



Islamabad POST

Monday, April 25, 2022

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Tyson Fury retains WBC heavyweight title at Wembley

Detailed News On Page-06

NAB enjoys Pakistanis' confidence

Detailed News On Page-08



Pak-Iraq to sign various agreements

Detailed News On Page-08



Briefs

Khan's actions dangerous

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Sunday that the courts were opened at night because the despotic Imran Khan and his cronies in high offices had flagrantly violated the court orders. The PTI government flouted the court orders and then ask why the courts were opened at night, the minister said in a statement. The minister advised Imran Khan to shun fascism and violation of the Constitution, do not make Parliament hostage to his intransigence. They minister said the PTI leaders held the constitution, democracy and parliament hostage and then ironically they ask why were the courts open?

PTI to protest outside ECP offices

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Fawad Chaudhry announced on Sunday that the party will stage protest demonstrations outside the offices of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) across the country on April 26 against the conduct of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikander Sultan Raja. Chaudhry, through his official Twitter account, said a meeting of the party's political committee was held on Sunday wherein issues pertaining to the ECP were deliberated upon.

No coup evidence against Imran Khan

DNA

NEW YORK: Noam Chomsky, the leading voice against imperialism and a fierce critic of US foreign policy, has said that there is "no meaningful evidence of a coup" by his country against former prime minister Imran Khan. Responding to some questions of a left-wing blogger with whom he has communicated frequently in the past, Chomsky said, "US is powerful, but not all-powerful."

Army vows to defeat every conspiracy

DG ISPR says that Pakistan's intelligence agencies are working day and night against the conspiracies

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Director-General (DG) Major General Babar Iftikhar has said that the Pakistan Army will not let any plot against the country succeed. He said that Pakistan's intelligence agencies are working day and night against the conspiracies. "If anyone tries to hatch any conspiracy against Pakistan, we will not let it succeed," the ISPR DG said. In his last media briefing, Major General Iftikhar had said that there was no conspiracy against the country. He said that the Pakistan Army is responsible for preventing conspiracies against the country's security and redressing them. On April 14, Major General Iftikhar had clarified that the word "conspiracy" was not used in the statement issued after a meeting of the National Security Committee (NSC) last month. He, however, said that the stance of the military leadership was conveyed in the meeting as well as the statement issued after it. "Whatever the meeting concluded is present in the statement." He said that Pakistan's military agencies are working day and night against such plots and will not let them get successful.

Shehbaz, Putin exchange letters



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Russian President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif have quietly exchanged letters, expressing desire to strengthen cooperation between the two countries. The letters were exchanged after the election of Shehbaz as prime minister but both the sides kept development away from the media glare in what seemed to be a move aimed at avoiding any public attention.

Continued on Page 06

IMF team to visit Pakistan in May

The Finance Division says that IMF had "expressed support" to the delegation

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund announced that it will be sending a mission to Pakistan in May after the global lender held "several meetings" with Finance Minister Miftah Ismail and his team in Washington. The announcement of the mission's visit to Pakistan was made in a press release issued by the Finance Division following Ismail's meetings with IMF officials. Miftah had met IMF officials, including Deputy Managing Director Antoinette Sayeh, Director MCD Jihad Azour, and Mission Chief Nathan Porter. The delegation discussed pathways to

PM orders to control electricity outages

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Taking notice of the increase in power outages in the country and people's problems, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Sunday ordered to take emergency measures to significantly reduce power load-shedding by the next month. Shehbaz Sharif said he will not sit back till people get rid of this problem. He directed to make every possible effort to provide relief

Continued on Page 06

Continued on Page 06

Macron re-elected

Projections showed Macron securing over 58% votes

NEWS DESK

PARIS: Projections show that Emmanuel Macron has secured a clear victory over far-right rival Marine Le Pen. Macron got 58 per cent votes while his rival finished with 42 per cent. Just to remind you that these projections prepared by French media use a combination of real results and exit polls and



are considered ultra-reliable in this two-way contest. Make no mistake, this was Marine Le Pen's best chance of victory and yet it didn't happen. Her campaign was slick, her focus on the cost of living chimed with the voters, and she performed well in the big TV duel days ago. Macron didn't even enter the election until eight days before the first round, prompting accusations of arrogance. But when he did take part, the voters clearly listened.

Continued on Page 06

Governor asks President to nullify CM election



BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Governor Punjab Omar Sarfraz Cheema has recommended President to nullify election of Chief Minister of Punjab. Governor Punjab, in a report, expressed his reservations on the election of Hamza Shahbaz as Chief Minister of Punjab and said that the procedure was not held as per law and constitution of the country. The governor also claims that record of voting has also been tampered while police personnel were allowed to enter the Assembly which is against the rules of the House.

Imran tasks Lahore MPAs to bring more people to rally

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan Sunday tasked the party MPAs in Lahore with launching all-out efforts for preparing more and more people to go with the PTI march on Islamabad after Eid. According to the PTI sources, Imran Khan has asked the PTI MPAs in Lahore to launch a public campaign at Union Councils level in their constituencies for preparations regarding the party's long march after the upcoming Eid. It is to be noted here that the central leadership of the PTI has tasked the MPAs, instead of party leadership, in Lahore to bring more and more people to the party's Islamabad rally.

Continued on Page 06

Continued on Page 06



LAHORE: PM Shehbaz Sharif visit Kidney Center and expresses dissatisfaction over facilities. - DNA

Misuse of Kartarpur Corridor Pakistan rejects Indian propoganda

ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan categorically rejects the malicious Indian propaganda regarding the alleged use of the Kartarpur Corridor for business meetings. It is obvious that this concoction is part of India's deliberate smear campaign seeking to undermine Pakistan's historic initiative of opening the Kartarpur Sahib Corridor for Sikh pilgrims from India and around the world. There is nothing new about India's desperate bid to malign the "Corridor of Peace" and divert the world's attention away from the grave injustices being done to its own minorities, especially Mus-

Pakistan hosted over 2000 Sikh pilgrims from India alone who were here to participate in the annual Baisakhi festival held from 12-21 April 2022

lims, who are being targeted with impunity by Hindu zealots in utter disregard of all tenets of law and justice, said a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on Sunday.

Continued on Page 06

Inside...

- Polio case reported after 15 months - Page 02
- Coalition govt must come up with economic reforms - Page 03
- Modi's visit a cruel joke with Kashmiris: Mushaal - Page 04
- Unchaining Iran from the economic sanctions - Page 05
- Iga Swiatek claims fourth consecutive WTA title - Page 06
- 10 dead, 16 missing in Japan sightseeing boat accident - Page 07
- Plan for contempt plea against President hits snag - Page 08

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Polio case reported after 15 months

DNA

PESHAWAR: The first case of polio has been reported in Pakistan after 15 months in the year 2022 wherein it is the third case reported from all over the world. On April 22, 2022, the Pakistan National Polio Laboratory at the National Institutes of Health confirmed the polio case from North Waziristan. The Pakistan Polio Laboratory also confirmed the virus in environmental samples from Bannu on April 5. The last case was reported from Qila Abdullah Balochistan on January 27 last year. Secretary Health National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination Division, Amir Ashraf Khawajah said, "The reporting of the case is a matter of concern for children and it is undoubtedly a major blow to the efforts to eradicate polio in Pakistan and around the world."

measures have already been taken in this connection".

Amir Ashraf Khawajah, Secretary Health said, "Teams have been deployed at the National and Provincial Emergency Operations Centers to thoroughly investigate the case and on an emergency basis campaigns are being launched to prevent further spread of the virus."

In the last quarter of 2021, after the virus was reported from environmental samples from southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the program declared it susceptible to polio virus. The virus has been confirmed in environmental samples from Dera Ismail Khan and Bannu divisions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Dr. Shehzad Baig, Coordinator, National Emergency Operations Center, said that the presence of the virus in South Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has been confirmed, indicating that every child must have access to the vaccine.

Dr. Shehzad Baig said that the government and its global partners have already been working on a strategy to address the challenges facing the country so that the virus can be completely eradicated. In the year 2020, 22 cases

were reported from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa while no case was reported from the province last year, he informed. He said, effective strategies have been put in place to make the campaigns a success, but there are still some issues, including security. He said, despite these difficulties, our brave front line workers are making vaccines accessible to children.

He said, type 1 and 2 polio viruses have been eradicated from the world, while WPV1 has undergone a historic decline. This year, he said, one case has been reported from Afghanistan and another from Malawi. The program will continue its full efforts for the complete eradication of the virus. Parents must vaccinate their children against polio in every campaign, he said. Pakistan and Afghanistan are two countries in the world where the polio virus is still present, he informed.

He said until the virus is completely eradicated, children will be at risk from the virus. About the case he said, Muhammad Salih, s/o Ihsan Uddin, age 15 months belongs to village Essori, Near Patasi Adda, Tehsil Mir Ali, District North Waziristan.



ISLAMABAD: RCCI president Nadeem Rauf in a group photo with Federal secretary commerce, Muhammad Sualeh Ahmad Faruqi. – DNA

RCCI urges to promote gems and jewelry sector

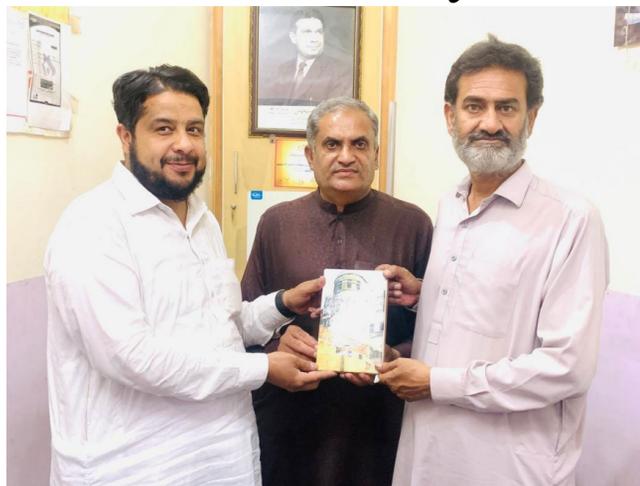
RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has urged the government to promote non-conventional sectors like gems and jewelry. Pakistan is rich in natural resources of gems and stones. RCCI president Nadeem Rauf said in a statement that the Government should come forward and add incentives to reduce taxes on import of machinery and other raw materials used in this sector. Pakistan always focused on traditional sectors to increase exports, however, we must look for new opportunities and sectors like

gems and jewellery to attract foreign investment as countries like Thailand, Sri Lanka and Central Asian states have shown interest, he added. He informed that the chamber is going to organize a third Gems and jewelry exhibition in the third week of May in Islamabad. The main purpose of this expo was to attract foreign investment in non-conventional sectors like gems and jewellery and to promote small and medium enterprise (SME), he added. He said that the exhibition would provide an opportunity to the businessmen to showcase the

best of Pakistani gemstones, diamonds, jewellery, and mineral specimens from across the country.

Nadeem Rauf informed that Pakistan has enormous wealth of expensive gems such as ruby, emerald, tourmaline, garnet, topaz, peridot, aquamarine, spinel, pergamite, diopside, moonstone, pink topaz, sapphire, zircon, feldspar, agate, serpentine jade, epidote, pink beryl (morganite), purple beryl, sphene, zoisite, lapis lazuli, turquoise, and kunzite etc. – APP

Book "Gujrat Guzashta" getting acclaim across the country



YOOSUF BHUTTA

GUJRAT: Veteran author, researcher and historian Iftikhar Warraich Kalarvi's fifteenth Urdu book "Gujrat Guzashta" is getting much acclaim across the country. In this book, the biographies of those great personalities of Gujrat have been published who have made the land of Gujrat famous

all over the world through their great deeds in different fields. Former Advisor to the Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir Chaudhry Masood Ahmed and young media person Toheed Muslim Minhas have paid rich tribute to the author Mr. Kalarvi for this work. It may be recalled that earlier fourteen books on the history and culture of Punjab by the same author have already been published in Punjabi and Urdu languages.

Distt peace committee meeting held

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: 24 April 2022: The meeting of the District Peace Committee was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Ali Shahzad and CPO Ghulam Mubashir Maiken in the Committee room of DC Office in which Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Qaiser Abbas Rind and other officers were present. Allama Riaz Kharal, Syed Jaffar Naqvi, Dr. Iftikhar Naqvi, Abdul Rashid, Aslam Bhalli, Mian Tanveer Riaz and other religious scholars were also present. Welcoming the members of District Peace Committee, Deputy Commissioner thanked the ulma karam for strengthened the peace in the district. He also thanked to business community for their cooperation in making the Ramadan bazaars a success, with the help of which the essential items were available at discounted rates to the consumers in the Ramadan bazaars and general markets and the buyers were looked satisfied with

Role of digital libraries vital for promoting education

SAQIB MUSHTAQ

BAHAWALPUR: State-of-the-art security system of the Central Sir Sadiq Muhammad Khan Library was inaugurated along with Vice Chancellor (VC) Islamia University of Bahawalpur Engineer Prof. Dr. Athar Mehboob. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Bahawalpur leader and former Punjab government spokesperson Dr. Sumera Malik in an ex-

clusive interview with e-library's state-of-the-art security system and digitization of Islamabad Post said that research in any field depends on access to already available information. Advanced research material is published in various journals and can be purchased from the databases of international publishing houses. A digital library is a library in which content is stored in digital format and accessed via computer, laptop or mo-

bile. This content can be stored locally and accessed from anywhere. The budget allocated for education in Pakistan is always insufficient. Especially when we look at the higher education sector, the fact is that the amount of money set aside for this is even less. Some educational institutions have invested in digital libraries. The trend has not yet taken root in all classes. Another important issue with digital libraries is that we need to

create and preserve our own research materials. Pakistani researchers are publishing their research in international journals, which discuss local issues. Our access to this content is limited because these magazines have to pay for full access. One solution to this problem is to create an online repository, where local and international research materials are fully available for Pakistani researchers and authors.

Pakistan will Never Recognize Israel: Ashrafi

DNA



LAHORE: Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, Chief of the All Pakistan Ulema Council in Pakistan has said that Pakistan will never recognize Israel unless the Palestine issue is settled. He said that "We consider Palestine as the issue of the Muslim Ummah and the entire humanity". Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi expressed his views at a press conference at Lahore press club, on Saturday. Allama Zubair Abid, Qari Abdul Hakeem Athar, Moulana M. Aslam Qadri and others were also present on the occasion. He also said Pakistan and Saudi Arab have historical ties and both have stood by the side of each other in testing times. He said that our relationship is based on cultural and religious similarities.

DC visits Ramzan bazaars; checks prices



ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Deputy Commissioner Ali Shahzad visited the Ramzan Bazaars and reviewed the prices and quality of essential items. He went to Ramzan Bazaars Fawara Chowk Batala Colony and other areas and inspected the stalls of the fruits, vegetables, pulses and other grocery items and gave satisfaction over the quality of the food items. He urged upon maintaining quality and other arrangements in the Ramzan Bazaars and directed the duty officers for facilitated the public in shopping. He also reviewed the process of sale of subsidized sugar and flour and advised for maintaining proper record in this regard. He also interacted the citizens busy in shopping and enquired about the quality and prices from them. He ensured that every possible economic relief would be provided to the people in the ramzan bazaars till the holy month. Deputy Commissioner said that the Punjab Government is taken all out measures for providing relief to the consumers during the holy month of ramzan. He expressed his satisfaction

over the Ramzan Bazaars arrangements and stressed upon maintaining these arrangements in letter and spirit till end of month. Adding he said that it was appreciable steps to provide all daily essential items on cheaper rates under one roof which was a big relief to the public. DC informed that comprehensive mechanism was being followed for uninterrupted supply of pulses, vegetables, fruits and other grocery items. He said daily review visit was also being held for further improving the Ramzan Bazaars arrangements. He said that 46 Special Price Control Magistrates had been mobilized to check the prices of essential items in the general market and profiteers were being dealt with iron hand. He informed to mediemen that Sugar is being sold at Rs 70 per Kg while 10 Kg bag of flour is available in 400 rupees besides 50 rupees concession is given on Ghee in Ramzan bazaars and chicken is also Rs 12 rupees lesser than open market. He further informed that 13 basic items are also being sold on subsidised rate at Agriculture Fair Price Shops of 19 Ramzan bazaars of the district.



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Government of Pakistan

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

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

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

Islamabad Metropolitan

Corporation.....9209224
Potohar Town.....9209224
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Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Coalition govt must come up with economic reforms

Dr Pasha highlighted that the current account deficit of Pakistan in the first 8 months of the current fiscal year has reached 12-billion-dollar

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Dr Hafeez A Pasha, former finance minister Pakistan, has said the agenda of comprehensive economic reforms strategy should be the top most priority for the new coalition government. It is for the first time that we are having such a broad-based national consensus government and, thus, it needs to be taken as a golden opportunity to correct the economy and rationalize our taxation system. He said this while delivering his keynote speech at the roundtable meeting on 'Immediate economic priorities of Pakistan' jointly organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES). Dr Pasha highlighted that the current account deficit of Paki-

stan in the first 8 months of the current fiscal year has reached 12-billion-dollar and could touch 18 to 19 billion dollars by June 30, 2022. Thus, we would be needing 30 to 32 billion dollars of financing every year to manage our transactions with rest of the world. "Pakistan has been able to arrange 18 billion dollars of financing in the first nine months of the current fiscal year whereas 15 to 16 billion dollars will have to be managed in the remaining 3 months," Dr Pasha projected while adding that about 5.5 billion dollars decline in the foreign exchange reserves in the month of March 2022 has added further into our economic woes. He suggested that while entering the negotiations with the IMF, we should ensure the IMF that we are going to pursue a comprehensive reforms' strategy. The relief package



should be targeted while all indirect taxes on basic food items including ghee, sugar, spices, vegetables, and tea, should be withdrawn. Dr Pasha said, "long-term capital gains exemption should be withdrawn on property and shares while fuel adjustment charges should be removed only for the small consumers." Besides, taxation should be on comprehensive income along with progressive taxation.

Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri, Executive Director, SDPI, highlighted that after COVID-19, the Russian-Ukraine Crisis has again triggered global recession and the issue of food security crisis. He said, "the Issues that Pakistan is facing, especially pertaining to high inflation are linked with the global scenario". Dr Suleri highlighted that the political instability would still remain a threat to our economy. He suggested that the new government should try to strengthen social safety nets instead of unrealistic promises of reducing the inflation. Renowned economist Mr Ashfaq Tola on the occasion asserted that to streamline the taxation system in Pakistan, we have to correct the fractured system of taxation. He said that the new government should take care of the inequity of taxes.

Senior economist Dr Aliya Hashmi was of the view that we need to look into the issues of Pakistan in a global perspective rather than a domestic one. Besides, we need fiscal consolidation as our budget financing requirements are now under new State Bank law which means the Government cannot borrow from the central bank and we have to rely on foreign financing. Dr Vaqar Ahmed, Joint Executive Director, SDPI, highlighted that circular debt in both power and gas sectors, is one of the key contributors to the fiscal seepages. "Nobody knows the true value or estimate of the circular debt in this country as the supply chain in the sector is broken," Dr Ahmed said while adding further that it is not just a governance issue but also an accounting issue in the power and gas sectors.

RDA's one window operation praised

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Chairman Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) Tariq Mehmood Murtaza on Sunday said that modern one window operation center was providing all services of RDA under one roof. He said that ease of doing business was promoted by RDA and people were getting the information about their applications from this centre which was set up at RDA with online facility for the citizens. Separate counters of the five RDA directorates at the centre are bound to finalise the matter by deciding on the applications of the citizens within the stipulated time period, he said. He said the centre was aimed at facilitating people so that they didn't have to go around every office for their work but only submit their applications here and get a copy of the decision on their application from the same office.

College Professor retires

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Professor Abdul Khaliq Principal of Islamabad Model Postgraduate College of Commerce H-8/4 has retired after attaining the age of superannuation. He entered in the government service on October 29, 1988 as Lecturer and rendered over thirty three year service in education. He was holding three degrees in three different subjects i.e. Master in Commerce, Master in Economics and a Law degree. According to the faculty members of the college, Prof Abdul Khaliq was the embodiment of a teacher, mentor and friend. The college staff arranged a farewell party and gave him a good sendoff.

Car lifter held; vehicle recovered

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Koral police claimed to have arrested a car lifter during a raid in Ghauri Town, a police spokesman said. He said following orders of the IGP Islamabad, Muhammad Ahsan Younas, the SSP Operations Muhammad Faisal Kamran directed all zonal SPs to make a comprehensive strategy to curb the car lifting incidents. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kazakhstan Yerzhan Kistafin distributing gift packs among the needy persons. - DNA

PTI believes in democratic values, says Nusrat Khan

The truth is that Imran Khan's only crime is that he wants a system for ordinary Pakistanis that is specific to the characteristics of the country

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Nusrat Khan has said that PTI believes in achieving its goals only through democratic struggle. Expressing his views in an interview, Nusrat Khan said that Imran Khan's entire political life has witnessed that he believes in democratic values. He said that there is no truth in those who accuse Pa-

kistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) of violating the constitution and law. In response to a question, Nusrat Khan said that the fact is that Imran Khan is striving for real democracy in the country. Imran Khan wants a system in the country where there is no separate law for rich and poor. Truth is that Imran Khan's only crime is that he wants a system for ordinary Pakistanis that is specific to the characteristics of the country.

Three multipurpose dams to generate over 25 MW energy

ISLAMABAD: The three multipurpose dams to be constructed in Tank and Dera Ismail Khan Districts would generate 25.5 megawatts electricity and help irrigate thousands of acres barren lands in the region. New dams included Tank Zam Dam, Chodwan Zam Dam and Daraban Dam to be constructed on priority basis as the region was facing water shortage, said an

official source. After construction these dams an estimated 109,721 acres of barren land would be irrigated. These dams would also bring an agricultural revolution in KP's impoverished zone, besides ensuring food security and creating job opportunities for the local people. By using water efficient models the command area can be enhanced and would help in achieving self-sufficiency in food sector as per the vision of the government. The decision of the provincial government was highly lauded by the people of Tank and DI Khan who were of the view that would highly usher a new era of prosperity in the area. - APP

PM asks 'The Metro Man' for guidance

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has called Ahmad Cheema 'The Metro Man' to PM House to work with him and guide his government to fast track all the infrastructure and energy initiatives based on his experience in Lahore Metro, Orange line and Quaidezam Power Plant. The Prime Minister stated that he is stuck in PM house working unwillingly without any formal orders as he is unwilling to work in the civil service now after being subject of unjust and brutal victimization by politically motivated and criminality weaponised National Accountability Bureau (NAB) which kept him behind the bars for three years. Ahmad was exonerated by the Imran Khan government through a prolonged disciplinary proceeding inquiry based on the charge sheet of NAB allegations. - DNA

Minimum Fitrana fixed at Rs 170 per person

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The minimum amount of Fitrana, an obligatory charitable donation by affluent Muslims to poor and needy before Eid-ul-Fitr, has been fixed at Rs 170 per person in 2022, said former Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee Chairman Mufti Muneebur Rehman. Under the Islamic Shariah, every adult Muslim who was mature (baligh), sane, conscious, financially able and possesses food in excess of needs on the eve of Eid al-Fitr must pay Fitr. The head of household can also pay zakat al-Fitr for their dependants such as children, servants and any dependent relatives. The rate for Fitrana per person can be based on one of the prices of a basket of items, including flour, dates, raisin, cheese, or

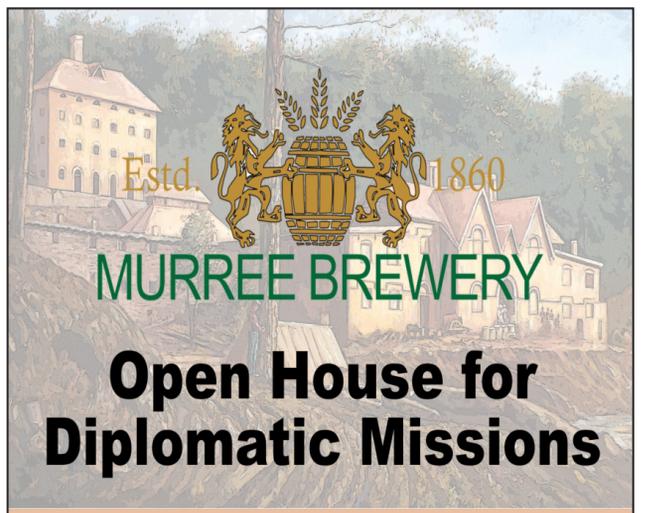
barley. According to a chart shared by Mufti Muneeb, the minimum amount that should be given in charity was Rs170 with respect to wheat (around 2 kg), in accordance with Barley (4kg) it was Rs 480 or 540, with respect to price of dates and Raisins it was Rs 1,600 and 2,800 respectively. Fitr with respect to second class Raisin was Rs 2,200 per head, he said. The Fidy amount needed to be paid for the 30 days with respect to wheat price was Rs 10,200; with respect to barley Rs28,800; with respect to dates Rs 9,6000; and with respect to raisins Rs168,000. Sadaqatul-Fitr, also known as Zakatul-Fitr, was a small amount of food to be given in charity before Eid-ul-Fitr prayers. It was not advisable to pay after Eid prayer. However, if a person has failed to pay Fitrana at proper time, then he/she

should pay it as soon as possible. This amount was separate from the annual payment of Zakat, which was one of the pillars of Islam. Unlike Zakat, which was calculated annually as a percentage of extra wealth, the Sadaqat-ul-Fitr was to be paid equally by every Muslim man, woman and child. According to the Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) each person should give away in charity an amount equivalent to one 'sa'a' (an ancient measure of volume, approximately between 2.6 Kg to 3 Kg of grain). A sa'a was a unit of measurement equal to 4 handfuls of an average man. As such, the exact weight differs based on the foodstuff in question. Each individual Muslim, who has financial power to give away this amount - man or woman, adult or child, sick or healthy, old or young. These were the min-

imum Fitrana and Sadaqah rates. Those who have been given abundance in sustenance by Allah, considering their financial status, can pay fitrana accordingly. Islam obligates its followers to pay the required amount to the most deserving people including relatives or neighbours before offering the Eid prayers to ensure that monies donated were able to be distributed amongst those most in need in order for them to join in with Eid celebrations. "The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) ordained Zakat ul Fitr [Fitrana] to purify the fasting person from indecent words or actions, and to provide food for the needy. It was accepted as Zakat for the person who gives it before the Eid prayer; but it was a mere Sadaqah for the one who gives it after the prayer." [Abu Dawud and Ibn Majah].

'Eco-friendly tourism in GB priority: Aftab

ISLAMABAD: Managing Director Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) Aftab Ur Rehman Rana has said that efforts were underway to expedite campaign for eco-friendly responsible tourism in northern areas of the country particularly Gilgit-Baltistan. The PTDC Managing Director said a proper mass awareness campaign was being designed to educate and create awareness among the local people and tourists visiting the scenic areas of the country, he told APP while elaborating the PTDC endeavours for sustainable tourism development. Rana said the PTDC was creating booklets, public awareness messages, and training guides on responsible tourism that would help overcome the damage incurred by careless tourists. Since the post pandemic era, he said there was a surge in domestic tourism in the region. A record 800,000 to 900,000 people had visited the northern areas in 2021 whereas the number was over 1.2 million during pre-COVID-19 times, he added. He informed that the environment and tourism departments of Gilgit Baltistan have been sensitised on responsible tourism and sustainable development. Moreover, Gilgit and Hunza have also established their solid waste management bodies whereas Gilgit Baltistan had also established the country's first ever Tourist Police that almost had graduate personnel, he added. Rana told that 1422 helpline was made active in Gilgit Baltistan for Tourist Police, adding, it was a prompt and efficient service for tourist sites' information and emergency services in the region. He added that the Spring Festival was underway in Gilgit Baltistan and its information was available on the Gilgit Baltistan Tourism Department website whereas the Corporation was planning for summer events. He mentioned that there were two training programmes underway at Nagar and Gulkin valleys to promote winter sports which would be expanded further after successful culmination. The PTDC Managing Director underlined that the people of Gilgit Baltistan also participated at the Dubai Expo 2020 Pakistan pavilion which was based on tourism. To a question, he said investment was a major challenge in promoting the tourism sector where the international investors have shown keen interest in Pakistan's tourism sector. - APP



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For further information please contact the following.

Maj (r) Sabih Ur Rehman
Mobile: 0300 8553342

Briefs

PNCA
arranges
Mehfil-e-
Milad for
ladies

ISLAMABAD: In connection with Holy month of Ramadan, Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) Sunday organized Mehfil-e-Milad for ladies. Well-known female Naat-khwan presented Recitations of Holy Quran, Hamd-e-Allah Ta'ala, Naat-e-Rasul (PBUH), Salat (darood)-o-Salam, said a press release issued here. They spoke about the life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the significance of the Holy month of Ramadan, and its importance for the Muslims. At the end, all participants prayed for the progress, peace, and prosperity of our beloved country, Pakistan. The following female Naat-khwan presented Naat Shereef; Noor Ul Huda, Hira Ashraf, Aliza Batool, Haroon Bibi, Laiba Shazadi, Iram Nazaqat, Anam Nazaqat, Maryam Asif, Naseem Akhter, Farzana Arif, Attira, Sharish, Dr Nagina Sadaf and Mahmooda Gazia.

World
Intellectual
Property Day
to be marked
on April 26

ISLAMABAD: World Intellectual Property Day will be marked on April 26 (Tuesday) across the globe including Pakistan with a variety of events and activities worldwide it aims to increase people's awareness and understanding of intellectual property (IP). World Intellectual Property Day is sometimes referred as World IP Day. The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) works together with various government agencies, non-government organizations, community groups and individuals to hold different events and activities to promote World Intellectual Property Day each year. Activities and events may include (but are not exclusive to): Stage concerts or other public performances centered around the World IP Day theme, with the performers delivering messages which encourage respect for creators and creativity. - APP

Lok Virsa to
hold series
of training
courses

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



ISLAMABAD: Women taking part in a Milad mehfil organized by the National Art Gallery, in connection with the month of Ramadan. - DNA

Modi's visit a cruel joke
with Kashmiris: Mushaal

ISLAMABAD: Mushaal Hussein Mullick, wife of illegally detained Chairman of Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front Yasin Malik, said that fascist Narendra Modi has already turned Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) into a killing field and his visit would further add fuel to the fire. Mushaal, who is also Chairperson of the Peace and Culture Organization, said in a statement on Sunday that Modi's visit to the scenic valley was nothing but a cruel joke with the Kashmiri people. She said that the visit is tantamount to rub salt on the wounds

of Kashmiris who have been living life under the shadow of guns for the last seven decades. Mushaal vowed that the brave people of the Kashmir would observe complete shutdown on the visit of notorious Modi to give a clear message to him as well as to the world that Kashmiris would not accept the brutal subjugation anymore come what may. She added that Kashmiris rejected India's illegal occupation of their homeland and they would continue their struggle till they achieve their inalienable right to self-determination. The Hurriyat leader made it



clear that complete shutdown on Modi's visit to IIOJK meant to register protest against India's illegal occupation and to expose his brutal and fascist

face before the world. She went on to say that the Indian prime minister wanted to visit the land of martyrs to mislead the world about real situation in the valley.

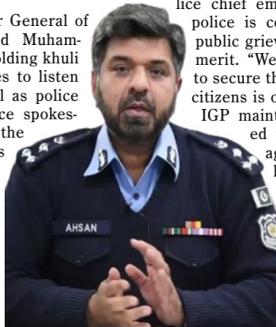
Mushaal claimed that Modi has virtually turned Kashmir into a killing field, as Indian occupation forces have been given license to kill and torture innocent and unarmed Kashmiris with complete impunity. She warned that the supremacist Hindu regime could not buy loyalty of Kashmiri people with announcing some development projects, adding that the people are well-aware of his

nefarious designs and they could not be misguided. The chairperson said that Kashmiris were determined to continue struggle against forcible occupation till last drop of their blood and they would give strong message through observing shutdown in IIOJK that Kashmiris will die but not capitulate. However, she said that it was incumbent upon the United Nations to play its much-needed role to stop systematic genocide of Kashmiris, as the occupied authorities crossed all the limits of brutality and barbarism in the valley. - APP

Police committed to solve
Public grievances: IGP

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Muhammad Ahsan Younas is holding khuli kacheries on daily bases to listen and solve public as well as police official's issues, a police spokesman said. On Saturday the IGP marked applications to the relevant police officers and directed them to resolve them on priority bases and on a given time frame. He strictly directed all zonal officers to listen to public complaints and resolve them pure-



ly on merit. "No laxity will be tolerated in this regard" he added. Islamabad police chief emphasized that Islamabad police is committed to resolve the public grievances on priority and on merit. "We are public servants and to secure the life and property of the citizens is our foremost priority" the IGP maintained. He further stated that a massive campaign against drug menace and land grabbers is on full swing. The IGP directed all the police officials to adopt courteous attitude with the complainants visiting police stations and accomplish their responsibilities in a professional manner.

Lok Virsa arranges
Eid Bazaar for people

ISLAMABAD: National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage Lok Virsa has arranged special Eid Bazaar for the people to buy different items with wide range including chunri, traditional paranday, khussay, jewelry, handmade embroidery, mehndi, traditional bangles adding colors to festivities in the federal capital. Talking to APP on Sunday, senior official Lok Virsa Anwarul Haq said that from bangle makers to henna artists, the Eid Bazaar included almost everything people look for ahead of Eid. The festival focuses on female



glass bangle makers from Hyderabad, art and craft bazaar, garments and henna stalls, artisans' displays and other attractions, he said. He also told that fun lovers including youngsters termed the festival an excellent recreation and shopping opportunity, saying that the overall ambience of the festival was different from typical shopping. He said that Eid related products serving the people with taste of their traditional heritage are being presented. The event will continue till Chand Raat, he added. - APP

World Day
for Safety
and Health
at Work to
be marked
on April 28

ISLAMABAD: World Day for Safety and Health at Work will be observed on April 28 (Thursday) across the globe including Pakistan to help raise awareness of workplace safety and health issues. The UN, ILO and other organizations, communities, individuals, and government bodies with an interest in workplace health and safety unite on or around April 28 to promote an international campaign known as World Day for Safety and Health at Work. The UN posts this event in its events calendar each year. Community leaders and organizational representatives often promote the day by speaking out on issues such as workplace health and safety standards. Various media have promoted the day through news articles and broadcast programs. Different types of events and activities that center on workplace health and safety are held in many countries on or around April 28 each year. Safety-Day The International Labour Organization (ILO) started observing the World Day for Safety and Health at Work on April 28, 2003. - APP

Int'l Girls in ICT
Day to be marked
on April 28

ISLAMABAD: The International Girls in ICT Day will be marked on April 28 (Thursday) across the globe including Pakistan drawing attention to the critical need for more girls and women in the ICT sector. For girls and young women to thrive in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) careers, they need safe and reliable access to the internet and digital tools. That's why, in consultation with youth, we identified "Access and Safety" as our theme for Girls in ICT 2022. UN Women is joining girls around the world to mark International Girls in ICT Day. With technology playing a role in all kinds of careers, from art and history to law, primary teaching and graphic design, learning tech skills at a young age will set girls up for economic independence.

And, the ICT sector needs more girls and women. The United Nations International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is highlighting the need to promote technology career opportunities for girls and women in the world's fastest growing sector. Girls and young women who learn coding, apps development and computer science will not only be well-placed for a successful career in the ICT sector, but ICT skills are rapidly becoming a strong advantage for students in just about any other field they might choose to pursue. Girls in ICT Day reminds us that ICTs help to improve the lives of people everywhere through better health care, better environmental management, better communications, and better educational systems that transform the way children and adults learn.

Lok Virsa arranges
Qawwali night

ISLAMABAD: The National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage, Lok Virsa Sunday organized Qawwali Night to entertain the audience with singing skills of Ghulam Abbas Ali Khan. According to Lok Virsa, the entry was free and many people came along with their family and friends to this classical night while all shops

were opened to facilitate the audience. The event aimed at promoting the virtues of peace, harmony and love through traditional music developed many centuries ago by the Sufi saints. Qawwali is a devotional form of music that dates back to 13th Century spreading the theme of peace, love, harmony and compassion. - APP

Islamic
calligraphy
exhibition
attracts
audience

ISLAMABAD: An exhibition of Islamic calligraphy to mark the holy month of Ramadan, which will continue till end of Ramadan, was attracting a large number of people from different parts of country specially foreign tourists at the National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage Lok Virsa. Lok Virsa is a specialized institute dealing with research, collection, documentation, preservation and dissemination of Pakistan's traditional culture and folk heritage, said senior official Anwarul Haq. Interested bonafide calligraphers are invited to send copy of their work along with their brief profile to Lok Virsa. Terms and conditions are, Lok Virsa reserves the right to accept or reject any work received from the calligraphers while only framed calligraphic work were being entertained. The respective calligrapher handed over the work selected by Lok Virsa at the Pakistan National Heritage Museum. The work will be returned to the calligrapher after the exhibition. - APP

Chilam Joshi
Festival to
start from
coming
month

ISLAMABAD: A four-day Chilam Joshi festival, will kick off from May 13 in Kalash Valley, the festival commemorates the arrival of summer and celebrates the abundance of dairy products during the season. The people of Kalash love music and dance to the beat of drums. Both men and women partake in dancing festivities, where they make circles and enjoy the sound of music. This festival gives an excellent opportunity to celebrate the beginning of summer and to give a message of peace to the world. During this festival, the people of Kalash pray for the safety of their fields and animals. The people of Kalash adore the music and dance to the beat of drums. Both men and woman share these moments of dancing together during the festivities. The Kalash are for their music and dance festivals. - APP

AIOU's
exams begin
from Monday

ISLAMABAD: Final exams of various programs of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) for the Semester Autumn, 2021 will begin in Rawalpindi-Islamabad and other parts of the country from 25th April (Monday). According to the Controller Exams, the programs include BA (Associate Degree), Associate Degree in Education, Associate Degree in Commerce, Associate Degree in (Human Resource Management, Islamic Banking and Marketing), B Ed, BBA, BS Accounting and Finance and Certificate Courses. Roll number slips have been uploaded on students' CMS portals while date-sheet has also been placed at the University's official website. Students who have difficulty in downloading roll number slip from CMS portals are directed to approach the concerned Regional Office for assistance. As per the instructions of the Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum, exam centers have been set up at the nearest places of the students' residences or work places. All possible efforts have been made to ensure transparency in the entire exams' process. Special teams have been constituted to supervise and monitor the examination process. There is a 'zero-tolerance' policy against any kind of unfair practice. Strict vigilance system is enforced during the exams' process. If someone is unable to reach Main Campus for addition the missing reappear course, should visit concerned Regional Office for addition/updating (hard copy/print of last result intimation (Spring 2021) showing reappear (RE) is mandatory for addition/amendment in Admit Card. - APP

Loadshedding monster
raises its ugly head

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The power crisis raises its ugly head once again as the country is in the grip of extreme heat these days with the mercury level rising above 40c at many places. The country is witnessing the worst electricity loadshedding with a duration of 8 to 10 hours in a day in many cities. People are facing extreme hardship in this month of Ramadan as they have to bear long power outages. Much to the chagrin of fasting people, the power companies are doing loadshedding even at Sehri and Iftar times. The prolonged power outages could be seen in Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar, Quetta and all other big cities. In many areas of Karachi, the electricity has gone for the last 8 to 10 hours. There was no power supply in Lyari, Lines area, Korangi, Orangi Town and Baldia. Citizens complained that were facing extreme difficulty at the time of Sehri and Iftar when there was no power. On the other hand, the K-Electric claimed that there was an improvement

in the power supply in Karachi. The NTDC claimed that the supply of 1,000MW electricity had been restored and it had cut down the loadshedding duration. It said that no loadshedding was being carried out in exempted areas. In Lahore, the unannounced loadshedding was going on in the month of Ramadan creating numerous problems for the fasting people. In urban areas, the loadshedding duration is four hours while the duration in the suburban and border areas is six hours. However, since today (Sunday) is holiday, so the Lesco experienced a 400MW decrease in the electricity demand. The demand has been waned due to closure of commercial markets on Sunday. According to Lesco, the demand for electricity was 4,200MW while supply was 3,650MW. So there is a shortfall of 550MW and loadshedding is being carried out in different areas of the city to meet the demand, Lesco. In Nawabshah, where temperature touches 45c today, many loadshedding-stricken youngsters are heading towards the city canal for taking a cool dip. - APP



ISLAMABAD: National Sovereignty and Children's Day Ceremony and an iftar was organized by TIKA Islamabad for the children studying at the Al-Khidmat Orphanage at the Turkish embassy. Ambassador Ihsan Mustafa Yurdakul and his wife interact with the children on the occasion. - DNA

Mr PM, condemn Indian rights abuses

BY attending the inauguration of a new JCB factory in Gujarat on Thursday, Boris Johnson might have thought he was leaving his troubles behind in Westminster. What harm was there in going in to bat for a successful British business owned by a big Tory donor? Plenty, it transpires. Mr Johnson walked into a major human rights controversy over the use of JCB's bulldozers in flattening Muslim homes and businesses in Delhi and in states run by Indian prime minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata party. Mr Johnson should not have mugged for the cameras with the machinery used to intimidate religious minorities by a regime seemingly bent on creating a theocratic Hindu state. Perhaps he is unaware of the growing sense of vulnerability felt by India's 200 million Muslims. But no one who is paying attention could miss what Mr Modi is about. He is the only person ever denied a US visa for "severe violations of religious freedom". This was in 2005, after he failed, as Gujarat's chief minister, to stop a series of deadly anti-Muslim riots. Earlier this month the US secretary of state, Antony Blinken, said Washington was monitoring a rise in human rights abuses in India by "some government, police and prison officials". The US often takes an instrumental approach in determining whether human rights violations are raised or overlooked. Instead of keeping his distance, Mr Johnson hugged Mr Modi close. India is set to be the world's fastest-growing major economy over the next two years. One assumption is that India is so indispensable in geopolitics that its partners will not be offended if it also deals with some of their opponents. Another is that the country is competently governed and has the social and economic means to accomplish its policy goals. The latter is a live question. Mr Modi failed to grasp the scale of the Covid pandemic early on, and his mistakes meant that Delhi failed to fulfil its obligation to supply Covid vaccines to the EU. Mr Johnson, who faces political oblivion thanks to his own pandemic mistakes, might envy the ends – if not the means – of Mr Modi's rule. The Indian prime minister has been in power since 2014. His success is built on an aggressive assault against minorities, with economic policies that favour the rich. Mr Modi's populist repertoire sees him claiming that the poor are his priority, while doing little to combat inequalities. His appeal endures despite rising unemployment and Covid deaths. Judges rarely confront the government. Civil society opponents are jailed. But Britain is not India. The Indian jurist BR Ambedkar sensed a fatal political flaw in his fellow citizens: the tendency towards hero worship, which he said was "a sure road to degradation and to eventual dictatorship". In Mr Modi, that prophecy might be fulfilled.



Macron to be re-elected

THERE was more than a reasonable probability Sunday that Emmanuel Macron will become the first President of France to be re-elected to office in more than two decades. And while up to 48 million voters in France are eligible to cast ballots in the second and final round of French elections, all of the opinion polls heading into the ballot give the incumbent the edge. Before last Wednesday's critical nationally televised debate, Macron held a lead – depending on the sample and methodology of the polling companies – of between 5 and 7 percentage points. That debate, however, changed Macron's fortunes, proving that he is capable of picking apart the case for the presidency made by Marine Le Pen and the National Rally.

The run-off is a repeat of the resident election five years ago, and in that instance Macron – then a fresh newcomer who had reinvigorated French politics – easily defeated Le Pen by winning two votes at the ballot box for every one cast for the right-wing candidate. In the televised debate five years ago, Macron's in-depth knowledge of economic policy easily convinced voters that Le Pen's support then for leaving the euro and the European Union was flawed and would risk the financial foundations of the French economy. That performance showed he was the person best-suited to succeed Francois Hollande in the Elysee Palace.

This time around, the televised debate centred on Ukraine and Le Pen's long-time admiration for President Vladimir Putin of Russia. While she tried to focus the debate on the EU and her plans to revitalise it, she was unable to remove the perception that if elected, she would weaken France's position with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation as well as the 26-member EU bloc.

Currently, France is the only nuclear-armed member state of Nato that is also a member of the EU. Since the military operations began in Ukraine two months ago, Macron has played a leading role in trying to broker a diplomatic end to the conflict. Over the past five years, Le Pen has remade the image for the Front National, transforming it into National Rally, and giving up on leaving both the EU and the eurozone. If Macron returns to the Elysee Palace this evening as polls indicate he will indeed do so, he becomes the de facto leader of Europe given that former German Chancellor Angela Merkel has departed the political stage. In that regard, his influence will be greatly required to find a negotiated solution to the conflict in Ukraine.

Unchaining Iran from the economic sanctions

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



The history of sanction on Iran demonstrates that Iran has the ability to survive in difficult times like economic asphyxiations. They have a record to find a way to sell oil and also rely on their previous experience of sanctions

IN 2015, Iran made a long term deal (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action) on its nuclear program with world's major powers known as P5+1. Under the accord Tehran was agreed to limit its nuclear program and allowed international community to visit and observe the activities of the nuclear program in return for lifting economic sanctions. President Obama said on that occasion that the deal will prevent Iran to build nuclear program in secret. Under this deal, Iran was able to get more than \$100 billion from foreign investment and from the sale of petroleum products in the international market using the global financing system for trade. The Iranian economy had bounced with the GDP growth of 12.3% post JCPOA agreement. International companies flocked into Iran.

In May 2018, President Trump abandoned the landmark deal announcing that "It didn't bring calm, it didn't bring peace, and it never will". Trump's supporter argued that "Tehran had deceived international community and that it continued to destabilize Middle East undeterred, via proxy in Lebanon, Syria, Yemen and other parts of the region". Then in November 2018, it reinstated economic sanctions targeting both Iran and the countries that were trading with Iran. Washington wanted to apply maximum pressure on Iran to compel it to negotiate the deal but Tehran remained defiant. Other European parties of the deal like British, France and Germany opposed because they argued that Iran is complying with the agreement. European countries also announced that they will establish mechanism to protect their trading companies and trade with Iran. Despite of opposing by other parties of JCPOA agreement, the substantial impact of the

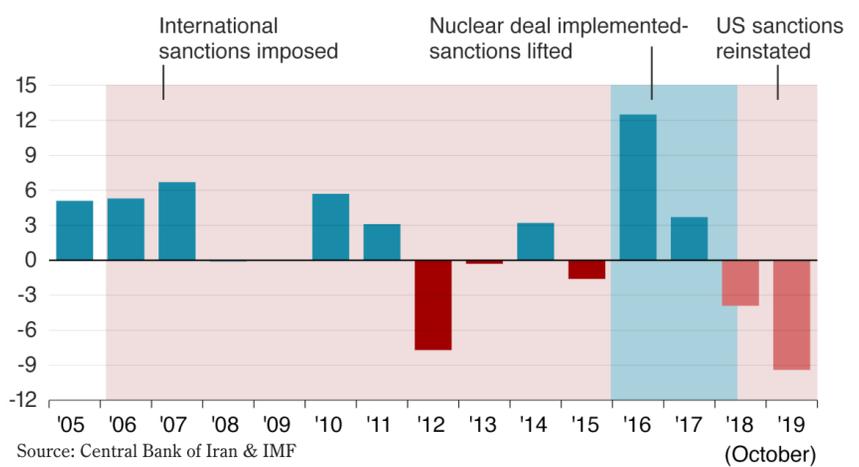
United States economic sanctions has had on Iran. The sanctions made Tehran more isolated and its economy was also badly affected. The real GDP growth rate of Iran started dropping.

Even before the sanction imposition, the Iranian economy started decline particularly Iranian currency. Western firms and businessmen started flee away from Iran to avoid jeopardizing their connections with United States financial system and market. On the other side, some European and Asian countries continued their support to Tehran and refused to cooperate with United States in this regard. Iran apparently intended to get rid from this sanction wave with the hope that after the Trump regime the new government will return to the nuclear deal. But it is much significant to evaluate Iranian strategy to escape from the geopolitical isolation.

The isolation reduced Iranian economic activities in the country as well as beyond the country. Currency was a major barrier for the Iranian economic activities in and beyond the country. Mostly people were avoiding trading, business and transaction in dollar. To get rid of this jeopardizing economic situation Iran decided to allow to the trading partners to use their own currencies in bilateral trade and settle any imbalance at the end of specific period. Iranian Foreign Minister Mr. Zarif stated in New York on September 29, 2018, "Sell stuff in your own currency buy stuff in other country's currency and at the end of specific period, balance it out in non-dollar currency. It may be possible and even profitable for all its traders. Therefore, Tehran has formatted the policy of offering incentives to its trade partners and those countries who are opponents of Washington's policies like Beijing and Moscow. China-Iran both are the largest trade partners as Iran fulfills Chinese oil needs and China helps Iran with diplomatic, political, defense and economic benefits. Trading in Yuan is an attractive opportunity for China to enhance bilateral trade and to promote Yuan. Likewise, Russia also faces US sanctions because of Ukraine issue and the use of chemical agents. Similarly, it is moving away from the payments in US dollars. In the same way, the president of European Commission Jean Claude Juncker also said that UE may planes to increase the use of Euro to trade particularly to buy oil and gas. For many months, European countries have been looking for alternative money transfer electronic system which could not be blocked by the treasury department of United States. Moreover, European Union has been discussing for a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to protect their economic freedom and to pursue legitimate business with Iran. Such system could possibly facilitate Iran for the payment of export and import. In the past, during the multilateral sanctions, Iran had been managing oil export more than one million barrels a day. Post reinstatement economic sanction on Iran in 2018, Trump administration wanted to reduce Iranian oil export to zero but Iran managed its oil export one million bpd. Due to Iranian incentive scheme, China, India, S. Korea and European Union disliked United States intention against Iran. At that time, Iran followed the strategy to rely on front companies to do business in China, Iraq and UAE to lessen the effect of sanctions. The front companies are registered under the obscure names. These companies

Economic growth in Iran

GDP growth rate %



bought goods and legally shipped to Afghanistan, Iraq and UAE and finally smuggled the goods to Iran through the water and land routes. Iran has been hiring such individuals and private companies owned by Arabs people of Iraq, Syria and UAE. As well as Iranian businessmen opened new companies with Chinese, Russian, Arabs and other partners in the world. According to Wall Street Journal IIRG has opened 150 front companies with the partnership of Georgian businessmen. For the medicines, Foreign Investment Company of Iran which also has made investment in Afghanistan, Oman, Brazil, and Germany facilitated Iran to import medicines. On the other hand, Iranian parliament considered legislation to increase imports of essential goods and to subsidize exports to mitigate the impact of sanctions. Although French and Indian companies are pulling out from the huge pledged investment projects but China is ready to replace them and to earn benefits. Meanwhile, fishermen in the Gulf have also been complaining that Chinese boats and fishermen are stepping in their areas. Another strategy of Iran has been relying upon neighboring countries to circumvent sanctions and has been purchasing dollars from Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan. Almost three million Iranian enter Iraq as religious pilgrims and visit Karbala and Najaf. A large number of essential goods have been smuggled to Iran via UAE and Oman. But due to the pressure of United States, UAE and Oman cracked down and Iran turned towards Iraq. Due to incompetency of Iraqi authority, Iranians are allowed to bypass many rules and regulation because they have leverage in Shia groups and militia. Similarly, Iranians use another tactic of couriers and porters. Iraqi Kurds bring money and food for their relatives in Iranian Kurdistan. It has become a profitable business

for the Kurds of both sides. In past, Afghan banks have been used to pay for the imports of Iran. Once the president of money exchangers union in Afghanistan has said that Iranian Rials "come across in trucks" then they are converted in to US dollars. From this practice, Afghan middle men earned five to seven percent commission. A money exchanger in Kabul has told Bloomberg TV in September 2018 that dollars are transferred to Iran via remote area of Afghan-Iran border. The traders of both sides have multiple entry visas so that border police does not ask more questions to them. Moreover, Eastern European countries like Belarus Hungary and Romania had been getting benefits during the previous sanctions periods but now they are unclear during the present sanction period.

The history of sanction on Iran demonstrates that Iran has the ability to survive in difficult times like economic asphyxiations. They have a record to find a way to sell oil and also rely on their previous experience of sanctions. Although Iranian people are forced to bear the bitter taste of economic sanctions but it may compound grievance of economic, political and social illness. No doubt sanctions have great effect on the social life and economic activities of Iran but it is working hard to maintain trading links with its trading partners. It is looking towards China, Russia and other eastern countries to forge new links to fill the gap left by lost Western Investment. China's role may prove very critical who the largest Iranian oil importer is. President Hassan Rouhani has encouraged his people by stating "There is no doubt that United States will not achieve success with this new plot of economic sanctions against Iran as they are retreating step by step". He further said that Iranian nation will rid out from the storm of sanctions.

Only one holiday a week- an admirable decision

Chaudhry Muhammad Latif



I am afraid the federal secretariat may not mislead the Prime Minister of Islamic Republic Pakistan to review the apt, appropriate, useful...

IT may appear a petty action of the Prime Minister of Islamic Republic of Pakistan Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif to declare only one holiday in a week on his very first day of the assumption of his high office. But in fact, it is a big administrative

decision with far reaching healthy consequences for rural uplift, convenience of civil servants and public at large. It was a felt need of the nation to rectify the fault of two holidays in a week at the national level. The two holidays system simply meant to add luxury to the luxurious and misery to the miserable. The said system was not wise rather it was otherwise. All the district offices were observing one holiday since the beginning and only directorates and secretariats at the federal and provincial level were open only for five days who most often would bracket their holidays with weekends thus the whole week would go waste. The decision is big because big authorities are adverse to the decision. Had the Prime Minister consulted the federal secretariat level senior officers the verdict could be difficult because several similar efforts in this respect had been earlier foiled. Therefore, the decision is all the more commendable. It seems the personal sincere decision of the Prime Minister who feels the pains and pleasures of the public and knows the secrets of the progress of the nation. It exhibits the interests of the Prime Minister to work hard. In AJK, too the two holidays a week system was experienced twice. In the earlier span the writer was holding the assignment of Secretary Services and had close analysis of the difficulties faced by the lower staff like peons, drivers etc, mostly coming from rural areas. They had to reach office in the morning and bear the additional expenses of their lunch. They would reach their homes in evenings very late hours

in winter in particular. The lower staff would also undergo the loss of domestic inevitable engagements besides the problem of transport. The female staff had crucial difficulties. So we had to arrange a canteen for the low paid staff with free accommodation so as to make the food cheaper. After the bitter experience we recommended to the Prime Minister of AJK, Mujahid-e-Awal Sardar Muhammad Abdul Qayyum Khan, to restore one holiday system and he, being aware of the ground realities, agreed to the suggestion. He also was conscious of the delayed decision making process at Directorate and Secretariat level due to two holidays practice. It had adverse effect on administration and pace of development projects awaiting approval of top level authorities.

After sometimes again the decision makers at secretariat level persuaded the Prime Minister to adopt the uniform policy with Pakistan. In fact it was a luxury of elite of bureaucracy at federal level while the provinces were bound to follow. The two holiday system had no relevance with economy of energy rather than electricity line losses increased due to lack of effective supervision and delayed decision. I am afraid the federal secretariat may not mislead the Prime Minister of Islamic Republic Pakistan to review the apt, appropriate, useful, and beneficial decision taken abruptly but timely. The promotion cases of subordinate officers were held up at the higher decision making levels. Now the higher offices will remain open for six days a week and subordinate will

have easy access at the top level for their selection board, pension cases, and other cases of nominations for higher courses which could be bound with specific dates were likely to be lapses due to delayed decisions and communications. The two holidays practice requires longer hours for five days to complete the package of weekly hours. As a consequence late departure from offices would require transport and security of person and property of the employees leaving for rural areas. The facilities are not available in Pakistan keeping in view the obtaining conditions in our rural areas. There is a general perception of the public at large in rural areas that government policies are often urban-oriented and mostly adverse to working conditions in rural areas.

As such the one holiday a week was long awaited decision by the federal government which has rightly and luckily been taken by the present Prime Minister. The decision has been hailed at large by the public and civil servants. As the autonomous bodies also follow the government timings, therefore, people will feel convenient in discharging their utility bills and other financial transactions. So the government of Pakistan should adhere to the advantageous decisions which have earned goodwill for the present government which has the benefit of the pool of wisdom of multiple experienced political parties of the country.

- The writer is retired additional Chief Secretary of AJK and advocate Supreme Court of AJK.

Briefs

Shehbaz, Putin exchange letters

FROM PAGE 01

A media organization reported citing sources that President Putin wrote a letter to the prime minister, congratulating him on his election. The official, who requested not to be named because of the sensitivity of the issue, said Putin expressed the desire to deepen cooperation between the two countries.

PM Shehbaz wrote back to Putin thanking him for his felicitation message and expressed similar sentiments on bilateral ties between the two countries as well as cooperation on Afghanistan. The exchange of letters happened as the former prime minister Imran Khan is adamant he was ousted from power through an alleged US-backed vote of no-confidence since Americans did not like his Russian policy. But the felicitation message by President Putin suggested that the process of building a relationship between Pakistan and Russia would continue under the new political dispensation.

Foreign office officials said resetting ties with Russia was a decision taken by the state a long time back keeping in view the changing regional and international alignments. That process, officials said, would continue but without much fanfare for some time given the Russia-Ukraine crisis.

Pakistan rejects Indian propaganda

FROM PAGE 01

The statement further said, 'Pakistan accords the highest primacy to the rights of the minorities. Sanctity of religious places and revered sites of every community is ensured in Pakistan'. Just recently, Pakistan hosted over 2000 Sikh pilgrims from India alone who were here to participate in the annual Baisakhi festival held from 12-21 April 2022. Elaborate arrangements were put in place to facilitate the visiting pilgrims to pay homage at their holy religious sites. The Sikh community around the world has remained appreciative of Pakistan's commitment to inclusivity, diversity and promotion of religious harmony, it added. The MOFA statement advised Indian to desist from casting fallacious aspersions on the Kartarpur Corridor which was a gift by the Government of Pakistan to the Sikh community, and instead focus on taking meaningful steps to effectively protect its own religious minorities and ensure the safety of their lives and places of worship.

Governor asks President...

FROM PAGE 01

The vote was conducted while adopting a procedure in violation of the second schedule of the constitution, the report read. The governor should also be satisfied with the electoral process of election of the chief minister, according to the text of the report. The governor in his reported resignation of Usman Buzdar as disputed in which sub-section of Article 130 has been violated. "Governor's office didn't receive resignation from Usman Buzdar," according to the report. "How could the governor approved it when resignation not received to him," according to the report. Meanwhile, it is learnt that the Punjab Governor Omer Sarfaraz Cheema who rushed to hospital yesterday is suffering from kidney problem as has been revealed in his medical test reports. According to initial tests report, Governor Cheema's kidneys have been affected. He was admitted to hospital complaining food poisoning on Saturday - the day when the country was abuzz with the rumour that Chief Minister-elect Hamza Sharif would take oath in his office at Governor House, Lahore. Services Hospital MS Dr Amir Ghafoor Mufti said was governor's second day at hospital and his condition was improving gradually.



ISLAMABAD: Players of Nishtar and Rising Stars Hockey Clubs posing for a picture before match in 5-side hockey tournament, played at multi-purpose sports facility F 6. The IHA arranged this flood-lit tournament. - DNA

Iga Swiatek claims fourth consecutive WTA title

"I worked hard this week to adjust properly and to play my best tennis on this surface," said Swiatek. "I'm pretty proud of myself and pretty proud of my team because basically after yesterday's match, it wasn't easy to reset physically and mentally and be ready for today"

WEB DESK

STUTTGART: World No.1 Iga Swiatek just keeps on winning. The Polish star claimed her fourth consecutive title and her 23rd straight match-win with a 6-2, 6-2 victory over No.3 seed Aryna Sabalenka in the Porsche Tennis Grand Prix final on Sunday. Swiatek made her Stuttgart tournament debut a triumphant one by completing her week with a commanding 84-minute victory over fourth-ranked Sabalenka. Swiatek collected her seventh career Hologic WTA Tour singles title with the triumph. Swiatek's winning streak began with a title run at WTA 1000 Doha, and she remained undefeated at WTA 1000 events this year by sweeping through the Sunshine Double of Indian Wells and Miami. Two additional wins for her Polish squad at Billie Jean King Cup qualifying gave Swiatek a 19-match winning streak coming into the indoor clay of Stuttgart. Liudmila Samsonova pushed Swiatek to the limit in Saturday's semifinals, snapping the top seed's run of 28 straight sets won in the process. But Swiatek pulled through that match in three hours to set up a meeting against Sabalenka, where the No.1 once again swept through a final. After the match, Swiatek said joining the other players in the list of longest win streaks since 2000 (see WTA Insider tweet above) is "pretty surreal, honestly. A few years ago I

wouldn't even think about being in this kind of group. "For sure right now I need to work harder to keep this streak, but I'm just going to take it match by match, and I'm super proud of myself and really satisfied. These are the kind of players who were role models when I was growing up." Aside from losing her first final to Polona Hercog as a 17-year-old in 2019, Swiatek has been utterly dominant in finals. Swiatek has won seven finals in a row since then without dropping a set, and indeed has lost no more than five games in each of those championship matches. Swiatek is now the first player to hit 30 match wins this season, as she improved her 2022 win-loss record to an astounding 30-3. After dropping her first meeting with Sabalenka at last year's Akron WTA Finals, Swiatek has won their following two clashes in straight sets. "I worked hard this week to adjust properly and to play my best tennis on this surface," said Swiatek. "I'm pretty proud of myself and pretty proud of my team because basically after yesterday's match, it wasn't easy to reset physically and mentally and be ready for today." Swiatek had to save a break point in the opening game with a rally crosscourt backhand, but she methodically moved through the set from there, surviving a patch of brilliant Sabalenka backhands as the Pole picked off big points in a handful of tight games. An untimely double fault by Sabalenka on set point ceded the opener to

Swiatek. 2021 Stuttgart runner-up Sabalenka toughed out a service hold from break point down at 1-1 in the second set, deploying multiple forehand winners down the line. But Swiatek found perfect placement on her shots down the stretch, grabbing the last four games to finish off the final and grasp her latest trophy. All told, Swiatek's 17 winners out-paced Sabalenka's 13, and the top seed won 77 percent of her first-service points as she was never broken on the day. No.2 seeds Desirae Krawczyk and Demi Schuurs captured the Porsche Tennis Grand Prix doubles title later on Sunday with a 6-3, 6-4 victory over No.1 seeds Coco Gauff and Zhang Shuai. The champions fought off a whopping six break points in their last two service games combined before prevailing after an hour and 19 minutes of play to win their first Hologic WTA Tour doubles title as a team. The triumph marks the reer doubles title for Schuurs, and the seventh for Krawczyk. They paired up for the first time at Indian Wells last month, and af-

ter starting their partnership with a 2-3 record, they knocked off four wins in a row to capture the crown in Stuttgart. "I think we're both really happy with the improvements we've had the past few weeks," Krawczyk said, after the final.



PSG clinch 10th Ligue One title



PARIS: Despite being held by 10-man Lens, Paris St-Germain clinched a record-equating 10th French title with four games to spare - yet supporters left early to celebrate outside the stadium without the players. Lionel Messi's magnificent curled shot appeared to win victory for the hosts, who needed just one point to claim the league title. Despite Kevin Danso's expulsion for a second booking, Lens' Corentin Jean equalised late on. Mauricio Pochettino has won his first league title as a manager. "We are going through a difficult period with the fans, and we hope it will get better. We're in a democracy, and we accept all protests. But we have to show respect for this title," Pochettino said. The club's ultras began to depart the stadium 15 minutes before the final whistle, rather than celebrating with the players, as a result of the club's Champions League defeat to Real Madrid. The stadium was deserted 10 minutes after the game ended, and the players did not perform a lap of honour. - Agencies

Bayern secure 10th consecutive Bundesliga title

MUNICH: Bayern Munich won the Bundesliga for the tenth time in a row with a comfortable victory against second-placed Borussia Dortmund in Der Klassiker. Julian Nagelsmann's team has beaten domestic opponents once again this season, and this victory gave them a 12-point advantage at the top with three games remaining. Serge Gnabry's brilliant touch and volley put the game away, and Robert Lewandowski added a second with ease. The advantage was halved to one goal by Emre Can's penalty, but Jamal Musiala added a third late on. Bayern's 32nd league triumph was sealed when the 19-year-old smashed home from close range to throw the Allianz Arena into raptures. - APP

Rublev outlasts Djokovic to claim Serbia Open crown

BELGRADE: World number one Novak Djokovic's barren title spell in 2022 continued as he went down 6-2 6-7(4) 6-0 to Russian Andrey Rublev in the Serbia Open final in Belgrade on Sunday. Playing his second tournament on clay this season after being knocked out by Alejandro Davidovich Fokina in Monte Carlo earlier this month, Djokovic was off to a slow start as second seed Rublev broke him twice to clinch the opening set 6-2. Djokovic had prevailed from a set down in his last three matches and the 20-times major winner, cheered on by a capacity home crowd, raised his game in the second set to take the tie-breaker despite earlier squandering five set points on the Rublev serve. The Serbian missed a chunk of the early season, including the Australian Open as well as ATP Masters 1000 events in Miami and Indian Wells, due to his refusal to get vaccinated against COVID-19 - and his lack of match practice showed in the deciding set on Sunday. - APP



Tyson Fury retains WBC heavyweight title at Wembley

LONDON: Tyson Fury retained his WBC heavyweight title after beating Dillian Whyte by technical knockout in the sixth round in front of a raucous 94,000 fans at Wembley Stadium. It was a true boxing masterclass from Fury, who further cemented his place at the top of this generation's heavyweight division. Whyte came into the fight with serious aspirations of taking the WBC belt from Fury, but was outmatched and outclassed from the opening bell in what was one of the most hotly-anticipated heavyweight bouts in recent history. "He [Whyte] didn't fight the world champion tonight," Fury said in his post-match press conference. "I ain't the world champion, I'm

a legend in this game. You can't deny it, I'm the best heavyweight there's ever been. The 94,000 tickets sold out in just hours and set an all-time record for the highest attendance at a boxing match in Europe and the biggest globally of the 21st century. Wembley Stadium was more than three-quarters full two hours before Fury and Whyte were even due to make their ring walks - perhaps unsurprising given some fans had paid around £2,000 (\$2570) for the more premium seats. With both fighters hailing from the UK - Fury from Manchester and Whyte from London - they were each treated to a boisterous reception as they appeared on the big screens for the

first time, with Fury narrowly edging Whyte on the Decibel meter. Thanks to his larger than life character and incredible technical ability, Fury boasts a unique magnetism and is extraordinarily popular among British boxing fans, but Whyte's grit and



determination during what has been a roller coaster career at times has also greatly endeared him to the public. This shot at the WBC heavyweight title had been long-awaited and many felt it was long overdue. The build up the fight had been uncharacteristically

amicable by the heavyweight division's standards, with both men clearly holding a great deal of respect for each other. The pair shared a number of comical moments during fight week, notably when they competed in a dance-off during the weigh in. Fury also drew a roar of laughter from the gathered media during Wednesday's press conference when he playfully grabbed Whyte during the face-off. As expected, though, any niceties dissipated when the first bell sounded; Fury had promised fans "a real war" in the ring and it was certainly a promise he lived up to. With the defending champion boasting the superior skill should the fight go the

distance and be decided on points, Whyte knew his only realistic shot at claiming the title was by knocking Fury out, so he understandably started on the front foot. After a tentative opening round, Whyte came out swinging at the start of the second with a huge right hook that Fury evaded elegantly, drawing the first 'ooh' from the crowd. As the third round drew to a close, Fury landed two jabs on Whyte and gave himself a nod of approval. By the fourth, the niceties were well and truly over. Whyte seemed upset with Fury for an apparent use of the head, leading referee Mark Lyon to give both men a stern talking to in their respective corners.

Imran tasks Lahore MPAs to...

FROM PAGE 01

Meanwhile, PTI leader Asad Umar said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had said that he would side by Imran Khan if foreign interference behind ouster of the PTI government was proved. "Now, the National Security Committee (NSC) has twice confirmed that foreign interference did occur," he said, urging Prime Minister Shehbaz to step down and call general elections. "Imported government unaccepted," he added.

IMF team to visit Pakistan...

FROM PAGE 01

complete the seventh review. Miftah Ismail, Finance Minister, laid out his government's priorities and efforts to bring fiscal discipline while insulating the vulnerable from oil price volatility in the international markets," said the statement. The Finance Division said that the IMF had "expressed support" to the Pakistani delegation.

"An IMF mission lead by Mission Chief Nathan Porter will visit Pakistan in May to discuss the issues around subsidies on petrol and electricity announced by the outgoing government," said the statement.

Finance Minister Miftah and his team had also met World Bank's Managing Director Axel von Trotsenburg, Vice President Hartwig Schafer and other officials as well during the trip.

"Progress of on-going programme loans and projects as well as avenues for further assistance were discussed. The finance minister thanked the bank officials for the financial and technical support provided by the bank throughout. MD Operations also assured full support for Pakistan," said the statement.

The delegation met vice president IFC, vice president MIGA and executive directors of IMF.

PM orders to control electricity outages

FROM PAGE 01

the people from the pain caused by the criminal negligence of the previous government. He said interim measures should be taken till sufficient amount of oil and gas is arranged. He said the government led by former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif had provided ample amount of extra electricity in the country, but unfortunately, the previous government led by former Prime Minister Imran Khan failed to add a single unit to it. Shehbaz Sharif said the Imran-Government neither procured fuel well in time nor ensured maintenance of the power plants. He said what an irony it is that the Imran-Government closed the most efficient and affordable power plants installed by the last government of the PML-N and used expensive and inefficient plants. Instead, the previous government had utilized those low power generation units which supplied expensive power and due to this injustice, the nation had to pay the heavy price in the shape of Rs100 billion every month.

The prime minister said an LNG carrying ship which cost Rs6 billion, now priced at Rs20 billion and the nation had to pay more than Rs500 billion this year due to such injustice done by Imran Khan's government. This tyranny of Imran-Government will cost the nation more than 500 billion this year. He said the previous rulers have hatched a conspiracy to bankrupt Pakistan's economy by destroying energy sector.

Macron re-elected

FROM PAGE 01

Even though Le Pen offered tax cuts and no rise in the pension age, they decided his proposals were more realistic and they rejected hers. Softer they may have been, but they were still far right. Not for 20 years has France backed a president for two terms, and never before has a president been re-elected with a majority in parliament.

Briefs

Former prisoner sues Canada for \$35M

TORONTO: Former Guantanamo Bay prisoner Mohamedou Ould Slahi, filed a \$35 million lawsuit against the Canadian government for his 14-year detention, local media said Saturday. According to a statement filed Friday on behalf of Slahi in the Federal Court of Canada, authorities took actions that "caused, contributed to and prolonged (his) detention, torture, assault and sexual assault at Guantanamo Bay," according to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC). Slahi, 51, a Mauritanian citizen who lived in Montreal from November 1999 to January 2000, was investigated by security services during that time. He claimed that Canadian authorities harassed him during the investigation and forced him to return to Mauritania. - Agencies

Iran seizes foreign vessel in Persian Gulf

TEHRAN: Iran on Sunday seized a foreign-flagged vessel in the northern shores of the Persian Gulf, which it alleged was carrying 200,000 liters of "smuggled fuel". In a statement, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Navy said eight members aboard the vessel were arrested and handed over to judicial authorities in Iran's southern Bushehr port. The source of the fuel tanker and the nationality of the arrested crew were not immediately known. Gholamhossein Hosseini, the director of the IRGC Navy's public relations wing in Bushehr, said five other smaller vessels that intended to refuel the foreign-flagged tanker were also taken into custody for further investigations. - APP

47 migrants rescued from capsized boat

BEIRUT: Lebanese authorities have rescued 47 people following the sinking of a boat off the coast of Lebanon's northern port city of Tripoli, according to the military on Sunday. A boat carrying illegal migrants sank on the Qalamoun area, south of Tripoli. A military statement said that naval forces had recovered the dead bodies from eight migrants from the boat. The statement said the boat had capsized as water leaked into it due to overloading. Lebanese authorities said that the boat was carrying over 70 people when it capsized. The Lebanese army said efforts were still ongoing to rescue those still missing. According to the military statement, one person was arrested in connection with the boat sinking. - APP

10 dead, 16 missing in Japan sightseeing boat accident

TOKYO: At least 10 people were confirmed dead Sunday after a sightseeing boat sank in frigid waters off Japan's northeast, the coast guard said, with the search continuing for 16 others still missing. "We have confirmed the deaths of all 10 people" who have so far been retrieved, a coastguard spokesman told AFP. In a statement, the coast guard added that those found so far had been identified as seven men and three women. The Kazu I sightseeing boat sent a distress signal on Saturday afternoon after it began taking on water off the remote northeastern tip of Japan's Hokkaido region. A search-and-rescue operation began immediately, but hopes soon began to fade for the 26 people on board, including two children and two crew, because of the cold temperatures in the region. The boat had set out on Saturday morning on a sightseeing cruise of the sort that is popular in the Shiretoko Peninsula, a designated UNESCO World Heritage site for its pristine

natural environment and diverse wildlife. The tour went ahead despite high winds and waves that reportedly prompted even some local fishing boats to return to shore to avoid the worsening conditions. "It was clear that the conditions at sea would worsen, so I told them not to go," a local tour boat operator told NHK. "But they did (went) anyway. I told the captain not to." The boat issued a distress call at around 1:15pm (0415GMT) on Saturday, with coast guard helicopters and vessels arriving in the area several hours later. By nightfall though, as the air temperature dropped to around zero degrees Celsius, there was no sign of either the boat or those aboard, though the search continued overnight with infrared and thermal equipment. Local police and Japan's Self Defense Forces have joined the rescue operation, and the first four people from the boat were located early on Sunday, with six more being retrieved in the following hours. Some were found in the water, while others

were spotted along the rugged shoreline, where images from national broadcaster NHK showed rescue workers combing the coast as waves crashed into the shore. Images released by the coast guard showed rescuers crouched in a crevasse along the rocky shoreline inspecting an area, as well as items clearly marked Kazu I washed up on a beach, with ice still visible on the shore. Those rescued so far have been taken to hospitals, and NHK showed images of at least one person being transferred from a helicopter to an ambulance with officials holding up a blanket to shield their identity. The Shiretoko Peninsula was designated a UNESCO world heritage site in 2005. It is well known for its unique wildlife, including the endangered Steller sea lion, as well as migratory birds and brown bears. Sightseeing boat trips in the area are popular for visitors hoping to spot whales, birds and other wildlife, as well as drift ice in the winter. Japan's borders remain closed to

tourists because of Covid-19 rules, so sightseeing in the country is effectively limited to residents and Japanese citizens. The Kazu I ran aground in shallow water in June last year, becoming stranded with 21 passengers and two crew members on board, according to Japanese media. The boat was able to leave the shallows on its own and returned to the port, but police investigated its captain for endangering traffic by negligence in the conduct of business. Japan's coastguard has been involved in a variety of search and rescue missions around the archipelago, including the successful discovery last November of a 69-year-old man who spent 22 hours drifting in open water off southwestern Kagoshima. In September 2020, a cargo ship with 43 crew onboard sunk after being caught in a typhoon off Japan's southwest coast. Two survivors were rescued, while a third crew member was found unresponsive and declared dead. The search operation was called off a week later. - Agencies

Govt aims at bringing economic, fiscal stability: Miftah Ismail

DNA

WASHINGTON: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Dr. Miftah Ismail said Saturday that the government was aiming to bring about economic and fiscal stability leading to economic recovery and growth. While achieving this objective, the government would ensure that this growth was all inclusive by taking care of the poor segments of the society, the minister said while speaking at an event hosted by renowned US think tank Atlantic Council in Washington DC. He highlighted the economic agenda and priorities of the newly formed government in Pakistan, according to press statement issued by the finance ministry here. Miftah reiterated the government's commitment to attract US investment in all sectors of country's economy by creating business friendly environment, adding the government also recognized the potential of Fintech and digital economy, and the sector would be facilitated further. He said that the government would take step-wise measures to ensure robust increase in country's exports to resolve balance of payment and current account deficit issues. The minister also answered questions from the participants that included US government officials, economists, think tank experts and prominent Pakistani American entrepreneurs.

Egypt gig economy workers face rough ride

CAIRO: Young men on bikes and scooters zip through Cairo, Egypt's sprawling megalopolis, dodging cars to deliver more than a million orders each day, with little physical or legal protection. Egypt's digital gig economy is growing, as economic pressures push more of its key demographic - educated, urban youth - into the work-on-demand model. Engineer Mohamed Sherif, 37, joined online food ordering company Talabat as a bicycle courier in Alexandria three months ago because he couldn't find a job. "They bleed you dry left and right, but there's nothing else to do," he told AFP. In early April, Talabat couriers called a two-day strike to demand higher wages, with only a fraction of the 12,000 workforce joining. The work stoppage reflected, however, the state of Egypt's sizeable, app-based gig economy. Inflation has climbed to a three-year high of 12.1 percent while the Egyptian pound plunged to 18 percent of its value. The mounting economic hardships come as global commodity prices have soared following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. A courier who declined to be named said commissions have been stagnant since 2020 at 9-18 Egyptian pounds (50 cents and \$1). "You can work a nine or 10-hour shift, and just not get enough orders," Sherif told AFP. After paying for gas, oil and other expenses, "you could end up only making 30 or 40 pounds that day". In Egypt, where 60 percent of the 103-million-strong population are under 30 and 14.5 percent of university graduates are unemployed, digital labour platforms have attracted 100,000-200,000 workers. - Agencies



ISLAMABAD: Federal minister for poverty alleviation and social safety, Shazia Marry chairs review meeting at the Benazir Income Support Program office. - DNA

Pak-China co-op in sorghum industry can boost up economy

There is a need to take advantage of Chinese technology and experience under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor in this field

BEIJING: Pak-China cooperation in sorghum industry can boost up local economy, Gwadar Pro reported on Sunday, quoting Experts. Sorghum is an excellent source of food and feed, and plenty of products can be made from it, so there are ample opportunities for the sorghum industry in Pakistan with the help of China which would definitely improve Pakistan's economy, said Dr. Qamar Shakil, Senior Scientist (Sorghum), Ayub Agricultural Research Institute, Punjab. Dr. Qamar Shakil told Gwadar Pro that mutual cooperation between the two countries can be given strength by long-term and short-term cooperation, seeking the future opportunities for expansion of sorghum production, export, and development in Pakistan. There is a need to take advantage of Chinese technology and experience under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor in this field. Since China is a major importer of Sorghum grain for manufacturing various products, there is plenty

of room to expand the export of sorghum to China. Secondly, the quality of sorghum grain produced in Pakistan for the processing and extraction of different products is far better than that in some other countries. Qamar told Gwadar Pro that the environment of Pakistan is most suitable for developing quality sorghum crops for grain, green chop, silage, haylage, and hay purposes. "As sorghum is a kharif (summer) season crop, so it does not compete with our staple crop (wheat), so there is plenty of cushion for its cultivation in Pakistan for export purposes. Finally in order to boost the economy by virtue of exports sorghum crop can play a pivotal role," he added. Dr. Qamar Shakil said that in sorghum hybrids are used worldwide for the production of grain and green chop, unfortunately, very little research is done in Pakistan. China has much advancement in this regard, therefore their expertise can be hired for

the development and improvement of research regarding hybrids development. He further said that flood irrigation is mostly used in Pakistan. Due to the scarcity of water resources, there is a need to develop new reservoirs for water storage (small scale) and efficient utilization of available water through improved irrigation techniques. Experts believe that in order to produce sorghum crops on a large scale, there is a need to create farmers' associations for understanding the problems involved in sorghum production on a large scale and for resolving these issues. Likewise establishing farmer-based associations would allow for the pooling of acres and farms into large entities that would benefit from technology. For fetching out higher sorghum grain and fodder tonnage from unit area there is need to literate the farmers regarding adaptation of sorghum production plan. Dr. Qamar Shakil further said that

for meeting the sorghum grain and green chopped world standards, especially for export to China, there is a dire need to develop state of the art internationally accredited research laboratory to facilitate the rapid export of sorghum grain to China. For rapid transportation of sorghum grain and other related materials to China and similarly import of machinery and other types of equipment, CPEC can effectively be utilized for the purpose. "There is a tremendous amount of international experience especially belonging to China that can assist in building the infrastructure in the sorghum breeding programs and animal nutrition that is required to enhance Pakistan's ability to efficiently produce animals," he added. Experts believe sorghum production in Pakistan can be enhanced and will be available for export to China. This will aid in mutual cooperation between both countries and in this way local industry will flourish. - Agencies

US hails NSC statement ruling out 'foreign conspiracy'

DNA

WASHINGTON: The United States has welcomed statement of National Security Committee ruling out foreign conspiracy behind ouster of PTI-led government of Imran Khan from power. Responding to a question at the daily news briefing in Washington, State Department Principal Deputy Spokesperson Jalina Porter said Islamabad is critical to Washington's interests. "So, as we have continued to say all along, there's absolutely no truth to those rumours, so we welcome this statement. And I would also like to underscore that the United States values our longstanding cooperation with Pakistan and has always viewed a strong, prosperous, and democratic Pakistan as critical to US interests." Porter added. She underscores that United States values longstanding cooperation with Pakistan and has always viewed a strong, prosperous, and democratic Pakistan as critical to US interests. The NSC, in its meeting on Friday, ruled out a foreign conspiracy behind the ouster of the PTI-led government in a setback to ex-PM's narrative of a "regime change" conspiracy. "The NSC, after examining the contents of the communication, reaffirmed the decision of the last NSC meeting. The NSC was again informed by the premier security agencies that they have found no evidence of any conspiracy," the statement issued after the meeting had stated. "Therefore, the NSC, after reviewing the contents of the communication, the assessment received, and the conclusions presented by the security agencies, concludes that there has been no foreign conspiracy," read the statement.

CPEC project enters eighth year

DNA

ISLAMABAD: China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), fully loaded, is exceeding the expectations of the two peoples, is entering the eighth year since it was officially inaugurated. According to Gwadar Pro, just in the year 2015 when CPEC officially kicked off, Umer Idrees, a young man from Lahore, graduated from Punjab University. So far, he has devoted almost all his career to CPEC. Following CPEC's development route, Umer Idrees' work in CPEC started from the infrastructure project Lahore Orange Line Metro Train system, to a project focusing on improving people's livelihood called the 'Smart Classroom', which is helpfully to breathe new life into Pakistan's education system in the near future. "The objective of the project is to modernize the classrooms to improve the accessibility of students from one location to the best teachers located at another place, overcoming the limitation of physical distances," Umer presented the project with pride. Now he is working as the site engineer. According to Umer, the smart classrooms use a variety of digital tools including smart screens, smart boards, digital textbooks and audio-visual tools to make classroom learning more effective and engaging. In the past decade, emphasis has been placed on improving higher education system and educational infrastructure by the Pakistani government. Currently, a total of 100 smart classrooms are being built at 50 public universities in 49 cities from Hunza in the northernmost to Karachi in the far



south, covering all the provinces and regions of Pakistan, which means the state-of-the-art educational resources will be better utilized and distributed for young people over the whole country in the near future. "This Smart Classroom project will revolutionize our education system which we are following since the 20th century," Umer has the confidence. Working as the site engineer, actually Umer's daily work is far beyond engineering. More importantly, he works as a 'bridge' of communication between the Chinese and Pakistani sides. Involving as many as 100 classrooms in Pakistan, there's a lot of complicated communication work to do during the whole project. In the view of Chen Chun, project manager from China Railway Signal & Communication Shanghai Engineering Bureau Group Co., Ltd.,

Umer's role in the project is the key to success because it's him who communicates with the universities as well as the construction team to ensure the whole project advance in a balanced and orderly manner. "His contribution to the project is huge," Chen Chun said. Simultaneously, Umer's life and career have been nourished by CPEC. According to him, his income has been increased more than 50 percent compared with his previous jobs before involved in CPEC projects. "A good income source is always helpful for us because it brings prosperity to me and my family. It is uplifting our way of living and social status," he said. Moreover, his skills of both engineering and communication have been greatly enhanced because the project is of the high-tech information industry. "This job is like a training session for me to improve my abilities. Our working environment is very good and seniors always support us and give us confidence to take decisions. My abilities have been much enhanced," he said. In last December, because of his excellent performance, Umer was awarded as one of the "Outstanding Pakistani Staff of CPEC for the Year 2021" by the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan. Approximately in this November, when those smart classrooms come into service, his diligent work will be felt by more people. Looking into the future, Umer is still willing to work for CPEC, and grow with CPEC. "I am the eye witness that CPEC has produced lots of jobs for people of Pakistan. It helps them improve their incomes and lifestyle. From infrastructure to education system, CPEC has a great positive impact on our people's daily life," Umer concluded the interview.

China's 3-Day Iftar Program held at Gwadar

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GWADAR: China's 3-Day Iftar Program held in Gwadar, in collaboration with the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan, Helping Hand Foundation and China Overseas Port Holding Company

(COPHC), according to Gwadar Pro. The Program came to end with enthusiasm on Friday leaving a lasting imprint of philanthropism, humanity and a people-to-people bond between China and the indigenous community of impoverished people in Gwadar. Iftar Program commenced on Wednesday.

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Briefs

At least 80 killed in Nigerian oil blast

LAGOS: An explosion at an illegal oil refinery in southern Nigeria has killed at least 80 people, the emergency services said on Sunday. The explosion occurred late Friday at the illegal site between the southern oil states of Rivers and Imo, police said. "We recovered at least 80 badly burnt bodies at the scene," Ifeanyi Nnaji of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) in the area, told AFP, adding that the toll could rise further. "We learnt many bodies are in nearby bushes and forests as some illegal operators and their patrons scammed for safety," Nnaji said that several burnt vehicles and jerry-cans used in scooping stolen crude and petroleum products littered the scene. The incident Friday is the latest to hit oil-rich Nigeria in recent years. According to local media reports, more than 100 people were killed in the blast. Illegal crude refining is common in the southern-oil region where thieves vandalise pipelines to steal crude which they refine to sell on the black market. - Agencies

ANF recovers 10.6 kg narcotics

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) on Sunday recovered over 10.6 kg narcotics and arrested three accused besides impounding two vehicles. According to ANF headquarters spokesman, ANF Rawalpindi and ANF Intelligence intercepted two vehicles near Islamabad Motorway Toll Plaza and recovered 9.6 kg charas from two Suzuki Mehran cars. ANF also arrested two accused namely Suleman and Naseeb ur Rehman residents of Peshawar. In another operation, conducted at Pacha Khan International Airport, ANF Peshawar and ANF Intelligence recovered 133 capsules containing 1.064 kg heroin. The spokesman informed that ANF Peshawar foiled a bid to smuggle heroin from Peshawar to Bahrain and recovered 1.064 kg heroin from a passenger namely Nadeem Khan resident of Peshawar going to Bahrain through flight no GF-787. Separate cases have been registered against the accused while further investigations are in progress. - APP

750 graduates join Afghan security forces: Govt

KABUL: About 750 people after receiving training have been commissioned to security forces under Afghanistan's Taliban-led caretaker government, the country's Ministry of Defense said on Sunday. The newly trained soldiers received professional, military and intellectual training at a training center in army's 205th al-Badar Corps and attended a graduation ceremony on Saturday, the ministry said in a statement. The Afghan caretaker government has been working to establish a 350,000-strong security force, Acting Deputy Prime Minister Mawlawi Abdul Salam Hanafi told local media recently.

Study finds almost 80% of Afghan girls missing out on education

KABUL: Almost 80% of Afghan girls are missing out on an education, Save the Children said Friday - almost a month after the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) issued a ban on teenage girls going to school. A study by Save the Children, UNICEF and its Education Cluster partners has assessed who has returned to school in the past month across Afghanistan. - Agencies



ISLAMABAD: Dr. M Suresh Kumar Charge d Affaires of the Indian High Commission hosted an iftar dinner for Pakistani friends and diplomats from the Islamic countries, at Islamabad Serena Hotel. A galaxy of guests hailing from various walks of life was invited to be part of the iftar dinner. Dr. Suresh in his welcome speech said that the Iftar dinner used to be a regular feature however due to Covid it could not take place. He also highlighted achievements of India in various fields. He said Indian government has administered 1.84 billion covid doses that helped it cope with the pandemic effectively. - DNA

Imran harming foreign policy for political survival: Ahsan Iqbal

DNA

LAHORE: In a fierce tirade against former prime minister Imran Khan, Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal has said that like a drunk driver, Imran is crashing his vehicle into constitutional institutions of the country while vowing that the new government will not spare any criminal and violator of the Constitution. Addressing a presser in Lahore on Sunday, the planning minister announced that legal action would be initiated against former National Assembly speaker Asad Qaiser and deputy speaker Qasim Suri for subverting the Constitution. Turning the direction of his gun towards Imran, Mr Ahsan said that former premier was constantly playing with country's interests for the sake of his political survival. He said like a stoned man, he was smashing his vehicle into constitutional institutions, unaware of the damage he was causing. "Imran Khan is causing harm to Pakistan's foreign policy in order to hide his failure in politics," Ahsan maintained. He held that the former premier even harmed our relations with Gulf countries when he sold the gifts in markets which they presented to him as country's chief executive. "Imran has brought shame on us by selling gifts of foreign dignitaries," he added. The planning minister alleged that Imran Khan wanted to isolate Pakistan after picking up quarrel with each and every friend of Pakistan and world powers. He said that Imran vitiated country's ties not only with America and Europe but also with China. He alleged that the Imran government intentionally dented the CPEC project. On Punjab politics, he said a strange drama was being played in the province. "It is beyond us what enmity Imran is harbouring against Punjab," Mr Ahsan added. The Federal Minister has said that the new government is working tirelessly to solve the issues faced by the country. He said that work is being done at a fast speed under Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif's leadership. He said that Pakistan will keep moving forward and we will make the country's economy strong again.

Plan for contempt plea against President hits snag

Under Article 248 of the Constitution, the President of Pakistan and the Governor both enjoy indemnity. They are not answerable to courts of the country

AGENCIES

ISLAMABAD: As the Punjab constitutional crisis regarding swearing-in of Chief Minister-elect Hamza Shehbaz lingers on, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) plan to file a contempt plea against President for not implementing the court order hits a snag. According to legal experts, there are several legal complications involved in filing a contempt plea against the President. Under Article 248 of the Constitution, the President of Pakistan and the Governor both enjoy indemnity. They are not answerable to courts of the country, they added. On Friday, LHC Chief Justice Muhammad Ameer Bhatti ordered President of Pakistan

to appoint a representative for administering oath to Punjab chief minister-elect as Governor Omar Sarfraz Cheema had expressed his inability to do so. Earlier, rumors were rife that President Arif Alvi had appointed Senate Chairman Sadiq Sanjrani to administer the oath and preparations were afoot at Punjab Governor House for the swearing-in ceremony of Hamza which was expected at 4pm. But by the end of the day, no ceremony was held and rumors died down with the tweet of President Alvi uploaded just before 4pm in which he stated that he received a summary from the PM Office on 23rd April 2022 regarding the court order and it was under consideration as per the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The Punjab administration yesterday had already sent a plane to Islamabad Airport to bring

Sanjrani to Lahore for Hamza's oath-taking ceremony. But the plane flew back sans Senate chairman. The PML-N leadership became edgy as the long-awaited ceremony was once again put on hold. After the emerging new situation, PML-N leaders Atta Ullah Tarar, Malik Ahmad Khan, Awais Leghari, Khalil Tahir Sindhu and others held a press conference in Lahore and rued that the delaying tactics were being used despite the Lahore High Court order on the matter of oath-taking of Hamza Shehbaz. They announced that a contempt of court petition would be filed in the Lahore High Court on Monday. In the heat of the moment, though the PML-N spokesmen announced to bring contempt plea against the President but the legal experts don't reckon that they could be able to do so in the light of constitutional indemnity

enjoyed by the President and Governor. The experts say that the Constitution provides protection to the President and courts cannot issue any order or advice to the Head of the State. The Lahore High Court has not issued any order or instructions to the President regarding appointment of a representative who could administer oath to the chief minister-elect, experts say adding that even the President was not made a party in Hamza Shehbaz's petition. They say that the court even did not give any timeframe for the appointment of a representative in its ruling. The legal brains are of the view that instead of filing contempt plea against President, the PML-N can file a petition requesting court to issue another order for implementation on its earlier order regarding appointment of a representative for oath-taking administration.

Pak-Iraq to sign agreements in various sectors: Iraqi Envoy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Iraq in Pakistan Hamid Abbas Lafta on Sunday said that Pakistan and Iraq will sign agreements on cooperation in various sectors, including trade promotion and tariff rationalization to enhance the bilateral economic and trade ties. Pakistan and Iraq will sign 10 agreements to promote such

cooperation in coming June, which will mark the beginning of a new era in enhancing bilateral relations, the Ambassador of Iraq to Pakistan said in a media interview here. These agreements will be signed on tax and tariff exemptions, economic and trade cooperation, promotion of diplomatic cooperation, human trafficking, Coordination in crime, drug and air connectivity, he said. Ambassador Lafta said that there was a huge potential

for the development of bilateral trade between the two countries in near future. Ambassador said that Iraq was a free market where there were vast opportunities for Pakistani investors, from which the local business community can benefit from. He said the current \$100 million bilateral trade needs to be doubled, which would require new petroleum, tourism cooperation on both sides and more facilities for mutual air travel.

Talks are also underway to make air connectivity more effective in both the countries and agreements will be signed in this regard, he added. Ambassador said that in order to improve economic and trade cooperation, it was necessary to know each other's markets and in this regard exhibitions and seminars should be organized to increase the interest of business class and investors of both the countries to promote mutual economic cooperation.



'Majority of Pakistanis satisfied with NAB'

ISLAMABAD: National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Chairman Justice Javed Iqbal has said that NAB is the focal institute of Pakistan under UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and is Chairman of SAARC anti corruption forum as NAB is considered role model in SAARC countries which is a great success and honour for Pakistan. SAARC countries have lauded NAB's performance. Transparency International Pakistan, World Economic Forum, Global Peace Canada, PILDAT, Mashal Pakistan has also appreciated NAB's efforts whereas as per Gilani & Gallup survey, 59 percent of people have expressed confidence in NAB. Pakistan is the only country that has signed a memorandum of understanding with China to fight corruption. Pakistan and China are working together to ensure transparency in the ongoing CPEC projects in Pakistan. NAB is the only institution in the country which since its inception has recovered Rs. 864 billion from corrupt elements. NAB is the only institution in the country which has returned the recovered money to various federal, provincial agencies and affected citizens. NAB has



distributed Rs 25 billion among the affected of illegal housing societies. NAB officers consider eradication of corruption as their national obligation while that have also devised three pronged strategy to eliminate corruption. This has been acknowledged as the most effective anti corruption strategy. NAB has introduced a Combine Investigation Team (CIT) system in order to benefit from the experienced and collective wisdom of senior supervisory officers. CIT headed by director general included a

senior and junior investigation officer, additional director as case officer, legal counsel, financial and forensic experts. CIT's excellent results have started coming. The NAB has established its own Pakistan Training and Research Academy, which is imparting specialised training to investigation officers on modern lines in order to conduct investigations of cases of money laundering and white collar crimes besides the establishment of the state-of-the-art Forensic Science Laboratory in NAB Rawalpindi for scrutinising documents and fingerprints, analysis of digital data, etc. This has increased investigation standards. NAB has established a money laundering cell at its headquarters. NAB has no affiliation with any political party, group or individual. It has affiliations with state of Pakistan. NAB is the anti corruption institution in country. It has conferred the responsibilities of recovering looted amount from corrupt elements. The incumbent leadership of NAB has recovered record Rs 584 billion. During current leadership the accountability courts have convicted 1,504 suspects due to rigorous persuasion of NAB. - APP