



# Islamabad POST

Thursday, April 14, 2022

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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**Shehbaz assures CM Sindh of support for development**

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**Turkey ready for Mariupol evacuation**

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**Fokina downs Djokovic in Monte Carlo**

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**Briefs**

**Want PML-Q back in sphere**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari has said that they wanted Pakistan Muslim League Quaid (PML-Q) back in the political sphere, media reported on Wednesday. Asif Ali Zardari said in a statement that an agreement was signed with all coalition parties. "I have united them and their demands will be met. I am the guarantor of the agreement with Mutahida Qaumi Movement (MQM)." The PPP co-chairman said, "Pervaiz Elahi is senior among us and we will keep making efforts for him."

**Big powers may hit Khan**

DNA

PESHAWAR: Former interior minister Sheikh Rashid Wednesday claimed that foreign powers may have former prime minister and PTI Chairman assassinated as they want to rein in Pakistan's foreign policy. In a conversation with reporters in Peshawar, the AML president said the ex-prime minister could either be assassinated or the "foreign powers" could have him imprisoned. Rashid said Khan would not bow down before the foreign powers as he berated the incumbent government for being "international beggars" due to whom Pakistanis abroad were burning their passports.

**Imran 'forcefully' taking resignations**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: PML-N leader Ayaz Sadiq said Wednesday that PTI Chairman Imran Khan was "forcefully" taking resignations from his party's lawmakers in the National Assembly. The former speaker said Khan was forcefully asking lawmakers to resign and submitting their resignations to Deputy Speaker Qasim Suri.

## US hopes for defense ties' continuation

The Pentagon official says the US recognises that Pakistan plays a key role in the region

DNA

WASHINGTON: The Pentagon has hoped that the United States would continue its "healthy" military-to-military ties with Pakistan despite the change in the government and swearing-in of Shehbaz Sharif as the prime minister. "...we do have a healthy military-to-military relationship with Pakistani armed forces. And we have every expectation that that will be able to continue to be the case," Pentagon Press Secretary John F Kirby said in a press briefing Tuesday. PM Shehbaz was sworn in as the prime minister on April 11, following the ouster of the Imran Khan government through a no-confidence motion - making him the first premier to be removed through the democratic process. The Pentagon official said the US recognises that it has shared interests with Pakistan with respect to security and stability. "We recognise that Pakistan plays a key role in the region." Ruling out any US military role in Pakistan, he said that America recognises that Pakistan and its people are, themselves, victims of terrorist attacks "inside their own country". "I don't foresee any US military role here. And I'm certainly not going to, again, wade into internal domestic politics in Pakistan," he told a journalist at the press briefing.

**Pakistan rejects India-US joint statement**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office categorically rejected on Wednesday the "unwarranted reference" to Pakistan in a joint statement issued by India and US following the fourth '2+2' dialogue between the two countries. In the statement, US and India called on Pakistan to take "immediate, sustained, and irreversible action" to ensure that no territory under its control was used for terrorist attacks. According to Radio Pakistan, the Foreign Office in Islamabad rejected the statement and called it a "betrayal to the counter-terrorism focus of both countries". "It is unfortunate that a bilateral cooperation mechanism is being used to target a third country for political expediency and to mislead public opinion away from the real and emerging terrorism threats. The assertions made against Pakistan in the statement are malicious and lack any credibility."

Continued on Page 06

## Palestine, UK, UAE leaders felicitate Shehbaz

Bangladeshi Prime Minister also sent a congratulatory message for Shehbaz

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Abbas praised the historical bilateral relations between the two countries which are based on the principles of brotherhood, solidarity, and mutual appreciation, stressing keenness to work jointly towards strengthening these relations in the interest of the two countries. President Abbas expressed appreciation for Pakistan's stances in support of the Palestinian people and their just cause. President Mahmoud Abbas today congratulated in a cable Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif on his election as the new Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. President Abbas extended his heartfelt congratulations to Sharif on his election, wishing him success in



performing his tasks, as well as in achieving the goals and aspirations of the Pakistani people. President Abbas praised the historical bilateral relations between the two countries which are based on the principles of brotherhood, solidarity, and mutual appreciation, stressing keenness to work jointly towards strengthening these relations in the interest of the two countries.

President Abbas expressed appreciation for Pakistan's stances in support of the Palestinian people and their just cause. Separately, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces of United Arab Emirates has felicitated

Continued on Page 06

## Some 1,000 Ukraine marines surrender, claims Russia

Ukraine accuses Russia of blocking aid convoys to tens of thousands of civilians it says are still trapped in Mariupol

NEWS DESK

MARIUPOL: More than 1,000 Ukrainian marines have surrendered in the port of Mariupol, Russia's defence ministry said on Wednesday, signalling that it had moved closer to capturing the ruined city, its main strategic target in eastern Ukraine. If the Russians take the Azovstal industrial district, where the marines have been holed up, they would have full control of Mariupol, Ukraine's main Sea of Azov port, reinforcing a southern land corridor before an expected new offensive in the country's east. Surrounded and bombarded by Russian troops for weeks and the focus of some of the fiercest fighting in the war, Mariupol would be the first major city to fall since Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24. Russia's defence ministry said 162 officers were among the marines who had surrendered to Russian and pro-Russian separatist forces. "In the town of Mariupol, near the Ilyich Iron and Steel Works, as a result of successful offensives by Russian armed forces and Donetsk People's Republic militia units, 1,026 Ukrainian soldiers of the 36th Marine Brigade voluntarily laid down arms and surrendered," the ministry said in a statement.

**Russia: US, NATO weapon transports legitimate targets**

MOSCOW: Russia will view U.S. and NATO vehicles transporting weapons on Ukrainian territory as legitimate military targets, Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov told the TASS news agency in an interview on Wednesday. Any attempts by the West to inflict significant damage on Russia's military or its separatist allies in Ukraine will be "harshly suppressed," he added. "We are warning that US-NATO weapons transports across Ukrainian territory will be considered by us as legal military targets," TASS quoted Ryabkov as saying. "We are making the Americans and other Westerners understand that attempts to slow down our special operation, to inflict maximum damage on Russian contingents and formations of the DPR and LPR (Donetsk and Luhansk People's republics) will be harshly suppressed," he said. - Agencies

Continued on Page 06



KARACHI: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif lays floral wreath at Mazar-e-Quaid. - DNA

**Staff of African mission booked**

Driver booked on harassment charges

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Police have booked a Pakistani staff member of an African embassy on the charges of sexual harassment. An FIR has been registered in the Police Station Ratta Amral, Rawalpindi. According to the details a staff member working in an African embassy tried to sexually harass a woman hailing from Rawalpindi. He promised her a job in the embassy and in return asked for an immoral act. The affected woman in her complaint submitted before the police that she was a housewife and looking for a job. The man in question approached her and promised her a job. He also asked for her pictures and other details. But after some time he started blackmailing her. She further told the police that due to his threats her family life was disturbed badly therefore she decided to lodge a formal complaint. Police, after registering the First Information Report (FIR), have started further investigations.

**FIA nabs 12 trollers**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The FIA counter-terrorism unit on Wednesday arrested 12 trollers involved in running smear campaign against sensitive institutions and important personalities.

Continued on Page 06

**Will request China to include KCR in CPEC, says PM**

Shehbaz was in Karachi on a day's visit; meets CM Shah and MQM-P leaders

DNA

KARACHI: Newly elect Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Wednesday said Pakistan would request China to include Karachi Circular Railway (KCR) in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects. Shehbaz was in Karachi on a day's visit and has left for Islamabad after paying his respects at the Quaid-e-Azam mausoleum and meeting Chief Minister Sindh Murad Ali Shah and MQM-P leaders. Speaking to journalists, after his one-on-one meeting with CM Shah - where they discussed political, economic, and several other issues of the province - Shehbaz mentioned that earlier Chinese authorities had shown interest in KCR; however, due to political changes, things weren't finalised. Shehbaz assured CM Sindh regarding the federal government's support for the development and betterment of the province. "Terming Karachi's drinking water issue, the "biggest challenge", the premier said that he has requested CM Sindh and other relevant authorities to complete the programme - under which half capacity requirement will be fulfilled -by 2024 directing him to

Continued on Page 06

**Directs to control electricity outages**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Newly-elected Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has ordered the concerned authorities to take immediate measures to arrest power outages vowing he will not let gas and electricity crisis hit the country. Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday was chairing an emergency meeting on energy. The meeting discussed a strategy to control electricity loadshedding and provision of petroleum products. The country witnesses an acute upsurge in power outages during summers. The newly-elected premier directed the concerned ministries to take steps to immediately control loadshedding, besides finding reasons behind excessive power outages. He warned that he would not tolerate any laxity on the part of ministries in this regard. Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, Miftah Ismail, officials of petroleum and finance ministries participated in the meeting. Shehbaz vowed that he would not let country confront the gas and electricity crisis.

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Pakistan's rice export to China increases 3.9% to \$132.59m - Page 07

Shehbaz' remarks on CPEC highly commendable: China - Page 08



## Briefs

## Propaganda against Army, external agenda

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Talking about the current political situation, PML-Q Deputy Secretary Information Khawaja Rameez Hassan said that the development of the country is conditional on the rule of law and constitution. He said that propaganda campaign against national institutions is an external agenda. A vicious conspiracy is being hatched to weaken the state structure by targeting the Pakistan Army and law enforcement agencies in which our own people are being used.

Economic reforms are a major challenge for the new government, he said, adding that heavy food subsidies are essential for the troubled common man. At present, cheap flour, Ghee and sugar are more important than amendments to the constitution

## No compromise on country's sovereignty, integrity: CM

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister, Mahmood Khan here Wednesday said Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf would continue political struggle for supremacy of democracy and no compromise would be made on the country's integrity and sovereignty. He said KP was the stronghold of Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf and Peshawarites would again repose full confidence in the leadership of former Prime Minister Imran Khan today. Talking to media persons after inspecting arrangements for the public meeting to be addressed by Imran Khan tonight, the Chief Minister said that PTI was the most popular political party of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and it's people are standing with Imran Khan like a solid rock. He said Imran Khan was launching its new Movement from Peshawar and would announce some 'surprises' in today's public gathering. - APP

## 2 awarded 5-year jail in explosive recovery case

FAISALABAD: An anti-terrorism court Wednesday awarded five-year rigorous imprisonment to two accused each in an explosive material recovery case. The court also ordered for confiscating properties of the convicts. ATC Judge Muhammad Hussain announced the verdict after hearing arguments of the parties and examining evidence. According to the prosecution, a Counter-Terrorism Department team had arrested the accused, Sartaj and Wasal - and recovered explosive material from them on Dec 7, last year. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Chairman PTI Imran Khan chairs PTI's Political Committee meeting. In which political gatherings across the country and future political strategy was discussed. - DNA

## No compromise on safety and security of FESCO staff

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Superintendent Engineer Second Circle Ahmad Ali Shah has said that implementation of safety codes is mandatory and no compromise should be made on safety of FESCO staff. Line staff adhering to work with safety principles is a valuable asset of Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO), he was addressing a function to award cash prizes and appreciation certificates to the best performing linemen in Nazimabad Division. He further said that the encourage-

ment of employees, working for the betterment of the company is commendable which would also continue in future also. Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Director Safety Saeed Raza said that FESCO Health Safety and Environment (HSE) Directorate is taking various steps to protect the line staff from fatal as well as non-fatal accidents. He said that FESCO is spending huge amount every year for purchase of standard T&P while a pocket size safety booklet has also been introduced for the line staff, which contains necessary instructions regarding first aid during work and in case of

accident. Director Public Relations Tahir Mehmood Sheikh in his address said that on the special directive of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) FESCO Engr. Bashir Ahmed, punishment and retribution is practically implementing in FESCO. Departmental action against the employees who disregard the safety policy while awarding commendation certificates and rewards for staff, using complete safety T&P will inspire other employees to do better. Executive Engineer (XEN) Nazimabad Division Rao Muhammad Zubair said that during the maintenance work including shut-

down, the staff is being closely monitored to ensure the safety of their precious lives and the lives and property of the people. He further said that FESCO is adopting zero tolerance policy for safety in which no negligence will be tolerated in any case. Later, SE Second Circle Ahmad Ali Shah and other officers presented cash prizes and appreciation certificates to the best linemen. Deputy Commercial Manager Second Circle Iqbal Khan Niazi, Revenue Officer Nazimabad Division Wasim Asghar, SDOs of the division and a large number of employees attended the function.



KARACHI: Turkish Consul General Karachi posing for a photo with guests after an Iftar dinner hosted by Turkish consulate general. - DNA

## PTI's politics giving rise to hatred: Sherry Rehman

PPP leader said the narrative of corruption and accountability exposed, and therefore, PTI was looking for a new narrative in 'threat letter'

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Vice President and Senator Sherry Rehman said on

Wednesday that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) style of politics was giving rise to hatred and chaos in the country. "The charged followers of Imran Khan are setting a very dangerous trend in the country, and the PTI leadership is responsible for that because the workers usually do on social media as well as in everyday life what their leadership asks them to do," she said. "An anti-American narrative is being developed to avoid questions about performance. People are fed up with your narratives, for they know that your new narrative is no

different from your past attempts to gain votes," she said to the PTI leadership. She stated that the PTI's narrative against corruption was also a lie, adding that before the PTI government, Pakistan was ranked 117th in the Corruption Perception Index (CPI). "But, it was ranked 140th in 2021 in the CPI due to the PTI government." The PPP leader said that the narrative of corruption and accountability had been exposed, and therefore, the PTI was looking for a new narrative in 'threat letter'.

## CPEC to weed out poverty

FAISALABAD: China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has emerged as the most vibrant political and economic block with the ultimate objective to weed out poverty and bring prosperity in the third world countries linked with it, said Engineer Ahmad Hassan, Chairman FCCI standing committee on Research & Development (R&D). Addressing a meeting at FCCI here, he said that Pakistan is blessed with a geo-strategic position connecting several sub-regions of Asia and the Arabian Sea. He said that Pakistan's immediate neighbour Afghanistan has no access to sea and the 17 years conflict has slowed down its economy. "The central Asian republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan are also landlocked countries but with abundance of natural resources", he said and added that with CPEC and its synergies with other existing regional connectivity projects, both regions could have the opportunity to work together to expand economic ties and overcome fiscal and energy deficits. He said that CPEC is the flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative that has not only enhanced Pakistan's importance to Asia, but also promotes regional connectivity in central and south Asia. - APP

## PTI counsel presents arguments before ECP in foreign funding case

DNA

ISLAMABAD: PTI's lawyer Anwar Mansoor on Wednesday presented arguments before a panel of the election commission in foreign funding case. A three-member bench of the Election Commission of Pakistan headed by CEC Sikandar Sultan Raja heard the case. Anwar Mansoor, a former attorney general, argued before the ECP that a company registered outside Pakistan could not be called a local entity. "Funding from multi-national and local companies has been prohibited," Anwar Mansoor said. "In the election law funding from foreign sources has been prohibited," he said. "The Election Act has removed ban on funding from the local companies," the counsel further

argued. "Are you confessing of foreign funding to the party," Sindh member of the ECP Nisar Durrani questioned. "No funds received from prohibited sources," PTI counsel replied. "The money came from abroad but allegation of funding from prohibited sources is wrong," the counsel said. "The petitioner should prove the allegation with evidence if the donors are foreigners," the counsel said. "The party didn't accept funding from any Indian national," PTI lawyer said. "Will you deem him a foreigner if a Hindu citizen got dual nationality," the lawyer posed question. "Funds coming to the party from the United States were declared foreign funding," Mansoor said. "Fund raising required necessary registration in the US, all funds coming from the overseas were declared," he said.



PESHAWAR: Vice Chancellor Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University Dr. Naseem Akher inaugurating Flower Show, Organized by Directorate of Administration SBBWU. - APP

## Imran Khan okays no-confidence motion against own AJK PM Niazi

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In order to frustrate PDM's possible no-trust move against Azad Jammu and Kashmir government, the PTI has decided to sacrifice its own Prime Minister Sardar Abdul Qayyum Niazi. Former prime minister and PTI Head Imran Khan on Wednesday while giving approval of the no-confidence motion against his party's AJK premier, also suggested

name for the new chief executive of the valley. PTI Secretary General Asad Umar wrote a letter to AJK Assembly speaker in this regard. According to the letter, Sardar Tanveer Ilyas would be the PTI contender for the premiership. The AJK assembly session would be convened on April 15. Imran Khan has instructed all MLAs of the party in this connection. The PDM wanted to bring a no-confidence motion in the AJK assembly with the help of

estranged members of the ruling PTI. After the general elections in AJK in July 2021 in which PTI emerged as the largest party, Sardar Tanveer Ilyas was the strongest candidate for premiership but Imran Khan installed Qayyum Niazi as prime minister of the AJK. PTI MLAs were of the view that the party would not have to see this day if Imran Khan had made right decision. In its reaction, the PPP AJK said on Tuesday that they along

with PML-N would table their own no-confidence motion against Abdul Qayyum Niazi. PPP AJK Central Deputy Information Secretary Shaukat Javed Mir said the PTI had itself expressed no-confidence against its own government. "We will oust this government which was imposed on us through rigging," he added. Sardar Abdul Qayyum Niazi was sworn in as the 13th prime minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir in August 2021. Meanwhile,

PTI Chairman Imran Khan has summoned AJK Prime Minister Sardar Abdul Qayyum Niazi against whom the party is bringing no-trust move, to meet him immediately at Bani Gala. Sources said Imran Khan would discuss no-confidence motion and other political affairs with Mr Niazi. They would also discuss complaints about Ali Amin Gandapur and Sardar Tanveer Ilyas, sources concluded. In a dramatic turn of events, AJK PM Niazi dur-

ing his telephonic conversation with PTI Chairman Imran Khan complained to him that a big conspiracy was hatched against his government. He apprised Imran that whatever the latter was told against him, was not true. Mr Niazi alleged that a deal of billions of rupees was struck between former minister Ali Amin Gandapur and AJK senior minister Tanveer Ilyas to oust him. He told Imran Khan that he would prove conspiracy against him.

## Over 8.309m people vaccinated in Faisalabad

FAISALABAD: Over 8.309 million (8,309,308) people have so far been vaccinated against COVID-19 in the district. District Health Officer Dr Ataul Mun'im said on Wednesday that 4,614,638 citizens were injected first dose while 3,611,427 were administered the second dose of vaccine. He further said that 39,851 health workers were also given first dose while 43,392 received the second dose of vaccine. He said that sufficient stock of coronavirus vaccine was available in the district. He said that 37 vaccination centers and 20 mobile vaccination camps were operational in Faisalabad where registered people were being vaccinated. In order to facilitate the people these centers had been established in various areas of the city including Allied Hospital, District Headquarters Hospital, Government General Hospital, Faisalabad Institute of Cardiology, Government General Hospital Samanabad, Children Hospital, Sports Complex Samanabad, Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Jaranwala, Samundri, Tandlianwala, Chak Jhumra, Sports Complex Chak Jhumrah, Sports Complex Jaranwala, Government General Hospital Chak 224/R-B, New Building RHC Khurrianwala, New Building THQ Samundri, New Building THQ Tandlianwala, Social Security Hospital Madina Town, Wapda Hospital, Rural Health Centers Mureed Wala, Chak 174-JB, Chak 134-JB, Chak 229/R-B, Chak 65-GB, RHC Lundianwala Jaranwala, RHC Khurrianwala Jaranwala, Pindi Sheikh Musa, Kanjwani, Mamukanjan, RHC Chak 400-GB, RHC Chak 153/R-B, RHC Chak 374-GB and Chak 469-GB, he added. He further said that timing of these vaccination centers was 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. except Sports Complex Samanabad center which would remain open round the clock. - APP

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## National Days and Armed Forces Days

### APRIL

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



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### Emergency

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### Hospitals

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

### Water Tank

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# ICCI hosts grand iftar dinner for diplomats, business community

Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, ICCI welcomed the excellences, dignitaries and members of business community for attending the dinner. He briefed the foreign diplomats about the business and investment opportunities in various sectors of Pakistan's economy



### DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) in collaboration with Sheikh Amir Waheed, former President ICCI hosted an Iftar Dinner in honor of foreign diplomats. H.E. Mr. Atadjan N. Movlammov, Dean of Diplomatic Corps and Ambassador of Turkmenistan as well as diplomats of various

countries including Japan, Indonesia, Vietnam, Turkey, Iran, Sweden, Norway, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Ukraine attended the Iftar Dinner. Chairman Founder Group Khalid Iqbal Malik, Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah Federal Tax Ombudsman, Ms. Kashmala Khan Federal Ombudsman Secretariat for Protection Against Harassment, former Presidents ICCI including Khalid Javed,

Abdul Rauf Alam, Tariq Sadiq, Zubair Ahmed Malik, Mian Shaukat Masud, Ejaz Abbasi, Zafar Bakhtawari, Baser Daud, Nasir Khan, Zahid Maqbool, Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, Muhammad Ahmad, Atif Ikram, Senior Member Nasir Qureshi, former Senior Vice Presidents Muhammad Naveed Malik, Khalid Chaudhry, former Vice Presidents Ahsan Zafar Bakhawari & Ashfaq Chatha, Executive Mem-

bers ICCI, many dignitaries and a large number of business community attended the Iftar Dinner. Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry welcomed the excellences, dignitaries and members of business community for attending the dinner. He briefed the foreign diplomats about the business and investment

opportunities in various sectors of Pakistan's economy. He said that many Special Economic Zones were being set up in Pakistan under CEPC that offered great opportunities for JVs and investment to local and foreign investors. He said that the construction industry was a booming sector in Pakistan with attractive prospects for local and foreign investors. He said that marble & granite,

pharmaceuticals, infrastructure development, oil & gas and many other sectors also offered good opportunities for JVs and investment and stressed that the foreign diplomats should play a role to motivate the investors of their respective countries to explore Pakistan for JVs and investment. Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President and Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President ICCI

thanked the foreign diplomats, dignitaries and the members of business community for attending the Iftar Dinner. They also highlighted the business and investment opportunities for foreign investors in Pakistan and hoped that the foreign diplomats would inform the investors of their respective countries about these opportunities so that they could capitalize on them.

## Police committed to resolving public grievances on priority

ISLAMABAD: Inspector-General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Muhammad Ahsan Younas Wednesday said that the police were committed to resolving public grievances on merit and save the life and property of the citizens on priority. He said expressed these views while listening to the public issues during a 'Khuli Kacheri' (Open Court) held at Central Police Office (CPO) in which people submit their problems. The IGP listened to the grievances of the public as

well as police officials and marked their applications to their relevant officers and directed them to resolve them on priority bases and within a given time frame. The IGP strictly directed all zonal officers to listen to public complaints and resolve them purely on merit. "No laxity will be tolerated in this regard" he added. During the 'khuli kacheri', the police chief listened to the grievances of the citizens and marked their applications to the concerned officers for timely action

on merit. He also directed them to send reports to his office in the given time frame. Muhammad Ahsan Younas emphasized that the police would not leave any stone unturned to save the lives and property of the citizens adding that the Islamabad police was taking many steps to facilitate the public. The IGP directed all the police officials to adopt a courteous attitude with the complainants visiting police stations and accomplish their responsibilities in a professional manner. - APP

## PAC examines audit paras of Ministry of Railways

ISLAMABAD: Public Accounts Committee (PAC) on Wednesday examined audit paras of Ministry of Railways for the years 2019-20. The meeting was held here at Parliament House under the chairmanship of MNA Rana Tanveer Hussain. Senior officials of Railways informed PAC that a total 44 corruption cases were being investigated. The committee directed that the report of the inquiry committee be submitted within a week and the committee take action against the officers involved and impose fines on them. - APP

## PSEB, SLIC sign MoU to offer insurance products, services

ISLAMABAD: Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB) and State Life Insurance Corporation (SLIC) of Pakistan to develop and offer insurance products and services tailored to meet the needs of ICT industry professionals and freelancers. The MoU was signed by Osman Nasir, Managing Director, PSEB and Shoab Javed Hussain, Chairman, SLIC. Pakistan Software Export Board is an entity of the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication with the mandate to ensure sustainable growth of Pakistan's ICT industry and to enhance exports of ICT

products and services, said a news release issued here on Wednesday. The State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan is the largest life insurance company of Pakistan and is one of the largest companies in Pakistan by assets in Pakistan. Muhammad Sohail Rajput, Secretary IT said that running a business always comes with inherent risks. The use of insurance products is widespread in well developed markets across the world for protection against a myriad of risks such as lawsuits, financial losses, physical asset losses, protection of brand image and other threats in order to ensure business continuity. - DNA

## IESCO notifies power shut down notice

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Wednesday issued a power suspension programme for Thursday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to IESCO Spokesman, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period from 06:00am to 10:00am New Kalam, Old Kalam, HPT-III, Industrial, Sohtran, Quidabad, Pir Wadhai, Bagh Sardaran, Carriage Factory, Zubair Shaheed, Bolani, Muslimabad, Ahsanabad, Gulzar Shaheed, Dhok Hasso feeders and surroundings. - APP



ISLAMABAD: High Commissioners of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Ambassador of Nepal attending Iftar dinner hosted by ICCI. - DNA

## Chery's full of confidence in Pak-China automobile collaboration

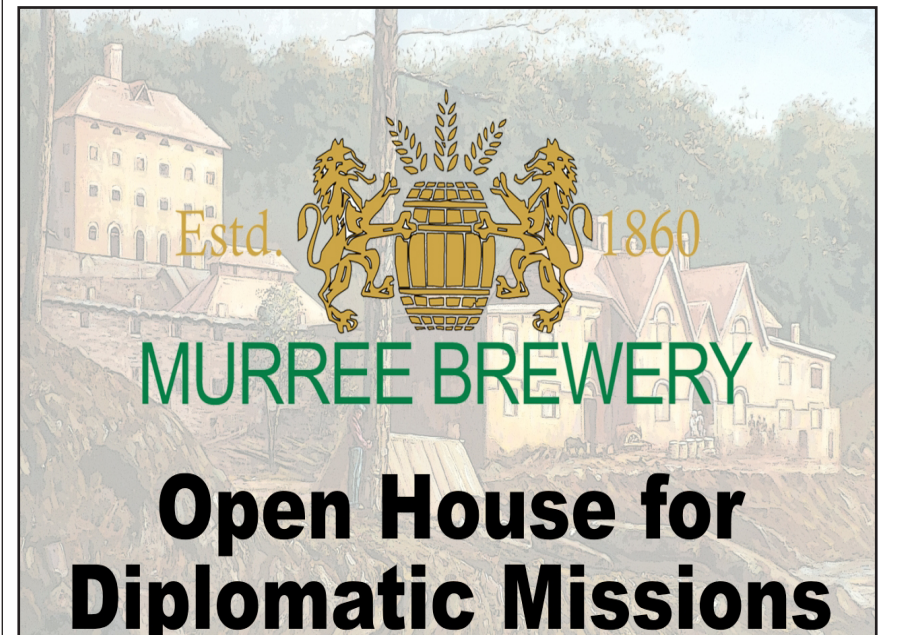
### DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chery Automobile Co., Ltd, completed the body shop trials for its Tiggo Series, which is the company's first body trial out and assembly trial out in Pakistan, Gwadar Pro reported on Wednesday. This means that Chery's first model will complete its SOP and be presented to consumers by the end of this month, after 3 months since the production started in January. Like other Chinese brands that have invested in vehicle manufacturing factories in Pakistan, Chery is optimistic about Pakistan's advantages in developing auto industry. Felix Hu, country

director of Chery Automobile in Pakistan, stated in an interview with Gwadar Pro that, "based on Pakistan's huge potential market size, supportive policies for attracting foreign automobile investors and opportunities brought by CPEC, we have landed Chery's first RHD (Right Hand Driving) CKD project in Pakistan, which is a local manufacturing project with long-term development considerations." Chery launched its new RHD strategy in 2019 and selected seven countries as key potential markets for RHD, including Pakistan. It has partnered with Gandhara Nissan Ltd to invest Rs. 2.4 billion in Pakistan's production of Tiggo Series

SUVs in January 2021. Felix Hu revealed that Chery is promoting the listing of the company in Pakistan next month. It will continue to focus on the Pakistani market and satisfy the local consumers. The company also plans to export from Pakistan to other RHD countries in the near future. At present, Chery Automobile's products include saloon cars and SUVs. Choosing to manufacture SUV models in Pakistan is based on the fact that the global consumption trend is upgrading from cars to SUV, SUV is more suitable for Pakistan's road conditions, and Chinese companies are competitive in the SUV market segment, etc.

Felix said that SUV is a strategic choice according to Chery's initial development plan in Pakistan, and more models will be launched as the company deepens cooperation and gets more feedback from the market. As one of the largest automobile exporters in China, compared with other manufacturers such as Hyundai, MG and HAVAL, Chery's entry to RHD markets including Pakistan is relatively late. The reason for this, Felix explained, is to make sure that their products are the latest models for RHD markets, rather than some old generation models. Felix believes that the future trend of the automobile industry is electrification and intelligence.



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For further information please contact the following.

Maj (r) Sabih Ur Rehman  
Mobile: 0300 8553342



## Briefs

## ITP to check unauthorized number plates

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) has constituted special squads to take action against vehicles with fancy and non-pattern number plates. These squads have been constituted following directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Muhammad Ahsan Younis who also ordered action against those preparing such number plates and vendors. Police source said that ITP fined 7,915 drivers during ongoing year having non-pattern number plates on their vehicles. He said that ITP has intensified action against fancy and non-pattern number plates and special squads have been constituted to curb this practice.

The purpose this campaign is to ensure high alert security, maintain law and order situation, ensure protection to the lives as well as property of citizens and avert any untoward incident. Meanwhile, the SSP (Traffic) Rai Mazhar Iqbal has urged the motorists and motorcyclists to display the number plates issued by Excise and Taxation Office and also keep with them their driving licenses and vehicles' documents showing possession on their names or even authority letters. - APP

## FGEHA for providing modern residential facilities to employees

ISLAMABAD: The pace of different development projects, being executed under the Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) had accelerated significantly to provide modern residential facilities to employees in the shortest possible time. Secretary Ministry of Housing and Works Dr. Inran Zaib Khan directed the concerned officials to expedite the ongoing projects under the umbrella of FGEHA including Kashmir Avenue Apartments, G-13 Chaklala Heights and Skyline Apartments, Islamabad, an official told APP.

There were 3,432 apartments in Chaklala Scheme, while the Skyline Apartments comprise a total of 3,945 units, he added. The official said the Secretary directed the staff on the site to ensure quality and timely completion, construction works on both the schemes was going at an accelerated pace. He said the authority was striving hard to provide residential facilities to the allottees in the shortest possible time. Besides these projects, the FGEHA was also launching other housing projects for the employees and other segments of society. - APP

## PR making efforts to vacate Zhob Station

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways was making all out efforts to vacate Zhob Railway Station building within the next few months. The building occupied by unauthorized outsiders was being used for residential purpose following its permanent closure.

The notices as per new Ordinance of 2021 for removal of encroachment introduced by federal government were being served to unauthorized occupants, an official in the Ministry of Railways told APP. He said the efforts were being expedited with assistance of local administration and the levies to retrieve the encroached structures and hopefully the encroachment issue would be resolved. The Zhob Railway Station was established in 1920 on Bostan-Zhob section which was a narrow gauge section and it was closed for passenger traffic in 1985 and for goods traffic in 1990 being un-economic hence no renovation of the station was carried out, since its closure, he added. To a question, the official said Pakistan Railways has taken several steps to improve financial conditions of the department including Raabta. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Japan, Editor Islamabad POST, Ambassadors of Morocco, Indonesia and Norway attending Iftar dinner hosted by ICCI President Shakil Munir and Waheed Shaikh. - DNA

## Female gets role in China Power Hub Generation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Outstanding Pakistani female pioneer Rizwana Ghani has been awarded for an active role in CPEC-China Power Hub Generation, Gwadar Pro reported on Wednesday.

"It is my great honor to arrange the first capesize vessel of coal to Pakistan. At that time, I had to take the boat to the main vessel by using the towing pulley, which was really an adventure but I finished it independently. By now, China Power Hub Generation (CPHGC) is the only enterprise in Pakistan to import coal via capesize vessel," Rizwana said proudly, "as one of the Pakistan's most successful power project with competitive promotion system and cultural harmony of Chinese and Pakistani employees, I feel like a duck to water here."

Rizwana Ghani, a Senior Manager Fuel Procurement working at the 2x660 MW China Hub Coal Power Plant Project in Lasbela district, Balochistan. She has more than 14 years of industry experience with almost 6 years of experience with the current CPEC project. "In the beginning I was responsible for the insurance and compliance audit. The major achievement I made was the placement of project construction insurances to the top insurance companies of China, this was also the first experience in my career to interact with the developed insurance sector in China. Secondly, I successfully obtained the dispensation letter issued by the Ministry of Commerce, Government of Pakistan. It enabled our CPHGC project to place the insurances directly to international market throughout the 30 years life of the project," the management talent noted in an exclusive



interview with Gwadar Pro.

As a working woman, Rizwana also mentioned the challenges she faced, "during my early working days there were some difficulties. Being Pakistani women, the work scope is limited. Usually, women are not inducted to most technical field. But eventually, I gained confidence and skills in technical field like supply chain. Undoubtedly, our project team gave me an equal chance to compete with others." After successfully spending her role as an insurance manager, CPHGC gave her a chance to expand her occupational area. Rizwana Ghani joined fuel management department as Manager Fuel Procurement in September 2018 and

based on the outstanding performance, she was promoted to Senior Manager Fuel Procurement within just six months. "Our team has procured more than millions of tons coal from South Africa through Pakistan International Bulk Terminal (PIBT) and Coal Transshipment System. Since CTS is the new concept of coal unloading and transportation, also it is the first and only coal offshore unloading facility in Pakistan, we need to face a series of technical restrictions, meanwhile, changeable weather also means challenges. With the support from our senior management, I have been smoothly managing the operations of coal unloading through CTS facility."

Besides, Rizwana has managed to get the coal unloading agreements signed with PIBT and road transportation agreement with the largest transportation company of Pakistan, National Logistics Cell. In Rizwana's view, the advancement of her career means that she can contribute more as a member of CPEC project, which is the most meaningful thing. "Thanks to this job, I have visited China several times to experience the coal power plant operations management. Since the coal power plant technology is new in Pakistan, we required a lot of education and training. These experiences have broadened my horizons and given me the opportunity to listen, see and feel a different world.

Moreover, my company has given me the opportunity to do something Pakistani women never had the opportunity to do in the past." Rizwana recalled, inspired by her experience, many of her family members and acquaintances, especially women, also want to join CPEC projects and work hard for their personal career development and family prosperity, "which is what I am most proud of."

Rizwana's tireless efforts soon paid off. "During my career I have been rewarded multiple times by the higher management of our project. And our team has been awarded the best working team award of 2019." However, compared with personal honor, she always believed that the greater significance of the 2x660 MW China Hub Coal Power Plant Project is to change the status quo of the entire power industry in Pakistan to a certain extent.

The project can supply 9 billion kWh of electricity every year, meeting the electricity demand of 4 million Pakistani households. "For me, it is not just a power project, actually it is a lifeline of Pakistan's power sector. With state-of-the-art technology and power units, our project is a gift for my country as it improved the power production of Pakistan in every respect, brining prosperity and technological advancement every day. What's more, the project has created thousands of jobs to the local people living in the remote region of Balochistan." At the end of the interview, Rizwana sincerely spoke her heart out. "I hope to give message to all Pakistani women that if someone has determination to fulfill her dreams in this society then all hurdles can become your ladder to success. Your existence matters. Just dream big and keep working!"

## ECI proposes SCO, ECO level water sharing treaties

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Considering a number of disputes on trans-boundary rivers in South, Central and West Asia, it is needed that groupings like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) come up with regional water sharing accords. This is proposed by the Eurasian Century Institute (ECI), an Islamabad based think-tank.

ECI notes that many of the member nations of SCO and ECO are involved in disputes over sharing of trans-boundary rivers, and bilateral arrangements like the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), despite being in place for over six decades have so far failed to resolve water conflicts among the parties. ECI has been involved in consultation with experts from Pakistan, China, India, Afghanistan, and Central Asia and there seems to be this increasing realization among those having closer look at the water sharing issues that regional arrangements can open

doors for better cooperation, ushering the region in improved management of shared water resources. "The point is not to undermine the bilateral arrangements, treaties but to initiate the process for regional arrangements that enhance stakes and ensure that rights of the people are safeguarded," maintains the think-tank. For this purpose, ECI stresses, developing regional principles and policies, while learning from global best practices is need of the hour. Most of the countries in South, Central and West

Asia that have some kind of dispute with a neighbor over a river are either the member of ECO, or SCO. Some are members of the both. So, these two groupings would be doing the people of their member states a huge favor if they are able to move ahead in this direction. The Institute however does not pin much hope on the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) - the other regional grouping in this part of the world - in this connection citing the track record of SARRC, dotted with more failures than successes.

rejection by the FTO. It may be recalled that FBR had levied 17% sales tax instead of 12.5% on cars less than one thousand cc. FBR Refused to provide relief for a reduction of up to 12.5%. Consumers from all over the country including Lahore, Karachi, Islamabad, Gujarat, Gujranwala, Multan and Faisalabad sent complaints to

## AIUO to hold teaching practice workshops

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIUO) will hold face to face teaching practice workshops of M.Ed and M.A Education for the semester Autumn, 2021 from April 18. These workshops will be held in the Regional campuses of the University from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. As per schedule of these workshops, released by the university, workshop of course code 3600 will be held from April 18-20 while the teaching practice workshops for course codes

6554,6555,6550 and 6551 will be held from April 18-23. According to Dr. Malik Tauqeer Ahmad Khan, Director Regional Services, letters have been sent to students to attend the workshops. Moreover, the workshop schedule has also been uploaded on students' CMS portals and has also been made available online on University website.

It should be noted that students belonging to Mirpur, Muzaffarabad, Gilgit, Skardu and Abbottabad have been merged in Islamabad region. - APP

## POS integrated invoices surge by 26.3pc

ISLAMABAD: The invoices issued by Tier-1 Retailers integrated with Point of Sale (POS) System mounted to 48 million during the month of March 2022 against the integration of 38 million in February, showing increase of 26.3 percent, Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) said Wednesday.

In a tweet, the board said that likewise as many as 48000 individuals who shopped from outlets integrated with FBR POS System verified invoices in March compared to 39000 in February 2022, this shows huge trust of public in FBR. "In Mar are 48 M against 38 M in Feb,22. Verified invoices rose to 410,000 in Mar which were 260,000 in Feb.48000 individuals verified invoices in Mar & they were 39000 in Feb 2022. Huge trust in FBR!" FBR tweeted.

The ongoing campaign and the prize scheme continued to gain momentum as numbers kept growing up. It as a phenomenal increase in public participation and expressed the hope that it was likely to grow further with every passing day, according to recently released Monthly Economic Update and Outlook for March 2022. It is pertinent to mention here that FBR had launched an intensive awareness campaign on the mainstream national media to educate and engage consumers to ensure that tax collected from them at the point of sale is deposited into the state exchequer and not pocketed by the retailers themselves. The campaign also encompasses a prize scheme worth Rs.53 million to be disbursed among 1007 lucky winners through a transparent computerized ballot being held on 15th of every month at FBR Headquarters, Islamabad. - APP

## Winder Dam to be completed in 2025

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

He said that the Winder Dam would have 54,000 acre feet water storage and 10,000 acres of land would be irrigated in the area adding that agriculture and livestock would be progressed in the area after completion of the dam. "About 54,000 acre feet of water storage capacity will be created and more than 10,000 acres of land will be irrigated from the conclusion of the Winder Dam", he said. He said water supply to the lands from the dam through canal could also be ensured. - APP

## IRSA releases 103523 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) Wednesday released 103523 cusecs water from various rim stations with an inflow of 97637 cases.

According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1085.50 feet, which was 35.05 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded a 28314 and 35000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 47109, 27595 and 23660 cases respectively. Similarly, from the Kabul River, a total of 16200 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 19723 cusecs released from the Chenab River at Marala. - APP

## FBR to refund to 9,000 car customers

FTO Dr Jah Rejects FBR's proposal to refund only to NTN holders

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Board of Revenue and the Federal Tax Ombudsman have agreed on a mechanism to refund the additional tax of 9,000 Suzuki cars worth tens of billions of rupees. In this regard, under Section 66 of the Income Tax Ordinance, Pak

Suzuki Company will file a refund claim on behalf of 9000 customers. The FBR will issue refunds to Suzuki Company for all relevant customers and Suzuki Company will refund the additional taxes to each customer. Earlier, the FBR had proposed to refund additional tax only to NTN number holder customers, which was



rejected by the FTO. It may be recalled that FBR had levied 17% sales tax instead of 12.5% on cars less than one thousand cc. FBR Refused to provide relief for a reduction of up to 12.5%. Consumers from all over the country including Lahore, Karachi, Islamabad, Gujarat, Gujranwala, Multan and Faisalabad sent complaints to

Federal Tax Ombudsman Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah. Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah issued an order stating that the position of FBR and the company concerned that sales tax on cars would be levied on the basis of time of booking. The FTO ordered the car company and the FBR to collect the tax according to the time of delivery.



## PECA ordinance meets its fate

THE Islamabad High Court (IHC) has rescinded the Pakistan Electronic Crimes Act (PECA) Amendment Ordinance, which included new regulations to prosecute journalists. The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and its Pakistan affiliate, the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ), have welcomed the court's decision to overturn the PECA Amendment Ordinance and congratulate Pakistan's media on this historic victory. Similarly the All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) and other media bodies have also welcomed the decision and termed it a victory for the freedom of the press. The four-page order stated that free speech, protected under Article 19 of the Constitution, and the right to receive information, protected under Article 19-A of the Constitution, are essential for a society's development, progress, and prosperity, and that their suppression under the PECA ordinance was unconstitutional and contrary to democratic values. "The criminalisation of defamation, protection of individual reputations through arrest and imprisonment and the resultant chilling effect violates the letter of the Constitution and the invalidity thereof is beyond a reasonable doubt", the ruling stated.

The previous PTI government led by Imran Khan spoiled its relations with the media from the outset. It tried to muzzle the press through coercive means. The then Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry during his first stint as the minister tried to damage the print media. According to him the future belonged to the digital media therefore there was no need to have newspapers anymore. This approach created disenchantment and disappointment among the media practitioners. The news agencies used to get some sort of financial support from the government in order to subsidize their expenses but the PTI government soon after coming to power was done away with that subsidy. The amount in question was peanuts but as a matter of fact hundreds of families were being fed because of that grant. Then the government tried to introduce Pakistan Media Development Authority (PMDA), which was an attempt to control the electronic media. Huge fines and corporal punishments were recommended in that law. But due to colossal opposition from the media stakeholders the government had to withdraw the law. Then came this PECA law. It was basically meant to regulate social media. The government this time implemented the law by shelving the concerns of the media stakeholders and the political parties. The battle was then taken to the courts and finally the Islamabad High Court declared the law null and void and hence the media fraternity heaved a sigh of relief. But in the meantime relations between the government and the media houses became extremely tense. It is hoped that the incumbent government would do its best to address genuine issues of the media industry. At the same time, it would avoid indulging in futile exercise of enacting laws seeking to curb the freedom of the press.

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Under the rubble ...



## Boris Johnson to be fined

THE prime minister and the chancellor broke the law. That is the finding of the Metropolitan police investigation, which will result in fixed-penalty notices for the two men. To be more precise: Boris Johnson broke the life-saving rules that he set, and which others made immeasurable sacrifices to follow, in the very place where they were formulated – then denied having done so. Through his actions and his subsequent remarks, he has treated the public with contempt.

While parties took place in Whitehall, hundreds of parents, spouses, siblings and friends were dying each day. Families were unable to see vulnerable relatives in care homes. Doctors and nurses on the frontline could not gather to comfort each other after gruelling shifts. The Met is investigating no fewer than 12 gatherings, and has handed out 50 fixed-penalty notices; with the prime minister alleged to have attended as many as six events, he could yet face more fines. The Covid-19 Bereaved Families for Justice group observed: "It is still unbelievably painful that Boris Johnson was partying and breaking his own lockdown rules, while we were unable to be at our loved ones' sides in their dying moments, or in miserable funerals with only a handful of people." That Mr Johnson should have lied when challenged over his behaviour is hardly surprising, given his record. But the ministerial code of conduct is clear: "Ministers who knowingly mislead parliament will be expected to offer their resignation." Mr Johnson told parliament that he had been repeatedly assured that there were no parties and that no Covid rules were broken. Asked about two events in late 2020, Rishi Sunak assured MPs: "I did not attend any parties." The opposition is right to say that they should go. According to a snap YouGov poll, 57% of voters agree The lockdown breaches will magnify growing public anger at the kind of country this government is creating: the sense that there is one set of rules for those in power and another for the rest of us; the feeling that it is their world, built by them and for them, in which the rest can only struggle by. It is hard to think of a conclusion more corrosive to democracy, and to a society already deeply riven. Tory MPs can choose to ignore the ministerial code of conduct, trashing the standards of government. They can choose to ignore Mr Johnson's actions. But they should remember that the public will ultimately judge them as well as their boss if they give him a free pass – and rightly so. Treat voters with contempt and you should expect them to respond in kind.

# The strategic prospect of Gwadar

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



The ideal location of the Gwadar seaport and coastal belt significantly enables Pakistan to keep an eye on the oil shipped out of the Middle East. The products of oil refineries and LNG plants can be shipped or piped to any country of the globe with short consumption of energy. The transit route to the CARs and China would be dependent on Gwadar. Further, Pakistan can be able to develop understanding with India because the western part of India will also prefer to have transit trade through Gwadar as it lies at a shorter distance than Indian ports

GWADAR is a newly built warm water seaport in the southwest of Pakistan on the shores of the Arabian Sea along a 600 km-long coastline. It is a God-gifted natural deep sea port unlike the contemporary ports of Iran and Dubai, and has the capacity to have 88 berths and ability to anchor a mothership of 1,00,000-2,00,000 DWT. It is located at the mouth of the Persian Gulf and 624 nautical km away to its west is the Strait of Hormuz. Strategically, it is situated in the midst of three important regions: the Middle East, South Asia, and Central Asia. It is only 1500 km away from Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan & Tajikistan. It is also surrounded by a third of the world's oil resources.

Historically, it was under the colonial occupation of Oman and then transferred to Pakistan on 8 September 1958. Then in 1977, it was incorporated as a community district of Baluchistan. The program of the construction of Gwadar seaport was launched for the first time in 1964, and then after three decades, it resumed once more in 2000. In March 2002, China started support on the condition of transferring sovereignty guarantees of the port to China. China provided 198 million dollars for the first phase that was completed in 2006. In 2007, the port was leased for 40 years to the Port of Singapore Authority. The PSA could not make any positive development for the Gwadar Port. Then it was handed over to the China Overseas Port Holding Limited in February 2014. This is another milestone in Chinese-Pakistani relations and economic commitment. The construction of an additional nine berths, a bulk cargo terminal, grain terminal, and two oil terminals are included in the 2nd phase and investments of 600 million dollars are estimated.

Due to its large population and the rapidly growing economy, China is a great consumer of energy. It fulfills its need from the Malacca Strait and Persian Gulf through the longest sea route across the Indian Ocean. The Chinese think that the Indian Ocean route is insecure and that this increases their energy dependency. Pakistan's geostrategic position enables China to create new economic corridors and connectivity with regional states. It will also decrease the energy flows of China in the Indian Ocean. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is a 2000 km route that will link Gwadar to Kashgar. The project was recognized in May 2013 and imagined the investment of 12 billion dollars.

China is focusing on redevelopment of internal structure of roads and railway lines sea transportation, construction of oil gas pipe line, lay optical fiber cable and alternate electric resources.

The importance of Gwadar seaport depends upon its development into a potential economic hub. Gwadar seaport lies at the heart of the Sino-Pakistan partnership and is its litmus test. Former President Musharraf in 2002 said about Gwadar, "If we see this whole region, it is like a funnel. The top of the funnel is this wide area of Central Asia and also China's western region. And this funnel gets narrowed on through Afghanistan and Pakistan and the end of this funnel is Gwadar port. So this funnel, futuristically, is the economic funnel of this whole region." This plan carries an economic prosperity attractive to multiple stakeholders from the region. China is looking for new trade and energy corridors from its western region to the Arabian Sea. If the real potential is utilized, then it can be proved to be a cornerstone of economic development and help to improve the troubles of the people of Balochistan and other parts of the country. The present crippled economy of the country can improve in a short span of time if the project is successfully implemented.

The contemporary ports of the region do not have the advances of the Gwadar seaport, which can bring together world business and trade. The Central Asian Republics (CARs) can have a shorter route to global markets due to Gwadar's geostrategic location, and at the same time, the development countries can also access their natural capital possessions and markets because Gwadar is only 1500 km from Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan & Tajikistan. Secondly, East Africa is very close to Gwadar, and thus, also China and the CARs. The natural resources of Africa can be easily shipped to Gwadar, and after value-added additions, can then be reshipped other global consumer markets. Nearby India and China account for almost half of the world's population, and Gwadar can facilitate their trade with the CARs and Africa. The port can also provide transshipment services as well as trade transit considering that Dubai earns billions of dollars from this business yet is 700 km further away from Gwadar and its partners must first pass through the narrow Strait of Hormuz to access it. The ideal location of the Gwadar seaport and coastal belt significantly enables Pakistan to keep an eye on the oil shipped out of the Mid-

dle East. The products of oil refineries and LNG plants can be shipped or piped to any country of the globe with short consumption of energy. The transit route to the CARs and China would be dependent on Gwadar. Further, Pakistan can be able to develop understanding with India because the western part of India will also prefer to have transit trade through Gwadar as it lies at a shorter distance than Indian ports.

The Gwadar seaport requires less maintenance cost as compared to other ports since it's a natural deep sea port. The project not only connects China and Pakistan, but it provides opportunities for business and jobs for the Pakistani and Chinese people and also for their neighboring countries. This port can attract trade and business like a magnet due to cheap sea transportation. Similarly, it has the potential to address and decrease the unemployment of Baluchistan and other parts of Pakistan with economic development in the coming years. The opportunities for business and jobs will stretch from Gwadar to the Khunjerab Pass and thus immensely benefit all of Pakistan's provinces. The running of millions of vehicles on the route from Gwadar to Khunjerab would resemble the ancient Silk Road caravans that carried silk along the Golden Route, albeit trading many more different products in the present day.

The construction of a road-rail network from Gwadar to Kashgar is an enormous task and financially sound but not impossible. China's technological expertise, experience, and desire to expand trade and business routes from its western region to the rest of the global market through Gwadar can make this dream a reality without Pakistan having to entirely finance this vision. Pakistan should be on board to provide security to the Chinese and other investors and satisfy their all queries and worries, which should be sincerely addressed at all levels. Similarly, by taking the regional and international powers into confidence for the commercial use of the port, the economic interdependence at the country at the regional and international levels will automatically guarantee security to all actors along with evolving a conducive business environment. The project of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is becoming a new vista for China-Pakistan relations. Both countries can increase cultural, economic, and strategic relations and people-to-people contact, which will bring regional stability and peace.

# Pakistan isn't a Democracy

Dr. Abdus Sattar Abbasi

Charles E. Merriam defined democracy in 1941 as "a form of political association in which the general control and direction is determined by the bulk of the community in accordance with understandings and procedures providing for popular participation and consent. Its postulates are 1) the essential dignity of man on a fraternal rather than a differential basis in a formula of liberty, justice and welfare 2) the perfectibility of the man 3) value of the consent 4) The value of decisions arrived...

A TERRIBLE history of fratricide and never ending wars have evolved human understanding to develop a structure of government which enables societies for peaceful transitions of power. Entire human history irrespective of cast and creed is packed with blood shedding conflicts and battles to grasp supremacy. We can find innumerable instances where even states and dynasties of same faith crushed their fellowmen for their hunger for control. During peacetimes we can't imagine some of extremely brutal traditions and executions of war even in our recent history which horrify our imaginations.

However, human learning about formations of governments from anarchy to democracy has somehow brought civilization in human societies to ensure less animosity in power corridors. We are also trying to comprehend for the last 75 years that which form of the government is suitable for Pakistan. Although our history remained devoid of certainty but mostly people agree to allow democracy to flourish in the Country to get benefit of collective wisdom of the masses. But which model of democracy we are following, as yet, in Pakistan is a million dollar question. Parliamentary, according to the books, but in reality it is more than a hybrid model. Different experiments, variety of interventions and then numerous recipes for corrections, this all made it an interesting subject for a common man to understand real face of Pakistani democracy. Charles E. Merriam defined democracy in 1941 as "a form of political association in which the general control and direction is determined by the bulk of the community in accordance with understandings and procedures providing for popular participation and consent. Its postulates are 1) the essential dignity of man on a fraternal rather than a differential basis in a formula of liberty, justice and welfare 2) the perfectibility of the man 3) value of the consent 4) The value of decisions arrived at by common counsel rather than by violence and brutality." Intellectually it is the point no. 2 which remained head-on to our friction with the concept of democracy which, I think, isn't without solid philosophical underpinnings. Probably it is this point which owes a lot to determine dark side of the democracy; however, it is not our focus today.

According to Conrad P. Waligorski from University of Kansas, "Democracy is one of the most used and abused ideas in the twentieth century. Since the end of World War II, virtually everyone has claimed to be a democrat and to be supporting, working toward, or preserving democracy. Denominations include liberal democracy, constitutional democracy, participatory democracy, direct democracy, representative democracy, economic democracy, social democracy, elite democracy, majoritarian democracy, mass democracy, limited democracy, and people's democracy; there are military juntas claiming to restore democracy and theorists attempting to curb democracy in the name of preserving it. Sometimes these terms overlap, and often they are incompatible, but there is still virtually universal agreement that democracy is good." When we look back to our history it is predominantly dictatorial due to three long military rules. To legitimize their coup dictators usually pursued two pronged strategy, seeking legal ratification and popular support. This opened doors for compromises (popularly known as NROs), manipulations, exploitations and fabrications. Requirements for legal endorsement led to constitutional amendments, particularly in-and-out of 58-2(b) which gave discretionary powers to the President of Pakistan to dissolve National Assembly.

Objective Resolution adopted on March 12, 1949 states, "sovereignty over the entire universe belongs to Allah Almighty alone and the authority which He has delegated to the State of Pakistan, through its people for being exercised within the limits prescribed by Him is a sacred trust." The ruling of the country in the name of God (Allah) consistent with the doctrines and principles of a particular religion or religious community is called theocracy. Prof. Robert Audi from University of Notre Dame suggests, "Much of the world is seeing conflict between people whose views permit basing political actions and lawmaking on religious convictions and people whose democratic values oppose this. Democratic societies are in principle open to the free exercise of religion and, in constitution, they are characteristically pluralistic in both culture and religion. Religions are highly variable in their stance toward government, but many

of the world's most populous religions, including Christianity and Islam, are commonly taken to embody standards of conduct, such as certain prohibitions, that cannot be endorsed by democratic governments committed to preserving liberty for the religious and thenonreligious alike."

In Pakistan generally it is believed that throughout after the independence there are certain families who remain in power whether government is formed by any of the dictator or the political party. These people and families are popularly known as electables due to their wealth and influence in the society. Nowadays their next generations have emerged as leaders and progressed significantly during last decade and now this new generation is quite prominent in the mainstream political arena.

This transfer of influence and power from electable few to their next generations to continue their legacy clearly depicts deep-rooted oligarchy in our society. Occasionally we do witness representation of other classes of the society but those who make it to the parliament usually end up to the affluent class and join their mates from oligarchic circles. Oligarchic characteristics of our democratic processes further mystify the nature and the form of our government and one wonders if Pakistan isn't a democracy. We did fumble with one unit and the federation. Fundamentally, Pakistan is a federating union of provinces with relatively sufficient autonomy after 18th amendment. One way or the other importance of citizen voters survived over the years. Dictators required voters for referendums to legitimize their rules while voters did exercise their right of choosing their representatives through elections under both civilian and military regimes to form yet another unique 'theocratic parliamentary oligarchic democratic governments', which indeed is an exclusive version of democracy and calls attention of scholars of the subject to probe further in the nature and characteristics of this distinctive model.

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



## Briefs

## Pakistan rejects India-US joint statement

FROM PAGE 01  
The Foreign Office said Pakistan had remained a major, proactive, reliable and willing partner of the international community in the global fight against terrorism over last two decades. "Pakistan's successes and sacrifices in countering terrorism are unparalleled and widely acknowledged by the international community, including the United States. No country in the region has sacrificed more for peace than Pakistan," it stated. The FO expressed that India's insinuations against Pakistan were a desperate attempt to conceal its state-terrorism and brutal atrocities against the subjugated Kashmiris in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

"Responsible members of the international community must condemn India's use of terrorism as an instrument of state policy and the impunity that continues to be associated with it," it urged, adding that India's terrorism network using the soil of other countries through supporting UN-designated terrorist organisations, was on record. "Failing to take cognizance of this serious situation is tantamount to abdication of international responsibility," the FO highlighted.

## Palestine, UK, UAE, leaders felicitate Shehbaz

FROM PAGE 01  
Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on assuming his office. A post of the UAE embassy on Twitter on Wednesday read that the UAE crown prince "sends congratulatory message to Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on his election as the prime minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan". Shehbaz Sharif was elected the prime minister of Pakistan after winning a no-confidence vote in the National Assembly against his predecessor Imran Khan. Meanwhile, United Kingdom's Prime Minister Boris Johnson said on Wednesday that he wanted to work with Pakistan's newly elected premier Shehbaz Sharif. "Congratulations to @CMShehbaz on his election as Prime Minister of Pakistan," Johnson said in a tweet, where he share his aspirations for a future working relationship with his Pakistani counterpart. "The UK & Pakistan have a longstanding relationship and our people share deep ties. I look forward to working together on areas of shared interest," the UK's PM added. Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has also congratulated the newly elected Hon'ble Prime Minister of Pakistan Mr. Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. In a message of felicitations, Bangladesh's Prime Minister stressed that the entire region must work together to overcome the challenges facing the region for its common benefits.

## FIA nabs 12 trollers

FROM PAGE 01  
In a joint crackdown launched by the FIA counter-terrorism department and its cyber wing, the agency apprehended as many as a dozen trollers who were linked to running a slur campaign against the state institutions. However, the FIA counter-terrorism wing has sought legal opinion regarding registration of cases against the arrested persons who were found involved in hate trolling against sensitive institutions. The FIA was provided with lists of 50 people who were operating hundreds of fake social media accounts. From these fake accounts, trolling against sensitive institutions and important personalities was being done. FIA sources informed that some accounts were being operated from abroad. So far 12 trollers have been arrested from Lahore, Gujrat, Faisalabad and Islamabad, they added. Sources said that cases would be registered under anti-terrorism clauses.

## Finland, Sweden veer closer to NATO in historic policy shift

Finnish Prime Minister Sanna Marin and her Swedish counterpart say a decision on joining the military alliance could come by late June

STOCKHOLM: Finland will make a decision about whether to apply to join the 30-member NATO alliance in the next few weeks, Prime Minister Sanna Marin told reporters in a joint news conference with her Swedish counterpart. "There are different perspectives to apply [for] NATO membership or not to apply and we have to analyse these very carefully," Marin told reporters in the Swedish capital Stockholm on Wednesday.

"But I think our process will be quite fast, it will happen in weeks," Marin said parliament would debate an official assessment of how Russia's invasion of Ukraine led to a "change of our security environment" and evaluate making a historic shift in Finland's defence posture. "We need to be frank about consequences and risks, both long and short term," Marin said. However, she anticipated there was "no other way to have security guarantees than under NATO's deterrence and common defence", and a



decision could come by late June. Finland and Sweden, which share a border and a similar security environment, have deepened collaboration both among themselves and with NATO since Russia invaded

Crimea in 2014. Swedish Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson said Moscow's decision to invade Ukraine had been a watershed moment. "There is a before and after 24 February, the security landscape has completely changed," she told reporters. "Given the situation, we have to really think what is best for Sweden and our peace in this new situation." Andersson said the two countries had similar timeframes for joining NATO and "there is good reason for that", hinting at the fact that neither Stockholm nor Helsinki wish to be the last to stand outside the alliance. Russia has warned Finland and Sweden against joining NATO, an alliance formed in 1949 to counter the threat of Soviet expansion, arguing the move would not bring stability to Europe. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters "the alliance remains a tool geared towards confrontation".

## Tunisian President vows to end 'Exceptional Phase'

DNA

TUNIS: Tunisian President Kais Saied has pledged to end the country's "current exceptional phase." Saied was speaking during his meeting with the European Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee members at Carthage Palace. On Monday, the delegation arrived in Tunis for consultations on the country's path towards political reforms and a return to institutional stability. During the meeting, Saied reviewed the reasons for announcing the measures in July 2021, saying he is keen to end the exceptional period by implementing the announced steps, in reference to the roadmap. He stressed that the national dialogue has already been

launched and will be based on the results of the online consultation to complete the stages he has previously announced, in particular holding a referendum on Jul. 25 and parliamentary elections on Dec. 17. "The legislative elections will be free, transparent, and fair and under the full supervision of the Independent High Authority for Elections," Saied said. The Tunisian President also expressed his unconditional stance in protecting the unity of his country and the continuity of the functioning of state institutions. The European delegation expressed its support for Tunisia in its reform path, stressing the need to respect the principles of participation, pluralism, and representation in the remaining stages

of the roadmap. The European delegation said it was willing to use its expertise to help Tunisia complete the elections under the best conditions. Observers believe that the members of the European delegation will not announce their final positions on the situation in Tunisia. They explained that the European officials will not wholly comprehend the political situation in Tunisia until meeting with representatives of political parties, especially those who reject the exceptional measures and civil society organizations that demand the return of constitutional institutions. The delegation will discuss the European support for Tunisia in the "political reform process." Earlier, Prime Minister Naj-

la Boden discussed the elections and the constitutional referendum in Tunisia with the European delegation, stressing that participation is vital for the roadmap. The meeting was attended by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Migration, and Tunisians Abroad, Othman Jerandi, and the European Union Ambassador to Tunisia, Marcus Cornaro. The delegation had previously indicated that members of the European Parliament would seek to reaffirm the need for an inclusive political dialogue, respect for the rule of law, civil liberties, and human rights, as well as a political system based on democratic principles, especially the separation of powers guaranteed through institutional checks and balances.

## Fokina downs Novak Djokovic in Monte Carlo

PARIS: Alejandro Davidovich Fokina had won just seven games across two previous meetings with Novak Djokovic coming into the Rolex Monte-Carlo Masters, but the World No. 46 banished those demons in style on Tuesday with a stunning upset on the Monaco clay. The Spaniard struck the ball with power and accuracy throughout the second-round clash, recovering from the disappointment of losing a tight second-set tie-break to clinch a 6-3, 6-7(5), 6-1 victory at the ATP Masters 1000 event. "This win is so special for me because I grew up watching Nole and I'm a big fan of his," said Davidovich Fokina in his on-court interview. "I look at him every tournament, every match. Here in Monte Carlo, full of people, against the No. 1, I enjoyed every moment and I'm so happy." It was Djokovic's first match since his quarter-final defeat to Jiri Vesely at the Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships in February and the top seed was given little room to find his feet by his tenacious opponent at the Monte Carlo Country Club. The World No. 1 may have enjoyed comfortable wins over the Spaniard at the 2021 Internazionali BNL d'Italia in Rome and the Tokyo Olympics, but Davidovich Fokina reached the quarter-finals on debut in Monte Carlo in 2021 and is renowned as one of the toughest competitors on Tour. Any illusions of a third consecutive landslide victory for Djokovic over the Spaniard were shattered early on Court Rainier III as Davidovich Fokina broke three times on his way to the first set, with an out-of-sorts Djokovic offering up 16 unforced errors in the frame. A topsy-turvy second set featured six breaks of serve, and although Djokovic failed to serve it out at 5-4, the Serb produced a stunning forehand pass to clinch the tie-break. - Agencies

## Israeli forces kill Palestinian

DNA

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM: Israeli troops have killed a Palestinian in the city of Nablus after a series of attacks inside Israel sparked five consecutive days of army raids in the illegally occupied West Bank. "The young man, Muhammad Hassan Muhammad Assaf, 34, died after being shot in the chest by the Israeli occupation army during the aggression on the city of Nablus," the Palestinian health ministry said on Wednesday. Assaf was the legal adviser to the Palestinian Authority's committee against the wall and settlements, according to the ministry. The Palestinian Red Crescent reported that 31 people had been wounded in Nablus and the nearby village of Beita, including 10 people by live fire, six by rubber-coated bullets and 13 by tear gas. The Israeli army raided Beita and Luban ash-Sharqiya, south of Nablus, at approximately 5am local time, according to the medical organisation. The army also raided the villages of Urif and Balata, east of Nablus, where an exchange of gunfire was reported at approximately 8:30am local time. Israeli public radio said troops entered Nablus to escort Israeli workers repairing damage done by Palestinians to a site Jews revere as the tomb of Joseph.

## Ukraine hope BJK Cup tie will bring distraction

LONDON: Ukraine's players face the United States in the drifting to the war back North Carolina in a qualifier for the BJK Finals in November, with the tie being the backdrop of Russia's Ukraine captain Olga Savchuk and team member Katarina Zavatska said if the year, they would happily swap the trophy for peace at least maybe our match, our tie, will give our people off," Savchuk told reporters on Tuesday. "It's probably hope. I think it's also very important that we play, governing bodies of tennis have each other. Ukraine while the United States will contribute a further 10% from this week's qual-Grand Slam singles honour the revamped named, will be donating \$50,000. Former world number 103 Zavatska said her mother,

grandmother and some to her apartment where she very tough. don't think some other city of to be ple, who have do is play to my nobody in my home. do to

hope to provide some much-needed distraction for their compatriots this week when they

Billie Jean King Cup but concede it is difficult to keep home. The two teams will meet on Friday and Saturday for the BJK Finals in November, with the tie being the backdrop of Russia's Ukraine captain Olga Savchuk and team member Katarina Zavatska said if the year, they would happily swap the trophy for peace at least maybe our match, our tie, will give our people off," Savchuk told reporters on Tuesday. "It's probably hope. I think it's also very important that we play, governing bodies of tennis have each other. Ukraine while the United States will contribute a further 10% from this week's qual-Grand Slam singles honour the revamped named, will be donating \$50,000. Former world number 103 Zavatska said her mother,

others moved ment in France. "It's Every day it's tough. There is no one day that we about it," said the 22-year-old, whose father and er family members remain in the western Ukrainian Rivne. "First week it was tough to do anything. Just even around, I don't know, surrounded by people who listen to music, who laugh, who live, talk, it was impossible. I understand people to live, but at that time... What I can tournaments, earn money, send this family to help them because has a job right now there family. Everybody is just They have nothing to earn." - DNA

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## Some 1,000 Ukraine marines surrender...

FROM PAGE 01

Ukraine's general staff said Russian forces were proceeding with attacks on Azovstal and the port, but a defence ministry spokesman said he had no information about any surrender. Reuters journalists accompanying Russian-backed separatists saw flames billowing from the Azovstal area on Tuesday. On Monday, Ukraine's 36th Marine Brigade said it was preparing for a final battle in Mariupol that would end in death or capture as its troops had run out of ammunition. Tens of thousands of people are believed to have been killed in Mariupol and Russia has been massing thousands of troops in the area for a new assault, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said. "We have destroyed more Russian weapons and military equipment than some armies in Europe currently possess. But this is not enough," he said in a social media video, reiterating calls for tanks, fighter jets, and missile systems. Ukraine accuses Russia of blocking aid convoys to tens of thousands of civilians it says are still trapped in Mariupol. Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov, an ardent supporter of Russian President Vladimir Putin, urged remaining Ukrainians to surrender. "Within Azovstal at the moment there are about 200 wounded who cannot receive any medical assistance," Kadyrov said in a Telegram post. "For them and all the rest it would be better to end this pointless resistance and go home to their families."

Russian television showed pictures of what it said were marines giving themselves up at Illich Iron and Steel Works in Mariupol on Tuesday, many of them wounded. Ukrainian Deputy Defence Minister Hanna Malyar has said there was a high risk of Russia using chemical weapons in their assault on the country, echoing earlier warnings by Zelenskiy that Russia was using phosphorus bombs to terrorise civilians. Chemical weapons production, use and stockpiling is banned under the 1997 Chemical Weapons Convention. White phosphorus, although condemned by human rights groups, is not banned.

Will request China to include KCR in CPEC, says PM

FROM PAGE 01

ensure that full capacity requirement is met. He said: "We will be following the will of Allah if we are able to resolve Karachi's drinking water issue." Highlighting Orange Line, and Green Line projects, Shehbaz said he has asked Shah to bring air-conditioned buses to Karachi. "I have suggested Shah bring thousands of air-conditioned buses in a transparent manner while pre-qualifying transporters followed by a bidding," he said, adding that transporters will then be allowed to take a loan from banks at minimal interest rates. He also acknowledged the Sindh government and the chief minister for their warm hospitality. The PM was also presented with aarak by the Sindh CM. Before the leaders' press conference, they held a meeting, where, according to the spokesperson of the Chief Minister House, the prime minister directed the chief minister to make all-out efforts for the welfare of the people and the safety of their lives and properties. The chief minister congratulated the premier on the occasion for assuming the office of the prime minister and assured him that the Sindh government will work closely with the federal government for the welfare of the people of the province. The meeting was attended by MNAs Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, Maryam Aurangzeb, Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, Maulana Asad Mehmood and Ahsan Iqbal besides other officials.

## Strategic sales management in real estate industry

M ALI ABDULLAH

REAL industry is booming in Pakistan. There are many real estate marketing agencies that are helping in the making sales. Strategic sales management is about using the resources effectively to meet and exceed sales target. Strategic management in sales would lead to more sales and more revenue. The local real estate arena is integrated through various channels which include property dealers, buyers, and property owners.

Real estate industry in Pakistan is using strategic management in sales to generate more revenue and they are doing it successfully. A holistic approach is employed while strategizing the sales in any organization, based upon which adaptability is ensured for a comparatively longer period of time. Towards that end, the local market has seen various innovations by the virtue of which value creation for the end user and the home owners has also been increased manifold. For example, the local market has been filled with third

party dealers for a long time and it still is, to some extent. The authenticity is of such dealers is barely verifiable, in addition to which the average user is not aware enough to get that verified. This has been the cause of many fraudulent activities by a particular segment of dealers in the market. To counter the aforementioned discrepancies, the strategic sales has stepped in to create and retain a level of trust between the end users and the intermediary dealers. These intermediary dealers are associated with verified corporations

which spend a lot on their marketing are very popular among the end users. This strategic process of value creation for the all the participants of the supply chain has been able to generate growth primarily through securing the channels and players involved in it. The primary supply chain process in the old days started with end user himself. They had to search for the required property or buyer by going to property dealers himself. With strategic sales management big real estate marketing agencies have made this process sim-

ple and easy and hassle free that leads to more sales. By using strategic management the buyer or seller would contact the marketing agency, sales team will contact the potential buyers or they would contact the property dealers in their panel to sale the property. This integrated supply chain that include seller, buyers and property dealers provide value to each member of chain in terms of commissions and for the buyer they make the process hassle free. The real estate industry in Pakistan has seen exponential growth over a short peri-

od and is still in the process of innovation as new real estate corporations achieve their sales target through strategic management. The primary factor which has fueled growth in this sector is the process innovation made possible by the many corporations and the inclusivity of local dealers as their associates. There is still a long way to go, since comparatively speaking, the local market is just at the tip of the iceberg. With innovations such as AI integrations and designated portals, the industry can go a lot further in the years to come.



## Briefs

## Four sentenced to hang in Bangladesh

DHAKA: A Bangladesh court sentenced four extremists to hang Wednesday for their fatal machete attack on a celebrated writer, in a case that took nearly two decades to reach a verdict. The men brutally maimed award-winning author and language professor Humayun Azad outside a book fair in 2004 – the first in a wave of violent attacks on free speech advocates in the Muslim-majority country.

Images of a blood-soaked Azad after the attack shocked the country, and a legion of fans mourned when the 56-year-old died several months later while seeking treatment in Germany. Two of the attackers are still at large, and a fifth member was shot dead by police in 2014 after reportedly attempting to flee a prison van.

“Four were handed down the death penalty over the murder including two who were sentenced to death in absentia,” Abdullah Abu, chief prosecutor in the capital Dhaka, told AFP. The perpetrators were members of Jamayetul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), a banned outfit whose leader ordered Azad’s murder after the author penned a book that mocked and criticised fundamentalists. The organisation was also responsible for a series of deadly bomb blasts around the turn of the century, and several senior members were executed in 2007.

Security outside the courtroom was tight, with dozens of officers standing guard. Mizanur Rahman, one of the two men in custody over the murder, mocked reporters as he was led back into a prison van after the sentence. “Journalist friends, are you satisfied? Did you get your desired verdict?” he asked. The author’s daughter Mauli Azad welcomed the verdict and said authorities should chase down the two perpetrators still on the run. – APP

## Current war is ‘betrayal’ of God: Pope

ROME: Pope Francis on Wednesday blasted the “armed aggression” on Ukraine as blasphemy and a betrayal of God. The leader of the world’s 1.3 billion Catholics did not explicitly mention Russia or Ukraine, but his remarks clearly referenced the conflict between Moscow and Kiev, which began on Feb. 24. “The weapons of the Gospel are prayer, tenderness, forgiveness and freely-given love for one’s neighbor, to any neighbor. This is how God’s peace is brought into the world,” Francis told his weekly audience. “This is why the armed aggression of these days, like every war, represents an outrage against God, a blasphemous betrayal of the Lord of Passover, a preference for the face of the false god of this world over his meek one,” he added. During the course of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, Francis has repeatedly condemned war and called out for peace, but has shied away from directly criticizing Moscow and Russian President Vladimir Putin. – Agencies

## Where Paris hides some of its best art

PARIS: Through the gallery window, just off the swanky Rue Faubourg Saint-Honore in Paris, a tree is growing out of the ceiling. On closer inspection, it turns out the branches, leaves and flowers are made from bronze and rock-crystal, and it is one of dozens of beautiful and bizarre chandeliers in the Regis Mathieu Gallery. Few tourists would think to visit – often too intimidated to enter the fancy showrooms of private galleries. But with Paris having emerged from a half-century slumber to once again become a major global art hub, there is renewed focus on the treasures to be seen in the city’s galleries. – APP

## Pakistan’s rice export to China increases 3.9% to \$132.59m

DNA

BEIJING: Pakistan’s rice export rose by 3.90 percent to dollar 132.59 million in the first two months of this year, Gwadar Pro reported on Wednesday quoting General Administration of Customs of the People’s Republic of China (GACC). During the first two months of 2022, bilateral trade has

increased significantly and China imported more than 347,434 tons of different types of rice, increasing 18% by volume and \$ 132.5 million by worth while last year in the same period it was 294,240 tons worth \$ 127.61 million. Commercial Counselor Pakistan Embassy Beijing, Badar uz Zaman hoped that within next few years Pakistan will be largest exporter

of rice in the Chinese market. I think Chinese seed and technology, especially color sorter machines, helped increase the export of Pakistani rice to China”. He further said that last year China imported about 973,000 tons of rice worth \$ 437 million from Pakistan. Badar Uz Zaman further said that Pakistan has become the third-largest exporter of rice to China, adding that they are

using traditional and especially social media platforms to provide awareness about Pakistani rice in this market. Shamsul Islam Khan - Former Vice President of Karachi Chamber of Commerce and CEO of Integra Trade and Marketing - told Gwadar Pro that the reason for the increase of rice export to China is that there is no quota system applied to broken

rice and the duty is 10%, while Chinese hybrid seed increased the production and cultivation here. “I requested that China should accept more Pakistani companies in the approval list which is now 53 and remove all duties that would help increase Pakistan’s export of rice to China,” Shamsul Islam Khan added. It is to be noted that last July China’s custom allowed

7 more Pakistani rice units to export rice to the Chinese market. The number of total companies in the approved General Administration of Custom P.R of China list reached 53. It is also worth mentioning that Pakistan’s exports to China crossed \$ 670 million in the first two months of 2022, which recorded a nearly 23% increase from January to February this year.

## Russian embassy in Bosnia warns of destabilisation

SARAJEVO: The Russian embassy in Bosnia and Herzegovina has criticised the suspension of a Bosnian Serb property law and warned of potential destabilisation in the tense Balkan country unless the decision by the top UN representative is revoked. German diplomat Christian Schmidt, head of the UN Office of the High Representative in Bosnia, had on Tuesday suspended a law passed in Republika Srpska in February, which ruled that property used by local public authorities belongs to the semi-autonomous Bosnian Serb region. The Russian embassy, in a statement carried by local media on Wednesday, reiterated that Moscow does not recognise Schmidt and considers his moves illegitimate. The Russian comments highlight a dispute with the West over policies in the volatile Balkans where Moscow has sought to increase its historic sway. With war raging in Ukraine, there have been fears of tensions soaring in the Balkans as well. The law is seen as part of the Serb drive in Bosnia to gain as much independence as possible. Bosnia also has a Bos-

niak-Croat entity, along with joint, central institutions designed to keep the country together after its 1992-1995 war. In announcing his decision, Schmidt said only the Bosnian state can regulate property issues and urged dialogue within Bosnia to resolve the dispute. Bosnian Serb leaders have rejected the decision. The US embassy has said that the international community was “left with no choice but to act” after Bosnian Serb leaders refused to “engage constructively” in solving the problem and took “unconstitutional, unilateral action” instead. Russia has supported Bosnian Serb leader Milorad Dodik, a member of the multi-ethnic Bosnian presidency, who has faced US and British sanctions for undermining the 1995 peace agreement ending the war that killed more than 100,000 people and made millions homeless. In its statement, the Russian embassy warned against Schmidt’s actions and the sanctions on Dodik, saying that “all responsibility for possible destabilisation in Bosnia-Herzegovina will lie on the representatives of the international community.” – APP

## Turkey ready for Mariupol evacuation

ANKARA: Turkey has made its preparations and is ready for the planned Mariupol evacuation of both Turkish and other civilians, Defense Minister Hulusi Akar said on Tuesday, indicating that Ankara is in contact with the warring sides on the issue. “We are in constant contact with the defense ministries of Russia and Ukraine. As Turkey, we have done and continue to do what is necessary to carry out the evacuations there in a safe manner. In this regard, we expect positive outcomes in the upcoming days,” Akar told journalists following the Cabinet meeting in the capital Ankara. Saying that the humanitarian situation in the city has worsened, Akar said: “We have made all kinds of

preparations to evacuate all civilians, including Turks.” “There is a dual situation, part of the city is under Russian control and part under Ukrainian control. As a result, we are striving to achieve what has to be done in humanitarian terms.” Last week, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Turkey proposed a plan to help evacuate wounded people from the Ukrainian city of Mariupol. Turkey had previously stated it is ready to provide ships for the evacuation of civilians and those wounded in Mariupol. Turkey has been one of the countries leading efforts to find a diplomatic solution to the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine, which has impacted millions of civilians. – APP



Baku: Pakistan ambassador to Azerbaijan Bilal Hayee calls on Minister Defense Industry of Azerbaijan Madat Guliyev. Issues of bilateral co-op including implementation status of “Protocol of Cooperation” signed in Baku on 2 Dec 2021 discussed. – DNA

## EU initiates support for Ukraine in war crimes

BRUSSELS: The European Union has initiated support for Ukraine to investigate alleged war crimes, an EU official said on Wednesday. “Europe is going to do everything in order to carry out an independent investigation on war crimes in Ukraine,” European Commission’s deputy chief spokeswoman Dana Spinant told reporters. She recalled the promise made by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and foreign policy chief Josep Borrell during their visit in Ukraine last week. “A joint investigation team has been set up with Ukraine to collect evidence and investigate war crimes which will also cooperate with the International Criminal Court,” said Christian Wigand, the EU executive body’s spokesman on justice affairs. He explained that the EU has already provided experts and equipment for Ukraine, and dedicated a 7.5-million (\$8.1-million) project to support investigations by ensuring large data collection processes. Following the request of Ukraine’s prosecutor general, EU member states were also asked by EU Commissioner Didier Reynders to raise their cooperation on the matter and to support the work in a letter sent on Tuesday. EU member states were invited to send “invest-

## 191 children killed in Russia’s war

KYIV: At least 191 children have been killed and 349 injured since the beginning of Russia’s war against Ukraine, the Ukrainian Office of the Prosecutor General said on Wednesday. Children in the Donetsk, Kyiv, Kharkiv, Chernihiv, Mykolaiv, Luhansk, Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Sumy, and Zhytomyr regions, as well as the capital Kyiv, have been the most affected, it said in a statement. As a result of daily bombings and shelling, 957 educational institutions have been damaged, with 88 destroyed. Also, 6,261 “crimes of aggression and war crimes,” as well as 2,848 “crimes against national security” were registered in the last 49 days since the beginning of the war. These figures are not final as work continues to confirm data from places where active hostilities are taking place, as well as temporarily occupied and liberated territories, it added. At least 1,892 civilians have been killed and 2,558 injured in Ukraine since Russia started the war on its neighbor on Feb. 24, according to UN estimates, with the true figure believed to be much higher. – Agencies

tigators to document war crimes, experts with forensic expertise,

equipment for the secure storage of evidence, secure lines of communication, or on-the-job training for investigators,” Wigand added. He also revealed that the European Commission will soon present a proposal extending the mandate of the Eurojust, an EU agency responsible for judicial cooperation between EU member states on criminal matters. The amendment will authorize Eurojust, which already has experience in international crimes to collect and store evidence on war crimes, especially audio and video recordings. “There can be no impunity. Those responsible for the atrocities and war crimes in Ukraine must be held accountable, and we will do everything possible towards this goal,” Wigand said. Over 3,000 criminal proceedings have been opened for crimes committed by Russian troops in the Kyiv region since Russia launched the war on Feb. 24, according to Ukrainian authorities. At least 1,892 civilians have been killed and 2,558 injured in Ukraine since the start of the war, according to UN estimates, with the true figure feared to be much higher. More than 4.6 million Ukrainians have fled to other countries, with millions more internally displaced, the UN refugee agency said. – Agencies

## Shusha. Cultural Capital of Turkic World 2023

NEWS DESK

BAKU: Shusha, known as the pearl of Karabakh, is one of the symbols of Azerbaijan’s history and culture. Founded by Panahali Khan in 1752, the city is replete with historical marvels exuding an epitome of the country’s history. The year 2022 marks the 270th anniversary of the foundation of the city. The ancient monuments in Shusha offer an insight into the city’s history and culture. Azerbaijan’s cultural capital is home to some fascinating sights like Shusha Castle, Bulbul’s House-Museum, Yuhari Govhar Agha Mosque, Ashaghi Govhar Agha Mosque, etc. Considering its historical and cultural significance, the city of Shusha has been declared the Cultural Capital of the Turkic World 2023. The decision was made by the TURKSOY Permanent Council at an extraordinary meeting in Bursa, the Cultural Capital of the Turkic World 2022. The meeting chaired by the Term Coordinator of the Permanent Council of TURKSOY and Turkish Minister of Culture and Tourism Mehmet Nuri Ersoy gathered Azerbaijani Culture Minister Anar Karimov, Secretary-General of the Organization of Turkic States Bagdad Amreyev, Secretary-General of TURK-PA (Parliamentary



Assembly of Turkic-speaking Countries) Mehmet Sureyya Er, Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation President Gunay Afandiyeva and other officials. At the meeting, Culture Minister Anar Karimov suggested that the city of Shusha in Azerbaijan be declared Cultural Capital of

the Turkic World 2023 and made a presentation on the history of Shusha as well as its cultural heritage and natural landscapes. The presentation was followed by voting of the TURKSOY Permanent Council as a result of which the city of Shusha in Azerbaijan was unanimously se-

lected as Cultural Capital of the Turkic World 2023. The announcement of Shusha city as the Cultural Capital of the Turkic World 2023 gives grounds to say that the ancient city rises from the ashes. Major work is carried out to restore historical, cultural and religious sights in the city lib-

erated from almost three decades of the Armenian occupation. Numerous cultural and sports events will be held in the city, including joint projects with the Turkic-speaking states. At the same time, President Ilham Aliyev signed an order declaring the city of Shusha as Azerbaijan’s cultural cap-

ital in order to restore Shusha’s historical appearance, bring its former glory to the city as well reunite it with the traditionally rich cultural life. Now Azerbaijan is determined to bring back life to the formerly occupied territories and to turn the city into the major cultural center.

## NZ announces biggest interest rate hike

AUCKLAND: New Zealand’s central bank increased its interest rate – official cash rate – by 50 basis points to 1.5% on Wednesday. It has been the biggest interest rate hike since May 2000, according to data by the Reserve Bank of New Zealand (RBNZ). The bank’s monetary policy committee agreed to continue tightening monetary conditions to ensure price stability and support maximum sustainable employment. “They agreed that moving the official cash rate to a more neutral stance sooner will reduce the risks of rising inflation expectations,” it added. The recent global developments regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war increase inflation pressures and deepen supply disruptions, the bank said. – Agencies

## Philippines cyclone, death toll climbs to 43

MANILA: Death toll from the cyclone Agaton in the Philippines has climbed to 43 with seven people still missing, the country’s disaster management authority said on Wednesday. The tropical depression, internationally known as Megi, claimed most of the lives in the Visayas and Davao regions, the Philippines’ National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council said in a statement to the daily Phil Star. The cyclone caused rain, floods and landslides, affecting people who were evacuated to safer places, and damaging infrastructure on a large scale. Around eight people were injured during the cyclone. Nearly 16,800 metric tons of agricultural products have also been affected by the cyclone. A day earlier, bad weather due to the cyclone caused over 280 flooding incidents in many parts of the country, including in the Bicol and autonomous Bangsamoro regions in Muslim Mindanao. – APP

## Ivory Coast’s PM resigns

DOUALA: The head of the government of Ivory Coast resigned Wednesday during a council of ministers meeting at the presidential palace in the capital, Abidjan. “Prime Minister Patrick Achi handed in the resignation of the government to President Alassane Ouattara on Wednesday, April 13, 2022,” said a government statement. “Ouattara will proceed next week to the appointment of a prime minister who will lead a tightened government of about thirty members.” “In this context of extreme international demands, whether sub-continental or global, you have clearly expressed your willingness to proceed with a reorganization of the government, I would therefore respectfully submit my resignation as Prime Minister as well as that of the entire government,” Achi told Ouattara. – APP

## Armenia aims to continue talks with Turkiye

YEREVAN: Normalization talks between neighboring Turkiye and Armenia should not be neglected but should continue, said Armenia’s premier on Wednesday. The sides should do their best to see that the talks go on, Nikol Pashinyan said in an address to Armenia’s parliament in the capital Yerevan. Saying that the Armenian side is aware of all the possible risks involved in the negotiations, he added that he believes the negotiations should continue and dialogue should be established. The results might not come quickly, and Yerevan has told this to its international partners, said Pashinyan, adding that those partners fully support the normalization of bilateral ties. Long divided by such issues as borders and the events of 1915, Turkiye and Armenia last December named special envoys to discuss the normalization of ties. Two rounds of talks followed on Jan. 14 and then on Feb. 24, the day Russia launched its war on Ukraine, an issue that has dominated the global agenda ever since. – Agencies



## Briefs

### No political deal with Sarkozy: Macron

PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron has denied that there was any wider political agreement with former conservative president Nicolas Sarkozy over his endorsement of Macron ahead of a second round of the presidential election on April 24. French media have speculated that Macron, who will need a new majority after legislative elections later this year following the presidential vote, obtained Sarkozy's endorsement after offering political influence in return.

"There was no agreement," Macron told France 2 television on Wednesday, a day after Sarkozy endorsed him. Macron is facing a tight race against far-right candidate Marine Le Pen. Sarkozy's endorsement will help Macron attract voters who backed the conservatives' candidate Valerie Pécresse in the first round of the election, but it could also deter left-wing voters who will see it as confirmation that Macron is as right-wing as Sarkozy. - Agencies

### Shanghai warns citizens not to violate lockdown

#### NEWS DESK

SHANGHAI: The Chinese commercial capital of Shanghai has warned its citizens that anyone who violates Covid-19 lockdown rules will be dealt with strictly, while also rallying people to defend their city as its tally of new cases rebounded to more than 25,000. The city police department on Wednesday spelled out the restrictions that most of the 25 million residents are facing and called on them to "fight the epidemic with one heart ... and work together for an early victory". "Those who violate the provisions of this notice will be dealt with in strict accordance with the law by public security organs ... If it constitutes a crime, they will be investigated according to law," the department said in a statement.

### 10 killed in bus crash in Egypt

#### AGENCIES

CAIRO: Ten people were killed in a bus crash in southern Egypt on Wednesday, a spokesperson with the governor's office of Aswan Province told Xinhua. Five Egyptians and five tourists, including four French and one Belgian, died after a tourist bus heading to Aswan Province was hit by a lorry, according to the spokesperson. More than a dozen French and Belgian tourists had broken bones and bruises after the accident, and they were taken to a local hospital for treatment and are now in stable condition, the spokesperson said.

# Shehbaz' remarks on CPEC highly commendable: China

BEIJING: China on Wednesday highly commended Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's remarks on the construction of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and said that it was ready to work with Pakistan to continue pursue high-quality development of the corridor and build it into a model and demonstration project for Belt and Road (BRI) cooperation. "We noted Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's remarks on the CPEC and we highly commend that," Chinese Foreign Ministry's Spokesperson Zhao Lijian said in response to a question, raised by APP during his regular briefing. In his maiden speech to Parliament after winning election on Monday, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had said that his government would speed up construction

of CPEC, the flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative. Zhao Lijian said, since its launching, the CPEC had made important contributions to Pakistan's economic development and improvement of Pakistani people's livelihood and added, "It has won widespread acclaim and recognition." He said, "China stands ready to work with Pakistan to continue to pursue the high quality development of the economic corridor and build it into a model and demonstration project for high quality BRI cooperation." Shehbaz Sharif had previously spoken highly of the CPEC several times, calling it an ambitious blueprint to transform Pakistan into a major emerging economy so that the less developed parts of the country could enjoy the dividends of development.

Long Xingchun, a senior research fellow at the Academy of Regional and Global Governance of the Beijing Foreign Studies University, told the Global Times that PM Shehbaz Sharif spoke of the construction of the CPEC in his victory speech, which showed that he intended to safeguard China-Pakistan friendly cooperation and stabilize Pakistan's economy. "It also highlighted the importance he attached to the relationship. In fact, the CPEC has been through several changes of government since its establishment, but it has always been highly appreciated and promoted by the Pakistani side, which shows that the project is a reflection of mutual benefit and win-win cooperation, and also helps the two countries and the people of the region," Long said.

Cheng Xizhong, Visiting Professor of Southwest University of Political Science and Law noted that all political parties in Pakistan were highly consistent on the issue of relations with China. He believed that under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the development of the CPEC and Special Economic Zones (SEZs) would be further accelerated. According to experts, since 2015, the CPEC has directly created more than 75,000 jobs in Pakistan. In the meantime, China has also invested heavily in various projects in the country. "It is conceivable that once the CPEC construction is fully completed, more investment will be drawn to the country, which will be greatly conducive to improving Pakistan's manufacturing base," they said. - APP

## Election for Speaker NA on April 16

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly on Wednesday issued schedule for the election of Speaker and letters to all members of the House have been dispatched in this regard. The election would be held in next sitting of National Assembly on April 16, 2022 (Saturday) while nomination papers can be submitted for the slot till April 15, 2022 at 2 pm with Secretary National Assembly. The nomination papers can be obtained from the Legislation branch of the House. The election of the Speaker would be held under Rule 9 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in National Assembly 2007. It is to mention that seat of Speaker National Assembly has become vacant due to resignation of Asad Qaisar. - APP

## Terrorist involved in attacks on forces arrested

DNA

KARACHI: The Karachi police on Wednesday arrested a suspected terrorist of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) for his alleged involvement in various incidents, including attacks on armed forces and other terrorist activities. According to a spokesman for district South Police, a team of Gizri police station in a joint operation with an intelligence agency arrested Sher Daraz alias Sher Khan. During initial interrogation, the arrested confessed his involvement in attacks on military and other forces. He revealed that he had worked with five commanders of the organization. He also told the investigation authorities that he had been to Afghanistan to meet other terrorist organizations. Police also recovered a hand grenade and a 30 bore pistol along with rounds from the possession of arrested terrorist. A case has been registered and further investigations are underway.

## Rupee gains 20 paisas against dollar

ISLAMABAD: Exchange rate of Pak rupee strengthened by 20 paisas against the US dollar in the interbank trading on Wednesday and closed at Rs181.81 against the previous day's closing of Rs182.01. According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs182 and Rs184 respectively. Similarly, the price of the euro was depreciated by

92 paisas and closed at Rs196.89 against the previous day's closing of Rs 197.81. The Japanese Yen lost one paisa to close at Rs1.44, whereas a decrease of 31 paisas was witnessed in the exchange rate of British Pound, which was traded at Rs236.43 as compared to its last closing of Rs236.84. The exchange rates of Emirates Dirham and Saudi Riyal decreased by 05 paisas to close at Rs49.50 and Rs48.48 respectively.

## Increasing terrorist attacks against security forces

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR- In a bid to force the government and pressurize socio-political circles for bowing before its conditions for a patch up, militants associated with banned Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan intensified deadly violent attacks against the personnel of security forces. Though violence acts are on rise since empowering of Taliban in Kabul on August 15th last but it getting momentum with each passing day. In current April, so far at least 15 personnel of security forces were killed and over one dozen injured in militants attacks in a few Southern districts if Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Whereas Taliban (TTP) in its communiques are claiming killing of 37 personnel of security forces-both police and army in recent attacks. The last two days remained very crucial for the government as the militants made deadly attacks in Kulachi Dera Ismael Khan, South Waziristan and Bajaur. On Monday evening and night at least seven personnel including a major of armed forces were killed in militants attacks in South Waziristan and Kulachi of Dera Is-

mael Khan. Whereas on Wednesday morning a road side explosive device caused death t a religious figure in Bajaur." Besides deadly attacks against security forces, unknown militants are also carrying out target killings and focusing on extortion throughout Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Soon after empowering of Taliban in Kabul on August 15th, 2021, government through Haqqani network initiated dialogues with banned TTP. During the process, Taliban have declared ceasefire for a month in previous November. However, later both sides announced end to talks without any results. Advisor to Chief Minister Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif while talking to this scribe, said, "failure of dialogues initiated through Afghan Taliban with banned TTP is the major reason behind increasing terror acts, especially attacks against security forces in recent days." Elaborating his point if view, he said "banned TTP is divided on the question patch up with government and those who are opposing talks are involved in such acts. He, however said, "government is determined to continue action against all those militants involved in such violent acts. But on the other hand, tribal chieftain

Malik Khalid Khan Dawar believes that government's failure is the major reason behind growing deadly violent acts. He said that amidst government reconciliation efforts, the law enforcing agencies especially security forces are confused as some "hidden" hands are still in links with militants. As a result of government organs and lacking interests on the part of authorities concerned, there exists worst kind of uncertain situation in all over North and South Waziristan whereas common people are confined to homes from sun-set till late dawn. Some of religious minded circles having soft corner for Taliban also confirms divisions amongst the banned TTP ranks and deadlock in reconciliation efforts on the part of Afghan Taliban, especially Haqqani network. It is believed that all such events lead to confusions on both sides. However some of the religious circles are insisting on resumption of dialogues between the two sides, which is essential for ending every sort of terrorism and extremism. The Jamiat Ul Ulema Islam F leaders, especially from tribal areas are willing to mediate between the two sides.

## IHC orders removal of Gill & Akbar from stop-list

USMAN CHAUDHRY

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has ordered on Wednesday the immediate removal of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders Shahzad Akbar and Shehbaz Gill's names from the Federal Investigation Agency's (FIA) 'stop list'. IHC Chief Justice Athar Minallah heard the case with both PTI members and their lawyers, as well as officials from the FIA and interior ministry present at the hearing. The FIA official maintained that the assistant director of immigration had received a letter on April 8. He said that after the extraordinary situation of April 9 and 10 - when PTI leader Imran Khan was ousted as the premier through a parliamentary vote of no-confidence - the names of the two leaders were placed on the 'stop list' as inquiries against them were "pending". To this, Justice Minallah questioned if martial law had been imposed in the country. However, the FIA official reiterated that the PTI members' names were added to the list following the "extraordinary" situation in the country. He claimed that the FIA Islamabad zone had written a letter on April 8, as that the PTI leaders were being investigated for cases of 'abuse of power' and creating 'assets beyond means'. The CJ stated that the court has been observing this behaviour of FIA for the past two to three years, adding that no one will allowed to

be victimised like this. The IHC CJ also questioned the FIA's 'independent' decision-making for taking such actions against its own government - the PTI was officially in government at the time its leaders' names were added to the stop-list. "Do not embarrass yourself with your conduct," the court told FIA personnel. Shahzad Akbar claimed that their names were still on the FIA stop list, despite the high court's earlier order suspending the FIA notification. Responding to this, the FIA official said that the order to remove them was received "late at night" hence, could not be implemented upon. However, he assured that the order will be carried out shortly. The chief justice stated that the methods employed by the FIA were "very old" and that the investigation agency existed for the service of ordinary citizens. The court then ordered the immediate removal of Shahzad and Shehbaz's names from the FIA's stop list. The IHC further ordered them not to harass the two PTI members. "If they ask us, we will go to Adiala Jail anyway," Shahzad Akbar said with a smile, prompting Shahzad's lawyer to state that the statement was not applicable as far as his client was concerned. The IHC said that the FIA director general should ensure that Shahzad Akbar and Shehbaz Gill were not harassed, and sought a report from the interior ministry.

## Pakistan welcomes Yemen leadership council

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan welcomes the establishment of Yemen's Presidential Leadership Council and successful conclusion of the GCC hosted intra-Yemeni dialogue. Pakistan welcomes the establishment of Yemen's Presidential Leadership Council, successful conclusion of the GCC hosted intra-Yemeni dialogue in Riyadh, and the UN Special Envoy's announcement of a truce in Yemen. Pakistan considers the establishment of the Council

an important step in the right direction, that will help promote comprehensive political solution to the Yemeni crisis. Pakistan fully supports the initiatives by the GCC and the Saudi efforts for peaceful settlement of the conflict in Yemen. We urge all parties to the conflict in Yemen to engage in a meaningful dialogue to end hostilities and ensure regional peace and stability. - DNA



ISLAMABAD: The Iftar organized by Mrs. Zlatomira Yurdakul on behalf of Turkish Embassy for Suffa Sweet Home, Ambassador Mustafa Yurdakul, Ambassador of Azerbaijan, Mr. Khazar Farhadov and his wife Mr. Tarana Farhadova, the former Religious Affairs Minister Sardar Yousuf Khan Participated. - DNA

# Sri Lanka PM offers talks as opposition eyes no-trust vote

#### MONITORING DESK

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's prime minister offered talks on Wednesday with protesters calling for the government to step down over its handling of an economic crisis as the opposition threatened to bring a no-confidence motion against it in parliament. The island nation of 22 million people is in the throes of its worst financial crisis since independence in 1948, with a foreign currency shortage stalling imports of fuel and medicines and bringing hours of power cuts a day. Thousands of people have taken to the streets, many staging a sit-in in

the commercial capital, Colombo, to denounce the government led by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and his elder brother, Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa. "The prime minister is ready to start talks with the protesters at Galle Face Green," his office said in a statement, referring to a protest site that has become the focus of discontent. "If protesters are ready to discuss their proposals to resolve the challenges currently facing the nation, then the prime minister is ready to invite their representatives for talks," the office said. Some of the protesters at the tent encampment,

which has been growing over recent days with food stalls, medical facilities and phone charging stations, said this week they would only leave if the Rajapaksas stepped down. Sri Lanka is due to begin negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) next week for a loan programme, after months of delay as the crisis worsened. S&P Global Ratings on Wednesday lowered Sri Lanka's foreign currency rating to "CC" from "CCC", citing the economic crisis in the country and rising external funding pressures. "Sri Lanka's debt restructuring process is likely

to be complicated and may take months to complete," the ratings agency said in a statement. "The negative outlook on the ratings reflects the high risk to commercial debt repayment in the context of Sri Lanka's economic, external, and fiscal pressures," it added. Earlier on Wednesday, the World Bank revised Sri Lanka's growth estimates to 2.4% from 2.1% earlier, but warned that the economic outlook continues to remain uncertain. On Tuesday, the central bank chief said he was suspending foreign debt payments and diverting dwindling foreign reserves to importing essentials.

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