



Islamabad POST

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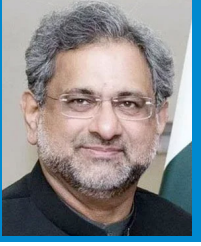
Detailed News On Page-08

Shehbaz Sharif will take the CPEC forward

Detailed News On Page-07

Khaqan Abbasi refuses to take ministry

Detailed News On Page-08



Briefs

PM greets Christian community

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday extended his greetings to the Christian community, living in Pakistan and across the globe, on the celebrations of Easter. On his twitter handle, the prime minister lauded the services rendered by the Christian community in all walks of life since the creation of Pakistan. "Happy Easter to the Christian community in Pakistan & around the world. We greatly value & laud the services that our Christian Pakistanis have rendered in all walks of life since the creation of Pakistan."

Imran terms Hamza's election 'sham'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: PTI chairman says his party rejects "this sham mafia-captured elections". Says what happened in Punjab Assembly was condemnable & against all democratic norms & constitutional provisions. PTI Chairman Imran Khan on Sunday condemned the violence and ruckus that took place in the Punjab Assembly one day prior and said that such an act was against the prescribed norms of democracy and the Constitution. Taking to Twitter, the PTI chairman wrote: "What happened in Punjab Assembly was condemnable & against all democratic norms and constitutional provisions".

PTI govt ignored Karachi

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Information Secretary Mariyum Aurangzeb on Sunday lashed out at former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan for "ignoring Karachi during his government's tenure". The PML-N leader's statement came a day after Imran held a rally in Karachi against the government which he dubbed as "imported".



DIAMER: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif addressing the local and Chinese Engineers and Labourers at Diamir Bhasha Dam construction site. - DNA

Cabinet expected to take oath today

Negotiations for ministries end as PPP decide to join federal cabinet

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) stands divided over joining the new federal cabinet even after the passage of six days to the formation of the new government, media reported on Sunday, citing sources. Sources privy to the matter said that former president Asif Ali Zardari is against joining the federal cabinet, while PPP chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari is keen to join the cabinet. They said that the PPP is more interested in holding constitutional positions as compared to the ministries in the federal cabinet, while PML-N has not yet decided in this context. The PPP has asked for constitutional positions including four governors and has demanded three important ministries in the federal cabinet. The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has not responded to the demands of the PPP including Senate chairmanship and others so far.

Continued on Page 06

PPP to get foreign ministry: Rana Sanaullah

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: PML-N leader Rana Sanaullah on Sunday said that following consultation between the allied parties of the government, PPP will likely get to head the foreign ministry. Speaking to the media, Sanaullah said that the allied parties have completed the talks related to the distribution of ministries, however, the parties have asked for a day to deliberate on the decision. "The ministries have been divided among the allied parties and now each party will name their preferred candidates," he said. Sanaullah said that in accordance with

Continued on Page 06

Saudi Crown Prince felicitates Shehbaz

The Prime Minister thanked Saudi Arabia for its historic and continued support and cooperation



ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif received a telephone call from HRH Prince Mohammad Bin Salman

Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Crown Prince warmly congratulated Mr. Shehbaz Sharif on his election as the Prime Minister of Pakistan. The Prime Minister thanked the Crown Prince for the felicitations and expressed his resolve to work closely with the Kingdom to enhance and further strengthen bilateral relations between their two countries. During the course of their most warm and friendly conversation, the Prime Minister paid rich tributes to the Custodian of

Continued on Page 06

Visits Diamer-Bhasha site

D-B Dam to be lifeline for economy: PM

"I insist to go ahead of its timeline of 2029 and complete it by 2026-27. It will be a miracle, if we achieve it", says PM

STAFF REPORT / DNA

DIAMER: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday said that completion of Diamer-Bhasha dam would serve as future lifeline for country's economy, augmenting the power generation, besides boosting agriculture activities. Speaking after a briefing over the construction of Diamer-Bhasha Dam here, the prime minister said that 4500 MW project was of immense importance for the country's economy and stressed that it should be completed ahead of its construction time line of the year 2029.

"I insist to go ahead of its timeline of 2029 and complete it by 2026-27. It will be a miracle, if we achieve it. Nothing is impossible in this world. We can achieve it if we advance in unison," he added. The prime minister said that the project was initiated by former prime minister Nawaz Sharif during 2016 and funds were provided by the

Pakistan urges Afghan authorities to secure border

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Sunday asked the Afghanistan government to secure Pak-Afghan border region and take stern actions against the individuals involved in terrorist activities in Pakistan, in

Continued on Page 06

Punjab Governor says PM Shahbaz can't sack me

STAFF REPORT

LAHORE: Punjab Governor Omer Sarfraz Cheema on Sunday said the prime minister did not have the authority to dismiss him and only the president could do so.

The recently appointed governor's remarks came amid speculation that he was being removed from the position by the federal government. "The prime minister does not have this kind of authority [to remove the governor]," Cheema said in a press conference in Lahore. "He [should send] a summary to the president because I am holding this office with

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At least 14 wounded in S. Carolina mall shooting - Page 06

Shehbaz Sharif to take CPEC forward: Senator Mushahid - Page 07

Captivating Qawwali night held at Serena Hotel - Page 08

No one allowed to take law into hands: COAS

COAS visited Combined Military Hospital Lahore (CMH) and inquired about the well being of Major Haris



STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa visited Lahore Garrison over the weekend. On his arrival COAS was received by Corps Commander Lieutenant General Muhammad Abdul Aziz. COAS visited Combined Military Hospital

Lahore (CMH) and inquired about the well being of Major Haris who was manhandled and injured in a road rage incident recently. COAS said that law will take its course. Perpetrators, who are under arrest, will be brought to justice. No one can be allowed to take law into their hands, COAS assured. Later COAS interacted with garrison officers and veterans in two separate interactive sessions. COAS appreciated Lahore Corps for maintaining high standards of operational preparedness and training. He said that Misinformation and propaganda threatens state integrity requiring timely and unified response to effectively counter speculations and rumours. Army draw its strength from people and any effort to create wedge between army and population won't be tolerated. The hostile forces are trying this for a long time but they won't succeed, Insha Allah, COAS concluded.

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Briefs

BNP, BAP
leaders
call on PM
Shehbaz
Sharif

ISLAMABAD: Balochistan National Party chief Akhtar Mengal and Balochistan Awami Party parliamentary leader Khalid Magsi on Sunday called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. During the meeting, leaders of both parties congratulated Shehbaz Sharif on taking oath of the office of Prime Minister and expressed their resolve to work closely with the federal government for the socio-economic prosperity of the country. PML-N Members of the National Assembly Khawaja Saad Rafique, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq and Rana Sanullah were also present during the meeting. PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. The Prime Minister appreciated Akhtar Mengal, Khalid Magsi and their leaders for showing resolve to work collectively for strengthening of the democracy and public welfare. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in a meeting with a delegation of BNP Mengal. -DNA

Moments of silence observed globally for Ms Bilquis Edhi

LAHORE: Apex academia in over 90 countries observed 'Moments of Silence' for Ms Bilquis Edhi, as a mark of reverence during the burial services moments in Pakistan, says a news release issued by AOPDA here on Sunday. Apex academicians of the world mourn the irreparable loss of Pakistan's Bilquis Bano Edhi - the towering humanitarian, the icon of morality, the savior of lost cause, the righteousness personified, the mother of hundreds of thousands of orphans and unwanted children. The Asia & Oceania Post-Doctoral Academia (AOPDA) had conceded a perseverance resolution to observe the moment of silence in the postdoctoral institutions of over 90

countries in lieu of the corresponding moments when burial services were being paid to the person of two decades, Ms. Bilquis Bano Edhi. The resolution was consented and duly ratified by postdoc academicians under the patronage of Justice (R) Dr. S. S. Paru, the Chancellor Emeritus of AOPDA from Indonesia. The appeal to observe silence was moved and drafted by AOPDA P.I. Prof. Dr. Aurangzeb Hafiz of Pakistan, who was the co-recipient of Bi-decadal Merit Award with Ms Bilquis Edhi. She considered Prof Dr Aurangzeb Hafiz as her third son. Ms Bilquis Edhi was a professional nurse and head of the Bilquis Edhi Foundation. She spent more than six decades of her life in serving



humanity. Her charity has saved over 42,000 unwanted babies so far by placing "jhoolas" (cradles) at the Edhi Homes and centres across Pakistan. Last year, she was de-

clared the 'most impactful person' in the 1st Bidecadal Merit Gazette of the 21st century by the Impact Hallmarks, a Britain based organization that conducted the century opinion poll. After the due process employed therein, the domino effect stated that the 21st century's Top Triarchy was triumphed by Ms Bilquis Edhi, the UN Rapporteur Prof Yanghee Lee and the US Ethicist Stephen Soldz. Along with other seven stalwarts, they "stretched and segmented the top of the top 10 hierarchy out of over 1.6 million notables with diverse backgrounds from over 190 countries. She was called by Impact Hallmarks, "the true patron of change, the

flag-bearer of righteousness and the domino effect architect of the Top-10 of the impact hierarchy of the two decades 2000-2010 and 2010-2020. Called the Mother of Pakistan Ms Bilquis Edhi was given various national and foreign awards including Hilal-e-Imtiaz, the Lenin Peace Prize, Mother Teresa Memorial International Award for Social Justice (2015), and the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Public Service. No doubt, she deserved to be the person of two decades, but nevertheless, she would be remembered only as the person of two decades, yet she is the person of the centuries and generations to come, it added. - APP

LOST & FOUND

MUBASHIR AHMED S/O BASHIR AHMED holding CNIC# 34202-0845250-1 am the legal rightful owner of TOYOTA COROLA SALOON ,model year 2004 Registration no LZA 5202 Engine no. 3996460 and chassis no. CE1200015478. The original Sale invoice and sale Certificate of this vehicle issued in the name of MUBASHIR AHMED by indus motor Company LTD. has been lost on 05/02/2022 in kharian. finder may please return these documents to customer relations indus motor Company LTD. plot no. NWZ/1/P1, port qasim authority Karachi. Telephone num (Toll free) 080011123

Court Notice

In the court of Mis Mehshadi Sahiba Civil Judge Jhelum Title: Sultana mir VS District Collector etc Advertisement Name: Defendant no(5) Farah mir s/o Rizwan Ulla mir (7) Irfan ullah mir s/o Hidayat Ullah Mir r/o house no B-V-296 near Shandar chok pira gaib Jhelum(9) Naima mir d/o Hidayat Ullah Mir widow Akram butt r/o house no B-V-296 near shabir plaza Shandar chok jhelum (10) shahina mir d/o hadayat ullah mir w/o saleem raza r/o Uk(13) Farhan ullah mir s/o Akraam ullah mir (14) Sadia d/o Akraam ullah mir r/o house no B-V-296 near shabir plaza Shandar chok jhelum city Claim: suit for declaration As there is not possible to call the defendant's through Summon in the instant case so through proclamation in Newspaper, you are directed to appear or legal advisor in the court on 18-04-2022 at 8:00AM, otherwise ex-parte proceedings will be initiated.

Snap checking first result of monitoring of law: DPO



SAQIB MUSHTAQ

BAHAWALPUR: DPO abadit Nisar In order to control crime in the district, orders have been issued for effective snap checking at various places of the district at night as well as on external and internal routes. Elements

cannot be transported in the district, DPO. According to the details, as per the orders of IG Punjab, District Police Officer abadit Nisar while issuing instructions to the police officers across the district said that snap checking is the first result of practical monitoring of law breaking and a major legal weapon. If implemented with the positive results, many lawbreakers will be stopped prematurely, ensuring peace throughout the district, digging in the dark of night, increasing the risk of cattle theft and crime. With regard to control, effective snap checking instructions have been issued on the external and internal routes of the district in addition to different places of the district at night time.

Four-day rain-wind, thunderstorm in KP

Wind and hailstorm may cause damage to standing crops and orchards in province on evening and night of Monday and Tuesday

PESHAWAR: Regional Meteorological Centre (RMC) Sunday predicted dust-wind-thunderstorms and rain associated with isolated heavy rainfall and hailstorm in northern parts of the province from evening of Monday April 18 to Thursday April 21. The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) has dispatched an alert to all Deputy Commissioners in the province. Thunderstorm and rain associated with windstorm is expected at scat-

tered places in Chitral, Dir, Malakand, Buner, Swat, Shangla, Kohistan, Torghar, Battagram, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Haripur, Swabi, Mardan, Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Orakzai, Kurram and Hangu districts while at isolated places in Peshawar, Nowshera, Charsadda, Kohat, North and South Waziristan districts on Wednesday Thursday. Wind and dust storm may cause damages to vulnerable structures especially in Peshawar and other cities of the prov-

ince and power disruption in some cities on the evening and night of Monday and Tuesday. Wind and hailstorm may cause damage to standing crops and orchards in the province on evening and night of Monday and Tuesday. PDMA appealed to take all precautionary measures in order to avoid and minimize human losses and any damages to property. In case of any untoward incident people should contact PDMA helpline on 1700 round the clock. - APP

FESCO serves notices to 28 govt depts

Spokesperson appealed to govt departments to pay their current bills and defaulting amount as soon as possible otherwise to face disconnections without any further notice

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) has served final notices to 28 government departments for payment of arrears worth Rs.1278million. According to FESCO spokesman, on the special directives of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Engr. Bashir Ahmed and under the supervision of General Manager Operations Itrat Hussain, a special recovery campaign has been launched against FESCO defaulters, in order to ensure maximum recovery before the end of this fiscal year. Simi-

larly, special teams have deployed in eight districts for recovery of arrears. The spokesperson appealed to the government departments to pay their current bills and defaulting amount as soon as possible otherwise they have to face disconnections of electricity without any further notice. Among the defaulters, WASA Faisalabad owes Rs 733.28million. Similarly Punjab Public Health Engineering Department is defaulter of Rs.97.67 million, Punjab Irrigation and Power Department Rs.39.93 million, TMA Madina Town Faisalabad Rs.35.26 million, Punjab Police Rs.22.64 million

and Punjab Jail and Convict Settlement Rs.21.86 million, District and Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Faisalabad Rs.19.80 million, TMA Lyallpur Town Faisalabad Rs.14.25million, District Roads and Buildings Department Faisalabad Rs. 12.75million, National Highway Authority Rs. 6.16million, Pakistan Telecommunication 8.86 million, Punjab Livestock and Dairy Department Rs.7.37 million, TMA Iqbal Town Faisalabad Rs.6.27 million, TMA Jinnah Colony Faisalabad Rs. 4.78 million, Health Department District Toba Tek Singh 8.14 million, TMA Jhang Rs.3.25million, TMA Samundari Rs.

5.49million, TMA Chiniot Rs.6.96 million, TMA Gojra Rs.6.60 million, TMA Sargodha Rs.91.47 million, District and Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Sargodha Rs.8.04 million, TMA Bhalwal Rs.4.54 million, District Government Khushab Colleges Rs.14.32 million, TMA Khushab Rs. 33.41million, District and Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Khushab Rs. 23.40million, District and Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Mianwali Rs. 16.75million, Health Department Mianwali Rs. 4.51million, TMA Mianwali Rs. 5.10million and TMA Issa Khel owes Rs 18.48 million.

Police Driving School's Badge No. 78 training completed

BUREAU REPORT

BAHAWALPUR: Police Driving Training School's Morning and Evening Motorcycle / Motor Car and Jeep Badge No. 78 Training Completed, Distribution of Achievement Certificate to Students, Violation of Traffic Laws Lives are lost, best training is being provided in driving school to avoid fatal accidents and awareness about traffic rules is also being provided to the citizens, said DP abadit Nisar. According to details, DIG Capt R Syed Ahmed Mubeen Shaheed Police Driving Training School has been set up in Bahawalpur like other districts of Punjab to provide best training to the citizens. Apart from motorcycle / motorcar, the students are being imparted the best training in LTV. In this regard, achievement certificates were given to the students who completed the 78th batch training of motorcycle / motorcar during the two week long training. Students are trained on the first school track, in the second phase on busy roads with professional instructors to increase students' confidence while driving and at the end of the course students take written and practical test. The school staff provided complete training to the trainees in phases during the day and evening as well as vehicle maintenance, practical training including traffic sign boards, road safety and law abiding and good driver traits. Achievement certificates are issued to the best performing students. During the training, certificates were distributed to the students with outstanding performance by the Driving School in charge, DPO Ibadit Nisar said in his message that police driving. The school is taking advantage of modern technology, Apply / issue for learner and license at Police Service Centers only through National Identity Card without online test, recommendation and middleman, traffic accidents due to violation of traffic rules and less knowledgeable and inexperienced drivers. Many precious lives are lost in the country.

Bid to smuggle wheat foiled

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: 17 April 2022: As many as 1906 Metric Tonn wheat had been shifted to wheat procurement center after thwarted the smuggling attempt of wheat during last week and 7 FIRs have also registered for illegal transportation of wheat. This was stated at a review meeting chaired by Divisional Commissioner Zahid Hussain on implementation of wheat procurement campaign in division. Additional Commissioner Co-ordination Tariq Mahmood, ACs Umar Maqbool, Sahibzade Muhammad Yousof, DD Food Shahid Khokhar, Director Agriculture Ch. Abdul Hameed, DD Agriculture Khalid Mehmood and a representative officer of Punjab Police were also present. The meeting was informed that in a week, 216 raids were carried out across the division to check the illegal movement and storage of wheat and sacks of wheat were seized also. Divisional Commissioner said that complete record of distribution of bardana and procurement of wheat should be compiled.

Islamabad POST

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ANF recovers over 196 kg narcotics

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) conducted various operations in different areas of the country during last week and recovered over 196 kg narcotics and 1080 kg Ketamine besides netting 11 accused. According to an ANF Headquarters spokesman, ANF Sindh and ANF Intelligence conducted a raid near Karachi Malir-15 and held three drug smugglers namely Abdullah Siddiqui, Abdul Raheem and Syed Fasihullah on recovery of nine kg charras.

In another operation, ANF Peshawar and ANF Intelligence recovered 98 capsules containing 553 grams Ice and 133 grams heroin from a passenger namely Muhammad Rasool resident of Khyber. The accused was going to Bahrain from Bacha Khan International Airport through Gulf Airline, flight no GF-787. ANF Peshawar and ANF Intelligence foiled another attempt to smuggle narcotics and recovered 77 capsules containing 616 grams heroin from a passenger namely Muhammad Ayaz, going to Bahrain from Bacha Khan International Airport.

In fourth operation, ANF Peshawar and ANF Intelligence intercepted a Toyota Premio car near 'Pish-takhara Chowk', Peshawar and recovered over 33,600 kg charras besides arresting two accused namely Abu Bakar and Ramazan Farooq resident of Peshawar. ANF in an operation conducted at 'Bacha Khan' International Airport recovered 27 capsules containing 216 grams Ice. ANF Peshawar and ANF Intelligence on Friday night foiled a bid to smuggle Ice from Peshawar to Doha and recovered 216 grams Ice from a pas-

senger namely Waseem Abbas resident of Jhelum who was going to Doha through Qatar airline, flight no QR-601. ANF Karachi and ANF Intelligence while conducting a raid managed to recover 1080 liters Ketamine. The spokesman informed that ANF foiled a bid to smuggle 1080 liters Ketamine from Karachi to Dubai. 1080 liters Ketamine which was packed in 2180 Aloe vera water spray bottles was recovered from a container being sent to Dubai. The container was booked by a Karachi based company namely 'Sirena World'

and being sent to 'Bold Star General Company', Dubai. In an operation conducted at Islamabad International Airport, ANF recovered 82 capsules containing 679 grams narcotics. ANF foiled a bid to smuggle narcotics from Islamabad to Bahrain and recovered 644 grams heroin and 35 grams Ice from a passenger namely Kashif Ahmed who was going to Bahrain through PIA, flight no. PK-187. ANF Rawalpindi and ANF Intelligence conducted a raid on Islamabad Ringar Highway and recovered 151,600 kg narcotics including 81,600 kg char-

ras and 69,600 kg opium from a truck. Truck driver namely Amir Ali resident of Okara was also arrested during the operation. In another operation conducted at Islamabad International Airport, ANF Rawalpindi recovered 106 capsules containing 677 grams heroin and 211 grams Ice from a passenger namely Zahir resident of Swabi who was trying to travel for Bahrain through PIA flight no PK-187. The spokesman informed that separate cases have been registered while further investigations are in progress.

National Days and Armed Forces Days

APRIL

- April 04 / Senegal National Day
- April 07 / W. H. O. World Health Day
- April 12 / Somalia Armed Forces Day
- April 15 / DPR Korea The Day of the Sun
- April 16 / Denmark National Day
- April 17 / Iran Army Day
- April 17 / Syria Independence Day
- April 18 / Zimbabwe Independence Day
- April 24 / Holy See Anniversary of His Papacy of his Pontificate
- April 25 / DPR Korea Armed Forces Day
- April 26 / Tanzania National Day
- April 27 / Sierra Leone Independence Day
- April 27 / South Africa Freedom Day
- April 30 / Sweden Birthday of His Majesty
- April 30 / Netherlands Birthday of Queen



Hotels & Restaurants

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

Single country exhibition in Almaty in May: envoy

Ambassador of Kazakhstan Hosts media iftar dinner

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kazakhstan Yerzhan Kistafin hosted Iftar dinner for the senior media people, at Islamabad Serena Hotel. The Ambassador also delivered a brief speech on the occasion and welcomed the guests. The ambassador said both Kazakhstan and Pakistan enjoyed excellent relations adding it was his earnest desire to further promote and strengthen these relations. He added, this year we will be celebrating 30 years of establishment of our bilateral relations. He announced that in May this year a single country exhibition shall take place in Almaty. Initially we planned to invite around 50 people but keeping in view the interest of exhibitors and general people we have decided to invite more people. So far we have received over 200 applications and the number is likely to swell as soon as the exhibition date draws near. The ambassador further said that in the end of May we are organizing an international conference dedicated to the legacy of Allama Iqbal. The conference will take place in Almaty. "We are inviting for this



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kazakhstan Yerzhan Kistafin hosted Iftar dinner for senior journalist. Seen in the picture are from left to right Bilal Agha, DAWN, Ambassador of Kazskhan, Ashfaq Gondal former Information Secretary and Editor Islamabad POST/CENTRELINE/DNA Ansar Mahmood Bhatti. - DNA

conference our brothers from Turkey and Azerbaijan as well because the event shall be organized by the

Turkish academy'. The ambassador also talked about recent high level visits that took place between the two

countries. He said military cooperation between the two countries is also excellent adding development

of media cooperation between Kazakhstan and Pakistan remains high on his agenda. He thanked the Pa-

kistani media for highlighting various initiatives taken by the Kazakhstan embassy in Islamabad. - APP

World Creativity and Innovation Day

ISLAMABAD: Like other parts of the globe, World Creativity and Innovation Day (WCID) will be marked on April 21 across the globe including Pakistan to raise awareness around the importance of creativity and innovation in problem solving with respect to advancing the United Nations sustainable development goals, also known as the "global goals". The day was created with UN resolution 71/284 with the support of 80 countries. The first World Creativity and Innovation Day was celebrated on April 21, 2018. - APP

Winder Dam to be completed in 2025

ISLAMABAD: The Winder Dam project of 3 megawatts (MW) capacity would be completed in 2025 which is situated across the Winder River that would store 54,000 acre feet water. The Dam is located at a distance of 125 Kilometer from Karachi, 66 Kilometer from Uthal and 25 Kilometer from Winder Town in Lasbela District of Baluchistan, said an official of the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) while talking to APP. He said that the Winder Dam would have 54,000 acre feet water storage and 10,000 acres of land would be irrigated in the area adding that agriculture. - APP

After Delay of 4 Years Peshawar Morr to New Islamabad International Airport

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Briefs

Earth Day to be marked on April 22

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Earth Day will be marked on April 22 across the globe including Pakistan. Earth Day aims at creating awareness and appreciation for Earth's environment. The United Nations calls the event International Mother Earth Day. People unite on Earth Day to appreciate and respect Earth's environment.

The April 22 Earth Day is celebrated with outdoor performances, where individuals or groups perform acts of service to Earth. Typical ways of observing Earth Day include planting trees, picking up roadside trash, conducting various programmes for recycling and conservation and using recyclable containers for snacks and lunches.

Some people are encouraged to sign petitions to governments, calling for stronger or immediate action to stop global warming and to reverse environmental destruction. Television stations frequently air programmes dealing with environmental issues. The April 22 Earth Day, founded by Senator Gaylord Nelson, was first organized in 1970 to promote ecology and respect for life on the planet as well as to encourage awareness of the growing problems of air, water, and soil pollution.

World Book and Copyright Day on April 23

ISLAMABAD: Like other parts of the globe World Book and Copyright Day will be marked on April 23 across the globe including Pakistan. The day is annually observed on April 23 to mark the anniversary of the birth or death of a range of well-known writers.

A range of activities to promote reading and the cultural aspects of books are held all over the world. Many of these emphasize international cooperation or friendships between countries. Events include: relay readings of books and plays; the distribution of book marks; the announcement of the winners of literary competitions; and actions to promote the understanding of laws on copyright and the protection of authors' intellectual property. World Book and Copyright Day is an occasion to pay a worldwide tribute to books and authors and encourage people to discover the pleasure of reading. It is hoped that this will lead to the renewed respect for those who have made irreplaceable contributions to social and cultural progress. In some years, the UNESCO Prize for Children's and Young People's Literature in the Service of Tolerance is awarded.

Literacy Program benefits 4m rural women

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Around 4 million rural women got benefitted from National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) Literacy Programme highlighting the importance of education and education for the empowerment of rural women. Talking to APP, Director General NCHD Hassan Baig said the importance of education in remote areas, especially for women. He said NCHD's Literacy program is focusing on rural women. Director General NCHD reiterated the need for the allocation of proper finances for the Literacy and Non-Formal Education for the eradication of illiteracy through Adult Literacy Programs and to mainstream the dropouts through Non-Formal Accelerated Learning Program. He said education is the single equalizer for the society needs to invest in education for the nation. NCHD was established to support the line departments.

The project endeavors to improve the basic and functional literacy skills of rural women aged between 15 and 25 years promote poverty eradication through literacy empowerment and empower women to make positive contributions to their communities.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Turkey Ihsan Mustafa Yurdakul hosted Iftar dinner for the Pakistani staff of the embassy, at the Embassy lawns.— DNA

Gwadar University key human resource generating institution

University of Gwadar Vice-Chancellor Prof. Abdul Razzaq Sabir presented a commemorative shield of the university to the guests at the end of the ceremony and wore a Balochi shawl

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Gwadar University has turned into a key human resource generating institution for CPEC, Gwadar Pro reported on Sunday quoting Chief Secretary Balochistan Mather Niaz Rana.

He was addressing the participants of Laptop Distribution Ceremony held here at University of Gwadar.

On this occasion, Chief Secretary Balochistan distributes 300 laptops to university students under CM's Balochistan laptop scheme. The event was attended by Vice-Chancellor University of Gwadar Prof. Dr. Abdul Razzaq Sabir, General Officer Commanding (GOC) 44 Special Security Division, Maj-Gen Inayat Hussain, Capt. (Ret'd) Jameel Ahmed Baloch, Deputy Commissioner Gwadar, Brigadier Fahad Mansoor, officers of Armed Forces, District demonstrative Officer heads of different departments, faculty members, admin staff and students of UoG. Recipients of laptops include students of Department of Management Sciences, Commerce, Education, and Computer



Science, University of Gwadar. Speaking on the occasion, Chief Secretary Balochistan Mather Niaz Rana congratulated all the students who received laptops.

In his address, he said that the Balochistan government strives to provide higher education and the best facilities to students of Balochistan.

He further said that the priority of all students should be to serve the country and the province. In his welcome speech, Vice-Chancellor University of Gwadar Prof

Dr. Abdul Razzaq Sabir thanked the Government of Balochistan and especially Chief Secretary Balochistan Mr. Mather Niaz Rana, for taking a keen interest in the flourishing University of Gwadar and extending unending support to set an environment for the promotion of quality higher education in this far-flung part of the country. Major General Inayat Hussain GOC 44 SSD in his address said that no nation can develop without education and the promotion of quality education in Gwadar is one of his top priorities.

In this age of technology and innovation, it is commendable to provide such facilities to students to promote research culture in higher education institutions.

Deputy Commissioner Capt. (Ret'd) Jamil Ahmed Baloch and Brigadier Fahad Mansoor Commander 440 Brigade besides district administration officers, university students, and teachers also attended the function. University of Gwadar Vice-Chancellor Prof. Abdul Razzaq Sabir presented a commemorative shield of the university to the guests at the end of the ceremony and wore a Balochi shawl.

NBF promoting book reading culture in various districts

ISLAMABAD: National Book Foundation (NBF) aims to promote book-reading culture in various districts of the country as NBF was running the mobile book shop and holding of exhibition at the far-off places. An official of NBF Raza Mehmood told APP on Sunday that NBF was providing inexpensive and quality books to the students, teachers and public. Besides government, all segments of the society had to play their effective role for the promotion of book-reading habit in the country, he added. He said country required encouragement of such positive tendencies so that young generation could be able to flourish in future. — APP

Lok Virsa to hold Islamic exhibition

ISLAMABAD: The National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage (Lok Virsa) is planning to hold an exhibition of Islamic calligraphy to mark the holy month of Ramadan from April 22 till end of Ramadan. Lok Virsa is a specialized institute dealing with research, collection, documentation, preservation and dissemination of Pakistan's traditional culture and folk heritage, said a press release issued here. Interested bonafide calligraphers are invited to send copy of their work (s) along with their brief profile to Lok Virsa by 18th April 2022. Terms and conditions are, Lok Virsa reserves the right to accept or reject any work received from the calligraphers only framed calligraphic work(s) will be entertained. Being a promotional effort to project the work of calligraphers, no payment for display of work will be made by Lok Virsa. The respective calligrapher will hand over the work selected by Lok Virsa at the Pakistan National Heritage Museum. The work will be returned to the calligrapher after the exhibition.

Lok Virsa to hold series of training courses

ISLAMABAD: National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage-Lok Virsa is planning to hold a series of training courses in folk crafts and folk music from next month (May-October). With an objective to promote traditional skills and inculcate awareness among the masses particularly youth students about the indigenous folk culture of Pakistan. In this regard the schedule of the courses included calligraphy, truck art, block printing, pottery and folk singing harmonium playing, said a press release issued here. There is no age limit to join these courses by any individual male or female who wants to learn traditional skills can apply for these courses. — APP

District Admin conducts 4262 raids

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi District Administration conducted 4262 raids in seven tehsils of the district to check profiteering during last week and imposed Rs 621,500 fines on rules violators while 31 shops were sealed besides netting 16 violators.

According to a district administration spokesman, strict action in accordance with the law was being taken against profiteers and hoarders and 16 violators were sent behind the bars.

Operations were conducted in Gujar Khan, Kahuta, Kotli Sattian, Kalar Syedan, Murree, Taxila, Rwp Cantt, Rawalpindi City, Rwp Sadder division and other areas and the teams took ac-

tion against the rules violators. The Commissioner had instructed the officers concerned to visit different markets on daily basis and take strict action in accordance with the law against profiteers to provide relief to the citizens. Cases should also be registered against the rules violators and they should be sent behind the bars, the Commissioner said adding the rate lists must be displayed at prominent places at the shops. The Commissioner had instructed the authorities concerned to make earnest efforts to provide relief to the citizens particularly during Ramadan ul Mubarak. The officers concerned were also directed to improve the facilities at

Ramazan bazaars. The citizens could get registered their complaints at complaint cell set up in Ramazan bazaars, he said adding, the official social media page of Commissioner Rawalpindi could also be used to lodge complaints against profiteering. Efforts would be made to address the complaints within shortest possible time frame, he added. Deputy Commissioner, Rawalpindi Tahir Farooq and Assistant Commissioners of all the tehsils were conducting raids to review arrangements at Ramazan Bazaars and check prices of essential commodities besides checking quality of food items, he informed. — APP

BoI Chairman Azfar Ahsan resigns

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Board of Investment (BOI) Chairman Muhammad Azfar Ahsan has tendered his resignation from his post. In his resignation letter, Muhammad Azfar Ahsan said that it has been a privilege and a huge honor to serve as Chairman of Federal Board of Investment with the status of Minister of State. "In my five months tenure as 1301 Chair, I am fully convinced that Pakistan has enormous opportunity at hands to bring foreign and local investment to transform our country. Though our foreign direct investment inflow is stagnant at USD 3 billion, I believe it has a potential of USD 15 to USD 20 billion per year. Though my tenure was short, I never wasted any opportunity to revamp 901 to realize that promise." "Under my leadership 901 was successful in instituting 125 regulatory reforms (Asaan Karobar Program). Establishment of Pak-China Business & Investment Forum, and

the signing of Framework Agreement with China are historical milestones and I feel humbled and honored that BOI signed it under my Chair. Furthermore, with the Investment Minister of our brotherly country Saudi Arabia, I have designed the investment strategy to work jointly for investments worth a few billion dollars in different sectors." "The BOI's perception, in my honest view, has fully transformed as a progressive and business friendly premium investment promotion agency. The team at 601 are one of the best public servants, with the requisite passion and intellect to continue to play a central role in driving an investment agenda that Pakistan truly deserves. My parting recommendation would be to grant more empowerment and resources to BOI in line with trends followed in regional countries." "I am grateful to former Prime Minister Mr. Imran Khan for entrusting me with this portfolio. I believe I have served Pakistan's interest well with integrity and character."

AIOU to close admissions today

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has set April 18 (Monday) as the last day of its 2nd Phase admissions for the semester Spring, 2022. The interested students have been advised to apply for the admission before the expiring date. It was hoped that the students will avail the opportunity to continue their future study. Admission forms and prospectuses for the all programs are available on the University website www.aiou.edu.pk. The university has recently digitized its administrative, financial and educational affairs and provided online

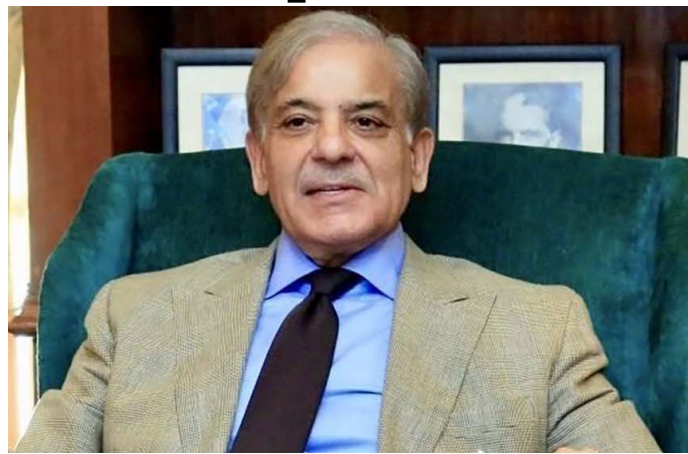
facilities to the students. Applicants for admission in any program can now apply only under online mode. Candidates who do not have access to computer and internet can go to the nearest regional office of the university and apply online using free computer and internet facility. Where the staff of the university is providing all possible facilities and support to the students. Fee-to-face workshops on teaching practice of MA Education and M.Ed programs offered in the fall semester 2021 are also starting today (April 18). These workshops will be held at the Regional Offices of the University from 1pm to 5pm.

Letters have been sent to students to attend workshops. Workshops' schedule is also uploaded on the students' CMS portals and on the university's website. In addition, examinations of BA (Associate Degree), Associate Degree in Education, Associate Degree in Commerce, Associate Degree in (Human Resource Management, Islamic Banking and Marketing), B.Ed, B.B.A., BS Accounting and Finance and Certificate Course will start from 25th April across the country and will continue till 22nd June. Date-sheet has been uploaded on the University's website www.aiou.edu.pk while roll number slips are also been uploaded on students' CMS portals.

PM for quick completion of Rawal Chowk flyover

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday directed for immediate completion of Rawal Chowk flyover without compromising over its quality of work. The prime minister accompanied by authorities concerned reached the construction site early in the morning where he was given a briefing. He directed for the completion of this project by 1st of September this year. The prime minister observed that the project was



almost stalled for many months and issued direction for an inquiry. He also directed for audit of the project by a third party. The prime minister, on the occasion, said that public interest projects should be completed within the stipulated period of time. The project like this should be completed within six months, he said, adding the delay in its construction was adding to public woes. The prime minister expressed his dissatisfaction over the slow pace of work, saying that lethargy and complacency were the apparent reasons behind

the delayed project. He said that even mega projects in the country had been accomplished within a period of two years but why this minor project was hitting the snags! Shehbaz Sharif said that it was the central chowk and the closure of work on the project had been causing public nuisance. The prime minister also raised questions about the award of contracts, construction company's profile, landscaping and service lines etc. The project was initiated during 2020 and its completion period was two years.

Economic crisis in Sri Lanka

SRI Lanka is in dire straits. The beautiful South Asian island nation is reeling from high inflation, a lack of services and utilities, poor health care and wider economic paralysis. While images of long queues in front of petrol stations, steep rise in prices of essential commodities and frequent blackouts have become commonplace, the ongoing pandemic has further exacerbated the suffering of ordinary Lankans. But more than the disruption brought about by Covid-19, the crisis has its genesis in the fundamentals of Sri Lankan economy – and the massive debt crisis at hand. The country is – for the first time in decades – likely to default on its foreign debt in what may well be the nation's worst economic crisis in over 70 years.

Amid the looming crisis, Sri Lanka's central bank has announced that the country may temporarily suspend payments, so that its limited foreign reserves could be spent on essential imports. Consequently public opinion has soured as people face soaring prices, stalled growth, currency collapse and a host of other issues – some of which are the government's own making. With power cuts extended for up to 10 hours a day, there have been several nonviolent civilian protests throughout the length and breadth of Sri Lanka, conveying a massive, nationwide anger simmering over the weeks and months. On its part, the Sri Lankan government offered to talk to protesters, but the situation continues to be grim and is unlikely to improve in the short-term. Next week, the country is likely to start talks with the IMF to ease the economic situation. Sri Lanka's economic problems are massive, and unless concrete steps are taken to address this crisis, the country's economy can go in a tailspin. The Lankan government needs to act fast to try and restore confidence and stability. There is hope that with pragmatic policies, Colombo will be able to tide over the crisis and restore order and some semblance of economic stability. It is paramount that the people are taken into confidence and a fresh road map is unveiled – one that works towards restoring economic stability. With the active assistance of international community, everything possible must be done to help the island nation emerge from the crisis.

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Ukraine war getting out of hands

UKRAINE has asked G7 nations for \$50 billion in financial support and is also considering issuing 0 percent coupon bonds to help it cover a war-linked budget deficit over the next six months, the president's economic adviser Oleh Ustenko said on Sunday. Speaking on national television, Ustenko said these options were being actively discussed. Separately, Russia offered to spare the lives of Ukrainian soldiers fighting in Mariupol if they laid down their arms Sunday, as the weeks-long resistance in the besieged port-city appeared to be finally coming to an end. The offer, made "out of purely humane principles," gave Ukrainian forces still fighting in the city until 6 a.m. Moscow time (11 p.m. ET) to surrender, according to a statement from the Russian military, reported by the TASS news agency. There were no immediate reports of activity from Ukrainian forces in Mariupol. Were it to fall, it would be the first major city to be taken by Russian forces since the Feb. 24 invasion.

Meanwhile, the Russian missile cruiser that was damaged in a fire on Thursday was hit and ultimately sunk by Ukrainian missile strikes, a senior U.S. defense official confirmed on Friday. Russia and Ukraine had offered differing accounts of what happened to the vessel. The defense source confirmed that the ship was hit by two Neptune missiles and told NPR that there are likely casualties. Experts say the loss of the Moskva – the flagship of Russia's Black Sea Fleet – is significant both symbolically and militarily, even if it doesn't deal a decisive blow to Russia's overall operations. Russia's Defense Ministry has said that a fire broke out on board, causing munitions to explode and prompting the evacuation of the ship's crew, which is believed to number about 500. Ukraine claims responsibility, saying it hit the vessel with two Neptune anti-ship missiles about 60 miles off the coast of Odesa. Russian defense officials said later that the vessel sank while being towed to shore in stormy weather, though weather reports indicate that conditions on the Black Sea were mild. While losing one vessel isn't going to immobilize Russia's navy, it reinforces the narrative that Ukrainian troops can still deliver powerful blows by being more agile and creative, as NPR's Greg Myre reports. This is the second major vessel that Russia has lost off the coast of Ukraine in recent weeks.

Climate Smart Potatoe Production

Munir Ahmed



A good sign that Pakistan has finally come up to understanding the situation. National food security shall be the top priority of the government when the climatic changes are taking place quite...

AMAZING to think about climate smart potatoes when climate action and climate smart agriculture are the buzzwords of the day. Educating the higher authorities about the informed decision making for climate smart crops and capacity building of farmers accordingly is a huge task. After the big success of Pakistan's Climate Action – the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 13, Pakistan's focus has shifted to adapting the Climate Smart Agricultural models. Food Security is one of the key objectives of the Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) models. They are mainly being propagated and promoted by the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and other international organizations such as Centre for Agriculture and Biosciences International (CABI),

an intergovernmental organization promoting scientific research and practices.

An approval of a national policy last year has reflected Pakistan's vigorously integrated action plan to take on the challenges confronting our national food security. Recently, we have seen Pakistan importing food grains and some other agricultural products from other countries. Red alert for Pakistan's agricultural sector that has great potential to contribute to the country's GDP, much more than 18.9 percent (2021) by absorbing 42.3 percent of the labour force (2021). A good sign that Pakistan has finally come up to understanding the situation. National food security shall be the top priority of the government when the climatic changes are taking place quite briskly than the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) projections. Scientific crop research, knowledge development and its dissemination to concerned ones at all tiers for urgent actions and implementation plans could save 230 million people of Pakistan – an agricultural country that is fast becoming food insecure. Immense and urgent tasks for the relevant federal and provincial ministries and their subordinate institutions in provinces shall be to enhance their efforts to seek more international technical support for scientific research and farmers' capacity building for backbone crops – wheat, rice, sugarcane and potatoes. Good to know that the Pakistan government is receptive to new crop knowledge that is based on the local scientific research the CABI has extended. CABI is the country's long-term partner in the agricultural sector development. With the support of the government, the CABI launched a project for capacity building of small-scale potato growers in four districts of Punjab. The intervention kicked off in December 2020 in Okara, Sahiwal, Pakpattan and Kasur. Potatoes are one of the major crops in Pakistan that has high consumption and nutritious value. The initiative has successfully taken several measures to increase average yield per acre. The potential is huge that would be maximized by using advanced production technology. New scientific knowledge and crop management techniques will help farmers to combat challenges including climate variation, pest and

disease control. Women's engagement and capacity building in best agricultural practices including sustainable and safe use of pesticides is the crosscutting edge of the initiative.

The project districts generate over 95 per cent of potato production that has started increasing in one year after the significant measures were taken by a team of expert researchers from the Wageningen University, Netherlands. As many as 24 master trainers including 8 women have been trained on a technical manual prepared by the Wageningen University. Some 24 demonstration plots have been established in the project district by the CABI master trainers and Wageningen University experts that represent Dutch best practices in climate smart potato production. A baseline survey was also conducted to assess current production practices and to identify the constraints and challenges faced by farmers, especially by women farmers in the early stage of the initiative. Seed selection is the key to potato production. More than 600 farmers including women have given on-field training including demonstration plots' visits. Advance production practices and crop monitoring is being performed by the district master trainers under the guidance of the CABI and the Wageningen University experts. All the interventions are supported by information material and technical knowledge in Urdu language. Local government, communities and other key stakeholders like University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, Potato Research Institute, Sahiwal, Department of Agriculture Extension, Potato Research and Development Board and Potato Growers Cooperative Society Pakistan have been engaged for larger ownership of the best practices and to replicate them. Several interventions are in pipeline with the support of Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) and its subordinate organizations. It is just about one major crop – the potato production making it climate smart. Many more shall be on the agenda to make Pakistan a nationally food secure country.

– The writer is a freelance journalist and broadcaster, and Director Devcom-Pakistan. He can be reached at devcom.pakistan@gmail.com and tweets @EnmayeSyed

How many more lives does the Israeli govt have?

Yossi Mekelberg

The government of Naftali Bennett, and I am far from being one of its fans, has at least managed to shake up Israeli politics, including the passing of a budget bill for the first time in years and the reduction of some of the inflammatory rhetoric in relations with the world and also at home

IT was only a matter of time before Israel's coalition government would face a major crisis and lose its majority in the Knesset, the Israeli parliament. It might be regarded as almost a miracle that it took nearly 10 months for this to happen but it did and, ironically, it was the government whip, Lidit Silman, the person tasked with keeping this improbable collection of eight parties together, who decided to quit, citing irreconcilable ideological differences.

Will this prove to be the moment at which the wobbly coalition pressed the self-destruct button? For now, the government enjoys the support of exactly half of the 120 members of the Knesset – but even this is questionable. There is not a single domestic or international issue on which all the members of this coalition, which comprises almost the entire range of Israeli political persuasions, genuinely agree. Well, with one exception: Doing away with the divisive and corrupt time in office of former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

This so-called "change" government raised the banner for bringing the 12-year Netanyahu era to an end. "Anyone but Bibi" was the slogan under which this narrow coalition came together and it originally enjoyed a majority of just one. It was, and still is, a noble objective to want to prevent a defendant in three cases of corruption from running the country while playing to the personality cult that surrounds him. Yet, as it stands, there is a considerable number of right-wing members of the coalition who share more views with members of the opposition than they do with their colleagues in government, an anomaly that was bound to result in

tensions and crisis within the latter.

Whatever one's political persuasions, in the numbers game of Israeli party politics the thing that is preventing an outright right-wing government is that Netanyahu refuses to leave politics and is officially leader of the opposition. From this position, he and his henchmen are able to target right-wing coalition members they see as weak links, and use threats and abusive language to pressure them to quit the political alliance.

The justification for this thuggish and shameless behavior is that by being part of the coalition these members of Knesset have betrayed their voters, not to mention their creed, above all by legitimizing the sharing of power with an Arab-Israeli party, Ra'am, led by Mansour Abbas. Worse, there is a profound danger that as a consequence of the protracted political instability, the government and its prime minister, Bennett, will feel compelled to pursue more hawkish, aggressive and populist policies, under pressure from the opposition, on the way to its next test at the ballot box.

Silman, a member of Prime Minister Bennett's shrinking party, blamed her desertion on the health minister, who had reiterated to hospital managers a ruling by the High Court of Justice allowing unleavened bread, an item prohibited to observant Jews during the festival of Passover, in hospitals. After all, not all patients are Jewish or observant Jews. The story of Exodus that is told during Passover has an all-new political meaning in Israel this year: It begs the question of whether Silman's act has parted the sea for a mass exodus from Bennett's government, leading to the less-than-promised land of another general election.

–Courtesy: Arab News

Johnson looks abroad to avoid home-grown scandals

Andrew Hammond

The UK under Johnson has at least three big reasons to want the relationship with India to be as warm as possible. Firstly, the general cooling of ties with China has been more significant to London than it has been to many other European capitals

BESIEGED at home by scandals, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson heads to India this week to seek a change of political fortunes abroad, with a bilateral free-trade deal a key prize. One of the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic has been that Johnson has undertaken very little international travel so far during his premiership, and what there has been was mainly confined to Europe. That is changing this year as he seeks to look beyond the continent to drive a new "Global Britain" campaign. After only 13 foreign trips since July 2019, Johnson's trip to India – his first to the country, and indeed the massive Asia-Pacific region, as prime minister – is a key sign that change is on the horizon. He wants it to send out a signal of what is to follow in 2022 and beyond.

For the UK government, Global Britain is about re-investing in relationships, championing a rules-based international order, and demonstrating that England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are open, outward-looking and confident on the world stage. So the trip to India, with its population of more than 1 billion people, is a major moment for the prime minister. London and New Delhi have, of course, long had a

unique relationship, dating back to the days of the British Empire. But the growing warmth in bilateral ties under the leaderships of Johnson and his Indian counterpart, Narendra Modi, is striking. During the coronavirus crisis, this included maintaining the flow of medical goods. The UK received many millions of face masks and packets of paracetamol from India during the pandemic, for instance.

Both Johnson and Modi attach high importance to bilateral relations. In 2018, the latter became the first Indian premier to visit Britain in more than a decade. The UK under Johnson has at least three big reasons to want the relationship with India to be as warm as possible. Firstly, the general cooling of ties with China has been more significant to London than it has been to many other European capitals.

The growing warmth in UK-India ties under the leaderships of Johnson and his Indian counterpart, Narendra Modi, is striking. In this context, the second reason is that London would like New Delhi to play an increasing role in international affairs. To this end, Johnson last year invited India, alongside fellow G20 states South Korea and Australia, to the UK-hosted G7 summit in Cornwall as part of the ambition to work with a group of like-minded democracies to advance shared interests and tackle common challenges. The third reason is Brexit; Johnson wants UK firms, in the aftermath of Britain leaving the EU, to gain greater access to consumers in the massive Indian market through a new bilateral trade deal.

The strength of the contemporary economic relationship between the two countries is underlined by the fact that the UK is one of the biggest G20 employers and investors in India; more than 400 British firms have a presence there. India, meanwhile, is one of the largest sources of foreign investment in the UK. More than 800 Indian companies currently operate there. There are several distinctive elements of this economic relationship – which has come to dominate bilateral ties recently – that Johnson wants to emphasize in a post-Brexit trade deal. The first is that he would like to see even stronger cooperation in defense manufacturing as part of a wider bilateral security and defense dialogue. Here, he will encourage Modi to adopt a tougher stance on Russia's aggression in Ukraine. The second is encouragement of further international investment, via the City of London, to finance Indian infrastructure. The third is technology, given the sig-



nificant investment in Indian telecoms and technology by UK-headquartered businesses.

Fourth is health, pharmaceuticals and life sciences. As the "pharmacy of the world," India supplies more than 50 percent of the world's vaccines. More than a billion doses of the UK's Oxford/AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine were manufactured at the Serum Institute in Pune, for example.

Yet despite all the potential benefits to be gained from a trade deal, there are challenges too. One key issue India is pressing for in a wider agreement is UK immigration reforms that will enable more Indian businesspeople and students to travel to England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

However, despite the differences that remain between India and the UK on the details of a new, post-Brexit trade deal, what is more striking is how much economics has come to dominate the bilateral relations in recent times.

As this has happened, some of the traditional irritants have been de-emphasized, including the issue of human rights in India. In 2013, there was even a motion in the UK's House of Commons calling on the government to reintroduce a previous travel ban on Modi, citing his alleged "role in the communal violence in 2002" in Gujarat. As Johnson continues to prioritize post-Brexit ties with India, such controversies have been cast aside. During his time as PM, any irritants in UK-Indian relations look likely to be superseded by the desire for greater economic cooperation as London seeks to balance cooler relations with Beijing with warmer ties with New Delhi.

– Andrew Hammond is an associate at LSE IDEAS at the London School of Economics.

Briefs

Pakistan urges Afghan authorities to secure border

FROM PAGE 01
the interest of peace and progress of the two brotherly countries. "Pakistan, once again, strongly condemns terrorists operating with impunity from Afghan soil to carry out activities in Pakistan. This is detrimental to our efforts of maintaining peace and stability along Pak-Afghan Border," Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release while responding to media queries regarding recent incidents along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. In the last few days, incidents along Pak-Afghan border had significantly increased, in which Pakistani security forces were being targeted from across the border. Pakistan and Afghanistan had been engaged for past several months through institutional channels for effective coordination and security along their long-shared border. Pakistan has repeatedly requested Afghan government in the last few months to secure Pak-Afghan border region as the terrorists were using Afghan soil with impunity to carry out activities inside Pakistan, the spokesperson said. Unfortunately, elements of banned terrorist groups in the border region, including TTP, continued to attack Pakistan's border security posts, resulting in martyrdom of several Pakistani troops. On April 14 as well, 7 Pakistan Army Soldiers were martyred in North Waziristan district by terrorists operating from Afghanistan, it was added. "Pakistan also takes this opportunity to reaffirm respect for Afghanistan's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. Pakistan will continue to work closely with Afghan government to strengthen bilateral relations in all fields," the spokesperson reiterated.

Saudi Crown Prince...

FROM PAGE 01
the Two Holy Mosques His Majesty King Salman bin Abdulaziz and the Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman for achieving remarkable progress and development of the Kingdom, under their visionary leadership. While recalling the fraternal and historic bonds between their two countries that has been the hallmark of their strategic relationship over the past seven decades, the Prime Minister reaffirmed his government's and his own commitment to further advance these relations to new heights. The Prime Minister thanked Saudi Arabia for its historic and continued support and cooperation, both bilaterally as well as at international forums, while also assuring the Crown Prince that Pakistan would stand by the Kingdom at all times. The Prime Minister and the Crown Prince agreed to work together to further augment and diversify their bilateral ties in all spheres, in particular trade, investment and employment generation opportunities.

PPP to get foreign ministry...

FROM PAGE 01
the number of members each party has in the Parliament, PPP will get 11 ministerial positions, while PML-N will get 14. "If names of other parties to head ministers surface, the PML-N will make that information public too," he said. He added that the ministry of foreign affairs will most likely be handed over to the PPP, while the party's chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari is deliberating over the decision to head the ministry. "I cannot ascertain whether Bilawal Bhutto will become part of Shahbaz Sharif's cabinet," he said. Sanaulah further said that the ministry of finance, the ministry of national security, the ministry of planning and development, the ministry of energy, and the ministry of defence will be led by PML-N. "The ministry of maritime affairs and the ministry of overseas Pakistanis and human resource development will be given to MQM and PPP, respectively," he said.

At least 14 wounded in S. Carolina mall shooting

A 22-year-old suspect remains in police custody and is expected to be charged with unlawful carrying of a pistol

WEB DESK

SOUTH CAROLINA: At least 14 people have been injured in a shooting at a busy shopping centre in Columbia, capital of the US state of South Carolina, and police say they have arrested a suspect. Victims of Saturday's shooting at Columbia Centre, ranged from 15 to 73, according to Columbia Police Chief W H "Skip" Holbrook who added that 22-year-old Jewayne M Price, one of three people initially detained as a person of interest, remains in police custody

and is expected to be charged with unlawful carrying of a pistol. Holbrook said no fatalities were reported but nine people were shot and five suffered injuries while attempting to flee the mall. Police said a 73-year-old victim continues to receive medical treatment, but the other victims have been released from local hospitals or will be released shortly. "We don't believe this was random," Holbrook said. "We believe they knew each other and something led to the gunfire." Investigators believe that at least three suspects displayed firearms

inside the mall, and are working to determine how many suspects fired weapons. Police said at least one firearm was seized. Daniel Johnson, who was visiting from Alabama with his family, said they were eating in the food court when they first heard shots and started seeing people running. Johnson said people were screaming, knocking over tables in the food court as they fled. "Everybody was trying to get outside," Johnson said. "When I was coming out, you could see baby strollers turned over, people's phones and left keys. It was kind of a

hectic situation." Johnson said he gathered his wife, daughter and son and began heading towards the exit after letting the crowd clear out for a bit. Heavy police presence continued in the area hours after the shooting, though officers began letting more traffic through the streets surrounding the shopping centres and strip malls that are usually packed on weekends. Officers were also stationed outside a nearby hotel designated as a reunification area for people at the scene of the shooting and their families. The shooting is the latest in a

rash of shootings at or near shopping centres across the country. A 15-year-old boy was shot in the head on Wednesday outside Brooklyn's Atlantic Terminal Mall. On Tuesday, a Southern California shoe store owner mistakenly shot a nine-year-old girl while firing at two shoplifters at the Mall of Victor Valley, police said. Earlier this month, police said six people were killed and 12 others wounded in Sacramento, California, during a gunfight between rival gangs as bars closed in a busy area near the Downtown Commons shopping mall and the state Capitol.



NEWCASTLE: Leicester City player taking a shot during a Premier League match against Newcastle United. — DNA

Last-gasp Vlahovic saves Juve in Bologna draw

MILAN: Dusan Vlahovic saved a point for Juventus with a last-gasp leveller in Saturday's 1-1 draw with Bologna who finished the match with nine men following a hotly-contested decision to not give Juve a late penalty. Serbia forward Vlahovic headed in Alvaro Morata's overhead kick from practically on the goalline to save some face after in-form Marko Arnautovic had put Bologna in the lead seven minutes after the break with his 12th goal of the season. A beautiful spring evening in Turin had begun with the return of club icon Alessandro Del Piero, who made his first official appearance at the Allianz Stadium since leaving the club against his will in 2012 and was given a standing ovation from fans. However Juve were uninspired despite the presence of the World Cup winner and Vlahovic's leveller in the fifth minute of stoppage time couldn't mask a poor display which left them eight points behind league leaders AC Milan with five matches remaining after the Easter weekend. "Earlier in the season we would have lost this match, so let's look at it as a glass that's half-full," said Juve coach Massimiliano Allegri, who didn't comment on the bizarre sequence of events on which the match turned. — APP

New clashes over anti-immigration rally in Sweden

STOCKHOLM: Plans by a far-right group to publicly burn copies of the Koran sparked violent clashes with counter-demonstrators for the third day running in Sweden, police said on Sunday. Litter bins, a bus and a car were all set on fire in a series of incidents in the southern city of Malmo overnight, police said in a statement. "The situation calmed down towards 3:00 am (0100 GMT)," police spokeswoman Kim Hild told SR public radio, adding that no officers were hurt, but a number of members of the public were slightly injured. Nearly 20 complaints had been filed, including for vandalism. There have been similar

Tsitsipas downs Fokina to defend Monte Carlo crown

MONTE CARLO: Stefanos Tsitsipas successfully defended his Monte Carlo Masters title with a 6-3, 7-6 (7/3) victory over Spain's Alejandro Davidovich Fokina in Sunday's final. Third seed Tsitsipas hammered 21 winners and made only 11 unforced errors in the Monaco sunshine to win in an hour and 36 minutes. It was the 23-year-old Greek's eighth ATP title and first in 11 months as he made the perfect start to

the clay-court season. "I'm very proud of the amount of belief I had in my game," Tsitsipas said. "He fought in moments I didn't really expect him to fight and hit some incredible winners. I believe that's a great result against him." He joins an illustrious list of players to win back-to-back Monte Carlo Masters, including Rafael Nadal, Juan Carlos Ferrero, Thomas Muster and Bjorn Borg. Tsitsipas, who beat Andrey

Rublev in the Monte Carlo final 12 months ago, has now won four clay tournaments in his career. He is gearing up for another tilt at the French Open title after losing last year's final at Roland Garros to Novak Djokovic despite leading by two sets. Davidovich Fokina had knocked out world number one Djokovic earlier this week but could not repeat those heroics in his first ATP final, losing for the third time in as many

meetings with Tsitsipas. World number 46 Davidovich Fokina struck first, breaking in the third game, but Tsitsipas hit straight back with a magnificent forehand up the line to level the first set at 2-2. The set remained on serve until game eight, when Tsitsipas broke as Davidovich Fokina fired a backhand into the tramlines. The Greek star wrapped up the opener with a hold to love, capped off by an ace. — Agencies

Shock on the streets as Kharkiv wracked by fresh blasts

KHARKIV: Swaying stunned in the street, Svitlana Pelelygina surveys the wreck of her apartment building smouldering from the latest salvo of blasts to rain down on Ukraine's second city of Kharkiv. "The whole home rumbled and trembled," the 71-year-old told AFP on Sunday. "Everything here began to burn." "I called the firefighters. They said, 'We are on our way but we were also being shelled.'" Officials said five people were killed and 13 wounded in the latest volley to hit Kharkiv - just 21 kilometres (13 miles) from the border with Russia. Since President Vladimir Putin called off his northern offensive to capture Kyiv, he has refocused the push onto Ukraine's eastern flank. Kharkiv is one of the strategic footholds now under near-constant bombardment by troops dug in outside the city gates. "You know how when a dog hears a bang it starts to tremble all over even if the noise is far away? I'm like that now," said 69-year-old Zinaida Nestrizhenko, huddled on the roadside with her pet cat rescued from her home. "Everything, every part of me is trembling," she said. On Sunday afternoon AFP reporters heard two incoming bursts of bombardment, then saw five different fires raging in apartment blocks above shops in the previously hand-some downtown district. All around government buildings are already demolished from previous Russian airstrikes to hammer the beleaguered city, home to 1.4 million before the war. On Sunday an official said a fleet of 33 rescue vehicles was despatched with 150 firefighters to more than 15 addresses citywide after the emergency callout came around 2pm. Lumbering cherry-red fire engines tore in every direction in the moments after the blasts hit, as pedestrians and cars scattered in panic. The roads were lined with shattered glass and corrugated roof panellings, peeled off from the force of the detonations. — Agencies

South Africa flood toll rises to 443 as deluge eases

DURBAN: The death toll from floods that have battered South Africa's east coast has risen to 443, including a rescuer, a regional official said on Sunday, as dozens more are still missing. "The death toll now stands at 443," Sihle Zikalala, the premier of the KwaZulu-Natal province told a media briefing, adding 63 other people are still unaccounted for. A member of the rescue and recovery

team "experienced difficult breathing and was airlifted to... hospital. Unfortunately he passed away". Rains were starting to let up in the flood-ravaged east, allowing for search and relief aid operations to continue after one of the deadliest storms in living memory. Zikalala said the "inclement weather has slowed our assessment and rescue operation on the ground, but we are

once again back in the full swing". Floodwaters engulfed parts of the southeastern coastal city of Durban and surrounding areas early last week ripping apart roads, destroying hospitals and sweeping away homes and those trapped inside. The city of 3.5 million was overcast but the South African Weather Service's Puseletso Mofokeng said "rainfall is actually clearing". — Agencies

India: 14 arrested after communal violence

Clashes between Hindus and Muslims erupted in the Indian capital during a Hindu religious procession, injuring several. It comes as religious clashes are reported elsewhere in India

MONITORING DESK

NEW DELHI: Police in India's capital city New Delhi said on Sunday that they arrested 14 people in connection with clashes between Hindus and Muslims during a Hindu procession. It was first major violence reported in the Indian capital since 2020, when 53 people died in Hindu-Muslim clashes over a contro-

versial citizenship law. The clashes started on Saturday when a rally celebrating the Hindu religious occasion of Hanuman Jayanti was passing by a local mosque in the northwestern Delhi area of Jahangirpuri. Violence broke out as the opposing groups pelted stones and set vehicles on fire. One police officer was quoted by the ANI news agency as saying that some peo-

ple brought swords to the clashes. The situation was brought under control with heavy police deployment, authorities said. It is unclear what sparked the violence. Police said they were looking for information on the remaining rioters, and had arrested one rioter who shot bullets. The suspects were arrested on charges of rioting and criminal conspiracy, among others, following the incident

on Saturday night, said senior police officer Usha Rangani, according to the Press Trust of India news agency. According to a police spokesperson, at least nine people, including eight police officers, were injured during violence that marred the procession at a festival in Jahangirpuri, a suburban section of New Delhi. Local media reports said Delhi Police Sub-Inspector Medhalal Meena

was shot in his hand, but was in a stable condition. Meena told ANI that he "caught a bullet and went to the hospital on PCR." "There were no reported deaths from the incident. In recent weeks, religious clashes between the majority Hindu and the minority Muslim communities have been on the rise in several parts of the country. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi comes from the

Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party, which has emboldened several hardline Hindu groups. The party has denied any role in the rise of communal tensions. "Fringe elements, who are unable to digest the peace and prosperity in the country, try to defame India's inclusive culture and commitment," Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi told The Economic Times newspaper.

D-B Dam to be lifeline...

FROM PAGE 01

PML-N government for the land acquisition. The prime minister said that it was a gigantic task and assured all out support from the federal government to complete the project as early as possible. He also suggested for encouraging the international investors for future fund raising. He also announced construction of 13km Babusar top tunnel to ensure year's round traffic flow and asked the authorities to submit a study report to his office. The prime minister said that what happened during last four years was unfortunate. He said early construction of the dam would be a good omen and a milestone in the country's history. He regretted that out of 125-130MAF water, they were only saving and utilizing 25-30MAF water annually. The prime minister observed that it would be a big success, if they saved water and mentioned that Diamer-Bhasha dam would play a vital role in water storage capacity. It would save Tarbella dam from deposits of sediments and enhance its life span by 35 years, he added. The dam would control flash floods, enhance agricultural productivity, besides create jobs opportunities in the area, leading to economic prosperity, he added. The prime minister said that he would not go into the past four years, but what happened with power sector was indeed an injustice with the nation. Despite a power generation capacity of about 6000-7000MW, the gas fired and oil run power plants had been shut, he added. As a Khadim e Pakistan, he would not lie before the nation or twist truth, but facts should come forward, he remarked. The prime minister said the area lacked health facilities. He as chief minister of Punjab had donated a scanning machine for Gilgit. He directed the authorities concerned to submit a report within a week for construction of fully equipped hospital in the area to provide the latest health facilities to population of the area. Earlier Chairman WAPDA Lt. Gen. (retd) Muzamil Hussain briefed the prime minister over the ongoing project. The prime minister was accompanied by members of the National Assembly Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, Khawaja Asif and PML-N spokesperson Marriyum Aurangzeb, MNA. The chairman WAPDA apprised that three mega hydel projects Diamer-Bhasha, Mohmand and Dasu dams worth Rs2.6 trillion were being completed. He said Diamer-Bhasha dam would have the storage capacity of 8.1 MAF with live storage of 6.4MAF and irrigate 1.23 million acres of land. It will generate 18,100 Gigawatt hours (GWh) power annually. The project would be completed during 2029 despite different challenges, he said adding, about 16500 jobs would be created. Later, the prime minister also took an aerial review of Karakorum Highway, 3MW Thuk power project and Chilas cadet college.

Singapore reports 1,670 Covid cases

SINGAPORE: Singapore reported 1,670 new confirmed cases of COVID-19 on Saturday, bringing the total tally to 1,157,251. Of the new cases, 254 cases were detected through PCR (polymerase chain reaction) tests and 1,416 through ART (antigen rapid test) tests, according to statistics released by the Ministry of Health. Among the PCR cases, 245 were local transmissions and nine were imported cases. Among the ART cases with mild symptoms and assessed to be of low risk, there were 1,375 local transmissions and 41 imported cases, respectively. A total of 262 cases are currently warded in hospitals, with eight cases in intensive care units. Three deaths were reported from COVID-19 on Saturday, lifting the total death toll to 1,313, the ministry said. — APP

Punjab Governor says PM...

FROM PAGE 01

the pleasure of the president of Pakistan. Until the president notifies [the order to remove me], I am holding this office." Following Cheema's press conference, PML-N leader Marriyum Aurangzeb told Dawn.com that the government was sending a summary to the president for his removal. Cheema's stance on his potential sacking was seconded by PTI Vice President Fawad Chaudhry, who said President Dr Arif Alvi had denied removing the governor. "The power to remove the governor belongs to the president. No such summary has reached his office. Therefore, Omar Cheema will continue to serve as the Governor of Punjab," he said.

PPP divided over joining the cabinet

FROM PAGE 01

On the other hand, the allied parties including JUI-F and BAP are also interested in getting the positions of KP and Balochistan governors. Earlier, there were reports that the PPP had decided to become part of the federal cabinet after talks with the PML-N.

Briefs

Pakistan to be in ten most water scarce countries: UN

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Munir Akram said that the country is estimated to be in the top 10 list of the world's countries facing water scarcity. Munir Akram, speaking about the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 6 which deals with the issue of clean water, said that the world has not been able to do so. The UN representative cited climate change, floods and drought as the reason.

He said that an appropriate framework around which to structure the themes of the dialogues can be formed through its five accelerators Financing, Data and Information, Capacity Development, Innovation and Governance. Munir Akram, speaking about the water governance issues, added that the transboundary water cooperation has a key role crucial role when it comes to supporting wider regional integration, peace and sustainable development, as well as in tackling regional security challenges and in supporting climate change adaptation.

Precision agriculture can enhance productivity

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Chairman, Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (PCSIR) Dr. Syed Hussain Abidi has said that precision agriculture can help enhance agricultural productivity as well as water use efficiency.

Addressing the participants as chief guest here while inaugurating the wheat & Brassica harvesting at Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi (PMAS-AAUR) Research Farm, Koot, Dr. Syed Hussain Abidi lauded the initiatives of PMAS-AAUR to attract farming community to witness demonstrative exhibitory attractions at the farm. PMAS-AAUR Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Qamar uz Zaman, deans, directors, faculty members and farmers also attended the ceremony. Dr. Abidi was of the view that trained manpower and modern innovative technology play an important role not only to enhance productivity of the agriculture sector but will also be helpful for food security in the country. To increase per acre production, he urged the faculty members to do their level best to solve the problems faced by the farming community to become a self-sufficient country. Dr. Qamar-uz-Zaman said that the Faculty of Agricultural Engineering & Technology has been working at the Campus to train manpower by adopting innovative and affordable agricultural tools in order to bring mechanical revolution in Pakistan.

Pak-China friendship hospital to complete by Dec 22

ISLAMABAD: Under the game changer China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Project the Chinese government is financing the Pak-China Friendship Hospital being established over 68 acres of land which would be equipped with modern technology for the people of port city of Gwadar. The project has been proposed for implementation of Phase-II of 50-beds hospital to be constructed under the Gwadar Development Authority (GDA) Business Plan (Federal PSDP), an official source told APP while updating on the mega project. The Hospital would create employment opportunities for the local masses as a total of 40 local jobs would be generated whereas civil work had started by November 2020 which was expected to be completed by December 2022, he said. - APP

Shehbaz Sharif to take CPEC forward : Senator Mushahid

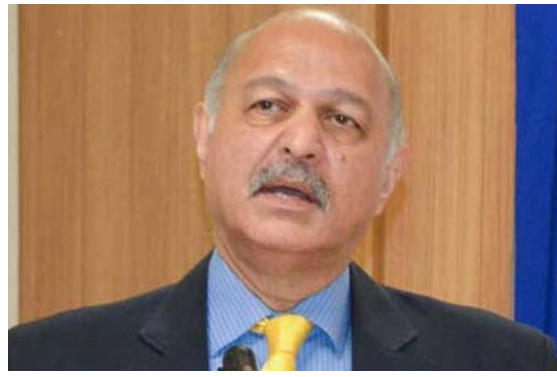
Senator Mushahid remarked that China had a very old and longstanding relationship with PM Shehbaz Sharif

DNA

BEIJING: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will take China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) forward with new vigor, vitality and in a rejuvenated manner ensuring multifaceted development of the flagship project of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed said on Sunday.

"In the first day in office as Prime Minister, Shehbaz Sharif met the Chinese Acting Ambassador and told her that Pakistan considers China as Pakistan's closest friend and strongest partner and we will take the

CPEC forward with new vigor, with new vitality and in a rejuvenated manner," he said while discussing future of Pakistan-China relations and future cross border collaboration in CGTN program. The Hub with Wang Guan. Senator Mushahid remarked that China had a very old and longstanding relationship with PM Shehbaz Sharif. When the Belt and Road Initiative of President Xi Jinping was launched, the CPEC was its centrepiece, and that was taken forward by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his brother Shehbaz Sharif was then the Chief Minister of Punjab.



He said that under the new government, there would be a broad based acceleration in Pakistan-China relations in all domains.

"China is number one, in terms of a foreign policy pri-

ority, which the prime minister made clear when he listed the list of countries and his formulation has been very warmly welcomed in China. So, we have no doubt," he added. Senator Mushahid

said that China was one country in Pakistan, on which there was across the board national consensus and entire leadership agreed with that China was the number one friend. "So, China friendship is the cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy, and I see this relationship being further developed and taken to new heights of the development," he added. In response to a question about continued momentum in CPEC projects, he said that the first phase of CPEC was completed under the period when Nawaz Sharif was in power. "The second phase is bigger. And you will see perhaps acceleration in the field

of agriculture, in the field of Information Technology, in the field of tourism, and also infrastructure, especially the railway project," he added. He said that Prime Minister, Shehbaz Sharif had already announced during his visit to Karachi that his government would expand CPEC. So, there would be multifaceted development of CPEC. Senator Mushahid opined that CPEC framework also united the federation of Pakistan through infrastructure and energy projects and it had resolved a lot of problems, adding, "So, we feel CPEC is the character of a better tomorrow for the people of Pakistan."

Tajikistan participates in FMs Central Asia + Japan Dialogue

DNA

DUSHANBE: In the format of a videoconference, a meeting of the foreign ministers of the participating countries of the Dialogue "Central Asia + Japan" was held. During the meeting, the Foreign ministers of the member states of Dialogue discussed the issues of further strengthening cooperation between Central Asia and Japan, the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, to counter COVID-19 pandemic, strengthening border control,



implementation of the sustainable development goals in the region and cooperation in

the international and regional issues. It was emphasized that Tajikistan has established good

cooperation with Japan on the development and implementation of various projects in the fields of

agriculture, education, energy, industry, healthcare, transport, tourism and IT technology to achieve a sustainable development goals.

It was emphasized that Tajikistan has established good cooperation with Japan in the implementation of various projects in the fields of agriculture, education, energy, industry, health care, transport, tourism and IT technologies to achieve a sustainable development. At the end of meeting, the parties expressed their readiness to continue mutual beneficial cooperation within the framework of the "Central Asia + Japan dialogue."

Direct flights start between Tel Aviv and Sharm el-Sheikh

TEL AVIV: The first direct flight between the Israeli coastal city of Tel Aviv and Egypt's Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh took off on Sunday, Israeli national airline El-Al said. Flight 5193, operated by El-Al subsidiary Sun d'Or, departed Ben Gurion International Airport at 0715 GMT, the carrier said in a statement. Direct flights have long been in operation between Tel Aviv and Cairo, since Egypt in 1979 became the first Arab country to sign a peace accord with Israel. The two countries have lately bolstered their ties. Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett has twice visited Egypt after coming to power in June, and met President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi in September. In early October, a plane branded with the logo of Egypt's national carrier Egyptair landed in Israel for the first time, a flight de-

scribed as "historic" by the Israel Airport Authority. Prior to that, Egyptian flights to Israel had been operated by an Egyptian subsidiary, Air Sinai, set up exclusively for the Israeli route and without displaying the Egyptian flag on the exterior of its planes. Some in Egypt continue to oppose ties with the Jewish state. The Egyptian branch of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement, which opposes Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories, has called for a boycott of two Israeli-organized dance festivals due to take place in Sinai over the coming days. Until 2020, Egypt and Jordan were the only Arab governments to have normalized relations with Israel. That year, they were joined by Bahrain, Morocco and the United Arab Emirates, which all now operate direct flights to the Jewish state. - Agencies

China Eastern resumes Boeing 737-800 flights

BEIJING: China Eastern Airlines resumed flying Boeing 737-800 aircraft on Sunday, flight tracking data showed, just weeks after it grounded 223 planes over a crash that killed 132 people. Flight MU5843, operating the 800 variant of the 737, departed the southwestern city of Kunming at 9:58 am local time (0158 GMT) and landed in Chengdu at 11:03 am, according to Flightradar.com. The three-year-old jet later returned to Kun-

ming from Chengdu, with further flights scheduled for Tuesday. Flight MU5735 - a 737-800 - was en route from Kunming to Guangzhou on March 21 when it nosedived into a mountainside, disintegrating on impact. The jet dropped 20,000 feet (6,096 metres) in just over a minute. The velocity of the impact left twisted metal and passengers' belongings scattered across a vast swathe of forest. - APP

Wapda expedites work on massive hydropower project

ISLAMABAD: The Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) has expedited the development work on the much awaited 72 megawatts Keyal Khwar Hydropower Project that would increase power generation, irrigation and employment opportunities

for the locals. Keyal Khwar Hydropower Project is located at Keyal Khwar Nallah, a tributary of the Indus River in Lower Kohistan District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa that has around 72 megawatts (MW) electricity generation capacity. Talking to APP, an official of WAP-

DA said that there were two turbine units of 34 MW each and one unit of 4 MW installed at Khan Khwar Hydroelectric Station with an average annual generation capacity of 595 million units (GWh) of cheap electricity. In the current financial year, around Rs 1,084 mil-

lion has been allocated for the execution of the project. The hydropower project would channelize emission less energy and business opportunities for the locals by promoting fisheries and tourism opportunities, the official said. - APP

PIDE hosts Conversation on Pakistan's Economy

PESHAWAR: Dr. Nadeem Ul Haque, Vice Chancellor Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) here on Sunday hosted an 'Informal Conversation on Pakistan's Economy' which was also attended by senior politician and former minister for Privatization Daniyal Aziz. The session was attended online by number of PIDE Economists in-person while many other members

of the Institute, according to a statement issued by PIDE here. During the session, issue of high inflation came under discussion in the conversation with exploring its short and long term options. The pros and cons of measures such as administrative controls, increasing interest rate and structural changes for long term inflation man-

agement were thoroughly discussed. Daniyal Aziz considered 'inflation' to be the biggest challenge for the new government. He stated that regulating the monetary side instruments of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) in particular, the interest rate has been misused. He initiated his conversation using some statistics of the 2003-08 period which he termed

as the basis of all current economic ills of the country. Daniyal was also critical of the rise in Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF) in the same time period due to lack of impact it had in increasing production in the country. In short, he termed the economy as a bubble during these years and the bubble continues to hamper Pakistan even today. - APP



ISLAMABAD Christian community attending religious rituals to mark the celebrating the Easter at Fatima Church F-8. - DNA

Myanmar junta says to free 1,600 prisoners

WEB DESK

YANGON: Myanmar's junta said it will release more than 1,600 prisoners from jails across the country on Sunday to mark the Buddhist new year, without specifying whether those being pardoned were protesters or common criminals. The Southeast Asian country has been in turmoil since Aung San Suu Kyi's civilian government was ousted last year in a military coup, which sparked huge protests and a deadly crackdown.

State television announced that 1,619 prisoners, including 42 foreigners had been "pardoned" and will be released to mark the new year. It was unclear whether anti-junta protesters or journalists jailed for covering the coup will be among those freed. On Sunday morning, more than 100 people gathered outside Yangon's Insein prison hoping to be reunited with loved ones, AFP correspondents said. Among them was a woman waiting for her 19-year-old nephew, who was sentenced to three years impris-

onment for incitement against the military. "He was young, and he may have some feeling to fight," she said, declining to give her name. "I wish all young children will be released including my nephew. They all were innocent." Another woman waiting outside the prison said she was hopeful that her uncle - sentenced to three years in prison in March because of his political activism - would be released. "I came here as I expected that he would be among other prisoners who got amnesty," she said.

The woman, who wished to remain anonymous, said she had received a letter from her uncle in prison, reassuring her he was well. There was no mention of the Australian economist Sean Turnell, a former Suu Kyi adviser who was arrested shortly after the coup. He is currently on trial for allegedly breaching the official secrets act, which carries a maximum 14-year jail sentence. The exact details of his alleged offense have not been made public, though state television has said he had access to "secret state financial information"

and had tried to flee Myanmar. Human rights groups have raised concerns about his prosecution, particularly after the Australian embassy was denied access to his court hearing in September. Myanmar typically grants an annual amnesty to thousands of prisoners to mark the Buddhist New Year, usually a joyous holiday celebrated in many parts with water fights. But this year, with the bloody military crackdown on dissent, the streets in many major cities have been silent as people protest junta rule.

Gwadar water supply project to be completed this year

ISLAMABAD: The water scarce port city of Gwadar will get clean drinking water supply, from nearby dams, by the mid of this year as the development work on the important project is in full swing. The project objectives to develop water transmission pipelines from Swad Dam and Shadi Kaur Dam to Gwadar city to meet the future water demand of the city, said an official while talking to APP. He informed that the installation of water pipelines network from Swad Dam to Gwadar was already completed. "It is a 67 km long pipeline that will provide 5 million gallons of water per day." The repair work of water pipelines inside Gwadar city was also expected to be completed this year, he added. "90 percent work on the Ankara Kaur Dam is also completed which will provide 2.7 million gallons of water per day," the official told while elaborating the project progress. - Agencies

Rain brings miseries for South Africans

DNA

JOHANSBERG: Rescue operations are continuing in South Africa in an effort to save the lives of dozens of people who are missing following the floods in KwaZulu-Natal province. With more rain on its way, emergency teams face further peril as they search for survivors. "My house was here, and behind my house it was six or seven metres away from the river, so I thought I was safe," says Hero Canga, pointing at the debris that was once his Durban home. "I'm traumatised because I don't know what to do, I don't know where to go, I don't know the way forward. There's no way forward in fact." Hero is one of about 40,000 people affected by the floods. Officials say 13,500 properties have been damaged, leaving many homeless without shelter, food or water. Another woman nearby, who said she was too embarrassed to be named, said she must flee before her home is destroyed. "I need a place to stay now, right now I'm leaving. Just for the safety of my children. It's too bad, but we thank God that we are alive." Nearly 400 people have died and there are fears that number will increase as search and rescue operations continue to find scores of people who are still unaccounted for. The grim search for survivors is also in jeopardy because some excavation machine drivers have left for the Easter holiday. One aid organisation, Gift of the Givers, is now appealing for people who know how to operate excavation machinery.

Sinosure scales up financial support

BEIJING: China Export and Credit Insurance Corporation (Sinosure) has stepped up support for the country's green industries by providing more export credit insurance, the company said. Since the start of 2021, the company has insured over 150 green projects, with the sum insured reaching around 7.7 billion U.S. dollars. Sinosure has also strengthened its financial support to green projects under the Belt and Road Initiative and helped domestic companies explore overseas green and low-carbon markets. Take the photovoltaic industry as an example. Sinosure has helped facilitate the export of photovoltaic products worth over 130 billion U.S. dollars from 286 companies since 2005. Looking to the future, Sinosure will continue to explore green finance innovation, promote the integration of green finance and green industries, increase support for green industries and green projects, and give better play to the role of export credit insurance, the company said. Sinosure is a state-funded insurance company established to promote China's foreign trade and international economic cooperation. - APP

Briefs

Fawad Ch denies removal of Punjab Governor

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Fawad Chaudhry has denied the removal of Omar Sarfaraz Cheema as Punjab Governor. Chaudhry in his reaction said that President Arif Alvi has refuted the news regarding the removal of the Punjab governor and added no such summary has been sent to the President's House. Omar Sarfaraz Cheema will continue to discharge his duties as Punjab Governor as the authority to remove him lies with the President of Pakistan, Fawad Chaudhry added. Earlier, federal government announced to remove Governor Punjab Omar Sarfaraz Cheema from his office. Governor Punjab while addressing a press conference said that the Prime Minister was not authorized to remove him from his office. "This power rests with the President. Only he can remove me from the office," Governor Omar Sarfaraz Cheema said.

AJK assembly to elect PM today

DNA

MUZAFFARABAD: Acting on the directives of the Supreme Court Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), President Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry has summoned session of the Azad Kashmir Legislative Assembly to elect new prime minister, following resignation by Abdul Qayyum Niazi. The session of the AJK Legislative Assembly has been summoned on Monday at 10:00 am. PTI has nominated Tanveer Ilyas for the premier and claimed of having support of 33 members of the assembly against the 27 members needed for getting majority votes. The joint opposition which was yet to announce its candidate has nominated Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) AJK President Ch Muhammad Yaseen for the slot. PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has given approval of Ch Yaseen's name.

Five injured in mosque shooting in Canada

MONITORING DESK

TORONTO: Five people were injured in a mosque shooting Saturday in the Toronto area of Canada, according to police sources. A group of men, who had finished midnight prayers during the Holy month of Ramadan, was randomly attacked in a drive-by shooting in the Scarborough district, said Toronto Police Department spokesperson David Rydzik. At least six shots were fired but it remains unknown how many suspects were involved in the shooting, he said. "We are unable to say whether the victims were targeted because of their religious beliefs," said Rydzik.

Captivating Qawwali night held at Serena Hotel

Imran Aziz Mian's looks and his style are a mirror image of his father. He welcomed the guests at Jashn-e-Qawwali which is part of the celebrations of 20th anniversary of Islamabad Serena hotel

AB KHAN

The Sheesh Mahal at Serena hotel Islamabad, set the mood of the night for the musical aficionados who were in full attendance to savor the mystical rhythmic notes with Imran Aziz Mian on the invitation of Mr. Aziz Boolani, CEO Serena hotels. Going with the last name, Imran Aziz Mian is one of the nine sons of famous Aziz Mian qawwal who ruled over the hearts of millions of fans in South Asia for many years until his death in 2000. Aziz Mian who also holds the record of singing the longest commercially released qawwali for 150 minutes, was known as Shahenshahe-Qawwali (King of qawwali). He attained stardom over night when he performed in front of the Shah of Iran Reza Shah Pahlavi who was so awe-struck by his performance that he gave Aziz Mian a gold medal and his musical career, and tremendous boost. The majestic stage at the center of the hall brought back the memories for many denizens of Islamabad who have been craving to quench their thirst for cultural rendezvous pre-covid period. As Imran Aziz Mian and his party (Humnawa) ascended the throne, the lights in the hall went dim and the stage was beautifully lit. It was first come first serve seating setup and spacious room for floor seating as well. The younger crowd looked quite comfortable on the floor with cushions laid by their sides whereas the septuagenarians on chairs looked quite at home.

Imran Aziz Mian's looks and his style are a mirror image of his father. He welcomed the guests at Jashn-e-Qawwali which is part of the celebrations of 20th anniversary of Islamabad Serena hotel under their cultural diplomacy program which initially started off with Mehfil-e-Mushaira a few months back. As a scion of the King of Qawwali started his rendition, the powerful and raspy voice brought back memories of his late father for many in attendance. Nabi nabiyah Nabi nabi, Aadmi hay Benazir, Allah he janey kaun basher hai were the hit numbers he sang one after another thus setting the tone for the night. Following the footsteps of his father, Imran begin his delivery in a gentle tone and build steadily to a very high energy level in order to induce hypnotic state both among the musicians and within the audience. The instrumental prelude complimented by harmonium and tabla was followed by improvised variations of the melody. His members joined in the singing of the verses thus constituting the refrain. The lyrics of the main verses sent the audience in a trance casting a spell binding affect in the hall. If one digs into history, Qawwali music was introduced in the 13th century in India by none other than the great Sufi saint Amir Khosrow by fusing Persian, Arabic, Turkish and



Indian tradition informed Imran Aziz Mian while talking about the origins of qawwali, also acknowledging that gathering of such nature to listen to qawwali is called Mehfil-e-Sama. The poetry selected for such occasions is implicitly understood to be spiritual in its meaning, even though the lyrics can sometimes sound wildly secular, or outright hedonistic, he explained. Sufi qawwali in Pakistani music genre revolves around love, devotion and



longing (of man for the Divine). But in the context of qawwali, these songs of intoxication and yearning use secular metaphors to poignantly express the soul's longing for union eventually with the divine and its joy in lovingly the Divine. Similarly, many of Aziz Mian's renditions are taken to be in spiritual context attaining spiritual knowledge. The words frequently used in the famous qawwali's of his, like "wine" (sharaab) represents "knowledge of the divine", the "cup-bearer" (saaqi) is God or a spiritual guide, the "tavern" the metaphorical place. It is being said that the reaction to Qawwali is intended to bring everyone involved to a spiritual union with God and in bringing listeners to a state of religious ecstasy hypnotizing both performers and listeners... and Imran Aziz main successfully managed to achieve that challenge. As the clock struck 3:00am, Imran's finale, damadam must qalander served the cherry on the top. The audience was swinging in ecstasy and some devotees

where physically performing dhamaal near the stage. The night came to an end with the announcement for suhoor, setup in the foyer and Aangan area with spacious sit-down seating arrangements. Piping hot puri's swimming in the oil wok were dished out fresh for the guests alongside assortments of nan from tandors, paratha from woks and breads from toasters. A wide variety of food to choose from was on display but the beeline at the Lassi stall indeed was the show stopper.

North Korea tests new weapon

Photos show the country's leader Kim Jong-un smiling and clapping as he watches the new missile's launch

NEWS DESK

North Korea says it has successfully tested a new weapon, which it says will significantly enhance its tactical nuclear capabilities. Photos show the country's leader Kim Jong-un smiling and clapping as he watches the new missile's launch. Experts believe this is a sign that North Korea is planning to test compact nuclear weapon soon - in other words,

a tactical nuclear weapon. North Korea stopped nuclear testing in 2017. The following year, it blew up tunnels at its Punggye-ri nuclear testing site, in a move that was seen to be part of a diplomatic rapprochement with South Korea and the US. But recent satellite images suggest work is under way to restore the tunnels. The "new-type tactical guided weapon... is of great significance in drastically improving the

firepower of the frontline long-range artillery units and enhancing the efficiency in the operation of tactical nukes," the North's official KCNA news agency reported. It added that Mr Kim had given "important instructions on further building up the defence capabilities and nuclear combat forces of the country". South Korea's military confirmed that two missiles - likely to be short-range - were launched from the North into the

sea on Saturday night. The US said it was monitoring the situation. Experts say the timing of the test could be seen as a protest against joint US and South Korean military drills, which are due to take place for nine days from Monday. North Korea has often denounced such drills as a rehearsal for war. The timing also coincides with events celebrating the anniversary of the birth of North Korea's founder, Kim Il-sung, last Friday.

Time period extended for aid transportation to Afghanistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Pakistan in November 2021 had approved, as a special gesture to the Afghan people, the transportation of 50,000 MTs of wheat and life saving medicines as humanitarian assistance from India to Afghanistan via Wagah border on exceptional basis for humanitarian purposes. The time period granted for transportation of the humanitarian assistance expired on 21 March 2022. The Government of India recently requested for extension in time period to complete the transportation process. As a manifestation of our sincere efforts towards addressing the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, it has been decided to grant two months' extension to facilitate completion of the transportation.

Over 20 wounded in new Jerusalem violence

AGENCIES

JERUSALEM: More than 20 Israelis and Palestinians were wounded on Sunday in several incidents in and around Jerusalem's flash-point Al-Aqsa Mosque compound, two days after major violence at the site. The latest clashes take the number of wounded since Friday to more than 170, at a tense time when the Jewish Passover festival coincides with the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan. They also follow deadly violence in Israel and the occupied West Bank starting in late March, in which 36 people have been killed.

Early on Sunday morning, "hundreds" of Palestinian demonstrators inside the mosque compound started gathering piles of stones, shortly before the arrival of Jewish visitors, police said. Jews are allowed to visit but not to pray at the site, also known as Temple Mount, the holiest place in Judaism and third-holiest in Islam. Israeli police said its forces had entered the compound in order to "remove" the demonstrators and "re-establish order". The Palestinian Red Crescent said 19 Palestinians were wounded, including at least five who were hospitalized. It said some had been wounded with rubber-coat-

ed steel bullets. An AFP team near the entrance to the compound early Sunday morning saw Jewish worshippers leaving the site, barefoot for religious reasons, and protected by heavily armed police. Outside the Old City, which lies in Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem, Palestinian youths threw rocks at passing buses, resulting in seven people being treated for light wounds, Shaare Zedek hospital said. Video released by the police showed two Israeli buses, their windscreens and side windows smashed in, driving down a road near the Old City as young men showered them with rocks.

The police said they had arrested 18 Palestinians. Senior Palestinian official Hussein Al Sheikh said Sunday that "Israel's dangerous escalation in the Al-Aqsa compound... is a blatant attack on our holy places", and called on the international community to intervene. King Abdullah II of Jordan - the kingdom serves as custodian of holy places in east Jerusalem, which Israel captured in 1967 and later annexed in a move not recognised by most of the international community - on Sunday called on Israel to "stop all illegal and provocative measures" that drives "further aggravation".

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