



Islamabad POST

Wednesday, April 06, 2022

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Briefs

Pakistan a sovereign country

DNA
ISLAMABAD: Former Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi while in Islamabad, said on Tuesday that Pakistan is a sovereign country with self-esteem. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) vice-chairman in a statement questioned that does selling your dignity and changing your loyalty for money in accordance to the constitution of Pakistan. Shah Mahmood Qureshi also said that can anyone show me where it is stated in the constitution that one has the right to buy peoples conscience.

Iran against interference in Pak affairs

DNA
TEHRAN: "Saeed Khatib zadeh" the spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry said regarding the recent developments in Pakistan. We are closely following the developments in Pakistan and the developments in this friendly and brotherly country are of great importance for us. These developments are normal in the Pakistani parliamentary system but we must all make sure that the Pakistani people decide the fate of their country without any foreign interference. He stressed: "We have very good relations with the Pakistani government and in this context we tried to maintain relations."

Dy speaker's ruling a 'suicide attack'

DNA
ISLAMABAD: Calling National Assembly Deputy Speaker Qasim Suri's ruling of April 3, 2022, under which he had thrown out the opposition's no-trust motion on the ground that it was part of a foreign conspiracy, senior PPP leader Qamar Zaman Kaira called it a 'suicide attack' by the PTI government not only on the parliament but also on the democratic system as well as on the country.

US threat letter Russia slams 'shameless interference'

Russia says the development "leaves no doubt" that the US intended to punish "disobedient" Imran Khan

DNA / FOREIGN DESK
MOSCOW: Russia slammed the United States for "another attempt of shameless interference" in the internal affairs of Pakistan for its "own selfish purposes". According to a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, spokesperson Maria Zakharova noted the ongoing political situation in Pakistan, saying that the development "leaves no doubt" that the US intended to punish "disobedient" Prime Minister Imran Khan. The statement cited the ruling PTI's claim, that US Deputy Secretary of State for South Asia Donald Lu called upon the Pakistani ambassador in Washington and subsequently called upon Ambassador Asad Majid to "condemn the balanced reaction of the Pakistani leadership to the events in Ukraine," as evidence of US involvement. "Immediately after the announcement of the working visit of Imran Khan to Moscow on February 23-24 this year, the Americans and their Western associates began to exert rude pressure on the prime minister, demanding an ultimatum to cancel the trip," the statement read. The spokesperson further noted that when he [PM Imran Khan] nevertheless came to

US once again refutes PM Imran Khan's allegations

NEWS DESK
WASHINGTON: The US State Department has once again spurned Prime Minister Imran Khan's allegations of toppling his government through a no-trust motion by funding the Opposition. On March 27, at a jalsa, the PM accused the US of interfering in Pakistan's politics and plotting to oust his regime through a no-trust motion in the National Assembly. As proof, the PM also brandished a "threat letter" at a public gathering, saying that a foreign country has warned of dire consequences if he remains in power. Following the Opposition's ruckus on the 'threat letter', the PM had called the National Security Committee (NSC) and presented the letter. To this, the NSC expressed concern and a demarche was issued to the US envoy in Pakistan. Subsequently, based on this 'threat letter', the deputy speaker rejected the

COAS urges region to work collectively

The Army Chief said that Pakistan wishes to enhance long-term multi-domain relations with Nepal based on common interests

NEWS DESK
RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa has urged all regional countries to work collectively for enduring peace and stability in the region. He made this demand while talking to Ambassador of Nepal to Pakistan, Tapas Adhikari, who called on him at the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi on Tuesday.



RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa in a meeting with Ambassador of Nepal to Pakistan, Tapas Adhikari. - DNA



LAHORE: Prime Minister Imran Khan in a meeting with Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi. - DNA

PM Imran, Uzbek President discuss region

The leaders exchanged warm congratulations on the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev on Tuesday telephoned Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan to discuss diverse matters, media reported. According to the press service of the President of Uzbekistan, the leaders exchanged warm congratulations on the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan, sincerely wishing peace, well-being and further progress to the friendly peoples of the two countries. The progress in the implementation of the joint action plan adopted following the results of the high-level state visit to Pakistan on March 3-4 this year was considered. The importance of the timely implementation of projects and programs of multifaceted cooperation, primarily in trade, industry, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, tourism, culture and other priority areas, was noted. Following the conversation, the Leader of Uzbekistan wished the Prime Minister and the people of Pakistan a successful holding of the upcoming important political event - parliamentary elections in the country. On March 3, President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev visited Islamabad where he was welcomed by Prime Minister Imran Khan.

Nation to bury politics of traitors: PM

The prime minister said that three stooges had been plundering the national wealth for the last thirty years

ABID RAZA
LAHORE: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Tuesday said that the Pakistani nation would teach a lesson to those traitors in the general elections who tried to topple an elected government that was pursuing an independent foreign policy. Addressing a gathering of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf workers here, the prime minister said, "The people of the country will teach a lesson to these traitors (opposition leaders) in the next general elections by burying their politics forever." The prime minister referring to his main political opponents said that these three stooges had been plundering the national wealth for the last thirty years and stashed it abroad. "They can say that beggars are not choosers," owing to their vested personal interests, he added. He said a drama had been staged in the country. In the local hotel of Lahore, PTI defectors who had sold their party

Shehbaz seeks evidence of treachery

KHAYAM ABBASI
ISLAMABAD: PML-N President and Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday asked Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa and DG ISI to present evidence before the nation on whether the Opposition leaders have committed treason. Speaking to journalists outside the premises of the Supreme Court, Shehbaz reiterated that none of

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Dy Speaker's ruling our only focus, says CJP

During the hearing, Justice Mandokhel inquired if the court can review the ruling passed by a deputy speaker

STAFF REPORT
ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Tuesday adjourned the hearing of the case - filed against the "unconstitutional act" of the National Assembly Deputy Speaker Qasim Suri - till Wednesday. A five-member larger bench of the apex court, headed by Justice Bandial and comprising Justice Muneeb Akhtar, Justice Aijazul Ahsan, Justice Mazhar Alam, and Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhel resumed hearing this afternoon. During the hearing, CJP Bandial also directed NA speaker's counsel Naem Bokhari to present the minutes of the crucial NA session held on March 31 to debate on the no-confidence motion against Prime Minister Imran Khan. At the outset of the hearing, PPP Senator Raza Rabbani walked to the rostrum to present his arguments. "This is a civilian coup. A stance was created through an alleged cable which is based on malafide intent," the Senator said, adding that the no-confidence motion against the prime minister was tabled on March 28 but the NA session was adjourned. He maintained that Suri gave the ruling without putting the documents before the parliament on Sunday. He argued that Rule 28 says the deputy speaker cannot give a ruling even if he has the authority. "Deputy speaker's ruling is illegal [...] no-trust motion cannot be rejected without voting on it," Rabbani said. He further stated that the deputy speaker's ruling doesn't have constitutional security under Article 69. "Voting is mandatory within the given duration as per the Constitution". PPP's counsel said that the no-trust motion cannot be rejected under the Constitution. "It can be dismissed only when if those who submitted it take it back and the speaker can reject it only after voting is held on it." Rabbani went on to say that President Arif Alvi didn't need to file the reference seeking interpretation on Article 63A. Instead, he should have advised the prime minister to go for voting on the motion filed against him.

Continued on Page 06

Indonesian embassy to establish 'facilitation corner' in Peshawar University: Envoy

The envoy said his country had provided 500 scholarships to Pakistani students to study at top Indonesian universities

BUREAU REPORT

PESHAWAR: Indonesian Ambassador to Pakistan, Adam Mulawarman Tugio Tuesday said his embassy would establish a 'facilitation corner' on the premises of the Peshawar University aimed at facilitating students and enhancing people-to-people contact. Addressing an online internship programme titled "Contemporary Dynamics of Indonesia," he said the facility would also share Indonesia's social, cultural, and economic information with students. He expressed his gratitude to the faculty of Peshawar

University for providing space for the establishment of the facilitation corner. The Vice-Chancellor of the University and a large number of students attended the event. He said the objective of the online internship program was to increase a better understanding of modern Indonesia through dialogues with experts or scholars of different studies in Indonesia. It is expected to enhance the knowledge and awareness of the participants about the existing potential and opportunities for development in the two countries by sharing lessons from the past and modern eras. The envoy said his country had provided 500 scholar-

ships to Pakistani students to study at top Indonesian universities. He said his government was looking to facilitate students to students exchange programs, and the University of Peshawar was a one-stop in this regard. "Pakistan and Indonesia are enjoying cordial ties and people-to-people contact will further enhance bilateral and brotherly relations between two countries," he added. He said Indonesia and Pakistan were blessed with rich cultural heritage and traditions carrying interesting and attractive similarities. Both the countries cherish various traditions and share many similarities

from nature to culture and preserving (Islamic) tradition being two of the most populous Muslim countries in the world, embracing modernity. He said his embassy was planning to arrange a "Museum program" during the current year to exhibit the strong Islamic and Buddhism civilization in Peshawar city. Renowned Indonesian scholar Abdul Ghaffar Karim informed the participants that Indonesia has 17000 islands and 273 million populations and is the fourth most populous country. He said that the country had 87.2 percent Muslims including hundreds of ethnic groups and religious groups.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and President Pakistan Peoples Party Asif Ali Zardari presiding over meeting of PPP Central Executive Committee (CEC) at Zardari House. - DNA

Diversification stressed for exports

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) have stressed the need for diversification for sustained Pakistani exports during the fifth review of Pakistan Trade Policy (PTP). Mr. Atif Munir Sheikh President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) has welcomed this recommendation and said that the business community of Faisalabad was already cognizant of this need and in this connection FCCI has recently organized a three-day Pakistan Economic Conference (PEC).

"The ultimate objective of this conference was to convince businessmen to explore new opportunities in other emerging sectors instead of focusing only on textile", he said and added that as a result of this conference many potential sectors were identified including IT, plastic and poultry etc. He particularly mentioned the IT sector and said that it has recorded 47% growth and young start-ups could not only earn respectable livelihood for themselves but also fetch precious foreign exchange for the country. He said that FCCI is now contemplating to organize one day sector specific conferences after the successful PEC and in this connection the main focus would be laid on IT. He said that entry in to this proposed conference would be totally free so that talented youth could harness their practical skills and play their proactive role in the global markets.

DC Bahawalpur inspects Ramzan Bazar

SAQIB MUSHTAQ

BAHAWALPUR: Deputy Commissioner Irfan Ali did a surprise visit of Ramzan Bazar established in Tehsil Bahawalpur's Saddar area Khanqa Sharif. At this time Assistant Commissioner Muhammad Tayyab were with him. Deputy Commissioner visited stalls of Food items, Flour, Sugar and chicken including Agriculture Fair Price Shops where he checked the quality and prices of Food items. He told that Government has provided subsidy on the food items in Ramzan Bazars. He added that Government of Punjab is selling 10 kilogram Flour bag at 450 rupee and Government is providing 125 rupee subsidy on the 10 kilogram bag. He further told that in Ramzan Bazar 12 rupee subsidy is being provided on per kilogram of Chicken and 6 rupee subsidy on per dozen eggs. He added that Agriculture Fair Price shops have 13 items including apples, bananas, dates, guavas, lemon, Okra, Tomatoes, potatoes, onions, Garlic, lentil and lentil flour so that people could get relief.

He directed that price list of the food items should be displayed on prominent locations while cleanliness arrangements in Ramzan Bazars should be ensured. He directed Ramzan Bazar's in-charge and other concerned staff should observed their duties with responsibility. Later Deputy Commissioner visited Wheat purchasing center Khanqa Sharif along with Assistant Commissioner Muhammad Tayyab where they reviewed the wheat purchasing arrangements.

DC checks cleanliness situation

Deputy Commissioner Bahawalpur Irfan Ali Kathiya visited different areas of Bahawalpur with Chief Officer Metropolitan Corporation Bahawalpur Mian Azhar Javed, he took notice of the sewerage water accumulated in front of Quaid e Azam Medical College at Circular Road and directed that drainage system should be improved and drainage of the accumulated sewerage water at circular road should be ensured. Deputy Commissioner directed that machinery should be used to drain the water as soon as possible so that public

would not have to face any difficulty during their commute. He also checked the cleanliness arrangements in the city. Later with the help of Metropolitan Corporation's machinery and sanitary workers sewerage water was drained from the circular road.

DC visits vegetable and fruit markets

Deputy Commissioner Bahawalpur Irfan Ali Kathiya visited fruit and vegetable markets established in Bahawalpur first thing in the morning, he monitored the auction of fruits and vegetables. At this time Assistant Commissioner Muhammad Tayyab, Secretary Market Committee Mehar Mulazim Hussain, Extra Assistant Director Agriculture Marketing Munazzam Javed and other concerned staff was there. Deputy Commissioner directed to ensure the selling of fruits and vegetables on fixed prices, he said that price lists of all products should be displayed on prominent locations so that public would not have to face any difficulties during shopping, he added that strict action should be taken against those who are not selling the commodities on fixed prices.

Secy directs to insure availability of items in Ramzan Bazars



ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Secretary Archives Punjab/In charge Ramzan bazar arrangements Saqib Manan has directed that the supply of high demand items in Ramadan bazars should not be disrupted. In this regard, the in-charge Ramadan Bazaar should make all arrangements. He instructed this while inspecting

Ramzan Bazars. The Secretary checked the quality of fruits and vegetables in the Ramadan bazars of Akbar Chowk Gulistan Colony, Faizan e Madina Chowk Susan road and clarified that only quality items should be available in the Ramadan bazars as the sale of quality essential items at cheap rates is the distinguishing feature of these bazars. He also checked the expiration date on some items

whereas reviewed the sale process at flour and sugar stalls. Saqib Manan asked about the quality of essential commodities and the rate differences of ramzan bazar from general's market from the people present at the spot and said that purpose of continuous monitoring is to keep bazaar safe from defects. He directed duty officers to check the stalls from time to time and remove rotten

things immediately so no consumer have any complaint. On this occasion, it was told that besides providing essential commodities to consumers at lower costs, subsidy is also being given at agriculture fair price shops on different things. Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue Fazal w Rabi Cheema, AC City Sahibzada Muhammad Yousaf and other officers are also present.

Four officers of Fesco transferred

FAISALABAD: Four officers of the Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (Fesco) were transferred and posted on Tuesday. Fesco Spokesman Tahir Sheikh said Technical Officer First Circle Muhammad Naeem Javed had been transferred and posted as Xen Operation Ghulam Muhammad Abad Division while Muhammad Ameer Khan Xen Operation Ghulam Muhammad Abad was transferred and posted as Xen Operation Civil Lines Division. Similarly, Ammar Iftiaz Xen Operation Civil Lines Division was transferred and posted as Xen M&T Second Circle whereas Muhammad Kashif Xen M&T Second Circle was transferred and posted as Xen Transformers Reclamation Workshop Fesco, he added. - APP

Masses to hold Imran Khan accountable: Hamza Shehbaz

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Hamza Shehbaz on Tuesday claimed that the masses will hold Prime Minister Imran Khan accountable. Addressing a press conference in Lahore, Hamza lambasted the premier and alleged that Prime Minister Imran Khan wants to destroy the country and system. Hamza alleged that Imran Khan has destroyed diplomatic relations. Hamza said that only with the rule of law and constitution, it is possible for the nation to live with respect and dignity. Hamza said he will go to the Punjab Assembly with the members tomorrow. Hamza said that elections usually hap-



pen, the day after the submission of nomination papers. Hamza Shehbaz took a jibe at the Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI) led government and said that the stock exchange has been crashed as the country is facing a severe economic crisis, adding that IMF is saying to whom they talk now. Hamza said that this country also belongs to the Establishment as much as everybody. Hamza said that the country become a banana republic when the constitution broke. Within a month, the price of the dollar increased by Rs8, adding that national debt goes up when the dollar rate increases, said Hamza. - DNA

Tribute paid to Chinese martyrs of KKH

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Officials and locals from Gilgit-Baltistan paid tribute to Chinese workers and engineers who lost their lives about 50 years ago in the construction of Karakoram Highway (KKH). According to Gwadar Pro, the "April 4, National Mourning Day" was organised by Overseas Chinese Association Gilgit-Baltistan (OCAGB). Officials, local notables and students were gathered at "China Yadgar", the Chinese cemetery, located in Danyor, about 10 kilometers away from Gilgit city across the Gilgit Giver. The officials, locals and students laid floral wreaths on the graves of Chinese workers and engineers who laid their lives in the construction of KKH, also known as the Eighth Wonder of the World. Poems eulogizing the sacrifices and Chinese and Pakistani workers who laid their lives in the construction were also buried in the cemetery; every year on April 4, we pay tribute to the Chinese workers and engineers at China Yadgar," said Ali Ahmad Jan.

OGDCL, KP govt sign MoU for construction of dam

PESHAWAR: An MoU between Oil & Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL), Energy & Power Department, Irrigation Department and Public Health Engineering Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has been inked to construct a Dam for Nashpa Greater Water Supply Scheme (NGWSS) in District Karak, KPK. Large population of Nashpa block had been facing acute shortage of drinking water, as there was neither ground water potential to feed them with deep wells/tubes wells nor they had any perennial spring/source to be developed to establish a water supply scheme to meet the drinking water requirements of the area. Therefore, an agreement was signed between OGDCL, MOL and the notables of surroundings of Nashpa Field to construct a Dam at suitable site where gravity flow could be maintained to 11 villages of Nashpa.e (Lorgai, Sanda Manzai, Salkhani, Sand Khurram, Nashpa, Faqirbanda, Zandrakabanda, pirmila, paidibanda, Mir kalam and Khazibai.). The population of Nashpa block is about 21,916 people with a water demand of approximately 15 GPCD is about 328,745 Gallons, 0.611 cusec or 442.240 acre-ft/year. The proposed dam is located at a distance of 24 KM North-East of Karak city. The site is accessible after 54 KM from Kohat on Indus highway towards left side with an un-metalled road via village Shaheedan. Currently, OGDCL is providing drinking water through bowzers on daily basis to meet the requirement of locals of Nashpa area with cost of Rs. 16.63 million per year. Since signing of OGDCL agreement in the year 2012, it has always honored its obligations and approval & execution of NGWSS depicts fulfillment of another commitment in this regard. - DNA

3-day spinal anesthesia training workshop

He told the audience that no doubt knowledge, skills, and attitude mattered a lot in creating capable and competent health professionals but society needed values and their successful transfer to all professionals on top of everything else

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: A three-day spinal anesthesia training workshop held at Kuwait Hospital Three days spinal anesthesia training workshop organized by Prime Foundation held at Kuwait Teaching Hospital Peshawar. Prof. Dr. Hafeez-ur-Rahman Dean of Health Sciences Peshawar Medical & Dental Colleges, Dr. Anisa Afridi Director MNCH Merged Tribal Districts and Dr. Saeed Anwar Director PIPH talked during the concluding session of the said training workshop. The purpose of the three days skills-based training was to build the capacity of the medical officers and anesthesia technicians on payrolls of the DoH in the merged tribal districts for initiating and maintaining basic emergency and newborn care (BEMONC) as well as comprehensive emergency obstet-

ric and newborn care services (CEmONC) in the hard to reach areas, save the lives of mothers and babies and also contribute to sustainable development goals. In the end, Prof. Dr. Hafeez-ur-Rahman

Dean of Health Sciences Peshawar Medical & Dental Colleges, Dr. Anisa Afridi Director MNCH Merged Tribal Districts and Dr. Saeed Anwar Director PIPH gave away certificates to the workshop participants, facili-

tators, and resource persons. Meanwhile, an event was held at Peshawar Medical College for the students and faculty of Peshawar Medical & Dental Colleges where Dr. Javed Iqbal, Professor Emeritus Surgery is also a well-known medical educationist and a popular motivational speaker was the keynote speaker.

He told the audience that no doubt knowledge, skills, and attitude mattered a lot in creating capable and competent health professionals but society needed values and their successful transfer to all professionals on top of everything else. He explained that educational approaches required being tailor-made for individual students than one size fits all, and needed to be based on partnership, respect, and friendliness. Likewise, the education and training endeavors needed to be made more challenging than stressful for the learners.



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 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
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ISLAMABAD: Volunteers distributing food for iftar among deserving people during the Holy month of Ramazan at Ghouri Town. – APP

Turkmenistan keen to promote trade relations

President, ICCI appreciated the offers of Ambassador of Turkmenistan for online conference between ICCI & CCI Turkmenistan and presentation to ICCI members that would help in exploring new opportunities of trade promotion between Pakistan and Turkmenistan

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Atadjan N. Movlamov, Dean of Diplomatic Corps and Ambassador of Turkmenistan said that his country was keen to promote trade ties with Pakistan as both countries had good potential to do trade in many items. He said this while talking to Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) during his visit to Embassy of Turkmenistan. Muhammad Naveed Malik, former Senior Vice President ICCI also accompanied him at the occasion. The Dean of Diplomatic Corps said that his embassy was ready to organize an online business opportunities conference between ICCI and Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Turkmenistan so that business communities of both countries could interact and explore potential areas of mutual cooperation. He said that his embassy would give a presentation in its premises to ICCI members about exportable products of Turkmenistan and potential areas of trade cooperation between the two countries. He said that Turk-



menistan could supply LPG to Pakistan to meet its energy needs.

He exchanged ideas with President ICCI on a range of topics to improve bilateral trade and economic relations between the two countries.

Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry appreciated the offers of Ambassador of Turkmenistan for online conference between ICCI & CCI Turkmenistan and presentation to ICCI members that would help in exploring new opportunities of trade promotion between Pakistan and Turkmenistan.

He said that being a landlocked country, Turkmenistan could promote its trade and exports through Gwadar and Karachi ports to many countries. He said that Central Asia was an attractive market for Pakistan and close cooperation with Turkmenistan would help Pakistan in getting better access to Central Asian markets. He also discussed various proposals with Ambassador of Turkmenistan to promote business linkages between the private sectors of both countries in order to explore all untapped areas of bilateral cooperation.

IGP holds khuli kacheri to listen public grievances

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Muhammad Ahsan Younas held khuli kacheri to listen and solve the public grievances, a police spokesman said. He said that the khuli kacheri is being held in Central Police Office (CPO) Islamabad by the IGP in which people submit their issues. On Wednesday, the IGP listened to the grievances of the public and issues of police officials and marked their application to their relevant officers and directed them to resolve them on priority bases and on a given time frame. The IGP strictly directed all zonal officers to listen to public complaints and resolve them purely on merit. "No laxity would be tolerated

in this regard" he maintained. During the khuli kacheri, Islamabad Police chief listened to the grievances of the citizens and marked their applications to the concerned officers for timely action on merit. He also directed them to send reports to his offices in the given time frame. Muhammad Ahsan Younas emphasized that Islamabad police would not leave any stone unturned to save the lives and property of the citizens adding that Islamabad police is taking many steps to facilitate public.

The IGP directed all the police officials to adopt courteous attitude with the complainants visiting police stations and accomplish their responsibilities in a professional manner.

FDE to add 1000 teachers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) will add as many as 1000 teachers to the system before the start of next academic year, which will improve the system. He said that 337 teachers have been recruited with full transparency. These teachers have been appointed only in rural schools. The test of 250 new recruits will be held on April 17, said Director General FDE Dr Ikram Ali Malik on Tuesday. We do not have a shortage of budget but there are administrative issues, he said adding that the teachers have been promoted, except for SSTs, they have a court case. They have issued instructions to the Area Education Officers to purchase furniture, science lab equipments, sports equipment for the children, for which Rs 260 million is being spent.

Five Sasta Ramzan Bazaars operational across city: CDA

"The main purpose of bazaars is to ensure availability of essential kitchen items to general public on controlled rates during the holy month of Ramazan," he maintained

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority's (CDA) Directorate of Municipal Administration (DMA) has set up five Sasta (Subsidized) Ramzan Bazaars at various sectors in the city to provide edible items to residents at controlled prices during the holy month, said DMA director Shakeel Arshad on Tuesday. Talking to media, he said the Bazaars were operational in multiple sectors of Islamabad including I-9, H-9, G-10, G-7 and G-6. Vegetable, fruits and other essential edibles were being sold at cheaper rates than market price, he added. He said teams were constituted to check the prices of various edibles displayed at stalls in the bazaars. Strict action would be taken against profiteering. "The main purpose of bazaars is to ensure availability of essential kitchen items to general public on controlled rates during the holy month of Ramazan," he maintained. The market committee would ensure constant food supply in all bazaars. Stalls of Utility Stores Corporation would also be established in each bazaar. Likewise, secretaries of respective union councils and DMA staff would be available to provide necessary support in that regard. – DNA

18 profiteers booked, 16 shops sealed

AC Saddar Sania Pasha inspected various shops in secret E-11 to assess the prices of essential food items. 3 shopkeepers were shifted to police station due to price hike while others were fined and strictly warned

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration has tightened nose around profiteers and booked 18 shopkeepers, besides sealing 16 shops and imposing Rs1,97,800 fines for overcharging. With the arrival of Ramzan special teams of ICT administration comprising assistant commissioners (ACs), magistrates were conducting surprise raids to various markets and Ramzan Bazaars to ensure government notified rates on essential items, said ICT spokesman on Tuesday. As per details, magistrate Saddar Zone Mir Yamin checked the prices of vegetables, fruits, poultry and meat in different markets within the limits of Tarnol police station. The shopkeepers selling food items on exorbitant rates were fined Rs10500. Magistrate City Ghulam Murtaza Chandio visited various markets in G-6 and shift-

ed four vendors to police station for overcharging. He also imposed fine to milk seller for fleecing the customers. AC Secretariat Aneel Saeed and deputy director food along with special price magistrates inspected different markets in Bhara Kahu to implement government prescribed rates and quality products. Violators were fined and warned as per law. Five shopkeepers/stall-holders were arrested for overpricing. AC Industrial Area Awaid inspected prices of essential commodities, milk, meat, fruits and vegetables and display of price lists. All those in violation were fined and warned. Three person arrested. AC Rural Zakhuraf Fida Malik inspected prices of essential commodities in Tramri Chowk and Lethrar Road to ensure compliance to notified rates. Two shops sealed and owners arrested for violation. AC Rural inspected the arrangements and

adherence to notified rates at Bhandar Stop Sasta Bazaar. He also conducted visit to Tarlai Sasta Bazaar in order to ensure compliance to government rate list. During the visit, provision of basic facilities were also ensured. AC Industrial Area inspected the arrangements and adherence to notified rates at G-9 Karachi Company Sasta Ramazan Bazaar. Provision of facilities including resting areas, ample parking and prayer sections provided for the general visitors was ensured. AC Shalimar Abdullah Khan conducted price checking in the area of G-11. Those in violation of govt notified rates were heavily fined and warned. Magistrate ICT inspected the prices of essential commodities at G-10 I&T Center and Buland Market, violators were warned and fined as per law. Magistrate, ICT, Aimal Khan, carried out price

checking in the areas of Shams Colony and Jhangi Syedan. Accordingly, 56 shops were inspected out of which 16 displayed price lists. Subsequently, fine amounting to Rs 35,700 was imposed on violators. AC Saddar Sania Pasha inspected various shops in secret E-11 to assess the prices of essential food items. Three shopkeepers were shifted to police station due to price hike while others were fined and strictly warned. Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat visited various markets at sector G-7, G-9 and E-11 Ramzan sasta bazaars to review the prices of edible items. He sent two shopkeepers to lock up for overcharging and warned five sellers. He asked all the ACs and magistrates to remain in field to ensure strict adherence to rate list of food items in markets during Ramzan to clamp down on profiteering. – APP

Mirza Mubashir appointed Chief (Export & Exemption)

ISLAMABAD: Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has appointed Mirza Mubashir Baig, a BS-20 officer of Pakistan Custom Services (PCS), as Chief (Export and Exemptions), Customs Wing, FBR (HQ), Islamabad. According to the FBR notification issued here on Tuesday, he has resigned from the post of Collector, Collectorate of Customs Appraisement, Lahore, and has taken over the post. The FBR also informed that Sami-ul-Haq, BS-20 Officer, PC Services, has taken over the charge of Post collector, Collectorate of customs Sambrial, Sialkot. – 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 kindly visit National Art Gallery to witness and appreciate the Photographer M.H. Toori. DC Islamabad, Hamza Shafiqat 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. – APP

Pak team to participate in Asian Cycling C'ship

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan team would feature in the Asian Cycling Championship scheduled to be held at New Delhi, India from June 18 to 22. According to the Pakistan Cycling Federation (PCF), the federation was invited for participation in the Asian Cycling Championship. PCF selection committee was going to select cyclists for national team for the said championship. In this regard the Selection Committee has scheduled trials on May 8 at 8am at the Cycling Velodrome, Lahore. PCF has requested all its affiliated units including Pakistan Army, Wapda, Sui Southern Gas Company, Bikesan Cycling Academy, Four Provincial cycling associations, Islamabad cycling Association, Gilgit Baltistan cycling Association and Pakistan Ordnance Factories Wah to direct their top cyclists to appear before the selection committee at Lahore. The trials would be conducted in the Individual Time Trial, Individual Pursuits and Sprint events. Only those cyclists would be allowed for trials who have the current year's cycling license (valid cycling license). – APP

ANF recovers drugs

ISLAMABAD: The Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) and Airport Security Force (ASF) have conducted an operation at the Islamabad International airport and recovered 2.41 kg of hashish. According to ANF spokesman, in the operation, Asim Shehzad, a resident of Mandi Bahaudin, was found with hashish in his luggage. The accused had skillfully concealed the hashish in a suitcase who was on his way to Bahrain via flight number GF771. A case has been registered against the accused under the Anti-Narcotics Act and further investigation was underway. – APP

Briefs

AIOU launches nationwide plantation campaign

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has launched a tree plantation campaign at its regional offices and model study centres in all the provinces of the country, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir. According to Dr. Malik Tauqeer Ahmad Khan, Director Regional Services (DRS), regional directors have been directed to engage students, teachers and social activists in this plantation drive. Vice Chancellor, AIOU, Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum directed the DRS to launch a nationwide tree plantation campaign and plant trees in the Regional Offices and Model Study Centers. Dr. Zia said that Plant for Pakistan is a national project and each of us has to play our part to make this project a success. He further said that this campaign aims to provide a healthy and pollution free Pakistan to the coming generations.

Sehbaei shares a anniversary post for wife

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Legendary Pakistani stars Manzar Sehbaei and Samina Ahmed celebrated their second wedding anniversary on Monday. The veteran actors tied the knot on 4 April, 2020 in an intimate nikkah ceremony that took place in Lahore. The wedding was hailed by their fans and followers for its simplicity and grace. When it comes to writing heartfelt messages for his wife, Sehbaei does not hold back. Taking to twitter, the Bol actor shared an adorable picture of their anniversary celebration and posted a loved-up caption "Our second wedding anniversary, as we happily move towards our 50th." he wrote along with a heart emoticon. The post received an outpouring of love from family and fans.

48 factories registered during last 3.5 years

ISLAMABAD: As many as 48 factories have been registered in the Federal Capital under Factories Act, 1934 during last three and half years. The government has fixed minimum Rs 20,000 wage as well as by the Chief Commissioner, ICT under Section-4 of the Minimum Wages Ordinance, 1961 for unskilled workers/ in all the Industries/Commercial establishment, sources APP told APP here Tuesday. They said for ensuring payment of minimum wages, the field staff of the Labour Welfare Department, Islamabad regularly visit their respective areas for implementation of various Labour Laws. To monitor and evaluate the performance of field staff, the Director (Industries & Labour) held meetings regularly, daily inspection of various factories/establishments was carried out by the field staff to check the Minimum Wages, they said. They said strict legal proceedings were initiated against the violators. - APP

Three new Covid cases in Rawalpindi

RAWALPINDI: Three more people were diagnosed with fatal coronavirus during the last 24 hours, raising the district's tally of confirmed cases to 46,499. As per the new data released by the District Health Authority here Tuesday, the total infected cases included 42,998 from Rawalpindi and 3,501 from other districts. Two cases were reported from Taxila and one from Rawal town among the new patients. "Presently, one confirmed patient is admitted to city Bilal Hospital," the report said. In addition, the report informed that 26 were quarantined, including 25 homes and one isolation. - APP

Time to purge political system of black sheep, says Farrukh

The leader said a that a section of media had run a concocted news claiming that ECP was not ready to hold elections within stipulated time

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Leader Farrukh Habib said on Tuesday that time had to come to purge the political system of black sheep involved in horse trading. Talking to media persons outside Election Commission of Pakistan, he said when the no-confidence motion was tabled in the

National Assembly, the business of purchasing loyalties of legislators started and thrived.

He said that Deputy Speaker National Assembly had not violated any article of the constitution. He said that the issue of foreign conspiracy was taken up in the National Security Committee meeting and Parliament Secretary Committee meeting was also summoned but the opposition stayed away from it. He said that



opposition would have to tell the Supreme Court why they did not attend the committee meeting. He claimed that a section of media was supporting a political party and spreading fake news which was condemnable. He said that it was responsibility of the Election Commission of Pakistan to conduct general elections within 90 days after the dissolution of the assemblies. The leader said a that a section

of media had run a concocted news claiming that ECP was not ready to hold elections within stipulated time. He said that Aleem Khan's political career was almost finished but PTI gave him a new lease of political life when he joined it in 2012. Farrukh said due to wrong decisions of Aleem Khan as president PTI Punjab, the party lost election on many constituencies of Punjab.

Govt notifies transfer, posting of officers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The federal government on Tuesday notified transfer and posting of high rank officers. According to a notification issued by Establishment Division, IramAnjum Khan, a BS-21 officer of Pakistan Audit and Accounts Service (PA&AS), presently posted as Additional Secretary, Finance Division (Military Finance Wing) is transferred

and directed to report to his parent department i.e. Office of the Auditor General of Pakistan (AGP), with immediate effect. While, Ahmed Shah, a BS-17 officer of Police Service of Pakistan, presently awaiting posting in Establishment Division, is transferred and his services are placed at the disposal of Interior Division for further posting in Islamabad Capital Police, with immediate effect and until further orders.

PNCA starts painting, calligraphy & guitar classes

DNA

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



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Hamza Shafiqat checking prices of daily use items. - DNA

USA, China, UK remain top 3 destinations of Pakistani exports during 8 months

ISLAMABAD: The United States remained the top export destinations of Pakistani products during the first eight months of financial year (2021-22), followed by China and United Kingdom (UK). Total exports to the USA during July-February (2021-22) were recorded at US \$4410.593 million against the exports of US \$3079.375 million during July-February (2020-21), showing growth of 43.23 percent, according to State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). This was followed by China, where in Pakistan exported goods worth \$1841.113 million against the exports of \$1165.949 million last year, showing increase of 57.90 percent. UK was the third top export destination, where Pakistan exported products worth \$1472.599 million during the months under review against the exports of

\$1308.686 million, showing growth of 12.52 percent, SBP data revealed. Among other countries, Pakistani exports to UAE stood at \$1180.538 million against \$944.576 million during last year, showing an increase of 24.98 percent while the exports to Germany were recorded at \$1131.971 million against \$989.878 million last year, the data said. During July-February (2021-22), the exports to Holland were recorded \$916.795 million against \$715.361 million whereas the exports to Italy stood at \$651.691 million against \$483.830 million. Pakistan's exports to Spain were recorded at \$699.382 million against the exports of \$512.644 million while the exports to Afghanistan were recorded \$295.866 million against \$ 629.787 million last year. The exports to Bangla-

desh stood at \$559.118 million against \$375.669 million, showing growth of 48.83 percent, according to SBP. Similarly, the exports to France during the months under review were recorded at \$334.009 million against \$287.618 million while the exports to Belgium stood at \$459.587 million against \$357.658 million. Pakistan's exports to Saudi Arabia were recorded at \$260.260 million during the current year compared to \$326.668 million last year whereas the exports to Canada stood at \$255.500 million against \$192.843, to Malaysia \$268.693 million against \$127.265 million. Overall Pakistan's exports to all other countries witnessed an increase of 28.11 percent in eight months, from \$16.092 billion to \$20.616 billion, the SBP data revealed.

Services' exports up by 18.17% in 8 months

ISLAMABAD: The exports of services from the country witnessed an increase of 18.17 percent during the first eight months of the current financial year (2021-22) as compared to the corresponding period of last year, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. The exports of services during July-February (2021-22) were recorded at US \$ 4,492.02 million against the exports of US \$ 3,801.18 million during July-February (2020-21), showing growth of 18.17 percent. The services' imports also rose by 39.20 percent by growing from US \$ 5,089.31 million last year to US \$ 7,084.40 million during the period under review. Based on the figures, the services trade deficit was recorded at US \$ 2,592.38 billion this year against the deficit of US \$ 1,288.13 billion during the last fiscal year, showing an increase of 101.25 percent. On year-on-year basis, the services' exports during the month of February 2022 grew by 13.73 percent to US \$ 547.07 million against the exports of US \$ 481.02 million during February 2021. The imports also grew by 25.34 percent from US \$ 663.01 million in last February to US \$ 831.01 million in February 2022, according to the data. On month-on-month basis, the exports from the country went up by 4.98 percent as compared to the exports of US \$ 521.13 million in January 2022. The imports decreased by 17.40 percent as compared the imports of US \$ 1006.04 million in January 2022, the data revealed. - APP

NCHD to establish 'adult literacy centers'

ISLAMABAD: National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) would establish 'Adult Literacy Centers' for the illiterate prisoners in 89 Jails for improving the social, economic, education and health related indicators in the country specifically in the far flung rural areas and prisons. Director General NCHD Hassan Baig said the support and cooperation by the concerned authorities were commendable in establishing Adult Literacy Centers in Jails. He further added that NCHD would soon initiate a programme for the Rehabilitation of Drug Addicts and Impart entrepreneur training to uplift them to the main stream of development, said a press release issued here. DG NCHD further stated, "To establish a Single Governing body/Ministry is need of the time to look after all the development indicators pertaining to education, health, economy, social safety networks, and poverty alleviation and to ensure freedom of choice nationwide. This paradigm shift would help directing the course of action regarding betterment in Human Development Indices (HDIs) through coordinated and objective approach and ending the development race in silos. - APP

Strict action directed against profiteers

RAWALPINDI: Commissioner Noor ul Amin Mengal on Tuesday directed the special price magistrates to take strict action in accordance with the law against profiteers. According to a district administration spokesman, the Commissioner had instructed the authorities concerned to make earnest efforts to provide relief to the citizens particularly during Ramzan ul Mubarak. The officers concerned were also directed to improve the facilities at Ramzan bazaars. The citizens could get registered their complaints at complaint cell set up in Ramzan bazaars, he said adding, the official social media page of Commissioner Rawalpindi could also be used to lodge complaints against profiteering. The efforts would be made to address the complaints within shortest possible time frame, he added. The special price magistrates deployed in Ramzan Bazaars of Rawalpindi district were also instructed to take action against profiteers, he said. - APP

CC&C center to be inaugurated at NHMP soon

ISLAMABAD: A state of the art Central Command and Control center would soon be inaugurated at National Highways and Motorway Police (NHMP) Headquarters in Islamabad. According to NHMP, the use of modern technology is the need of the hour and all possible steps were being taken to make the Motorway Police more efficient. Everything happening in the field would be visible and supervised 24/7 from the Central Police Office. An official said that the initiative aimed to improve efficiency of patrolling and performance all regions to ensure safety and security of commuters. - APP

PTI organizes a protest rally at D.Chowk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has staged a protest rally at D.Chowk against a 'foreign conspiracy' allegedly hatched against the PTI government. PTI leaders including Asad Umar, Perwaiz Khattak, Faisal Javed, Murad Saeed, Hamid Azhar, Ali Muhammad Khan, Dr Shireen Mazari, Ali Nawaz Awan, Aamer Mehmood Kiani, Shahbaz Gill and others participated in the rally. A large number of PTI workers and families have attended the rally that started after Iftar. Addressing the rally, PTI General Secretary Asad Umar has regretted the foreign interference in the internal matters of the country and horse trading in the National Assembly. He asked the opposite political parties as to why they are running away from the elections, challenging them to compete. He said that a no-confidence motion was launched in which efforts were made to buy parliamentarians. He said that turncoats were being sold on 15 to 18 cor each. He thanked PTI workers, saying that the people of the federal capital have never disappointed PTI. - DNA



ISLAMABAD: Wafaqi Mohtasib of Pakistan, Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi, presenting the Annual Report 2021 to President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. - DNA

Ehsas program reaches out to street hawkers

"The marginalized segment of street vendors is an integral part of the local economy, which cannot be wished away in a low-income country like Pakistan," she said

DNA

ISLAMABAD: After benefitting millions deserving people in the country, the scope of Ehsaas program has been extended to Street Hawkers for their socio-economic uplift by providing better earning opportunities. This is yet another unique intervention of the Ehsaas program aimed at ameliorating the lot of a poor segment of society, roaming at pavements and streets in low cost localities and providing easy access for people to a wider range of goods and services. They have been toiling hard since years to earn their living by themselves and without any patronage of the state institutions. But, MazdoorKaEhsaas program has ended their wait by launching first-ever Ehsaas Street Hawkers initiative

initially from federal capital. The initiative is being executed through collaboration among the Capital Development Authority (CDA), Islamabad Capital Territory Administration (ICTA), Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI), and Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) under MazdoorKaEhsaas. According to the conservative estimates, there are around 20,000 street vendors operating in Islamabad, who are generating annual net income up to Rupees 9.6 billion. Ehsaas' support for street vendors is in line with the Prime Minister Imran Khan's vision of the welfare state based on Riyasat-e-Madina model. Under this initiative, around 200 vendors in Islamabad have been provided vending licenses issued by municipality

and new eco-friendly carts. Syed Tahir Sardar, a street vendor at G-11 who is beneficiary of the EhsaasRehriabaan initiative said, "This is for the first time in the history that any government paid heed to the concerns of the street vendors and took steps to ensure their respectable earning through providing them a proper legal space, license certificate and new eco-friendly carts." Tahir Sardar who is providing watch repairing services said, this scheme has facilitated me and other vendors. "Earlier we have been facing issues due to sitting illegally in the main markets and bearing loss whenever Capital Development Authority (CDA) launched encroachment operation." He said, the owners of the shops in front of which we were sitting used to exploit us through extracting more

and more money and pressurize us to raise the rent. "This program has saved us from all the pressures and helped expand our businesses." Another beneficiary of the program, ZahidJaved who is a garments vendor in the same sector, said the Rehriabaan initiative has reduced our difficulties to a greater extent. "Earlier we were facing difficulty in displaying more and more stuff on the cart but this cart is more convenient to use." He said since this cart is covered and can be locked so we are now safe from heat and rain as well as thieves. "We can leave the stall there and freely move to do other tasks. We are thankful to the present government and urge to include us in other initiatives of the Ehsaas program." According to the Special Assistant to the Prime Minister

on Poverty Alleviation and Social Protection, Dr. SaniaNishtar, the government has embarked upon this initiative for street vendors for the first time in Pakistan. "The marginalized segment of street vendors is an integral part of the local economy, which cannot be wished away in a low-income country like Pakistan," she said. Street Vendors, have remained an integral part of the urban economy around the world. They provide a range of goods and services to middle- and low-income groups of society. Pakistan is also not an exception as hundreds of thousands poor salesmen earn their living through vending business. They reach out to every nook and corner especially in low cost settlement to provide items of daily use at their door step.

Sanctions on Russia

THE EU executive have proposed a fresh wave of sanctions against Russia that would include a ban on coal imports and blocking Russian ships from entering European ports. The proposal, part of the bloc's planned fifth wave of sanctions since the February 24 invasion, needs to be approved unanimously by the EU's 27 member states. The European Union and US are seeking to tighten the noose on Moscow after dozens of bodies were discovered in the Ukrainian town of Bucha following the withdrawal of Russian troops.

The Europeans have been under pressure to hit Moscow in the crucial energy sector and stop Russia's main source of revenue to pay for its war.

Brussels is also proposing a total ban on transactions of four large banks that represent a quarter of the Russian banking sector, including VTB, the country's second largest lender. The EU executive additionally wants to expand the list of Russian products banned in the EU, including vodka.

The proposal from the commission will now be presented to the EU's member states with hopes they will approve it as early as Wednesday. So far countries deeply dependent on Russia for energy – such as Germany, Austria and Italy – have resisted expanding the measures to gas or oil.

French President Emmanuel Macron also expressed support for banning Russian oil and coal as part of a new round of sanctions against Russia, after reports emerged of mass graves and atrocities in the town of Bucha, a town outside Ukraine's capital, Kyiv. "What happened in Bucha demands a new round of sanctions and very clear measures," Macron told France Inter radio on Monday, adding that there were "very clear indications of war crimes". France will coordinate such steps with its European Union partners, "especially Germany", in the coming days, he said, adding that the bloc could also impose further sanctions against Russian individuals.

Russia's economy has been hit hard by Western punitive measures following its invasion of Ukraine and is currently facing the gravest crisis since the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 02 Issue: 282

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IPCC report

THE continued heating of the planet means that this year will probably be one of this century's coolest. As the latest report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) makes clear, current climate pledges by governments would not keep global heating to 1.5C above preindustrial levels – the target promised in the 2015 Paris agreement. Instead greenhouse gas emissions are rising. During the past decade, on average annually they were at their highest levels in human history. The world is on a pathway to temperature increases of more than 3C in the coming decades. This would make large parts of the world too hot to work in. Severe harvest failures will become common. Disappearing ice caps would submerge major cities. Governments have hitherto been far too hesitant to take on vested interests and are all too ready to protect historic investments in fossil fuels.

To achieve 1.5C, the world must reduce annual CO2 emissions by about 50% by 2030, and reach net zero by 2050, while reducing methane emissions a third by 2030 and almost halving them by 2050. This will need deep cuts in fossil fuel use. The IPCC says the case is unanswerable for widespread electrification – especially crucial for enabling the decarbonisation of road transport, industry, mining and manufacturing – powered by renewable sources. The UN's scientists argue that energy efficiency and conservation are central to achieving a greener, safer future.

There are some success stories: at least 18 countries have sustained production-based greenhouse gas and consumption-based carbon dioxide emission reductions for longer than a decade. Much of the carbon dioxide already in the atmosphere was released by rich countries that burned coal, oil and gas to industrialise more than a century ago. The UN panel said about 40% of emissions since then came from Europe and North America. Only about 12% can be attributed to east Asia, including China.

It is likely that global temperatures will "overshoot" the 1.5C pledged by the Paris agreement. Even under one of the least bad scenarios, the IPCC says that temporarily exceeding this limit by a tiny 0.2C before dropping back down to about 1.4C by the century's end could still unleash irreversible impacts such as dead coral reefs. The pandemic was an opportunity to make the rapid shift required away from fossil fuels and was missed by most governments. Russia's immoral war in Ukraine offers another chance for nations concerned about overreliance on hydrocarbons to do the right thing.

On the right side of history

Raza Ali

A few decades later, when Pakistan was playing to the tune of the American fiddle, Pakistan turned from a tolerant society into an Islamic extremist society, where inter-faith tolerance gave way to extremist ideas and killing of a brother by a brother

FOR at least the last 50 years, I have been noting that India had always been late in making decisions. There are multiple examples of how India hurt itself making delayed decisions. One of the examples from recent history is the Indian decision of turning towards the American bloc, when Americans had already played their game with Pakistan, and India could see it, but could not understand the consequences, and took a wrong stance.

But, now I can see for the first time that India has taken timely decision to stand on the right side of history. I think, the credit for this shift in Indian policy must be given to Dr. S. Jaishankar's farsightedness. It seems that Dr. Jaishankar has succeeded in rising above petty positions and has realized the place that India can, and will enjoy in the global game.

I think the Indian foreign office has, for the first time, started realizing, India's poten-

tial, and has decided to play it cool. India showed its resilience, and said: "NO" to the colonial masters for the first time. This is the first time in recent history that India has openly said NO to western hegemony. The Indian decision to buy Russian Oil for Indian Rupees or Russian Rubles is a slap on western face. Let me just go back to 1948. The very first military conflict between Pakistan and India. Do you remember that in 1948 Pakistani and Indian armies were under British Chiefs of Staff. When the issue of Kashmir rose, one of the those British generals, refused to support the country of his deputation, while the other one encouraged dislocation of large numbers of military personnel to the conflict zone. This instigated a conflict, which has not come to an end till date. Please remember, both of the Chiefs of Army Staff in India and Pakistan, in 1948, were loyal to their British crown. They fulfilled the orders of the same British crown.

A few decades later, when Pakistan was playing to the tune of the American fiddle, Pakistan turned from a tolerant society into an Islamic extremist society, where inter-faith tolerance gave way to extremist ideas and killing of a brother by a brother. Infliction of damage by neighbor on neighbor. A society, which progressed, seized to comprehend the meaning of the word "progress". Then the Soviet Union collapsed, the world order changed, and India decided to hug the American dream. India, the country, which outlawed cast based discrimination right after independence. A country, which cherished its secularism. A country, which even had Muslim and Sikh Presidents, turned into a Hindu nationalist state.

This all happened and is happening, but why? Why did India abandon its secularism? Why

did Pakistan, seize to be a country for the progressive citizens of all faiths? The answer is, the injection of British bred American hegemonic colonialism.

But, now, when India has decided, under the futuristic vision of Dr. Jaishankar, to stand on the right side of history, and get rid of colonial lords forever, is Pakistan also looking in the same direction? I hope, yes.

But, when I look towards Islamabad, I see a Prime-Minister, who does not want to kneel in front of the colonial lords. I see a foreign minister, who wants to join the correct world order. But I also see opportunistic, monetarily inclined, shortsighted politicians, who are ready to dance to the colonial fiddle, and keep us enchained forever.

Although, we had always been ahead of India in making proper decisions, I dread the outcome of such narrow political perspective of those, who cannot see any further than their own noses.

If we do not succumb to the immediate personal benefits, our future as a country, as a society, and as an important member of a multipolar world, is very bright. We have the alternative access to the world, in the shape of Gwadar. We will facilitate international trade, bypassing European ports, and of course the western hegemony. There are projects under way to establish all central Asian and Russian trade through Pakistan. CPEC is no secret as well.

So, are we going to stand on the right side of history, or are we going to jump back into the colonial lap, just to satisfy the personal interests of shortsighted individuals, who are still on the first steps of human evolution?

The decision lies with the people of Pakistan, but this decision has to be made now, before we fall back into the trap of the-empire-of-lies, led by the Americans and the British.

End the pandemic of violence against women

Vandana Sharma and Isabela Salgado

Eighteen months later, there is evidence that governments responded to Guterres's appeal. Data tracked by the UN Development Programme show that, of 4,968 Covid-19 policy measures, 853 focused on violence against women

VIOLENCE against women and girls increases during periods of crisis. So, it should come as no surprise that Covid-19 has added to the risk of gender-based violence. Even before the pandemic, one in three women worldwide reported experiencing physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner. But, by confining women at home with their abusers, pandemic-related lockdowns have increased their exposure to violence. Lockdowns have also contributed to economic stress, and diminished women's access to the resources and support systems that help them escape abusive relationships.

In April 2020, UN Secretary-General António Guterres called for action to address gender-based violence during the pandemic. This call was supported by 146 countries. That same month, the United Nations Population Fund estimated that every three months of lockdown would result in an extra 15 million cases of violence against women and girls.

Eighteen months later, there is evidence that governments responded to Guterres's appeal. Data tracked by the UN Development Programme show that, of 4,968 Covid-19 policy measures, 853 focused on violence against women. In the United States, for example, millions of dollars in pandemic-relief spending are being directed to strengthen urgently needed resources – such as shelters, psychological services, and housing assistance – that address the immediate needs of women experiencing violence.

But these efforts alone will not stop violence from occurring. To end violence against women and girls requires effective prevention strategies that target its root causes. Such programs address pervasive inequalities and power dynamics – especially gender norms that justify and normalize violence against women and girls.

There are plenty of examples of effective and proven approaches to preventing violence against women that can be implemented even during a global pandemic. A large body of evidence – including best practices and robust assessments generated over several decades – demonstrates which approaches work best. In particular, randomized impact evaluations can guide decisions on how to build healthy, violence-free populations.

One type of effective, evidence-based approach is facilitated gender dialogues. These conversations help men and women examine and challenge inequitable gender norms and roles, and practice relationship skills in safe spaces. One such program in Ethiopia, called Unite for a Better Life (UBL), was conducted within the context of the Ethiopian coffee ceremony,

a traditional forum for community-based discussion.

A randomized evaluation showed that UBL can reduce intimate partner violence by up to 50% when delivered to groups of men. UBL led to more equitable relationships, including greater joint decision-making, men's involvement in domestic tasks like cooking and childcare, and increased communication between partners on sensitive topics like sexuality. The benefits of the program spread beyond participating households. Positive effects, including reduced violence, were observed even among community members who had not joined UBL sessions.

This research shows just how crucial it is to include men in prevention efforts. Similar interventions, such as those implemented under the What Works to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls program, provide further evidence in support of participatory dialogues that engage men.

Other promising approaches, highlighted in UN Women's RESPECT Women framework, include school-based curricula, microfinance or savings and loans programs to empower women, and social-marketing or media interventions. The latter include radio and television programming in the form of "edutainment," which integrates social-change messages into storylines. Randomized evaluations in Uganda, Mexico, and Nigeria have shown that edutainment can reduce acceptance of violence against women and its incidence, while also encouraging reporting.

Media-based campaigns offer a low-cost way to reach many people remotely. For example, UBL's podcast-based adaptation was designed for humanitarian crises where people may be on the move and unable to join in-person sessions. These podcasts can be shared easily and accessed on a basic mobile device. Additional work is needed to understand how other programs can be adapted effectively to help people in times of crisis, like the pandemic; but the existing evidence offers a place to start.

There is no time to waste. Policymakers need to use the available evidence to expand effective prevention programs and support their adaptation to new contexts. And additional research and evaluation of novel or untested prevention strategies is essential. To end violence against women, governments must do more than provide support for survivors. They also must invest in and implement effective violence-prevention programs that challenge harmful gender norms and promote healthy, equitable relationships.

– Courtesy: Khaleej Times

Afghans continue to suffer as world is distracted

Luke Coffey

Finally, the threat from terrorism coming from Afghanistan has not declined. The commander of US Central Command, Gen. Kenneth McKenzie, last month told Congress during his annual update that Daesh and Al-Qaeda "are seeking to exploit a reduction of US counterterrorism efforts in Afghanistan to reinvigorate their adherents and increase their ability to plot and direct external attacks." He also stated that the deteriorating humanitarian situation and the pending food crisis will only drive more people into the arms of extremists

THE Russian invasion of Ukraine is now in its second month. Europe is facing a large-scale refugee and security crisis. Russia is coming under intense economic pressure from sanctions. And countries in the Middle East and across much of Africa are concerned about how the fighting will impact their imports of Ukrainian food.

But even with this focus on Ukraine, there is another geopolitical matter that cannot be ignored: Afghanistan. Eight months after the Taliban took power, Afghanistan still faces an acute humanitarian crisis. The Taliban have been utterly incompetent when it comes to governing and they are not capable of handling the humanitarian crisis facing the country. The UN claims that 97 percent of Afghans could be living in poverty by the middle of this year. According to a report published by the Observer Research Foundation in India, 11 million people in Afghanistan are experiencing food insecurity. It does not seem that the US, or the wider international community for that matter, has a strategy to confront the humanitarian crisis. Among American policy circles, it is as if Afghanistan barely exists. President Joe Biden did not mention the country once during his recent State of the Union speech before Congress, for example. Right now, all eyes are on Ukraine.

However, the situation for the international community is not straightforward. If money and resources are given directly to the Taliban, it is likely that most of it will be siphoned off. The US State Department announced this week that it would provide \$204 million in humanitarian aid "to help the people of Afghanistan" and that this funding would be funneled through international aid organizations, but it is not clear that any aid group has the freedom and ability to operate effectively in Afghanistan. Another crisis that will have a long-term impact on Afghanistan is the lack of female education. When the Taliban swept back into power in August last year, it banned girls over the age of 12 from attending school. They later relented and announced that, by the Nowruz holiday on March 23, girls would be back in the classroom. Girls across the country gathered their books and backpacks on that date, only to be told they were not welcome. Now, two weeks after the Taliban's promised date for girls returning to school, they remain out of the classroom. Finally, the threat from terrorism coming from Afghanistan has not declined. The commander of US Central Command, Gen. Kenneth McKenzie, last month told

Congress during his annual update that Daesh and Al-Qaeda "are seeking to exploit a reduction of US counterterrorism efforts in Afghanistan to reinvigorate their adherents and increase their ability to plot and direct external attacks." He also stated that the deteriorating humanitarian situation and the pending food crisis will only drive more people into the arms of extremists. At the time of America's retreat from Afghanistan last year, assurances were made by the Biden administration that an "over the horizon" counterterrorism capability could strike at emerging terrorist threats in the country from bases outside the region. McKenzie told Congress that "conducting counterterrorism operations in Afghanistan from 'over the horizon' remains difficult, but not impossible." However, since no details have been provided about how such a capability could work in practice, his claim that it is "not impossible" raises eyebrows.

Eight months since American forces left, there is no indication that the US has the ability to launch these long-range strikes and there is every indication that terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda and Daesh are increasingly active in the country.

As Afghanistan enters spring and then heads into summer, observers should keep an eye out for moves made by the National Resistance Front of Afghanistan. The NRF is led by the capable and astute Ahmad Massoud, the son of the former resistance commander Ahmad Shah Massoud, who fought against Soviet forces and the Taliban in the 1980s and 1990s. Immediately after the Taliban took Kabul last year, thousands of fighters sought shelter in Afghanistan's mountainous Panjshir Valley, about 100 km north of the capital. The Taliban immediately launched an attack on the region, but the resistance fighters were able to use the winter weather conditions and the region's topography as protection. Now that the NRF has seemingly survived the winter, expect it to start making moves against the Taliban in the predominantly Tajik regions in the north of the country. So as the world focuses on Ukraine, there is a lot happening in Afghanistan. As the situation continues to deteriorate, the effects will be felt beyond its border and even across the region. It seems unlikely that the international community has the ability, or even the desire, to deal with more than one major crisis at a time.

As has been the case for more than 40 years, the Afghan people will continue to be the ones that suffer.

– Courtesy: Arab News

Briefs

Russia slams 'shameless interference'

FROM PAGE 01
Russia, "US Deputy Secretary of State for South Asia [Donald Lu] called the Pakistani ambassador in Washington and "demanded that the visit be immediately interrupted, which was also rejected." Citing Pakistani media, the Russian ministry said that on March 7 this year, in a conversation with the Pakistani ambassador, a high-ranking American official (presumably the same Donald Lu) "sharply condemned the balanced reaction of the Pakistani leadership to the events in Ukraine and made it clear that partnerships with the United States are possible only if Imran Khan is removed from power." Zakharova said the further development of the situation "leaves no doubt that the United States decided to punish the disobedient Imran Khan: a group of deputies of the same party of the prime minister suddenly went over to the Opposition and the question of a vote of no-confidence in the head of government was immediately submitted to the Parliament."

US once again refutes...

FROM PAGE 01
no-trust motion against the PM and President Arif Alvi dissolved the NA on the PM's advice. However, this act turned into a deep constitutional crisis as the matter is in the Supreme Court now. Earlier, the US State Department and White House categorically rejected PM's allegations and said the US government has nothing to do with it. Despite the earlier rejection, the US has once again refuted PM Imran Khan's allegations over the US government involvement.

Dy Speaker's ruling our only focus, says CJP

FROM PAGE 01
Rabbi requested the court to seek the minutes of the National Security Committee meeting and the cable. He also requested to form a judicial commission to probe into NA proceedings and asked for a stay on Sunday's assembly session case. "The court should consider the misuse of authority instead of the proceedings within the assembly and see whether the speaker can apply Article 5." Rabbi concluded saying that they want that the arguments are completed and the court issues a brief order today. "[We] will release an order if all the parties complete the arguments," the chief justice said in response. After Rabbi completed his arguments, PML-N's counsel Makhdoom Ali Khan presented his arguments before the court. He narrated the NA's proceedings since the session of March 28 when leader of the Opposition Shabbaz Sharif was allowed to table the no-trust resolution against PM Imran Khan till April 3, the day fixed for voting on the motion. Khan said that a debate had to be held on the no-trust motion on March 31's session under Rule 37 but it didn't happen. He asked if Suri, as the deputy speaker, had the authority to dismiss the resolution in this way. "The entire case is based on the question whether the deputy speaker can give such a ruling," he added. Khan contended that majority of the MNAs supported the resolution of no-confidence against PM Imran Khan as 161 lawmakers favoured it.

Moreover, he said that the session couldn't be further adjourned after a motion of no-confidence is filed against NA Speaker Asad Qaiser. Justice Akhtar inquired if Article 69 encompasses the NA Rules regarding the authorities of the speaker. At this, Khan said that NA Rules for running the assembly affairs and no rule contradicts the method stated under Article 95. Justice Akhtar inquired if Articles 91 and 95 give the speaker the Constitutional security over the procedural defect.



LAHORE: A view of the T-20I cricket match between Pakistan and Australia. - DNA

Kyiv mayor calls for more sanctions on Russia

Vitali Klitschko tells UN forum for mayors that Russia is conducting war against Ukraine's civilians

KYIV: The mayor of Kyiv has urged the world to implement more sanctions against Russia and offer his country humanitarian help, weapons and political support, accusing Moscow of "genocide" in Ukraine. Vitali Klitschko addressed the Second Forum of Mayors 2022 organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, accusing Russia of "aggression" and conducting "a war against civilians." Klitschko said that the day before, he had viewed shocking scenes in Bucha, a dormitory town of Kyiv, where - he claimed - Russians had shot 300 civilians. Their bodies were dumped in the streets or left in mass graves. "In our hometown Kyiv, Russian rocket attacks destroyed over 100 apartment buildings. More than 100 civilians have died, and more than 300 are in hospital in a critical condition," said the mayor, noting that even children have not been spared. He said the attacks went back



to 2014, citing the shooting down of a Malaysian Airlines plane with Russian missiles over eastern Ukraine. "This is genocide. This is a war against civilians. This war is against our country. The main goal is to destroy the country. This war doesn't have rules," said Klitschko, noting he leads the biggest city in "east Europe." The mayor said thousands of Ukrainian civilians were killed by "Russian

aggression." He added that in the besieged city of Mariupol in southern Ukraine thousands are trapped and 5,000 civilians have been killed. He said that the war is bad for Ukraine and also for Russia, with 20,000 Russian troops having perished in the fighting that began on Feb. 24. Klitschko said that Ukraine merely wants to defend its people and its freedom and does not

intend to expand into other countries, noting that it had given up being a nuclear power in 1994. "We have to defend our country," said the mayor. The mayor said "Russian propaganda" says "it's about a war against nationalists, fascists, and radicals." This, he said, is a lie. "Clearly, (Russian President Vladimir) Putin has said the idea is to rebuild the Russian Empire to rebuild the Soviet Union. And the main goal of the Russians is to take Ukraine into the influence of the Russian Federation and have total control over the whole country," said Klitschko. "The main weapons right now for the Russians is not tanks; it's not the planes. The main weapons right now are the media," he said, referring to propaganda from the country. Klitschko said: "It's not a secret... Russia today has a budget much bigger than that of our capital city of Ukraine that is more than 2 billion euros (\$2.2 billion)."

Rashid Khan eager to learn from Younis

SPORTS DESK

KABUL: Afghanistan star leg-spinner Rashid Khan is eager to learn from former Pakistan captain Younis Khan. The 44-year-old has recently been appointed as a batting coach for the Afghanistan team for the upcoming UAE training camp. Younis Khan will join his compatriot Umar Gul who was appointed as the bowling coach days before the appointment of Younis. On this occasion, the former right-handed batter shared his sentiments on his Twitter. He expressed his desire to work with the Afghanistan team since his playing days, and finally, he accepted the role. "It has been my utmost desire to work with Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) as a coach, and the discussions have been going on since 2011 during my playing days. I now feel it's the right time and the UAE camp is a perfect opportunity to work with ACB and get to know the upcoming talent more closely." Younis posted on Twitter. Younis Khan is the top run-getter for Pakistan in Tests (10099) with 34 centuries and 33 half-centuries, he also has over 7000 runs to his name in ODI's, and he was the captain of Pakistan team in the 2009 T20 World Cup when they were crowned champions. In response to Younis's Tweet, Afghanistan star player Rashid Khan responded eagerly, showing his respect for the legend. The 23-year-old replied to Younis Khan's tweet in Pashto. "Pakhairraghleyounis Bhai, looking forward to learning the most from you, INSHALLAH." Rashid Tweeted. Pakhairraghleyounis Bhai looking forward to learn the most for you INSHALLAH. Younis Khan and Umar Gul both are Pashto speaking which is the native language of Afghanistan. The right-arm leg spinner used "PakhairRaghle", which means greetings in Pashto. Younis Khan and Umar Gul will join the team in Abu Dhabi for 15 days. The duo will work with an expanded squad of 25 at a training and preparatory camp.

Australia beat Pakistan in only T20 Match

DNA

LAHORE: Australia defeated Pakistan by 3 wickets in the only T20 match played between the two sides, thus ending the Aussie tour of Pakistan. In the only T20 match, Pakistan gave Australia a target of 163 runs to win. In the match played at Gaddafi Stadium, Australia decided to bowl after winning the toss against Pakistan. The opening pair of Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan put on a 67-run partnership for the first wicket. Babar Azam scored 66 and Rizwan 23 runs. Apart from them, Khush Dil Shah remained prominent by scoring 24 runs. For Australia, Ellis took four wickets while Green took two wickets. It should be noted that this is the first time that Pakistan is hosting a T20 match against Australia at home. Earlier, Australia had beaten Pakistan 0-1 in the Test series. While Pakistan won the ODI series against Australia after 20 years.

Nation to bury politics of traitors: PM Imran

FROM PAGE 01

allegiance were put together. With such shabby tactics, the democracy, future of the coming generations and solidarity of the nation had been put at stake, he added. The prime minister said the people had been elected on PTI seats or the reserved seats, and then sold out their conscience for the sake of few million rupees, adding that they would ensure a life time ban for such traitors. He said these elements were traitors to the nation, to the country and to the coming generations, adding unless they were punished, they would continue bargaining over the democracy for petty monetary gains. The prime minister said with such a trend, any foreign country could purchase the localities of the lawmakers and topple an elected government. He resolved that they would fully confront them legally. The case was taken up by the Supreme Court. "All those are traitors who have played a part in the foreign conspiracy," he added. The prime minister said the entire nation would resist such trends as it was a defining moment, and would not let the conspiracy succeed as it had periled country's future and democracy.

Shehbaz seeks...

FROM PAGE 01

the Opposition leaders have committed treason. "We did not invite any foreign power and neither are we involved in any foreign conspiracy," he said, adding that this issue should be clarified. "I demand COAS and DG ISI to take notice of this issue and produce evidence in the Supreme Court if we have committed treason," Shahbaz said, adding that he has never spoken such clear words before. The PML-N leader said he will also present this request in front of the Supreme Court, "we will put this demand forward through our lawyers that please review this matter and create a forum in which the matter is clarified." Recalling their previous demands, he said: "We have been raising this issue for last three-and-a-half years that this government and the prime minister is illegal." He complained that when the joint Opposition submitted a no-confidence motion against Prime Minister Imran Khan practising its constitutional right the former PTI-led government raised the issue of "foreign conspiracy." The Opposition leader said: "It is now time for the army officials, who have made innumerable sacrifices, to clarify whether the National Security Committee (NSC) passed a resolution in which the role of Opposition in 'foreign conspiracy' is stated." Replying to a question regarding the formation of the caretaker government, the PML-N leader said that he has not received President Arif Alvi's letter in this regard, adding that first, they want the Supreme Court to resolve the issue of the unconstitutional step taken by the president and prime minister and then they [the Opposition] will talk about other matters.

Ramiz to meet BCCI officials next week

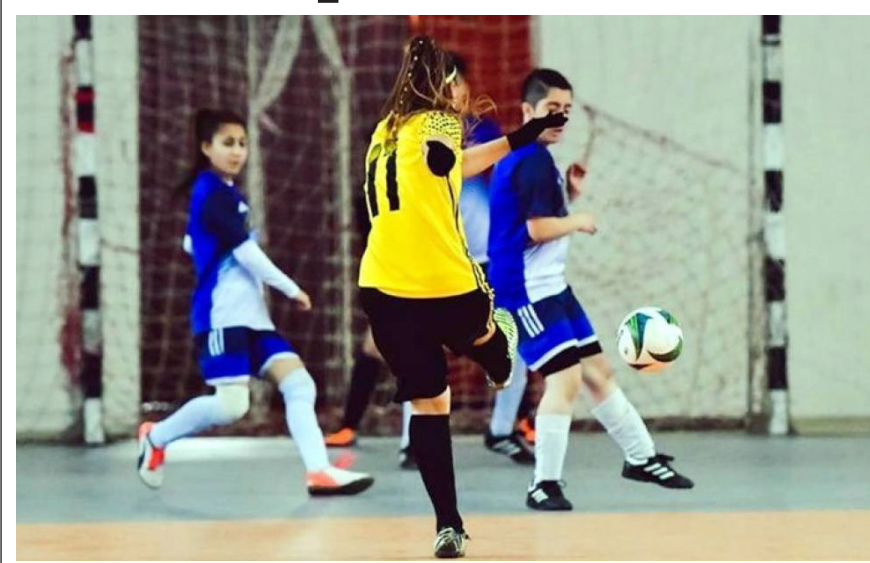
LAHORE: Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Ramiz Raja is set to meet officials from the Indian cricket board for a formal meeting in Dubai. Raja will meet the officials during the board meeting of the International Cricket Council (ICC) and it will play a crucial role in the future of both cricketing nations' schedules. The ICC meeting is scheduled to be held in Dubai from April 7 and will last for three days till April 10. Ramiz Raja and Chief Executive Faisal Hasnain will leave for Dubai tomorrow. The session will begin with a chief executive meeting where various issues will be reviewed. The meeting will look at Finance and other committees. According to sources, in the board meeting, Chairman PCB Ramiz Raja will share a special report to the ICC on hosting the Pak-Australia series. On the sidelines of the meeting, the PCB chairman will also hold meetings with various heads of the respective boards to improve relations and create future opportunities for Pakistan cricket. The Chairman PCB will also share the proposed plan for the four-nation T20 tournament with other board officials. The four-nation T20 tournament consists of arch-rivals Pakistan and India, rivals Australia and England. The proposed tournament has an estimated revenue of USD 650 million to be distributed among all participants and ICC. The money can be used to develop cricket for all countries. This will be the first meeting in two years due to Covid-19. The board members will be arriving in Dubai by tomorrow. - DNA



5 people killed as train strikes vehicle

BUDAPEST: A train derailed and overturned after striking a vehicle in southern Hungary early Tuesday, leaving five people dead and others injured, police said. The accident occurred just before 7 a.m. in the town of Mindszent. Police said a flatbed truck carrying workers drove onto the train tracks and was struck by a train, which derailed from the force of the collision. Seven men were traveling in the truck at the time of the collision, according to Hungarian state news agency MTI. Five of them were killed and two others taken to hospital with serious head and limb injuries, the police said. In a statement, Hungarian state railways indicated that all those killed had been traveling in the truck. It said that 22 people were on the train at the time of the collision. Two passengers were seriously hurt and eight others suffered mild injuries. Ten ambulances and a helicopter were dispatched to the scene, according to a spokesperson for the National Ambulance Service. The Csongrad-Csanad county police said they had closed the entire width of the road during the on-site inspection and rescue. Traffic was diverted to surrounding streets. - APP

'Pakistan can become futsal powerhouse'



DNA

KARACHI: Brazilian coach Celso Luis Marques believes Pakistan can be a powerhouse in the international futsal community if the steps to develop the sport continue in the right direction. Marques along with Coach Rubyany Brandao were in Pakistan earlier in March, as they trained at least 46 participants in the coaches and referee course organised by the Sindh Women Futsal Association (SWFA) and Diya Women Football Club (DWFC), under the umbrella

of Pakistan Soccer Futsal Federation (PSFF). "The experience of coaching in Pakistan is very good," Marques told The Express Tribune. "I'm very happy to see the interest and the dedication from the coaches and referees in the course." Marques and Brandao also spent time with the children on March 3 and 4, while they trained the coaches to further their knowledge of futsal. Marques was particularly impressed with his experience in the football-mad locality of Lyari. "I need to see a lot of places in Pakistan. Every region is different, and that

makes the players different too. But I was very surprised to see Lyari, the talent of players there, their appreciation for the sport and their experience with the game as well. I can see a lot of players from there that can be a part of the national team one day," said Marques. The Brazilian explained why futsal is important for him and as a sport what it can do for the people who cherish it. "It is a very lovely game. Futsal is a magical sport, in which there is discipline, there is movement, there is commitment and a lot of things that make futsal very dynamic," he said.

Covid and its impact on retailer sentiments

ESHA QAISAR

PAKISTAN has the largest wholesale and retail trade sector, maintaining a growth of 7.5% and contributing around 18.2% to GDP. Around 54% of the retail units are involved in the selling of beverages, tobacco, and food within the retail trade, and 80% of these are located in urban areas, employing 33% of the informal labor force. From the year 2019, Pakistan's retail sector has witnessed a decline of 3.4% in spending and this

is due to the COVID-19 lockdown and the whole social distancing situation that has limited the activity for retail businesses. Due to the restrictions imposed by the government of Pakistan, physical stores have observed a decline in sales. However, retail businesses are rapidly moving towards online shopping by creating demand for their existing products and services online, diversifying into high-demand products and services during this pandemic, and investing in online payment methods and delivery systems. These businesses are taking help from

Social media platforms to boost sales. They are promoting their products by advertising online and addressing customer queries without any hustle. Retailers have observed a huge decline in demand and buying patterns of consumers have changed due to COVID-19. Since everything has gone online and physical stores have been closed due to lockdown so the traditional retailers had to go through a costly process of adapting their entire supply chains to align with the new conditions. Innovative strategies like using virtual reality and

online streaming were also being chosen by some retailers for the launch of their products. However, other retailers modified their delivery networks whereas some offered discounts and coupons to retain their customers. Despite the fact that the government has persistently involved with those working in the retail sector to design effective regulations and has also introduced relief packages for the unemployed, salary cuts and lay-offs have been unavoidable. While government SOPs concerning COVID-19 helped in putting a stop to the

spread of an outbreak, restrictions regarding reduced operational hours declared by the officials have restrained demand. This is on the grounds that a major consumer base which liked to visit outlets during later hours or on weekends has been stopped. This emphasizes the importance of gathering information on customer footfall in retail shops which will help in designing more balanced and effective policies to not only keep in control the spread of the virus but also impose a suitable operational schedule on the retail sector.

Briefs

Uzbek, Kazakh Presidents hold phone call

DNA

TASHKENT: President ShavkatMirziyoyev held a telephone conversation with the President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, reports "Dunya" IA correspondent. According to the press service of the President of Uzbekistan, the Heads of state exchanged sincere congratulations on the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan, wished the fraternal peoples of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan well-being and prosperity. Issues of practical implementation of the agreements reached at the highest level were considered. The main attention was paid to increasing the volume of mutual trade, promoting joint industrial cooperation projects, and continuing active exchanges within the framework of the cultural-humanitarian program. The Presidents also exchanged views on the current aspects of regional cooperation, including the preparation and holding of the SCO Summit in Uzbekistan in September this year. The conversation between the Presidents of the two countries took place in a traditionally businesslike and friendly atmosphere.

Quake strikes off eastern Indonesia

JAKARTA: A 6.0-magnitude earthquake jolted Indonesia's eastern province of North Maluku early Tuesday with no damages or casualties reported, an official said. The quake, which triggered no tsunami, rocked at 8:44 a.m. Jakarta time (0144 GMT), with the epicenter at 108 km north-west of Halmahera Barat district of the province and the shallow at 10 km under the seabed, the country's Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysics Agency said, adding that the tremor was also felt in the nearby province of North Sulawesi. The head of the Operation Unit of the North Maluku province's Disaster Management and Mitigation Agency, FebbiAlting, said that the tremors did not trigger any damage or casualty in the province, including in the hardest hit area, Gelela town. - APP

Drugs seized on Azeri-Iran border

NEWS DESK

BAKU: The State Border Service has prevented over 34 kg of drugs, 3,557 psychotropic pills and 957 units of medicine from being smuggled into Azerbaijan from Iran in late March and early April, the service has reported. The first incident occurred in the service area of the Horadiz border detachment's border post near Fuzuli region's Gazakhar village at about 2225, on March 31. A border guard serving in the area noticed an unknown person, who approached the border and immediately left the scene. As a result of the operational measures, the area was cordoned off and taken under control. During the inspection, 10.5 kg of drugs (5 kg 200 grams marijuana, 4.2 kg opium, 1.1 kg heroin), as well as 2,000 Methadone M40 - psychotropic substances were taken from a parcel found in the area as a result of a border search. At about 2317 on April 2, the Goytapa border detachment's border guard detained a suspect, who tried to leave the scene with a parcel near the state border in Bilasvar region's YuhkharAghali village. During the inspection of the package, over 20 kg of drugs (14.4 kg of marijuana, 450 grams of methamphetamine, 510 grams of heroin, 4.9 kg of opium), as well as 957 pills and 10 grams of medicine were seized from Aghsu region Garadashi village resident NijatGuliyev (25). At about 1222, on April 3, border guards thwarted a border violation attempt from Iran to Azerbaijan in the Horadiz border detachment's service area near Zangilan region's Minjivan settlement. The border trespasser threw the contraband and escaped the scene, taking advantage of the thick reeds and complicated topography. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Ukraine's ambassador to Pakistan Volodymyr Lakomov meets Director General Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry. - DNA

Baku approves action plan for anti-corruption fight

The decree also reflects the president's instruction for the Cabinet of Ministers of Azerbaijan and recommendations to the Commission of Azerbaijan for Combating Corruption to regularly analyze the status of work done for the implementation of the Action Plan and inform the president about this

NEWS DESK

BAKU: President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has signed a decree on approval of the national action plan to strengthen the anti-corruption fight for 2022-2026. The decree has been signed in accordance with item 32, article 109 of Azerbaijan's Constitution in order to further increase transparency in the activities of state structures, prevent cases that create conditions for corruption, and further strengthen the public accountability of state bodies. Besides, the decree is aimed at improving and digitalizing public services pro-

vided by state structures, as well as ensuring the sustainability of anti-corruption measures.

The decree, along with the approval of the national action plan to strengthen the anti-corruption fight for 2022-2026, has also instructed central and local executive authorities, state-owned legal entities, the controlling stake (shares) of which belongs to the state, as well as legal public entities created on behalf of the state to: submit an annual report on the implementation of the measures provided for in the "National Action Plan to Strengthen the Fight against Corrup-



tion for 2022-2026" to the Cabinet of Ministers of Azerbaijan and the Anti-Corruption Commission of Azerbaijan by December 30 of each year; approve annual work plans for the implementation of the Action Plan and send information about this in the electronic form to the Anti-Corruption Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Besides, in the decree the president has recommended the Supreme Court, the General Prosecutor's Office, the Judicial-Legal Council, the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman), the Central Bank and the Accounts Chamber of Azerbaijan, as well as the national associations of municipalities, to ensure the implementation of the activities provided for in the Action Plan.

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lyze the status of work done for the implementation of the Action Plan and inform the president about this.

The Cabinet of Ministers was also instructed to coordinate the implementation of the activities envisioned in the Action Plan and resolve other issues arising from this decree. The Commission for Combating Corruption was recommended to ensure regular assessment of the implementation of the Action Plan, take measures to involve civil society institutions in this process, and regularly inform the public about the work done in the implementation of the Action Plan.



MINSK: Pakistan ambassador to Belarus Sajjad Haider holds a meeting with Rector, Belarussian State University of Informatics & Radio electronics Vadim Bogush. Both sides discussed possible collaborations with Pakistani universities. - DNA

Pakistan has become economic hub, focusing on connectivity: Prof Cheng

BEIJING: Cheng Xizhong, visiting Professor of Southwest University of Political Science and Law said on Tuesday that with the transformation of Pakistan's national strategy from geo-politics to geo-economy, the country has become an economic hub, centering on economic security and focusing on connectivity and development. Now, Pakistan is firmly committed to peaceful co-existence and cooperative multilateralism for win-win outcomes. Pakistan's outlook and trajectory have been fundamentally

transformed. Therefore, Pakistan is striving for peace, prosperity and connectivity in the region, and even the whole world, Prof. Cheng, who is also a senior fellow of the Charhar Institute and former Chinese Defence Attaché in South Asian countries said in a statement. He also noted that Pakistan successfully and successfully held an extraordinary meeting of the OIC-CFM and the 48th session of the OIC-CFM meeting. Pakistan has made great efforts to promote the solidarity and cooperation of the Muslim Ummah and make it play a greater role in international affairs, thus having made outstanding contributions to regional and world peace. To alleviate the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, Pak, on the one hand, has done its best to provide a large amount of assistance, and on the other hand, has vigorously promoted the joint efforts of Afghanistan's neighbours and the international community to solve the Afghan problems, he added. - APP

Servis Group to enhance Pakistan's tyre exports in collaboration with China

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Servis Group said that it will enhance Pakistan's tyre exports by \$300 million annually in collaboration with China, Gwadar Pro reported on Tuesday. According to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Servis Long March (SLM), Omar Saeed, the company will make Pakistan self-reliant in one of the most critical industries. Additionally, it will put Pakistan on the map of global engineered goods exports. He maintained that the Servis group - the largest exporter of Tyres and footwear in Pakistan - will boost Pakistan's tyre exports by US \$300 million annually at the completion of all three phases of the new project, contributing to growing Pakistan's economy even further. Servis Long March Tyres (Pvt) Ltd., a collaboration of China's ChaoyangLongmarchTyre Co. Ltd. and Pakistan's Servis Group, had recently inaugurated Pakistan's first all steel radial Truck/Bus tyre plant on March 28. - Agencies

Sri Lanka's newly-appointed finance minister resigns

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's newly-appointed Finance Minister Ali Sabry resigned on Tuesday, less than 24 hours after his appointment on Monday. Sabry said he had accepted the portfolio only as an interim measure. He said he was also willing to step down from his parliamentary seat if the president wished to appoint a suitable person to handle the situation from outside the current Parliament. Sabry also told local media that his resignation was to pave the way for establishing an interim government. Sabry and three other ministers were sworn into the new cabinet on Monday after Sri Lanka's cabinet ministers offered to resign from their positions on Sunday night in response to calls from the protests amid economic instability and a severe fuel shortage in the South Asian country. - APP

Over 7.1M in Ukraine internally displaced

FOREIGN DESK

KYIV: More than 7.1 million people have been internally displaced in Ukraine since Russia began its war on Ukraine over 40 days ago, the UN migration agency said Tuesday. "The main needs include cash, medicines & health services," the International Organization for Migration said on Twitter, adding that half of the displaced are women. The agency added they will continue to deliver humanitarian aid in Ukraine. On Feb. 24, Russia launched a war against Ukraine, which has met international outrage, with the European Union, US, and UK, among others, implementing tough sanctions on Moscow. At least 1,430 civilians have been killed in Ukraine and 2,097 injured, according to UN estimates, with the true figure feared to be far higher. More than 4.21 million Ukrainians have also fled to other countries, according to the UN refugee agency.

Erdogan, Japanese PM discuss Russia-Ukraine war

ANKARA: President Recep Tayyip Erdogan discussed the Russia-Ukraine war with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida in a phone call on Tuesday.

According to the statement by Turkey's Directorate of Communications, Erdogan emphasized the importance of finalizing the Turkey-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement as soon as possible. He also said that Turkey wants to increase cooperation in the fields of energy, food, agriculture, advanced technology, defense and the space industry.

During the meeting, Erdogan also noted that Turkey continues initiatives to reach establish a cease-fire and open humanitarian corridors in Ukraine. After the Republic of Turkey replaced the Ottoman Empire, Japan was one of the first countries with which it established diplomatic relations in 1924. One year later, Turkey opened its first embassy in Tokyo. After decades of strong relations, both countries upgraded their ties to the level of "strategic partnership" in 2013 and Japan declared 2019 as the Turkish Culture Year.

The two countries have also pursued a strong economic partnership. In addition to the high trade volume, Japan is also among the major investors in Turkey, with over 200 Japanese companies operating in the country. Recently, through its Japan International Cooperation Agency, Tokyo has been among the financiers of infrastructure projects in Istanbul, including the landmark Marmaray underwater rail link, a bridge over it and another bridge connecting the city's Asian and European sides. The agency also financed two dam projects in Turkey. - APP

France removes Turkiye from orange list

PARIS: France has taken Turkiye off its orange list of COVID-restricted countries and moved it to its least-restrictive green list, according to an official announcement. Turkiye was moved to the green list on March 31, the Turkish Consulate in Paris said in a statement on Tuesday. Classifying countries according to the health situation and the level of vaccination among the general population, France has color-coded red, orange, and green lists.

No travel restrictions apply to those coming from countries on the green list. Passengers who want to enter France from the green list are only required to have a COVID-19 test unless they have been vaccinated. People who want to visit France from the orange list and are vaccinated do not need to indicate a reason for entering the country, but they must submit a negative test result. Since December 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic has claimed more than 6.17 million lives in at least 192 countries and regions, with over 493.9 million cases reported worldwide, according to the US' Johns Hopkins University. - APP

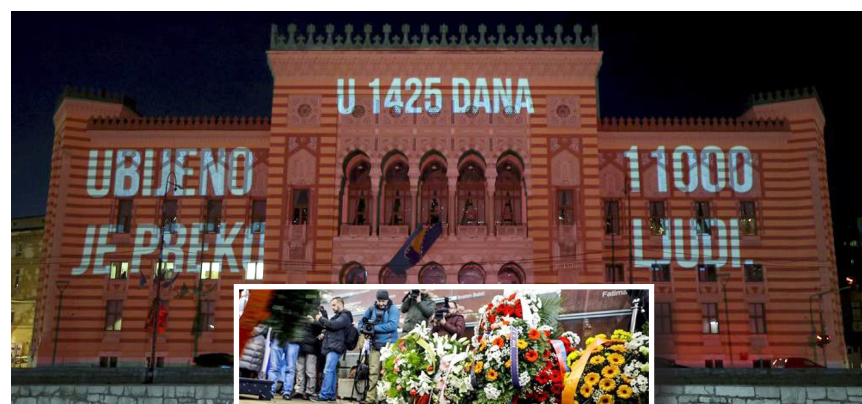
Sarajevo marks 30th anniversary of siege

Sarajevo was attacked on April 5, 1992 and it remained under siege till Feb. 26, 1996

FOREIGN DESK

SARAJEVO: The 1992 Bosnian War, which started with Serbian troops' siege of Sarajevo and left over 100,000 people killed, has still its traces alive though decades have passed. The EU recognized the independence of Slovenia and Croatia on Jan. 15, 1992; however, it required a referendum for the independence of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which it responded positively to. The Bosnian Serbs decided to boycott the referendum in a bid to make it invalid as a result of the lack of participation. Despite all obstacles and difficulties, Bosnia-Herzegovina declared independence from Yugoslavia following the referendum on March 1, 1992. Shortly after the Balkan country became an independent state, Serbian troops besieged Sarajevo on April 5. The siege started a bloody war that continued for three-and-a-half years and left great tragedies and haunting memories. The Serbs began targeting areas with Mus-

lim majority following the referendum; their goal was to declare a new Bosnian Serb region affiliated with Serbia. The Serbs deployed 13,000 soldiers on the hills surrounding Sarajevo and besieged the city, targeting it with both heavy and light weaponry. In response, the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina - composed of 70,000 soldiers - was formed in the next 19 months. Nevertheless, the defense forces were not able to break the siege as they did not have enough equipment. Acknowledged as the longest military siege in modern history, the siege of Sarajevo continued for 1,425 days and 11,541 people, including 1,601 children, lost their lives.



The war spread across the country following the siege of Sarajevo, leaving some 100,000 people dead. At least 2 million others were forced to abandon their homes. The war and bloodshed came to an end on Nov. 21, 1995, when Bosnian, Serbian and Croatian parties reached an agreement in Ohio, the US. Upon the initiative of US diplomat Richard Hallbrooke, the Dayton peace agreement was signed by Alija Izetbegovic, first president of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and then presidents of Serbia and Croatia, Slobodan Milosevic and Franjo Tudjman, respectively. Sarajevo was attacked on April 5, 1992 and it remained under siege till Feb. 26, 1996. Fikret Logic, a former employee in Bosnia and Herzegovina's cartography agency, mapped the 44-month siege of Sarajevo. Logic said he aimed to enlighten future generations on what happened during the siege, and not let them forget about the bloody siege. He also said that the preparation of the map took around three years and it should be distributed in schools in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Briefs

After crisis, Spanish PM to meet Morocco's king

MADRID: Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez will meet Morocco's King Mohammed VI in Rabat on Thursday after the two countries ended a thorny year-long dispute over Western Sahara. Sanchez will join Morocco's king when he breaks Thursday's Ramadan fast with an evening meal, Spanish Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Albares told a Madrid news conference. "This is a very strong sign of friendship," he said, adding Sanchez's visit would continue on Friday. During Islam's holy month of Ramadan, believers abstain from food and drink during daylight hours, breaking their fast with the iftar evening meal. Morocco's royal palace confirmed Sanchez's visit in a statement, saying he would be a "distinguished guest". The meeting comes as the two nations moved to normalise ties after drawing a line under a bitter spat in mid-March, when Madrid changed its position on Western Sahara, a disputed territory claimed by Rabat. Spain on March 18 said it had agreed to publicly recognise Rabat's autonomy plan for the territory, ending a decades-long stance of neutrality. In agreeing to a long-standing Moroccan demand, Spain sought to end a dispute which erupted in April 2021 when it allowed Western Sahara's independence leader Brahim Ghali to be treated for Covid-19 at a Spanish hospital. - APP

ECP says ready to hold elections any time

STAFF REPORT
ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Tuesday rejected media reports regarding its "inability" of conducting general elections within three months. "Media reports about ECP not ready to conduct elections are totally fake," the ECP spokesperson said in a statement, adding that holding general elections is the legal responsibility of the election body and it is ready to hold polls at any time. He further said that ECP has summoned an emergency session to mull over preparations regarding general elections after President Dr Arif Alvi dissolved National Assembly on PM's advice and announced to hold polls within 90 days. "ECP will fulfill all legal responsibilities as per the Constitution of Pakistan," he added. The ECP clarification comes after a news report claimed that the election body had expressed its inability to conduct general elections within three months, citing various legal hitches and procedural challenges as the reason.

Italy expels 30 Russian diplomats

WEB DESK
ROME: Italy is expelling 30 Russian diplomats over "national security" concerns as Russia's war in Ukraine rages on, Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio said Tuesday. The Russian ambassador to Italy was summoned to the ministry and notified of the decision this morning, Di Maio said, speaking from Berlin to RAI public broadcaster. A Foreign Ministry spokesman confirmed the expulsions. "This measure, taken in coordination with other European and Atlantic partners, was made necessary by motives related to our national security, in the context of the current crisis situation stemming from the unjustified aggression of Ukraine by the Russian Federation," Di Maio said. Italian media quoted Russian state media as saying that Russia would respond in kind to the diplomatic expulsions.

Civilian killings show 'unbearable brutality'

"Targeting and murdering civilians is a war crime," Stoltenberg said, adding that those responsible for "these atrocities must be brought to justice"

DNA

BRUSSELS: Civilian killings in the Ukrainian city of Bucha near the capital Kyiv show an "unbearable brutality" that Europe has not seen for decades, the NATO chief said on Tuesday. "We have all seen the horrific images of murdered civilians in Bucha and other places controlled by the Russian military until a few days ago. This is unbearable brutality that Europe has not witnessed in many decades," Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg told a press conference ahead of a two-day NATO foreign ministers meeting in Brussels on the Russian war on Ukraine. "Targeting and murdering civilians is a war crime," Stoltenberg said, adding that those responsible for "these atrocities must be brought to justice." He said Russian President Vladimir Putin's lack of respect for the rule of law and basic human rights showed the nature of his war, which he said poses "the most serious security challenge we have faced since the Second World War." "It has triggered a very comprehensive and strong response from the whole NATO alli-

Moscow accuses Ukraine of 'staging' footage

MOSCOW: Russia on Tuesday accused Ukraine of staging new civilian deaths in a number of locations in an effort to pin the blame on Moscow. The Russian defence ministry made the assertion after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky demanded tough new sanctions on Moscow over killings in the town of Bucha that have prompted international condemnation. The Russian defence ministry said on Tuesday that the Ukrainian military recorded a fake video that purported to show "peaceful civilians allegedly killed by the Russian armed forces". The video was made on Monday evening in the settlement of Moshchun some 20 kilometres (12 miles) northwest of Kyiv and was designed to be distributed through Western media, Moscow said. "Similar events are now being organised by the Ukrainian special services in Sumy, Konotop and other cities," the Russian defence ministry said, referring to cities in north-eastern Ukraine. - DNA

ance," Stoltenberg added. While Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky says the killings in Bucha could be labeled genocide, Russia denies that its troops killed civilians while withdrawing from towns near Kyiv. Russia's war against Ukraine, which started on Feb. 24, has been met with international outrage, with the European Union, US and UK, among others, implementing tough sanctions

on Moscow. At least 1,430 civilians have been killed in Ukraine and 2,097 injured, according to UN estimates, with the true figure feared to be far higher. More than 4.21 million Ukrainians have also fled to other countries, with over 7 million more internally displaced, according to UN agencies. Stoltenberg also warned about a "major" new Russian offensive expected to take place in a few weeks meant to seize the

entire Donbas region in eastern Ukraine. Russian troops are pulling back from Kyiv to "regroup, rearm and resupply" and are planning a major offensive to take Donbas in the coming weeks, he said. Donbas has been wracked by Russian-backed separatists since 2014, in a conflict that took some 13,000 lives. Before launching the Ukraine war on Feb. 24, Russia recognized two separatist enclaves in Donbas as "independent." "Moscow has not given up its ambitions in Ukraine," said Stoltenberg. "We now see a significant movement of troops away from Kyiv to regroup, rearm and resupply and to shift their focus to the east." "In the coming weeks, we expect further Russian troops in the eastern and southern Ukraine to try to take the entire Donbas and to create a land bridge to occupied Crimea." That's why it is "extremely important" that NATO allies provide support to Kyiv so Ukrainian forces can be rearmed and resupplied, the NATO chief said, adding that this will be discussed by allies during the meetings. He added that Ukraine's Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba will also join the two-day meetings to update NATO on the latest developments.

LPG prices reduced by Rs 40 per Kg

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A big relief for LPG consumers in Ramadan as the OGDCL has reduced the prices of LPG. Chairman LPG Distributors Association Irfan Khokhar has informed the media that LPG has gone cheaper by Rs 40 per kg. Rs 467 are lowered on domestic cylinder and Rs 1,796 on commercial cylinder. Mr Khokhar said that the reduction in price was due to reduction in production cost of Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL). The State-owned OGDCL has slashed the price of LPG by a substantial margin. The production price of LPG has been reduced by Rs 39,552 per metric tonne to Rs 39.5 per kg, Rs 467 for domestic cylinder and Rs 1,796 for commercial cylinder. The production price of LPG issued by OGRA on March 31, 2022 was fixed at Rs. 171,551.81 per MT, Rs. 171.5 per kg, Rs. 2,024 for domestic cylinder and Rs. 7,788 for commercial cylinder. On March 5, 2022, the OGDCL fixed the production price of LPG at Rs 132,000 per metric tonne, Rs 132 per kg, Rs 1,558 for domestic cylinders and Rs 5,993 for commercial cylinders.

Hungary risks EU funding cut

STRASBOURG: The EU executive on Tuesday launched a never-used procedure against Hungary that could see the Hungarian government stripped of EU funding for flouting democratic standards. The move comes two days after Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban won re-election with an overwhelming majority. The nationalist is frequently accused in Brussels of backsliding on democratic norms. The European Commission "will now send the letter of formal notification to start the conditionality mechanism," European Commission head Ursula von der Leyen said to applause at a plenary session of the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France. Hungary has clashed with Brussels over its public procurement system, conflict of interests and corruption. The conditionality mechanism was created in 2020, after a summit at the height of the coronavirus pandemic that agreed common borrowing to build an 800-billion-euro (\$900 billion) pile of grants and loans for EU countries to recover. Budget hawks, including Austria and the Netherlands, demanded the conditionality mechanism to put guard rails around the spending of taxpayers' money. Hungary and Poland challenged the new procedure in the EU's top court. But the European Court of Justice in February greenlit its use, saying the European Union "must be able to defend those values".

Citizen writes to CJ IHC on health card refusal

USMAN CHAUDHRY

ISLAMABAD: The citizen wrote a letter to Chief Justice Islamabad High Court Justice Athar Minallah on the refusal to treat his son on health card. In the handwritten letter of the citizen, there was a position that I am not Nawaz Sharif or Zardari, I am poor Pakistani, You are our last hope. The citizen wrote that his son is an FSC student and has come to bed. "Only injections can prevent this disease which is very expensive". The citizen stated that he has already used all his resources, "I am no longer getting injections on health cards from PIMS". The citizen wrote that after that he has no choice but to come to this court with son and commit suicide. Taking notice, Chief Justice Athar Minallah converted the letter into a petition. The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has issued notice to the Health Secretary seeking reply by April 13.



ISLAMABAD: The Thai Ambassador and officers from the Royal Thai Embassy took the famous Thai Vlogger "Deen" (DEEN VLOG) to try Pakistani street food including chicken bryani, paratha and doodh patti chai during his trip to Islamabad to film his latest vlog. - DNA

Bill Gates writes to President Alvi; lauds efforts against polio

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Co-chairman of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Bill Gates Tuesday wrote a letter to President Dr Arif Alvi wherein he lauded the latter's high-level commitment to protecting the health and well-being of every child in Pakistan. Bill Gates, also a co-founder of Microsoft, an American businessman and philanthropist,

particularly spoke high about the work to secure a polio-free future for generations of children to come. Thanking the president for a warm welcome on his first visit to Pakistan on February 17, this year, he said it was an honour to receive the Hilal-e-Pakistan national award, in recognition of his meritorious services for the people of Pakistan, particularly for the eradication of polio.

"Pakistan has made remarkable progress in the fight against wild polio virus, with no cases for over a year—although circulation of the disease has persisted in southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa," he remarked. Bill Gates viewed that the president's continued engagement on polio would go a long way to accelerating Pakistan's continued progress. He expressed his pleasure in discussing other challenges of

vital importance, particularly tackling stunting and malnutrition, access to family planning services and commodities, and effective targeting of social protection programs such as Ehsaas. "Mr. President, I look forward to a deepening partnership between the Government of Pakistan and our foundation to tackle these and other issues of shared interest. I hope we can speak again soon," Bill Gates concluded.

EU Commission head to meet Ukrainian president

The EU chief will meet with Zelensky "prior to the pledging event #StandUpForUkraine on Saturday in Warsaw," Mamer added. Roberta Metsola, the president of the European Parliament, also visited Kyiv last week

DNA

VIENNA: The European Commission head will visit Kyiv this week to meet with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. During her visit to the war-torn country, Ursula von der Leyen will be accompanied by EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell, said Eric Mamer, an EU spokesman, on Twitter. This will be the most high-profile visit by a Western official to Ukraine since Russia's war began on Feb. 24. The EU chief will meet with Zelensky "prior to the pledging event #StandUpForUkraine on Saturday in Warsaw," Mamer added. Roberta Metsola, the president of the European Parliament, also visited Kyiv last week. Meanwhile, Austrian Chancellor Karl Nehammer will also visit Ukraine in the coming days to meet with the Ukrainian president, his office said in a statement. He will discuss humanitarian and political support for Ukraine, the statement said, adding no further details were announced for security reasons.

'Nobody negotiated with Hitler': Poland slams Macron



WARSAW: Poland's prime minister rebuked French President Emmanuel Macron for negotiating with Russian leader Vladimir Putin, whom he likened to Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin. Putin and Moscow are facing vehement criticism from Western leaders after Ukraine accused Russian forces of committing a "genocide" and "war crimes" in the city of Bucha. Russia has rejected the allegations as a "fake news attack," arguing that images of dead bodies and footage of slain civilians that have drawn global outrage were staged after Russian forces withdrew from the city. "Mr. President Macron, how many times have you negotiated with Putin, what have you achieved? Have you stopped any of the actions that have taken place?" Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki said at a press conference on Monday. "One should not negotiate with criminals, one should fight them ... Nobody negotiated with Hitler. Would you negotiate with Hitler, Stalin, Pol Pot?" he added. Macron has had at least 17 phone calls and a meeting in Moscow with Putin since last December, first in a bid to prevent conflict in Ukraine and now to broker peace between the two sides. The French leader also distanced himself from US President Joe Biden's comment in which he called Putin a "butcher." "I will not use this kind of remark because I continue to talk with President Putin," Macron told a local news channel a day after Biden made the comment in Poland on March 26. - APP

Pak condemns burning of Muslim Houses in India

The BJP-RSS combine has enabled perpetration of senseless violence against minorities as part of its 'Hindutva' agenda marked by hate and majoritarianism, he added

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Tuesday strongly condemned the "senseless" vandalization and burning of more than 40 houses of the Muslim community in Karauli area of Rajasthan, India by radical Hindu zealots belonging to BJP-RSS dispensation with the connivance of local security authorities. "Equally alarming is the apathy of state machinery which wantonly looked the other way and failed in its basic duty of protecting the lives and properties of its citizens," the Foreign Office spokesperson said in a statement. He said regretfully, the minorities in India, especially Muslims con-

tinued to live under fear and intimidation. The BJP-RSS combine has enabled the perpetration of senseless violence against minorities as part of its 'Hindutva' agenda marked by hate and majoritarianism, he added. The spokesperson said that the recent Indian history was replete with traumatic instances that reflected the current regime's deep-seated animosity against the Muslims in India. "Deafening silence of the BJP leadership and absence of discernible action against 'Hindutva' proponents must ring alarm bells across the international community," he remarked. He said rather than relenting in their hostilities against the Muslims, the BJP-RSS activists had intensified the atrocities.

Recently, on April 3, Yati Narsinghan, the infamous Haridwar priest, once again brazenly called upon the Hindus to take up arms against the Muslims. "Pakistan calls upon the international community to take immediate notice of the worrying level of Islamophobia in India and prevail upon Indian authorities to prevent systematic human rights violations against minorities particularly Muslims and take effective steps to ensure the safety, security and well-being of all minorities in India," the spokesperson added. Meanwhile, All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) leaders have expressed concern over unending dark black night caused by the brutalities of Indian occupation

troops in length and breadth of the territory. The leaders in their statements in Srinagar referred to the recent confirmation by the Indian Army that its troops led by Captain Bhoopendra Singh staged July 2020 fake encounter in Amshpora area of Shopian district and demanded a probe into all other such massacres, said a press release here on Tuesday. It is worth mentioning here that three labourers, one of them a teenager, were killed by Indian army soldiers led by Captain Bhoopendra Singh in Shopian district on July 18, 2020, and on the very next day, July 19, 2020, the army claimed that it had killed three "terrorists". Hurriyat leaders described the so-

called initiation of Court Martial proceedings against the Captain as mere eyewash to hoodwink the international community. Hurriyat leaders mentioned martyrdom of three Kashmiri businessmen and a dental surgeon in Hyderpora, Srinagar, one in Gund Jahangir, Bandipora, five in Patherial and three in Machil fake encounters on different occasions as the glaring examples of how Indian troops are mercilessly killing the innocent Kashmiri youth in fake encounters. Meanwhile, APHC leader Syed Bashir Andrabi in a statement issued in Srinagar laid emphasis on a lasting solution to the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the aspirations of the Kashmiri people and relevant UN resolutions.

North Korea warns of nuclear response

SEOUL: For the second time this week, the powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un berated South Korea for touting its supposed preemptive strike capabilities against the North, saying her country's nuclear forces would annihilate the South's conventional forces if provoked. In a statement carried Tuesday by North Korea's state media, Kim Yo Jong called South Korea Defense Minister Suh Wook's recent comments about preemptive strikes a "fantastic day-dream" and the "hysteria of a lunatic." She stressed that North Korea doesn't want another war on the Korean Peninsula but warned it would retaliate with its nuclear forces if the South opts for preemptive strikes or other attacks, which would leave the South's military "little short of total destruction and ruin." North Korea has repeatedly stated it would preemptively use its nuclear weapons when threatened by rivals as it accelerated its development of nuclear bombs and missiles, which Kim Jong Un sees as his strongest guarantee of survival. - APP