visited the Julian main stupa and other stupas located around it and the oldest university, which remained a centre of learning from the 5th century BC to the 5th century AD. The monks, who hailed from Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Indonesia, America, Lebanon and Ireland, took a keen interest in the exhibition of artworks during their first visit to the Gandhara region. Talking to The Express Tribune, a Buddhist leader from Malaysia, Lim Ebon, said that this trip has not only provided them with the opportunity to visit their religious and cultural sites but also provided great joy to them. "Pakistan is not only the custodian of places of worship of other religions but they can also worship here with complete freedom," he said, adding that the international community appreciates Pakistan's positive steps to promote religious tourism. It was a pleasure to be loved by the people of Pakistan, he said. He expressed satisfaction over the condition of these heritage sites, saying that thousands of years old Buddhist heritage in Pakistan is being taken care of in the best possible way. "The healing Buddha at Jaulian University is considered to be our Messiah," he said. Before performing the religious rites, Archaeology Department officials Gul Nabi and Raja Adnan briefed the delegation. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Archaeology Department Director Dr Abdul Samad told The Express Tribune that the monks performed religious rites and enjoyed their time during the visit. "Our priority is to promote religious tourism in the province," he said. The site's visit provided them with a platform to explore Gandharan Buddhist history, philosophy, art, and architecture. As a holy land for millions of Buddhist devotees, Pakistan houses the Buddhist heritage sites, art and iconography of unmatched significance for devotees, scholars and travellers. - DNA

Food commodities valuing \$3.433 bln exported

ISLAMABAD: Food group exports from the country during first 07 months of current financial year witnessed about 20.33 % growth as compared the exports of corresponding period of last year. During the period from July-February, 2021-22 different food commodities valuing \$3.433 billion exported as against the exports of \$2.588 billion of same period last year. During the period under review, about 2.179 million tons of rice valuing \$1.539 billion exported as compared the exports of \$1.337 billion of same period last year, according to the data of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. In last 07 month rice exports grew by 15.07% and exports of Basmati Rice grew by 30% as 490,352 metric tons of Basmati Rice valuing \$432.289 million exported against the exports of 345,764 metric tons valuing \$330.173 million of same period last year. Meanwhile, over 2.584 million tons of rice other than Basmati worth of \$1.107 billion exported during the period under review as compared the exports of 2.153 million tons valuing \$1.007 billion of same period last year, it added. - APP

NDMA, PRCS signs MoU for collaboration

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) on Friday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for collaboration in various areas related to disaster risk management. The areas of mutual cooperation/collaboration include support in tackling disasters during all phases and other emergency situations through preparedness, mitigation, community-based disaster risk reduction (CBDRR) and relief/rehabilitation, said a news release. Chairman NDMA, Lieutenant General, Akhtar Nawaz on the occasion commended PRCS for its role in management of disasters, especially in the recent Covid-19 outbreak and hoped that collaboration with PRCS will help develop a sustainable mechanism for quick and effective response following any disasters in the country. PRCS Chairman Abrarul Haq while highlighting the role being played by the NDMA in disaster management stressed the need to enhance cooperation and create synergies for disaster management. - DNA

Train accidents decline drastically during 2021-22

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways has beefed up precautionary measures that helped in drastically reducing accidents from 145 in 2020 to 53 in the first half of year 2021-2022 due to the efforts being undertaken to reduce trespassing at un-manned level crossings and un-authorized locations. The safety of train operations as per the performance agreement signed with the prime minister by the Federal Minister for Railways, Railways has shown considerable progress owing to safety of trains, an official told APP. The present government was taking several steps to improve the Railway services including the issues related to track maintenance that were given top priority, the official added. In this regard, the official said that 40 un-manned level crossings were upgraded and manned and 1,561 un-authorized

locations (trespassing sides) were closed. He said the punctuality of trains was improved and all the trains were being monitored, reviewed and rectified. To facilitate passengers, a mobile application "Pak rail live" has also been launched for real time tracking of trains. The official said due to close monitoring of trains at Divisional Headquarters and Ministry level, the punctuality of trains has improved from 63 percent in financial year 2019-20 to 80 percent in financial year 2020-21. To a question, he said that first aid posts are established in Assistant Station Masters offices and Police Help Line Centres at all Railway Stations where para-medical staff/staff trained in first aid is available along with first aid box/emergency kits round the clock. He said the first aid box/emergency kits were available with In-charge Guards in all running trains who were trained in first aid and provide first aid to ill passengers. The official said that in case of serious illness In-charge Guard call the doctors at next coming station for providing further medical care. Due to consistent efforts by the present government, the freight sector had also shown considerable improvement and an average of 25,054 tons per day had been transported from Karachi during 2020-21 as compared to 23,051 tons per day during 2019-20, he added. - APP

IRSA releases 87474 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) Friday released 87474 cusecs water from various rim stations with an inflow of 89545 cases. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1072.80 feet, which was 22.08 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded a 33271 and 32000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 38400, 21255 and 19045 cases respectively. Similarly, from the Kabul River, a total of 11200 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 22274 cusecs released from the Chenab River at Marala. - APP



ISLAMABAD: PTI workers entered the Sindh House in search of PTI MNA hiding in the House. - DNA

G-13 apartments to be completed by Dec 2022

ISLAMABAD: The project of Federal Government Housing Authority (FGHA) Lifestyle Residency, EHFPRO G-13 is likely to be completed by December 2022 depending on the availability of funds. The project was expected to be completed by the end of the year 2020, however, due to multiple reasons such as the COVID-19 pandemic, increase in prices of construction materials as a whole, and steel, in particular, the desired targets could not be achieved, an official in the Ministry of Housing and Works told APP. He said the project was launched in July 2016 and the construction work on the project formally started in September 2017. As result, the original financial plan of completing the project on recovering 83 percent tentative costs from the members became nonviable. Therefore, he said, the EHFPRO Board of Directors decided to split the remaining 17 percent into four installments. - APP

MPs in Sindh House

SEVERAL dissident MNAs from the ruling PTI came out in the open and were found staying at the Sindh House in Islamabad, with Raja Riaz and Malik Nawab Sher Waseer saying they would vote on the no-confidence motion tabled against Prime Minister Imran Khan in "accordance with their conscience".

TV footage showed several other lawmakers from the ruling PTI – including MNAs Noor Alam Khan, Basit Bukhari and Wajiha Qamar – staying at the facility, giving a clear indication which side they would be tilting towards in the upcoming vote that will decide the fate of the prime minister.

If this drama about the no confidence motion against the prime minister is doing one thing, it is exposing how hollow Pakistan's democratic credentials really are. The latest incident to shock the people was news of about two dozen MNAs locked up in Sindh House till the day of the vote. And just as speculation, and accusations, raged about whether they were from the ruling party or opposition, two PTI lawmakers from the Jahangir Tareen group finally stepped forward and claimed to have taken sanctuary in Sindh House out of fears for their security. The government, on the other hand, is pretty certain that Sindh House is where PPP is doing all the buying and selling, which is why a "strong action", in the words of Information Minister Fawad Chaudhary, is on the cards.

All this means that the needs and interests of the people, which representative, democratic government is meant to serve, are forever subservient to the interests of the political elite. The opposition, for example, does not mind at all if the economy suffers as a result of its no confidence maneuvering as long as PTI is shown the door. Likewise, the government has no qualms about what might happen to the economy or the people or even the IMF bailout program in the log run as it announces politically motivated "relief packages" that will have to be rolled back sooner rather than later.

Politicians will no doubt take legal cover behind the old and rusted line that none of their actions have so far made a break from the letter of the law, even if they have made a mockery of the spirit behind it. But now as another government-opposition showdown is looming in the form of mega-rallies that could well turn violent and result in casualties, there is the feeling that most people in the country are already fed up with this show. Their problems are very serious, and they will not be solved by watching the country's senior most politicians try to take each other to the cleaners.

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Other conflicts' victims

ATTACKS on hospitals and healthcare workers. Escalating strikes claiming the lives of civilians, including children. A growing humanitarian crisis, with vast numbers forced to flee their homes. A flagrant disregard for human life.

These terrible scenes are witnessed not only in Ukraine, where Vladimir Putin's brutal invasion has transfixed the world, but in other wars across the globe that have largely slipped from the public's attention – in Myanmar, where the military tries to crush resistance to its seizure of power just over a year ago; in Ethiopia, where the prime minister believed he could win a swift victory against the Tigray region's leaders, but fighting continues 16 months on; in Yemen, riven by conflict since 2014; in Syria, where the war entered its 12th year this week.

In Ethiopia, too, health workers have been attacked and grotesque violations of the laws of war have become the norm: this week a horrifying video emerged on showing armed men burning a Tigrayan man to death in western Ethiopia. As many as half a million people have died from the violence and hunger caused by the war, researchers said this week.

In Yemen, more than 4 million people have been displaced, and escalating violence made January the deadliest month for civilians since 2018. The World Food Programme warned it was already forced to take food from the hungry to feed the starving, and might soon be unable to feed even the starving. Yet Wednesday's UN funding conference raised less than a third of the \$4.2bn desperately needed. In Myanmar, military and security forces have committed systematic and widespread abuses, bombarding populated areas with airstrikes and heavy weapons and deliberately targeting civilians. The UN high commissioner for human rights, Michelle Bachelet, on Monday urged the international community to take "concerted, immediate measures" to halt the spiral of violence. Some supporters of the deposed civilian government hope that the unprecedented sanctions imposed on Russia will help to make the case for further action against Myanmar's junta. While the EU recently expanded sanctions to a state-owned oil and gas company, the US has been slow to act.

Yet others fear that the conflict in Ukraine will drag away the political attention and resources needed to put the generals under pressure. Meanwhile, aid agencies find the multiple conflicts, the disastrous conditions in Afghanistan and what is described as the worst-ever hunger crisis in South Sudan have left them torn between grim choices.

More humanitarian funding is needed, alongside political will and diplomatic energy. The victims of these other wars deserve the same level of support and solidarity rightly seen for the people of Ukraine. Those already too often overlooked must not be pushed further into the shadows.

Sphere of influence

Dr M Ali Hamza



On the one hand these western colonizers declare that they believe in democracy, but on the other hand they forget that the cornerstone of democracy is the rule of the majority

BACK in the days, and not very long ago, all sovereign countries of this world had more than one sides to turn to for economic, military, technical, and social support. The world was divided into two spheres of interest: the western bloc and the eastern bloc. The western bloc was led by USA since WWII, and the eastern bloc was in the Soviet sphere of influence. But, then the Soviet Union collapsed, and the world was left with only one option. Simply saying there was no option left. Either you had to bow to US pressure and demands or you were doomed: remember the threat of throwing Pakistan back into Stone Age? Since US global hegemony doctrine is in practice, many sovereign UN member countries have suffered the consequences of daring to have their own opinion about the state of global affairs. This post-Soviet US doctrine meant covert global colonization, and historically notorious colonial powers like UK, France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Denmark and their allies and servants in Europe, were happy with the situation, as this gave them an indirect hegemonic control over the vast majority of people of this world. This group of hegemonies comprise of less than 12% of world population. They comprise of

around 5% of the area of the world and own less than 10% of global natural resources. So why is it that these western hegemonies are adamant that they should rule the world? Why does the world have to be their property and why do people of the world have to abide by their rules? On the one hand these western colonizers declare that they believe in democracy, but on the other hand they forget that the cornerstone of democracy is the rule of the majority. According distorted western perspective 12% should rule 88% of the world population. The owners of just 5% of the land should have control of the other 95% area of the world, which is not owned by them. Let us not fool ourselves and shy away from reality. When a small group of people tries to enforce their will upon the rest of the world, how else can you call it other than colonization? So, what is happening right now is the disruption of colonial plans. The vast majority of the world has finally decided to take things into their own hands and get rid of this US led hegemony.

Whatever is going on right now in Ukraine, is not local. It has global implications. What you are witnessing right now is the final battle between the colonizers and the colonies. The reason why the western countries are stretching out of their skins to stop this revolt by hook or by crook is very evident. They are blatantly imposing censorship. They are forcing smaller countries into subjugation. They are threatening others to comply with the western agenda or face consequences. Lately Prime Minister Imran Khan has denounced the same try by the west to suppress the sovereign state once again, and now local political situation is on fire in Pakistan. In fact EU and all its member states have already failed in concealing their relationship of subjugation with the US. Today Europe is caught off-guard. The key players from the other side are not doing anything to weaken Europe. They are weakening the American influence in Europe and around the world. The only tool with which the Americans have been controlling the world is the US dollar. Now under the current circumstances, when the Americans and their European pets have at last exposed their hegemonic designs, using financial control

as a tool of oppression, the world is rapidly dumping dollar as a means of trade. Russia and China are already trading in local currencies for many years. Their energy trade is also not in USD. The Americans and Europeans announced that they will replace Russian oil and gas with Iranian and Venezuelan energy products. Although the same Americans, and under their leadership, the Europeans refused to trade with Venezuela and Iran for many years and they even froze Venezuelan assets. Taking into account the colonial mindset of the Western bloc, we can understand that they think that at this crucial time Iran and Venezuela will bow their heads to a flow of American dollars, but this is not happening. The Venezuelan vice-president met with the Russian foreign minister in Turkey, and most recently Iran dispatched a few missiles in the vicinity of American consulate in Northern Iraq. For sensible people this is signal enough to understand the mood in these countries.

As the American influence dissipates, the Europeans will be left with very little choice, but to accept the new realities. Though it is hard for Europeans to accept the new realities, as these realities bring them down from their pedestal and put them in line with many other players, who according to Western mentality are inferior to them, but are they having any other choice? The Western mentality is very obvious if you consider Winston Churchill's claim: "I do not admit for instance that a great wrong has been done to the Red Indians of America or the black people of Australia. I do not admit that a wrong has been done to those people by the fact that a stronger race, a higher-grade race or at any rate a more worldly-wise race, to put it that way, has come in and taken their place." Similarly Hitler's Nazis considered everyone other than Germans to be Untermenschen. And we see the same trend among the contemporary Europeans and Americans. As recently as 4 days ago, the Ukrainian army fired a missile into the center of Donetsk city, which killed lots of people, but the European and American propaganda machine conveniently forgot to mention this barbarism. Do you know why? Because for the Western bloc hegemonies, Slavic people are also Untermenschen.

Serious consequences of Russia-Ukraine conflict

Attiya Munawar



Refugees from Syria, Iraq and other Islamic countries are protesting around the world, but their borders are being closed while Israel has not only sent special planes to bring Jewish refugees from Ukraine, but also Jewish immigrants are also being invited to settle in their homeland

THE whole world is being affected by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. This war has not started suddenly, but has been started deliberately. The United States forced Russia to invade Ukraine. The effects of this war have to do with Ukraine and all countries belonging to Russia but instead of ending this war the US is intensifying it. The United States has warned China that if it helped Russia, it would have "severe consequences", but for now Ukraine with most countries around the world suffering the consequences.

It is clear that Russia-Ukraine war is not a war of ordinary countries, but a war between global thugs, however China is not a typical country, yet the United States is threatening China. The United States is deliberately pointing fingers at China, a major power, so that China can help Russia and give the United States a mere chance to wreak havoc. China understands the US conspiracy assuredly, so at the moment Chinese diplomats have given a diplomatic response but china will definitely help Russia and the whole world will have to suffer because of the US.

The world, on the one hand, is suffering the war and economic consequences of the Russia-Ukraine conflict and on the other hand, there are consequences that everyone is silent on. As soon as Russia ambushed Ukraine, the world began to see that it was becoming impossible for people to leave Ukraine, a few thousand people from Pakistan would also be there, the news of which was

also very much exposed as a result of which the impression was created all over the world that now once again refugees crisis is brewing. Refugees from Syria, Iraq and other Islamic countries are protesting around the world, but their borders are being closed while Israel has not only sent special planes to bring Jewish refugees from Ukraine, but also Jewish immigrants are also being invited to settle in their homeland.

The duplicitous attitude of the world is not hidden from anyone. On one side, there are the ravages of war and on the other side, there is a race to achieve one's own interests. Now it remains to be seen what interests the United States has in spreading this war and who is working with the United States.

The United States wants to continue the war in the world because it is conducive to its armament factories, the United States has the same agenda behind the Russia-Ukraine war but with this US agenda, Israel is also stating the existence of a hardline Zionist state. No one has yet acknowledged this claim but no one has openly denied it.

No Muslim country in the world has the guts to declare its acceptance of Muslims as a result of atrocities, but Israel is announcing that Israel is ready to gladly accommodate Jews from all over the world. Because he will evacuate some Palestinian settlement and settle immigrant Jews there and in return for the favor of the state of Israel, these Jews will also support the government in its atrocities against Muslims. Israel is making its will public and the world is silent. While the heads of the Muslim countries are also covered with filth and no one can see anything.

The Islamic world remains silent as much as it wants, but Pakistan should openly announce its measures for the Muslims of India and Kashmir. The OIC meeting is being held in Pakistan. There should be a resolution in this OIC meeting as well. If Islamic countries wake up from their slumber and raise one voice then the world will also be attracted, otherwise Israel and India will continue to follow their own whims and no one will be able to stop them.

One of the many facets of the Ukraine-Russia conflict is that the economies of the weaker countries will be squeezed out, so there will be no possibility of any resistance from them in the future. The improvement lies in the fact that whether direct or indirect parties should prefer world peace to interests and to fulfill their obligation to resolve this issue through negotiations to end this protracted conflict and save the world from impending catastrophe.

Uncontrolled inflation: The promise change?

Assma Zareen Tarar

The current inflation rate of Pakistan is 12.20 percent, and this double-digit rate is predicted to persist. Partly the repercussion of COVID, the people of the state are under tumultuous storm of rising pressures with no shelter in sight. The working and marginal class, which already lived hand to mouth, are having trouble in simply providing three meals a day to their families

"THE change is coming!" This is a famous quote by respected Mr. Imran Khan that he has been advertising since 2014. Taking hold of the office of Prime Minister in 2018 Mr. Imran Khan had to face many economic challenges that led to the degradation of already fragile Pakistan economy. Was this the change that was promised to us?

The current inflation rate of Pakistan is 12.20 percent, and this double-digit rate is predicted to persist. Partly the repercussion of COVID, the people of the state are under tumultuous storm of rising pressures with no shelter in sight.

The working and marginal class, which already lived hand to mouth, are having trouble in simply providing three meals a day to their families.

The contemporary government is facing immense criticism from the public and opposing parties – having announced a further spike in the prices. It is striking that notwithstanding the strikes, the government has consistently insisted that Pakistan's economy is doing better than preceding years and is doing comparative-

ly better than other regional countries. Excluding the political stances and statements, it cannot be denied that the ever-increasing spike in prices is a constant thorn for the public because they are not able to afford even a simple life anymore. There has been a 12.82% inflation witnessed by the food group with perishable goods bearing price increase of 6.43% and nonperishable of 13.77%. Additionally, the prices of housing, water, electricity gas and fuel have increased by 15.53%. The upcoming blessed month of Ramadan is anticipated with a further price increase.

However it would be adjudged unfair to place full responsibility of the inflation on government's shoulder because pandemic has crippled the global economy, making electricity, oil and other food items internationally expensive.

This is an issue that must be catered by the government very soon. Already a significant number of Pakistani population has fallen below the poverty line, and if the uncontrolled inflation will prevail, it will also result in an unstable political situation, in addition to an economic one.

Briefs

Vote of defected...

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The minister stated that Sindh chief minister had sent the public money which was meant for the welfare of the poor people to buy legislators' conscience. Clean drinking water was not available in Sindh, health system was in dilapidated condition, but Sindh rulers were engaged in horse trading. The government, he added, had the resources, it was easy for it to purchase conscience of the members. When the no-confidence motion against Benazir Bhutto was tabled, the movement was thwarted by using official resources, he remarked.

Rashid urges PTI...

FROM PAGE 01

anything to them. "I appeal to them to return to the party," he said. The minister asked them to consult with their constituencies and their voters on what they thought about their decision. They (MNAs) would regret their decision, if they did not return, he added. He said the government had received information about the presence of only about five to six PTI members at the Sindh House but in videos 9-12 members were shown. The minister asked the estranged members as well as the allied parties to stand by Imran Khan at this critical juncture.

He said 2000 personnel of Rangers and 1000 of Frontier Constabulary were called for deployment in the capital for ensuring security. Rashid said the opposition would hold its rally on March 25 while Prime Minister Imran Khan would address a historic rally of PTI on March 27 at D-Chowk. As many as four public holidays have already announced from March 21 to 24 in view of OIC Foreign Minister Summit and Pakistan Day parade.

"We want to mutually decide these matters including the routes for rallies. There is no room for conflict in democracy," he said. The minister said directives were issued to the Deputy Commissioner Islamabad to decide mutually routes of both the rallies. Rashid said bringing a no-confidence motion against the prime minister was the opposition's right and nobody would face security issues while voting on it. He said he had presented a summary to the prime minister for imposing emergency and governor rule in Sindh earlier in the day but no decision had been made on the suggestion so far. It was his personal view point that governor's rule should be imposed in Sindh as openly buying and selling of lawmakers was carried out at the Sindh House, he added. — APP

PPP, PTI trade barbs...

FROM PAGE 01

today. We will give you our response in Islamabad," he wrote while sharing an anti-PTI government poem on his official Twitter handle. Meanwhile, Sindh Governor Imran Ismail said that he will not hesitate for even a second if PM Imran directed him to impose governor's rule in the province. Speaking to a ceremony in Karachi, he said that future generations will remember what is happening in the country today. "I have a meeting with the prime minister tomorrow. We will give them (opposition) a surprise that everyone will remember," he added.

The governor said that the assembly members whose "conscience has awakened" should take their decision as per law, adding that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) should also take notice of the situation. "Dissident lawmakers bagged votes in Imran Khan's name. ECP should take action against them instead of stopping the prime minister from going to Swat," he remarked. Meanwhile, Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Ali Haider Zaidi taking to Twitter has said that if anyone tried to harm any of PTI's parliamentarians in Sindh or attack their houses, we will directly hold Asif Ali Zardari, Bilawal and Murad Ali Shah responsible for any harm or damage caused.

Direct flights started between Pak-Azerbaijan

The Heydar Aliyev International Airport of Azerbaijan received the first passenger flight of Pakistan International Airlines



DNA

ISLAMABAD: On March 16, 2022, direct flights started between Azerbaijan and Pakistan. An official ceremony was held on the occasion of the launch of direct flights at Lahore Airport. Speaking at the ceremony Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan KhazarFarhadov, CEO of PIA Air Marshal Arshad Malik, Secretary Aviation Division Shoukat Ali noted that the launch of the direct

flights will contribute to the further deepening of relations between the two brotherly countries, especially ties in economy and tourism. They congratulated the peoples of the two countries on the occasion of this historical event and wished them success in future joint activities. On the same day, direct flight departed from Lahore to Baku. Along with Pakistani passengers, Azerbaijani Ambassador KhazarFarhadov, CEO of PIA Air Marshal Arshad Malik and Secretary

Aviation Division Shoukat Ali also travelled to Azerbaijan. The Heydar Aliyev International Airport of Azerbaijan received the first passenger flight of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA). On this occasion, an official ceremony was held at the Heydar Aliyev International Airport. Azerbaijani Ambassador to Pakistan KhazarFarhadov, Pakistani Ambassador to Azerbaijan Bilal Hayee, Director of the State Civil Aviation Agency under the Ministry of Digital Development and Transport

of Azerbaijan Arif Mammadov, Vice President of AZAL Eldar Hajiyev, CEO of PIA Air Marshal Arshad Malik, Secretary Aviation Division Shoukat Ali and other officials attended the ceremony. Director of the State Civil Aviation Agency under the Ministry of Digital Development and Transport of Azerbaijan Republic A. Mammadov, Vice President of AZAL E. Hajiyev, Air Marshal Arshad Malik, Pakistani Ambassador to Azerbaijan B. Hayee spoke at the event and stressed of the importance of launch of the

direct flights, which contribute to growing ties in all directions between Azerbaijan and Pakistan, as well as increasing the number of direct flights as a result of future cooperation between the two countries' airline companies, and they congratulated the people of both countries on this occasion. On the same day, the Pakistani airlines carried out a direct flight from Karachi to Baku as well. It should be noted that, the PIA will operate the direct flights from Karachi and Lahore to Baku twice a week.



ISLAMABAD: Netherlands ambassador to Pakistan Wouter Plomp meets siegfried Aikman, new coach of the Pakistan National Hockey team. — DNA

Russia's plea against FIFA ban rejected

LONDON: The Court of Arbitration for Sport has refused to suspend FIFA's ban on Russia from taking part in the playoffs for the 2022 World Cup finals over the offensive of Ukraine. "The challenged decision remains in force and all Russian teams and clubs continue to be suspended from participation in FIFA competitions," the court said in a statement on Friday. CAS, the sport's top court, is still to rule on the legal basis of the ban, but a decision is not expected for several weeks at least.

The decision means Russia will not be able to play Poland in World Cup qualifying on Thursday. The latest ruling follows a similar CAS refusal on Tuesday to freeze UEFA's ban on Russian national and club teams in European soccer. Russian athletes have been banned from competing in multiple sports because of the country's operation in Ukraine. Belarusian athletes have also been banned because their country has been an ally of Russia. The Football Union of Russia had appealed against the suspension, hoping to gain permission to allow Russia to face Poland in a World Cup playoff that was due to have been played on March 24. FIFA however has already granted Poland a bye into the playoff final. Ukraine is also in the World Cup playoffs, and its scheduled game on Thursday against Scotland was postponed by FIFA until June. Ukraine or Scotland will advance to face either Wales or Austria — who play in Cardiff next week — with a place at this year's World Cup in Qatar at stake. Other sporting bodies have faced in tense pressure to ban Russian competitors. The International Olympic Committee has recommended that international federations exclude Russian teams and competitors. — Agencies

Pakistan Day celebrations held at Belteleradio company Belarus

NEWS DESK

MINSK: As part of the National Day of Pakistan celebrations and to commemorate the 28th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Belarus, the Embassy of Pakistan in Minsk in collaboration with Belteleradio Company organized a comprehensive event on 17 March 2022.

The programme included a Round table discussion covered political, parliamentary, economic, education and culture areas of mutual cooperation with the participation of prominent speakers from diverse fields. H.E. Mr. Sergey Rachkov, Chairman of the Standing Commission on International Cooperation & Internal Security of the Council of the Republic spoke about the parliamentary cooperation between the two countries, while Mr. Igor Voytov, Rector of State Technical University and Ms. Natalia Karchevskaya, Rector of the State University of Culture and Arts also shared their thoughts on the prospects of cooperation between the two countries. Ms.



Julia Arabey, Deputy Head of South East Asia and Middle East of "Minsk Tractor Works" spoke about ongoing cooperation in Industrial area.

While, the Ambassador of Belarus to Pakistan H.E. Andrei Melitela addressed the event virtually, Ambassador Sajjad Haider Khan spoke about the friendly bilateral ties between Pakistan and Belarus and broached about ways and means to further broaden the friendly relations.

One of the most important activity of the event was the musical performance of the Symphonic Orchestra of Belteleradiocompany who made a live performance of the National Anthem of Pakistan and the Mili Nagma "Jeway Jeway Pakistan". Pakistani dance performance by Tamazur Dance School of Minsk and Urdu song "Dil Dil Pakistan" by Belarusian singer Tatiana Kremis were also part of the special event.

Alcaraz ends Norrie's title defence, sets up Nadal meeting

SPORTS DESK

INDIAN WELLS: Britain's Norrie lost the quarter-final 6-4 6-3 to Alcaraz, who becomes the second youngest male semi-finalist in Indian Wells history. Spaniard Alcaraz reached the quarter-finals at last year's US Open. Nadal won his 19th consecutive match since the start of the year with a 7-6 (7-0) 5-7 6-4 win over Nick Kyrgios. Australian Kyrgios was broken when serving for the first set, and was warned after smashing his racquet in frustration. He conceded the tiebreak 7-0 on a penalty point after being penalised for an audible obscenity directed at a heckler in the crowd. The Australian world number 132 was unhappy with the noise the crowd made throughout the match and when he lost the deciding set he again smashed his racquet into the court. It bounced and shot forward, narrowly missing a ball boy who had to take evasive action at the back of the court. "Did I throw the racquet anywhere near him originally?" Kyrgios replied when quizzed about it after the match. "It landed a metre from my foot and skidded and nearly hit him. I'm human. Things happen like that. "Obviously it was a very unfortunate bounce.



PTI people storm into...

FROM PAGE 01

demanding Riaz resign from the party. As a result, a heavy contingent of police was deployed outside the MNA's house for his security. The demonstrators held placards and posters depicting the faces of the MNAs covered in black ink. A huge crowd blocked the road and chanted slogans against the MNAs. A similar protest also took place in Peshawar against MNA Noor Alam Khan. PPP leader Sharjeel Memon termed the storming a "failure" of Islamabad police and the interior ministry, saying "we consider the attack on Sindh House an attack on the Sindh province."

"We are peaceful now. We should not be forced to start such incidents as well which we are not in the mood for right now because we have been [restrained] by our leadership. Do not test our patience."

He said all political matters should be taken to the parliament, warning that if such attacks happened again then "your houses will not remain safe either".

"We have also seen Bani Gala and the Prime Minister House. Then we will see who saves you."

Sindh Information Minister Saeed Ghani reacted in a similar manner to the incident, saying: "If PTI thugs don't return, then we also know the way to the [Sindh] Governor House."

He said in a statement that PPP workers would surround the Governor House in Sindh if PTI workers would not leave the Sindh House in Islamabad.

Ghani added that Prime Minister Imran Khan and Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid would be responsible in case of any harm to a lawmaker. Meanwhile, federal Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry shared that PTI secretary general Asad Umar has asked party workers to clear Sindh House and be "patient and tolerant".

Zardari, Bilawal...

FROM PAGE 01

the Sindh House. President Zardari said that if Imran Khan had enough numbers, he would have demonstrated his power in the House instead of attacking the parliament lodges and the Sindh House.

Imran Khan did not attack the Sindh House but the symbol of Sindh in the federation. Imran Khan has hurt the federal identity of Pakistan today and it is unbearable. It is apparent to the people of Pakistan who has democratic values and who wants to push the country towards anarchy by spreading chaos, President Zardari said.

Meanwhile, Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has termed the attack on Sindh House as an act of terrorism.

Chairman PPP said that a well-planned attack on Sindh House is tantamount to an attack on Sindh. Crossing dozens of police checkpoints and reaching Sindh House in the Red Zone is a question mark. The Sindh House is Sindh's identity in the federation. Imran Khan showed his real hatred by invading Sindh. We are not the kind of people who take the law into our own hands but we know how to deal with rebellious elements. By attacking the residences of families of public representatives and judges of high courts, Imran Khan has also violated the sanctity of the four walls.

PM has no authority...

FROM PAGE 01

On Thursday, the nation's security czar Sheikh Rashid advised PM Imran to impose governor's rule in the province of Sindh after the open show of dissent by PTI lawmakers, hiding on the pretext of seeking refuge in Islamabad's Sindh House ahead of the no-confidence vote against the prime minister.

Fazl, referring to senior appointments and transfers by the incumbent government, said that after the no-trust motion, any transfer or appointment by the premier or the government would be unconstitutional.

The Pakistan Democratic Movement chief further said that any kind of posting, appointment or withdrawal by the premier would be considered wrong and would also be resisted. — DNA

WEB DESK

KARACHI: "I've worked very hard for this fight. I'm now requesting my people, my country to pray for me. I'm confident, but I need prayers for it," Pakistan's first boxer to ever win the World Boxing Federation (WBC) belt Muhammad Waseem is urging, as he came out of the official weights room in Dubai, where he'll fight Sunny Edwards for the International Boxing Federation (IBF) world title in flyweight category.

The fight is the main event. Waseem is also number one in the World Boxing Association ratings. This is the moment that the Quetta-born pugilist has been waiting for, the chance at the world title. Earlier he attempted to win it in 2018, but had to see the first defeat of his professional career due to various issues among his team in the background. The de-

feat from South Africa's Moruti Mthalane had only strengthened his resolve to win the world title. Just on November 26, Waseem had regained his WBC silver belt. He defeated Colombia's Rober Barrera (24 wins, 13 KOs and four defeats) 115-113, 115-114 and 117-111 in a unanimous decision in Dubai, which was also the WBA world title eliminator bout. So far Waseem holds the impressive record of 12 wins, eight knock-outs and only one loss that was from Mthalane, while fighting for the IBF world title. This is Waseem's toughest fight and the British boxer may be his toughest opponent being unbeaten in all of his 17 bouts at age 26.

However, Waseem, 34, is now a different man. He is a father now, who has not seen his son as yet as he had been training for the fight. He has been making sacrifices that are extraordinary to make sure that Pakistan finally gets a world champion



in professional boxing. "I've worked very hard. It is a tough fight. It is the IBF world title. I'm 100% confident that I'll beat Edwards. I've worked hard and trained hard, more than 100 rounds of sparring," Waseem told The Express Tribune exclusively. "I've spent a very hard training time, made a lot of sacrifices, especially when it comes to my family. They are in Pakistan, my son, who

was born two weeks ago, he is also back home in Pakistan. I haven't seen him yet, because I was training but I'm hoping by the grace of Allah that all of these sacrifices and hard work will come to fruition. They will all be paid tomorrow night (March 19). I hope I win this fight and make Pakistan proud." Waseem added that he trained in Dubai only.

"Yes I trained here throughout, but we got sparring partners from Kazakhstan and some from the UK. I sparred with them for 80 to 100 rounds. I'm in great shape and I am ready for this fight," said the Falcon, as he is nicknamed due to his agility and resilience. Waseem signed with Probellum recently and is also signed with MTK. But his journey has been full of twists and rather tough turns till this point.

Waseem had been chasing the dream since he was young and began training for boxing at a

local club in Quetta. From there he proved his mettle domestically, only to be picked for the national camp and ultimately represent Pakistan internationally. He won bronze in 2014 at the Asian Games, silver medal in Commonwealth Games, gold in South Asian Games, and gold in the World Military Games before he chose to turn pro due to negligent and manipulative officials running the Pakistan Boxing Federation (PBF). Meanwhile, Edwards has also been in Dubai for the promotion and he feels that Waseem will not be able to beat him. He feels that he can be one of the greatest boxers from his country, albeit he admitted that he can come across as being "flashy and a bit cocky" and his ego can sometimes get the best of him. However, Waseem's camp should not underestimate his ability to go for the full 12-round bout.

Briefs

Germany reports nearly 300,000 new cases

DNA

BERLIN: Germany reported nearly 300,000 new COVID-19 cases on Friday, its highest-ever daily rise since the pandemic started. The Robert Koch Institute (RKI), the country's disease control agency, confirmed 297,845 new COVID-19 cases and 226 related fatalities in the past 24 hours. The relaxation of anti-coronavirus measures last month and the spread of the highly contagious omicron sub-variant BA.2 were the main factors driving a spike in cases. The share of the subtype in all COVID-19 cases increased from 48% to 62% in a week, according to the RKI's weekly report released on Thursday. "It can be assumed that the increased transmissibility of the BA.2 sub-variant, as well as the lifting of the contact restrictions and behavior changes, have contributed to the significant increase in the COVID-19 cases," experts said in their report. The institute called on citizens to continue following guidelines, such as hygiene rules, wearing masks, and physically distancing where possible, to avoid getting infected. Despite the surge in new infections, the majority of new cases have been mild so far, not requiring hospitalization. On Thursday, 1,913 coronavirus patients were admitted to hospitals, while nearly 2,300 patients with COVID-19 were receiving treatment in intensive care units, where almost 2,900 beds were free. According to experts, Germany's high vaccination coverage among the elderly has been effective in preventing COVID-related hospitalization despite the fresh surge in infections.

Mali cuts off French TV, radio stations

BAMAKO: Mali's government has blocked two major French media outlets, accusing Radio France Internationale and the France24 television channel of broadcasting false information about alleged army abuses. The move is the latest sign of escalating tensions between Mali's government and its former colonizer that has spent the last nine years trying to help the West African country end an Islamic insurgency. Relations have sharply deteriorated following military coups in 2020 and 2021 and France is now in the process of withdrawing its troops from the country. The suspension of the French broadcast outlets would apply to both short-wave and FM frequencies and also would affect their digital platforms, Malian government spokesman Col. Abdoulaye Maiga said. The suspension effectively halts the dominant sources of international news in Mali, a French-speaking country. Viewers who attempted to watch the channel on Friday received a "program blocked" message on their screens. - Agencies

Gansu to share agricultural expertise with Pakistan

Li Taian, Director of Division of Asia and Africa Affairs, Foreign Affairs Office of the People's Government of Gansu presided over the meeting

DNA

BEIJING: China's Gansu Academy of Agricultural Sciences (GAAS) and the Islamia University of Bahawalpur (IUB) discussed a roadmap for boosting agricultural cooperation in the future, with advanced Chinese technologies to be transferred to Pakistan. According to China Economic Net (CEN), Gansu and Pakistan share similarities in climate, crop types, environment, etc. According to

Fan Tinglu, Vice President of Gansu Academy of Agricultural Sciences, high-yield crop varieties of wheat, potato, corn, oilseed rape, cotton, and various technologies of efficient use of water and fertilizer on dry land, solar greenhouse, fruit and vegetable storage and cold chain logistics etc. are hopefully to be introduced to Pakistan. "Many technologies from Gansu, for instance, the technology of farmland water utilization and regulation with plastic-film mulching on dry land, have been

introduced to Pakistan and achieved promising results. We sincerely hope our cooperation with IUB contribute to both food security and agricultural development in the future," Fan Tinglu said. Dr. Athar Mahboob, Vice Chancellor of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur, said the area that IUB located in is facing soil, water and climate challenges, where Chinese technologies can play a positive part. "IUB is looking forward to working with the Chinese counterparts. We want to

learn from the Chinese experience and advanced technologies to improve our local conditions and food security," Mahboob said. Last year, IUB already established cooperative ties with Sichuan Agricultural University (SAU) specialized in intercropping technology. Now, the Sino-Pak agricultural cooperation is steadily expanding through more linkages being forged. Based on a series of investigation and research by the Foreign Affairs Office of the People's Government

of Gansu, there's enormous potential to develop cooperation in agriculture to fuel the progress of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Phase which focuses on improving people's livelihood. Simultaneously supported by the Pakistani Embassy in China, it's believed the agricultural cooperation between Gansu and Pakistan is to blossom. It's learned that a MoU between GAAS and IUB is on the way to kick off the cooperation in an efficient and practical way.

Li Taian, Director of Division of Asia and Africa Affairs, Foreign Affairs Office of the People's Government of Gansu presided over the meeting. Wang Min, Director of Division of S&T Cooperation and Exchange, GAAS, Zhang Lijun, Deputy Director of Division of S&T Cooperation and Exchange, GAAS, Dr. Muhammad Ali Raza, Director of National Research Center for Intercropping, IUB and Dr. Iqbal Bandesha, Dean, Agriculture, IUB, were also present at the meeting.

Putin, Scholz speak about Ukraine over phone

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin continued to discuss the situation in Ukraine with Germany's Chancellor Olaf Scholz in a phone talk on Friday, the Kremlin said. "The Russian president drew attention to the missile attacks by the Ukrainian military on the residential areas of Donetsk and Makeyevka, which led to a great loss of life. These war crimes were ignored in the West," the statement said. Putin told Scholz that the Russian armed forces do everything possible to preserve the lives of civilians, including by organizing safe corridors to leave cities in the war zone. "On March 17, as a result of the humanitarian operation carried out in Mariupol, about 43,000 people were evacuated," the statement said.

About the peace talks, Putin said the Ukrainian delegation is trying to delay them, putting forward new proposals. "Nevertheless, the Russian side is ready to continue searching for solutions in line with its well-known principled approaches," the statement said.

The Russia-Ukraine war, which started on Feb. 24, has drawn international condemnation, led to financial restrictions on Moscow, and spurred an exodus of global firms from Russia. At least 780 civilians have been killed and 1,252 injured in Ukraine since the beginning of the war, according to the UN, while noting that conditions on the ground make it difficult to verify the true number. - APP

UK revokes RT's broadcast license

LONDON: British broadcast regulator Ofcom announced on Friday that it has revoked Russian news channel RT's license to broadcast in the UK "with immediate effect." "We have done so on the basis that we do not consider RT's licensee, ANO TV Novosti, fit and proper to hold a UK broadcast licence," a statement from the watchdog said. "Today's decision comes amid 29 ongoing investigations by Ofcom into the due impartiality of RT's news and current affairs coverage of Russia's invasion of Ukraine," it added. Ofcom said they considered the "volume and potentially serious nature of the issues raised within such a short period to be of great concern - especially given RT's compliance history." A separate investigation "to determine whether ANO TV Novosti is fit and proper to retain its licence to broadcast" has been launched, the statement added. It said: "This investigation has taken account of a number of factors, including RT's relationship with the Russian Federation. It has recognised that RT is funded by the Russian state, which has recently invaded a neighbouring sovereign country," it said, referring to Russia's war on Ukraine, now in its fourth week. "We also note new laws in Russia which effectively criminalise any independent journalism that departs from the Russian state's own news narrative, in particular in relation to the invasion of Ukraine." - APP

Work starts for Gwadar 1.2 MGD desalination plant

ISLAMABAD: In pursuance of constructing a 1.2 MGD (million gallon per day) Water Desalination Plant, comprehensive soil testing kicked off in the premises of Gwadar Port Free Zone area. According to a Gwadar Pro's report, the Water Desalination Plant, being built with Chinese grant, aims to ensure uninterrupted supply of potable water to poor residents of Gwadar. "Soil Testing encompassing a dredging process on three points will be completed within a few days. As for the first point of dredging which had to be drilled approximately 33 feet, the results remained robust and positive," Geologist Sajjad Ali, supervising Soil Testing on site of the under-construction Water Desalination Plant, told Gwadar Pro. "The boring at Point 2 will also be completed in two and three days and after that the next phase involving piling and foundation will commence accordingly," he added. Dawood Baloch, GPA Project Director of the 1.2 MGD Water Desalination Plant said

that the plant, spreading over approximately one acre, is being constructed with Chinese grant of Rs. 2 billion. It is another gift from China to Gwadar, he added. "As per PC 1, the plant is supposed to complete in 12 months but hopefully China Harbor Engineering Company (CHEC) will finish the task in 6 months. If it happens, it'll be another project after Pak-China Technical & Vocational Institute that is completed ahead of the deadline," he added. The 1.2 MGD Water Desalination Plant project, he said, will be enough to meet water demand of the Gwadar city and Gwadar port. He said initially a 0.5 MGD Water Desalination Plant project was inked with conduct of feasibility and survey by government of Pakistan and China. Later fathoming realistic rising water demand, PC 1 was finalized for the construction of a 1.2 MGD Water Desalination Plant. On 5 July 2021, the government approved the 1.2 MGD Water Desalination Plant for Gwadar. - DNA



RIYADH: Ambassador of Pakistan to Saudi Arabia Ameer Khurram Rathore visited the Chairman Federation of Saudi Chambers of Commerce. During the meeting both sides discussed business opportunities. - DNA

Azerbaijan, UNEP eye Karabakh rehabilitation



NEWS DESK

BAKU: Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov and the Director of the United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) Regional Office for Europe Bruno Pozzi have discussed future cooperation and rehabilitation of Karabakh, the ministry has reported. Representatives of relevant government agencies involved in the working group, as well as members of the UN Environment Programme's expert group visiting Azerbaijan, attended the meeting, the report added. "At the meeting, the issues related to the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the liberated areas, the demining pro-

Azerbaijan, EU mull regional issues

cess, as well as opportunities to deepen bilateral relations in the field of environment and the Sustainable Development Goals were also discussed," the ministry said in a statement. Bayramov stressed that Azerbaijan appreciates cooperation with the UN and its specialized agencies and welcomes the UN Environment Programme's assistance for the restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems in Azerbaijan's liberated lands. Bayramov briefed the guests about the current regional situation, the large-scale restoration and reconstruction work carried out by Azerbaijan on its liberated territories. The minister emphasized the government's environmental protection activities in the country, as well as the challenges ahead and solu-

tions to current environmental issues. He recalled that as a result of Armenia's military aggression against Azerbaijan and 30 years of occupation of its territories, over one million Azerbaijanis became refugees and internally displaced persons. Bayramov also briefed the experts on a comparative assessment of the condition of forest resources, flora and fauna, specially protected natural areas, water resources, mineral deposits, lands in liberated areas with the pre-occupation period, and agricultural work. He spoke about degraded lands, military erosion, the "Smart Village" project, the "Green Energy Zone Concept", monitoring liberated territories using satellite images, and the restoration work that will be done.

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Hong Kong's Covid infections exceed 1m

HONG KONG: Hong Kong's total coronavirus infections exceeded 1 million and the number of related deaths topped those in mainland China, as the city grapples with a widespread outbreak. Health officials reported 20,079 confirmed infections on Friday, taking the total since the start of the pandemic to 1,016,944. Nearly 97% of those came from Hong Kong's current wave, which began in December. Since Feb. 9, nearly 5,200 people have died from the virus. The total number of deaths in Hong Kong - 5,401 - have exceeded the fatalities recorded in mainland China at 4,636. Mainland authorities have counted 126,234 confirmed cases, but unlike most countries, China does not count asymptomatic cases. The city of 7.5 million is in the grip of an omicron surge that has strained its health care system as hospitals reached maximum capacity. Coffins are running out and mortuaries are so full that bodies have to be temporarily stored in refrigerated containers. - Agencies

Germany exported military equipment to Russia: Report

BERLIN: Germany shipped 122 million (\$134 million) worth of military equipment to Russia despite the EU arms embargo in effect since 2014, local media has reported. Nine other EU member states also exported military goods during that time, said the report. German arms exports to Russia between 2014 and 2020 included special protection vehicles and icebreaker vessels but also lethal weapons such as rifles, according to a report by Investigate Europe. Economy Ministry spokesperson Annike Einhorn told reporters on Friday that since the EU's arms embargo in 2014, Germany has not granted any new licenses for exports of military equipment to Russia. But she was unable to account for the deliveries that continued until 2020. - APP

Turkey celebrates 107th anniversary of WWI victory



FOREIGN DESK

ANKARA: The 107th anniversary of Turkey's Çanakkale victory during World War I was celebrated on Friday. However, the day, officially called Çanakkale Victory and Martyrs' Day, was a solemn occasion. All across the country, people visited the graves of soldiers and others killed in action, either during counterterrorism operations or in World War I. The culmination of ceremonies and remembrance was in Çanakkale, where the

(MHP), as his helicopter landed next to the enormous Martyrs' Memorial next to the graves of soldiers killed in World War I. The president greeted a small crowd, including army veterans, and attended a wreath-laying ceremony in memory of the fallen. A row of naval vessels held a parade at sea, while an aerial stunt team of the army flew above to honor the fallen. Ministers presented the standard of an Ottoman unit to the president during the ceremony. Erdogan kissed the standard before handing it to Defense Minister Hulusi Akar and delivered an emotionally charged speech to mark the day. The president said that the Çanakkale battles were a great saga of sacrifice, bravery and patriotism of the Turkish nation, "a glorious page of our history." "We remember with respect and gratitude the martyrs who made the saying 'Çanakkale cannot be passed' real," Erdogan said.

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Briefs

Over 3.25 million have fled Ukraine, most to Poland

GENEVA: More than 3.25 million refugees have fled Ukraine since the Russian invasion, the United Nations said Friday, with more than two million crossing the Polish border. UNHCR, the UN refugee agency, said 3,270,662 people had joined the exodus since the war began on February 24, or another 100,765 since Thursday's update.

"We have seen a general slowdown" in flow since the early days of the conflict, said UNHCR spokesman Matthew Saltmarsh. As for people still within Ukraine who have left their homes, "It's safe to assume the number is considerably higher than two million", he said. However, "the pace and magnitude of the internal displacement and refugee exodus from Ukraine, as well as resulting humanitarian needs, will only increase if the situation deteriorates." Some 90 percent of those who have fled are women and children, he added. Ukrainian men aged 18 to 60 are eligible for military call-up and cannot leave.

The UN's International Organization for Migration said that as of Wednesday, 162,000 third-country nationals had fled the country. The UNHCR initially estimated that up to four million people could leave Ukraine, but last week admitted that figure might well be revised upwards. Before the conflict, Ukraine had a population of 37 million in the regions under government control, excluding Russia-annexed Crimea and the pro-Russian separatist regions in the east. - Agencies

Finland crowned happiest nation for fifth year

HELSINKI: Finland has been named the world's happiest country for the fifth year running, in an annual UN-sponsored index that ranked Afghanistan as the unhappiest, closely followed by Lebanon. The latest list was completed before the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Bulgaria, Romania and Serbia recorded the biggest boosts in wellbeing. The largest falls in the World Happiness table, released on Friday, came in Lebanon, Venezuela and Afghanistan. Lebanon, which is facing economic meltdown, fell to second from last on the index of 146 countries, just below Zimbabwe.

War-scarred Afghanistan, already bottom of the table last year, saw its humanitarian crisis deepen since the Taliban returned to power last August following the pull-out of US-led troops.

"This (index) presents a stark reminder of the material and immaterial damage that war does to its many victims," co-author Jan-Emmanuel De Neve said. - APP

Baltic states expel Russian diplomats

NEWS DESK
RIGA: Baltic countries Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania on Friday announced the expulsion of 10 Russian diplomats over Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, prompting Russia to say it would respond in kind.

"Latvia expels three Russian Embassy employees in connection with activities that are contrary to their diplomatic status and taking into account ongoing Russian aggression in Ukraine," Latvian Foreign Minister Edgars Rinkins tweeted. "The decision has been coordinated with #Lithuania and #Estonia," he added. Estonia's foreign ministry said it had declared three Russian diplomats persona non grata for breaching international conventions on diplomatic ties. "All three have directly and actively undermined Estonia's security and spread propaganda justifying Russia's military action," it said in a statement.

Taliban welcomes UN's Afghanistan presence

"The Council gives a clear message with this new mandate: UNAMA has a crucial role to play in promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan and to support the Afghan people as they face unprecedented challenges and uncertainty"

AGENCIES

KABUL: The Taliban Friday welcomed a UN Security Council resolution formally extending the world body's presence in Afghanistan, although the government of the hardline Islamist group remains unrecognised by the international community.

Thursday's resolution, which avoids using the word "Taliban", allows the UN to continue work in Afghanistan, still reeling after decades of war and whose economy was devastated when the international community cut off aid as the group took power last year. The vote to extend the United Nations Assistance Mission for Af-

ghanistan (UNAMA) was 14 in favour, with one abstention, by Russia. The UN has not yet recognised the Taliban's pick of envoy to the body, and the resolution does not give the new government international recognition. The mission includes several strands of cooperation, on humanitarian and political issues as well as on human rights, including those of women, children and journalists. "We consider the extension of the mandate of UNAMA as a good step and want them to work effectively for solving humanitarian and other problems in Afghanistan," Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid told AFP Friday. "We will coordinate and cooperate with them." First established in Afghanistan in 2002,

UNAMA's mandate has in the past included humanitarian support, human rights advocacy and political and regional cooperation. Before last year it also sought to protect civilians throughout the conflict and support the peace process.

"The Council gives a clear message with this new mandate: UNAMA has a crucial role to play in promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan and to support the Afghan people as they face unprecedented challenges and uncertainty," said Norwegian UN ambassador Mona Juul, whose country drafted the resolution. The security situation in Afghanistan appears to be stabilising, months after the Taliban seized power on August 15, 2021

amid a hasty withdrawal of US-led foreign forces after 20 years of war. But since then the country's humanitarian crisis has deepened. The United Nations and other global aid agencies have said that more than half of Afghanistan's 38 million people are facing hunger as winter drags on. The country has known almost continuous war since 1979, broken up only by the Taliban's first regime from 1996 to 2001. As a result it is one of the world's poorest countries, with little in the way of infrastructure and a young population traumatised by decades of fighting. In January, the UN made its biggest-ever single-country aid appeal, calling for \$5 billion to avert a humanitarian catastrophe.



ISLAMABAD: Wife of Ambassador of Palestine hosted spouses of heads of mission of various countries at the Palestine House. A video was shown to the guests featuring different traditional Palestinian dresses. - DNA

Nigerian Minister, Bahrain's Commander call on CAS

ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force (PAF) Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu on Friday held separate meetings with the Defence Minister of Nigeria and Commander of the National Guard of Bahrain and discussed matters of professional and mutual interest.

Minister for Defence of Nigeria Major General (R) Bashir Salihu Magashi commended the professionalism of PAF and acknowledged its developing indigenous capacity in the aviation industry. The Air Chief said Pakistan and Nigeria had longstanding religious, cultural and historical bonds which were manifested through strong ties between the Air Forces of the two countries. He also thanked the Nigerian government and military leadership for their trust in JF-17 Thunder fighter jets. In a separate meeting, Commander of the National Guard of Bahrain General Shaikh Mohamed Bin Isa Bin Salman Al-Khalifa also called on Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu.

The CAS said Pakistan valued its strong diplomatic, economic and defence relations with the Kingdom of Bahrain. The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's role in regional stability. He also acknowledged professionalism of Pakistan Air Force. He assured to play his role for further improvement in diplomatic and military cooperation with Pakistan at all levels. Measures to further enhance professional cooperation between the two brotherly countries were also discussed during the meetings. - DNA

CJCSC meets German, Swiss defense leaders



BERLIN: General Nadeem Raza, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, who is on official visit to Germany and Switzerland called on General Eberhard ZORN, Chief of the Defence Forces, Germany. Matters of bilateral professional interest including further strengthening of security & defence cooperation between the two countries was brought into discussion during the meeting. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to work together for peace, security and stability in the region particularly in Afghanistan. Chairman JCSC during his visit of Germany also visited German Infantry School at Hammelburg and Center for Internal Leadership at Kolbenz where he was briefed about the mandate and curriculum of the institutes.

Earlier, upon arrival at German Ministry of Defence a smartly turned out contingent presented 'Guard of Honour' to the Chairman JCSC. Later, General Nadeem Raza visited Switzerland where he called on Lieutenant General Thomas SUSSLI, Chief of Swiss Armed Forces. Chairman JCSC reviewed the full gamut of bilateral defence relations and exchanged views on global and regional security environment and enhanced military and defence cooperation between the two Armed Forces. Chairman JCSC also visited Geneva Center for Security Policy (GCSP). GCSP is an international foundation that provides executive education and training in comprehensive international peace and security policy. During the visit of the center, Gen. Nadeem Raza highlighted the security perspective of Pakistan on geo-strategic situation of the region with emphasis on Afghanistan. The General emphasized upon the need for reconciliation within Afghanistan for regional peace & security. - DNA

Russia's plan to evade sanctions revealed

NEWS DESK
MOSCOW: Russia's attack on Ukraine has resulted in unprecedented Western sanctions in order to destabilise the country's economy and pressure Moscow into ending the conflict. Thousands have been killed in intense fighting and bombardments since Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered the attack on its neighbouring country on February 24.

Russia calls its actions a "special military operation" to "denazify" the country and prevent genocide, a claim the United States and its allies reject as a pretext for an unjustified and illegal attack. Among the many penalties imposed on the country over the past month, its financial system, energy exports, and forex reserves have been targeted. However, the Russian state-owned media outlet RT has published a report in which it listed the measures Moscow is taking to mitigate the effects of the sanctions. According to RT, major Russian banks have

been cut off from the SWIFT global financial messaging system, effectively denying them access to international markets. However, Russia can now accept electronic transfers via Mir, the Russian alternative payment system, and work with foreign banks and businesses, bypassing Western restrictions. "Mir also provides an alternative to Visa and MasterCard, which have stopped providing international transaction services to Russian clients," the report stated. It said that sanctions also targeted Russia's holdings in Euros and US dollars to deny the country the ability to trade internationally. However, according to the report, Moscow is setting up trade mechanisms to enable national currency payments with foreign trade partners. "Russia and China have had ruble-yuan payment mechanisms for a while, and earlier this month, Turkey expressed its willingness to trade in rubles. Also, a ruble-rupee trading scheme has been announced for Russian oil exports to India. India, which until now bought only 3% of its oil imports from Russia, has been eager to boost purchases, as has Serbia.

Russian strikes hit west Ukraine

LVIV: Russian missiles struck close to Lviv's airport in Ukraine's far west Friday, extending the war to a relatively unscathed region near NATO territory. Ambulance and police vehicles raced to the scene of the early-morning strike on an aircraft repair plant near the border of NATO member Poland - which has seen more than two million refugees cross over from Ukraine.

Motorists were turned away at checkpoints and a thick pall of smoke billowed over the airport, an AFP reporter saw, although officials said the plant was inactive and there were no fatalities. Located 70 kilometres (45 miles) from the border, Lviv had until now largely escaped assault by Russian forces, and it has become a rear base for foreign diplomats fleeing Ukraine's capital Kyiv.

"This was a strike on the city of Lviv, on a humanitarian hub where more than 200,000 people have been displaced," regional governor Maksym Kozzyskyi told reporters. Valentin Vovchenko, 82, told AFP in Lviv: "We fled Kyiv because of the attacks but now they've started to hit here." As President Vladimir Putin's three-week-old ground offensive has stalled under fierce Ukrainian resistance, Moscow has increasingly turned to indiscriminate air and long-range strikes. In the besieged southern city of Mariupol, rescue workers have been searching for any survivors buried beneath the rubble of a bombed-out theatre, amid fears hundreds may be trapped.

Japanese envoy calls on governor Punjab

LAHORE: Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan Wada Mitsuhiro called on Governor Punjab Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar and discussed various issues including bilateral ties in trade and investment sectors between the two countries during a meeting at the Governor's House here on Friday. Governor Punjab congratulated the Japanese Ambassador on the completion of 70 years of Pak-Japan diplomatic relations. He reiterated his commitment to expanding bilateral cooperation with Japan in the fields of economic, trade, development and investment. He said that Pakistan gives great importance to bilateral relations with Japan based on mutual trust and understanding adding that Pakistan believes in better and friendly relations with the world.

Governor Punjab said the Pakistan government under the leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan has played its due role for peace in the whole region including Afghanistan and also made immense sacrifices to eradicate terrorism. Sarwar said Pakistan stands for peace in the region adding that the world must play its role to get the Kashmir issue resolved in accordance with the UN resolutions and winning lasting peace in Afghanistan. - APP

Opposition wants NA session at the earliest

DNA
ISLAMABAD: Making it clear to the secretary National Assembly (NA) that he was not the servant of an individual but of the state, the opposition leaders on Friday asked him to convene the assembly's session at the earliest so that voting on the no-trust motion could be held and the fate of the present government could be decided.

The opposition leaders, who met with the secretary in the NA building, inquired from him as to when the assembly's session was being convened. He replied that he was waiting for instructions from the speaker. The leaders said that this was not a genuine excuse. They also handed to him the letter addressed to the NA speaker in which they reminded him that they had submitted a no-confidence resolution on March 8.

"And that as per the assembly rules, the secretary distributes among MNAs copies of the notice of the resolution, which he has not done so far. Therefore, it is urged that copies of the notice be distributed among the legislators as early as possible," reads the letter.

Japan funded project for special persons inaugurated

The Government of Japan will continue to provide flexible and timely support to improve the social well-being of the people of Pakistan at the grassroots level in cooperation with local organizations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A grassroots grant assistance project for construction of a special education self-support training center for persons with disabilities in Lahore, funded by the Government of Japan, was inaugurated on March 18, 2022. The Government of Japan had provided a US\$74,173 grant (equivalent to around PKR 13 million) to Milestone Society for the Special Persons, a local NGO working for spreading awareness and accessibility for persons with disabilities, for implementing the project.

At the inauguration ceremony, H.E. WADA Mitsuhiro, the Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan congratulated the organization for completing the project in a professional way. He also showed great appreciation for its staff members who work wholeheartedly as a team for encouraging persons with disabilities to be independent and take an active part in community. Mr. Muhammad Shafiq Ur Rehman, President of Milestone, while speaking on the occasion thanked the people of Japan for the well-equipped facility



and expressed his hope that the training programs conducted at this self-support training center will contribute more to promoting independence and employability of persons with disabilities. The Government of Japan will continue to provide flexible and timely support to improve the social well-being of the people of Pakistan at the grassroots level in cooperation with local organizations.