



Islamabad POST

Thursday, March 31, 2022

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I will be Pakistan's ambassador to Somalia: Khadija

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UN Chief grieved over DRC crash

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Osaka breezes into the last four at Miami

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MQM part ways; PTI govt loses majority in NA

A 18-point agreement reached between the Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) named the "Charter of Rights"

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The MQM has finally put its weight behind the opposition and will support the no confidence against Prime Minister Imran Khan thus brining and end to PTI government. After MQM support the opposition has a majority in the National Assembly now and PTI has lost its majority. The MQM leadership announced this decision during a press conference along with the opposition leaders including PML N President Shehbaz Sharif and PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui the MQM leader announced his party decision in the press conference. He told the media that they had made this decision in the larger interest of the country. He said MQM wanted to secure rights for the people of Karachi and Pakistan. Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addressing a joint press conference on the eve of MQM joining the opposition has expressed his gratitude towards the latter. Chairman Bilawal said that MQM has taken a historic decision by supporting the united opposition and prioritising the country. The working relationship between PPP and the MQM has no link with the no-confidence. The PPP and MQM have to work together for the benefit of the country. Chairman PPP said that the dialogue between the PPP and MQM has not begun just now. It was my long-standing desire for the two parties to work together. I am grateful that we have come to a result that allows for such a journey.

CONTENTS OF THE AGREEMENT

A 18-point agreement reached between the Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) has been named the "Charter of Rights." The agreement has been signed by Pakistan People's Party (PPP)

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We will fight back: Fawad

Prime Minister will not resign



SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain on Wednesday said Prime Minister Imran Khan took the Federal Cabinet members into confidence over the "threat letter". About no confidence he said we will fight back and foil this attempt.

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ISLAMABAD: Leaders of Opposition PML-N President Shahbaz Sharif, Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, PDM Chief Maulana Fazalur Rehman, MQM-P convener Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui and BNP-M Chief Akhtar Mengal addressing a press conference. - APP

PM Khan's address to nation 'postponed'

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan's address scheduled for today has been postponed, confirmed PTI Senator Faisal Javed Khan. Taking to his Twitter handle, he wrote: "PM Imran Khan's address to the nation for today has been postponed." Earlier, Interior Minister Sheikh Rasheed had told journalists that the premier will address the nation today after an emergency meeting of the federal cabinet. The premier announced that he will reveal to senior journalists and PTI allies "written evidence" of the letter he has been saying contains evidence of a foreign conspiracy against the government, as he wants to silence his critics who have been calling news of the letter "a drama".

Following the announcement, Rasheed revealed that Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry has invited 10 journalists today who will be shown the letter.

Putin demands Mariupol surrender

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin has said that shelling of the besieged Ukrainian city of Mariupol will only end when Ukrainian troops surrender. Mr Putin made the comments during an hour long phone call with French President Emmanuel Macron on Tuesday night, the Kremlin said in a statement. But French officials said the Russian leader had agreed to consider plans to evacuate civilians from the city. - APP

Army Chief visits Peshawar; attends martyrs' funeral

BUREAU REPORT

PESHAWAR: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa on Wednesday urged for a "whole of nation approach and unified response to counter extremism and defeat terrorism decisively" in the country. According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the army chief visited the Corps Headquarters in Peshawar today. During the visit, the army chief was given a "detailed briefing" on the prevailing security situation and the progress of development works in the newly-merged districts. Gen Bajwa appreciated the security forces for providing an enabling environment for the completion of socio-economic development projects in the newly-merged districts. He termed the projects "vital for enduring stability and sustainable progress of the area".

Soldiers embrace shahadat

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Fire exchange took place between security forces and terrorists in Makin, South Waziristan District. Troops responded in a befitting manner and killed four terrorists. However, during intense exchange of fire, Captain Saad Bin Amir (age 25 years, resident of Rawalpindi) and Lance Naik Riaz (age 37 years, resident of Tank), having fought gallantly, embraced shahadat. Area clearance is being carried out to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area. Pakistan Army is determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism and such sacrifices of our brave officers and soldiers further strengthen our resolve.

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PESHAWAR: Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Bajwa and Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Shah Farman carrying the coffin of martyred Captain. - DNA

Briefs

China a reliable ally: FM

NEWS DESK

BEIJING: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, after a meeting with Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi, on Wednesday said Beijing had reaffirmed that it was and would always stay a close ally of Pakistan. "I am immensely happy to share that the Chinese FM has given a nod of approval on the rollover of commercial loan as well." "The procedural formalities are being completed by relevant authorities," the foreign minister said. "An announcement will be made as soon as they're sorted." He added that China has also assured to help the country to counter the international shortage of diesel.

Govt to bring the letter before NSC

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Cabinet has proposed to bring the letter, revealing conspiracy against the government, before the National Security Committee. This was stated by Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib while talking to media in Islamabad on Wednesday. He said the cabinet also proposed to discuss the matter in an in-camera session of the parliament. The Minister of State said Prime Minister Imran Khan will not compromise on independent foreign policy of the country. He said our government will not be dishonest with the public of the country.

'Threat letter' shared with journalists

They showed the letter from a distance

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The contents of a "letter" that Prime Minister Imran Khan brandished at the PTI's power show on March 27 and which purportedly contains "evidence" of a foreign conspiracy against his government were shared with some senior journalists on Wednesday. Asad Umar shared some details. They showed the letter from a distance. It is very clearly evident [from the letter] that whatever is happening in Pakistan through the no-confidence motion was conveyed on March 7 and [whoever the letter was addressed to] was told that if the vote of no-confidence is successful, Pakistan's problems internationally will be reduced but if Prime Minister Imran Khan survives the no-confidence vote, arm-twisting of Pakistan will be done.

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IHC bars PM Imran from making documents public

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad High Court Wednesday barred Prime Minister Imran Khan from making the secret documents public. The IHC passed the order on a petition filed by a citizen to stop the PM Khan from making the secret documents public. In its order, IHC asked the prime minister not to violate his oath by leaking the secret information. IHC said before making any decision, the PM has to take the Official Secret Act into the account. The IHC hoped that the PM will not reveal anything regarding

Continued on Page 06

MQM divorces the PTI government; what next

The people of Pakistan are not concerned about who comes and who goes. They simply want resolution of their problems and the question that boggles the mind is whether these parties having divergent views and religious orientation, shall be able to provide some relief to the hapless people?

Analysis

ANSAR M BHATTI

AFTER MQM's parting of ways with the PTI government, from the face of it, it appears as if Prime Minister Imran Khan's days were numbered. PTI has virtually lost majority in the National Assembly and ideally the Prime Minister should have tendered his resignation. But as announced by the Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry, the prime minister will fight to the hilt, despite the fact that this fight may only prove an exercise in futility. The Prime Minister and the ministers are still confident that they will emerge victorious at the end of the day! Let me borrow a few lines from my article published in the newspaper on January 26 when I wrote, "Time is running out for the PTI and particularly Imran Khan. They hardly have any time to make up for the lapses made during the past three years. They literally need

a magic wand that could turn things in their favour". Elimination of corruption was a solemn vow that PTI sold to its voters to win elections but as we witnessed the party has not been able to materialize its vow. Consequently Pakistan has dropped 16 places in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) for 2021 compared to the previous year, ranking 140 out of 180 countries, according to Transparency International latest report. It is simply useless to mention that when it comes to corruption, all political and non-political parties made hay while the sun was shining. In that backdrop people expected from PTI and especially Imran Khan that he would clear the Augean stables by introducing anti-corruption reforms and putting the corrupt behind the bars. But unfortunately things went even worse during PTI tenure. People and those who were very close to the prime minister made their fortunes overnight. Resultantly, the poor and middle class in particular suffered a lot. We in the media kept on reminding the PTI that it was detracting from its manifesto and path, which it had promised to implement and take after coming to power. But hats off the government ministers and especially the informa-

tion minister who played a key role in creating a gulf between the media and the prime minister. There is no second opinion that the prime minister himself is an upright and honest man, however the team he picked or was made to pick was least bothered about carrying forward his agenda and vision in letter and spirit. It is also a fact that the bureaucracy too gave a cold shoulder response to PTI ministers and MPs because of their being naive. Due to this these ministers and MPs were unable to get things done for the people from their home constituencies, which generated disenchantment among the PTI supporters. The Prime Minister and his team are now banking upon the so-called letter or diplomatic cable that reportedly came from Pakistan's former Ambassador to USA Asad Majeed. The cable contents were based on his meetings with the US officials including the Assistant Secretary of State dealing with Pakistan. In the meetings the US officials expressed concerns about the PTI government's governance and the lopsided foreign policy, which according to them was based on anti-American sentiments. Realistically speaking this letter or cable cannot help the prime minister and the PTI government to thwart the tide. It is too late. It has

been my consistent view that the prime minister will not complete his five year term simply because we do not have any such precedent. And I can say now that a prime minister who will take charge after the 2023 elections may also not complete his five year term. The reasons for this are multiple. I have been advocating a cut in the tenure of assemblies to four years instead of five years. That may help prime ministers complete their term. All said and done, as per the opposition announcement PML N President Shehbaz Sharif will be the Prime Minister for the interim period. Now the question is will this interim set up complete rest of one and half years or early elections would be called? My understanding and information is that PML N would like to call early elections, maybe after the budget since the move will politically help Muslim League. As I wrote in my last piece, the PPP wants to complete the remaining period for two reasons, first, in case of early elections the PPP had to dissolve the Sindh assembly as well and secondly it wanted some more time for electioneering. PML Q and PML N at one point in time had almost decided to work together and PML N was ready to accept Pervez Elahi as the Punjab Chief Minister but then

Pervez Elahi committed a political suicide by joining the government camp. The reason why PML N and PML Q agreement could not materialize was PML N's insistence on holding of early elections, preferably within four to five months. The PML Q wanted to have a full remaining term. Even now, cooperation between PML N and PML Q is quite possible provided Pervez Elahi gives assurance that he would call early elections if voted to power as the Chief Minister Punjab. The people of Pakistan are not concerned about who comes and who goes. They simply want resolution of their problems and the question that boggles the mind is whether these parties having divergent views and religious orientation, shall be able to provide some relief to the hapless people? I don't think so for all of them have already served multiple tenures yet our problems remain the same. Maybe a temporary relief can be granted in order to beguile the public and keep their hopes alive. Opposition parties' cooperation is only for the interim period therefore we would see new alliances and groupings coming up in the next general elections. This alliance hence may be called as a marriage of convenience, which should not necessarily last for good.

Governor Punjab inaugurates biodiversity park

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: 30 March 2022: Governor Punjab Chaudhry Muhammad Sarwar inaugurated the Ch. Sarwar Biodiversity Park by planting tree at Government College Women's University New Campus Khurrianwala under the Clean and Green Program of the Prime Minister of Pakistan and so far 10,000 plants have been planted. Members of Assembly Latif Nazar, Firdous Rai, Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Rubina Farooq, Additional Deputy Commissioner Headquarters Kashif Raza Awan, Assistant Commissioner Jaranwala Ahmed Saeed Manj, Divisional Forest Officers

Wajihuddin, Muhammad Ali Butt, Faculty Members and students were also present. Governor Punjab Chaudhry Muhammad Sarwar said that promotion of tree planting is the most urgent and need of the hour and it is an honor to participate in the grand planting campaign at GC Women New Campus. He appreciated and thanked the university administration for naming the park after him. He said that the present government under the leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan has given priority to tree planting and in this regard one billion saplings are being planted across the province. He said that GC Women's University was playing a leading role in combating

climate change and planting fruit and flowering plants in the vicinity of this new campus would not only enhance the natural beauty but also benefit for the birds and animals. He urged the other universities to follow the example of GC Women's University Faisalabad in which the participation of every class is essential. The Governor Punjab said that planting trees is a Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and Hazrat Muhammad PBUH said that those who plant and nurture trees will be rewarded. Congratulations to the Vice Chancellor of GC, he said that he has never tried to bring politics in the university and teaching Quran with translation in

the universities of Punjab is underway that is a great achievement. He said that the recommendations are only for the incompetents and they have appointed Vice Chancellors of universities on merit and now the universities of Punjab are joining the world rankings. The Vice Chancellor thanked the Governor of Punjab for inaugurating the park she said that on the 400 acres of land construction of women University Campus, the construction of which is progressing at a fast pace. She thanked the faculty members of the university, district administration and forest department officials for their full support in making the plantation campaign a success.



ISLAMABAD: Mayor of Luton (UK) Malik Mehboob Hussain calls on Governor Punjab Chaudhry Sarwar at Punjab House Islamabad. – DNA

Five cases registered against persons involved in child labor: DC Gujrat

Deputy Commissioner said that after Ramadan, joint camps of Labor, Health, NADRA and Social Security Department, will be held for the benefit of the workers. He said that the target of issuing social security cards to 1107 heads of families living on kilns was set

YOOSUF BHUTTA

Gujrat: "During the ongoing crackdown against child labor, cases have been registered against five violators last month. Challans have been sent to the competent court against 55 persons for paying less than the stipulated wages. So far 437 social security warrants have been issued in the district." This

was disclosed by Deputy Commissioner Gujrat Dr. Khurram Shehzad. He expressed these views while addressing a meeting of the District Vigilance Committee on Labor. The meeting was also attended by Deputy Director Labor Shafiq Munir, Labor Officer Shehzad Ahmed, President Bhatta Khasht Association Chaudhry Riaz Ahmed Warraich, Police and

Social Security representatives. Deputy Commissioner said that after Ramadan, joint camps of Labor, Health, NADRA and Social Security Department, will be held for the benefit of the workers. He said that the target of issuing social security cards to 1107 heads of families living on kilns was set. Of these, 437 cards have been issued so far while special camps shall be held

for issuance of remaining social security cards to others. Deputy Commissioner Dr. Khurram Shehzad said that cases would be registered against those who did not pay the wages fixed by the Punjab government. Cases have been registered in different police stations against five persons involved in child labor while 61 inspections were conducted during the last month.



Ambassador invites trade delegation to visit Bulgaria

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: H.E. Irena Gancheva, Ambassador of Bulgaria in Pakistan, has invited a large-scale trade delegation from Pakistan to visit Bulgaria – representing various sectors – for exploring the avenues for enhancement in bilateral trade; paving the way for entrepreneurs to invest; encouraging joint ventures and crafting mutually-beneficial chamber-to-chamber linkages between FPCCI & Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI). She was speaking at the occasion of her visit to the FPCCI Head Office at Federation House Karachi.

H.E. Irena Gancheva offered to expedite the visa processing for the business, industry and trade community's representatives of Pakistan to create an enabling environment for them to forge business-to-business and people-to-people relationships. She stated that Bulgaria offers the cheapest skilled workforce in the EU and also enjoys the shortest distance with Pakistan in the EU; therefore, Bulgaria can serve as a gateway to Europe for Pakistan. Bulgarian Ambassador also called upon the Pakistani exporters to fully capitalize on the tariff exemptions offered by the GSP Plus status and export textile products to Bulgaria. Fur-

thermore, many regulations have been relaxed by the Government of Bulgaria over the years; which were historically in place; making Bulgaria a business-friendly country, she added. It is pertinent to note that the Pakistani Trade Delegation to Bulgaria will be led by Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President FPCCI. He has expressed his profound optimism that the delegation will open the doors for a new era of Pakistan-Bulgaria economic relations and unleash the true trade potential between the two countries. Mr. Suleman Chawla, Senior Vice President FPCCI, appreciated the fact that the honorable ambassador has come to the

right forum in Pakistan as FPCCI is the apex chamber of the country. He added that FPCCI will nominate the businessmen for the trade delegation to Bulgaria after due diligence; and, ensuring their relevance and potential to contribute productively. Mr. Shaikat Omerson, VP FPCCI, emphasized that Bulgaria should open an office in Karachi to facilitate visa processing; as traveling to Islamabad will be time-consuming and counterintuitive to FPCCI's efforts to create awareness and garner interest – on which, the honorable ambassador promised to relay the demand to the Government of Bulgaria to resolve the issue.

Govt policies to promote innovation in KP: Jhagra

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Finance, Taimur Salim Jhagra Wednesday said that policies and planning of provincial government would help promoting business, innovation and entrepreneurship in the province. He was addressing the 3rd graduation ceremony of National Incubation Centre (NIC) as a chief guest. The ceremony was also attended by students, startups and elected representatives. The minister said that major shifts in policies and planning would change the economic scenario of KP paving the way for innovation and entrepreneurship. He said that students should venture into field of technology and prepare themselves to meet challenges of contemporary world. – APP

4 illegal colonies sealed

DNA

FAISALABAD: The Faisalabad Development Authority (FDA) Wednesday sealed four illegal housing colonies and demolished their structures and sales offices. A spokesman said that the FDA enforcement team, headed by Estate Officer Imtiaz Ali Goraya, checked the status of two housing schemes – Afzal Residential Chak No.59-JB, Green Palm Chak No.58-JB, and two Izafi colonies of Chak No.56, and found them illegal. Therefore, the enforcement team sealed premises of the colonies and demolished their structures including sales offices, main gates and boundary walls. The FDA officials also appealed to the general public to avoid purchasing plots in the illegal housing schemes.

FESCO utilizing all resources for staff welfare

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Promotion and practical implementation of the safety culture in the company is top priority of the FESCO administration, FESCO is utilizing the all available resources to provide a safe working environment to its staff, said speakers of a workshop on the topic of "Electrical Safety Training for The Trainers". The workshop was arranged by the FESCO Health Safety & Environment (HSE) Directorate at WAPDA Engineering Academy here today. During his speech, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) Engr. Bashir Ahmed said that the process for the purchase of the bucket cranes is at

the final stage. FESCO in collaboration with National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) has also prepared a safety handbook for the line staff, which would be helpful for creating awareness about safety first, he added. He further said that on the special directive of the FESCO Board of Directors (BODs) FESCO is continuously organizing the safety workshops which are not only facilitating the line staff but also introducing new safety dimensions for the officers. Chairman, Board of Directors, Health Safety & Environment (HSE) committee Salman Najeeb Khan said that all line staff should be aware about the safety codes and basic safety principles so that they could be saved from any mishap. He further said that it is man-

datory that senior officers transfer their experience to the juniors so that safety culture could be promoted. He said that FESCO is implementing zero tolerance against the violation of safety codes. During his speech, Director Board Barrister Irfan-Chattha emphasized upon the need to provide a safe and secure working environment to employees and said that we cannot control the accidents rate without practically implementing the safety first principle. He reiterated his commitment that all possible measures would be adopted for the safety of staff and consumers because human life is paramount. He also highlighted the legal aspects of action against power pilferage and different sections against electricity theft.

Passing out parade of 145th LC held

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Passing out parade of 145th PMA Long Course, 12th Mujahid Course, 19th Lady Cadet Course and 64th Integrated Course held at Pakistan Military Academy, Kakul. 17 Allied cadets from Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Jordan, Maldives, Azerbaijan and Nigeria were also among passing out cadets including international Lady Cadets. Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of Air Staff was the chief guest on the occasion. He reviewed the parade. CAS congratulated the passing out cadets on achieving this milestone. The chief guest gave awards to distinguished cadets. The coveted Sword of Honour was awarded to

Academy Senior under Officer ASUO Abdul Qahar of 145th Long Course. The President's Gold Medal to Battalion Senior Under Officer Ubaid Ur Rehman of 145th Long Course, the Overseas Gold Medal to Foreign Country Senior Under Officer Issa Enad Al Masoodi from Iraq of 145th Long Course, Commandant's Cane to Company Sports Sergeant Matee Ur Rasool

of Integrated Course, Commandant's Cane to Company Junior Under Officer M Haaseeb Khan of Basic Military Training Course, Commandant's Cane to Company Under Officer Faizan Khan of Basic Mujahid Course, Commandant's Cane to Company Sergeant Major Nida of Lady Cadet Course and Commandant's Overseas Medal to Friendly Country Sergeant Hauwa from Nigeria.



Speakers demand to end women violence

Sharmeela Rassol said the issue of violence against women can't be addressed overnight and consistent struggle was imperative to overcome the issue

BUREAU REPORT

PESHAWAR: Speakers at a two-day national women conference Wednesday underlined the need for strict implementation of existing laws to end domestic, sexual and other types of violence against women folk. The conference titled 'women as development agents' is being organized by Pakistan Academy for Rural Development (PARAD) in collaboration with UN women representatives here at National Institute of Management (NIM) and Pakistan Provincial Services Academy (PPSA). In her welcome address and later talking to reporters, Director General PARAD, NIM and PPSA, Nafees Rahim said violence against women was an international phenomena and collective approach was required to curb it. She said violence against women and girls was also a social issue that could be effectively tackled through transformative approach, pro-women legislative reforms and

strict implementation of existing laws. She said PARAD was making determined efforts for socioeconomic empowerment of underprivileged women and providing conducive environment to women officers and under-training female officers at this historic institute. Nafees Rahim said a daycare center has been established at the institute for facilitating working women besides a girl hostel for accommodation of under training female officers and women staff. While thanking Sharmeela Rassol, Country Representative UN Women Pakistan on her participation in the conference through video link and Sumera Shams, Member Provincial Assembly and Chairperson Women Parliamentary Caucus KP, the Director General PARAD said a vocational educational institute was also setup at the academy for professional training of women so that they could live a dignified and prosperous life. She said academicians, researchers, civil society, intelligentsia, women officers of the KP Government and rights activists were

participating in the two days moot, adding its recommendations would be shared with relevant departments and lawmakers for implementation. Sharmeela Rassol said the issue of violence against women can't be addressed overnight and consistent struggle was imperative to overcome the issue. She said Pakistan had achieved substantial progress in respect of socioeconomic empowerment of women referring to their increased education literacy ratio and participation in civil service, parliament besides others socioeconomic services. She said great scope were available for Pakistani women in all key sectors including education, health, banking, economics, social welfare and civil service to shine. She said it was very encouraging that a positive shift has been witnessed in people's mindsets about girls' education in Pakistan. Sharmeela Rassol underscored the need for continued and enhanced engagements for promotion of higher education of girls and

their economic empowerment. Sumera Shams, Member Provincial Assembly and Chairperson Women Parliamentary Caucus KP said that a legislative bill to curb domestic violence against women has been passed while another bill to counter acid burns crimes was being prepared. She said work on others legislative bills to counter honour killing and harassment at work place besides protecting rights of transgender were underway. He said that a legislative bill regarding reproductive health has been passed to protect rights of girls. The others speakers highlighted various issues pertaining to pro-women legislative structure in Pakistan and its effective implementation, women's role in decision making, cultural and gender norms' barriers, property rights, child marriages and presented recommendations for its solutions. Earlier, Additional Director Training PARAD, Peshawar Zafar Jamal and presenter Namjush Sahar appraised the participants about objectives of the conference.

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

MARCH

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| 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 |
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| March 27/ Myanmar | Armed Forces Day |



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| Serena Hotel..... | 111 133 133 |
| Marriott..... | 051- 2826121 |
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| Turkish Airlines..... | 8494949 |
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| Rawal Town..... | 5773343 |

Water Tank

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ISLAMABAD: Ladies posing for a picture during a reception organized by the Japanese embassy. – DNA

Tunisian Envoy invites ICCI to explore Africa

The Envoy said that Tunisia has signed FTAs with many countries of the region and close cooperation of Pakistan with it would help it get easy access to Africa, EU, Middle East countries for exports



DNA

ISLAMABAD: H.E. Borhene El Kamel, Ambassador of Tunisia said that his country was a gateway for Africa and ICCI should plan a business delegation for Tunisia to identify business opportunities in Tunisian and African market. He said that the direct interaction between the private sectors of Pakistan and Tunisia was the key to explore all potential areas of mutual cooperation and visit of ICCI delegation to Tunisia

would be a right step in that direction. He assured that his embassy would facilitate them in B2B meetings to make their visit successful. He said this while addressing the business community during his visit to Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry. Ms. Dorsaf Maaroufi, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Tunisia also accompanied him at the occasion. The Envoy said that Tunisia has signed FTAs with many countries of the region and close cooperation of Pakistan with it would help it get easy

access to Africa, EU, Middle East countries for exports. He said that Tunisia could help Pakistan in renewable energy, development of tourism infrastructure, olive oil cultivation and many other sectors. He said that both countries have potential to set up JVs in pharmaceutical, automobile, fertilizer and other fields. He said that Pakistan was a big market and a business delegation of Tunisia was scheduled to visit Pakistan by end of this year to hold B2B meetings with Pakistani counterparts for business collaborations &

partnerships. Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that ICCI would consider taking a trade delegation to Tunisia to explore its market. He said that the bilateral trade of around USD 30 million between Pakistan and Tunisia was very low and private sectors of both countries should make strong efforts to improve it. He said that the geographical location of Tunisia has great importance for Pakistan as it is connected to

the developed European countries. Tunisia is also at the crossroads of emerging African markets and thus can create new trade opportunities for Pakistan. Similarly, Pakistan holds geostrategic importance for Tunisia as it is connected to the Middle East, Central Asia and China, which is the world's second largest economy. Therefore, close cooperation between Pakistan and Tunisia offers them great potential for improving trade and exports. Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh

Senior Vice President ICCI said that both countries should establish direct air links to improve bilateral trade and encourage frequent exchange of trade delegations to explore all untapped areas of mutual cooperation. Zafar Bakhtawari and Zahid Maqbool former Presidents, Asher Hafeez, Hamayun Kabir, Hafiz Bilal Munir Executive Members and others also spoke at the occasion and gave useful suggestions to promote trade and economic relations between Pakistan and Tunisia.

CDA developed 50 parks during 2021

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has developed around fifty new parks with cost Rs341 million across the city to provide recreational and healthy activities to Islamabad residents. The parks were developed during the last one year in the sectors where people were residing but facilities including a healthy environment were missing, said a CDA official on Wednesday. Talking to media, he said parks were also built in various areas of Islamabad on state land that was retrieved during anti-encroachment operations and at places where garbage and debris had piled up. The sectors where parks constructed include I-14, I-16, D-12, I-11, G-11, I-10, F-11, F-10, I-9, I-8, Park Enclave, Diplomatic Enclave, G-7, H-8, F-6, Rawal Town, Shahzad Town, Bani Gala, Mulpur, G-14, E-11, Shakrial, Shakar Parian, Khana Pull and other areas of the city. The official said in order to provide more healthy activities to the citizens, the departments concerned under the direction of CDA management constructed cycle tracks and jogging tracks at 7th Avenue, Sector E-7, Faisal Avenue, Zero Point and Serena Chowk during the same period. Other beautification activities include the upgradation of the art gallery, center square and cricket ground in F-9 Park, rehabilitation of amphitheater, jogging track on the green belt connected to Sector E-9, in F-9 Park wood carvings and calligraphy, and construction of a sit-out area in F-9 Park, and construction of a mosque in the park. – DNA

'PDM's conspiracies against government to meet failure'

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Climate Change Zartaj Gul Wednesday criticized that the opposition leaders were involved in foreign conspiracies to remove present government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) from power. Talking to a private news channel, the minister said that the government would take all the decisions in the best interests of the country adding that "PTI-led government cannot be pressured as our national interests must be respected and honoured". "Defence of our beloved country's sovereignty and its territorial integrity is a sacred duty of government which shall never be compromised," she added. "Nation would not further allow PDM leaders to hatch conspiracies against country, she said, adding, public firmly stands with their leader Imran Khan". – APP

SAPM advises beneficiaries to receive computerized receipt

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Poverty Alleviation and Social Protection, Senator Dr. Sania Nishtar Wednesday advised all beneficiaries under 'Ehsaas Kafalat' not to forget collecting computerized receipt at the time of payment and double check the stipend amount mentioned on the receipt is aligned with the cash received. Talking to PTV news channel, she said that 'Ehsaas Kafalat Program 2022 stipend has been increased to Rs. 14,000 from the previous Rs. 12,000 to help the poorest families in the country. The Ehsaas Kafalat payments are started in all districts of Punjab, KP, Sindh, Balochistan, Islamabad, Gilgit Baltistan, and AJK, she added. Dr. Sania further warned that fraudulent people are cheating innocent people and grabbing money from them while receiving payments adding, Ehsaas schemers will be strictly dealt. She also said that beneficiaries should not leave their original CNIC cards at shops after receiving payments, adding, people should be aware of agents who try to deny cash payments at the time of biometric verification asking recipients to come later some other day. – APP

Orientation session held on Palestine programme

Dr. Basri Saleh, Deputy Minister for Higher Education, conveyed his best regards to all from Palestine

DNA

ISLAMABAD: COMSTTECH organized a virtual orientation session on Palestine programme which includes offer of 500 fellowships and scholarships for Palestinian nationals by the Pakistani member universities of COMSTTECH Consortium of Excellence on Wednesday. The Coordinator General COMSTTECH welcomed the participants of the session and said that I am absolutely pleased to have this session and delighted to have very prominent officials from Palestine along with the Ambassador of Palestine, H.E. Mr. Ahmed Jawad A.A. Rabei in Pakistan. Prof. Choudhary said this programme of scholarships and research fellowships is indeed a culmination of lots of thoughts and work in which the Palestinian ambassador has played an extremely important role along with Mr. Murtaza Noor who is advising us on inter-

national relations and coordinating our efforts with the universities of Pakistan. He said that the incident after incident, and atrocities after atrocities, the history is full of these annoying and heart breaking events which we see in Palestine and that have made all of us sensitive to the needs of our brothers and sisters in Palestine. We have good understanding and appreciation of Palestinian cause, based on these feeling we decided to work closely with many universities in Pakistan to help our brothers and sisters in Palestine to continue their education in different fields largely in science and technology and engineering so they can go back and server their country and contribute in furthering the cause of Palestine, and this is the best thing which we could do. Prof. Choudhary said that we have the support of ministry of science and technology, ministry of foreign affairs and the excellency president of Pakistan, who is also the chairman of COMSTTECH. The foreign minister

of Palestine was informed by the President of Pakistan on the occasion of CFM about this programme. He informed that there will be a ceremonial launching of this programme after Eid ul Fitr. Host institutions are eagerly waiting Palestinian scholars to provide them an excellent environment and opportunity of learning in different fields of science and technology and engineering. Dr. Basri Saleh, Deputy Minister for Higher Education, conveyed his best regards to all from Palestine. On behalf of Palestinian Scientific Research, we are grateful for initiative of the President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi to provide research fellowships and scholarships opportunities to Palestinian researchers and extend thanks to all brothers in Pakistan and the government for supporting Palestine. Thanks to COMSTTECH for establishing COMSTTECH Consortium of Excellence to offer fellowships and scholarships for scientific research and development. The minister encourages this programme

which creates research opportunities for students. We hope this programme will help in increasing the number of researchers. He extended thanks to the ministry of foreign affairs and ministry of science and technology Pakistan and COMSTTECH. H.E. Mr. Ahmed Jawad A.A. Rabei, Ambassador of Palestine in Pakistan thanked the President of Pakistan, the Coordinator General COMSTTECH and the Minister of Science and Technology for taking this initiative of scholarships and fellowships for the people of Palestine. He said the people of Palestine and the government extend heart-felt thanks to the people and government of Pakistan. He said that we are grateful to Pakistan for unwavering support on all areas and fronts. The Ambassador also informed the participants of the session from Palestine about the efforts made to launch this programme and encouraged the Palestinian researchers to actively participate in the programme.

GB should be given AJK-like setup, says Hafeez

NUAMAN ISHFAQ MUGHAL

ISLAMABAD: Former Chief Minister of Gilgit-Baltistan Hafiz Hafeez-ur-Rehman said that Gilgit-Baltistan should be given an Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK)-like governance setup. He also said that the people of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) were not an obstacle to the rights of Gilgit-Baltistan.

In an exclusive interview with Nuaman Ishaq Mughal, he said that Imran Khan had formed a government in Gilgit-Baltistan through rigging and it was not possible for him to make Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) a province. "Two-thirds majority is mandatory not only in National Assembly but also in Senate to create a new province. While Imran Khan has lost the confidence of even his party members in the assembly," he said. He further said that at present there are Buzdar number two (Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan) and Buzdar number three (Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir) in GB and AJK.

Former Chief Minister of Gilgit-Baltistan Hafiz Hafeez-ur-Rehman said that the people of Azad Kashmir were not an obstacle to the rights of Gilgit-Baltistan. He added that when he was the Chief Minister, he made four visits to AJK to create harmony among the people of the GB and AJK. Similarly, the then Prime Minister of AJK Raja Farooq Haider Khan also visited GB.

HEC and Microsoft announce Imagine Cup 2022 winners

ISLAMABAD: Microsoft and the Higher Education Commission jointly organized the Virtual Imagine Cup 2022 closing ceremony on 29th March, 2022 where the winners and runners up were announced in Pakistan. During the event, the "Omega GIKI" team with their project "Mind Braille" from Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering, Science and Technology (GIKI) Pakistan and the "Reliance Team" with their project "Health Care 360" from University of Peshawar (UET) were declared national winners of Imagine Cup 2022 and each team received a prize money of PKR150,000. The "Roz team" from Forman Christian College was declared as "The EPIC Challenge Winners". The EPIC challenge winners of Imagine Cup got the unique opportunity of qualifying directly for world finals with a prize money of 1000\$. The three winning teams will now be representing Pakistan at the international level by competing with world top 48 world finalist teams. Additionally, 14 more university teams from South, Center, Baluchistan and Sindh regions were declared Imagine cup regional winners and runners-up and won cash prizes. – APP

'22 press clubs to get digital studios, labs this year'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Husain said on Wednesday that 22 press clubs have been selected for provision of digital studios and labs facility this year. These press clubs will get modern studios and equipment, said the minister using his twitter handle. This will enable local journalists to use modern techniques of digital journalism. He said under the scheme furniture and sound system will also be upgraded in the press clubs. Press clubs in Multan, Faisalabad, Mianwali, Jhelum, Lahore, Jhang, Hyderabad, Sukkur, Badin, Thatha, Quetta, Turbat, Gwadar, Hub, Peshawar, Chitral, Bannu, Abbotabad, Skardu, Gilgit, Muzaffarabad and National Press Club Islamabad would be upgraded under the scheme.

Briefs

Khunjab reopening on Friday

ISLAMABAD: Reopening of Khunjab pass border on Friday will help expediting implementation of the second phase of Pakistan-China FTA. According to Gwadar Pro, China is going to reopen the Khunjab pass border with Pakistan on April 1. Abdul Razak Dawood, advisor to Prime Minister of Pakistan on commerce and investment, expressed his pleasure while tweeting about the opening of the border.

The border-reopening will not only help in utilization of the second phase of Pakistan-China FTA but it will also support the local commerce on both sides of the border. The advisor to PM shared his thoughts on fruit and vegetable exports from the northern part of Pakistan. He urged exporters to take full advantage of this opportunity, so they can increase their exports to China.

The Khunjab pass is a core connecting trade way between both countries and in normal times, it usually stays open from May to November to trade and traveling. Its reopening for commercial purposes will bring new life to the business community in Pakistan. Exporters and importers in Pakistan have warmly welcomed this positive step. — APP

56,565 patients get treatment at OGDCL's eye camps

ISLAMABAD: The Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL), in collaboration with Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital, recently held 19 eye camps in all four provinces where around 56,565 underprivileged patients were extended free of cost treatment. At the camps arranged under the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, as many as 3,168 cataract surgeries were performed, besides the provision of 18,139 spectacles and 2,125 special glasses to the patients, official sources told APP. Sharing details, they said 10 eye camps were organized in six districts including Sanghar, Ghotki, Sukkur, Khairpur, Jamshoro & Hyderabad in the recent past, while two more camps were scheduled from March 9 to 17, 2021. Total 22,880 patients have been treated in Sindh Province.

Since November 2021, the company has so far held four camps in the Karak and Kohat districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and treated 15,855 patients whereas three more camps would be held by June 2022. Similarly in Punjab, three eye camps were set up in Attock, Vehari and Rajanpur district where 11,896 patients had been treated for various eye-related diseases. In Balochistan, two eye camps were arranged at districts Barkhan and Kohlu where the medical team treated 5,934 patients. Five more camps would be held in the province by June 2022. — APP

IHC seeks final arguments in PECA case

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday directed journalists bodies and other petitioners who challenged the amendments in Prevention of Electronic Crime Act (PECA), to present final arguments. Chief Justice Athar Minalah heard the cases filed by PFUJ, PBA and others. Additional Attorney General Qasim Wadud, Deputy Attorney General Syed Tayyab Shah and others appeared before the court.

At the outset of hearing, AAG said that the ordinance was issued on February 19. They used to view the limitations under Article 89 of the constitution before issuance of the ordinance, he said. The chief justice remarked that it was not the power of executive for not placing the ordinance before the house for approval. Additional attorney general said that there was a timeline in the law to place the ordinance before the house. He also gave references of different judgments in the matter. The court said that the government had to place the ordinance before both upper and lower houses of the Parliament. — APP



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan addressing at the inauguration ceremony of e-Passport. — DNA

President Alvi for enhanced use of satellite navigation

Secretary-General Asia Pacific Space Cooperation Organization, Yu Qi in her video message shown on the occasion said Pakistan as a founding member of APSCO always promoted regional cooperation for the promotion of space science

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday called upon the country's space technology scientists to explore capabilities in satellite navigation and promote relevant applications in areas of socio-economic development. The president stressed achieving capabilities to process the high volume of satellite image data in areas particularly agriculture, river water telemetry, climate change and flood monitoring. Addressing at the concluding ceremony of the International Conference on Space (ICS) 2022 on 'Role of space technology and applications in socio-economic development', the president said achieving the goal of self-reliance in satellite navigation was significant for Pakistan to match the pace of global scientific advancements. Organized by Pakistan Space and Up-



per Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO), the three-day event brought together space sector scientists, academicians, and researchers to share views on areas of space science, technology, and applications. President Alvi said the government was focusing on the making of indigenous satellites and added that huge responsibility lay on scientists to target

their work and research in identifying future requirements related to satellite navigation in line with latest trends. He mentioned that Pakistan through its satellites was already carrying out studies on global warming to get a better understanding of the effects of trace gases on depletion of atmosphere's Ozone layer. He said expanding the existing scope of remote sens-

ing through geo-stationary satellites was important for sustainable management of water resources. The president said he had tasked SUPARCO to use artificial intelligence and Geographic Information System (GIS) for improved calibration of irrigation system in the country. He said Pakistan supported the peaceful use of space technology and emphasized that

the world needed to understand that science without the approach of compassion and humanity was of little use for mankind. However, he pointed out that the countries with "an edge of power" were ignoring the principles of morality in view of their economic interests. He expressed confidence that the International Space Conference 2020 would provide budding

scientists of Pakistan an opportunity to converge their energies on research and development in the field of space science, technology, and its applications. Chairman SUPARCO Amir Nadeem said the technical discussions of the conference focused on the management of remote data and GIS for better management of natural resources. He said the platform provided an opportunity to those having an ambition in the space sector and exploring various dimensions of science. Secretary-General Asia Pacific Space Cooperation Organization, Yu Qi in her video message shown on the occasion said Pakistan as a founding member of APSCO always promoted regional cooperation for the promotion of space science. ICS Secretary Aftab Ahmed Khan highlighted the objective of enhancement of science applications and services for socio-economic development.

University of Gwadar signed MoU with Jiangsu University, China

ISLAMABAD: University of Gwadar (UG) and Jiangsu University China (JUC) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to cooperate with each other in research, faculty exchange and academic programs, Gwadar Pro reported on Wednesday. President of Jiangsu University Professor Dr. Yan Xiaohong and Vice-Chancellor UG Professor Dr. Abdul Razaq Sabir signed the MoU. Under the MoU, the collaborators intended to engage in Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) collaborative programs for PhD and Postdoctoral faculty members in the field of engineering, agricultural science, medicine and management for the interest and benefits of the two universities. "The MoU would benefit the faculty and students of Universities in both countries and would provide UG with an opportunity to play a vibrant role in CPEC," said Professor Dr. Abdul Razaq Sabir while signing the agreement. The MoU was signed during an online meeting between the two sides. Besides the Vice Chancellor, Professor Dr. Aslam, Registrar UG Dolat Khan and Sagheer Ahmed from the Department of Management Science attended the meeting. In 2021, the provincial Assembly of Balochistan upgraded Gwadar Campus of University of Turbat (UoT) into a new University in the southwestern part of Balochistan. Dr. Abdul Razaq Sabir is serving as the first Vice-Chancellor of UG. While serving as the founding VC of UoT, Dr. Sabir had conceived the idea of establishment of a sub-campus of UoT in Gwadar in 2015. HEC of Pakistan notified the sub-campus of UoT in Gwadar in July 2016 while academic activities were started in January 2017 on the campus. — APP

AIIOU organizes one day national seminar

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A one-day National Seminar on "Traditions of Systematic Translation and Interpretation of Holy Quran in Subcontinent" is being held today (Thursday, March 31) at Allama Iqbal Open University. Explaining the details of the seminar, Dean of the Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Prof. Dr. Shah Mohyuddin Hashmi, said that this would be the third event of the ongoing academic activities in the University for the Promotion of Quran and Sunnah teachings and these activities would continue throughout the year. The seminar will commence at 9:30 am in the Academic Complex of the University and will be chaired by Prof. Dr. Shah Mohyuddin Hashmi. Among the speakers are Prof. Abdul Haq.

CDA allocates funds for maintenance of water supply system

Rs 1 million would be spent for replacement of electrical equipment of various tube wells in I-Series sectors and tenders have been floated in newspapers in that regard

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority (CDA) has allocated sufficient funds for maintenance of water supply lines to improve water supply system in the federal capital. The water supply department of the federal apex agency were taking inclusive measures for uninterrupted water supply to Islamabad residents, CDA official told media on Wednesday. He said the authority will fix dysfunctional tubewells, besides repairing water supply lines linked with it to provide maximum water to the area people. He said Rs10 million was specified to repair lines in sectors H, I, F and G series, while Rs5 million were set aside to fix lines of tube wells installed in Model Village including National Police Academy, Golf Course, Poona Faqiran and Sector H of Islamabad. Similarly, Rs 1 million would be spent for replacement of electrical equipment of various tube wells in I-Series sectors and tenders have been floated in newspapers in that regard. Likewise, he said Rs5 million for 8" dia AC line of tube wells in Sector H-8/2 and Rs 3.5 million for fixing of 6" dia pipeline in sector I-9 were earmarked. A budget of Rs5 million was allocated for replacement of 3", 4" and 6" dia pipelines. In addition, a budget of around Rs5 million has been allocated for the replacement of 3-inch dia ac line in sector I-10/1, while Rs9 million for 10" dia ac line in sector I-10/2. Rs 4 million has been allocated for 3" dia JI Line in Margalla Town Phase One, Two and Humak Town of Islamabad. Moreover, Rs8.5 million has been allocated for the replacement of 12-inch dia PRCC line in sector I-9 and Rs 4 million for replacement of 6-inch dia ac line in sector H-8/4. — DNA

Development of industries top priority of Govt

The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce is actively involved in resolving the issues of the traders and investors. "I congratulate the Rawalpindi Chamber on its remarkable achievements over the decades

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Chairman Senate, Senator Mirza Muhammad Afridi has said that the government would extend all possible support to industries for stabilizing the country's economy, economic growth, eliminating unemployment and improving the living standards of the people. The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce (RCCI) is actively involved in resolving the issues of the traders and investors. "I congratulate the Rawalpindi Chamber on its remarkable achievements over the decades," he added. These views were expressed by Deputy Chairman Senate, Senator Mirza Muhammad Afridi while addressing a function organized by RCCI. He said that the traders

and industrialists have a key role to play in the development and prosperity of the country. RCCI is one of the oldest chambers of Pakistan, playing an important role in the development of the country by introducing the national identity of 'Made in Pakistan' products at the international

level, he said. "Congratulations from the bottom of my heart to all the members of the RCCI," said Mirza Muhammad Afridi. He further said that the government was taking priority measures to solve the problems being faced by the industries and economic growth was dependent

on industrial development therefore further development of industries was top priority of the government. The Deputy Chairman Senate said that the government was taking special steps and there was interest in solving the problems of traders, industrialists and investors. Solid

steps are being taken to ensure uninterrupted supply of electricity and gas to the industries in order to alleviate the hardships of the industrial sector, he said adding, the traders and industrialists are playing a vital role in improving the national economy and due to the government policies, the economy is improving. The Deputy Chairman Senate said that stock markets across the country are functioning well and there are signs of improvement in the economy. As a result of the restoration of law and order, business activities in the country are gaining momentum and investor confidence is being restored. He said that there are vast opportunities for investment and trade in Pakistan which could benefit domestic and international investors and businessmen.



OGRA holds hearing on SNGPL's petition

ISLAMABAD: The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) on Wednesday held a public hearing in Lahore to consider Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL)'s petition for determination of its Estimated Revenue Requirements (ERR) and prescribed prices for the next fiscal year. "The petitioner has projected average prescribed price at Rs 920.88/MMBTU (Million British Thermal Unit) for FY 2022-23, and requested Rs 1,172.01/MMBTU on account of previous years' shortfall," the authority said in a news release here. Accordingly, the SNGPL has requested the aggregate average prescribed price at Rs 2,074.89 per MMBTU including previous years' shortfall in the natural gas business. The gas company, in its petition, also projected the RLNG cost of service at Rs 490.18 per MMBTU from July 1, 2022, for the RLNG (Re-gasified Liquefied Natural Gas (RLNG)) business, including Rs 330.68/MMBTU on account of the differential impact of the RLNG diversion. — APP

Pak Post establishes a night post office

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Post has established a night post office in Multan city under its modern and innovative plan. According to Pakistan Post, the initiative is aimed at meeting the growing needs of the people. In the new post office, postal customers will have the opportunity to avail all postal services from 9:00 am to 8:00 pm, including submission of utility bills, urgent mail service booking, money order service, and registration of letters. — APP

Pak earns \$315m from travel services' export

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan earned US \$315.030 million by providing different travel services in various countries during the first seven months of the current financial year 2021-22. This shows the growth of 13.67 percent as compared to the US \$277.146 million same services were provided during the corresponding period of the last fiscal year 2020-21, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. During the month under review, the personal travel services increased by 13.71 percent, from the US \$276.006 million last year to the US \$313.840 million during July-January 2021-22. Among these personal services, the exports of health-related expenditure rose by 72.73 percent while the education-related expenditure increased by 0.15 percent. In addition, the other personal services witnessed an increase of 13.83 percent. Meanwhile, the exports of business services also grew by 4.39 percent, from the US \$ 1.140 million to the US \$ 1.190 million, the PBS data revealed. It is pertinent to mention here that the exports of services from the country witnessed an increase of 18.82 percent during the first seven months of current financial year (2021-22) as compared to the corresponding period of last year, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. — APP

IHRA starts inspections of healthcare establishments

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Healthcare Regulatory Authority (IHRA) inspection teams in continuation of their activities carried out inspections of 36 Healthcare Establishments (HCEs) in different areas of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) during the past two weeks. According to IHRA, Akbar Medical Center was sealed due to different malpractices like issuance of fake reports, breaking the IHRA seal without de-seal order from the authority and operating the laboratory during the sealing period. IHRA suspended the services of Khyber Medical Center, Khyber Dental Clinic and Anwar Capital Hospital over different non-compliances like poor hygienic conditions and keeping expired reagents. — APP

Change in Punjab, too?

REACTING to a deal between PTI and PML-Q, PPP co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari said that Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi is "too late" now, adding that the Opposition will decide who will become the new chief minister of Punjab. Asif Ali Zardari has been taken by surprise after PML-Q decided to support Prime Minister Imran Khan amid the no-confidence motion. The press conference was held to announce that independent MNA from Balochistan Mohammad Aslam Bhoonani has joined the Opposition and parted ways with the PTI at the most crucial junctures of PM Imran Khan's career. "At 12 in the night, he comes to congratulate me and then later goes elsewhere," Zardari said after the PML-Q accepted PM Imran Khan's offer to nominate Punjab Assembly Speaker Pervaiz Elahi as the new chief minister of the province following CM Usman Buzdar's resignation from office.

Zardari said he had approached Elahi keeping in mind the political situation of the country – and with the same intention, he had asked other lawmakers to support the no-confidence motion against the premier. "Now, we will decide who will become the next chief minister, as Pervaiz Elahi is too late now," Zardari said, claiming that the person whom the Opposition backs will become the next chief minister of Punjab.

The politics of Punjab has been complicated over the last three and a half years. It was quite obvious to most very early on that Usman Buzdar was perhaps not up to the task of leading the province. It is a complete mystery why the prime minister had insisted on retaining him for so long, given that the Chaudhrys would have remained powerful allies had Pervaiz Elahi been given the post he so obviously wanted from the start. Add to this mix the 'foreign conspiracy' claimed by the government, and we have a perfect concoction for a political crisis that can drag on for a few more weeks. Per some reports, the conspiracy surrounding the alleged conspiracy letter has been denied by the 'relevant quarters'.

The government, however, has offered to show the letter to Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial, though one wonders why a letter concerning a security threat is being shown to the judiciary. These are serious matters and, as the political opposition and political analysts have said, the government must make sure it has enough of a reason and evidence to have disclosed the existence of such a letter. As the vote of no-confidence looms, speculations about the opposition's strategy, the future of dissident members of the PTI if they vote against Prime Minister Imran Khan, and who the allies will choose have made the coming days more uncertain. The fact that the entire government machinery is busy dealing with this political crisis rather than focusing on governance and economy, in a country where people are already struggling to make ends meet, spells even more economic disaster.

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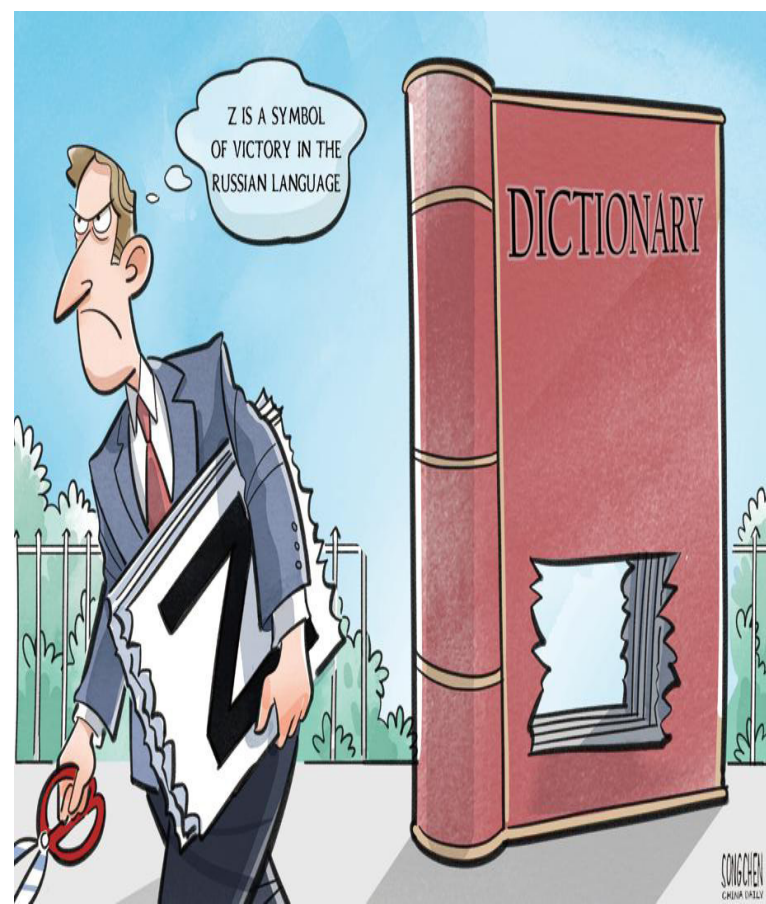
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China, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan can go for all-round cooperation for development

Syed Ali Nawaz Gilani



China, however, has been consistent in promoting common growth and benefits among developing nations and seek good relations with as many partners as possible, including all OIC members as well as both Ukraine and Russia, though it observes its principle and does not go for alliance. If we look at the Islamic countries there is a feeling that Pakistan...

CHINA'S historical relations with Muslims dated back to the time of the Islamic Khalifah, in which the Silk Road was a key factor, and the revival of historic links between China and Muslim countries under today's Belt and Road Initiative has the potential to make significant progress in the future. At the 48th Foreign Ministers' Summit of the Organization of Muslim Cooperation (OIC) in Islamabad, Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan conveyed a message of peace to the world with expected contributions by both China and the OIC.

For the Muslims of South and East Asia to move further in the path of development, then they will have to enhance exchanges and cooperation with China. This includes Pakistan and Saudi Arabia among others. Pakistan is currently the world's first Muslim nuclear power and has extensive strategic and defense experience, while Saudi Arabia is a strong country rich in oil as well as a religious center for Muslims. If these two brotherly Muslim countries using their economic, military and financial capabilities, further carry on BRI projects, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan people can be more prosperous while the conditions of the poor people of the region especially the Muslims can change very fast. So far, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is getting upgraded and extending services to neighboring countries. The synergy between the Belt and Road Initiative and the Saudi Vision 2030 benefits both parties, but also becomes a pacesetter for regional cooperation. The fame and success of BRI is a testament to the fact that the Group of Seven rich economies, led by the United States, seem concerned about China-initiated global program and are teaming up to stage their own infrastructure programs and projects to counter China's reach.

China, however, has been consistent in promoting common growth and benefits among developing nations and seek good relations with as many partners as possible, includ-

ing all OIC members as well as both Ukraine and Russia, though it observes its principle and does not go for alliance.

If we look at the Islamic countries there is a feeling that Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Iran and other major Islamic countries should show unity instead of division, a theme of the recent OIC. The joint declaration issued after last week's OIC session explicitly states that the OIC seeks to resolve all major issues including the resettlement of Palestine, Occupied Kashmir and Afghanistan. Its seeks to send a message to the world that it must resolve its issues through dialogue rather than war. It is time to fight on economic fronts, not war.

Therefore the Muslim leadership also needs to think more of economic terms.

The implication is that at present China is a non-controversial country that does not have major military involvements with any country but has used its economic plans to sustain the markets of Europe, the Americas apart from Asia and Africa.

If Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and China come together to build up new patterns of all-around and high-level cooperation, it will have a positive impact on the world economy. This close partnership seems natural in the sense that these three already have very good relations with each other.

Saudi Arabia is a brotherly Islamic country of Pakistan, which has provided financial support to Pakistan at all times while Pakistan has helped the other without any hesitation. Moreover, relations between China and Pakistan are also of a historic nature.

There is a need for joint economic and financial agreements of the three countries so that their trilateral cooperation could be taken forward.

— (The writer is Secretary General Pakistan-China Friendship Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province-Pakistan. Email: syed.gilani@gmail.com)

Afghan refugees in Pakistan; A costly decision

Munaza Kazmi

Nevertheless, UNHCR somehow continued its support which assisted Pakistan in improving the Afghan refugee's lives, but due to the recent global crises, mainly Syria, the focus of international community had diverted, which made Pakistan single handed in carrying this never-ending burden. Over last four decades the Govt of Pakistan and its populace is hosting millions of Afghan refugees

YEAR 1979, when Soviet forces invaded Afghanistan, that resulted in a huge amount of Afghan refugees crossing the border into Pakistan; same people who voted negatively at the time of creation of Pakistan. This influx started through Torikham border, hence a million of Afghan refugees entered the country. Till today the country is showing hospitality towards those Afghan refugees, nevertheless the number became swollen hugely in the past forty years. In the early years, Pakistan was receiving a handsome support globally, including food assistance from World Food Program to feed those empty stomachs, nevertheless that assistance was withdrawn in 1995. Gradually that made the Afghan refugees to move from the camps and turn themselves to the urban areas of Pakistan, nevertheless this was in good favor of those Afghan refugees, but still local government put a strain of limited resources. If we contemplate the idea today then we could analyze how badly it turned for the country of Pakistan, first to let those Afghan refugees cross the border and then let them move to Pakistan's civil areas, today much of Pakistan's land is polluted with the whereabouts of these Afghan refugees. Later the donors, like UNHCR, USA, EU, KSA, and other Islamic countries that first supported Pakistan in feeding those Afghan refugees have also set back, backing the 9/11 terrorist attack, since there seemed a drastic ideological change among the communities worldwide regarding the region.

Nevertheless, UNHCR somehow continued its support which assisted Pakistan in improving the Afghan refugee's lives, but due to the recent global crises, mainly Syria, the focus of international community had diverted, which made Pakistan single handed in carrying this never-ending burden. Over last four decades the Government of Pakistan and its populace is hosting millions of Afghan refugees. Currently there are 1.4 Million registered and God knows how many are wandering here and there undocumented. Hence, the Government of Pakistan has reflected a very flexible conduct in handling the Afghan refugees' issues and has allowed them

to live with freedom, the liberty of moving, the luxury of education, food and safety. Even Pakistan went so far in providing them with POR card from which they could open accounts in any bank. Moreover, several different programs had been initiated by private public partnership to provide the Afghan refugees with skills so that they could earn their livelihood. Even though Pakistan been so generous that the country has allowed the Afghan refugees to have higher education, encouraged them to join the national sport teams and domestic cricket tournaments.

But the sole purpose of hosting the Afghan refugees was to provide them with "asylum" until the situation easy in Afghanistan, which was a sign of humanity. But unfortunately, these Afghan refugees have rooted them selves which the wish of living in the heaven of Pakistan forever, as these Afghans seem reluctant to go back to their country. It has been more than forty years that Pakistan is under the liability which never belonged to it. Today Pakistan have much more Afghan refugees spreading everywhere, which I believe was one of the biggest mistake Pakistan ever come across. While the country remained a generous host till all those years, the continued presence of Afghan refugees marked a burden on our precious resources. Moreover, with the advancement of Taliban in Afghanistan, the government of Pakistan in 2021 however for the cause of humanity had taken a costly and foolish decision of allowing a huge number of refugees to reenter in Pakistan. Nevertheless, this was for a few months, but these few months had been turning into year, which is a disastrous sign, since the whole country is infiltrated with Afghans, our every business of life is being cruelly disturbed. Let's say the rental values of homes have been climbed drastically, once the minimal cost of commodities of everyday use have surmounted, along crime rate, drugs mobility and a lot more. Moreover, it's a threat to our culture, our language and our tradition, this's basically against the national interest. As we have been their host for a long time, instead of going back, herds of refugees had come once more.

China's outbreak

MORE than two years after China imposed the world's first Covid-19 lockdown, in response to the virus's emergence in Wuhan, tens of millions are stuck at home once more. With cases at their highest since early 2020, the leadership is wedded to its zero-Covid strategy. For much of the pandemic, it allowed most people to live without restrictions within the country's borders, and it certainly saved countless lives. Officially, mainland China's death toll has remained under 5,000, despite a population of more than 1.3 billion; the UK, with 67 million inhabitants, has seen 165,000 deaths. But vaccines have offered an alternative, the transmissibility of Omicron makes it less feasible in the long term, and the economic and human costs are becoming less tolerable.

Officials are now struggling to straddle two diverging goals: to control infections while shoring up the economy – one new study suggests lockdowns are costing at least \$46bn a month. A "dynamic zero-Covid" approach of targeted restrictions, mass testing and isolation seeks to allow the swift relaxation of controls and minimisation of disruption and economic shock. Its biggest test to date may have arrived. Early on Monday, Shanghai – the country's financial centre and home to 25 million residents – began a two-stage lockdown. The leap in cases should be put into context. Earlier this year, China was reporting fewer than 100 cases a day; the 5,000-plus recorded on Monday are still a long way short of the 42,000 reported in the US that day. But Hong Kong, which earlier this month had the worst death rate in the world – recording more deaths per day than it had in the whole of the pandemic until then – has shown how quickly an outbreak can escalate. On the mainland, vaccination rates among older people are better, but the over-80s in particular are poorly protected.

Social stability is paramount until then. So the country is likely to creep towards living with the virus long after others have cast off all restrictions. If that reflects an excess of caution, it also speaks to recklessness elsewhere. Living with Covid is not the same thing as pretending it does not exist. A calibration of measures makes more sense than an all-or-nothing approach. Free testing, decent sick pay, ongoing investment in prevalence studies, masking in spaces such as public transport, and improved ventilation would all help to keep rates down and protect the vulnerable. Britain, which has also seen infections surge in the last month, should take heed.

Covid-19 and Geopolitical Reality

Dr. M Akram Zaheer



The first weeks of the epidemic were troubling, as countries discovered to the extent that they had relied on the People's Republic for vital supplies

THE twentieth century saw geopolitics emerging as a phenomenal concept with of strategic studies in the realm of international relations. The realism school of thought has adopted various strategies to define geopolitics as an approach to take into account the requirements of balance as emphasized by Kissinger. G.K declared it as a concept that actually stimulates the ideas of nation states/empire, war and diplomacy. Hence the fact is that geopolitics is a method through which states control and compete for their territorial jurisdiction within a set of regional or global framework. Theoretically, geopolitics is used psychologically in order to exercise territorial control and competition by the state, generating geographical based images. It means building hype in geopolitical realities by some powerful actors, as is commonly practiced by super or regional powers. Theoretically geopolitics is defined as postulate where states determine their foreign policies influenced by their location natural resources and physical environment. In simple words, geopolitics is a combination of geographic configurations with the historical experiences. Furthermore, a number of foreign policy and national security goals are designed by geography which also is considered vital factors in national power and strategy. This is how, national strategic interests are secured by the policy makers and states using geographic dimension. The foreign policy actions and decision express national interests of any states where geography and historical development elements play a very vital role.

Within states, the current inequality of access and income is exacerbated by the consequences of epidemics. We often hear that the disease did not discriminate. Indeed, he did. For example, if you were rich, it would be easier to implement physical distance. Older people, who are more susceptible to serious cases of COVID-19, may be better able to isolate themselves if they have an existing support system and a substantial income. In countries such as the United States, the mortality rate was significantly higher for some ethnic minority communities.

The Indian experience, and the gruesome images of tens of thousands of migrants returning to their villages, showed that those who depended on the daily wage or the informal sector were less likely to survive. Aid packages were to be sent worldwide through existing welfare and social security sources. They were often inadequate for work and did not reach the workers in the informal economy or temporary jobs who were most at risk. Of course, this had nothing to do with the generosity or lack of packages. The United States spent so much on the CARES Act that household savings increased by points in 2021. Yet there was widespread deprivation, and in some parts of the country, even food banks were overwhelmed. Inequality in access to infectious diseases is showing inequality in access to basic welfare and public services even in ordinary times.

In and between countries, the pace of recovery has also been uneven: a gap that will only widen when some of the worst epidemics emerge sooner than others. Dictatorships such as the People's Republic of China and high-solid democracy democracies such as Taiwan and New Zealand quickly overcame the virus and reduced its economic impact. By 2021, the countries that will most effectively implement the vaccine will be quicker to take physical distance measures, and therefore return faster to normal production and income levels. Will Countries that can enter global capital markets to increase their government debt to spend more on aid will also better manage the epidemic and get out of it sooner. For developing countries, these factors will put their relative position far behind. Managing the public dissatisfaction that will create this inequality should be a major concern for policy makers.

The second notable trend is already relevant: the relevance of Environmental Social Governance (ESG) factors to development, investment and finance. States with more efficient governance structures, as already mentioned, will be able to more effectively stabilize revenue and productivity. More comprehensive and widely accessible social systems have also responded well to the epidemic. It's a cold, hard economic reality, and it's accepted by the world's coldest, toughest community, international finance. The flow of ESG-related funds competed with epidemic panic to scale to new heights in 2020. Environmental factors also took center stage, as the European Union began financing part of its aid package through green bonds. The main goal of the national and international economic conflict during 2021 will be the standard of relief and rehabilitation. Will the funds be spent on relief or investment? Will existing "brown" (carbon intensive) sectors be strengthened to protect jobs, or will new green sectors be helped to boost growth? Will there be an attempt to spread this stimulus across borders like in 2008? Will debt restructuring and sovereign forgiveness take into account new economic realities and China's emergence as a major lender?

Briefs

Army Chief visits Peshawar...

FROM PAGE 01

"There is a need for a whole of the nation approach and unified response to counter extremism and defeat terrorism decisively," said the COAS. Earlier on arrival at the Corps Headquarters, the army chief was received by Commander Peshawar Corps Lieutenant General Faiz Hamid. The ISPR said that after visiting the Corps headquarters, the army chief attended the funeral prayers of martyred Captain Saad Bin Amir and Lance Naik Muhammad Irfan who were martyred while fighting the terrorists in South Waziristan. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Shah Farman and provincial ministers were also present on the occasion.

'Threat letter'...

FROM PAGE 01

"Very clear threats have been given and the government discussed these in the federal cabinet meeting today." "My information is that when the details of this letter were being read out in the federal cabinet meeting, five to six ministers became tearful. PM has neither told the name of the country nor the officials. He confirmed that these things have been shared with the army chief and the DG ISI. He also said an in-camera session of parliament will be briefed by Shah Mahmood Qureshi about this. The parliament will also be taken into confidence." Earlier in the day, Prime Minister Imran Khan announced that he would show the letter to senior journalists and the government's allies.

IHC bars PM Imran from making...

FROM PAGE 01

the secret information. On Wednesday, the contents of a "letter" that Prime Minister Imran Khan brandished at the PTI's power show on March 27 and which purportedly contains "evidence" of a foreign conspiracy against his government were shared with some senior journalists.

COURT NOTICE

In The court of Khuda Yar civil Judge Gujrat

Title Razaq Hussain etc. versus: Province of Punjab etc.

Suit for Declaration with consequential relief

Notice to: 15-Riaz, 16-Muhammad Abbas Sons of Mian Khan, 21-Muhammad Ishfaq S/o. Nazar Muhammad R/o. Kalra Kalan Tehsil & District Gujrat. Whereas in the above mentioned case it has been proved to the satisfaction of the court that the above mentioned defendant is not served in ordinary way. It is therefore proclaimed under order 5 rule 20 CPC that if the said defendant will not appear personally or through a duly authorized agent or pleader in court at 8 AM on 07-04-2022. Otherwise case will be decided ex parte.

COURT NOTICE

In The court of Muhammad Abbas Sherazi Civil Judge Gujrat

Title Javed Iqbal. versus: Muhammad Anwar etc..

Suit for Possession

Notice to: 4-Aftab S/o. Muhammad Anwar Cast Jutt S/o. Kotli Kohala Tehsil & District Gujrat. Presently Residing in KSA. Whereas in the above mentioned case it has been proved to the satisfaction of the court that the above mentioned defendant is not served in ordinary way. It is therefore proclaimed under order 5 rule 20 CPC that if the said defendant will not appear personally or through a duly authorized agent or pleader in court at 8 AM on 13-04-2022. Otherwise case will be decided ex parte.

Given under my hand seal of the court this 30th Mar. 2022.

Qaisar Mehmood Warraich, Court Reporter Gujrat, Kharian 0333-8409964 Daily The Patriot

Experts warn Ukraine war risked future of World Order

The war is not a choice but perhaps a strategic compulsion that Moscow felt for a number of reasons like challenges ranging from the global world order to expansion of NATO and also concerns regarding the political leadership of Ukraine and its policies

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Russia-Ukraine conflict has not only created a worldwide political, diplomatic, economic, food and energy crisis but has also exposed the double standards of the world powers towards the principles of international politics and global governance. This was stated by experts at a One-Day International Conference on "Russia-Ukraine War: Causes, Dynamics and Implications" organized by the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) in Islamabad.

The international speakers of the conference included Dr Ivan Safranchuk, direc-



tor, Centre for Euro-Asian Studies, MGIMO University, Moscow, Dr Akis Kalaitzidis, professor of international relations at University of Central Missouri, Prof Zhang Jiegen, executive director, Pakistan Study Centre, Institute of Interna-

tional Studies, Fudan University, and Iliya Kusa, IR Analyst, Ukrainian Institute for the Future, Kyiv. Leading Pakistani academics, diplomats, security and foreign policy analysts including IPS' Chairman Khalid Rahman, Dr Syed

Rifaat Hussain, Ambassador Zamir Akram, Ambassador Masood Khalid, Dr Asma Shakir Khawaja, Dr Khuram Iqbal, Syed Muhammad Ali, Ambassador Syed Amir Hussain, Ambassador Zamir Akram, Brig (r) Dr Tughral Yamin, Brig (r) Dr Attique

Ur Rehman, and Brig (r) Said Nazir also shared their insights on the conflict and its global, regional and local implications. Some of the speakers expected the conflict to be a long-drawn-out affair. This is reinforced by the fact that despite

the inclination of the Russian leadership or military to end the war at an early stage, on the ground trends in the shape of military armament and around 50,000 non-state actors in Ukraine offer a very alarming specter. The war is not a choice but perhaps a strategic compulsion that Moscow felt for a number of reasons like challenges ranging from the global world order to expansion of NATO and also concerns regarding the political leadership of Ukraine and its policies. For the US, the speakers viewed, it is an ideological conflict that shows the level of violence and degree of pain and cost that could be inflicted on Russia by the US-led western alliance.

Cyprus will not be a Hellenic island: Turkish Cypriot President



DNA

NORTH NICOSIA: Cyprus will not be a Hellenic island, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) President Ersin Tatar said Tuesday, reiterating that the Turkish Cypriots will not give up on their right to an equal and sovereign state. Speaking to the Turkish Agency Cyprus (TAK) on the anni-

versary of the Greek Cypriot EOKA terrorist group starting its armed demonstrations, Tatar criticized the Greek Cypriot leadership's words that indicated approval of their acts. "If you still repeat the rhetoric of 1821, give messages to satisfy pro-Hellenism circles, then I doubt your goodwill," Tatar said. Underlining that the Turkish side always advocates for peace, Tatar said that

the TRNC seeks an agreement based on goodwill and a consensus in the Eastern Mediterranean that takes into account law and justice. Tatar also highlighted that the hydrocarbon resources in the Eastern Mediterranean have gained further significance due to the war between Ukraine and Russia. Noting that the Turkish Cypriots are on the side of Turkey and a factor of bal-

ance in the Eastern Mediterranean, Tatar said that the TRNC will not give up on Turkey's guarantorship. Tatar recalled that Ioannis Papatheoou, Greece's ambassador to the Greek Cypriot administration, voiced that a solution cannot be found on the island until Turkey's guarantorship is canceled and the Turkish military withdraws. "We have been and will continue to pursue our policy so that there can be an environment and an agreement on the basis of equality, where the Turkish presence continues until the end, where peace, tranquility and security can be best preserved with Turkey's guarantor." While Greece and the Greek Cypriot administration support a federation on the island, Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) insist on a two-state solution that reflects the realities. The island of Cyprus has been mired in a decade-long struggle between the Turkish and Greek Cypriots, despite a series of diplomatic efforts by the United Nations to achieve a comprehensive settlement.

Iran bans women from football stadium again

TEHRAN: Iran has once again denied women entry to a football stadium to watch an international match, leaving hundreds of ticketed fans locked out, Iranian media said. The World Cup qualifier against Lebanon on Tuesday night, won 2-0 by Iran, was played at the Imam Reza stadium in the northeastern city of Mashhad. "About 2,000 Iranian women, who had bought tickets for the Iran-Lebanon match, were present in the perimeter of Imam Reza stadium, but could not enter the stadium," ISNA news agency said. "For this match, 12,500 tickets were sold, of which 2,000 were for women," it added. Mohsen Davari, governor of Mashhad, told IRIB state television: "I apologise that many people couldn't enter the stadium..." "Unfortunately, a large number of people outside the stadium were deprived of watching the game." In the face of the controversy, President Ebrahim Raisi on Wednesday ordered the interior ministry to look into the incident. In January, women were allowed to attend an international for the first time in almost three years, for a World Cup qualifier against Iraq. The Islamic republic has generally barred female spectators from football and other sports stadiums since it was established in 1979. Clerics, who play a major role in decision-making, argue women must be shielded from the masculine atmosphere and sight of semi-clad men. But world football's governing body FIFA ordered Iran in September 2019 to allow women access to stadiums without restriction and in numbers to be determined according to demand for tickets. - APP

Asim bags Int'l Squash C'ship title

SPORTS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Muhammad Asim Khan clinched the DHA Islamabad International Squash Championship title here at the Jacaranda Family Club (JFC) on Wednesday. Asim downed his country mate Noor Zaman (Pakistan) in the final with a game score of 10-12, 11-5, 11-7 7-11, 11-6 in 43 minutes. Squash legend Jahangir Khan who was the Chief Guest on the final awarded trophies, prize money and souvenirs to the players and organizers. The tournament carried a cash prize of US\$12,000 and besides Pakistan, world ranking players from Egypt, France, Iran, Malaysia and Qatar featured in the extravaganza.

Exhausted Svitolina taking break from tennis

PARIS: Former world number three Elina Svitolina of Ukraine announced Tuesday she was taking a break from tennis because of mental and physical exhaustion. She said her compatriots' resistance of the Russian invasion of her country had encouraged her to play through back pain, but said "now I can't handle it any more". "It's been an extremely difficult couple of months for me not only mentally but also physically," the world number 20 wrote on social media. "For quite a long time I've been struggling with my back. The pain didn't let me prepare for the tournaments at my best." Meanwhile, observing with unbearable pain in my heart what is happening in my homeland Ukraine and with

how much bravery and courage our Ukrainian people are defending our country, this gave me a huge push to continue and fight on court," continued the 27-year-old. "Now, my body can't handle it any more and I need to rest. Therefore, I'm sad to announce I'll be missing Fed Cup and few of my favourite tournaments in Europe. But I'm sure I'll see your support in the challenging period." Svitolina, a winner of 16 WTA titles, has struggled for form since her quarter-final defeat in the US Open. She lost her Indian Wells opener against 122nd ranked Harriet Dart of Britain, and pulled out of the Miami Open which is currently underway. - Agencies



Portugal and Poland grab World Cup finals spots

DNA

PARIS: Portugal beat North Macedonia 2-0 and Poland saw off Sweden by the same score in play-off finals on Tuesday to book their places in the 2022 World Cup in Qatar. Bruno Fernandes scored both goals for Portugal to overcome the Balkan nation that had knocked out European champions Italy in a stunning result last week. Italy's shock exit had North Macedonia dreaming of their first ever appearance at a World Cup finals but Portugal proved a step too far in Porto. Fernandes set Portugal on their way at the Estadio do Dragao by finishing off Cristiano Ronaldo's pass in the first half and then put the victory beyond doubt in the second, connecting with a sublime cross from Diogo Jota. The victory means Portugal extend their run of qualifying for all six of the World Cups since the turn of the century while Manchester United forward Ronaldo is on course for his fifth, aged 37. Ronaldo's best previous result was reaching the semi-finals in 2006, when Portugal were beaten by Germany. Portugal coach

Fernando Santos said: "I would like to congratulate the players for their attitude and their quality. We controlled the match in a very clear way. "Now, having already won the Euro and the Nations League we have a dream of bringing enormous joy to Portugal." Robert Lewandowski stroked home a second-half penalty as Poland booked their berth in front of a fervent home crowd in Chorzow.



After the Poland captain converted a spot-kick, Piotr Zielinski completed the scoring with a superb second goal for the hosts.

Poland go into Friday's draw for the group stages of the World Cup finals, from November 21 to December 18, after dominating the second half. The Poles were awarded the crucial penalty just after half-time when midfielder Sebastian Szymanski rolled the ball to substitute Grzegorz Krychowiak,

who was fouled by Jesper Karlstrom. The referee pointed straight to the spot and Lewandowski casually arced his run, waited for Robin Olsen to move and then slotted the ball to the left of the Swedish goalkeeper. It was his 75th goal for Poland and arguably one of his most important. "It was really tough. I mean, this pressure!" Lewandowski said. "Even though I have taken many penalties in my career, this was one difficult. I knew this moment would have so much significance. "We suffered, but now we can celebrate. I am proud and happy."

Zielinski put the result beyond doubt when he capitalised on a slip by Sweden defender Marcus Danielson and sprinted clear. He slotted his shot past Olsen with 18 minutes left to spark wild celebrations from the home crowd. Only a superb save from Olsen denied Lewandowski a second goal when the Poland striker was allowed a rare late chance in the area by the Swedish defence. Zlatan Ibrahimovic came on for the final 10 minutes, but the 40-year-old Sweden striker was unable to influence the course of the match and will miss out on a third appearance at a World Cup finals.

MQM part ways; PTI govt loses majority in NA

FROM PAGE 01

Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and MQM-P's Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, while Shehbaz Sharif, Fazlur Rehman, Akhtar Mengal and Khalid Magsi have signed the agreement as guarantor.

According to the copy of the agreement available with ARY News, the PPP and the MQM-P have agreed on the following points:-

1. The Hon'ble Supreme Court's decision regarding LB in Sindh will be implemented in letter and spirit within one month.
2. The positions in the job shall be historically assessed and deficiency if any of those hailing from urban/rural Sindh shall be removed by enhancing the quota for them up to 40pc.
3. Issue of fake domiciles shall be jointly addressed by constituting a commission with mutual consultation.
4. MQM-P and PPP have agreed that a quota observation joint committee, comprising legislators with an equal representation shall be constituted to monitor the observance of job quota.
5. In the recruitment of officials from BS-1 to BS-15, the principle of local representation provided in the rules should be strictly followed.
6. Local policing shall be introduced to address the issue of lawlessness and street crimes in accordance with the law. 7. Fake and fabricated cases against MQM-P workers shall be withdrawn as per law.
8. Development needs of Urban and Rural Sindh shall be assessed by a joint committee constituted mutual consultation and on recommendations of this committee, a development package should be announced, and implemented in the given time.
9. It is jointly agreed that in order to avoid ghettoization and to channelize the growth of Karachi in a planned manner Master Plan should be prepared immediately. 10. It is jointly agreed to upgrade the transport system in Karachi.
11. It is jointly agreed that a Public-Sector Women University should be established in Karachi.
12. It is jointly agreed that Safe City Project to be implemented in Karachi immediately.
13. Establishment of a Cottage Industrial Zone in Karachi was also agreed upon.
14. It is jointly agreed that rehabilitation of infrastructure in the industrial areas of the city on priority.
15. It is jointly agreed that the health and education sector shall be given immediate attention and investment. 16. It is jointly agreed that the establishment of Hyderabad University shall be facilitated.
17. It is jointly agreed that a commission shall be established with an agreement to resolve issues of occupied evacuee land as per law.
18. MQM-P and PPP have agreed that all major political, administrative and economic decisions in Sindh shall be taken as per the constitution.

We will fight back: Fawad

FROM PAGE 01

He made it clear prime minister not resign. He said the PTI had a firm stand that the Pakistan Army was a guarantor of the national security and stability. Unlike the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz which attempted to "conquer" the institutions during its government tenures, he said, the PTI had been working with them in close coordination for the national progress and prosperity. The minister said the gist of the letter had also been shared with some anchorpersons, who hosted talk shows on the foreign affairs. "In the next phase, we have a plan to table it [letter] in an in-camera session of the Parliament," he added. The government had already expressed its desire to share the letter with the Chief Justice of Pakistan. "The kind of language, plan and threats given in the letter are unacceptable for any sovereign country," said Fawad, who believed that the prime minister would continue to fight for the country's integrity and sovereignty, and the respect of nation. Ruling out the possibility of the PM's resignation, he said Imran Khan would fight till the last ball. He also equated the current political situation with the 1992 Cricket World Cup when the Pakistan team had a poor start, but eventually won its final.

Briefs

Azerbaijan committed to achieving green energy targets

BAKU: Energy Minister Parviz Shahbazov has said that during the current catclysms, Azerbaijan is one of the few countries that has been seamlessly and continuously implementing its goals for green energy. He made the remarks during a panel discussion on the drivers of a just and social energy transition at the 8th Berlin Energy Transition Dialogue, an international conference. "Azerbaijan is a country that does not depend on external suppliers in the energy sector and has no problems with energy security," he said. The minister noted that the export of oil, gas and electricity today contributes to the energy security of European countries along with the countries of the region. He emphasized that Azerbaijan's energy independence, meeting the demand for energy at the expense of internal capabilities is the country's strength and advantage. "This allows us to take a step from energy security to decarbonization. Let's further increase the share of green energy in our energy mix. Currently, we continue to play the role of a reliable partner, and we are also implementing plans for the widespread use of renewable energy sources," he said. He added that without ensuring energy security, economic development, social welfare and environmental security are impossible. During the panel discussions, the energy minister shared his views on energy transition, energy security actualized compared to decarbonization under the conditions of unprecedented uncertainties, as well as the factors ensuring the energy independence of Azerbaijan and the course of renewable energy. - Agencies

Emerging youth demand to restart sculpture classes

ISLAMABAD: The emerging youth Wednesday demanded to restart sculpture classes at Pakistan National Council of Arts (PNCA) to get and avail the opportunity under the supervision of senior artists. Talking to APP, an official of PNCA Masroor Shah said PNCA would again restart sculpture classes to provide platform to those interested in such technique art. Sculpture, an artistic form in which hard or plastic materials are worked into three-dimensional art objects. The designs may be embodied in freestanding objects, in reliefs on surfaces, or in environments ranging from tableaux to contexts that envelop the spectator would be taught. An enormous variety of media may be used, including clay, wax, stone, metal, fabric, glass, wood, plaster, rubber, and random "found" objects. Materials may be carved, modeled, cast, wrought, welded, sewn, assembled, or otherwise shaped and combined. - APP

China and Pak sign MoU to enhance vocational training

BITC has carried out 32 foreign trainings for food inspectors and other technicians of countries along the "Belt and Road," with 888 trainees

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chinese and Pakistani Technical Institutes signed MoU to enhance skill development cooperation between both countries. According to Gwadar Pro, Beijing Industrial Technician College (BITC) and Punjab University of Technology, Rasul (PUT Rasul) signed an MoU to enhance sister college relations for long-term collaboration to increase international education exchange and strengthen vocational education and training cooperation. To further promote mutual understanding and friendship, both institutions under this MoU will develop cooperation in vocational education and training, focusing on teacher training and study tours. This MoU's potential outcome will be and not be limited to exchange and visits, study tours for students, customized professional development programs for trainers, teachers facilitated by BITC, and course and latest curriculum development. Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Dr. Rauf-i-Azam, Vice-Chancellor, Punjab



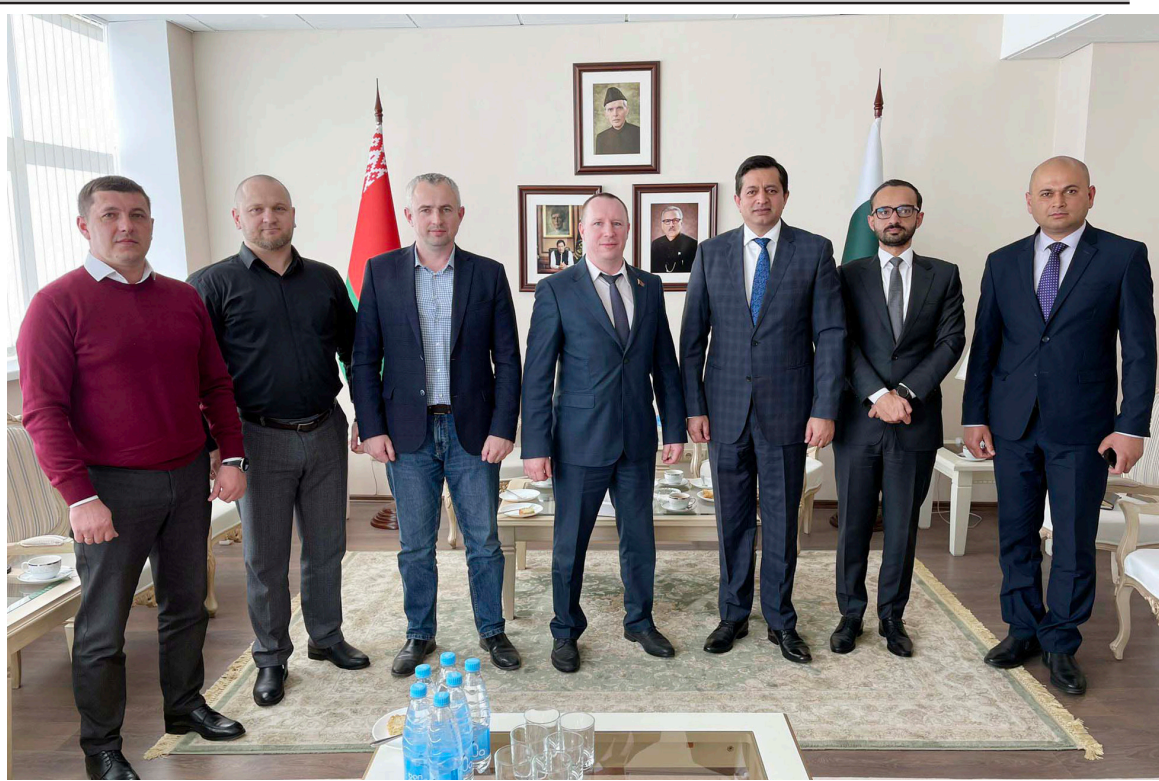
University of Technology, said that PUT Rasul was established through an Act of the Provincial Assembly of Punjab in 2018. Despite being launched recently, PUT Rasul has a rich history and enviable legacy of producing engineering professionals for more

than a century. PUT Rasul offers various BS programs related to Civil Engineering Technology, Electrical Engineering Technology, Mechanical Engineering Technology, Software Engineering Technology, Technology Management. He said this MoU would

bring forward the two institutions and help foster Pakistan-China relations. Cai Xizhong, President of Beijing Industrial Technician College, said that Beijing Industrial Technician College is subordinate to the Department of Human Resources and Social Security, with more than 3500 students. There are four major faculties and 25 majors, including Intelligent manufacturing, Environmental testing, Automobile maintenance services, and Cultural and creative industries. He said that the college is China's training base for four projects of WorldSkills International: CNC lathe, CNC milling, Water treatment technology, and Mechatronics. BITC has received experts and players from many countries for exchange visits. BITC has also won five gold medals, two silver medals, one bronze medal, and one prize in the world skills international; the gold medal rate is 50%, and the medal rate is 80%. BITC has carried out 32 foreign trainings for food inspectors and other technicians of countries along the "Belt and Road," with 888 trainees, covering more than 40 countries such as Cambodia and Burma.

Azerbaijan, UK eye military cooperation

BAKU: Azerbaijani Defence Minister Col-Gen Zakir Hasanov and UK Minister for Armed Forces, MP James Heappey have discussed military cooperation between the two countries, the ministry reported on March 30. In welcoming the visitor, Hasanov stated that the development of relations between the two countries is always a priority for Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev. Hasanov provided detailed information on the work done in the liberated territories following the victory in the 44-day war, as well as the situation in the Karabakh economic zone and on the Azerbaijani-Armenian border. The minister also thanked the UK for its assistance in clearing mines and explosive ordnance from Azerbaijan's liberated land as part of the UN Development Program. In turn, Heappey said that mutual visits and meetings between the two countries are important for the expansion of bilateral relations. Finally, the parties discussed the prospects for military cooperation and other issues. The UK contributed over AZN 1 million (£500,000) to Azerbaijan's recovery efforts and demining activities in its liberated lands, the UK embassy reported earlier. UK Ambassador to Azerbaijan James Sharp said in a video address posted on the embassy's Twitter account (September 2, 2021) that landmines and unexploded ordnance in the liberated areas pose a threat to people's lives and there have been over 150 victims of mine explosions following the 2020 war. ibed the former conflict zone as one of the world's most mine-littered areas based on his own observations. Therefore, the UK as a leading country in mine clearance, along with international organizations, takes active measures in the demining activities on Azerbaijan's liberated territories, he said. - Agencies



MINSK: Pakistan ambassador to Belarus Sajjad Haider meets with Vice Chairman of Belarusian Liberal Democrat Party & accompanying business delegation and briefed on Pak-Belarus ties, prospect for economic co-op. - DNA

Students receive 'Jinnah Writers Award' in Ankara

Award ceremony for 5th edition of essay competition saw attendance of Turkish deputy education minister, Pakistani ambassador

ANKARA: Talented high school students in Türkiye on Tuesday received "Jinnah Young Writers Awards" at a ceremony hosted by Pakistan's embassy in Ankara, in collaboration with the Turkish Education Ministry. The award ceremony for the fifth edition of the essay competition saw the attendance of Turkish Deputy Education Minister PetekA-

skar and Pakistani Ambassador to Ankara Syrus Sajjad Qazi. Speaking on the occasion, Askar said: "It is our duty to strengthen the bridge of brotherhood and friendship that our ancestors built in the past." "Joint initiatives, as Jinnah Young Writers Award aimed at further deepening of cooperation in education and cementing bonds of friendship between both countries," she said. She underscored that Pakistani students studying in Türkiye and Turkish Maarif Foundation schools in Pakistan were reflective of growing cooperation between the two countries in the field of education. Qazi, for his part, said that the two countries celebrate "75 years of bilateral diplomatic relations." - DNA



German public debt rises to 2.3 trn euros

BERLIN: Germany's public debt grew by almost 147 billion euros year-on-year and reached a new record high of 2.3 trillion euros (2.55 trillion U.S. dollars) in 2021, according to official figures released on Wednesday. The increase in the country's national debt was mainly caused by "actions taken to address the COVID-19 pandemic," said the Federal Statistical Office (Destatis). In the first two years of the COVID-19 pandemic, Germany supported its economy with 130 billion euros, including 24 billion euros for short-time work benefits, a form of state aid to avoid layoffs during crisis. In mid-March, the government agreed to take the new debt of almost 100 billion euros in 2022. "With what is likely to be the last pandemic budget, we already wanted to make progress on the road to fiscal normality," said German Minister of Finance Christian Lindner. - APP

DRC helicopter crash: UN chief saddened

WEB DESK

NEW YORK : UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said he was saddened by the deaths of eight peacekeepers in a helicopter crash in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) on Tuesday. The secretary-general was deeply saddened to confirm the deaths of eight peacekeepers onboard a Puma helicopter that crashed in North Kivu province of the DRC, Stephane Dujarric, Guterres' spokesman, said in a statement. The helicopter was on a reconnaissance mission in Tshanzu, where there have been clashes between the March 23 Movement (M23) rebel group and the DRC military in recent days, it said, adding that an investigation is underway. Guterres expressed his sincere condolences to the bereaved families and the governments of Pakistan, Russia and Serbia, the peacekeepers' home countries. He is deeply concerned by the resurgence of M23 activities in the Rwanda-DRC-Uganda border area and the ongoing impact of violence involving armed groups on civilians, said the statement. The secretary-general reiterated the UN's commitment to supporting the Congolese government and people in their effort to bring peace and stability to the eastern provinces of the country, it said. The Democratic Republic of the Congo military said Tuesday that the UN helicopter was shot down by March 23 Movement rebels, which is yet to be confirmed by the United Nations.

Chinese envoy calls on DRC to strengthen governance

BEIJING: A Chinese envoy called on the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to strengthen governance in the eastern part of the country and enhance security through development. China is gravely concerned about the deteriorating security situation in eastern DRC, with violence by armed groups becoming more active and attacks on civilians more frequent, said Sun Zhiqiang, counselor of the Chinese Permanent Mission to the United Nations, on Tuesday. The causes for the prolonged turbulence in eastern DRC are intricate and complex and will not be rooted out by military means alone. China supports the DRC government in strengthening governance; promoting reforms in key sectors; implementing the disarmament, demobilization, community reintegration and stabilization program; and exercising effective control of its eastern region, he told the Security Council. "It is important to value the role of development in enhancing security, and make use of the advantages in natural resources to create jobs, improve livelihoods, and eliminate poverty, so as to break the vicious cycle of violence," he said. - APP

Thailand industrial production index falls

BANGKOK: Thailand's industrial production index, a gauge of manufacturing activity, fell in February, snapping a five-month rising streak, official data showed on Wednesday. The reading in February declined 2.35 percent from the previous month to 102, compared with an increase of 2.15 percent registered in January, according to data released by the Office of Industrial Economics (OIE). The country's manufacturing capacity utilization rate also fell from 65.69 percent in January to 64.8 percent, according to the OIE. On a year-on-year basis, the production index climbed 2.75 percent last month, and was up 2.38 percent for the Jan.-Feb. period this year. A breakdown of the index showed that electronic component manufacturing and petroleum refining were among industries with high year-on-year production growth in February. - APP

France reports over 200,000 new Covid cases

ISLAMABAD: France on Tuesday reported 217,480 new COVID-19 cases detected in the past 24 hours, the highest daily number since the country lifted most COVID-19 restrictions on March 14. According to the French Public Health Agency, 21,300 COVID-19 patients are currently hospitalized, with 1,538 in intensive care. As the French presidential elections are approaching, the government is likely to encourage elderly and vulnerable people to wear masks during the first round of voting on April 10, local media reported on Tuesday. - APP

Turkey, Uzbekistan level up strategic ties

DNA

ANKARA: Turkey and Uzbekistan have leveled up bilateral ties to a comprehensive strategic partnership, Recep Tayyip Erdogan said, expressing the countries' target to increase the current \$3.6 billion bilateral trade volume to \$10 billion. "As a result of our meetings, we raised the relations between our countries to the level of comprehensive strategic partnership," Er-

dogan said at a news conference alongside Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev on March 29. The total trade volume exceeded \$3.6 billion with an increase of nearly 72 percent last year, he said, noting the two countries set a one-year target of \$5 billion for 2022. "Then, we will not stop there, we will raise the level to \$10 billion with the joint steps we will take later," Erdogan added. The president recalled that Turkey was the first country to recognize Uzbekistan's

independence and open an embassy in Tashkent and emphasized strong relations based on common history, culture, language and faith. The two countries signed 10 agreements, including a Preferential Trade Agreement, during Erdogan's visit. Stating that Turkish companies' investments in Uzbekistan have reached \$1.5 billion, Erdogan said that contracting companies have successfully completed 241 projects worth \$5 billion in the country so far.



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Briefs

Female seminary teacher slaughtered

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: Though the Police confirmed slaughtering of seminary teacher in Southern Dera Ismael Khan on the grounds of Blasphemy in according to confessional statements of three accused but Ulema including Chief of concerned organ disagreed and termed it a well planned plot against religious seminaries. In a religious seminary for girls, Jamia Lil Binat Al Falah Islamia a teacher was slaughtered by three other girls in Anjumabad Dera Ismael Khan on Tuesday morning. Police officer Azeem Wazir said that all three accused have been arrested soon after the incident and they are also students of same seminary. He said that two out of three accused are real sisters and third one is their paternal aunt. He, however, informed that all three accused and deceased female teacher are belong to Mehsud tribe from South Waziristan but settled in Anjumabad locality of Dera Ismael Khan. Azeem Wazir who is SHO of Cant Police Station told this scribe that the accused while confessing crime said, "deceased teacher went on laughing during discussion on the life of Muhammad (PBUH). She continued laughing for a while and reminded about indulging herself of committing Blasphemy." The accused further said, "another girl student of around 12 or 13 year of age, told us that she was directed in dream as the teacher deserve murder on the grounds of Blasphemy."

IHC asks minister to meet Baloch students

USMAN CHAUDHRY

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday instructed the Interior Minister Shiekh Rashid Ahmed to address the grievances of Baloch students of Qaid e Azam University Islamabad after conducting a meeting with them. Chief Justice Athar Minallah heard the case pertaining the grievances of the Baloch students and sought report till Friday. At the outset of hearing, the chief justice remarked that the students had been agitating but they were ignored. "Why the students have the concept that a social profiling of them was being conducted" he questioned. The deputy attorney general adopted the stance that the federal government was taking serious measures to address the matter. Many ministers visited the students and heard their grievances, he said. Imaan Mazari Advocate said that the Baloch students wanted to place their issues themselves before this court. The further hearing of the case was then adjourned till April 1.

Intra-Yemen dialogue opens in Riyadh

RIYADH: Intra-Yemeni talks started on Wednesday in the Saudi capital, Riyadh, under the auspices of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). "Today's talks are closely followed up by all Yemenis, amid hopes to reach a solution between rivals," GCC Secretary-General Nayef al-Hajraf told the opening session of the talks. "A peaceful solution is the only way to Yemen's crisis," he stressed. The GCC-sponsored talks seek to probe ways of restoring peace to Yemen, which fell into civil war since 2014. Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Hussein Ibrahim Taha, said dialogue is the only way to resolve the 8-year conflict in Yemen. "The Yemeni people have the right to aspire to a decent life and a better future," he added. Houthi rebels have boycotted the talks, demanding the dialogue be held in a "neutral country". - APP

Korea to increase EDCF loans for Pakistan: Envoy

The Embassy of the Republic of Korea and the University of Peshawar jointly organized a seminar on the Current Situation in Afghanistan and the Regional Plans for Peace-building on the 8th of December at University of Peshawar Campus

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador Republic of Korea Suh Sangpyo on Wednesday said the government of Korea will increase the Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) loans for Pakistan upto US\$ One billion for five years (2022-26). In an exclusive chat with media, the Korean Ambassador said that in 2019, Korea signed the framework agreement with Pakistan to provide \$500 million of EDCF loans that give financial space for the construction of infrastructure in Pakistan. Ambassador Sangpyo said there are multiple projects underway between Pakistan and Korea as in the business sector, both countries partner in the automobile, transportation, hydropower, smartphones, and confectionaries production sectors. While further elaborating the cooperation in various areas, he said Administrator of the Rural Development Administration

(RDA) of the Republic of Korea (RoK), Taewoong Hur and his delegation visited Pakistan from August 3rd to 5th past year and paid courtesy call to the Prime Minister. Hur inaugurated the KOPIA Pakistan Center and chaired the Joint Symposium for Agricultural Technical Cooperation between the two countries. The technical Cooperation projects include self-sufficiency of virus free potato seed multiplication by Aeroponic Technique, Chili production and post-harvest management technology development in Pakistan, and establishment of production technology of major fodder crops in Pakistan, he added. "New Technical Cooperation Projects Signing Ceremony between Korea Program on International Agriculture (KOPIA) Center, Rural Development Administration (RDA) and Ministry of National Food Security & Research (MNFSR), Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) was held on May 4, 2021," the Ambassador said.

He also underlined the collaboration in the field of EDCF and IT Park. The ambassador and Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunications, Syed Amin ul Haque inaugurated the Islamabad Technology Park in May, 2021. "Around 1,500 Pakistani students are studying in Korea in undergraduate and graduate programs. Global Korea Scholarship (GKS) provides international students with opportunities to conduct advanced studies in undergraduate & graduate programs at higher educational institutions in the Republic of Korea in order to promote international exchanges in education and mutual friendship between countries", he informed. The Embassy of the Republic of Korea and the University of Peshawar jointly organized a seminar on the Current Situation in Afghanistan and the Regional Plans for Peace-building on the 8th of December at the University of Peshawar Campus. More than 200 Masters and PhD students attended the seminar

and held interactive discussions over lunch with the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea Suh Sangpyo and the panelists. In the field of education, he said the University level Cooperation included PMAS-Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi and the Chungbuk National University memorandum of understanding (MOU). The institutions agreed to cooperate over full spectrum of mutual interest with specific agreements on January 26, 2022 which included academic and technical staff Exchange for joint research, joint publication of research paper etc. The Korean Embassy was also active contributing Climate Change Crisis Cooperation. The Embassy in its commitment to support the Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Initiative of the Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan has donated Ten Thousand Trees under the second phase of the Pak-RoK Friendship Forest, which is aimed at helping Pakistan in its fight against Climate Change.

Russia continues bombing Ukraine cities

AGENCIES

KYIV: Russian forces bombarded the outskirts of Kyiv and a besieged city in northern Ukraine on Wednesday, a day after promising to scale down operations there in what the West dismissed as a ploy to regroup by invaders suffering heavy losses. Nearly five weeks into an invasion in which it has failed to capture any major cities, Russia had said on Tuesday it would curtail operations near Kyiv and the northern city of Chernihiv "to increase mutual trust" for peace talks. "It's not true," Kyiv mayor Vitali Klitschko said in a video address to EU regional officials. "The whole night we listened to sirens, to rocket attacks and we listened to huge explosions east of Kyiv and north of Kyiv. There are immense battles there, people died, still die." Intensified bombardment could be heard in Kyiv on Wednesday morning from suburbs where Ukrainian forces have regained territory in recent days. The capital itself was not hit, but windows rattled from the relentless artillery on its outskirts. Reuters journalists southeast of Irpin, a Kyiv suburb which has seen intense fighting for weeks, heard frequent shelling and ordnance exploding on the ground and in the air. Ukrainians evacuating spoke of heavy shelling north of Irpin, shells landing in Irpin itself and dead bodies in the streets. Ukraine and Western leaders had cautioned that Moscow's apparent peace gesture at Tuesday's talks in Istanbul was a cover for reorganizing forces that had failed to take Kyiv.

FM holds talks with Russian, Iranian FMs

Foreign Minister Dr. Abdollahian reaffirmed Iran's desire to further strengthen fraternal ties in diverse areas of bilateral cooperation. He also extended an invitation to the Foreign Minister to visit Iran to carry forward the process of expansion of bilateral relations

DNA

TUNXI: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi met his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov in China on Wednesday. In the context of the discussions held during Prime Minister Imran Khan's recent visit to Moscow and their own telephone conversation earlier this month, the two Foreign Ministers reviewed bilateral relations and exchanged views on the regional situation. Foreign Minister Qureshi shared Pakistan's principled position on the situation in Ukraine including cessation of hostilities, provision of humanitarian assistance, and efforts for a solution through dialogue and diplomacy. He expressed the hope that talks between Russia and Ukraine would succeed in finding a diplomatic solution. Shah Mahmood Qureshi also conveyed Pakistan's readiness to reinforce efforts for a diplomatic solution including

through the OIC platform. Separately, Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi met with Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. Hossein Amir Abdollahian. During the meeting, the two Foreign Ministers had a comprehensive review of bilateral relations and the regional situation. Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi, referring to the frequent high-level exchanges, reaffirmed Pakistan's desire to strengthen bilateral cooperation in all areas. He expressed the hope that the Joint Economic Commission session would be held at the earliest to boost trade and economic collaboration. The Foreign Minister expressed satisfaction on the facilitative movement of trucks under TIR, which would further strengthen economic linkages in the region. The Foreign Minister also underscored the importance of earliest completion of border markets in the context of enhanced bilateral economic cooperation. Foreign Minister Qureshi appreciated Iran's steadfast support for the Kashmir cause, especially at the Supreme Leader level. The Foreign Minister also briefed on the unprovoked violation of Pakistan's airspace by an Indian supersonic missile, underlining that such actions were fraught with grave implications and represented a serious threat to regional peace and stability. On the situation in Afghanistan, Foreign Minister Qureshi highlighted that as neighbours, Pakistan and Iran had been closely coordinating. Pakistan would continue to play its role for political and economic stability of Afghanistan, which would ultimately benefit the entire region. Foreign Minister Dr. Abdollahian reaffirmed Iran's desire to further strengthen fraternal ties in diverse areas of bilateral cooperation. He also extended an invitation to the Foreign Minister to visit Iran to carry forward the process of expansion of bilateral relations.



TUNXI: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi met his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov in China on Wednesday. - DNA

At least six personnel killed in militants attack

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: At least six personnel including a junior commissioned officer of armed forces were killed and over two dozen others injured when militants attacked Frontier Constabulary camp in Southern Tank city of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in wee hours of Wednesday. The Police high ups also said that three alleged terrorists were killed during the encounter which was continued till morning. Reports from Tank reveal that a group of militants attacked the Frontier Constabulary camp situated in most sensitive area on mid night between Tuesday and Wednesday. The militants opened indiscriminate firing with modern and sophisticated weapons against the personnel, majority of whom were on sleep. However, immediately the personnel went on retaliation. The encounter was continued for several hours and according to DPO Waqar Ahmad Khan ended with killing of all three terrorists by morning. Soon after miscreants attack, emergency was declared in District Headquarter Hospital whereas according to local journalist around 29 persons mostly personnel of security forces shifted from the site. The DPO office later confirmed that six personnel including a junior commissioned officer of armed forces were killed and 22 others injured. Conditions of several injured stated precarious.

Turkey sends 1,478 tons of aid to Afghanistan

ANKARA: Turkey's fourth "Kindness Train" carrying humanitarian aid to war-torn Afghanistan departed from the capital Ankara on Wednesday. Following the instructions of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, a farewell ceremony was held at the historical Ankara Train Station for the train carrying food, clothing and health supplies within the scope of the "Afghanistan Kindness Train Project." The initiative has been organized with the support of 25 nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that came together under the coordination of the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD). Speaking at the ceremony, Deputy Interior Minister Ismail Catakli said that the train will deliver 1,478 tons of aid materials to Afghanistan. Underlining the fact that Afghanistan has faced war, internal conflicts, hunger and misery for years, Catakli said: "Around 3.5 million people are displaced and close to 25 million people in need of basic humanitarian assistance. There are around 13.5 million children whose access to basic food is difficult." Emphasizing that the Turkish nation has stood by the oppressed in every period of history, Catakli said: "While doing this, it did not look at their religion or sect. It did not look at the color of their eyes, hair and skin. It did not look at what geography they were

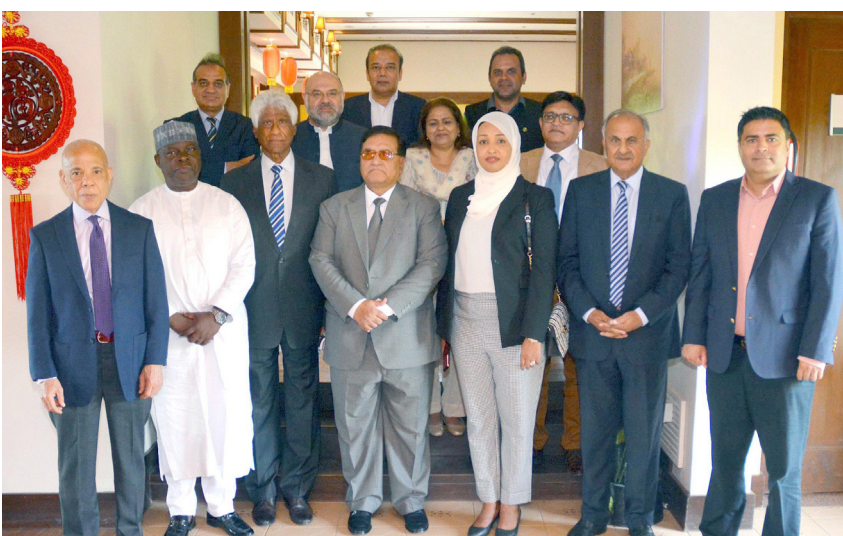
in. We inherited this understanding from our ancestors. Today we continue that understanding and I hope we will pass this trust on to our children." AFAD Chair Yunus Sezer emphasized that Turkey extends a helping hand to people facing difficulties in countries such as Ukraine, Afghanistan and Lebanon, and said, "Our train services will reach those in need during the holy month of Ramadan. In this sense, we will bid farewell to a very valuable aid train." After the speeches, the first train from the fourth expedition of the Kindness Train Project began its journey to Afghanistan, where 2,663 tons of humanitarian aid has so far been delivered within the scope of the project aboard seven trains across three trips in January and February. Aid groups describe Afghanistan's plight as one of the world's most rapidly growing humanitarian crises. According to the United Nations, half the population now faces acute hunger, over 9 million people have been displaced and millions of children are out of school. Previously, the U.N. and its partners launched a \$4.4 billion funding appeal to avert a humanitarian catastrophe in Afghanistan in 2022. U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has also warned that millions of Afghans are on the verge of death, urging the international community to release Afghanistan's frozen assets and jump-start its banking system. - APP

I will be Pakistan ambassador to Somalia: Khadija

Ambassador Khadija is leaving Pakistan after six years as she has been elected as Member of Somali parliament. She said she would happily like to serve as Pakistan's ambassador to Somalia

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Somalia to Pakistan Khadija Mohamed Almkhazoumi has said she was leaving Pakistan on a positive note and when relations between the two countries were on an upward trajectory. She made these remarks while speaking on the occasion of farewell lunch hosted by Zafar Bakhtawari. Ambassadors of African countries as well as former Senators and businessmen attended the lunch. Besides, officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were also present on the occasion. Ambassador Khadija is leaving Pakistan after six years as she has been elected as Member of Somali parliament. She said she would happily like to serve as Pakistan's ambassador to Somalia. "As Somali Ambassador to Pakistan, I considered my role was to facilitate the contacts between the players in the economic field, to get them to know each other better and also to interconnect in a better way and I am pleased to announce that I was able to bring peoples of both countries even closer". She further said, in 1969, Pakistan and Somalia were among



the founding members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Somalia's relations with Pakistan remained strong in the following years and through the ensuing civil war period, when the Pakistani military contributed to a UN peacekeeping operation in southern Somalia. She hoped that even in future this cooperation will continue adding she would continue to play her role for further strengthening and promotion of bilateral relations. The host Zafar Bakhtawari in his speech paid rich tributes to the outgoing ambassador and recognized her services which she rendered for promotion and strengthening of bilateral relations. He said, during her tenure a number of milestones were achieved. He said Somalia actively participated the both OIC conferences organized by Pakistan. He said Pakistan accorded huge importance to its relations with the African and Arab countries adding Africa happens to be an emerging market and Pakistani businessmen must benefit from this opportunity. Former Senator Abdul Qayyum also spoke on the occasion and expressed best wishes for Ambassador Khadija for her future role as a parliamentarian.