



Islamabad POST

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Yemen president cedes powers to council as ceasefire holds

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Bucha scenes cast shadow on peace process

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Don't care about Indian conspiracies

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Briefs

Democracy is best revenge

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, while giving the first reaction to the court decision, said that democracy is the best revenge. Long live Bhutto, long live Pakistan. Bilawal Bhutto further said that the decision has secured democracy and the constitution, the stain of 2018 has been washed away to a great extent, now the no-confidence motion process will be completed. He said that the objective of united opposition has been achieved today. I congratulate every democrat.

Opp. attitude affects economy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Chaudhry Fawad Hussain said on Thursday that due to irresponsible attitude of the opposition, national economy was on the brink. Talking to media persons here, he said that fresh elections were the only viable option to come out of the present crisis. He said that today Rupee had further depreciated against dollar owing to the ongoing political crises. He called for constitution of a judicial commission to probe into the lettergate issue. He said that Speaker's ruling and the Prime Minister's power to dissolve the National Assembly were two separate things.

US warns India against Russian support

DNA

WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden's top economic adviser says US is "disappointed" with some of Modi's moves on Ukraine. "There are areas where we are disappointed by China and India's decisions, in [the] context of invasion," Brian Deese says. In addition to seeking Russian oil, India is the world's largest buyer of Russian weapons.

Inside...

CEO FESCO vows to facilitate consumers - Page 02

Special educational tools for DAPs urged - Page 03

Chairman NAB reviews monthly performance - Page 04

Cooperating with autocrats: When is too much, too much? - Page 05

GCC welcomes formation of presidential council in Yemen - Page 06

Pakistan will have 60% renewable energy by 2030 - Page 07

PM launches 911 helpline for emergency services - Page 08

Apex Court buries Doctrine of Necessity National Assembly restored

Supreme Court declares deputy speaker decision as null and void; no trust vote stands revived; court orders to hold no-trust vote on Saturday

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court has restored the National Assembly by declaring the deputy speaker action null and void. The apex court gave a unanimous verdict. All five judges took a unanimous decision. Supreme Court of Pakistan also summoned Chief Election Commissioner of Pakistan as it had reserved its verdict on a suo motu case concerning the legality of the deputy speaker's ruling and the subsequent dissolution of the NA by the president on the PM's advice that would be announced shortly. Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Umar Ata Bandial has declared that the deputy speaker's ruling to reject no-confidence motion against Prime Minister Imran Khan was "wrong".

The top judge, however, asked the lawyers to assist the court for "solution" in the future. "One thing is clear which is the deputy speaker's ruling is wrong, what will be the next stem," he inquired.

Justice Bandial said that the five-judge larger bench will pronounce its verdict on the rejection of the no-confidence motion after Iftari at 7:30 pm today. During the hearing, the CJ mentioned that the court will have to look after the national interest. Earlier, the Supreme Court judges gave a pretty hard time to the lawyers of president, prime minister and speaker who defended the National Assembly Deputy Speaker Qasim Suri's ruling rejecting no-confidence motion against Prime Minister Imran Khan. During the course of proceedings, Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Umar Ata Bandial observed that apparently constitution was violated in the Assem-

President, PM ought to resign: analysts

PTI MPs may tender resignations; Khan to address nation today



ISLAMABAD: The political and legal experts have suggested the Prime Minister Imran Khan to step down gracefully in order to avoid the no-trust move. These comments came after the verdict of the apex court in which it declared null and void deputy speaker ruling and restored the National Assembly. The analysts believe the Prime Minister should have resigned when the no-trust move was tabled against him and especially when his own MPs decided to vote against the party. According to analysts the act of dissolution of assembly was a suicidal act on the part of the prime minister and the President and from the day one it was evident that the apex court shall strike down this act outright. The analysts also believe President Arif Alvi should also step down because the Supreme Court verdict in a way is a 'charge sheet' against him as well. Sources say that as a counter move, the PTI members of National Assembly may tender their resignations in order to create a crisis in the country. If 150 members tender en mass resignations, it may be difficult for the Election Commission to hold by elections on these seats. Sources say, it is also expected that the PTI may dissolve the KP Assembly as well. - DNA

ly. "If the voting had been allowed, then it would have become clear who is the prime minister. Prime Minister cannot dissolve the assembly if a no-confidence motion is tabled. What would be the conse-

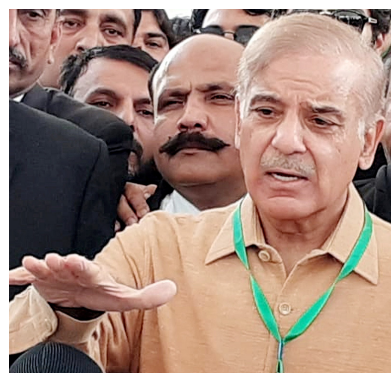
quences if the prime minister violates Article 58," the CJ asked. The top judge remarked anyone who is losing a no-trust vote tomorrow can opt for new elections. Justice Bandial said "There is no crisis in the country. Billions are spent on the new elections and the country also passes from a tough situation during the 90 days. We should think of the country." A five-member larger bench of the SC, headed by the CJ, heard the case. The judges on the bench are Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Umar Ata Bandial, Justice Ejazul Ahsan, Justice Mazhar Alam, Justice Muneeb Akhtar and Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhel. Justice Jamal Mandokhel observed that the court could not sit mum if there was a violation of the constitution. Is the no-trust issue not affecting the public? Is there any protection for unconstitutional steps? Do we sitting here let such unconstitutional steps go by?" Justice Mandokhel further asked can the prime minister advise the president dissolution if the majority of the assembly oppose it?

Justice Mandokhel also pointed out that the minutes of the parliamentary committee meeting, which were submitted to court by speaker's lawyer Naeem Bukhari, didn't prove if the deputy speaker was present. Continuing, Justice Mandokhel asked whether the foreign minister was present during the parliamentary committee meeting, noting that his signature was not included in the record. "Shouldn't the foreign minister have been present?" the judge asked, which prompted the lawyer to admit the minister should have been present. At this, Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP)

Continued on Page 06

Opposition hails historic SC verdict

Opposition Leader in the National Assembly Shahbaz Sharif said the top court's decision was in line with the expectations of the masses



DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Opposition leaders Thursday celebrated the Supreme Court of Pakistan's decision to nullify the government's actions from April 3 to date. The top court restored the National Assembly after it declared the government's decision to dissolve the assembly and NA Deputy Speaker Qasim Suri's ruling against the Constitution. The top court has ordered National Assembly Speaker Asad Qasier to summon the session on Saturday (April 9) at 10am to allow the vote on the no-confidence motion against the premier. "Democracy is the best revenge! Jiya Bhutto! Jiya Awam! Pakistan

Zindabad," Bilawal said in a tweet as the government's narrative faced a severe setback following the court's ruling. Talking to media personnel, Opposition Leader in the National Assembly Shahbaz Sharif said the top court's decision was in line with the expectations of the masses. "The Constitution has been saved and Pakistan has been saved through this decision [...] the court has upheld its independence and respect," the Opposition leader said. He thanked the top court for its unanimous decision to strengthen the parliament and its sovereignty. "We will not fight the battles of economy and politics for the people." Addressing the press conference alongside Fazlur-Rehman announced to observe 'Youm-e-Tashakur' on Friday after. "I would like to congratulate the entire nation as it is the victory of every Pakistani. Also, it is the victory of Constitution, democracy and judiciary," the opposition leader said. "On Friday, we will observe 'Youm-e-Tashakur' to celebrate this victory. Also, we will pray for our country to come out of the ongoing economic crisis," added Fazl and announced conducting country-wide rallies on Friday. In a conversation with journalists after the decision, PML-N leader Khurram Dastagir said the top court has upheld Pakistan's respect. "The Constitution is not just a piece of paper."



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Morocco Mohammad Karmoune presenting a souvenir to the outgoing Ambassador of Somalia and dean of African group Khadija Al Makhzoumi. - DNA

Pakistan issues visas to Sikh pilgrims

DNA

ISLAMABAD: On the eve of Baisakhi celebrations, the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi has issued over 2200 visas to Sikh pilgrims from India to participate in the annual festival scheduled to be held in Pakistan from 12-21 April 2022.

Continued on Page 06

Ukraine tells NATO: send arms before it's 'too late'

DNA

BRUSSELS: Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said Thursday he expected NATO members to send Kyiv the weapons it needs but insisted they had to act quickly before Russia launches another major offensive. "Either you help us now - and I'm speaking about days, not weeks, or your help will come too late, and many people will die, many civilians will lose their homes, many villages will be destroyed. Exactly because this help came too late," Kuleba said after meeting NATO foreign ministers in Brussels. "I have no doubts that Ukraine will have weapons necessary to fight. The question is the timeline. This discussion is not about the list of weapons. The discussion is about the timeline," he told journalists.

Ukraine is pushing the West to increase its arms supplies with heavier weaponry including air defence systems, artillery, armoured vehicles and jets, as Moscow refocuses its offensive on the east of the country. "The battle for Donbas (in eastern Ukraine) will remind you of the Second World War with large operations manoeuvres, the involvement of thousands of tanks, armoured vehicles, planes, artillery," Kuleba said. "Russia has its plan, we have ours - and the outcome of this battle will be decided on the battlefield."

More than 4.3 million Ukrainians flee war: UN

GENEVA: More than 4.3 million Ukrainians have now fled their country since the Russian invasion, the United Nations said Thursday. UNHCR, the UN refugee agency, said 4,319,494 Ukrainians had fled across the border since the war began on February 24 - a figure up 40,705 since Wednesday. The agency says it is Europe's largest refugee crisis since World War II. The UN's International Organization for Migration estimates that 7.1 million internally displaced people had fled their homes but were still in Ukraine. The IOM says that in addition to Ukrainian refugees, more than 210,000 non-Ukrainians living, studying or working in the country have also left. This means that in total, more than a quarter of the population have been forced to flee their homes. Before the Russian invasion, Ukraine had a population of 37 million in the regions under government control, excluding Russia-annexed Crimea and the pro-Russian separatist regions in the east. - DNA



RAWALPINDI: Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan Khazar Farhadov met with Mr. Waqar Ahmed Malik, Chief Executive Officer of Fauji Foundation of Pakistan. - DNA

Briefs

SI among 3 booked on robbery charges

FAISALABAD: The Civil Lines police have registered a case against three police officials including a sub-inspector (SI) on the charge of robbery. According to a spokesman, one Ismatullah of Lakki Marwat filed a complaint, contending that few days ago he came to Faisalabad to receive payment of a motorcycle from its purchaser, Musharraf. At that time a trainee Sub-Inspector Muhammad Ahmad and two constables intercepted him near Lorry Adda Faisalabad. The police officials, during body search, recovered Rs 470,000 from him and seized the amount. They hurled threats of dire consequences if he raised alarm. Later, the accused returned him Rs 10,000 for transport fare when he told them he had no money to go back home. On the complaint, the police registered a case against the police officials and started investigation. However, no arrest was made so far.

Man killed in train accident

FAISALABAD: A young man was killed after being hit by train in the limits of Nishatabad police station here on Thursday. Rescue 1122 spokesman said that 40-year-old Waqas Masih was passing through an unmanned level crossing when a train hit him near Nishatabad Bridge. As a result, he received severe injuries and died on the spot. The police handed over the body to his heirs. Further investigation was under way.

14 corona patients in Peshawar's hospitals

PESHAWAR: As many as 14 corona patients - four in the Khyber Teaching Hospital and 10 others in the Lady Reading Hospital are under treatment, an official of the Health Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa told media men here on Thursday. He said, 122 beds are allotted for corona patients in Khyber Teaching Hospital and four patients infected with corona are being treated at Khyber Teaching Hospital. At Khyber Teaching Hospital, 28 ventilators are reserved for corona patients and one patient infected with Corona is undergoing treatment at HDU. A small amount of oxygen has been allocated for 31 beds, on which 3 patients are undergoing treatment. He said no corona patient has not been admitted in the last 24 hours and 118 beds allotted for Corona in Khyber Teaching Hospital are vacant. However, in Lady Reading Hospital the number of coronavirus patients in LRH has increased to 10. Four hundred beds have been allotted for corona patients in LRH, he said. He said 6 patients were admitted in ICU and only 6 new patients have been admitted in the last 24 hours. He said, vaccine booster dose is playing its role in preventing corona. - APP

CHANGE OF FATHER'S NAME

I, Mushabab Asghar s/o Muhammad Asghar resident of village kolpur post office tahliyanwala tehsil and district Jhelum do hereby solemnly affirm and declare as under: That I was registered FBISE SSC level under Registration No.0922511072 and Pass the SSC Annual Examination 2009 under the Roll No. 113858. That I have decided to change my Father's Name from Muhammad Asghar to Muhammad Asghar Khan which is written as Muhammad Asghar in Board documents/records. The statement given above is true and correct to best of my knowledge, belief and nothing material is concealed or withheld.

CEO FESCO committed to facilitate consumers

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Consumers are a valuable asset of Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) and every effort is being made to provide them with all possible facilities, said Chief Executive Officer (CEO) FESCO, Engr. Bashir Ahmed, while addressing an e-court on Facebook at Fesco Headquarters.

He further said that during the Holy month of Ramadan, uninterrupted power supply is being provided to the consumers during Seh, Iftar and Taraweh for which a special monitoring cell has been constituted at FESCO Headquarters. He said that special measures have been adopted all over the FESCO region to improve the distribution system and provide the best possible services to its customers because best customer service is FESCO's top priority. He said that in the light of



the government's vision, holding of open court is helpful to resolve consumer complaints immediately. He also directed the FESCO officers and officials for immediate redress the consumers' electricity related issues so

that the image of FESCO could emerge as a consumer friendly company. He appealed to the consumers to cooperate in crackdown against power pilferage so that power theft from FESCO could be completely eradicated. He further

said that FESCO monitoring cell 118 and toll free number 0800-66554 are working round the clock for redressal of electricity complaints. At the start of the online E-court, the Chief Executive quoted the first

E-court performance and said that 95% of consumer complaints have been resolved. Meanwhile, over 200 consumers from all over the FESCO region including Faisalabad, Chiniot, Toba Tek Singh, Jhang, Sargodha,

Mianwali, Khushab and Bhakkar informed the CEO about their electricity related problems. On this, he issued orders to solve the consumers' complaint rapidly and informed about its progress within the next 24 hours.

14 held, 45 shops sealed for overcharging

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Divisional Commissioner Zahid Husain said that 3.49 million bags of urea and 2.29 million bags of DAP fertilizers were supplied to registered dealers, besides arresting 14 dealers on overcharging in Faisalabad division during the last 4 months. Chairing a meeting on Saturday, he said that out of 3,497,608 bags of Urea fertilizer, 3,369,732 bags were distributed among farmers at government fixed rates while remaining bags would also be sold out on subsidized rates. Similarly, 1,598,104 bags, out of 2,292,246 bags of DAP were sold out so far, whereas, remaining quantity of fertilizers was under distribution process, he added. He said that monitoring teams were fully active across the division to ensure the sale of fertilizers at government fixed rate. In this connection, cases were also registered against 71 fertilizer dealers for overcharging, in addition to arresting 14 accused. Shops of 45 dealers were also sealed, besides imposing a total fine of Rs 4.904 million on profiteers during the same period, he added. Deputy Commissioner Ali Shehzad, Additional Commissioner Tariq Mehmod, Director Agriculture Chaudhry Abdul Hameed and others were also present in the meeting.

Air quality report to be launched next week

PESHAWAR: Peshawar Clean Air Alliance, group of civil society activists formed to launch ways and measures to tackle toxic emission that pose direct threat to health and contribute to climate change, plans to launch a groundbreaking document, Status of Air Pollution in Peshawar (SAPP) in second week of current month. According to a press release issued here, the report provides a comprehensive analysis of Peshawar air quality and aims to bridge existing gaps in real time air quality data, with evidence based indicators and future policy direction for Peshawar Air Quality Management Plan (PAQMP). It shall enable policy makers towards multi-sectoral and integrated governance on air quality mitigation, and intergovernmental collaboration with the civil society, the statement added. Peshawar has been ranked as one of the 10 most polluted cities of the world with hazardous air quality, the statement continued. - APP

Quetta moot will be an important milestone

DNA

QUETTA: Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry Chairman Khurshed Barlas met Saeed Ahmed Supra, CEO of Balochistan Board of Investment and Trade at his office in Quetta yesterday. He said that the Investment in Balochistan Business Forum and three-day International Property Exhibition is being organized. The exhibition will be attended by a large number of renowned builders, developers, Allied Construction Bank projects and various business communities from the tourism industry across the country. Builders, developers, real estate agents and Real Companies from the state sector will display their projects. The Quetta Investment Conference will play an important role in terms of investment in

Pakistan, which will boost Pakistan's economy. And China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), is one of the most important investment projects in Balochistan. Saeed Ahmed Supra, Chairman, the Balochistan Board of Investment and Trade, appreciated his efforts regarding the Investment Conference in Quetta and assured him that he would be invited to hold an Investment Conference in Quetta. This Quetta Investment Conference will be an important milestone for the development of Quetta.

Caption: Chairman Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry Khurshed Barlas giving shield to Saeed Ahmed Sarpara, CEO of Balochistan Board of Investment and Trade in Quetta. Pak World Trade and Expo Center CEO Fahad Barlas is also present



Commissioner pays visit to THQ hospital

STAFF REPORT

KHARIAN: Commissioner Gujranwala Division Mr. Ehsanullah Bhatta paid a surprise visit to Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Kharian at 8:15 am on Tuesday 5th April. He also visited the Dialysis (Kidney Cleaning) Center and inspected the preliminary work of the new 30-bed building. Also checked NCD clinics and pharmacies. He appreciated the work of the hospital management Deputy Commissioner Gujrat Dr. Khurram Shehzad and AC Kharian Mr. Sajid Kalar were also present on the occasion. Dr. Bilal Bin Tariq MS Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Kharian.



Experts call for 'One Health' approach

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Stressing the need to adopt a holistic approach to deal with health-related challenges, including mental and physical diseases, experts said

that climate change, environmental degradation, and population growth are some of the critical issues that need to be addressed on priority. These views were expressed at a virtual seminar on 'Our Planet, Our Health'

organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) here. Dean and Chief Executive of FMU, Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences, Dr Rizwan Taj, said that mental health comes first as it is extremely important for a nor-

mal physical health. Thus, all the SDGs directly impact 'mental health. He emphasized that a comprehensive prevention and diagnosing policy encompassing all the members of the society can help recover people from the mental health issues.

No.3CF/4P/PUR.C/0018/2021-2022 Dated: -07-04-2022.

PAKISTAN RAILWAYS
CARriage FACTORY ISLAMABAD
NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

Sealed bids are invited from the eligible conditions of the bidding documents for the following Tenders. and qualified firms as per the terms and

S#	Tender Enquiries #	DESCRIPTION OF MATERIAL	SELLING DATES.	LAST DATE & TIME OF RECEIVING BIDS	OPENING DATE & TIME OF OPENING	COST OF TENDER (NON-REFUNDABLE)
1.	1CF/4P/0508/2021	Commissioning/ Installation of Road Weigh Bridge = 01 item.	09-04-2022 to 23-04-2022	25-04-2022 12:00 PM	25-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
2.	2CF/4P/0729-G/2021	Soft Wood = 01 item.	09-04-2022 to 23-04-2022	25-04-2022 12:00 PM	25-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
3.	1CF/4P/0501-A-1/2021	Stainless Steel Wash Hand Basin complete = 01 item	09-04-2022 to 23-04-2022	25-04-2022 12:00 PM	25-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
4.	1CF/4P/0496-B-1/2021	M.S Billet 60mm = 02 items.	09-04-2022 to 23-04-2022	25-04-2022 12:00 PM	25-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
5.	1CF/4P/0492/2021	Loader Rickshaw = 01 item.	09-04-2022 to 23-04-2022	25-04-2022 12:00 PM	25-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
6.	1CF/4P/0505/2021	Tea Table = 01 item.	09-04-2022 to 23-04-2022	25-04-2022 12:00 PM	25-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
7.	1CF/4P/0486/2020	Disc Pad = 01 item.	09-04-2022 to 23-04-2022	25-04-2022 12:00 PM	25-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
8.	1CF/4P/0499-G/2021	Hollow Rectangular, M.S Equal Angle = 02 items	09-04-2022 to 23-04-2022	25-04-2022 12:00 PM	25-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
9.	2CF/4P/0740/2021	Provisioning, Installation and Commissioning of CCTV Cameras = 04 items	09-04-2022 to 23-04-2022	25-04-2022 12:00 PM	25-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
10.	3CF/4P/0732/2022	Trousers and Jacket etc. = 04 items	09-04-2022 to 23-04-2022	25-04-2022 12:00 PM	25-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
11.	3CF/4P/0701/2021	Wet and Dry Papers etc. = 06 items	09-04-2022 to 23-04-2022	25-04-2022 12:00 PM	25-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
12.	3CF/4P/0696-III/2021	M.S. Seamless Pipe etc. = 02 items.	09-04-2022 to 23-04-2022	25-04-2022 12:00 PM	25-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
13.	1CF/4P/0498-A-IV/2021	Aluminum Profile = 05 items	11-04-2022 to 25-04-2022	26-04-2022 12:00 PM	26-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
14.	1CF/4P/0501-B/2021	Packing RKE = 02 items	11-04-2022 to 25-04-2022	26-04-2022 12:00 PM	26-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
15.	1CF/4P/0511/2022	M.S Round = 01 item	11-04-2022 to 25-04-2022	26-04-2022 12:00 PM	26-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
16.	2CF/4P/0735-J/2021	Air Diffuser = 01 item	11-04-2022 to 25-04-2022	26-04-2022 12:00 PM	26-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
17.	2CF/4P/0733/2021	AC Ceiling Fan 56" = 01 item	12-04-2022 to 26-04-2022	27-04-2022 12:00 PM	27-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
18.	2CF/4P/0747/2022	Air Compressor = 01 item	12-04-2022 to 26-04-2022	27-04-2022 12:00 PM	27-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
19.	2CF/4P/0730-I/2021	Primer for Steel etc. = 03 items	12-04-2022 to 26-04-2022	27-04-2022 12:00 PM	27-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
20.	2CF/4P/0743/2021	Flush Mounting Selector Switch = 02 items	12-04-2022 to 26-04-2022	27-04-2022 12:00 PM	27-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
21.	2CF/4P/0734-A/2021	PVC Cable = 03 items	12-04-2022 to 26-04-2022	27-04-2022 12:00 PM	27-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
22.	2CF/4P/0735-D/2021	PVC Cable Single core = 02 items	12-04-2022 to 26-04-2022	27-04-2022 12:00 PM	27-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
23.	3CF/4P/0695-A-2021	G.I Elbow etc. = 05 items.	13-04-2022 to 27-04-2022	28-04-2022 12:00 PM	28-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
24.	3CF/4P/0726/2021	Nitrogen Gas = 01 item.	13-04-2022 to 27-04-2022	28-04-2022 12:00 PM	28-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
25.	3CF/4P/0672/2020	Steep Cone Single End Mill Cutter etc. = 04 items	13-04-2022 to 27-04-2022	28-04-2022 12:00 PM	28-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
26.	3CF/4P/0711-A/2021	Five Toothed Spare Segmental Pieces = 01 item.	13-04-2022 to 27-04-2022	28-04-2022 12:00 PM	28-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
27.	3CF/4P/0709-A/2021	Twist Drills etc. = 11 items.	13-04-2022 to 27-04-2022	28-04-2022 12:00 PM	28-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
28.	3CF/4P/0703-A/2021	Cross Recessed CSK Lens Head Wood Screw etc. = 12 items.	14-04-2022 to 29-04-2022	30-04-2022 12:00 PM	30-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
29.	3CF/4P/0735/2022	Spring Liner etc. = 02 items	14-04-2022 to 29-04-2022	30-04-2022 12:00 PM	30-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
30.	3CF/4P/097-E/2021	Graphite Compound Rubbing Piece for side Friction Block = 01 item	14-04-2022 to 29-04-2022	30-04-2022 12:00 PM	30-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
31.	3CF/4P/0739/2022	Steel Shot = 01 item	14-04-2022 to 29-04-2022	30-04-2022 12:00 PM	30-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
32.	3CF/4P/0703-D/2021	Castle Nut etc. = 09 items	14-04-2022 to 29-04-2022	30-04-2022 12:00 PM	30-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
33.	3CF/4P/0671-I/2020	Oxygen Regulator Gauge etc. = 04 items	14-04-2022 to 29-04-2022	30-04-2022 12:00 PM	30-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
34.	3CF/4P/0717/2022	GRP Ceiling Panel Assembly etc. = 22 items	14-04-2022 to 29-04-2022	30-04-2022 12:00 PM	30-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
35.	3CF/4P/0718/2021	GRP Wall Board Assembly = 20 items	14-04-2022 to 29-04-2022	30-04-2022 12:00 PM	30-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
36.	3CF/4P/0719/2021	GRP Luggage Rack Assembly = 10 items	14-04-2022 to 29-04-2022	30-04-2022 12:00 PM	30-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
37.	1CF/4P/0496-D/2021	M.S Rounds etc. = 05 items	14-04-2022 to 29-04-2022	30-04-2022 12:00 PM	30-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-
38.	1CF/4P/0499-C/2021	Special Channel etc. = 03 items	14-04-2022 to 29-04-2022	30-04-2022 12:00 PM	30-04-2022 12:30 PM	Rs.1000/-

- Tender documents can be obtained from the office of District Controller of Purchase, Carriage Factory Adm. Building Pakistan Railways, J. Principal Road, Islamabad (Phone # 051-927817 & 9278070), the Office of the District Controller of Purchase/Inspection, Pakistan Railways Rail Line Karachi Cantt. (Phone No. 021-9920810) and Director Stores & Purchase, C.S.F. Building Pakistan Railways Headquarters Office, Lahore (Phone # 042-9201968), on Cash Payment as shown against each on all working days during selling dates as notified above against each tender enquiry.
- Quotation on Official Tender Forms shall only be considered and Tender to be dropped in the Tender Box in the office of District Controller of Purchase, Carriage Factory, Adm Building Pakistan Railways J. Principal Road, Islamabad, not later than 1200 hours and will be opened at 1230 hours on the last date of receiving the bids.
- Tenders dispatched through DAK must be received in the office of District Controller of Purchase, Carriage Factory Islamabad one day earlier to the date fixed for opening of the tender.
- Bidders are required to offer validity of bid upto 90 days. The offers of bidder having less than 90 days of bid validity will be ignored straightaway at the time of opening without making any back reference.
- Bidders may note that submission of bid bonded security as required against each item/tender is mandatory alongwith the technical bid in original.
- Only registered firms duly registered with Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), are eligible to participate in the tender, failing which offer will be ignored.
- Bidders may note that in case of public holiday on due date of tender opening, the same tender will be opened on next working day.
- Tender is invited as per Single Stage-two Envelope bidding procedure according to rule 36 (b) of PPRA Rules-2004.
- The Railway Administration may reject all bids or proposal at any time prior to acceptance of bid or proposal as per Rules 33 (1) of PPRA Rules 2004.
- Tenders are invited on FORFC, Islamabad basis.
- This Advertisement is also available on PPRA & Railway Websites: - I (www.ppra.gov.pk) II (www.prrail.gov.pk)

National Days and Armed Forces Days

APRIL

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



Hotels & Restaurants

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



Airlines

- Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

- Rescue (Police).....15
Bomb Disposal.....15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/
Islamabad.....1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance.....1122
& Rescue Services.4451122
Motorway Police.....9266044
Motorway Police.....9270601-20
Women Police Stations
Islamabad.....9222596
Rawalpindi.....9270601-20



Enquiry

- Edhi Ambulance.....115
PIA Flight Info.....114
PIA Cargo.....9280979
Railway Inquiry.....117
Railway Exchange 9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi.....5555489
CAA.....9281092



Hospitals

- CMH.....5611111
MH.....5611116
Cantt Hospital.....9270907-11
DHQ.....5556311-4
RGH.....9290301-7
Holy Family.....9290322-7
PIMS.....9261170-79
Polyclinic.....9218300-09
Shifa International.4603666



Departments

- CDA.....9221334-43
CDA.....9208301-04
Met Office.....9250360-6
RDA.....5555864
TMA.....5770886
Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Water Tank

- Islamabad.....0321-5744480

DNA



ISLAMABAD: Former State Minister for Information Farrukh Habib talking to Editor Daily Islamabad POST Ansar M Bhatti and other journalists at the Iftar dinner hosted by CEO Monal, at Monal. – DNA

Special educational tools for DAPs urged

The president also emphasised that the huge number of out-of-school children was a major issue that needed to be addressed with the collective efforts of educational institutions, civil society and non-governmental organizations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Thursday called for introducing special educational tools for differently-abled people, particularly the visually and hearing-impaired persons, to facilitate them in continuing their higher education. The president also emphasised that the huge number of out-of-school children was a major issue that

needed to be addressed with the collective efforts of educational institutions, civil society and non-governmental organizations. He made these remarks while chairing a follow-up meeting on Allam Iqbal Open University (AIU), Islamabad, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. The meeting was attended by the Vice-Chancellor of AIU, Prof Dr Zia-ul-Qayyum, and senior management of the University. Addressing the meeting, the president

underscored the need for skill-based courses to equip the youth with employable skills, particularly in the IT sector. He also underlined the need to introduce two-year Associate Degree Programs to fulfill the market demand for skilled

professionals. He stated that AIU needed to further increase its outreach through online and distance learning modes to increase the number of graduates in the country. The president urged the management of the university

to effectively utilize the latest ICT tools in that regard. While briefing the meeting, the Vice-Chancellor of AIU highlighted that during the last two years, the university had transformed its operations through massive technological interventions under its "Digital Transformation Policy". It was informed that AIU was the first university in the public sector to launch an integrated automated suite of applications that

had automated all academic, administrative and financial processes of the university. He apprised the meeting that over 1.2 million students were currently enrolled in the institution whereas more than 4.43 million students had graduated in various disciplines so far. The president appreciated the initiatives undertaken by the university, particularly enhancing its outreach and digitization of the institution.

Pakistani artist paints vibrant Truck Art in Sri Lanka

ISLAMABAD: Entrepreneur and artist Ali Salman Anchan showcased Pakistan's indigenous 'truck art culture' in Sri Lanka through an amazing wall painting project. Salman is an entrepreneur and founder of a social enterprise 'Phool Patti' which is dedicated to promote Pakistani truck art culture around the globe. They have been working to revolutionize art and highlight the positive face of Pakistan through their creative themes. Recently the 'Phool Patti' team flew to Sri Lanka for an amazing project of mural paintings which was arranged in collaboration with the Pakistan High Commission in Colombo to promote Pakistan's heritage globally. Phool Patti Pakistan's Truck Art team took it to social media and shared this initiative via their official Facebook page. "Phool Patti painted a wall of size 40x8 that highlights the cultural heritage of both Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The primary aim of painting the wall is to acquaint and familiarize the Sri Lankan community with the rich Buddhist heritage in Pakistan." While stating the detailed information about this incredible collaboration they mentioned the specifications and key features of the artwork. "The wall has been divided into two sections. The part of the wall dedicated to showcasing Sri Lanka heritage has been adorned with the Lord Buddha stupa discovered in Taxila and Mohen-jo-Daro; an important region during the Indus Valley Civilization. Also, the Sri Lankan side displays its cultural heritage like the national flower Lotus, an important landmark of Independence Memorial Hall, and its national animal, the Chicken." – APP

IT exports increased by 29.92% in 8 months

ISLAMABAD: The Information Technology (IT) exports have surged at the growth rate of 29.92 percent in the first eight months of the current financial year. "ICT export remittances, including Telecommunication, Computer and Information Services for the period July 2021 to February 2022 have surged to the US \$ 1.689 billion at a growth rate of 29.92 percent in comparison to the US \$ 1.3 billion during the same period in FY 2020-21," said an official of the ministry of IT and Telecom. He said, in February 2022, the ICT export remittances were US \$ 201 million at a growth rate of 12.29 percent when compared to US \$ 179 million reported for the month of February 2021. He said, US \$ 15 million was higher than export remittances of US \$ 186 million during the previous month of January 2022. – APP

Railways lease over 4,517 acres land to earn profit

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways has leased out over 4,517 acres of its land during the last three and half years to transform the department into profitable entity by generating more revenue. "The leased-out land was located in seven divisions including Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar, Quetta, Rawalpindi, Multan and Sukkar," official in the Ministry of Railways told media. He also divulged details of a plan, aimed at exploiting 25 mega sites of Pakistan Railways commercially under public-private partnership. An expression of interest to hire the consultant for the purpose was given in the newspapers last year, he said. Likewise, a second phased was also on the cards under which some 111 new commercial sites were identified for commercial use through public private partnership. To a question, he said Pakistan Railways had also decided to accelerate its anti-encroachment operation against land grabbers across the country to recoup its land from different individuals, groups and even business organizations using it for residential, commercial and agriculture purposes for decades. "The encroachment operation will be launched with the assistance of Railway Police and district administrations of the provincial governments," he added. He said that Railways had retrieved over 508 acres precious land worth billion of rupees from illegal occupants under its anti-encroachment operation across the country. He said the department was taking several steps to retrieve encroached land from the land grabbers including detailed survey was being carried out to identify the encroached land, occupied by the individuals and under illegal occupation of various government departments. The official said that First Information Reports (FIRs) were being lodged and cases were registered and sent to PR Judicial Magistrates for expeditious trial. The issue regarding illegal occupation and possession of Railways' land by government departments and institutions has also been taken up with the concerned departments, he added. – DNA

ICCI shows concerns over rising trade deficit

M Shakeel Munir said that the trade deficit had reached an all-time high of \$37.7 billion in 2017-18 fiscal year and due to the great efforts of government, it was brought down to \$23.2 billion in 2019-20

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Shakeel Muhammad, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) has expressed great concerns over the Pakistan's rising trade deficit, which has widened 70 percent to USD 35.4 billion during July-March 2022 due to rising imports and stagnant exports, which should be a cause of serious apprehension for the policymakers. He called for urgent remedial measures to curb this unhealthy trend as it would create multiple problems for the fragile economy. He said this while talking to a delegation of traders that called on him led by Ahmed Khan, President, Traders Association, G-10 Markaz, Islamabad. Muhammad Naveed Malik former Senior Vice President, Ashfaq Hussain former Vice President, Ali Akram Khan, Zohaib Khan and others were in the delegation. Muhammad Shakeel Munir said that the trade deficit had reached an all-time high of \$37.7



billion in 2017-18 fiscal year and due to the great efforts of the government, it was brought down to \$23.2 billion in 2019-20. However, the trade deficit has again increased to an alarming level and if this trend continues, it could cross USD 40

billion by the end of this fiscal year. He said that despite being an agricultural country, Pakistan was importing many agricultural products including wheat, sugar, palm oil and other food items, which was contributing to rising trade deficit.

He stressed that the agriculture research institutes of the government should work with farmers and help them to improve the per acre yield of agriculture productivity so that the indigenous production could meet the local needs and the country could get rid of relying on imported food items. ICCI President said that the industrial sector was importing many products including raw materials and intermediate goods to meet its manufacturing needs and emphasized that the government should encourage the indigenous production of imports substitutions that would help in reducing import bill and cutting down the trade deficit of the country. Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President and Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President ICCI said that the Ministry of Commerce and Trade Development Authority of Pakistan should facilitate the private sector in exploring all potential exports markets including Africa, Central Asia and others to boost export that would be instrumental in keeping the trade deficit within manageable level.

CDA approves Easter allowance for Christian employees

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority (CDA) has approved the Easter allowance for its all the serving Christian employees on the occasion of Easter-2022. In the light of the Board decisions, CDA Chairman approved the Easter Allowance for its all the serving Christian employees on the occasion of Easter would be solemnized on April, 17, 2022. According to a notification issued by the CDA's Finance Wing, the Easter Allowance will be paid to non-gazetted employees equal to their running basic salary while the gazetted employees would be paid an amount of equal to half of their running basic salary. The Easter Allowance would also be paid to Daily wage, contract and daily paid (muster roll) employees as per their regular salary scales. The Treasury Division and relevant accounts officers were asked to ensure in time release of Easter Allowance to all serving Christian employees of the Authority. The Christian employees extended their gratitude to CDA administration for announcing allowance to the community. They expressed the hope that the move would be beneficial for employees and help them celebrating religious festival in good manner.

Netizens eager for Suno Chanda Season 3

ISLAMABAD: Ace Pakistani scriptwriter and novelist Saima Akram Chaudhry promised Suno Chanda Season 3 and fans can't get enough of it. Saima Akram Chaudhry has been the master mind behind the blockbuster drama series like "Chupke Chupke", "Suno Chanda" and "Ishq Jalebi". All of her dramas made a huge fan following but Suno Chanda broke viewer-ship records in the history of Pakistani drama industry. The wonderful story was directed by none other than the very talented Ahsan-Talish. The lead roles were played by Iqra Aziz and Farhan Saeed, fans loved their on-screen chemistry. Following the success of season 2, netizens bombarded Saima's DM, asking her about season 3. The writer had to come and address about Suno Chanda. The queen took to social media and expressed gratitude "I am so overwhelmed by the response of my fans. This is the love I have been carrying since Suno Chanda Season 1", she wrote. She further promised Season 3 for the super hit Suno Chanda, considering the amazing response and request of the fans. – APP

NUST features in QS Subject Rankings 22

ISLAMABAD: Forging ahead with its legacy of academic and research excellence, the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) Pakistan, has maintained its upward trajectory amongst world universities, while standing first in Pakistan across seven subject areas as per Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) Subject Rankings 2022. These seven subject areas include Electrical and Electronics Engineering; Computer Science; Mechanical, Aeronautical and Manufacturing Engineering; Chemical Engineering; Civil and Structural Engineering; Mathematics; and Material Science. Besides, NUST has also featured amongst the world's elite institutions in 12 out of 51 subjects as compared to the last year when it featured in 9 subjects. In the broad category of Engineering and Technology, the university has also retained #1 position in Pakistan for the 6th consecutive year, while improving 35 positions globally from #214 to #179 in the last one year. In addition, NUST has ranked for the first time in the subjects of Civil and Structural Engineering, Material Science and Environmental Sciences. – APP

Briefs

Pakistan will have 60% renewable energy by 2030

ISLAMABAD: "At least 30% of all new vehicles sold in Pakistan in various categories will be Electric Vehicles (EVs) and 60% of all energy produced in the country will be generated from renewable energy resources including hydropower by 2030." This was stated by the Deputy Chairman Planning Commission, Dr. Jehanzeb Khan while virtually speaking at the Asia & Pacific Transport Forum 2022 organized by Asian Development Bank (ADB), according to Gwadar Pro. He said that Pakistan has taken several transportation initiatives during the last decade including Lahore Orange Line, Karachi Green Line, Peshawar BRT while Karachi Circular Railways has been recently approved, adding that a well performed transport and communication structure is vital for a country's development.

According to Dr. Jehanzeb, during the last decade, Pakistan has taken several transportation initiatives, especially in big cities like Karachi, Lahore and Peshawar. Green Line in Karachi, Orange Line in Lahore and BRT in Peshawar were important projects which helped millions of commuters in the country. He said that the investment in a country's infrastructure directly affects economic growth as producers find the best markets for their goods, reducing transportation time and cost, and generating employment opportunities. Dr. Khan highlighted that in order to make the transportation system affordable for people at large, Pakistan requires more such modern transportation systems both in urban areas and for inter-city transport. - APP

PTI confident to clinch fresh elections: Haleem

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Haleem Adil Sheikh Thursday claimed that Imran Khan would clinch the fresh election after three months with the two-thirds majority as no political party can enjoy the public support that Prime Minister Imran Khan has won among the masses. Talking to a private news channel, he said that the government had no threat from the defeated elements, who had been rejected by the masses, adding, that the opposition day-dreamers were just busy in foreign conspiracies to damage national institutions. "The people of Pakistan are ready for elections and no political party will ever run away from elections as opposition parties are running away now, he said, adding, the interim govt would rule for three months and the opposition leader should suggest their name for it. He urged opposition parties to focus their attention on fresh elections as the masses had already geared up and Pakistan was a sovereign state and any interference from outside will not be accepted at any cost in internal matters of the country. - APP

DOAM ensuring towards upgradation

ISLAMABAD: Directorate of Archeology and Museums (DOAM) is committed in contributing towards the upgradation and restoration of museums, heritage assets and archeological sites in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Three mosques, two stupas and three museums and the booklets of each site is prepared photographic documentation of all sites completed an official of DOAM told APP. Peshawar Museum is notable for its collection of Buddhist artwork dating from the ancient Gandhara region. He said Museum initially had only one exhibition hall and now it was further expanded with the construction of a new block with two galleries, two halls for the museum's collection in storage, offices for the provincial directorate of archaeology.



ISLAMABAD: Members of diplomatic corps and civil society enjoying iftar dinner at Monal restaurant hosted by CEO Monal Luqman Ali Afzal. - DNA

Chairman NAB reviews monthly performance

DG NAB Sukkur further informed that respected Accountability Court Sukkur passed judgment in reference No 14/2019 whereby the accused Dr. Ghulam Hussain Unar (Ex DHO Sanghar) was convicted / sentenced for 07 year of rigorous imprisonment along with a fine of Rs 107.55 million

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Honorable Mr. Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB chaired a monthly meeting to review overall performance of NAB especially accused conviction by the learned Accountability Courts during 2022 due to vigorous prosecution of NAB at NAB Headquarters. The meeting was attended by Zahir Shah, Deputy Chairman NAB, Syed Asghar Haider, Prosecutor General Accountability, Masood Alam Khan, DG Operations and other senior officers of NAB. During the meeting, it was informed by DG NAB Sukkur that the Learned Accountability Court Sukkur passed judgment in reference No 10/2017 whereby 23 accused persons including 6x officials of Government of Sindh were convicted due to vigorous prosecution of NAB Sukkur. Out of 23 accused persons, 19x accused persons have been awarded rigorous imprisonment seven years each, while remaining 4x contractors have been awarded five years imprisonment individually. The Court also imposed a collective fine of Rs.7, 433,556/- against



all the accused persons. The 23x convicted persons were sent to Central Prison Sukkur for serving the awarded sentence. Detail of accused persons is as under: DG NAB Sukkur further informed that respected Accountability Court Sukkur passed judgment in reference No 14/2019 whereby the accused Dr. Ghulam Hussain Unar (Ex DHO Sanghar) was convicted / sentenced for 07 year of rigorous imprisonment along with a fine of Rs 107.55 million. During the meeting, it was informed by DG

NAB Rawalpindi that the Learned Accountability Court Rawalpindi passed judgment in reference No 02/2019 title State vs. Maj Atif Qayyum (Cheating Public at Large with serving & retired officials whereby the accused person was convicted/sentenced 3 years R.I. with fine of Rs. 2.79 million under 489-F PPC, 3 years R.I. with fine of Rs. 2.55 million under section 406 PPC, 14 years R.I. with fine of Rs. 373.24 million under section r/w 9(a)(iii) & (ix) NAO and 14 years R.I with fine of Rs. by the Learned

Accountability Court Rawalpindi due to vigorous prosecution of NAB Rawalpindi. DG NAB Rawalpindi further informed that the Learned Accountability Court Islamabad passed judgment in reference No 06/2015 whereby the co-accused/PO Muhammad Qaid was convicted/sentenced for 26 months R.I. along with fine of Rs.23.7 million. During the meeting, it was informed that respected Accountability Court Islamabad dismissed the petition for Post Arrest Bail of co-accused Muhammad Sohail in B4U scam. During the meeting, it was informed by DG NAB Lahore that the Learned Accountability Court Lahore passed judgment in reference No 02/2017 title Hali Motors Scam-Cheating public at large whereby the accused persons namely Mehr M. Shafiq Hali & Muhammad Azam were convicted/sentenced for 8 years R.I. each along with fine of Rs.51.6 million jointly. During the meeting, DG NAB Lahore informed that respected Accountability Court Lahore passed judgment in reference No 04/2017 whereby the accused Abdul Rehman was convicted / sentenced for 05 year of rigorous imprisonment along with fine of Rs 88.457 million.

Dr. Sania apprises officials of Ehsaas' future course

ISLAMABAD: Former Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Poverty Alleviation and Social Protection, Dr. Sania Nishtar during a handover meeting held here apprised of the concerned officials about the future course of action of all the programmes of Ehsaas to ensure smooth continuity. According to the series of the tweets issued by the former SAPM, the meeting was attended by the Secretary Muhammad Ali Shehzada and senior staff of Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division. "Since Ehsaas is for deserving people, it is very important that all its programmes continue without any disruption. I have conveyed the officials the future mechanism and course of action of all the programmes of Ehsaas", she said in her tweets. Dr. Sania informed that she is busy nowadays in preparing Handover Papers of Ehsaas so that whoever assumes this position in the days to come will be well aware of the details of Ehsaas till now and the future priorities as this program will continue in the future as well. "In my opinion, it is important to submit handover papers while leaving the office and this is also the requirement of transparency. I am also writing the recent handover papers on the same lines as I wrote in 2013 when relieving from my responsibilities in the caretaker government", she said. She said, "It has been an honour and privilege to serve my country as Prime Minister's Special Assistant in Social protection and Poverty Alleviation. As I step down from this position, I pray that Pakistan's flagship Ehsaas grows even stronger to serve those who need it. Pakistan Paidabad!" - DNA

CDA building control collects Rs 21 mln

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority's (CDA) Building Control Directorate has collected Rs 21 millions revenue during the last one month. The revenue was collected on account of approvals of building plans, issuance of completion certificates, commercial charges and other heads including fines on account of non-conforming use, said its spokesman on Thursday. During the month of March Building Control Directorate, he said had fetched over Rs 600,000 revenue by issuing 15 completion certificates to residential buildings, whereas two commercial building plans generated funds amounting to Rs over 12mln. Similarly, around Rs 700,000 were fetched after approving building plans of some 22 residential buildings, while over Rs six (6) million earned by issuing No-Objection-Certificate (NOCs) to five (5) commercial buildings. - DNA

Intercropping-specific planter first applied in Pakistan's spring sowing

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Under the National Research Center for Intercropping jointly established by Sichuan Agricultural Universities and the Islamia University of Bahawalpur, spring sowing in the demonstrative plots of maize-soybean strip intercropping technology was completed, China Economic Net (CEN). This season, besides the skyrocketing demonstration area of 400 acres, there's a breakthrough in machinery as well. Planters specifically for intercropping were used and tested for the first time in Pakistan, which will greatly relieve sowing burden faced by local farmers in the future. This is the fourth year since China's maize-soybean strip intercropping technology

was introduced in Pakistan in 2018. This technology makes better use of available space to increase the amount of crops that can be harvested on the same area of land as soybean production is like an added 'bonus', which is helping Pakistan ease soybean shortage and cut soybean imports. According to Muhammad Ali Raza, Director of National Research Center for Intercropping, post-doc of Sichuan Agricultural University, now the total demonstrative area has surged to over 400 acres, about 2.67 times that of last autumn. More types of crops are being included in the intercropping system. This season, the demonstration of wheat-soybean strip intercropping also has started. "We have more than 20 demonstrations of

400 acres in Pakistan now, and over 20 farmers have adopted our technology as we know it," Dr. Ali said. Notably, 22 acres of the demonstrative plots were sowed with the newly invented intercropping-specific planter. "Sowing two crops with intercropping technology is always a problem, but now it's not. It is the first-ever intercropping-specific planter in Pakistan, which can adjust or change row distance between intercrops as well as fertilizer application rate," Dr. Ali said. "Farmers have been asking for this planter from me since 2018. Luckily, I designed the intercropping-specific sowing planter this year. Prof. Yang Wenyu, Prof. Yang Feng and Prof. Athar Mahboob helped me at all steps for the development of this planter," Dr. Ali told CEN.

ADB, LDC sign \$100mln loan to support farmers

Loan will support LDC's operations in India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Thailand and Vietnam by financing coffee, cotton, and rice inventories for over 50,000 smallholder farmers across these countries

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Louis Dreyfus Company BV (LDC) Thursday signed a loan of up to \$100 million to help smallholder farmers recover from the economic challenges caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and improve their resilience to climate change impacts. The loan will support LDC's operations in India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Thailand and Vietnam by financing coffee, cotton, and rice inventories for over 50,000 smallholder farmers across these countries.

This will help secure food supply chains and reliable incomes for smallholder farmers, and help offset the impact of supply chain disruptions due to the pandemic, according to a press release issued by the bank. "Smallholder farmers, who are already vulnerable to climate change, are facing increasing difficulties due to the pandemic, resulting in income loss, crop and food waste, and supply chain disruptions," said ADB Vice-President for Private Sector Operations and Public-Private Partnerships Ashok Lavasa. "ADB's assistance will help to ensure reliable off take to farmers, providing a direct way to



preserve their livelihoods and their assets, while enabling them to invest in climate-resilient farming practices." An accompa-

nying technical assistance (TA) grant will deliver capacity building and training activities that will reinforce the benefits of sustainable

and climate-resilient agricultural practices for cotton farmers in India and coffee farmers in Indonesia. The TA will support pilot-testing of drip irrigation in cotton fields in India, and use of biochar kilns in Indonesia. Assistance under the TA is expected to benefit about 4,000 farmers, particularly women farmers. The TA funding comprises \$205,000 from ADB's Technical Assistance Special Fund for COVID Recovery and \$385,000 from the Strategic Climate Fund, administered by ADB. "As a leading merchant and processor of agricultural goods, LDC is committed to empowering smallholder farmers, whose activities

are key to global food security, to use sustainable farming practices for the benefit of current and future generations," said LDC's Chief Commercial Officer and Head of Asia Region James Zhou. "With the right tools, knowledge, and support, farmers can lastingly improve their yields and livelihoods while preserving the environment. We look forward to collaborating with ADB toward this important goal." The statement added that the ADB was committed to achieving a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific, while sustaining its efforts to eradicate extreme poverty.

AIU announces 18th April as deadline

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Admissions for the second phase of Spring Semester 2022 in Alama Iqbal Open University (AIU) will continue till April 18. The admissions includes MSc/Postgraduate Diploma Programs/Associate Degree Programs/BS Programs, Teacher Training Programs (MA, M.Ed and B.Ed) and Certificate Courses. Admission forms and prospectuses for all the programs are available on the University website www.aiou.edu.pk.

According to Syed Zia-ul-Hasnain Naqvi, Director, Department of Home Affairs, application for admission in any program can be made only under online mode. He said that the students who do not have the facility of internet, can go to the regional office and apply online using the free facility of computer and internet. For this purpose, 'Student Facilitation Desk' has been set up in all the regional offices of the university where the staff of the university will provide all possible facilities and assistance to the students.

It is informed that residents of any country in the world or Pakistanis residing abroad can also enroll in these programs, and the whole process from admission to graduation for international students is online. It should be noted that in the last semester i.e. Fall 2021, students from 22 countries have enrolled in various educational programs. Among these countries are USA, UK, Germany, Canada, China, South Africa, Australia, Bahrain, Dubai, Hong Kong, Greece, Italy, Kuwait, Spain, Sweden, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sharjah, etc.

The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Zia-Ul-Qayyum has directed for launching educational programs in partnership with other universities of other countries to meet the requirements of modern times not only for the students residing in Pakistan but also for the Pakistanis residing in different countries of the world.

Anjuman Auqaf Jamia demands release of Mirwaiz

ISLAMABAD: In Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, Anjuman Auqaf Jamia Masjid Srinagar said that continued house arrest of its chief Mirwaiz Umar Farooq has caused strong anger and resentment among the masses against this aggressive attitude of the authorities and they demand his release in view of the holy month of Ramadan. According to Kashmir Media Service, the Anjuman in a statement on behalf of the organisation and Mirwaiz Umar Farooq paid rich tributes to the beloved daughter of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), the 'Khatoon-e-Jannat' Hazrat Syeda Fatima Al-Zahra (RA) on the occasion of her passing away anniversary which falls on 3rd Ramadan. It said that Hazrat Fatima Al-Zahra (RA) had shown the true path to the Muslims by leading her own life with piety, devotion and simplicity. It termed her as a "role model" for womenfolk for centuries now stating that her life has been an example for all the Muslim women daughters, sisters and mothers. It urged the Muslim women to follow in letter and spirit the path Hazrat Fatima (RA) choose for herself and thereby help bring an Islamic revolution, only then can the dream of establishing a welfare society be realized. - APP

IRSA releases 85849 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) Thursday released 85849 cusecs water from various rim stations with an inflow of 79347 cases. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1092.15 feet, which was 42.15 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded a 27798 and 35000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 19547, 23407 and 25005 cases respectively. Similarly, from the Kabul River, a total of 10700 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 16849 cusecs released from the Chenab River at Marala. - APP

Situation in Ukraine

THE Ukrainian president has repeated his calls for countries in the West to "bring Russia to justice" by rejecting Russian oil and completely blocking Russian banks from the international finance system. Volodymyr Zelensky was speaking through an interpreter to the Greek Parliament in Athens. The EU is proposing a ban on Russian coal. But some member states are resisting going further because they rely so highly on Russian energy. Oil and gas bans are not part of the latest sanction proposals. "Those who blackmail Europe with economic and energy crisis always lose," Zelensky said through an interpreter. "Let us be honest, since the very beginning Russia's actions were directed not only against Ukraine but also Europe."

The Group of Seven industrialised nations on Thursday called for Russia to be suspended from the UN's human rights body, over "atrocities" in Ukraine amid Russia's invasion. "Haunting" images of tortured bodies, apparent executions and reports of sexual violence "show the true face of Russia's brutal war" against Ukraine, the G7 has said. Foreign ministers for each of the G7 (Group of Seven) countries released a joint statement after meeting their Ukrainian counterpart, Dmytro Kuleba. The group said "massacres" in the city of Bucha, and other Ukrainian areas that have been under Russian occupation, will be listed as severe violations of international law. It warned Russia against any "further blatant abuses" of law, calling for President Vladimir Putin to allow humanitarian workers into conflict zones to deliver aid and safely evacuate civilians. The group added it was ready to give Ukraine's armed forces more money and military equipment to defend themselves.

The G7 is an organisation of the world's seven largest so-called "advanced" economies, which dominate global trade and the international financial system. They are Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK and the United States. Meanwhile, Facebook's parent company Meta on Thursday said Russian state actors and others are relentlessly trying to use the social network against the Ukraine with deception, hacking and coordinated bullying campaigns.

"Since the start of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, our teams have been on high alert to detect and disrupt threats and platform abuse, including attempts to come back by networks we removed before," Meta said in its latest threat report. A spike in activity aimed at Ukraine shortly before it was invaded by Russia in February has become an entrenched battle, according to Meta influence operations threat intelligence team leader Ben Nimmo.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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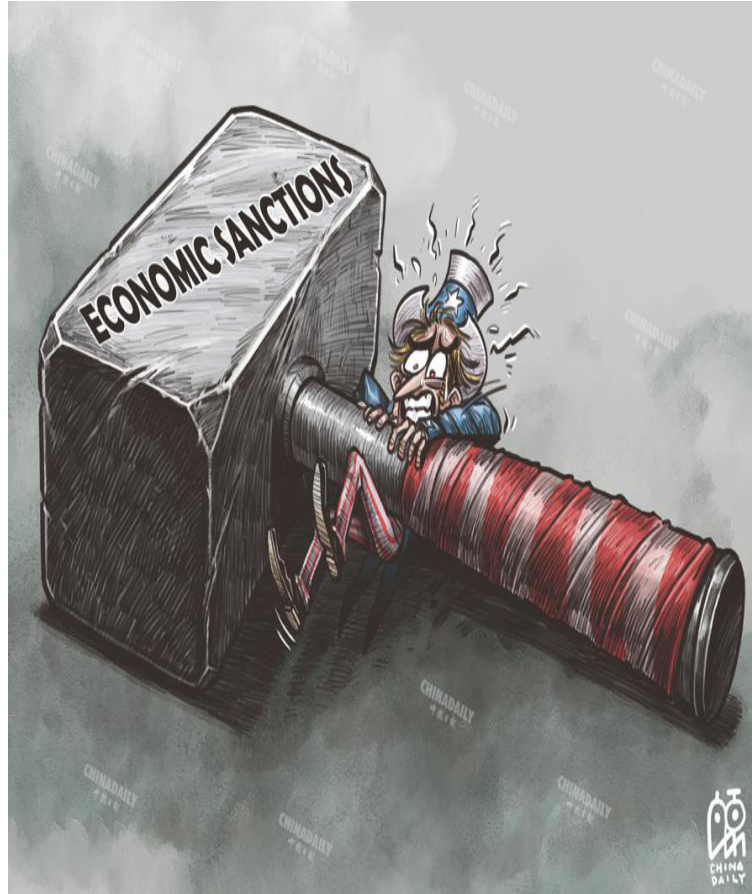
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Rising influence of Big Tech

TECH-SAVVY governments are better prepared for a future that is uncertain and throws up global crises like the ongoing pandemic. These governments will drive the response to events that shape our world.

Futuristic governance will run on technological acumen, and the sooner governments get on the bandwagon, the better it is for their people who want services delivered on the go. AI, the metaverse and digital currencies are already mainstream and it won't be long before they make their way into our governance systems that are now 24/7.

The UAE is, therefore, wasting no time in investing and embracing these tech platforms that could transform our lives. Before the pandemic, the focus was on smart governments. Now such systems seem inadequate to deal with the world's mounting problems that have been compounded by the biggest health crisis of our times, or even in a century. Sars-Cov2 has upended our lives. The long-term damage is still being ascertained. We are not out of the woods yet, but hope is premised on Big Data, Big Tech and Big Pharma. So, what comes after smart government systems, the Internet of Things and VR? AI-powered machines are already working overtime with less physical intervention to solve human problems and deliver results. Banking, utilities, drones, shipping and logistics are being guided by AI and robotics.

There's a raging debate over blockchain that's driving the next wave of digital transactions. Then there's the metaverse that could replace social media if Mark Zuckerberg has his way and people buy into the alternative communication and transactional platform that's still taking baby steps. The possibilities are endless. What's certain is that Big Tech is empowering governments which doesn't answer the what-next question. The developments in this space, however, show an alternative, smarter model on the horizon. Smart Governments could pave the way to Imaginative Governments, governments founded on ideas and a grand technological vision like the UAE.

At the recent World Government Summit, leaders said the UAE and other Gulf Cooperation Council countries are equipped to roll out central bank digital currencies. The regulatory mechanism is still being worked out, but action in this space could pick up in this with other governments showing interest. His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE, and Ruler of Dubai said: "The UAE is keen to develop its development experience with other countries, as part of its constant endeavour to support initiatives aimed at advancing human prosperity." It's a global vision for governance from the UAE with tech being the enabler. The world must join in the effort.

Cooperating with autocrats: When is too much, too much?

James M. Dorsey

"Saudi Arabia is not really becoming a freer country. It is simply becoming a different kind of repressive police state with more of an emphasis on nationalism and a willingness to provide the people with bread and circuses," said pundit Daniel Larison in a blistering criticism of Mr. Kaplan's argument. Moreover, few autocracies in the past seven decades have left a positive legacy

TWO recent publications have fuelled debate about democratic cooperation with autocratic governments in general, and Saudi Arabia in particular, in the wake of the Ukraine war. It is a debate that challenges US President Joe Biden's framing of the conflict as a struggle between good and evil, democracy and autocracy. The commentaries by prominent geopolitical analyst and travel writer Robert Kaplan and former Wall Street Journal publisher Karen Elliott House raise multiple, and perhaps troubling, questions that go to the core of culture wars in the United States and other Western countries.

The absence of the parallels between the brutality of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and similar events in the Middle East and North Africa spotlights the seeming blindness, if not the adoption of double standards, by the United States and Europe. These parallels include the equally brutal Russian intervention in Syria, the Saudi-UAE war in Yemen, and the occupation of conquered lands by Israel and Morocco. "Stunning that an entire article @WSJ @khouse200 blaming US, and Biden in particular, for undermining the US-Saudi relationship can be written without highlighting the seminal destructive role played by ruthless, reckless MBS in that undoing," tweeted Aaron David Miller, a senior fellow at the Washington-based Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and a former US Middle East negotiator. Mr. Miller was referring to Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. "Read the @WSJ piece and weep. Billions spent literally teaching hate, forcing monolithic Islam, destroying cultural heritage, and that is just some of the damage caused globally. How many children have been infected by hate?" added Farah Pandith, the former US State Department's Representative to Muslim Communities.

The two former officials took exception to Ms. House's suggestion that Mr. Biden should "seek forgiveness for a growing list of Saudi grievances" that have strained relations between the kingdom and the United States. They probably would have also taken issue with Mr. Kaplan's simplistic portrayal of Mr. Bin Salam as a social reformer who promotes "personal freedoms." Neither author made mention of Saudi responsibility for Yemen becoming one of the world's worst humanitarian crises or the lack of accountability and transparency in the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi by a Saudi crew with close ties to Mr. Bin Salman. Ms. House, the author of a book on Saudi Arabia, focused instead on the US refusal in recent years to respond more forcefully to attacks on critical Saudi and Emirati infrastructure by Houthi rebels in Yemen and Iran, the US backpedaling on arms sales, and Mr. Biden's refusal to engage Mr. Bin Salman because of the Khashoggi killing.

The gap between the United States and Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates has widened with the two Gulf states refusing to back sanctions against Russia or increase oil production to stop prices from further spiralling. "In the 40 years I have been visiting this country, never has anger at the US been so visceral or so widespread," Ms. House wrote. She argued that it was up to Mr. Biden to repair relations with the kingdom rather than putting at least part of the onus on the crown prince, who has cracked

down brutally on any perceived dissent.

Ms. House frames her argument in terms of the larger rivalry between the United States and China. "Saudi pique is dangerous. The kingdom's relations with China are strong and getting stronger," Ms. House said.

While Ms. House acknowledges that, in contrast to the United States, "Beijing can't protect Saudi oil fields or the sea lanes that allow its oil to reach world markets," she seems to overlook the fact that Saudi Arabia and the UAE may have overplayed their hand in the Ukraine crisis. The fact that China is a long way away from being capable or willing to replace the United States militarily in the Middle East and may prove to be a more difficult ally means that Saudi Arabia and the UAE's options to hedge their bets may have narrowed, giving the US more rather than less leverage.

That suggestion is reinforced by the fact that the Ukraine fiasco has effectively cost Russia a seat at the top table in an emerging more multi-lateral world order.

Mr. Kaplan puts the Ukraine conflict and the issue of cooperation between democratic and autocratic states in shaping a new world order in a broader context that complicates the terms of the debate.

The author correctly rejects the notion that the Ukraine conflict is a battle between democracy and autocracy. Instead, he frames it as a struggle to maintain the rule of law, uphold international law, and ensure the inviolability of internationally recognized borders.

While Ms. House's argument is based on cold geopolitical realities, Mr. Kaplan seeks to redefine liberalism and personal freedoms that, in his mind, are exemplified by Mr. Bin Salman's social rather than political liberalisation.

"If you survey the world beyond North America and Europe — giving the Middle East, Africa, Southeast Asia and Latin America the same importance — it becomes unclear whether parliamentary democracy is an absolute necessity for the general spirit of liberalism to develop," Mr. Kaplan asserts. In doing so, Mr. Kaplan reduces human rights to enhanced women's rights, for example, in Saudi Arabia, and personal freedoms to "protecting minorities, freedom to travel or to order any book from abroad, etc." Freedom of expression, the media, and assembly are glaring absent in Mr. Kaplan's definition.

Mr. Kaplan asserts that Saudis don't want elections because they could be won by "Muslim fundamentalists." He goes on to argue that "Saudis make a distinction between liberty and democracy."

It doesn't strike Mr. Kaplan that if Islamists were to win a free and fair election in Saudi Arabia, that would suggest that Mr. Bin Salman's far-reaching social reforms may be less popular than is widely assumed.

Mr. Kaplan makes a fair point that there are absolute and more benign autocracies and that the more enlightened autocracies may be acceptable partners.

Yet, there are at least two problems with his argument. Saudi Arabia may have enacted long-overdue social and economic reforms needed to diversify its oil-dependent economy. Still, the kingdom is anything, but an absolute, harshly repressive autocracy ruled by one man.

Saudi Arabia last month put 81 people to death in one of the largest mass executions in the kingdom's recent history. Many of the executed were Shiite activists convicted for their dissent and non-violent protest.

"Saudi Arabia is not really becoming a freer country. It is simply becoming a different kind of repressive police state with more of an emphasis on nationalism and a willingness to provide the people with bread and circuses," said pundit Daniel Larison in a blistering criticism of Mr. Kaplan's argument.

Moreover, few autocracies in the past seven decades have left a positive legacy. Among the few, some, like Chile and South Korea, have done so at a steep human price.

The fact that Chile and South Korea are exceptions that confirm the rule is not to argue that all cooperation with autocracies is wrong.

In a criticism of prominent historian of the Soviet bloc Anne Applebaum's assertion that autocracies are out to destroy democracies, Eldar Mamedov, political adviser for the social-democrats in the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament, notes that many authoritarian or semi-authoritarian states such as Turkey, Qatar, Vietnam, Venezuela, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan seek cooperation with the United States and Europe.

"Should they all be rebuffed due to their lack of democratic credentials? Can't conditions exist under which engagement with authoritarian states may foster positive change — if not outright democratization, then at least some forms of liberalisation and openness?" Mr. Mamedov asks.

He points out that "historically, engagement with authoritarian regimes in Spain, Portugal, Brazil, Argentina, and Chile prepared the ground for imperfect, but workable democratic transitions." That said, it's unlikely that Saudi Arabia will follow the example of Spain, Portugal or the Latin American states any time soon.

China's strategic approach towards Middle East

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



America's most powerful trump card of sanctions to return to the nuclear deal has potential to damage China-Iran Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. In this context, two scenarios emerge for the future of the nuclear deal. The implementation of the nuclear deal between the two parties has accelerated the first scenario, in which the sole purpose of the Biden administration is to return Iran to the international nuclear status

FROM 2016, China began to pay special attention to the Middle East. With its immense production capacity of industries, China is a primarily the world's largest buyer of Middle Eastern fuel. Therefore, establishing closer ties with oil-rich Middle Eastern countries, most of which are allies of the United States, shaped the foundation of Chinese foreign policy towards Middle East. China issued an Arab policy document in 2016, shows that it would strengthen its ties with the countries of the region with the "Declaration on the Implementation of Sino-Arab Cooperation". China has signed Belt and Road Initiative agreements with countries such as Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, Egypt and Morocco, and some of them are members of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank which was also initiated in the fields of renewable energy, oil, electricity and civil nuclear energy. In response, China has increased its oil purchases from oil-rich Gulf States, deepening its commitment to the region by increasing its oil purchases.

By signing cooperation agreements with these Arab states, China did not form its Arab policy on the political structure but economic with these countries or its relations with the United States, nor did it intend to replace the United States, which is a military power in the Middle East. This is due to the fact that the survival of Chinese investment and infrastructure projects in the Middle East, as well as the security of oil purchases in the Gulf, depended on the US military presence, which it maintained. Chinese entry into the Middle East meant an economic confrontation with the United States, but in doing so, it was careful not to turn its engagement into a struggle for military and political power. Intends to Furthermore, it is not an Arab states, it is another Middle Eastern country with which China cooperate fully and eventually compete with the United States in the international arena.

While Iran's relations with other countries in the region are marked by greater consistency as long as its ideological and strategic interests are aligned, its relations with world powers are more indecisive and duplicitous. In this regard, it can be seen that Iran pursues a multilateral foreign policy rather than supporting a superpower, and that it seeks to maximize its benefits by maintaining balanced and equitable relations. In fact, at a time when the pragmatic spiritual government signed a landmark nuclear deal with the European Union and the United States in 2015, it was also holding intense talks with China.

The West was offering Iran a package with direct and indirect political terms to lift sanctions and sign a nuclear deal. As a result, it was expected that Iran would undergo gradual social, economic and political change as a result of its integration and stagnation in the international economic system. Lifting sanctions would further boost Iran's investment and trade cooperation with China, as well as strengthen its ties with the West. In fact, with the easing of sanctions in 2015, China allowed a large number of manpower to Iran, paving the way for many medium-sized Chinese companies to explore cooperation opportunities, and to study the Iranian economy. Although violations of the nuclear deal during Trump's presidency have boosted China's economic relations with Iran, it can be seen that between 2015 and 2021, China became Iran's largest direct or indirect trading partner and oil importer. Despite the sanctions, China's oil purchases from Iran reached record highs in 2021. Therefore, the 25-year agreement between China and Iran in March 2021 was not a political agreement that Iran has signed with the P5+1 as an alternative to the nuclear deal, but this agreement of China has the potential for economic growth.

The content of the agreement between China and Iran is similar to the strategic agreements in the region. On the other hand, when it is considered the US-Iran nuclear talks, which are still stuck under Biden, the Sino-Iranian agreement is considered a threat by the US. In the past, China was demonstrating its ability to tolerate sanctions, using alternative methods such as oil trade and the use of the national currency in joint banking, as one of the most important disciplinary mechanisms in the international system. China has joined Iran with an alternative approach to the system and its own alternative modern model, aimed at resolving the political recommendations offered by the West. This situation highlights in the case of Iran that the United States is feeling that China is moving towards becoming a global economic power. In some of Biden's most recent statements, the threat posed by the prospect of global animosity between the Chinese and liberal development models can be clearly seen as an attempt to strengthen liberal-democratic principles, which the Biden administration recently strengthened. In short, the Sino-Iranian agreement is seemed as a turning point in the impending shift of power between China and the United States.

According to current indications, even if a nuclear

deal had been struck with the United States, Iran would have reached a strategic agreement with China and pursued a multilateral foreign policy with the major powers in the international arena. On the other hand, given its current stalemate with the United States, China's agreement could have far-reaching consequences in the long run.

Iran, which is struggling to maintain oil exports despite sanctions, the agreement may improve oil sales from China and the development of energy infrastructure. Particularly, the terms of the agreement are expected to introduce new regulations in the Iranian banking sector, as well as the use of its national currency instead of the US dollar in oil sales, to some extent weaken the Iranian economy. Therefore, these economic measures have the potential to reduce Iran's isolation as a result of international sanctions. The infrastructure development partnership with China will support Iran's plans to become a commercial corridor hub, opening it up to neighboring countries through new road, rail and port projects. Iran's influence in Lebanon, Syria and Iraq can strengthen its post-war economic and reconstruction power in the region, while, on the other hand, China can strengthen its economic activities and presence in the Middle East.

America's most powerful trump card of sanctions to return to the nuclear deal has potential to damage China-Iran Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. In this context, two scenarios emerge for the future of the nuclear deal. The implementation of the nuclear deal between the two parties has accelerated the first scenario, in which the sole purpose of the Biden administration is to return Iran to the international nuclear status. In the second scenario, Iran's ballistic missiles, military activities in the region and relations with the regional countries, the world should not expect positive response in return to the nuclear deal. The reason for this is that Iran will not make reassurance to the United States on these issues in particularly post deal with China, which has the potential to ease sanctions.

The Sino-Iranian deal will not replace Iran's negotiations with the West, like the nuclear deal and other major deals like the FATF, but it will serve as a trump card to tip the balance in Iran's favor on these deals. Iran's global strategy is not to side with the parties, but to use all the agreements it has made with major powers such as the United States, the European Union and China, and will do so in the future. This is the strategic implication of the principle of "multilateralism in international relations", which Persian diplomacy constantly emphasizes.

Briefs

Pakistan issues visas to Sikh pilgrims

FROM PAGE 01

The issuance of visas is covered under the framework of the Pakistan-India Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines of 1974. Every year, a large number of Sikh Yatraees from India visit Pakistan to observe various religious festivals/occasions. The visas issued from New Delhi are in addition to the visas granted to Sikh pilgrims participating in these events from other countries. The issuance of pilgrimage visas to religious pilgrims by the High Commission is in line with the Government of Pakistan's commitment to fully implement the Bilateral Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines between the two countries. Expressing his views on the auspicious occasion, Charge d'Affaires Aftab Hasan Khan, extended his heartfelt felicitations to the pilgrims and wished them a rewarding and fulfilling yatra. Pakistan takes immense pride in preserving sacred religious places and providing necessary facilitation to the visiting pilgrims, he added.

4 additional months required: ECP

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) Thursday said although it was fully committed to hold elections, yet it would require at least four additional months to complete the exercise of delimitation. The elections could safely be held honestly, justly and fairly as ordained in Article 18(3) of the constitution, in October 2022, the ECP informed President Dr Arif Alvi in a letter.

The Commission said that the it was an independent constitutional entity, entrusted with the sacred duty of organizing and conducting elections in terms of Article 218(3) of the Constitution and to make such arrangements as were necessary to ensure that the election is conducted honestly, justly, fairly and in accordance with law and that corrupt practices were guarded against. The delimitation of constituencies, it added, was one of the foundational steps towards the election. According to Article 51(5) of the Constitution and Section 17 of the Elections Act, 2017, the delimitation of constituencies was conducted on the basis of population in accordance with the last census officially published. The provisional results of the 6th National Census 2017 were published on January 3, 2018 and accordingly the delimitation of national and provincial assemblies was carried out by the Commission on the basis of said results as a one-time dispensation granted by the amendment made under Article 51(5) of the Constitution for General Election 2018 for National Assembly and Provincial Assemblies. — APP

SBP hikes interest rate by 250bp to 12.25%

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In an abrupt and surprise move, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Thursday raised its benchmark interest rate by a significant 250 basis points to 12.25% as the country grapples with uncertainty around the outlook for international commodity prices and global financial conditions, which had been exacerbated by the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The central banks believe that this action would help to safeguard external and price stability. At its last meeting on March 8, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) had noted that it "was prepared to meet earlier than the next scheduled MPC meeting on April 19, if necessary, to make any needed timely and calibrated action to safeguard external and price stability." In line with its forward guidance, the meeting took place 12 days in advance. The State Bank of Pakistan Monetary Policy Committee was scheduled to meet on April 19, 2022 to decide the interest rate. The recent hike comes after the rupee plunged to an all-time low of Rs188.18 against the US dollar in the inter-bank market.

GCC welcomes formation of presidential council in Yemen

Yemen's president cedes powers to Presidential Leadership Council consist of 7 deputy chairmen to govern country during transitional period

AGENCIES

RIYADH: Arab countries have welcomed the formation of Yemen's Presidential Leadership Council, headed by Rashad al-Alimi, as well as the urgent financial support provided by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to the Yemeni economy.

Early on Thursday, Yemeni President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi delegated his powers to the newly established Presidential Leadership Council to govern the country during the transitional period. The council is made up of seven deputy chairmen, including Aidarous al-Zubaidi, the head of the Southern Transitional Council and backed by the UAE.

The other members are Sultan Ali al-Arada, Tariq Mohammed Saleh, Abdulrahman Abu Zara'a, Abdullah Bawazeer, Othman Hussein Megally and Farah Salmin al-Bahsani. On Thursday, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman met with members of the

council led by al-Alimi, who pledged in a tweet to work on rebuilding the country and its modern civil state as well as protecting the gains of the revolution and unity.

In a statement carried out by the official news agency SPA, Saudi Arabia expressed its "full support for the Presidential Leadership Council and its supporting entities." It urged the council "to start negotiating with the Houthis, under the supervision of the United Nations, to reach a final and comprehensive political solution that includes a transitional

period that will move Yemen to peace and development."

Riyadh also pledged \$3 billion in emergency aid to the Yemeni economy, one billion of which will be provided by the UAE, as well as \$300 million to fund the UN humanitarian operation in Yemen. In a statement, the Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry welcomed the formation of the Presidential Leadership Council and affirmed its support for it in carrying out its responsibilities.

The Jordanian Foreign Ministry also welcomed the council's formation,

stressing that Amman "supports efforts to resolve the Yemeni crisis in order to reach a political solution," and appreciating Saudi Arabia and the UAE for their financial support. In a statement, Secretary of State Antony Blinken welcomed the move, stressing his support "in everything that achieves stability in Yemen."

For its part, the Arab League affirmed its support for the council "as an embodiment of Yemeni legitimacy," and expressed optimism that it would lead the country to peace. Yemen has been engulfed by violence and instability since 2014, when Iran-aligned Houthi rebels captured much of the country, including the capital Sanaa.

A Saudi-led coalition, which seeks to reinstate the Yemeni government, has worsened the situation, causing one of the world's worst man-made humanitarian crises. Nearly 80%, or about 30 million people, are in need of humanitarian assistance and protection, and more than 13 million are in danger of starvation, according to UN estimates.



UEFA adopts new regulations

NYON: UEFA on Thursday approved new licensing and "sustainability" regulations to replace its existing Financial Fair Play (FFP) rules, allowing European clubs to make bigger losses than before while bringing in caps on spending on wages and transfers. As expected, European football's governing body decided to overhaul the FFP rules that were introduced in 2010 in order to reduce spiralling club debts across the continent. FFP's limitations had been exposed by the emergence of state-held superpowers like Manchester City and Paris Saint-Germain, while huge losses incurred by the coronavirus pandemic left poorer clubs with little room for manoeuvre. "The biggest innovation will be the introduction of a squad cost rule to bring better cost control in relation to player wages and transfer costs," UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin announced following a meeting of the body's executive committee. UEFA will now allow clubs to report losses of 60 million euros (\$65.5m) over three years rather than 30 million euros previously, and the permitted figure will even reach 90 million euros for a club "in good financial health". However, that relaxation of the rules is combined with the new ceilings on wage spending.

There was never any possibility of bringing in a specific salary cap like in North American sports because UEFA has 55 member countries and must contend with European Union and national labour and competition laws. Yet under UEFA's new regulations clubs will be forced to limit spending on player and staff wages, transfers and agents fees to 70 percent of total revenues by 2025/26. The ceiling will drop as current contracts expire: 90 percent of club income in 2023/24, followed by 80 percent the season after and then 70 percent. — Agencies

US says F-16 sale to Turkiye to bolster NATO, boost national interests

FOREIGN DESK

WASHINGTON: The Biden administration has stated in congressional correspondence that the potential sale of F-16 fighter jets to Turkiye would serve US interests and bolster NATO unity, according to a report published Wednesday.

The letter, obtained by Reuters, comes after Turkiye requested in October that Washington sell it 40 F-16s and 80 kits to modernize its existing fleet. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said in late March that negotiations with the US were progressing positively.

The US under former President Donald Trump sanctioned Turkiye in 2020 after Ankara purchased the

advanced Russian S-400 air defense system and removed Turkiye the prior year from the F-35 joint strike fighter program.

The US maintains the S-400 could be used by Russia to covertly obtain data on the F-35 and is inoperable with NATO systems. Ankara has maintained, however, that the S-400 would not be integrated into NATO systems and said it poses no risks to the F-35. Naz Durakoglu, the State Department's top official for legislative affairs, acknowledged in a letter to congressman Frank Pallone the ongoing tensions over additional arms sales to Turkiye but maintained the sanctions and F-35 removal represent "a significant price paid" for the S-400 acquisition.

"The Administration believes that there are nonetheless compelling long-term NATO alliance unity and capability interests, as well as U.S. national security, economic and commercial interests that are supported by appropriate U.S. defense trade ties with Turkiye," Durakoglu wrote to Pallone, who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

"The proposed sale will require a Congressional notification if the Department of State were to approve it. We affirm our commitment to established defense trade authorization procedures, including Congressional oversight," she added, according to a copy of the letter circulated on social media.

Durakoglu further pointed to Turkiye's active contributions to NATO, as well as its support for "Ukraine's territorial integrity and cooperative defense relations," calling them "an important deterrent to malign influence in the region."

The State Department did not confirm the letter's authenticity when asked by Anadolu Agency, but a senior State Department official said the US "strongly values its partnership with its NATO Ally Turkiye." "The United States and Turkiye have longstanding and deep bilateral defense ties, and Turkiye's continued NATO interoperability remains a priority," said the official, who addressed the matter on condition of anonymity.

Pakistani athletes raise white cards

DNA

KARACHI: Multiple Pakistani athletes including tennis ace Aisamul Haq Qureshi and Ju-Jitsu gold medalists Muhammad Ammar and Abu Huraira raised white cards for the International Day of Sports Development and Peace (IDS DP).

"A big chunk of population consists of youth in Pakistan. That is where the hope lies when it comes to

making sustainable growth in sports and development. That is what our athletes are standing for," Pakistan Ju-Jitsu Federation secretary and former coach Tariq Ali told The Express Tribune, as sportspersons held the white cards. Ali emphasized that the goal is to spread awareness among the youth first and especially the ones who are out of the regular schools and college systems. In fact there needs to be inclusion of the youth, who are

a part of madrasa system, and sports has the power to bring the change in the lives of the youngsters.

"We celebrate the IDS DP every year on April 6," said Ali. "So this year is the same and we have our best athletes raising the white card to show that we stand for peace and development. This is the way to spread the awareness and try to reach the youth."

Among the card raisers are ju-jitsu international medalists Sr Wasim, Kainat Arif, Shahzaib, Muhammad Ammar, Abu Huraira, Dilawar Khan Sannan, and Riasat Ali along with PJJF officials including Mehmoodul Hasan and Tehseenullah Khan.

Aisam also posted on his social media for the campaign with Peace and Sports. "I truly believe if everyone on this planet was associated with any sport in one way or the other, this World would be a better and peaceful place," he wrote, for the goal of promoting peace through sports. A rough estimate of Pakistan's youth population was 64 per cent, according to the UN Development reports in 2018.

UN inaction on China abuses huge blow

GENEVA: The UN rights chief has miserably failed to address China's "genocide" against the Uyghur minority, a leading campaigner told AFP, demanding that a long-delayed report on abuses be released "immediately". Uyghur campaigner Rushan Abbas, who is American, decried that Michelle Bachelet had, to date, been so restrained in her criticism of the well-reported rights violations taking place in China's far-western Xinjiang region. "I am very, very disappointed in her," Abbas told AFP on the sidelines of the Geneva Summit for Human Rights and Democracy, insisting that what is happening "is clearly genocide".

If the UN high commissioner for human rights herself "does not defend the founding principles of the United Nations and fundamental rights... who is going to be out there to defend innocent people like my sister?" "We have been begging for her to speak up, to do something," said Abbas, who maintains her activism led to China detaining her sister, retired doctor Gulshan Abbas, almost four years ago. — APP

I don't care about Indian govt: Ramiz Raja



LAHORE: Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Ramiz Raja said he doesn't care about Indian government's role in putting hurdles for Pakistan to host international events. In an interview to Indian publication, Raja said mega international cricket season awaits Pakistani fans and they are focusing on making it successful. "Pakistan is lined up to host plenty of international cricket this year. We look forward to huge success of these events and progress of our cricket in long run," the chairman said. West Indies, New Zealand and England are scheduled to tour Pakistan later this year. However, Pakistan will host Asia Cup and Champions Trophy 2025. "I don't care if Indian government is creating problems for Pakistan to host international events. Also, I am not thinking about whether India will tour Pakistan or not for Asia Cup. Our prime focus is to get ready for mega cricket season," he added. Talking about his proposal of four-nation series involving India, Australia, England and Pakistan, Ramiz believes that India will consider his plan and put this on their government's table. "My four-nation series plan has nothing to do with politics. It will be a step forward to bridge the gap between India-Pakistan cricket," he said. — DNA

The new wave of generation Z sales

SHAHZADA KHOULED & MEHBOOB UR REHMAN

AS generation Z keeps on bringing new waves across the world in multiple ways, Pakistan is also on the verge of carrying out their sales according to the Gen-Z trends going on in Pakistan. Pakistani Gen-Z can't really imagine a life outside internet they have become tech savvy consumers, in that regard any product would be gone through a lot of research for it to be sold. As much as they are very hard to please the Gen-Z also have a very small attention span and quick to judge a product out of it doesn't satisfy their image which then they will just mark it as a meme product or how they have invented cancel culture for stuff which they don't want to hear about anymore. This new wave of this generation specially in the Pakistani market

makes things very interesting and also very easily fallible.

Since Generation Z is more diverted towards everything internet it's easy for them to use multiple platforms for their own good, this can include Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and even TikTok which is the new hype in Pakistan as the young adults are using this specifically to promote multiple brands which in return helps the sales of that company as tiktok is widely used by younger generation which the market in Pakistan want to capture. Sales can increase if exposed to the vast public and Gen-Z have the perfect formula for that as their platforms are highly watched by audiences from different age group, so the ability to attract people for their own promotion and for sales is immense. If the market can't please them then they themselves become the market and take matter into their own hands and get successful by

their own formula of using internet for their sales advantages. Pakistan has more population of these young people so for them to increase their popularity and their brand image and name they get these Internet or tiktok users to tap into the Gen-Z audience through their quirks and personality which a lot of people watch as their following is very huge to begin with. As Generation Z are more prone to listen to anything they see on internet they will be easily swayed compared to previous generations but their smartness shouldn't be underestimated as we have seen during the Covid Era where masks and sanitizers had the most boom because they targeted through internet for their sales which the Gen-Z fell into and purchased as they are more keen on keeping themselves safe which worked into the hands of Pakistani companies, this helped their sales sky rocket to a new extreme.

Pakistan also was one of the few countries who didn't get impacted by corona that much because of the daily videos shared or specific blogs and vlogs by Gen-Z of Pakistan which made people notice the virus as very deadly making them equip masks and sanitizers, this made the masks and sanitizers market boom as well as people started to sell these things for twice the amount because of the tiktok or internet videos Pakistani YouTubers or tiktok influencers made. From makeup to trendy clothes we have seen in Khadi where the female tiktok stars use their immense platform to increase the sales of certain clothes they wear on videos which people ask about and then even go buy it as girls influence on tiktok sales is huge compared to guys this is mainly the reason because Generation-Z girls just bring way more traffic to the store compared to their male counterparts. Imagine a person with over 300

million followers promoting your brand, the amount of clicks for that product would be astronomical, then the sales boost would be at all time high. Their influence over sales is unmatched as this new wave keeps on growing in Pakistan and this new generation keeps on adapting new strategies to guide companies and themselves to make the most out of the brand in terms of sales and marketing alongside that. Pakistani Gen-Z can shape and change the whole markets and have a complete swing and power in their palms for the sales to either be all time high or an all time low depending on what pleases them, this new wave of Gen-Z is like the X-Factor of Pakistan's economy as Pakistan boast one of the most youngest people worldwide so the sales market use this as advantage as there is more younger population then older which is beneficial to the markets and economy.

National Assembly restored

FROM PAGE 01

Umar Ata Bandial pointed out that Moeed Yusuf's name was also not included in the record. Justice Ijazul Hassan said the assembly could have reversed the deputy speaker's ruling had it not been dissolved.

"Prime Minister cashed in on the opportunity and dissolve the assembly," he added. Justice Muneeb Akhtar remarked was the prime minister aware of the deputy speaker's ruling that he was sitting ready to address the nation. "It was not in speaker's powers to reject no-trust move through ruling," he added.

He asked was not it like that the written ruling was given to the deputy speaker. "The deputy speaker gave the ruling but how come it carried the signature of the speaker," he baffled. Justice Muneeb further asked why the voting was not conducted after the ruling? Attorney General of Pakistan (AGP) Khalid Jawed Khan, in his arguments, prayed to the court to order general elections in the country. "There are several options before the apex court," the AGP said. He was of the view that the court should arrange an in-camera hearing in which he could inform it of details of the Parliamentary Committee on National Security meeting since disclosing them in the courtroom was not appropriate.

Similarly, AGP Khan went on to say, military officials had also attended the National Security Committee (NSC) meeting, and if minutes of the meeting were leaked right here in front of the people, it might have negative repercussions for the country's security as well as the foreign policy. "Some very sensitive issues were discussed at the NSC meeting," he told the court. The AGP argued that in the light of the constitution, a prime minister had the right to dissolve the assemblies. However, when the chief justice remarked that it was now settled that the deputy speaker's ruling was not 'justified', the AGP seconded him and said he did not defend his ruling either. Speaking on the occasion, Advocate Naem Bukhari, representing both NA Speaker Asad Qaiser and Deputy Speaker Qasim Suri, said he would not take much time and would complete his arguments as early as possible. "I would like to rely on Barrister Ali Zafar's arguments instead," he added.

He said now when general elections had been announced and the ball was in people's court, the Supreme Court should not hear the deputy speaker's ruling case. When Justice Muneeb Akhtar asked whether there was any instance of the rejection of a no-trust motion on a 'point of order', Bukhari replied, "Yes, there was." Justice Jamal Mandokhel inquired from him as to what was his opinion if the NA speaker does not allow voting on the motion. "Is that not a violation of the constitution?" he questioned. Speaker's lawyer responded that there was an instance of the National Assembly's dissolution, which was later declared unconstitutional by the court, but the elections were still held.

Bukhari, on the occasion, submitted to the SC minutes of Parliamentary Committee on National Security meeting. The chief justice said these were only the minutes. "Where are the names of those who had attended the meeting as well as those who gave the briefing?" he asked. Bukhari replied that total 29 people had been invited to the meeting. CJP remarked that the names of those who had briefed the participants of the meeting were missing. Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhel inquired as to whether Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi was present at the meeting.

Justice Muneeb Akhtar said that the deputy speaker did not allow a single lawmaker from the opposition benches to speak on his ruling. "In fact, he should have sought the opinion of MNAs on invoking article-5 of the constitution," he opined. Justice Mazhar Alam said it appeared as if somebody else had written the ruling and later handed it to Deputy Speaker Suri. He also expressed the surprise as how could the ruling bear the signatures of the assembly speaker when actually it had not been given by him. Bukhari insisted that the court could not look into the ruling.

Briefs

NZ-China upgraded free trade deal

AUCKLAND: The upgraded free trade agreement (FTA) between New Zealand and China entered into force on Thursday, said New Zealand's trade and export growth minister. "Our trade agenda has strong momentum, with the China Upgrade coming weeks after the signing of our UK FTA, which will add up to \$1 billion to our GDP," Damien O'Connor said in a statement. The two countries had agreed in February to implement the new upgraded deal from April 7. Under the upgraded FTA, New Zealand will get tariffs on 12 wood and paper products eliminated for the next 10 years, ultimately giving 99% of New Zealand's \$3 billion trade in this sector tariff-free access to China. Since the two countries signed their initial FTA in 2008, Beijing had eliminated or reduced tariffs on 75 wood and paper products.

Australia releases 20 refugees from detention

CANBERRA: Australian authorities on Thursday released more asylum seekers from detention centers after nine years, a local human rights body said. The authorities released around 20 refugees from immigration Transit Accommodation across the country, the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC), a rights organization, said in a statement, adding these refugees will get bridging visas which will allow them to temporarily stay in Australia. "This will leave around 10 people transferred to Australia from offshore detention for medical treatment still in detention centers after nine years," said the ASRC. "The Morrison government has provided no reason as to why the remaining 10 people are held against their will, while 230 others in almost identical situations are in the community." Due to prolonged detention, some refugees suffered different diseases including anxiety, diabetes, and blood pressure, according to local media. - Web Desk

Pakistan will have 60% renewable energy by 2030

In addition to the NDC target, the government has approved an EV Policy with aims to shift 30% of all vehicles to electric passengers' vehicles and 50% to electric two/three-wheelers and buses by 2030

DNA

ISLAMABAD: "At least 30% of all new vehicles sold in Pakistan in various categories will be Electric Vehicles (EVs) and 60% of all energy produced in the country will be generated from renewable energy resources including hydro-power by 2030." This was stated by the Deputy Chairman Planning Commission, Dr Jehanzeb Khan while virtually speaking at the Asia & Pacific Transport Forum 2022 organized by Asian Development Bank (ADB), according to Gwadar Pro. He said that Pakistan has taken several transportation initiatives during the last decade including Lahore Orange Line, Karachi Green Line, Peshawar

BRT while Karachi Circular Railways has been recently approved, adding that a well performed transport and communication structure is vital for a country's development. According to Dr. Jehanzeb, during the last decade, Pakistan has taken several transportation initiatives, especially in big cities like Karachi, Lahore and Peshawar. Green Line in Karachi, Orange Line in Lahore and BRT in Peshawar were important projects which helped millions of commuters in the country. He said that the investment in a country's infrastructure directly affects economic growth as producers find the best markets for their goods, reducing transportation time and cost,



and generating employment opportunities. Dr. Khan highlighted that in order to make the transportation system affordable for people at large, Pakistan requires more such modern transportation systems both in urban areas and for inter-city transport. Highlighting the key issues and challenges, he informed the forum that air pollution creates smog issues in Lahore especially during winters, and congestion in large cities like Lahore, Karachi and Islamabad also poses a big

challenge that needs to be addressed. Dr. Khan further informed the forum that Pakistan Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) had projected 300% growth in GHG emissions for the period of (2015-2021) based on projected 9% Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth and increased reliance on fossil fuels. According to him, the estimates have been revised downwards largely due to Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Programme (TBTP) sequestration of 8.4 MtCO2es (2016-2021). In addition to the NDC target, the government has approved an EV Policy with aims to shift 30% of all vehicles to electric passengers' vehicles and 50% to electric two/three-wheelers and buses by 2030.

Similarly, he informed the forum that Pakistan Railways has two flagship projects Karachi Circular Railway KCR and Karachi-Pipri Freight Corridor which are going to transform the entire public and freight transportation landscape of the metropolitan city of Karachi while easing congestion in the city. The forum was organized by ADB to explore solutions for creating a more sustainable and decarbonized transport future for the region. This year's theme was 'Accelerating Transformative & Decarbonized Transport'. The participants discussed the ways and means for accelerating the changes required in transport and mobility.

18,600 Russian troops killed: Ukraine

KYIV: At least 18,900 Russian soldiers have been killed in Ukraine so far, according to the Ukrainian military on Thursday. Ukrainian forces have destroyed 150 Russian planes, 135 helicopters, 698 tanks, 1,891 armored vehicles, 111 unmanned aerial vehicles, 76 fuel tankers, and seven boats, according to the latest update by the General Staff of the Ukrainian Armed Forces. It said also 332 Russian artillery weapons, 108 multiple rocket launcher systems, and 55 anti-aircraft warfare systems as well as 1,358 vehicles have also been destroyed. At least 1,563 civilians have been killed in Ukraine and 2,213 injured, according to UN estimates, with the true figure feared to be far higher. More than 4.27 million Ukrainians have fled to other countries, with millions more internally displaced, according to the UN refugee agency. - APP

France summons Russian envoy

PARIS: France on Thursday said it would summon the Russian ambassador in Paris for spreading "indecent and provocative" propaganda on the atrocities in the Ukrainian town of Bucha. "We will continue to fight against all Russian manipulation of information on the war in Ukraine," Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said on Twitter regarding his decision to summon Alexei Meshkov. The Macron government is also sending a delegation of French gendarmes and magistrates to witness firsthand the sites of massacres, Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin said. "The President (Emmanuel Macron) has asked us to send gendarmes and magistrates with the justice minister to Ukraine in order to help our Ukrainian friends and to observe the massacres that have taken place," he told BFMTV news in response to the propaganda of the Russian Embassy in Bucha. The official social media account of the Russian Embassy in France has been accused by the Macron government of posting provocative, false information and engaging in misinformation warfare. This time the post which provoked the ire of the Foreign Ministry was related to Bucha that was liberated last week by the Ukrainian military. Images from the place that was under the siege of Russian armed forces showed scores of civilians were killed and their bodies thrown in the open, residential houses were ransacked and buildings destroyed. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy argued the abuses committed against innocent civilians constitute "war crimes." France has held the Russian army responsible for the crimes. On Wednesday evening, the Twitter account of the Russian Embassy in France posted an alleged photo of Bucha, which it claimed was a staged shoot on the film set. It showed journalists and photographers armed with cameras documenting the scenes from the ravaged city. The photo in question was originally published by the Ukrainian media outlet Vechirnyy along with a series of other images of destruction, with the headline: "They leveled it to the ground: What Bucha's main street looks like today after large-scale battles". - Foreign Desk

Ambassador Sajjad receives business delegation

DNA

MINSK: The Ambassador of Pakistan to Belarus Sajjad Haider Khan received a business delegation led by Mr. Oleg Chesalov, Deputy Chairman of the Liberal Democratic Party of Belarus. Mr. Dmitry Dashkevich, Mr. Albin Mironovich and Mr. Dmitry Lasitsa, businessmen representing the construction, agriculture & heavy machinery and textile sectors respectively also attended the meeting, which was arranged by Mr. Zamad Khan, a Belarusian national of Pakistan origin. The Ambassador briefed the members on Pak-Belarus bilateral relations and latest developments in diverse areas of engagements. He particularly highlighted Pakistan's strengths as a burgeoning market of more than 220 million and geographical advantage making it an ideal destination for trade and investment.



Subsequently, the delegation was given a tour of the "Emerging Pakistan Display Centre" that has been established by the Mission, for a firsthand introduction with the range of Pakistani exportable products including textiles, home textiles, rice, surgical instruments, sports products, cutlery, salt, brass items and spices among multiple others. They were also acquainted with the rich Pakistani culture, national heritage and tourism potential by a walk around tour of the gallery having pictorial depictions about Pakistan.

Shanghai wrestles with food shortages

BEIJING: Residents of Shanghai are struggling to get meat, rice and other food supplies under anti-coronavirus controls that confine most of its 25 million people in their homes, fueling frustration as the government tries to contain a spreading outbreak. People in China's business capital complain online grocers often are sold out. Some received government food packages of meat and vegetables for a few days. But with no word on when they will be allowed out, anxiety is rising. Zhang Yu, 33, said her household of eight eats three meals a day but has cut back to noodles for lunch. They received no government supplies. "It's not easy to keep this up," said Zhang, who starts shopping online at 7 a.m. "We read on the news there is (food), but we just can't buy it," she said. "As soon as you go to the grocery shopping app, it says today's orders are filled." - AP

Bucha scenes have cast shadow on peace process



ANKARA: Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu on Thursday described the footage of dead Ukrainian citizens as "unacceptable" and said that the scenes from Bucha have cast a shadow on the peace process.

Addressing reporters after a NATO foreign ministers meeting at the NATO headquarters in Brussels, Çavuşoğlu stated that he discussed the latest developments on

the ground in Ukraine and the topic of potential guarantor countries. "The images from Bucha, Irpin and other regions are unacceptable. These scenes have overshadowed the negotiations," he said. "The emerging positive atmosphere, unfortunately, was overshadowed." "Our talks with both sides on evacuations from Mariupol are continuing. Most of our citizens have left the city, but we know that around 30 more citizens are still there," Çavuşoğlu also said, referring to the recent plans to evacuate citizens from the besieged port city by sea. "We see that there is a significant difference in their stances toward Turkey," Çavuşoğlu said, referring to countries participating in the NATO meeting. - Agencies

14.5 billion invested in CSR activities by OICCI members

NAZIR SIYAN

KARACHI: The members of the Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI), like previous years, once again reaffirmed their commitment to uplift the Pakistani society from all aspects and invested PKR 14.5 billion in different CSR and Sustainable projects during 2020-21, stated in a press statement issued here today for sharing the highlights of OICCI Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Report 2020-21. About 100 of the leading foreign investors and members of OICCI continued to stand by the government to fight the pandemic of COVID-19 besides carrying out their several CSR initiatives which benefit the marginal-

ized communities across the country. The CSR activities of OICCI members do not only include monetary contributions but the intellect and time of their employees as well which develop sustainable and long-term projects across Pakistan with the underlying commitment to uplift the underprivileged strata of the society through different means. President OICCI, Ghias Khan, commended the unparalleled commitment of OICCI members who are inspiring the corporate sector alike to invest in the society besides introducing latest technology and skills transfer for the local population. "The OICCI members keep on enhancing the CSR fabric through a proactive engagement between business and all stakeholders in the society which

results in model CSR initiatives and Sustainability practices, largely in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) to meet the growing needs of the society", Ghias added. Vice President OICCI, Amir Paracha, highlighted that the annual CSR Report 2020-21 reflects the feedback from about half of OICCI membership who have shared their CSR activities. This year total CSR contribution was PKR 11 billion, which benefited about 34 million direct beneficiaries across the country. OICCI members and their colleagues spent around 1.4 million man-hours and partnered with 160 social and development sector organizations throughout Pakistan. The geographic distribution of the CSR activities has been 31% in Sindh, 27% in Punjab

and well-being, and actively supported health and nutrition related initiatives through donations to reputable hospitals, medical care camps and health awareness campaigns. Moreover, 73% of members contributed to Quality Education by funding primary and secondary school facilities, scholarships, and various vocational training programs for skills development. Gender Equality is also one of the focus areas where more than half of our participant-members supported the women empowerment activities and actively supported the "OICCI Women" initiative in place since 2017. OICCI is the collective body of top 200 foreign investors in Pakistan, belonging to 35 countries, who are also the largest contributor to the economy of Pakistan besides being the largest foreign investors.

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Armenia, Azerbaijan gear up for Karabakh peace talks

Armenian and Azerbaijani leaders order their foreign ministers to begin preparation of a future peace treaty

NEWS DESK

BRUSSELS: Armenia and Azerbaijan are preparing for peace talks, their officials said on Thursday, after a recent flare-up in the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region. Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev met on Wednesday in Brussels for rare talks mediated by the European Council President Charles Michel. The meeting came after a flare-up in Nagorno-Karabakh on March 25 that allegedly saw Azerbaijan capture a strategic village in the area under the Russian peacekeepers' responsibility, killing three Armenian separatist troops. During the meeting, the two leaders "ordered foreign

ministers to begin preparatory work for peace talks between the two countries", the foreign ministry in Yerevan said in a statement. "An agreement was reached during the meeting ... to set up a bilateral commission on the issues of delimitation of the Armenian-Azerbaijan border, which will be in charge of ensuring security and stability along the frontier," the ministry said. Azerbaijan's foreign ministry also said works were under way to begin peace talks, adding that the future peace treaty would be based "on the basic principles proposed earlier by Azerbaijan". The European Union said Michel "noted both Prime Minister Aliyev's and President Pashinyan's stated desire to move rapidly towards a peace agreement between their countries".



"To this end, it was agreed to instruct Ministers of Foreign Affairs to work on the preparation of a future peace treaty, which would address all necessary issues," it said in a statement. After the March incident,

Moscow and Yerevan accused Azerbaijan of a ceasefire violation, a charge Baku has rejected, insisting its troops are in Azerbaijan's sovereign territory. Yerevan also called on Baku to start peace talks "without delay". Baku agreed, saying it had already put forward such a proposal a year ago. Baku tabled in mid-March its set of framework proposals for the peace agreement that includes both sides' mutual recognition of territorial integrity, meaning Yerevan should agree on Nagorno-Karabakh being part of Azerbaijan. Armenian foreign minister Ararat Mirzoyan sparked controversy at home when he said - commenting on the Azerbaijani proposal - that for Yerevan "the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is not a territorial issue, but a

matter of rights" of the local ethnic-Armenian population. Long-contested between the Caucasus neighbours, Nagorno-Karabakh was at the centre of an all-out war in 2020 that killed more than 6,500 people before it ended with a Russian-brokered ceasefire agreement. The pact saw Armenia cede swathes of territories it had controlled for decades in what was seen in Armenia as a national humiliation, sparking weeks of mass anti-government protests. On Tuesday, several thousand opposition supporters rallied in Yerevan to warn the government against concessions on Nagorno-Karabakh. Ethnic Armenian separatists in Nagorno-Karabakh broke away from Azerbaijan when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. The ensuing conflicts killed about 30,000 people.

Briefs

HC seeks report from FIA in PECA case

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday sought detailed report from Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) in cases challenging amendments in Prevention of Electronic Crime Act (PECA). Chief Justice Athar Minallah heard the cases filed by Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) and Pakistan Broadcasters Association (PBA). Additional Attorney General Qasim Wadood adopted the stance that 22 thousands complaints out of 94 thousands had been addressed. Chief Justice Athar Minallah noted that the FIA had no such capacity as the officers were not professionally trained. The court said that the FIA had taken actions on certain complaints to protect the repute of public office holders. There were only four thousands cases before the bench out of 22 thousands, it added. Additional Attorney General said that the ordinance couldn't be tabled in both houses at the same time. He said section-20 of PECA should remain intact with the ordinance. The AAG said that the public office holders and policies could be criticized. However, personal attacks on public office holders and their relatives shouldn't be permitted. - APP

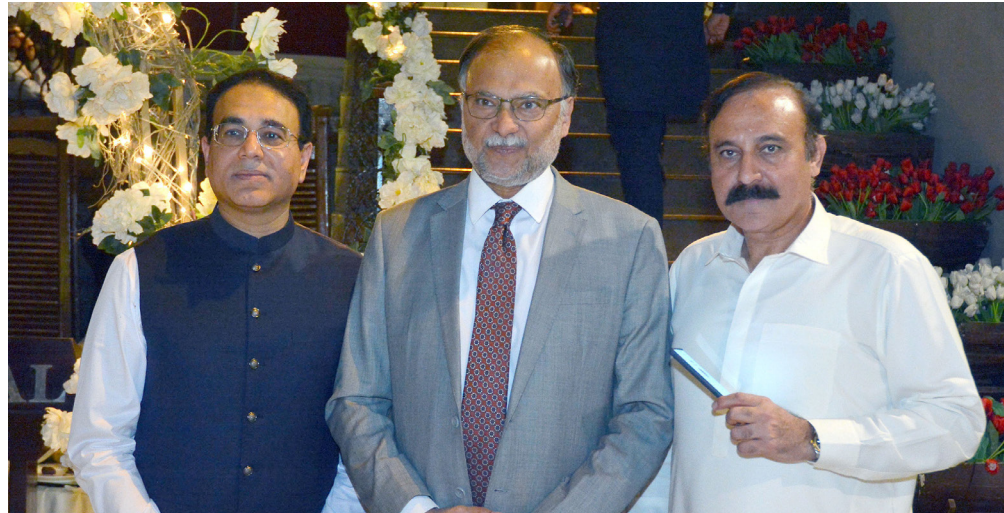
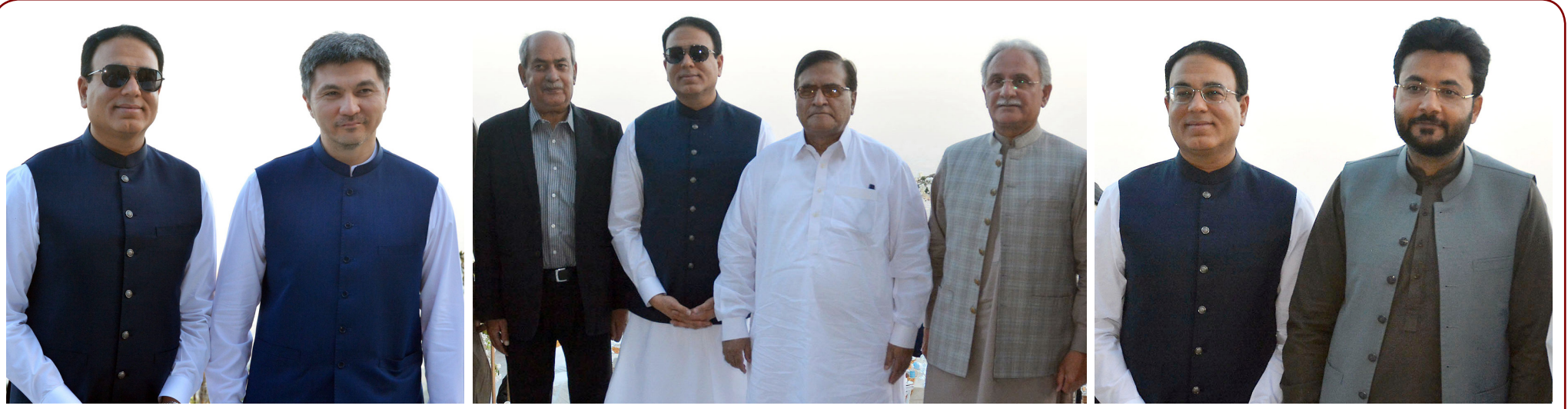
Scholz gets stinging defeat in parliament

BERLIN: German Chancellor Olaf Scholz suffered a stinging defeat in parliament on Thursday, with lawmakers voting down a government-backed proposal for mandatory vaccinations for people above 60. Scholz, who in late November touted compulsory jabs for all adults as the surest way out of the pandemic, had set a goal of introducing the jabs in "late February or early March". But the effort has petered out since, as even some members of the liberal FDP, which is part of Scholz's coalition, are opposed. After weeks of wrangling to find a formulation that could win a majority, a government-backed proposal for over-60s to get vaccinated was put to the vote on Thursday. But only 296 lawmakers voted in favour, while 378 parliamentarians cast their ballots against. The defeat was all the more embarrassing as the proposal was already significantly watered down to include only those above 60, a smaller group than the originally targeted adult population in general. While Covid infections remain high in Germany, the push for jabs in recent weeks has lost momentum as hospitals have been far from overwhelmed. - APP

US dollar goes out of control

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The pounding of Pakistani rupee at the hands of the US dollar went on as the greenback muscled past triple historic barriers during the intrabank trading on Thursday. As the business opened on Thursday, the US dollar first soared past historic Rs187 barrier in a flash and then bulldozed Rs188 barrier and later pummeled the Rs189 mark, scoring a heavy gain of two rupees and 87 paisas - a historic performance. The US dollar which ended Wednesday at Rs186.13 shot up to Rs189 by noon on Thursday. Economists were of the view that the rates of imported items will also rise due to the expensive dollar as its value rose nearly 11 rupees and 59 paisas in one month and seven days. With its rollercoaster ride, the US dollar rate has reached the historic high against the rupee. The greenback is constantly making big strides against the hopeless rupee which has been greatly pummeled after weathering the political uncertainties at home.



ISLAMABAD: CEO and Founder of Monal Group Luqman Ali Afzal hosted iftar dinner for diplomats, members of civil society, businessmen, politicians at Monal. The restaurant was decorated elegantly on the occasion. Full coverage of the event shall be published in the coming issue of Centreline. - DNA Photo Shahid Raju



PM launches 911 helpline for emergency services

The prime minister, who earlier launched the helpline by pushing a button, also lauded the interior ministry and other collaborating departments for establishing helpline said that it would also require constant coordination among all provinces

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Thursday launched a 911 Helpline to provide all emergency relief services through a single platform, which he believed, was a major step forward to developing Pakistan on the pattern of the Madina welfare state. "Now, every citizen in any part of the country will get the state's response (in case of any emergency). This is a major move forward towards our mission statement of making Pakistan an Islamic welfare state," the prime minister said addressing the launching ceremony of the helpline. The integrated Pakistan Emergency Helpline (PEHEL)-911 would provide emergency services like fire brigade, police, health assistance, disaster recovery and motorway police etc. A needy person will have to dial just 911 and the call center would forward the call to the relevant government agency. The prime minister said the government was striving to ease people's lives as in any welfare state, the citizens should have the confidence of receiving the state's response



in case of any threat to life and property. He said besides being a major facility, the PEHEL helpline would also give the people a feeling that Pakistan was for all as earlier, there were two parallel discriminatory systems supporting rich and poor respectively. The prime minister, who earlier launched the helpline by pushing a button, also lauded the interior ministry and other collaborating departments for establishing the

helpline said that it would also require constant coordination among all provinces. "This project should have all the provinces on the same page because it was about the benefit of all," he remarked. The prime minister said the PEHEL helpline would also enable the government to maintain the crimes data besides assessing the requirement of resources in different sectors. Reiterating his vision of making Pakistan a welfare state, said his government had launched Sehat Insaf Card providing Rs 1 million health insurance to every family across the country, except the opposition-led Sindh province. He said being, a provincial subject, the people of Sindh could not get the facility of health insurance. He said the government introduced a core national single curriculum to do away with the discriminatory education system and also launched multiple welfare initiatives under the umbrella of the Ehsaas and Kamyab Jawan Program including skill training, interest-free loans, housing loans, and farmers loans. Moreover, the introduction of a legal aid system to provide free legal services to needy people was also on his government's agenda.

CM for maximum relief to poor segment

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: As an important step to give maximum relief to the deserving households of the province, Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan has decided in principle to launch Food Card Program in the budget of new fiscal year. Under the proposed Food Card Program, it is initially proposed to provide free of cost wheat flour or provision of four basic food items at subsidized rates to the deserving households. More or less one million households and over 5.00 million individuals will benefit from the program. The Chief Minister has taken this decision while chairing a meeting of the food department held here on Thursday. Special Assistant to CM on Information Barister Muhammad Ali Saif, Additional Chief Secretary Shahab Ali Shah, Secretary Finance Ikramullah Khan and Secretary Food Mushtaq Ahmad and other relevant officials of food department attended the meeting. The meeting was briefed in detail about the preliminary sketch and features of the proposed Food Card Program, registration of deserving households, estimated cost, implementation mechanism and other various aspects of the program. The meeting also reviewed the various proposals for providing basic food items to deserving households on subsidized rates under the proposed program. The chief minister has directed the quarters concerned to submit workable proposals for approval to this effect. He also directed the food department to finalize the list of deserving households for the purpose. Talking on the occasion, the chief minister said that he was fully aware of the problems of people due to current inflation in the country adding that incumbent government was taking solid steps to curtail the burden of inflation on general public. He said that the provincial government was making a plan to give significant relief to deserving households of the province in the budget of next fiscal year.

Turkey suspends Khashoggi trial, transfers to KSA

"We decided to halt and hand over the case to Saudi Arabia"

ANKARA: A Turkish court has ruled to suspend the trial in absentia of 26 Saudis accused in the killing of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi and for the case to be transferred to Saudi Arabia. The 59-year-old journalist was killed inside the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on October 2,

2018. Last week, the prosecutor had called for the trial in absentia to be transferred to Saudi authorities. Turkey's justice minister later said the government would approve the request. "We decided to halt and hand over the case to Saudi Arabia," the Istanbul court said on Thursday, granting the prosecutor's request on March 31. The decision came despite warnings from human rights groups that turning the case over to the kingdom would lead to a cover-up of the killing, which a 2018 US intelligence report had linked to Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. Khashoggi's fiancée, Hatice Cengiz, a Turkish academic and researcher, said she would appeal the decision. Turkey "is not ruled by a family like in Saudi Arabia", she said, telling journalists outside the court that "we have a justice system that addresses citizens' grievances". "We will appeal the decision in line with our legal system," she added. Turkey has been trying to repair its relationship with Saudi Arabia and an array of other countries in the region.

Yemen president cedes powers to council as ceasefire holds

RIYADH: Yemen's president said Thursday he is handing his powers to a new leadership council, in a major shake-up in the coalition battling Huthi rebels as a fragile ceasefire takes hold. But Huthi spokesman Mohammed Abdulsalam dismissed the move as "a desperate attempt to rearrange the ranks of the mercenaries" fighting in Yemen, and said peace would only come once foreign forces leave. President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi made the announcement in a televised statement on the final day of Yemen talks held in the Saudi capital Riyadh. "I irrevocably delegate to this presidential leadership council my full powers," he said. Saudi Arabia said it welcomed Hadi's announcement and pledged \$3 billion in aid and support for its war-torn neighbour, some of it to be paid by the United Arab Emirates. Hadi's internationally recognised government has been locked in conflict with the Iran-backed Huthis, who control the capital Sanaa and most of the north despite a Saudi-led military intervention launched in 2015. Hadi has been based in Saudi Arabia since fleeing to the kingdom that year as rebel forces closed in on his last redoubt, the southern port city of Aden. A United Nations-brokered truce that took effect last Saturday - the first day of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan - has offered a glimmer of hope in the conflict which has triggered what the UN calls the world's worst humanitarian crisis. The truce came as discussions on Yemen were unfolding in Riyadh without the participation of the Huthis, who refused to attend talks on "enemy" territory. The talks concluded Thursday with Yemeni Prime Minister Maen Abdulmalik Saeed calling on the new leadership council "to start negotiations with the Huthis under the supervision of the United Nations in order to reach a final and comprehensive political solution". - DNA



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood receives Somali Ambassador Khadija Almahzoumi for a farewell call. - DNA