



Islamabad POST

Monday, April 11, 2022

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

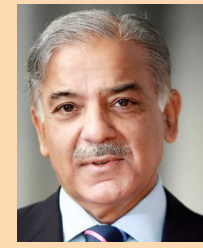
Price Rs. 20

France votes with Emmanuel Macron seeking new term

Detailed News On Page-07

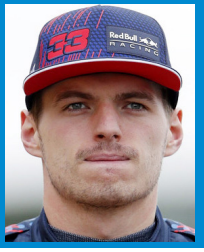
No peace with India until IOK resolution

Detailed News On Page-06



Failure in Australian GP unacceptable

Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

Freedom struggle begins

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A day after leaving office, former prime minister Imran Khan told his followers that Pakistan's "freedom struggle begins again today against a foreign conspiracy of regime change". Taking to Twitter, the former premier wrote: "Pakistan became an independent state in 1947; but the freedom struggle begins again today against a foreign conspiracy of regime change." The PTI chairman said that it was "always the people of the country who defend their sovereignty and democracy".

BBC

Urdu news fabricated

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the army's media wing, has rejected a report published by BBC Urdu about what happened at PM House before Imran Khan was ousted from the post of prime minister, terming it "baseless and a pack of lies." "The report published by British broadcasting agency today is baseless and a pack of lies. The propaganda report has not cited any credible, verified or relevant source," a brief statement by the ISPR said. The military's media wing said that this report is a violation of basic journalism ethics and there is "no truth in the fake news."

Attorney General resigns

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Attorney General of Pakistan, Khalid Javed Khan has resigned from his office as he tendered the resignation through a letter addressed to the President. It merits mention here that as per precedent of the PM Imran Khan was also sent packing without being given the opportunity to complete his tenure. According to details, as per precedent of the PM Imran was also sent packing without being given the opportunity to complete his tenure.

NA all set to elect new PM

Nomination papers of both Shehbaz Sharif and Shah Mahmood Qureshi accepted

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly will elect the new leader of the House (Prime Minister) on April 11, 2022 (Monday) after passage of no-confidence motion against Imran Khan at 2 pm. Opposition parties in the National Assembly on Sunday (April 10) defeated the ruling PTI government in the no-confidence resolution they jointly moved against Prime Minister Imran Khan with 174 votes, setting a new precedent in parliamentary history of the country for in-house change through a democratic and constitutional manner. President PML-N, Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and PTI Vice-President Shah Mahmood Qureshi are in the run for slot as both submitted their nomination papers for new leader of the House in National Assembly. Their papers were scrutinized and accepted by the National Assembly Secretariat. Earlier, Dr. Babar Awan raised objections on nomination papers of PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif but these were rejected by the NA Secretariat. The sitting would be held on Monday (April 11) at 2:00 pm to elect new leader of the House (Prime Minister). Before commencement of the poll, the Chair will read out to the Assembly the names of the validly nominated candidates, hereinafter referred to as the contesting candidates, in the order in which their nomination papers were received and proceed to hold the poll in accordance with the procedure set out in the Second Schedule. According to the second schedule, the Speaker of Chair shall direct

that the bells be rung for five minutes before commencement of voting to enable members not present in the Chamber to be present. Immediately after the bells stop ringing, all the entrances to the Lobby shall be locked and the Assembly staff posted at each entrance shall not allow any entry or exit through those entrances until the voting has concluded. The Speaker or Chair shall then read out the resolution before the Assembly and ask the members who wish to vote in favour of the resolution to pass in single file through the entrance where tellers shall be posted to record the votes. On reaching the desk of the tellers, each member shall, in turn, call out the division number allotted to him under the rules. The tellers shall then mark off his number on the division list simultaneously calling out the name of the member. In order to ensure that his vote has been properly recorded, the member shall not move off until he has clearly heard the teller call out his name. After a member has recorded his vote, he shall not return to the Chamber until bells are rung after conclusion of voting process. When the Speaker finds that all the members who wished to vote have recorded their votes, he shall announce that the voting has concluded. Thereupon the Secretary shall cause the division list to be collected, count the recorded votes and present the result of the count to the Speaker. The Speaker shall then direct that the bells be rung for two minutes to enable the members to return to the Chamber. After the bells stop ringing, the Speaker shall announce the result to the Assembly.



ISLAMABAD: Mian Shehbaz Sharif submitting his nomination papers for the office of Prime Minister. - DNA

Bilawal may be new FM; Naveed Qamar NA speaker



DNA

ISLAMABAD: After the success of the no-confidence motion against Imran Khan, the opposition alliance is set to elect new prime minister from Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the National Assembly speaker from Pakistan People's Party (PPP). PPP's Naveed Qamar is a strong candidate for the National Assembly Speaker. However, the PPP is yet to decide whether to become part of the

Continued on Page 06

'PTI MNAs may tender resignations'

Fawad Chaudhry says Final decision expected today in PTI parliamentary party meeting

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Following the removal of former prime minister Imran Khan from power through a no-confidence motion, senior PTI leader and former minister for information and broadcasting Fawad Chaudhry announced Sunday that his party members would resign from the National Assembly today (Monday) if the nomination of PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif is accepted. Speaking to journalists on Sunday alongside former energy minister Hammad Azhar and former state minister for information Farrukh Habib, Fawad said that PTI chief Imran Khan chaired a meeting of

Continued on Page 06

Imran chairs PTI core committee meeting

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan will chair a core committee meeting of the party Sunday (today) at Banigala in Islamabad. PTI Senator Faisal Javed tweeted that Imran Khan will announce the future course of action in the PTI core committee meeting to be held today.

Continued on Page 06

Kyiv keeps pressure on West to do more

Russian forces fired rockets into Ukraine's Luhansk and Dnipro regions on Sunday

NEWS DESK

KYIV: Ukraine said on Sunday it was seeking another round of European Union sanctions against Moscow and more military aid from its allies as Russian forces destroyed an airport and other targets in the east of the country. Russia has failed to take any major cities since it launched its invasion on Feb. 24, but Ukraine says it has been gathering its forces in the east for a major assault and has urged people to flee. Russian forces fired rockets into Ukraine's Luhansk and Dnipro regions on Sunday, officials said. Missiles had completely destroyed the airport in the city of Dnipro, said Valentyn Reznichenko, governor of the central Dnipropetrovsk region.

Continued on Page 06

Austrian leader to meet Putin today

AGENCIES

ZURICH: Austrian Chancellor Karl Nehammer will meet Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow on Monday, an Austrian government spokesman said, in what would be the first face-to-face meeting between Putin and a European Union leader since Russia's Feb. 24 invasion of Ukraine.

Continued on Page 06

Electoral reforms agreed upon: Kaira

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Senior Leader of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Qamar Zaman Kaira on Sunday said the electoral reforms was the combine agenda of the political parties and laws would be drafted in this regard. Talking to a private news channel, he said electoral reforms was the need of

Continued on Page 06

Five terrorists of banned TTP killed in Bannu

Police recovered modern weapons other equipment

STAFF REPORT

BANNU: At least five terrorists were killed on Sunday in a shootout with police and the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) in the Zindi Falak Sher area of Bannu. According to Bannu police, the slain terrorists belonged to Commander Akhtar Muhammad alias Khalil Group and Commander Zargul alias Uncle Group of banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

The police, flanked by the CTD, conducted an operation on a tip-off about the presence of the terrorists in the area. Five terrorists were killed in the shootout while many of their accomplices managed to escape under the cover of darkness. The police and the CTD launched a joint search operation for the arrest of the fleeing terrorists. The police recovered modern weapons, identity cards, mobile phones, a motorcycle and other equipment from the slain terrorists.

IK's exit: what went wrong and where?

ANALYSIS

ANSAR M BHATTI

AFTER serving in the office of the Prime Minister of Pakistan for 3 years 7 months and 22 days, Imran Khan was finally voted out on Sunday April 10, 2022 by 174 members of the National Assembly. Since Ayaz Sadiq was asked to preside over the proceedings after the resignation of Asad Qaisar, he could not cast his vote. Thus, the much-talked-about episode of no-trust came to an end. Imran Khan tried to the hilt to delay the vote for a couple of days, but he was not allowed to do so. The contingents of security forces were seen hovering around the important buildings including the President and the Prime Minister House and the Supreme Court was also convened at midnight in order to deal with the situation, which might have surfaced as a result of government delaying tactics. But then the better sense prevailed and Imran Khan willy-nilly allowed the

no-trust move to take place. There are many factors that led to the downfall of the cricketer-turned politician, at the top being his inflexible personality. Politics is the name of compromises and gerrymandering. Sometimes one has to make unwanted decisions as well. Political wheeling-dealing is an art and politicians who have mastery over it, ostensibly do wonders in this field. Imran Khan unfortunately badly lacked in such epithets, hence an unceremonious exit. While one may not doubt his patriotism and serene wish to bring about a socio-economic revolution in Pakistan, this is also a fact that he simply failed to transform his vows into reality. All his election promises and claims of introducing an efficient and clean governance system proved a hoax. Various internal and external factors played a key role in his ouster. On the external front Imran Khan failed to maintain cordial relations with Pakistan's traditional and extremely close friends. Then, an estranged relationship with the United States was yet another key element that paved the way for his early departure. A few weeks ago a top diplomat of a friendly country told me that he and his country's leadership had advised Imran Khan to maintain good working

relations with the establishment but he did not pay any heed. Another senior diplomat told me that a former Chinese senior diplomat came to him and complained about the step-motherly attitude of the PTI government towards the CPEC project. The Chinese diplomat further said that they had invested billions of dollars in the project and Imran Khan and his government wanted to wrap it up on the flimsy grounds of corruption and malpractices in the project. Some say, IK's Russia visit was also responsible for his downfall. Yes, but it was one of the factors and not the key factor. The PTI people have a point when they say the trip was planned long ago and it had nothing to do with the Russian invasion of Ukraine but analysts believe if that was the case then the visit could have been delayed for a few weeks. There is no second opinion that Pakistan ought to have close relations with all neighboring countries including Russia and India, however such relations should not be developed at the altar of another friendly country. The much-talked about secret letter issue played an instrumental role in PTI government dismissal. Right or wrong, one has to admit Khan's skills with which he propagated the whole episode and

grabbed huge public attention and favour. Mired in allegations of bad governance, corruption; nepotism and misadventures, the PTI government, by dint of the very letter, was able to prop up its sagging popularity and divert public attention from socio-economic woes. It has been my consistent opinion that the PTI and Imran Khan may not be able to cash in on the letter for a long time nevertheless undoubtedly they made huge temporary gains. After the letter saga, sympathy vote of PTI swelled to huge proportions. So much so, the PTI government did not spare the media also. Introduction of controversial laws including PECA and PMDA sought to damage the party's relations with the fourth pillar of the state. Like it or not, the media in Pakistan has acquired huge importance and power in recent years therefore political parties cannot afford to have bad relations with the media house even if they don't like it. I personally think the PTI govt's attempts to muzzle the press were ill-timed, absolutely wayward and unnecessary and especially at a time when the government had miserably failed in addressing public problems and grappling with the economic downturn. As announced by Fawad Chaudhry on Sunday PTI members are going to re-

sign from assemblies appears to be a disappointing move. There is no doubt that Imran Khan would have made a formidable opposition leader. His presence in the assembly as the opposition leader would always keep the government on its toes when it comes to good governance and deliverance of promises it has made with the people. Those in favour of resignations in PTI believe by doing so the way for early elections can be paved. The final decision in this regard is likely today in the PTI parliamentary party meeting. Ostensibly, PTI can be more effective and relevant while staying in the assemblies. Right from the start of the PTI government I maintained a consistent view that the Prime Minister may not complete the five year term simply because no prime minister has ever completed a full five-year parliamentary tenure, and Imran Khan looked as though he could well be the first. Anyway, towards the end of his rule, Imran Khan committed some serious political miscalculations. The idea of rejecting the no-trust vote by invoking the Article 5 was in fact a suicidal move. And it proved true when the apex court quashed deputy speaker's ruling with a 5-0 unanimous verdict.

To be continued...

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ICCI slams SBP for making steep hike in interest rate - Page 04

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Large Covid-19 outbreaks still spreading in Asia: UN - Page 07

Northern Alliance getting pace, harmful to Taliban interests? - Page 08

Briefs

Long queues of people at Utility stores in Dikhan

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: The government's claim of cheap Ramadan packages at Utility Stores during the month of Ramadan has become a joke for the citizens as long queues of the people were witnessed during the Holy month of Ramadan and scorching heat.

On the other hand, with the advent of the month of Ramadan, the prices of vegetables and fruits have skyrocketed. Due to hoarding in Dera, the prices of essential commodities have gone up since the beginning of Ramadan. Prices of vegetables and fruits have been increased in various markets. In Dera Ismail Khan, apples are being sold at Rs 250 per kg, watermelons at Rs 100 per kg and bananas at Rs 100 per dozen, similarly dates used during Iftar are also being sold at Rs 100 to Rs 250 per kg. Okra is being sold at Rs 220 per kg, Peas at Rs 160 per kg while tomatoes are being sold at Rs 180 per kg instead of Rs 80, on which the people seem to be complaining as usual. - APP

SAARC Chamber hails decision of barter trade

ISLAMABAD: President ISAAC Chamber of Commerce and Industry Iftikhar Ali Malik on Sunday said that Pakistan's prudent decision of barter trade with Afghanistan and Iran would further strengthen trilateral trade relations and foster existing econ ties among the three neighbouring Muslim countries. Talking to a delegation of traders led by Waqas Anjum which called on him, he said it is good wisdom based decision of the government to allow imports and exports under barter trade with both countries to promote trade with regional states. He said barter trade has tremendous importance to strengthen regional trade connectivity and to do with foreign exchange and other challenges confronted by the regional countries. He said it is good point to note that Pakistan government has amended relevant part of import and export policy orders 2020 to launch barter trade under the arrangements finalized after taking stakeholders into confidence. - APP

No. of corona cases decrease significantly in Punjab

LAHORE: The number of coronavirus cases have decreased significantly in Punjab due to current heat wave as 25 new cases of coronavirus were reported in the province during the last 24 hours. According to data shared by the spokesperson for the Punjab Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department (P&SHD), the number of coronavirus cases in the province reached 506,382 while death toll was recorded as 13,557 and recoveries as 490,518. The P&SHD confirmed 14 cases in Lahore, 01 in Bahawalpur, 03 in Multan, 05 in Rawalpindi, 01 in Sargodha and 01 cases of COVID-19 was reported in Vehari. - APP

COURT NOTICE

In the court of Mis Meh-wish shazadi Sahiba Civil Judge Jhelum
Title: Mohammad zulfikar VS Chairman Nadra etc
Advertisement Name: Defendant no(3)DG Immigration & Passport Through Assistant Director Passport Office Jhelum(4)Rehaan Zulfikar s/o Muhammad Zulfikar muhammad muhammad iqbal r/o Italy(5)Imran Zulfikar s/o Mohammad Zulfikar Muhammad Iqbal r/o italy
Claims: 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 12-04-2022 at 8:00AM, otherwise ex-parte proceedings will be initiated.



ISLAMABAD: Opposition's PM candidate Shehbaz Sharif meets Asif Ali Zardari and Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. DNA

Construction on multiple projects continues in Gujrat

The construction of 24 projects for the provision of non-existent facilities under the auspices of School Education will be completed in the same financial year

YOOSUF BHUTTA

GUJRAT: "Work order has been issued after completion of tender's process for construction of mega development project THQ level hospital Lakhnawal. It will be looked after by Buildings Division, as per instructions of Punjab Government. Construction of new Trauma Center,

Rescue 1122 building and Kidney Center in Kharian is in full swing in the district." These details were given in a meeting chaired by Deputy Commissioner Dr Khurram Shehzad. The meeting was also attended by Deputy Director Development Jahangir Butt and SDO Buildings. It was informed in the meeting that construction of THQ Level Hospital Lakhnawal is esti-

ated to cost a total of Rs. 953 million. It is reported that in the budget of the current financial year, in addition to the funds released for the project, a request will be made to the Punjab government for more funds. It was informed in the meeting that new Rescue 1122 stations will be constructed at Jalalpur Jattan, Kathala, Lala Musa, and Mangowal,

construction of new Trauma Centers at THQ Hospital Sarai Alamgir and Dinga, 10-bed Dialysis Center' building at Kharian will be completed shortly. All projects will be completed in the same financial year. It was informed in the meeting that the construction work of new Dar-ul-Amaan near Prince Chowk has been completed. Construction

of Major Pervez Shaheed RHC, upgrade of BHU Bhaddar, construction of new buildings of BHU Bernali, Pir Khana, Masoompur and Bansarian is also underway. It was informed in the meeting that work was in progress for the upgradation of Boys College Karianwala. The construction of 24 projects for the provision

of non-existent facilities under the auspices of School Education will be completed in the same financial year. Deputy Commissioner Dr. Khurram Shehzad directed that the officers of the Buildings Department should immediately approach the Punjab Government for all those projects for which funds are required.

Police bust 64 gangs in first quarter of 2022

PESHAWAR: The city police busted at least 64 gangs and arrested 234 gangsters during various operations conducted in first quarter of 2022, said SSP Operation Haroon Rasheed on Sunday. Talking to media here at his office, SSP said that more than Rs30 million were recovered from the possessions of the arrested persons. The other confiscated items included 20 vehicles, 182 motorcycles, and 182 smartphones. Similarly, a total of 126 gamblers besides 2500 drug peddlers were also arrested during the same period, he said adding hun-

dreds of bottles of liquor, 81 kg of ice drug, 1410 kg of opium, 181 kg of heroin and 1026 kg of hashish were also recovered from their possession. Haroon said that more than 500 drug addicts were admitted in drug rehabilitation centers during the period. A total of 485 search and strike operations were carried out under the National Action Plan to ensure peace in the city. During search operations arms smugglers were arrested and 3228 pistols, 183 Kalashnikovs, 187 rifles, 80 shotguns, 25 kalakovs, and 38 hand grenades were recovered. - APP



FAISALABAD: A view of sewerage water accumulated on Millat road needs attention to the concerned authorities. - APP

Pre-flood arrangements stressed

SAQIB MUSHTAQ

BAHAWALPUR: A meeting of District Emergency Board and District Management Authority was held in the Committee Room of DC Office under the chairmanship of Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue Shahid Imran Marth. On the occasion, Additional Deputy Commissioner

Revenue Shahid Imran Marth directed that all arrangements regarding pre-flood should be completed in a timely manner by the concerned departments. He said that a disaster emergency plan has been formulated to deal with any possible accident or tragedy. He said that 36 ambulances of Rescue 1122, 6 Fire Vehicles, 3 Rescue Vehicles, 42 Mo-

torbike Ambulances and 511 Rescuers would be on duty in the district. Officers of relevant departments were present in the meeting. Health officials visit jail: District Health Authority Bahawalpur Health Education, Vector Surveillance and Spray teams led by District Health Education Officer Zulqarnain Jatoti and District Entomologist

Madam Shahnaz visited Central Jail Bahawalpur here today. Fully aware of Meanwhile, mosquito breeding grounds in different parts of the jail were also inspected and no dengue larvae or adult mosquitoes were found in Central Jail Bahawalpur during the inspection. Later, anti-dengue spray was also sprayed in Central Jail Bahawalpur. Addl DC visits fruit

market: Additional Deputy Commissioner General Amir Nazir Kachchi visited Fruit and Vegetable Market Bahawalpur in the morning and monitored the auction of fruits and vegetables. Secretary Market Committee Mehr Mulazam Hussain and other concerned staff were present on the occasion. The Additional Deputy Commissioner General directed that the

sale of fruits and vegetables should be ensured in accordance with the fixed rates. He said that legal action should be taken against those who did not sell items as per the price list. He visited various sections of the vegetable and fruit market to check the quality of vegetables and fruits and also reviewed the cleaning arrangements.

Political crises: what next after Imran Khan

Though ISPR denied such reports but in coming days all such things may be made public through one or the other ways

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: After ousting Imran Khan, a number of different opposition parties are going to establish a coalition government with PML Mian Shabbaz Sharif as Prime Minister. However, former President and PPP co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari will be the main person in formulating strategies, policies and targets of the coalition government.

No doubt almost opposition parties are also in favour of early elections but Asif Ali Zardari and several others within the opposition are also having the same ideas. Likewise outgoing Prime Minister Imran Khan along with aides also wants early elections. Earlier Imran Khan had made attempts to go for

early elections with his choice of caretaker government, civil administration and security forces. But now the process of fresh polls may be held under the supervision of a set up to be decided by opposition parties. Secondly, unlike in 2018, Imran Khan and his party wouldn't enjoy support of a military dominated establishment in the coming elections. There are reports that Imran Khan at the last moment made attempts to replace Gen Bajwa by Gen Faiz Hamid but the move was foiled. Now Imran Khan's unceremonial departure made visible rifts between Bajwa and Faiz Hamid. Though ISPR denied such reports but in coming days all such things may be made public through one or the other ways.

Besides internal issues like security and economic disorder, Afghanistan might be the main issue before Shabbaz Sharif led coalition government. Though almost all members of the global community are extending help and pledges to the Taliban regime but none is willing to recognize. The Imran Khan Government had made hectic efforts to get international community recognition for the Taliban regime but had failed. Now Pakistan needs to initiate steps for restoration of lost image regarding Afghanistan. No doubt to mention that almost all components in the new coalition government have conflict approaches to internal and external issues. Unlike in the past, this time the new coalition also comprises MQM and ANP like rivals.

Approach on the part of JUI F towards the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, future of tribal districts and others is different from nationalists like ANP, BNP and even PPP. For a long time Maulana Fazal Ur Rahman has established his political identity as a "self interested" person. He is always reluctant in accommodating his allies and aides. The future of this new multi-parties alliance or coalition will depend on the policies of its top three leaders like Shabbaz Sharif, Asif Ali Zardari and Maulana Fazal Ur Rahman. The task is not easy for partners within the new coalition. And they are likely to bring back economic and financial expert Ishaq Dar for handling the economic matters. Similarly the partners who

follow policies of let to live can easily win the hearts of common people who were disheartened by Imran Khan government due to increasing price hike and alarming trends of corruption and corruption practices in government organs, nepotism and misuse of offices by ministers and other occupants of official posts. On the other hand, PTI Chief Imran as compared to past might be a serious hurdle to the coalition partners. Before passage of resolution on no trust, Imran Khan declared agitation against the government and US led allies. He through such slogans is likely to get attention throughout the country which may be harmful to the very interests of the country and the government as well.

Shehbaz Sharif meets PPP leadership

ISLAMABAD: President Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz, Shehbaz Sharif called on the former President of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari and the Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari at Zardari House Islamabad on Sunday evening. Former President Asif Ali Zardari, Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Mian Shehbaz Sharif discussed the political situation in the country. Shehbaz Sharif thanked President Zardari and Chairman Bilawal Sharif for their efforts to ensure the success of the no-confidence motion. They pledged to work together on the issues of public interest. Secretary information PPP and PPPP, Faisal Karim Kundi and Shazia Atta Marri were present on the occasion while Ayaz Sadiq, Maryam Aurangzeb and Saad Rafique accompanied Shehbaz Sharif. - DNA

AJK President leaves for KSA

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Azad Jammu and Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry has left for Saudi Arabia on a four-day official visit at the invitation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. During his four-day visit to Saudi Arabia, Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry is scheduled to meet the OIC Secretary General Hussain Ibrahim Taha and senior officials of the Islamic Development Bank. Besides apprising the OIC chief of the prevailing political and human rights situation in the Indian occupied Kashmir, he will also meet Saudi officials and members of the Kashmiri community settled in Saudi Arabia. The Azad Kashmir President was extended invitation for the visit to OIC headquarters during the OIC foreign ministers' conference in Islamabad last month.

Clash after PTI objects to Shehbaz's nomination

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Sunday objected to the nomination of Shehbaz Sharif for Prime Minister slot which triggered a verbal clash between the leaders of the two parties. The objection was raised by PTI leader Babar Awan during scrutiny of the nomination papers by acting National Assembly Speaker Qasim Suri. According to Babar Awan, there were a number of cases pending against Shehbaz Sharif in courts so his nomination papers must be rejected. Meanwhile, a delegation of the united opposition also reached the office of the acting National Assembly speaker where the nomination papers were being scrutinised. The raising of objection led to a heated exchange of words between both the sides.

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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



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Marriott.....	051-2826121
Monal.....	0334-5421812



Airlines

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Emergency

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Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....	0321-5744480
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Teachers demand timely payment as per ceiling

A lecturer at a local college on the condition of anonymity said, public money is misused on fake repair of furniture, vehicles and on different false purchases every year but there is always no budget to pay rental ceiling to the teachers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The college teachers of Islamabad Capital Territory have expressed disappointment over excessive delay in payment of their rental ceiling as well as discrimination in the assessment of the rents of their hired houses. According to an official source, the authorities are unable to release payments of rental ceiling to the landlords/owners of houses which have been pending for over a year. Moreover in many cases, the assessed rent by the hiring committee of the Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) is below the rental ceiling of the teachers. The landlords usually hover on the nerves of the teachers and repeatedly demand for early payments which gives the teachers a strong psychological upset. Consequently teachers are com-

pelled to borrow money either from relatives and friends or the banks to pay the rent. A lecturer at a local college on the condition of anonymity said, public money is misused on fake repair of furniture, vehicles and on different false purchases every year but there is always no budget to pay rental ceiling to the teachers. Owners of the houses are threatening the teachers of eviction if rent is not paid timely. The concerned authority should come forward to address the issue of backlog of unpaid rent that has accrued during the last one year, he demanded. Another lecturer who managed to purchase a house in sector E-17 by his hard earned money and after getting loans from his relatives said, fulfilled the entire requirement for hiring a house. Covered area of my house was even more than the required area but the rent assessment committee of FDE assessed the rent below my ceiling

fixed by the government. I was maltreated by the FDE rent assessment committee which fixed my rental ceiling one category below and denied the rightful privilege". "On the other hand my counterparts in other government departments have been receiving the rent of their houses situated in the same sector according to their rental ceiling. This is sheer discrimination with me. I have no access to higher authorities to seek justice and fair play", the lecturer said. When contacted, President of Federal Government College Teachers Association Dr Rahima Rahman said the payment of rental ceiling is not made smoothly and is delayed by months. As a result teachers pay rents to landlords from their own pockets or from arranging money in the shape of loans. Contrary to that, employees working in ministries and other government departments never faced any difficulty in availing them-

selves of the house-hiring facility. They always get payment well in time and according to their rental ceiling and covered area of the house but unfortunately in case of teachers there are different standards. Some of our teachers are not being paid according to their ceiling and covered area because the rent assessment committee of FDE has contrived its own inspection procedure of approving or disapproving of rental ceiling. She further said, teachers have been deprived of their due rights and fair demands but despite their efforts, they are unheard and are facing continued struggle. What performance can the government expect from a teacher who is always a victim of such perils? The new government should take notice of this and adopt a strategy for clearing the rental ceiling on time to the teachers. She urged the authorities to pay the rental ceiling immediately to facilitate the teachers.

5 gamblers held during crackdown

RAWALPINDI: Police have arrested five gamblers and recovered stake money of Rs 45,700, 05 mobile phones and play cards from their possession during crackdown, informed police spokesman on Sunday. Rata Amral police conducted raid and arrested gamblers identified as Jaber, Ahmed Ali, Hay Gul, Waheed Gul and Khan Wali. Police have registered separate cases against them and further investigation is in progress. - APP

Brothel raided, four booked

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Police on Sunday have busted a brothel and arrested four persons including two women, allegedly involved in immoral activities. According to the police spokesman, New Town Police acting on a tip-off, conducted a raid in its jurisdiction and netted four persons. - APP



SKARDU: A scenic view of Katapa desert lake in Northern Pakistan. - APP

WAPDA expedites construction work on 12 dams

ISLAMABAD: Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) has expedited construction work on 12 small and medium dams aimed at enhancing, clean energy generation, water availability and climate resilience across the country. As per detail given by the official sources, the dams were dual purpose projects as these were designed to store rain and floodwater along with hydropower generation in all the federating units of the country. He added that the small and medium dam projects initiated in Balochistan included Winder Dam project that

would produce 0.3 megawatts (MW) energy and water storage capacity of 0.036 Million acre-foot (MAF), Naulong Dam to produce 4.4 MW power and store 0.20 MAF water, Hingol Dam to generate 1.1 MW electricity and 1.41 MAF water storage, Garuk Dam to have 0.3 MW power production capacity and 0.05 MAF water storage and Pelar Dam to produce 0.3 MW energy and would conserve 0.099 MAF water. In Sindh, the Nai Gaj Dam would produce 4.2 MW electricity and store 0.30 MAF water, whereas the Darawat Dam was expected to produce 0.45 MW energy and

store 0.12 MAF water after completion. The WAPDA has also started work on different small and medium dams in Khyber PukhtonKhawa including the Kurram Tangi Dam of 83.4 MW hydropower potential and 1.2 MAF water storage capacity, Tank Zam Dam having 25.5 MW power generation and 0.345 MAF water storage capacity and Daraban Zam Dam would produce 0.75 MW energy and 0.069 MAF water storage capacity. The WAPDA official further said the Authority had started construction work on different small dams in Punjab including Ghabir Dam having

0.15 MW power production capacity and 0.066 MAF water storage, and Papin Dam of 0.3 MW power and 0.089 MAF water storage capacity hydropower projects that were at various stages of development. He informed that keeping in view the energy demands, project completion pace and availability of funds the Authority has decided to ensure swift culmination of construction and development work on the projects as it would not only help address water and energy issues rather would generate jobs for the local communities and start tourism and business opportunities. - APP

Commissioner, DC visiting Ramzan bazaars

RAWALPINDI: Commissioner Nour ul Amin Mengal and Deputy Commissioner (DC) Tahir Farooq are visiting Ramzan Bazaars set up in different areas of Rawalpindi division to review the arrangements and enforcement of the government rates. The commissioner and DC had visited Committee Chowk, Double Road, Haideri Chowk, Murree Road, Dhoke Hasu, Jhelum, Gujar Khan, Adyala Road, Chungi No. 22, Chur Chowk and other Ramzan Bazaars and reviewed the arrangements besides checking rates of essential commodities. The commissioner and DC during the visits also checked the quality of fruits, vegetables and essential commodities. Earnest efforts were being made to provide relief to the citizens, the Commissioner said and directed the officers concerned to further improve the facilities at Ramzan bazaars. The citizens could get registered their complaints at complaint cells set up in Ramzan bazaars, he said

and informed that official social media page of Commissioner Rawalpindi could also be used to lodge complaints. Efforts would be made to address the complaints within shortest possible time frame, he added. Special price magistrates were deployed in Ramzan Bazaars of Rawalpindi district to take action against profiteers, he said. The commissioner instructed the officers to ensure that separate price lists of the agriculture department must be displayed prominently at the fair price shops. Focal persons of the departments concerned should also remain present in Ramzan bazaars to listen complaints of the citizens, he added. The commissioner informed that a monitoring system had also been developed to check availability and supply of essential commodities to the citizens on subsidized rates. Any stall selling expensive and unhealthy vegetables and fruits would be shut down after the imposition of heavy fines, the DC said. - DNA

Less impact of prevailing heatwave on Shisper Glacier: GBDMA

ISLAMABAD: The Gilgit Baltistan Disaster Management Authority (GBDMA) officials on Sunday confirmed that there was less impact of the prevailing heatwave on the melting Shisper Glacier falling in the vicinity

of Hassanabad village of Hunza. The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) in its situation report sent to the GBDMA informed that if the prevailing weather conditions and temperature prevailed then the glacial lake water, which is very small at present, would drain out by the end of April or first week of May, the GBDMA Deputy Director told media. He said if the lake size swelled then the glacial lake formed at the Shisper Glacier might burst due to the expected rise in temperatures in the valley. To a question, he said keeping in view the prevailing situation and expected glacial lake outburst flood

(GLOF) the GBDMA teams were well prepared and trained to carry out community sensitization, local population's relocation and stockpiling ten days ahead of the Met Office's threat alert of GLOF. Sher Mohammad of International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) said that the Shisper Glacier started surging in 2018 that has breached thrice from 2019 to 2020. He said continuous monitoring was key to develop well informed preparedness plans and contingency measures to avoid massive life and property loss during the insurmountable natural hazard. - APP

ANF recovers over 57 kg drugs

ANF foiled a bid to smuggle Ice from Islamabad to Doha and recovered 645 grams Ice from a passenger namely Fariat Ullah resident of Mardan

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) conducted various raids in different areas of the country during last week and recovered over 57 kg drugs including 26.4 kg charras, 1.2 kg opium, 1645 grams Ice, over 4.9 kg heroin and 23.8 kg ketamine. According to a spokesman of ANF Headquarters, ANF intelligence and ANF Islamabad conducted a raid at an office of a private courier company in Aab-

para, Islamabad and recovered 1.92 kg heroin from a parcel containing ladies hand bags, booked by Liaquat Shah for Hassan Ali at United Kingdom address. ANF Rawalpindi and ANF Intelligence intercepted a Toyota Van near Islamabad Motorway Interchange and recovered over 24 kg charras, 1.2 kg opium, one kg Ice and 1.9 kg heroin besides arresting two accused namely Nadeem resident of Charsadda and Sher Rehman. ANF while conducting two raids in different areas managed to recover over 23.8 kg

Ketamine and 910 grams heroin. ANF foiled a bid to smuggle 910 grams heroin from Islamabad to the United States of America. ANF Rawalpindi acting on a tip-off conducted a raid at a private courier company office in Islamabad, New Airport Town and managed to recover 910 grams heroin from a parcel containing bed sheets. The parcel was booked by Mubasshir Hassan resident of Chakwal for USA. In another operation, ANF Lahore and ANF Intelligence foiled a bid to smuggle 23.8

kg Ketamine from Sialkot to Kazakhstan. ANF Lahore and ANF Intelligence conducted a raid at a private courier company office on Wazirabad Road in Sialkot and managed to recover 23.8 kg Ketamine from a parcel booked for Kazakhstan. ANF in its operation conducted at Islamabad International Airport recovered 82 capsules containing 645 grams Ice. ANF foiled a bid to smuggle Ice from Islamabad to Doha and recovered 645 grams Ice from a passenger namely Fariat Ullah

resident of Mardan. The passenger was going Doha from Islamabad through Qatar Airlines flight no. QR-215. ANF recovered 2412 grams charras and arrested an accused namely Asim Shehzad resident of Mandi Bahauddin at Islamabad International Airport. The spokesman informed that the accused was travelling from Islamabad to Bahrain through flight No. GF-771. Separate cases have been registered against the accused while further investigations are in progress.

Admin imposes Rs 984,500 fines on 332 profiteers

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi District Administration has conducted 4318 raids in seven Tehsils of the district to check profiteering during last week and imposed Rs 984,500 fines on 332 shopkeepers while 60 shops were sealed besides netting 27 violators. According to a district administration spokesman, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rawalpindi Tahir Farooq while chairing a meeting of price control inspections checked performance of the authorities concerned. The DC was informed that strict action in accordance with the law was being taken against profiteers and hoarders and FIRs were being registered while the violators were being sent behind the bars. The meeting was informed that raids were being conducted in seven Tehsils of the district and fines were being imposed on the violators. The officers concerned had been directed 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 DC said adding the rate lists must be displayed at prominent places at the shops besides ensuring establishment of DC counters at big general stores. Commissioner Rawalpindi Division, Nour ul Amin Mengal had also directed the special prices magistrates to take strict action in accordance with the law against profiteers. The Commissioner had instructed the authorities concerned to make earnest efforts to provide relief to the citizens particularly during Ramazan ul Mubarak. - APP

RCB imposes Rs 3.4 million fines on food outlets

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB) food branch while conducting raids on food outlets imposed Rs 3.4 million fines for unhygienic and poor cleanliness conditions during last nine months of the current financial year. According to RCB spokesman, the board issued 1084 notices to food outlets for unhygienic and poor cleanliness conditions and also collected a large number of food samples which were sent to lab for quality testing. The cases of substandard food items were also sent to the court of the cantonment magistrate which imposed fines on the rules violators, he told APP. Food Inspectors on the directive of the Cantonment Executive Officer conducted surprise visits of different markets including Saddar, Peshawar Road Trench Bhatta, Bakra Mandi and other areas and inspected cleanliness condition with quality of food items at food outlets. - APP

PTI leaders condemn attack on Dr Arsalan's house

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leaders condemned an alleged raid on the residence of former focal person to former prime minister Imran Khan on Digital Media. Asad Umar said that the raid on Arsalan Khalid house is highly condemnable and patriotic youth like him are an asset for the nation. Dr Shehbaz Gill, close aide of Imran Khan, said that Arsalan Khalid is a patriot and he has to live in this country. "We knew that you would do this so last night I talked to him and asked him to shift to some safer place. The laptops and mobiles you have taken are nothing but professional work. Thank you." Fawad Chaudhry expressed his concern over the news of the 'attack' on the house of Dr Arsalan Khalid. He said that the whole PTI will stand with him in testing time.

Briefs

DOAM ensuring towards upgrading heritage assets

ISLAMABAD: Directorate of Archeology and Museums (DOAM) is committed in contributing towards the upgradation and restoration of museums, heritage assets and archeological sites in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Mosques, two stupas and three museums and the booklets of each site is prepared photographic documentation of all sites completed an official of DOAM told APP.

Peshawar Museum is notable for its collection of Buddhist artwork dating from the ancient Gandhara region.

He said Museum initially had only one exhibition hall and now it was further expanded with the construction of a new block with two galleries, two halls for the museum's collection in storage, offices for the provincial directorate of archaeology.

He said Peshawar Museum has one of the largest and most extensive collections of Gandhara art of the Buddhist period and is considered to be one of the biggest collections of Buddhist objects in the world.

He further informed that the museum also contains the largest collection of Gautama Buddha, Buddhist stone sculptures, terracotta figurines, and other Buddhist objects. - APP

Lok Virsa announces its new Ramadan timings

DNA

ISLAMABAD: National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage-Lok Virsa Thursday announced new Ramadan timings for visitors frequently visiting both museums of Lok Virsa; Pakistan National Heritage Museum and Pakistan National Monument Museum.

The museums will remain open for visitors from Tuesday to Sunday between 10am and 4pm without any break with prayer break on Friday, said a press release issued here Sunday.

PNCA starts painting, calligraphy & guitar classes

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan National Council of Arts (PNCA) has started new sessions of painting, calligraphy and guitar classes under the supervision of master instructors here at the PNCA aiming to provide platform to talented youth for improving their artistic skills and creativity.

Talking to APP, an official of PNCA Masroor Shah said, "Faiza Shah a renowned painter and instructor teaches painting classes to students who get registered in these particular classes". He said the course was designed to help students make a successful transition of their abilities at PNCA.

Through presentations, hands-on projects, discussions and field trips, the students would learn in an enabling environment to develop their skills and professional artistic habits in a new social and academic setting, he added.

"A strong emphasis will be placed on building a community of young emerging artists and connecting students to resources that can enhance their studies and creative practices in arts," Shah said. He concluded that the PNCA believed in giving musicians and artists the platform they need to grow and the inspiration they seek to realize their unique potential.

The painting, calligraphy and guitar skills demand a creative and nature loving mind that always turns emotions, colours, feelings and nature into art like painting various sculptures, art pieces and creating eye-catching caricatures and producing melodious symphonies on guitars. - APP



ISLAMABAD: An attractive view of seasonal flowers at roadside marking the spring season. - APP

ICCI slams SBP for making steep hike in interest rate

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) has slammed the decision of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) to make a steep hike of 2.5% in benchmark interest rate taking it to 12.25 percent and termed it a harsh measure as it would badly affect the growth of business activities and hurt exports. He said that the policy interest rate was 4% in India, 4.75% in Bangladesh, 3.7% in China, 0.5% in Thailand and 0.75% in Hong Kong, but it has been increased to 12.25% in Pakistan, which was almost the highest in the region. He warned that this massive hike in the policy interest rate would adversely affect all sectors of the economy and lead to further downfall in the trade and industrial activ-

ities. He urged that the SBP should immediately revisit and withdraw this irrational increase as it would prove disastrous for the economy. He said this while talking to a delegation of Fruits & Vegetables Market, Islamabad during their visit to ICCI. Muhammad Naveed Malik and Khalid Chaudhry former Senior Vice Presidents, Muhammad Hussain Vice Presidents ICCI were also present at the occasion. ICCI President said that our economy was already facing many great challenges including rising inflation, sharp currency devaluation, unbearable foreign debt, depleting foreign exchange reserves, growing fiscal imbalances and dwindling foreign direct investments. He said that in these circumstances, the government should have made significant cut in the benchmark interest rate to promote ease of doing business in order



to revive the business and economic activities. However, the great hike in interest rate would make the credit cost unviable for the private sector due to which efforts to expand current businesses and make new investments

would face massive hurdles. He emphasized that the SBP should reconsider its decision and reduce the interest rate to make credit cost affordable for business class. Jamsaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President and

Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President ICCI said that in the past, governments used the policy of increasing interest rate to control inflation, but this policy has failed miserably. They said that instead of controlling inflation, high

interest rate would lead to rapid de-industrialization causing more slowdown in GDP growth. They urged that SBP should withdraw the massive hike in interest rate to save the economy from its disastrous consequences.

Excellence Centers get operational

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU) has established 3 excellence centers, Center for Seerat-un-Nabi studies, center for Iqbal, Tasawwuf and Muslim thought and Dialogue with History. These centers will conduct research and seminars on the Lifestyle and teachings of Hazrat Muhammad (SAWW), contributions of great leaders of Tehreek-e-Pakistan, and the achievements of other notable personalities. He congratulated VC, AIU Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum for not only establishing these three centers of excellence but also for appointing eminent scholars of the country as heads

of these centers. Director Public Relations, Dr. Bakht Rawan said that the idea of Excellence Centers as well as the selection of their heads is commendable and will yield far-reaching results. Along with Director PR, the media team included Assistant Director, Hafiz Hassaan Ahmad and Assistant PRO, Aziz-ur-Rehman. Distinguished Researcher, Critic and Architect of Pakistani Literature, Prof. Fateh Muhammad Malik has been appointed as the head, Center for Iqbal, Tasawwuf and Muslim thought while Professor Sahibzada Sajid-ur-Rehman, a renowned religious scholar, has been appointed as the head of the Center of Excellence for Seerat-un-Nabi.

while talking to the media team, said that there will be a Board of Management to select topics for its Excellence Center. Research on those topics will be presented in a seminar where scholars from all over the world would discuss that particular topic. He added that it is the responsibility of educational institutions to educate students about the Lifestyle and teachings of Hazrat Muhammad (SAWW) and the achievements of other notable personalities. He congratulated VC, AIU Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum for not only establishing these three centers of excellence but also for appointing eminent scholars of the country as heads

NCHD establishes 380 literacy centers across KP

ISLAMABAD: The National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) has established 380 literacy centers across KP and the newly merged tribal districts where about 9000 adult illiterate persons were enrolled and imparted literacy and numeracy skills successfully. The new literates were not only imparted literacy and numeracy skills but emphasis was also given on the social skills and character building and there is need to adopt innovative ways to address the issues of unemployment and lack of livelihood opportunities in the merged districts, an official of NCHD told APP. Huge influx of rural women have been enrolled in these centers. These centers offers certified course in basic literacy, numeracy and functional skills to women of the age 15 to 55, he said. - APP

400 Buddhist antiques discovered

ISLAMABAD: The Directorate of Archeology and Museums (DOAM) in an unprecedented excavation discovered its largest and record number of antiquities of 400 Buddhist monuments of different categories from a single site at village Babu Dehri of Swabi District. The recent excavation has been reckoned as the largest number of antiquities and artifacts belonging to Buddhist civilization were recovered in a large quantity which was a big success in archaeological history of the province, an official of the DOAM Khyber Pakhtunkhwa told APP while breaking the mega development in archeological studies made by the department. Besides, discovery of large number of artifacts from a

single location, comprising of around 400 monuments a large stupa was also unearthed from the site which was a big feat and considered as the largest discovery of the province, he added. Excavation at the site, he continued, was started on scientific grounds around six months earlier and the hard work of his team members resulted in making a big achievement of discovering hundreds of antiquities and a stupa. The department, he said, received reports about archaeological richness of the site as illegal digging was taking place there and again. The Archeology department, he continued, has now started work over preserving of the site for its opening to international tourists to promote religious tourism. - APP

Photo exhibition 'See Pakistan' in full swing

ISLAMABAD: A fascinating Photo Exhibition 'See Pakistan' by M.H. Toori is in full swing at Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) in which he shows the unseen beauty of Pakistan creatively. A keen interest was taken by viewers because of the beautiful depiction of nature, historical places and culture of Pakistan the ongoing response was commendable by the audience visited there, said a press release issued here.

PNCA has extended the show till 15th April 2022.

DC Islamabad, Hamza Shafqat graciously visited the exhibition and appreciated the beautifully curated exhibition by Visual Arts Division.

'See Pakistan' is a fascinating show portraying the diverse natural beauty, historical heritage, and amalgamation of culture and religion of Pakistan.

From the grand mountain ranges in the North to the vast alluvial delta of the Indus River in the South remains a blessed land with natural beauty and majestic mountains with world high altitude desert and highest peaks are magnificently photographed by M.H. Toori and are on display in this beautiful show.

A large number of the public from various walks of life alongside the press and media visited the exhibition to see the blend of culture and nature in Pakistan.

This show in particular is very important because M.H. Toori is showing his photographs for the very first time at the PNCA. PNCA is committed to promoting significant aspects of the country and encourages community participation in gallery activities, fostering curatorial practice to artists' own understanding of their work and encouraging a healthy and sustainable local arts industry. - APP

PNCA arranges calligraphy classes

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) arranged calligraphy classes under the supervision of instructor Shabbir Ahmad Zia. A large number of students had been registered to present their abilities in calligraphic art or other writing instruments and contemporary ideas related to the theme.

A calligraphic student Faiza Hassan, sharing her remarks about calligraphy, said modern calligraphy ranged from functional inscriptions and designs to fine-art pieces.

Classical calligraphy differed from type design and non-classical hand-lettering, though a calligrapher might practice both, she said.

She said calligraphy continues to flourish in the forms of wedding invitations and event invitations, font design and typography, original hand-lettered logo design, religious art, announcements, graphic design and commissioned calligraphic art, cut stone inscriptions, and memorial documents.

It was also used for props and moving images for film and television, and also for testimonials, she added. - APP

Int'l Day of Human Space Flight on April 12

ISLAMABAD: International Day of Human Space Flight will be marked on April 12 across the globe including Pakistan which remembers the first human space flight on April 12, 1961.

The International Day of Human Space Flight celebrates the start of the space era for humankind, reaffirming the important contribution of space science and technology in today's world. The day also aims at promoting aspirations to explore and maintain outer space for peaceful purposes. Activities to observe the day including photo exhibitions, conferences showcasing technology used for outer space and the release of commemorative stamps. April 12, 1961 was the date of the first human space flight, carried out by Yuri Gagarin. This historic event opened the way for space exploration. In 2011 the UN declared April 12 as the "International Day of Human Space Flight" to remember the first human space flight and to promote the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes and to the benefit of humankind. - APP

CPEC SEZs to usher in new era of development

ISLAMABAD: Special Economic Zones, a key component of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), is expected to usher in a new era of industrial development and economic growth in the country during days ahead.

As both the Pakistani and the Chinese authorities, at a recent interaction, had reviewed progress on Special Economic Zones, they had a common notion that SEZs would help boost economic activity in the country, generate employment opportunities and earn foreign exchange.

Officials of Board of Investment (BoI) Pakistan and Chairman National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), China, Ying Xiong, the Zhejiang, Shandong and Guangdong provinces had reiterated to encourage their enterprises to develop linkages with Pakistan's provincial BOIs and invest in the SEZs.

Pakistan is currently developing five out of nine SEZs nominated under CPEC including Allama Iqbal Industrial City in Faisalabad, Punjab, Dhabeji SEZ in Sindh, Rashakai SEZ in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Boston SEZ in Balochistan. Another fast-track SEZ is in Gwadar namely Gwadar Free Zone is also under progress. First phase of Gwadar Free Zone at an area of 60 acre land is already fully functional while the mighty second phase spanning over 2200 acres of land is under construction.

According to the CPEC officials, dozens of Chinese firms were operating at Pakistan's various economic zones as both the governments were actively engaged to carry forward the SEZ projects and making them operational at the earliest possible. In recent past, numerous Chinese companies' representatives had visited

Pakistan to discuss some outstanding issues and were informed that all issues on way to make these projects a success, would be resolved on priority. Pakistan is interested to relocate the Chinese industries in the CPEC SEZs to benefit from the expertise of the companies. Textile, information technology, agriculture, science and technology sectors, and mining sectors are the key areas in which Pakistan is keen to bring foreign direct investment in a bid to boost exports and to substitute the country's imports.

The upcoming projects in CPEC would mainly be in these sectors which would act as dual-beneficial tool, cutting down the country's imports and increasing the exports. Meanwhile, a senior official on the CPEC Authority has informed that it was a wrong perception that only China was involved in the CPEC projects.

He said a number of investors from other countries such as United States, Germany, United Kingdom, Canada, and the Netherlands were also participating in this mega project and around 20 companies from these countries had already invested in the Allama Iqbal Industrial City. With respect to Rashakai Economic Zone, he said its completion would encourage foreign investment and provide adequate facilities to foreign investors. The senior official se opportunity that to transform the trade corridor into a true economic corridor, after 9 long months of negotiations, signing of the quad-partite development agreement for the development of the first CPEC SEZ i.e. Rashakai SEZ, in KP was made possible.

Rashakai SEZ is to be developed in collaboration with a state-owned Chinese enterprise, that makes this development agreement first of

its kind with Chinese counterpart being one of the parties to the development agreement.

The official said that over 84% of industrial area has been allotted in the SEZs, 46% of investment has been realized with 50% of it being Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). The Federal Government has exempted Rs 49.39 Billion of custom duties and taxes on the import of plant and machinery for setting up of units in these zones. Overall, the official said that all the notified SEZs together in across the country, account for approximately 10,029.64 acres of industrial land out of which 5,220.62 acres (52%) have been allotted to investors for setting up of industry with planned investments of Rs. 633.9 Billion, 43.6% of this comprises of FDI component (USD 1.73 Billion). It is also significant to mention that under the SEZ Act

2012, a zone enterprise is obligated to start construction within six months and to get into commercial production/operations within 24 months of its approval, whereas title to land is to be transferred only after it has performed regular operations for six months.

Experts believe that China Pakistan Economic Corridor is a rare opportunity for Pakistan to boost its economy and overcome deepening economic recession. Since, the country is facing trade deficit, depleting reserves, downing rupee value and number of other challenges; this initiative can turn things around leading the country to economic stability. They also expect from the upcoming government to fully focus these projects so the country could be able to reap the benefits of this historic project between China and Pakistan at the earliest possible. - APP

Ukraine war; new dilemmas

THOUSANDS of civilians, including many children, were waiting to be evacuated to safety in the Kramatorsk railway station in eastern Ukraine on Friday morning when two missiles, later reported to be cluster weapons that are banned under international law, exploded in their midst. At least 50 people died, and more than 100 others were injured. A message in Russian on the surviving casing of one missile read "For the children". Ukraine's president, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, understandably described the attack as the action of "an evil that has no limits". The past 10 days mark an important change in the dynamics and location of the Ukraine war. But it is not a simple or conclusive change yet. Ukrainian resistance, aided by western weaponry and technology, has secured a notable military victory by forcing the Russians to retreat. Kyiv is, for now, able to come back to a kind of life; a few refugees have begun returning from the west, and western leaders, including the European Commission president, Ursula von der Leyen, have travelled there to show solidarity. Russian troops have now left the Sumy region in the north-east. Ukraine has also regained control of its border with Belarus. But the war itself is far from over. Moscow's forces are regrouping in the east, following Russia's decision to make the Donbas region its primary focus. This is somewhat easier territory for them logistically and politically. It heralds a further assault in Mariupol, fresh offensives in Donbas (of which the missile attack on Kramatorsk station is part) and against Odesa, all of which will stretch Ukrainian supply lines and resources. As a result, President Zelenskyy has increased his calls for further western military aid. This important argument is now taking place in real time. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz's welcome visit to Downing Street on Friday was very much part of this process; an announcement about anti-tank weapons was expected. Britain, like all the western allies, needs to be more open about the choices that we and our allies face as a result of the new phase in Ukraine. At the very least, there is now a powerful case for parliament to be recalled before Easter, so that the very serious military options now under active consideration by governments can be more openly examined.

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Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti
Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

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Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad



Khan departs

IMRAN Khan, the former international cricket star turned politician who oversaw a new era of Pakistan's foreign policy that distanced the country from the United States, was removed as prime minister early on Sunday after losing a no-confidence vote in Parliament. The vote, coming amid soaring inflation and a rift between Mr. Khan's government and the military, capped a political crisis that has embroiled the country for weeks and came down to the wire in a parliamentary session that dragged into the early morning hours. Pakistan remains in a state of turmoil as it heads into an early election season in the coming months. The motion to oust Mr. Khan was passed with 174 votes, two more than the requisite simple majority. The vote in Parliament began just before midnight on Saturday after a chaotic day of political scrambling in the capital, Islamabad, as Mr. Khan's allies appeared to be trying to delay a decision — stoking fears that the military might intervene. The Supreme Court also signaled that it would open at midnight, should the court need to intervene. Police officers and prison vans waited outside the Parliament building lest the proceedings turned violent. At 11:45 p.m., in protest of the no-confidence vote, lawmakers in Mr. Khan's political coalition stormed out of the National Assembly hall. Opposition lawmakers then proceeded with the no-confidence vote. Mr. Khan has repeatedly said that the opposition's moves against him were part of a United States-backed conspiracy to oust him from power and he called for his supporters to protest on Sunday. "Your future is at stake," Mr. Khan said in a televised address on Friday night. "If you do not take a stand to protect the sovereignty of our country, we will continue to remain subservient." He added: "The nation has to rise together to save Pakistan." But economic realities, including huge government debt and three straight years of double-digit inflation, thwarted his plans and undermined his popularity. Tackling corruption proved easier said than done. His shift away from the West and closer to China and Russia was polarizing. That paved the way for a coalition of opposition parties to mount a no-confidence motion last month. But in a stunning bid to block the vote, he and his allies dissolved Parliament moments before it was expected to take place on April 3. The public rebuke to his leadership from both the country's courts and lawmakers, including some of his allies, has cost him significant political capital and eroded the aura of indomitability he had maintained for years. But in a country where ousted political leaders are known to return in second and even third acts, Mr. Khan has shown no signs of backing down, and most analysts expect that he will run in the next elections.

Applying double standards in Ukraine is a risky business

James Dorsey

China has brutally repressed its Turkic Muslim population in the north-western province of Xinjiang in an effort to Sinicise its ethnic and religious identity. China has also built a surveillance state in which free access to information and basic human rights are denied. So has the UAE, whose opposition to political Islam persuaded it to help topple Egypt's first and only democratically elected government and support devastating civil wars in Libya and Yemen

RUSSIA'S suspension from the United Nations Human Rights Council was long overdue, even without the mass killing of innocent civilians in the Ukrainian town of Bucha.

A country that poisons or otherwise does away with its critics at home and abroad and stifles freedom of the press, expression, and association should not qualify for a seat on the Council.

A quick look at current and past membership in the Council explains why the UN General Assembly vote to suspend Russia, like multiple aspects of the Ukraine war, raises the spectre of double standards. Current members China and the United Arab Emirates rank alongside Russia among the world's worst human rights violators.

China has brutally repressed its Turkic Muslim population in the north-western province of Xinjiang in an effort to Sinicise its ethnic and religious identity. China has also built a surveillance state in which free access to information and basic human rights are denied. So has the UAE, whose opposition to political Islam persuaded it to help topple Egypt's first and only democratically elected government and support devastating civil wars in Libya and Yemen.

Saudi Arabia was a Council member for the first five years of the kingdom's military intervention in Yemen, which has sparked one of the world's worst humanitarian crises in the Arab world's poorest nation. Saudi Arabia lost the vote in 2020 for another term, less because of the Yemen war and more due to the 2018 killing of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

"The protracted conflict in Yemen has killed almost a quarter of a million people directly or indirectly due to inadequate food, health care, and infrastructure. It has included unlawful attack after unlawful attack, with homes, hospitals, schools, and bridges among the civilian objects that the warring parties have targeted," said Human Rights Watch's Yemen researcher Afrah Nasser. Ms. Nasser blamed both protagonists in the war, the Saudi-led coalition and the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels.

Raising hopes for an end to the eight-year-long war, the warring partners agreed to a two-month ceasefire this week. However, those hopes were dampened by a Houthi refusal to engage with a newly created presidential council that was empowered by Yemen's internationally recognised president, Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi. None of this, excuses or diminishes Russia's actions. However, the double standards exposed by Russia's suspension in the Human Rights Council go beyond the question of whether the Council should have a fit-and-proper test analog to Britain's assessment of candidate directors of the National Health Service Trust or prospective owners of clubs in its various football leagues.

The double standards also raise issues that go further than the difference between the reception granted by Europe and the United States to Ukrainian refugees as opposed to those fleeing wars in Syria, Libya, and Yemen or the Western country's willingness to counter foreign occupation, as in the case of Morocco and the Western Sahara or Israel and Palestine. The problem for the United States and Europe is that Ukraine has put their failure to address seemingly hypocritical double standards in the spotlight in ways that other conflicts have not.

The failure is likely to influence the broader battle for a new bi- or multipolar world order between the United States and China now that Russia has effectively removed itself from the equation.

The impact was already visible in a comparison of voting patterns in last month's condemnation of the Russian invasion of Ukraine by the UN General Assembly and this month's suspension of Russian membership in the Human Rights Council.

The assembly condemned the invasion, with 141 countries voting in favour, five against, and 35 abstaining. However, those numbers dropped to 93 in favour, 24 against, and 58 abstaining in the vote on the Council. Underlying the contrast are both question marks about the process of suspending Russian membership as more fundamental differences over what con-

stitutes a human right that has come to the fore with the rise of multiple civilisationalist world leaders.

Singapore, the only Southeast Asian nation to join the US and European sanctioning of Russia, abstained in the Council vote pending the results of an international commission of inquiry looking into human rights violations in Ukraine. Singapore said earlier that it had joined the sanctions to uphold the rule of law.

"We cannot accept the Russian government's violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of another sovereign state. For a small state like Singapore, this is not a theoretical principle, but a dangerous precedent," the Singapore foreign ministry said at the beginning of the Russian invasion.

Civilisationalist leaders, including the presidents of Russia and China, Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping, and Indian and Hungarian prime ministers Narendra Modi and Victor Orban, think in terms of collective rather than individual rights; authoritarian if not autocratic rule; and civilizational rather than nationally defined external and/or internal boundaries.

The divide was evident with countries like China and, of course, Russia voting against suspension of Russia's Human Rights Council membership and India abstaining. But, interestingly, widely viewed as Mr. Putin's closest friend in Europe, Hungary voted in favour.

The spotlighting of the differences between democrats and civilisationalists puts a higher premium on consistency, integrity, and adherence to principle and raises the cost of maintaining double standards.

The battle between democrats and civilisationalists, or what New York Times columnist David Brooks calls autocrats, "is not just a political or an economic conflict. It's a conflict about politics, economics, culture, status, psychology, morality, and religion all at once..."

To define this conflict most generously, I'd say it's the difference between the West's emphasis on personal dignity and much of the rest of the world's emphasis on communal cohesion," Mr. Brooks said.

Dramatic Reality

CONFLICT is the foundation of dramatic reality. Players in media and politics intentionally or unintentionally join hands to create dramatic realities to develop and drive narratives. Both usually start their discourses with disagreements, frictions and antagonism to quickly grasp attention of masses. Blake Ashforth from University of Arizona and his colleague suggest, "Life consists of diverse actions while drama is a structured action. Dramatic reality refers to the organization of what may be otherwise factually accurate information about people and events in ways that stress certain facts and underplay others. Using dramatic narratives, media and politicians are able to selectively distil a complex jumble of otherwise ambiguous and contradictory circumstances, events, pronouncements, and impressions into a simplified and relatively coherent portrayal. Elements of drama convey information in a manner that stimulates audience interest, identification, and engagement. Dramatic narratives increase the apparent importance of a fact, therefore, allows both the politicians and the media to report news and engage their audiences morally and emotionally."

According to Violina Rindova from University of Maryland and his colleagues, "Dramatic narratives usually begin with a disturbance to a seemingly calm or balanced situation. The disturbance creates conflict as a set of circumstances that present people with change and adversity." In politics or generally in the society changes and uncertainties arise from several endogenous &/or exogenous shocks e.g. changing loyalties, emerging or diminishing alliances, economic conditions, technological changes, cultural evolution, capacity development etc. All such changes enable the media and the politicians to portray dramatic dissonance, because these changes disrupt the status quo and present relevant stakeholders with new challenges and opportunities. The greater the impact of the change on various stakeholders, the greater the extent to which these changes could be adapted as a source for dramatic reality.

It usually surprised me to notices news of every murder, rape, theft, and robbery right early in the morning on TV screens. We have been witnessing reports of decline in customer turnover on almost every Eid. We are now attuned to the news of economic susceptibility and

collapse of democratic process in the Country. Blaming outgoing or ousted regimes has become a fashion and probably the most palatable narrative for masses. This all emerges from the very first pillar of dramatic reality the conflict, which all these players utilise knowingly or unknowingly to attain attention of masses but they fail to comprehend damaging aspect of creating this purposeful strife, friction and thrill. Common citizens pay the price for these conflicting and thrilling narratives through stress, depression, confusion and hostility. The beauty of human interactions lies in honourable exchanges, calm discourses, and logical narratives. However our current social environment is packed with aggression, intolerance, bullying and disrespect for others. It is this price which we are paying as nation for these technically but inappropriately crafted conflict based campaigns by political and media organizations. Utilising academic learning requires commitment to the rules of the game; applying outcomes of theoretical research in a naive manner leads to the consequences which we are noticing nowadays where people are readily available on workplaces, social media platforms, in the streets and even in our immediate families to tarnish every aspect of social fabric if anything goes against their preference or opinion.

On the basis of their strong attachments people assimilate the central character or the protagonist, which adjusts at the centre of their hopes. It is the second and probably the most important component of dramatic reality. People start attributing all their dreams, aspirations and expectations with the central character of the dramatic reality. Now they start considering him/her the saviour, the champion, the transformer, and what not. Purposely built protagonists may not fulfil expectations of those who actually drive the whole dramatic reality, because, such characters are devoid of real depth. They are usually not connected with ground realities which keep them in illusion as being exceptionally charismatic to attract and influence every element of the dramatic reality but actually they can't without crutches which they utilised during the journey of becoming the protagonist. Overattribution exaggerates expected outcomes of protagonist's actions making it appear larger than life or at least exceptionally proactive and capable than its competitors/opponents. Here actually lies the real

tragedy, the tragedy of expectations and eventual disappointment when heroic protagonist doesn't deliver. Media, politicians and seemingly both national and international invisible forces then develop a character of the protagonist. The purpose of character development in dramatic reality remains to establish credibility of the protagonist for convenient execution of the plan. Violina Rindova and his colleagues also argue that, "character development involves the provision of information about the physical, dispositional, motivational, cognitive, and behavioural attributes that characterize a protagonist — alsoenables audiences to like, dislike, or identify with the protagonist, thereby emotionally engaging with the dramatic narrative. By developing the character, architects can enhance the credibility of their claims that the protagonist is capable of taking the actions that resolve the uncertainty created by the dramatic reality."

In our case, we remained victim of several such claims from absolute Islamic state of mid 80s to modern-day riasat-e-Madina, from Islamic block of late 70s to siding US after 9/11 against a Muslim country, from the aspirations of becoming Asian tiger to recent support deposits in the central bank of Pakistan to manage extensive depreciation, and from a billion jobs to raising unemployment etc. Our discourses based on dramatic reality have always taken us to either fantasies or left us in absolute despair. We need to realise that it is not the exaggeration which rescues nations, actually it is the real acumen which helps societies grow and flourish. I think, now we should start discouraging attention hungry narratives with hollow slogans. We need to promote in the mainstream all practical contributions from every walk of life, no matter how dull it is. We should encourage collaborations, cooperation, harmony and partnership among masses to find novel ways of progress and development. We should facilitate every initiative which contributes towards the resolution of on-ground issues of a common man. We should explicitly expect from leadership positions and decision making bodies to provide a clear roadmap for the prosperity of not only this generation but also the generations to come.

— The writer is Associate Professor Management Sciences Head, Center of Islamic Finance COMSATS University (CIU) Lahore Campus Email: drabdussattar@cuilahore.edu.pk

Dr. Abdus Sattar Abbasi

It usually surprised me to notices news of every murder, rape, theft, and robbery right early in the morning on TV screens. We have been witnessing reports of decline in customer turnover on almost every Eid. We are now attuned to the news of economic susceptibility and collapse of democratic process in the Country. Blaming outgoing or ousted regimes has become a fashion and probably the most palatable narrative for masses. This all emerges from the very first pillar of dramatic reality the conflict, which all these players utilise knowingly or unknowingly to attain attention of masses...

Briefs

Kyiv keeps pressure on West to do more

FROM PAGE 01

The strike had wounded five staffers of Ukraine's state emergency service, said the head of the Dni-pro region council, Mykola Lukashuk.

Russia's defence ministry said on Sunday that high-precision missiles had destroyed the headquarters of Ukraine's Dni-pro battalion in the town of Zvonetsky. Reuters could not immediately confirm the reports.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on Twitter he had spoken on the phone with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz about additional sanctions, as well as more defence and financial support for his country. Zelenskyy also discussed with Ukrainian officials Kyiv's proposals for a new package of EU sanctions, his office said. In a video address late on Saturday, Zelenskyy renewed his appeal for a total ban on Russian energy products and more weapons for Ukraine.

The EU on Friday banned Russian coal imports among other products, but has yet to touch oil and gas imports from Russia.

Austrian leader to meet Putin today

FROM PAGE 01

"I'm going to meet Vladimir #Putin in Moscow tomorrow," Nehammer wrote on Twitter. "We are militarily neutral, but (have) a clear position on the Russian war of aggression against #Ukraine," he wrote, referring to Austria's position. "It must stop! It needs humanitarian corridors, ceasefire & full investigation of war crimes."

Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov confirmed to RIA news agency that Putin would be holding talks with Nehammer on Monday.

The planned meeting with the Russian leader follows a trip by Nehammer to Ukraine on Saturday, during which the Austrian chancellor met Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

Putin has been largely shunned by Western leaders since the start of the conflict, though he met Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett in the Kremlin in early March.

Electoral reforms agreed upon: Kaira

FROM PAGE 01

the hour and too essential for holding free, fair and transparent elections in the country. He said matters of the parliament should be resolved inside, adding the PPP had approached the Supreme Court when the PTI started to play with the constitution.

Kaira said a commission should be constituted over the issue of threatening letter and that commission should probe the matter. He said things should have to be improved by ignoring the past and all political parties should work for the development of the country as well as welfare of the people.

3 held for possessing illegal weapons

RAWALPINDI: Police have arrested three illegal arms holders and recovered arms, ammunition and bullets from their possession during operation here Sunday, informed police spokesman.

Rata Amral police arrested Shahzad and recovered one pistol of 30 bore from his possession.

Similarly, Gujjar Khan police arrested two accused Najawat Hussain and Wajid Hussain and recovered one pistol of 30 bore and 20 bullets from their possession.

Police have registered separate cases against all of them and further investigation was in progress. - APP

Sri Lanka: Protestors insist Rajapaksas quit politics

Protesters angry over a worsening economic crisis take aim at Sri Lanka's all-powerful Rajapaksa family

MONITORING DESK

COLOMBO: Thousands of people demanding "total system change" have rallied in Sri Lanka's capital, Colombo, calling for President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and his powerful brothers to quit politics amid a deepening economic crisis.

At the Galle Face Green on Colombo's waterfront on Saturday, students, teachers, lawyers, actors and architects - many of whom said they were protesting for the first time - chanted "mad-man Gota" and "Go home Gota", referring to the president's nickname, as they gathered under a blistering sun. They waved the Sri

Lankan flag and held up hand-written placards in Sinhalese and English that carried messages such as "No more corrupted politicians" and "Save Sri Lanka from the Rajapaksa family".

"This is a do-or-die moment," said 29-year-old Buddhii Karunatne, who works in advertising.

"For the first time, people of all kinds of political and social beliefs are coming together, with non-negotiable demands for the president to resign and hand over power to people who are capable of getting us out of this socio-economic crisis."

The display of anger marked a stunning reversal for Rajapaksa, 72, who won the presidency in

2019 by a big margin and whose party went on to secure a two-thirds majority in the parliament less than a year later. Those victories allowed Rajapaksa to appoint his brother Mahinda Rajapaksa as prime minister and amend the constitution to strengthen the president's powers.

He also went on to hand three other Rajapaksa family members key positions in his cabinet, including the finance, agriculture and sports portfolios.

At the time, many voters said they believed Gotabaya and Mahinda Rajapaksa would improve security and bring stability to Sri Lanka following a spate of ISIL-inspired bombings that

killed at least 250 people in 2019 - partly because the brothers had overseen the military defeat of Tamil separatists in 2009 after 26 years of bloody war. Mahinda was president at the time and Gotabaya the defence secretary.

But instead of improving things, the Rajapaksas "have proved incompetent and incapable of taking the right decisions", said one protester at Saturday's rally. "Gota simply can't run a country," said another. "He doesn't have a brain to deal with this kind of crisis."

Sparked by a foreign exchange crunch, the economic downturn is Sri Lanka's worst in decades. It has resulted in soaring inflation that has left the poor struggling to

afford enough to eat and caused fuel shortages and hours-long power cuts that have threatened to close down businesses.

Protesters at the Galle Face Green blamed government mismanagement for the meltdown.

That included measures such as drastic tax cuts that depleted government revenues, as well as a delay in seeking help from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) even as servicing Sri Lanka's high foreign debt drained foreign exchange reserves. Over the past two years - as the COVID-19 pandemic decimated Sri Lanka's key tourism sector - the country's foreign reserves have plunged by more than 70 percent.



MANCHESTER: Kevin De Bruyne celebrates scoring for Man City against Liverpool. - DNA

Tiger's epic comeback resumes as Scheffler eyes Masters title

AUGUSTA: Tiger Woods began Sunday's final round of the Masters, and resumed his incredible return from severe leg injuries, with a routine par while leader Scottie Scheffler eyed his first major title.

Woods, who opened with bogeys in the second and third rounds at Augusta National, teed off before thousands of supporters as his efforts stole the spotlight at the year's first major golf tournament.

His opening tee shot was left of the fairway but the 46-year-old medical marvel landed his approach 29 feet

from the hole and two-putted for par. The 15-time major champion arrived at Augusta chasing a record-tying sixth Masters crown 14 months after a car crash that caused him to wonder if his right leg might have to be amputated.

After weeks hospitalized and months unable to walk, Woods rehabilitated his battered body and returned to top-flight competition on the same course where he won his first major title 25 years earlier, his right leg held together with metal rods, pins, plates and screws.

Bordeaux beat Metz to boost survival hopes

PARIS: Bordeaux ended an eight-match winless run by beating relegation rivals Metz 3-1 on Sunday to earn a first victory under coach David Guion and climb off the foot of the Ligue 1 table. Metz came into the game above Bordeaux on goal difference and took a first-half lead through Didier Lamkel Ze, who cut short a loan at Russian side Khimki following the invasion of Ukraine.

Ricardo Mangas equalised early in the second half and Senegal international M'Baye Niang scored his first league goal since November to put Bordeaux ahead.

Hwang Ui-jo added a late third as Bordeaux switched places with Metz in the bottom two and moved to within a point of Saint-Etienne in the relegation play-off place.

Clermont are one point above Saint-Etienne in 17th following Saturday's 6-1 thrashing by Paris Saint-Germain in which Kylian Mbappe and Neymar both scored hat-tricks for the league leaders. Monaco improved their prospects of European football next season with a 2-1 victory over Troyes courtesy of goals from Caio Henrique and Kevin Volland. Nantes drew 1-1 at Brest following crowd trouble that held the game up for around 10 minutes in the second half. Visitors Nantes led after Randal Kolo Muani's goal but the game was briefly stopped as away fans threw flares onto the pitch. A second, longer interruption followed shortly after half-time when Brest supporters attempted to invade the pitch to confront Nantes fans. The referee sent the teams to the changing rooms. After they returned, Brendan Chardonnet scrambled the ball in at a corner to earn a point for Brest. - Agencies

Verstappen says failure to finish Australian GP 'unacceptable'

MELBOURNE: A frustrated world champion Max Verstappen said it was "unacceptable" that he was not able to finish the Australian Grand Prix on Sunday after his Red Bull broke down when he looked destined for second. It was the second time in the opening three races of the season that the Dutchman had failed to go the distance, after also retiring in Bahrain.

"We are so far behind (Ferrari). We need to finish races," Verstappen said after pulling over on lap 39 of 58 at Albert Park when running second to winner Charles Leclerc's Ferrari.

"I smell some weird fluid" Verstappen reported over team radio before stopping the car, jumping out and grabbing a fire extinguisher to help marshals to put out flames. "Today was a bad day, I was managing

the tyres, I could not fight Charles," he added. "It was an easy P2 but we didn't even finish the race - frustrating and unacceptable. These kind of things, if you want to fight for the title, are unacceptable."

Verstappen has not been happy all weekend, complaining after qualifying sec-

ond about the balance of his car. "I never felt comfortable for one lap except the long runs," he said. The 24-year-old also moaned after organisers cut the number of drag reduction system (DRS) zones to three from four for safety reasons. DRS allows drivers within one second of the

car in front to open a flap mounted on the rear wing to increase top speed and aid overtaking.

Red Bull are considered quicker on the straight than the Ferrari, so more DRS zones would have favoured them. Team principal Christian Horner said he could understand Verstappen's discontent.

"It's totally understandable, his frustration," he told reporters. "That was a really disappointing result not to finish the race. We don't know what the issue is yet, I don't think it was actually engine-related, I think it might be a fuel issue, but we need to get the car back, we need to look at what's exactly happened." It was not all doom and gloom for Red Bull, with Sergio Perez finishing second. However, he was more than 20 seconds behind Leclerc. - APP



Napoli's title bid dented by Fiorentina defeat

MILAN: Napoli's hopes of a first Serie A title since the days of Diego Maradona suffered a blow on Sunday after they slumped to a 3-2 home defeat to Europe-chasing Fiorentina. Last champions in 1990, Napoli would have moved top of the pile with a win in front of 50,000 fans in Naples but they stay a point behind league leaders AC Milan after goals from Nicolas Gonzalez, Jonathan Ikone and Arthur Cabral condemned Luciano Spalletti's side to a painful defeat.

They could end the weekend four points off the pace with six games remaining in an exciting campaign as Milan travel to Torino in Sunday's late match. - APP

Pakistan baseball team to participate in 19th Asian Games

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President of Pakistan Federation of Baseball (PFB) Syed Fakhar Ali Shah said on Saturday evening that Pakistani baseball team will participate in the 19th Asian Games to be held in China in September 2022. Gwadar Pro reported on Sunday.

In a statement, he maintained that PFB had written a letter to Director General of Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) Colonel Asif Zaman (ret'd) urging him to set up the

camp of Pakistan Baseball Team in Pakistan Sports Complex Islamabad.

He mentioned that PFB had sent a reminder to DG PSB that the Sports Board has started training camps for other sports therefore the camp of Pakistan Baseball Team should be organized as soon as possible.

"The long delay in setting up the camp will not only affect the baseball game but also the results of the Asian Games," he contended.

According to Baseball Federation of Asia, the top 6 teams in Asia are participating in these

games. Only Pakistan Baseball Team is from South Asia.

Apart from this, the training camps of the baseball teams participating in these games have also been started under the supervision of the sports boards of these countries while the camp of Pakistan Baseball Team has not started yet, according to Syed Fakhar Shah.

He hoped that the Sports Board would soon approve the training camp of Pakistan Baseball Team and the team would participate in these games with full readiness.

'PTI MNAs may tender resignations'

FROM PAGE 01

the party's core committee in Bani Gala where he reiterated that his ouster was part of a regime-change operation back by foreign powers. "When decisions related to a country's internal affairs are made from outside, it's the biggest sign of its slavery." The ex-information minister said that his party had sent all declassified documents to the speaker of the NA as well as the chief justice of Pakistan.

He said that the PTI has nominated former foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi as the candidate for the prime minister's slot. "We have chosen Qureshi for the prime minister's slot because firstly, we want to challenge Shahbaz Sharif's nomination because he has a corruption case of Rs16 billion registered against him."

He expressed his regret and said it would be unfortunate to impose a "foreign, selected, and imported government and on top of that, make Shahbaz Sharif the head of the government."

He informed journalists that during the meeting, the party's core committee said that all PTI members should resign from the assemblies.

"We will start off by resigning from the National Assembly," he said. "And if Shahbaz Sharif's nomination papers are accepted, then we will tender our resignations tomorrow."

Shortly afterwards, however, the NA Secretariat rejected PTI's objections and went ahead to accept Shahbaz's nomination.

He further said that a parliamentary party meeting has also been called tonight, adding that most of the PTI members from the assemblies have already submitted their resignation to the party chairman.

Fawad said that all PTI supporters will continue their protests against the alleged foreign conspiracy against Imran Khan. He went on to say that within the next few months, the party will start gearing up for the elections.

PTI protests outside Avenfield flats in London

LONDON: PTI workers on Sunday staged a protest demonstration outside Avenfield flats in London, the residence of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif. The outraged PTI workers chanted slogans while holding flags of Pakistan against the ouster of Imran Khan's government. Meanwhile, supporters of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz have also reached the Avenfield flats to show solidarity with the party supremo. The confrontation between the two groups turned into an arena of slurs and slogans raised against each party's leadership. - DNA

Imran chairs PTI core committee meeting

FROM PAGE 01

Sources claimed that the core committee of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf will discuss the political situation and the party's administrative affairs following the ouster of the PTI government. Imran Khan will also give directions to the party leaders for peaceful protests across the country.

PTI senior leaders including Shah Mehmood Qureshi, Asad Umar, Shafiq Mehmood and others will participate in the meeting.

Various party leaders of PTI expressed their support and solidarity with Imran Khan on social media.

Bilawal may be new FM; Naveed Qamar NA speaker

FROM PAGE 01

Federal cabinet or not. Shazia Atta Mari is yet another candidate for the post of National Assembly Speaker. Sources say PPP chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari is interested to become Foreign Minister of Pakistan. Hina Rabhani Khar may be alternate for this job. Similarly, Rana Sanaullah is tipped as the new Interior Minister, while Maryam Aurangzeb as the Information Minister. PPP is also interested in grabbing the top post of Chairman Senate and Yousaf Raza Gilani has already started campaign in this regard. Shahid Khaqan Abbasi wants to keep the Petroleum Ministry while Ahsan Iqbal may be considered for Planning Ministry. For the post of Finance Minister Miftah Ismael is a front runner however Ishaq Dar if comes to Pakistan and takes oath as Senator, then he may also be a candidate.

Impact of technical sales in IT sector

M DANISH WAQAR & NABEEL ASGHAR

IT sales refers to providing technical services such as customer support services, software development, data handling and manipulation, online systems management and selling software products. Since the growth of Web 2.0, Pakistan has been providing technical services

to the first world countries because, Pakistan possesses a large number of skilled labors in the field IT. Pakistan is one of the major exporters of IT services in world and the youth bulge turned out to be beneficial to the economy because every year thousands of new students graduates in the field of IT. This skilled labor is an asset to the country because they start to pro-

vide IT services to foreign clients and bring in revenues. There are different types of enterprises present in the country that recruit and provide technical services such as private limited IT companies have been established to recruit IT professionals and export IT products to foreign countries. Also, there is a large number of subsidiaries established by multinational companies such as

S&P Global, KeepTruckin and SAP international etc. These multinational IT based companies have opened up their business units in Pakistan because the country offers professional at cheap labor cost. Also, there are independent individuals that provides IT services online on hourly, daily, weekly, and monthly basis. These individuals are called freelancers, because they

work on task basis, once the task is complete, they will have no ties with the client company. There is an exponential boom in the rise of freelancers in Pakistan because of the huge demand for cheap IT services and young IT professionals are cashing this opportunity, in turn benefiting the economy a whole and contributing to the improving the lifestyle of population. According

to The News report, there has been a rise in the IT exports from 1.44 B dollars to 2.1 B dollars from fiscal year 2020 to 2021 and it is expected to grow further at current rate.

Thus, it is evident that IT sector of Pakistan is on a rise and a major contributor to the economy and improving lifestyle.

- The contributors of this article are students at SZABIST

Briefs

More than 4.5 million Ukrainians flee war: UN

DNA

GENEVA: More than 4.5 million Ukrainian refugees have fled their country since the Russian invasion on February 24, according to the United Nations refugee agency. The UNHCR said there were 4,503,954 Ukrainian refugees on Sunday. That was 62,291 more than the previous day. Europe has not seen such a flood of refugees since World War II. Ninety per cent of those who have fled Ukraine are women and children, as the Ukrainian authorities do not allow men of military age to leave. According to the UN's International Organization for Migration (IOM), around 210,000 non-Ukrainians have also fled the country, sometimes encountering difficulties returning to their home countries. A further 7.1 million people have been displaced within the country, according to figures published by the IOM on April 5. That means more than a quarter of the population have been forced to flee their homes, seeking refuge either abroad or elsewhere in Ukraine. Before the conflict, Ukraine was home to more than 37 million people in territory controlled by Kyiv - which does not include Crimea, annexed by Russia in 2014, or areas in the east under the control of pro-Russian separatists.

GB Governor Raja Jalal Maqpoon decides to resign

DNA

GILGIT: Gilgit Baltistan Governor Raja Jalal Husain Maqpoon has decided to resign from his office. They said the GB governor would quit his post after the election of the new prime minister. He had taken oath of his office on September 30, 2018. The National Assembly will meet tomorrow (Monday) at 2:00pm to elect the new prime minister after PTI chairman Imran Khan was de-seated from the highest office of the country through the opposition-moved no-confidence motion. The nomination papers of joint opposition's candidate Shehbaz Sharif and PTI's Shah Mahmood Qureshi have been approved for the prime minister's election. Earlier today, sources said that Governor Punjab Omar Sarfaraz Cheema will likely resign from his post. The governor Punjab will resign from his post once a new prime minister takes oath of his office, they added.

France votes with Macron seeking new term

PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron faced a tough test Sunday seeking re-election in a vote projected to produce a tight run-off with far-right leader Marine Le Pen. Polls opened in mainland France at 0600 GMT after an unusual campaign overshadowed by Russia's invasion of Ukraine that analysts warned could lead to unpredictable outcomes with turnout a major factor. Early indications showed that turnout was around three percentage points lower than at the same stage in 2017, although above 2002 when record numbers of French stayed away. Polls predict that Macron will lead Le Pen by a handful of percentage points in round one, with the top two going through to a second-round vote on April 24. Far-left candidate Jean-Luc Melenchon is snapping at their heels in third place and still fancies his chances of reaching the second round at the expense of Le Pen or even - in what would be an extraordinary upset - President Macron himself. Macron cast his ballot in Le Touquet on the northern French coast, accompanied by his wife Brigitte, around lunchtime. Le Pen voted in Henin-Beaumont, also in the north of the country while Melenchon cast his ballot in the southern port city of Marseille. - APP

Large Covid-19 outbreaks still spreading in Asia: UN

The GAVI Vaccine Alliance hosted the summit alongside G7 president, Germany, Ghana, Indonesia (which holds the presidency of the G20 industrialized nations forum), and African Union chair, Senegal

DNA

UNITED NATIONS: With new coronavirus variants emerging every four months on average, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has warned that the pandemic is far from over as large outbreaks are spreading in Asia. "Governments and pharmaceutical companies need to work better together to deliver vaccines to every person, everywhere - not just in wealthy countries," he said

in a video message to the GAVI COVAX international vaccine equity initiative's 'Advance Market Commitment Summit 2022', which saw world leaders commit \$4.8 billion to help lower-income nations boost vaccination rates, and secure better access for new vaccine procurements. The GAVI Vaccine Alliance hosted the summit alongside G7 president, Germany, Ghana, Indonesia (which holds the presidency of the G20 industrialized nations forum), and African Union

chair, Senegal. Guterres said in order to reach the billions who have so far not received vaccine shots, countries needed to fulfil and accelerate dose-sharing and donation commitments to COVAX, with better quality of supply. "And it means having strong national vaccine-delivery systems at the ready - including efforts to counter disinformation and get vaccines into arms. I also call on countries to commit new funding for the ACT-Accelerator and CO-

VAX this year." He said the summit was "a critical reminder that the COVID-19 pandemic is far from over. We're seeing 1.5 million new cases each day. Large outbreaks are spreading in Asia", he said, adding that a new wave was sweeping across Europe. He said the spread of Omicron - now surging in the form of the BA2 variant in many parts of the world - was "a startling reminder of how quickly COVID-19 can mutate and spread - especially in the absence of high

vaccination coverage." A third of the planet is still lacking even one dose, and yet, some high-income countries are preparing for their second booster doses, the UN chief said. "This is a brutal indictment of our deeply unequal world. It's also a prime breeding ground for new variants, more deaths, and increased human and economic misery. "The next variant is not a question of 'if'. It's a question of 'when'." "We are far from our target of every country reaching

70 per cent vaccination coverage by the middle of this year", he stressed, and with new variants emerging roughly every four months, "time is of the essence." He said there was plenty of global supply of vaccines, with 1.5 billion doses per month being manufactured, and the "remarkable" procurement, shipment and delivery system, of the COVAX Facility and its Advance Market Commitment mechanism, had managed to deliver 1.2 billion doses so far to countries in need.

A Pakistan-China film in the pipeline



DNA

BEIJING: A Pakistan-China film in the pipeline, with a famous actor Anees Qadir, says a report published by China Economic Net (CEN). Apart from being an actor, Anees is also working on his own film projects with Chinese partners. "The film will be about how Pakistan and China cooperate in the Karakoram Highway," Anees told CEN. "If we start this movie, 40 % of the shooting will be in China and 60 % in Pakistan. It [the film] will be a big surprise for the people of both countries." The report narrates that, "it's eight o'clock in the morning. Anees Qadir is

sitting at an airport lounge in the northwestern city of Xi'an in China, waiting to board a plane to the southern city of Haikou in China. With a script book in one hand, the Pakistani young man scribbled Pinyin upon the Chinese lines while looking up for new Chinese words on his phone as he recites the lines. Starting out as a nautical engineering student at a top university in the northwestern city of Xi'an in China, Anees has always harboured the dream of becoming an actor. "Before coming to China, I worked as a radio broadcaster in Pakistan," the Pakistani actor told CEN. "And in that role, I wrote stories and characters and

performed them in my own way in the radio...So I was acting in the radio [for a long time]..." Without attending any acting courses in a drama school, Anees learns acting by watching classic movies, and polishes his skills by practising scripts and filming and reviewing his own performance. "I don't have the [acting] diploma actually, but I have the skills." After graduating in 2018, Anees landed a job as a model for advertisements and photography, during which time, he was approached by a film director and had the opportunity to try for an audition. "I sent him my profile and I got a small role. It was approxi-

mately 1 to 2 minutes. I performed that, but it was good for me," said Anees. Soon after the audition, Anees got his first role in a documentary film, and began to embark on his journey of acting. Now nearly four years into the Chinese film industry, Anees has performed in five films and four TV series in China. And it is an arduous but rewarding process for the Pakistani actor. "I had this quite challenging role as an action hero in a movie because I never learned kung fu...and I have no idea how to react in the fight because the co-actors just throw their fists in the air rather than on my face," he noted, adding that "So I told the co-actors, if you hit me in the real, I will have the real expressions." The script poses another challenge. Since the lines are in Chinese, Anees has to first have them translated to understand the scene and the role before transforming them into Pinyin, the romanisation system for Standard Mandarin Chinese, to recite the lines. But all the efforts are paying off. In his latest role, he worked with Yang Shuo and Jiang Xin, two well-known Chinese actors, in a TV series. "Yang Shuo and I have very good chemistry working together. He was very nice and helped me a lot improve my skills."

CPEC industrial sector beneficial in creating more jobs: PBS

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Industrial development under CPEC is much more beneficial in creating jobs in Pakistan, Gwadar Pro reported on Saturday quoting recent Labor Force Survey (LFS) published by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). Industrialization in Special Economic Zones (SEZs) is targeted at creating around 475,000 direct and 1 million indirect jobs across the country. The majority of the new jobs during last three years has been created in the industrial sector. The survey findings re-

vealed that Pakistan's economy created total of 5.5 million jobs during the past three years - on an average 1.84 million jobs a year, which is far higher than yearly average of creation of new jobs during the 2008-18 decade. Out of 5.5 million, 2.5 million jobs were created in the industrial sector. Another 1.4 million jobs were created in the agriculture sector and around 1.7 million in the services sector, the PBS report added. Experts believe that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has also played an important role in the development of Industrial sector of Pakistan by

resolving energy crisis and providing more direct and indirect jobs. Pakistan was facing two vital issues in recent times: one is the energy crisis and the other is the lack of industrial capabilities. Before the commercial operation of a number of energy projects under CPEC, Pakistan was suffering probably its most severe power crisis, with 12-18 hours of load shedding a day, interrupting industrial production. Therefore, CPEC is helpful in resolving both issues. More energy projects started under CPEC helped boost industrialization in the country.

Lifting discount rate wrong way to deal with inflation

ISLAMABAD: The Friends of Economic and Business Reforms (FEBR) President Kashif Anwar on Sunday said that with weaknesses in private capital inflows continue to persist, the Central Bank should cut policy rates to spur growth, as cut would infuse confidence in the business community and propel economy which was hostage to the past policy of austerity. Kashif Anwar flayed the State Bank of Pakistan for jacking the key interest rate by 250 basis points to 12.25% on the excuse of dealing with emerging inflationary pressure, adopting a wrong way of dealing with inflation as 250 basis points increase in discount rate. - DNA

Raast: a game-changer for Pakistan's financial dealing

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Raast has turned into a game-changer for financial dealing in Pakistan, according to an article carried by Gwadar Pro on Saturday. Recently, the government announced Raast, Pakistan's first peer-to-peer digital payment system. Online payments systems like easypaisa and jazzcash have existed before but they were essentially using bank transfers and hence were not peer to peer. Raast on the other hand aims to make cash redundant in Pakistan as it hopes to make your phone your wallet. Additionally, due to it being peer-to-peer, issues like bank fees and bank transfer times are removed making it a much more viable option for the average consumer. Currently, the Raast program is in its

testing phase and is being used by the government to make transfers among different government departments. When it is going to be launched for the layman, it will prove to be a game-changer not only for the government but also for the people. Raast would give more control over the money supply to the government which would make monetary policies easier to implement. Additionally, it will also prove to be an amazing tool for curbing financial scams as online payments are trackable, a quality that cash does not have. For the people, it gives them the option to carry larger sums of money without worrying about losing it. Additionally, it will make it easier and safer to purchase goods online as consumers would not need to give their bank card information to every site they wish to buy from. This will

encourage online shopping which is a key marketplace not widely used by Pakistanis. The security that Raast claims to provide will undoubtedly increase consumption which in turn will increase GDP. Raast is not a unique software as similar softwares have achieved widespread adoption in China. Alipay and Wechat Pay prove that having such software not only boosts the confidence of the consumers but also small business owners who now can keep track of their finances without needing expensive accounting software. In 2019 alone, Alipay processed 17 trillion USD in payments. This proves the trust people have in such payment services and the fact that it can help raise GDP. Alipay and Wechat Pay have played a significant role in China's economy. We hope Raast can bring similar success to Pakistan.

Uzbekistan to privatize energy, airline, auto companies

TASHKENT: Uzbekistan will partly privatize several state companies, including Uzbekneftegaz, Thermal Power Plants, Uzbekistan Airways and automaker UzAuto Motors, according to a presidential decree on Saturday. According to the document signed by Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, the government will hire an experienced investment bank by May 1 to start the privatization process of the state oil and gas company Uzbekneftegaz by the end of the year. The process will also include an initial public offering of at least 49 percent of the company's shares and at least 51 percent or more of shares in Thermal Power Plants, the document said. Uzbekistan's national air carrier Uzbekistan Airways will start preparing to auction at least 51 percent of its shares, including through an initial public offering by Sept. 1. - Agencies

Malaysia reports 14,944 new Covid infections

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia reported 14,944 new COVID-19 infections as of midnight Friday, bringing the national total to 4,307,529, according to the health ministry. Of the new infections, there are 104 imported cases and the rest 14,840 are local transmissions, data released on the ministry's website showed. A further 31 deaths have been reported, taking the country's COVID-19 death toll to 35,259. The ministry reported 14,045 new recoveries, sending the total number of cured and discharged to 4,113,831. There are 158,439 active cases, 206 are being held in intensive care and 109 of those are in need of assisted breathing. - APP

Furniture exporters asked to focus on Chinese markets

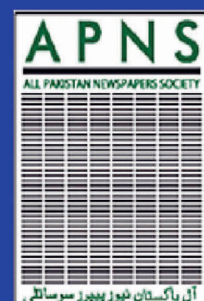
ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Furniture Council has urged the local exporters to further vigorously tapping Chinese market potentials besides focusing on improving quality of their products at par with international standards on top priority. Chief Executive Officer PFC Mian Kashif Ashfaq, while talking to a delegation of exporters led by Ishtiaq Ahmad Motianwali Sarkar here Sunday he said the recent upward trend in exports to China was encouraging. He said China is the second largest export destination for Pakistan and government had been making all out efforts to further boost exports to China by promoting industrialization in the country, providing special subsidies to the business community and working closely with the Chinese government and enterprises to get know how about Chinese market requirements. He said the trade between the two countries has made significant progress as both export and import volumes are on the rise. This is a testament to China's commitment to the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) projects with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor in the limelight, he added. He said the trade and commerce volumes signify that China wants to provide unconditional support to Pakistan and import more from it in order to uplift its economy, he added. He said China will continue to support Pakistan for a long time to come as Islamabad values unconditional support from Beijing. He said Pak exporters must cash this opportunity. Mian Kashif Ashfaq said among major items traded between the two countries, volumes of electronics, textiles, seafood, leather products and agricultural products have gone up on a year-on-year basis. - APP

EU to discuss sixth round of sanctions on Russia

BRUSSELS: EU foreign ministers are on Monday to discuss a sixth round of sanctions on Moscow for its war in Ukraine but the bloc remains divided over a ban on Russian gas and oil imports. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said during a visit to Kyiv on Friday that the EU was now engaged in "rolling sanctions" against Russia to increasingly punish President Vladimir Putin for his decision to invade his pro-Western neighbour. "We are mobilising our economic power to make Putin pay a very, very heavy price,"

she said. "We have imposed five waves of unprecedented sanctions against Russia. And we are already preparing the next wave." Although the sanctions that would hurt Russia the most - an EU boycott of its oil and gas exports - are not on the table formally, European Union diplomats acknowledge there are discussions about them. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has repeatedly called for such EU embargoes. The fifth round of sanctions, imposed since Friday, include a ban on Russian coal imports into the EU - an important first step towards a broader prohibition on more energy supplies. However unanimity is required among the 27 EU nations for any sanctions to be imposed, and countries reliant on Russian gas - among them Germany, Italy, Austria and Hungary - are reluctant to add it to the list. Since the start of the war in Ukraine on February 24, the Kremlin has pocketed more than 35 billion euros (\$38 billion) in gas, oil and coal sales to the EU, according to the bloc's foreign policy chief Josep Borrell. - APP

Thank You

Sarmad Ali
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Briefs

Pakistan reports 96 coronavirus cases

LAHORE: Pakistan has reported no deaths in the last 24 hours by novel coronavirus as the number of positive cases has risen to 1,526,568. The nationwide tally of fatalities has jumped to 30,361. According to the latest figures by the National Institute of Health (NIH) 96 persons tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 24 hours. Punjab remains the worst-hit province in terms of deaths followed by Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Till now 13,558 individuals have lost their lives to the epidemic in Punjab, 8,097 in Sindh, 6,322 in KP, 1,023 in Islamabad, 792 in Azad Kashmir, 378 in Balochistan and 191 in GB. Furthermore 576,320 coronavirus cases have been confirmed in Sindh, 505,372 in Punjab, 219,257 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 135,126 in Islamabad, 43,295 in Azad Kashmir, 35,480 in Balochistan and 11,718 in Gilgit-Baltistan. Pakistan has so far conducted 27,740,595 coronavirus tests and 25,342 in the last 24 hours. 1,486,820 patients have recovered in the country whereas 273 patients are in critical condition. So far, 133,511,565 people have received their first dose of coronavirus vaccine including 82,586 in last 24 hours. 119,748,634 citizens have been fully vaccinated while 206,961 received their second dose in last 24 hours. The number of total administered doses has reached to 243,111,622 with 290,262 in the last 24 hours. - APP

Dnipro airport 'destroyed' by Russian shelling

DNIPRO, UKRAINE: The airport in the Ukrainian city of Dnipro has been badly damaged in fresh Russian shelling, a local official said Sunday. "There has been another attack on Dnipro airport. There is nothing left of it. The airport itself and the infrastructure around it has been destroyed," the head of the city's military administration, Valentin Reznichenko, said on Telegram. "Rockets keep flying and flying," he added. He said authorities were seeking to clarify information about victims. An AFP reporter saw black smoke in the sky above the airport and fire trucks entering its grounds. A plane also took off from the airport later on Sunday, suggesting the runway was still functioning. Reznichenko said attacks on the city, which lies on the banks of Dnieper River, intensified on Sunday. The industrial city of one million people has been targeted by Russian forces since Moscow's invasion but has so far been spared major destruction. - APP

Governor Punjab likely to resign

ISLAMABAD: Governor Punjab Omar Sarfraz Cheema will likely resign from his post following ouster of Prime Minister Imran Khan through a no-confidence motion. According to sources privy to the matter, the governor Punjab will resign from his post once a new prime minister takes oath of his position. A spokesman for Governor Punjab has however denied reports of him resigning from the slot and said that he has left for Islamabad to attend a meeting of PTI core committee and final decision would be taken after consultation with party leadership. Meanwhile, sources said Omar Cheema arrived at Noor Khan Airbase in Islamabad on a special plane. He is expected to hold an important meeting with former prime minister Imran Khan at Banigala. Punjab Governor Omar Sarfraz Cheema took oath of his office on April 03 following removal of Chaudhry Muhammad Sarwar from the slot. - DNA

DNA



ISLAMABAD: Ambassadors of Arab countries hosted reception for the outgoing Ambassador of Somalia Khadija Al Makhzoumi. Envoys of, Iraq, Qatar, Libya, Palestine, Oman, Bahrain, Jordan, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Lebanon and Syria posing for a group photo on the occasion. - DNA

Imran Khan's principal secy goes abroad

ISLAMABAD: Azam Khan, the principal secretary of former prime minister Imran Khan, has reportedly left the country on an ex-Pakistan leave. Azam Khan got approved three-week leave from Imran Khan on the last day of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government. Azam Khan earlier wrote a letter to the interior secretary for provision of security to Imran Khan as the former prime minister. Earlier, it was reported that Azam Khan has been removed from the post of Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister and was directed to report to the Establishment Division. The notification has been issued for removal of Azam Khan by the Establishment Division. - DNA

N. Alliance getting pace, harmful to Taliban interests?

SHAMIM SHAHID

Whatever might be the future or future strategies of Taliban, the Northern Alliance, considered or dominated by Non Pushtoon Afghans is getting momentum throughout Afghanistan as almost its leaders are united and linked with each other. Except Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, almost top leaders and former occupants of important, political, administrative, diplomatic and security offices are now abroad but in close links with their supporters and followers throughout Afghanistan. Due to disintegration and internal rifts, the Pushtoon politicians are not only divided but some of them are extending maximum support to Taliban. Amongst them Hizbe Islami Afghanistan factions headed by Engineer Gulbadin Hekmatyar and sons of Maulvi Khalis are prominent. Likewise, over 90 per cent of

Taliban are also Pushtoons and having roots amongst the religious minded circles therefore, there is no visible threat of uprising or opposition to Taliban at the moment. Reports from inside Afghanistan reveal that all Non Pushtoon Afghan leaders like Rashid Dostam and others are in close links with each other. All these non Pushtoon leaders have reasonable supporters and followers throughout Northern and North-Eastern Afghanistan. First was no other than Ahmad Masud, son of Ahmad Shah Masud who had made attempt first to keep away Taliban from his father's stronghold Panjsher valley. Later when he made isolated by no other than top aides of his father, who have been airlifted on D-Day from Kabul to Islamabad under a well-planned plot. However, now all of them have realized BLUNDERS, and now making attempts for its compensation. Apart from Ahmad Masud, former first Vice President

Amar Ullah Saleh is already following armed resistance policies against Taliban. And now another former military boss Yaseen Zia who is also Tajik has initiated efforts to make assemble his aides and peace loving Afghans against Taliban. On such grounds, observers believe that like of 90's, Taliban are likely to move ahead with resistance in these areas in near future. Situation inside Afghanistan is worsening with each passing day for common people. Taliban are gradually establishing influence over Afghans in scattered areas. It seems that they are bent up on converting Afghanistan into a "prison" whereas one will be safe but he will not be allowed to utilize his genuine basic human rights." Though arrests and picking up becoming a routine in all over Afghanistan but there is no any data of arrested, convicted or executed people. In the light of divisions or disintegration amongst lead-

ership, the Pushtoons are uncertain about future. Even at local level, the Pushtoons are either compelled to surrender before Taliban or go for adjustment with the Non Pushtoon Afghans alliance, called Northern Alliance. So far no any formal decision was made public by Northern Alliance leaders but they are in discussing ways and means for the purpose so far. Majority of Northern Alliance leaders are camping in Turkey. Prominent amongst them is Rashid Dostam while Dr. Abdullah is stranded in Kabul. Former Afghan President Hamid Karzai is considered popular amongst the Pushtoon leaders but he is still in hot-water with his successor Dr. Ashraf Ghani. Though he is in close contacts with almost former Jihadi tribal chieftains and scattered progressive and nationalist minded politicians, he is against any sort of armed resistance and hostilities and preferring political means

for transfer of power to an acceptable broad based coalition government. Karzai is regularly receiving maximum former ministers, MP's and tribal chieftains in his home at Kabul. Taliban, however are making best to make him isolated and forced him to remain "silent spectator" and on such grounds, almost of his post-President perks and privileges including allowances. Due to Taliban's hostile policies and indifferent attitude, majority of people wants to flee the country. Majority of those who or whom elders remained occupants of official or political offices are approaching UNHCR and other foreign diplomatic missions to help them in airlifting from Afghanistan to any foreign country.

Pakistan restrictions On the other hand, common Afghans often complain about Pakistan's one sided visa and travelling restrictions. From beginning of current April, Pakistan banned crossing over of Turkham, Chaman and other borders through Afghanistan National Identity Cards called Tazkira or POR (Proof of Registration Cards) issued by UNHCR through Pakistan to registered Afghans. As a result now thousands of people have relatives on both sides are now stranded. Pakistani officials not only at crossing points but also in diplomatic missions inside Afghanistan are minting money on issuance of VISAs. Similarly now Taliban diplomatic squads in Peshawar, Islamabad and Quetta have adopted "tit for tat" policies, demanding bribe on the name of VISA Fee and taxes from Pakistani nationals including students. Due to ill fated internal policies and US led allies restrictions, economic miseries of common people are also intensifying day by day. Price hike of daily use goods, especially edible items made the lives of the common people miserably.

'No peace with India sans Kashmir solution'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister-designate Shehbaz Sharif said Sunday during an informal talk with media that Pakistan wanted peace with India, but peace was not possible without the resolution of the Kashmir issue. Shehbaz Sharif said that national harmony was his first priority, adding that the new cabinet would be formed in consultation with the opposition leaders. "Efforts will be made to improve the national economy and provide relief to the people," he pledged and also vowed to start a new era in the country. "We will promote mutual respect," he added. "When will Nawaz Sharif return? What will happen to his cases?" a question was put to him by a journalist. "Nawaz Sharif's cases will be followed as per the law," he answered.

US media widely covers Khan's removal

NEW YORK: American print and electronic media Sunday gave prominent coverage to the news of Prime Minister Imran Khan's ouster from office, highlighting his rise from an international cricketer to a politician who oversaw an era of Pakistan's foreign policy that distanced the country from the United States, and moved it towards China and Russia. In a dispatch from Islamabad, The Washington Post post wrote, "(Imran) Khan made a last-ditch effort to cling to power, producing a document that he said proved that U.S. officials had conspired against him in league with his legislative opponents."

Continuing, The Washington Post wrote, "A charismatic politician and former jet-setting cricket star, Khan, 69, swept to power in 2018, inspiring voters with his anti-establishment rhetoric and a vision of building a 'new Pakistan'—an Islamic welfare state based on opportunity, justice and independence for the nuclear power ... "But in recent months, he had struggled to control rampant inflation, foreign debt and other economic woes. While

many of his promised reforms and civic projects sputtered, he maintained a loyal following, especially among young Pakistanis. But he also made political enemies, rejected advice from military leaders and lost allies to the opposition, which slowly gathered enough support to challenge his fitness for office. "As his luster dimmed, Khan launched an aggressive campaign to restore it. He held massive rallies and gave speeches with stirring nationalist and religious themes, even couching his effort as a fight between good and evil. And when it appeared that his opponents had marshaled enough votes to remove him, Khan dissolved the legislature April 3 and arranged to have the vote abruptly canceled, on the grounds that it was based on an illegal foreign conspiracy..." - APP

Israeli soldiers kill Palestinian woman

JERUSALEM: Israeli soldiers shot and killed a Palestinian woman in the occupied West Bank on Sunday, the Palestinian Health Ministry said. The Israeli military said the woman had run towards soldiers at a position near Bethlehem and did not heed their calls or warning shots to stop. "When the suspect continued approaching, the soldiers fired towards the suspect's lower body," the military said, adding that no weapon had been found on the woman and that the incident was being investigated. The Palestinian Health Ministry said the woman, in her 40s, was pronounced dead in hospital. Israeli forces have been on high alert following attacks that have killed 14 people in Israel since late March. More than 20 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli forces since January, while Palestinians have reported a rise in violence by Israeli settlers in the West Bank. In public remarks to his cabinet on Sunday, Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said there would be no restrictions on security forces in stopping what he has described as a "new wave of terrorism". Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayeh condemned the killing of the woman, saying he held Israel "fully responsible for the consequences of this heinous crime".

Hussein al-Sheikh, a senior Palestinian official, said Israel's expansion of settlements on occupied land Palestinians want for a state and visits by far-right Israelis to the Al-Aqsa mosque compound in Jerusalem have led to escalation. Al-Aqsa, in a part of Jerusalem that Israel captured along with the West Bank in the 1967 war, has been a flashpoint of violence, often during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, which began last week. The complex is revered by Muslims as the Noble Sanctuary and by Jews as Temple Mount, the site of two Biblical Temples. In recent days, Israeli forces have mounted security operations in the West Bank city of Jenin where deadly clashes with gunmen have ensued. Israel condemned on Sunday serious damage that it said Palestinians had caused to Joseph's Tomb, a sacred Jewish site in the West Bank. Pictures published by Israeli media showed the tomb partly smashed and torched. "Attacking holy sites is attacking the heart of a people," Israeli Foreign Minister Yair Lapid tweeted. "We will bring the perpetrators to justice and repair Joseph's Tomb." There was no immediate comment from Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas's office. - APP

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