



Islamabad POST

Thursday, November 24, 2022

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 25

United States to keep helping people of Balouchistan

Detailed News On Page-08

Raisi for closer independent states' ties

Detailed News On Page-07



Boris Johnson slams Western attitudes

Detailed News On Page-07

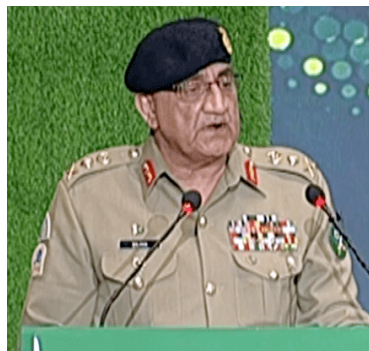


Army not responsible for 1971 events Our patience has a limit: COAS

Says army has decided to stay away from politics; rubbishes any conspiracy in PTI govt removal; urges unity for country's sake

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

RAWALPINDI: Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa, in his final public address as the army chief, criticised anti-military narrative and urged political stakeholders to set aside labels of 'imported' and 'selected' to move forward for the country's sake. The army chief made these remarks on Wednesday during his speech at the Defence and Martyrs Day ceremony, which is held annually at the General Headquarters (GHQ) Rawalpindi on September 6 to commemorate the sacrifices of fallen heroes of the 1965 war. However, it was postponed this year in solidarity with flood victims across the country and rescheduled for today.



avoided. "I want to correct some facts here. Firstly, former East Pakistan was a political failure and not a military one," he said. He said the number of soldiers fighting was not 92,000 but 34,000 and the others were in different government depots. He added that these 34,000 soldiers were confronted by an Indian army of 250,000 soldiers and 200,000 members of the Mukti Bahini. "Against these heavy odds, our army fought bravely and gave exemplary sacrifices which were acknowledged by Indian army chief field marshal Manekshaw." He said the nation had yet not owned up to these sacrifices which was

a "great injustice". "Taking advantage of this occasion I salute these martyrs and will continue to do so. They are our heroes and the nation should be proud of them," Bajwa added. Gen Bajwa will be retiring by the end of the month after commanding the army for six years. He was appointed army chief in 2016 for a three-year tenure, which was extended by another three years after parliament legislated on the tenures of services chiefs on the orders of the Supreme Court. He dedicated a major portion of his speech to political matters, saying that he often wondered that the Indian army carried out the most human rights violations in the world but "their people seldom make them the target of criticism". "In contrast to that, our army which day and night remains busy in serving the nation, is often made the subject of criticism," he said. "A major reason for this is the army's interference in politics for the last 70 years which is unconstitutional. "This is why in February last year army, after great deliberation, decided that it would never interfere in any political matter.

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Leslie Scanlon, the High Commissioner-designate of Canada presenting her papers to Ali Haider Altamash, Director General of Protocol. This is just the beginning of what I know is going to be an amazing time in this beautiful country, she said in her Tweet.=DNA

Pakistan expresses solidarity with Qatar
PM Shehbaz says smear drive to fail

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said Pakistan stood in solidarity with Qatar's Emir and people as the country faced propaganda while hosting the FIFA World Cup. "Unfortunately that Qatar is being subjected to a barrage of propaganda as host of FIFA World Cup," he said in a tweet. Instead, Shehbaz Sharif said, Qatar should rather be commended for wonderful arrangements for mega event and being a promoter of global peace and development. Qatar is hosting Football World Cup which started on November 20. It is a big occasion for this Arab country. Qatar is the first Gulf state hosting such a mega event. Qatar was preparing for it since 2010. It has put a lot of resources, efforts and emotions to make the event successful and memorable. Qatar used the opportunity to share the benefits with other countries by inviting hundreds of thousands of workers, companies and experts from abroad. It is for the first time the host of Football World Cup engaged such a large number of workers, companies and

Continued on Page 06

Army Chief appointment
President Alvi will take me on board, says Imran Khan
PTI Chairman says merit should be followed in the appointment

ALI HAMZA

LAHORE: Former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan has said that President Dr Arif Alvi will discuss matters relating to summary for appointment of Army Chief. Speaking to a private television channel on Wednesday, he said that he is in contact with President Dr Arif Alvi on matters pertaining to summary for appointment of Army Chief. Imran Khan said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif held consultation with a fugitive on Army Chief's appointment and he is the chairman of a party and the President will surely talk to him over the summary. The former PM said, "If someone thinks that he will bring his army chief to unleash vi-

olence, then the nation will stand against him, adding that Shehbaz Sharif was fully involved in the Wazirabad attack and Nawaz Sharif would also know but it is now up to Tasnim Haider how the police would present evidence in the court." Former Prime Minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) supremo Imran Khan on Sunday said that he has no issue with whoever is appointed as the next army chief, and there will be a surprise for everyone on November 26. Speaking to a delegation of journalists at his home in Zaman Park, the former premier said that

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

China ready to work with Pakistan: Zhao Lijian

DNA

BEIJING: China stands ready to work with Pakistan to implement the important consensus reached between leadership of the two countries during Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's visit to China and act on the outcomes of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) joint committee meeting, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson said on Wednesday. "China stands ready to work together with Pakistan to follow through on the important common understanding reached between our two leaders during Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's visit to China and to act on the outcomes of the CPEC joint committee meeting," Zhao Lijian said during his regular briefing in response to a question asked by media.

Promotion of film industry priority

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb says screen tourism can play a pivotal role in promoting our culture and values. Addressing the MoU signing ceremony between Fatimah Jinnah Women University and Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in Islamabad on Wednesday, she said, unfortunately, film industry in Pakistan has been facing tough circumstances in the past. The Minister said Pakistan's Film Industry has started growing since last decade. She said PML-N govt, during its previous tenure, formulated Film and Culture Policy for the first time in the history of the country.

'COAS to be finalised before PM Ankara visit'
Khawaja Asif says that, "The legal process on the summary is underway"

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif said on Wednesday that "the formalities" of appointing a new army chief will "likely take a day". Speaking informally with journalists outside the Prime Minister Office (PMO), the defence minister hinted that the new army chief may be appointed before PM Shehbaz embarks on a trip to Turkey on November 25. The PMO also confirmed earlier this morning that it had received the summary for the COAS' appointment. The army's General Headquarters (GHQ) has also sent a summary to the Ministry of Defence about the Chief of Joint Chief of Staff and the COAS appointment. Sources have also revealed that the defence minister met with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and discussed the army chief's appointment. Speaking to the media, Asif said that, "The legal process on the summary is underway." Brushing off a journalist's question about the government's stance on following the seniority principle, Khawaja Asif said "I don't know about that, but the names



should be finalised by tomorrow and allies and cabinet members will also be taken into confidence." "Be it the president or the prime minister, decisions should be made according to the Constitution and in the national interest," he added while responding to another press representative. Asif also said he did not "want to speculate" but remained hopeful that the "uncertainty that has gripped the country for the past few months will definitely end once the appointment matter settles before the PM leaves". "The process has its own sanctity," he said as he regretted that the issue had been made "into a big deal" due to "our politics and media" among other factors. Urging media to remain unbiased, the minister also quashed rumours that a summary had been received prior to the one in question.

EU lawmakers name Russia a 'state sponsor' of terrorism

In the United States, there is a specific legal instrument listing states that have "repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism

NEWS DESK

BRUSSELS: EU lawmakers on Wednesday declared Russia a "state sponsor" of terrorism in line with pleas from Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. "The deliberate attacks and atrocities committed by Russian forces and their proxies against civilians in Ukraine, the destruction of civilian infrastructure and other serious violations of international and humanitarian law amount to acts of terror and constitute war crimes," a press release from the European Parliament stated. The designation is a largely symbolic condemnation of Russia's actions in Ukraine and beyond. The US government has so far resisted the label for Russia, citing potential unintended consequences under its legal system. That depends on the jurisdiction. In the United States, there is a specific legal instrument listing states that have "repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism." At present, only Cuba, Iran, North Korea

and Syria are on it. Inclusion means restrictions on foreign aid, a ban on defense exports to such governments, controls on exports of technology with potential military use and financial constraints. Crucially, it also has implications for Russia's sovereign immunity in US courts. Canada also has a similar instrument condemning "state supporters of terrorism." By contrast, the European Union currently has no centralized list of "state sponsors of terrorism" and no equivalent tool, as the European Parliament motion for a resolution published last week acknowledged. In essence, there will be no hard and fast legal consequences. The European Parliament has limited clout in foreign policy, which remains under the control of the 27 member states. A number of US legislators have pushed the Biden administration for such a listing, including Republican Senator Lindsey Graham. In a statement in September, Graham said lifting Russia's immunity would allow "civil claims from the families of vic-

tims of its state-sponsored terrorism." But other US officials say the designation is not the best way to hold the Kremlin accountable. Listing Russia could undermine humanitarian initiatives, as well as the US's ability to help Kyiv at the negotiation table down the line, President Joe Biden's spokesperson, Karine Jean-Pierre, said last month. In the US, the designation has implications for third countries that interact with listed states. So far, parliaments in several of Ukraine's most ardent EU backers - Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland - have declared that they consider Russia under President Vladimir Putin to be a state sponsor of terrorism. These resolutions were nonbinding. The Kremlin has accused Latvian lawmakers of xenophobia. The lower house of the Czech Parliament has also made such a declaration. The parliamentary assembly of the Council of Europe called last month on its 46 member states to declare

Continued on Page 06

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Sir Ganga Ram's great-granddaughter meets Punjab CM

LAHORE :Ms Kesha Ram Hinsdale, the great-granddaughter of Sir Ganga Ram met Chief Minister Punjab Chaudhry Parvez Elahi at his office along with her husband Jacob Croteau Hinsdale here on Wednesday. The CM appreciated the valuable services of Sir Ganga Ram in the social sector and announced the restoration of Gangaram's residence in Taxali Gate to convert it into a museum. Ganga Ram served the people regardless of race and color and dedicated his life to the service of humanity; he noted and added that the world never forgets those who served human beings. Ganga Ram is still alive in hearts, he stated.

Chief Minister Parvez Elahi pointed out that he built a new 200-bed emergency block in Ganga Ram Hospital in his previous tenure and inaugurated the first phase of the mother and child block in this hospital. Medicines are available free of cost in all the emergency rooms of the government hospitals of Punjab, he remarked.

Through the health card, every citizen of Punjab can get free treatment for up to one million rupees per year. Cancer treatment through modern cyber knife technology has also been included in the health card; CM added and concluded that the Punjab government has allocated 125 billion rupees annually for free treatment through the health card.

Kesha Ram Hinsdale said that she visited Ganga Ram Hospital where patients are getting free medicines and the best treatment. It is heartening to see the mother and child block in Ganga Ram Hospital. —APP

Stakeholders call for long-term trade policy, facilitation of industry

PESHAWAR:Stakeholders have called for the formulation of long-term trade policy and facilitation of the industry to promote national exports on a sustainable basis. The call was made during a public-private dialogue (PPD) on discussing issues related to local trade and exports from Peshawar, the other day, said a press release issued here on Wednesday. The dialogue was organized under the auspices of the Centre for Governance and Public Accountability (CGPA) in collaboration with Small & Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA). The event was part of the project "Mobilizing Economic Reformers to Keep Critical Civic Space Open in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province" initiated by the CGPA. The session was aimed at gathering input on the issues faced by the business community of Peshawar and discussing the possible solutions with government officials concerned via an arrangement of Public-Private Dialogues (PPD).

This was the 10th PPD event, focused on identifying the issues pertaining to local trade in Peshawar and issues hampering exports from Peshawar. These PPD sessions will be concluded with the formation of recommended policy for developing a conducive economic environment in Peshawar. Entrepreneurs from Peshawar, engaged in trading and exports, members of Sarhad Chamber of Commerce.—APP

AKRSP commemorates 40 years of community service



DNA

CHITRAL: The Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) is commemorating 40 years of empowering communities in Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral. The inaugural ceremony of the three-day event in Chitral under the theme 'Celebrating 40 years of New Localism' began by recognising the commendable services of community members.

A pictorial exhibition along with documentaries on AKRSP's early evolution highlighted key achievements of AKRSP in major thematic areas, including climate resilience, civil society, agriculture and food security, early childhood development (ECD), education, social organisations, natural resource management, community infrastructure development, credit and savings, enterprise promotion and women economic empowerment. Around 27 stalls showcased the work of local artisans and micro-enterprises including traditional dresses, herbal products, gemstones, musical instruments, food items, and dry fruits. The event's chief guest Mr. Anwar ul Haq, Deputy Commissioner, Lower Chitral

acknowledged that "AKRSP is the only non-governmental organisation working more than any other organisation in the region. The AKRSP model is sustainable and pro-people." He felicitated AKRSP for completing 40 years, and applauded AKRSP's role in building resilient communities in Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral. AKRSP's development approach is based on the belief that local communities have tremendous potential to plan and manage their own development, once they are organized and provided access to necessary skills and capital. Since its inception, AKRSP has trained over 126,000 women and men in different technical and vocational fields, completed 4,706 community infrastructure projects benefiting more than 380,000 households, and planted tens of millions of trees. It has helped establish and mobilise 5,249 Village and Women's Organisations representing more than 78% of the households in Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral. These organisations have saved more than PKR 500 million, and disbursed PKR 2 billion as loans. Mr. Jamil ud Din, General Manager,

AKRSP, highlighted that AKRSP's 40 years of community service would not have been effective without the continuous support of the local communities. He applauded the role of local communities in empowering themselves through organisation, skill-building, and savings – the three fundamental principles taught by AKRSP. AKRSP's former board members, community members, poets, writers, and other dignitaries also expressed their views at the inaugural event and appreciated AKRSP's efforts in the development of Chitral.



Chairman PRCS condoles with Turkiye

ISLAMABAD: The Chairman of Pakistan Red Crescent Society, Sardar Shahid Ahmad Laghari, expressed heartfelt condolence to the people of Turkiye as a result of the earthquake in the north-west (Duzce) of Turkiye, on 23 Nov 2022. Chairman PRCS Said, The People of Pakistan, are deeply aggrieved over the sufferings of our Turkish brethren. He further added, we can easily relate to the sufferings and trauma of the people of Pakistan in recent years, has also suffered from a number of disasters. Although natural calamities are beyond our control, we can still mitigate the effects by providing assistance and psycho-social support. The Pakistan Red Crescent Society conveys its deep commiseration and sympathy to the people of Turkiye through the Turkish Red Crescent. —APP

Youth walking from Okara to Makkah facing visa issues

DNA

ISLAMABAD Usman Arshad, a resident of Punjab's Okara district who already started his once-in-a-lifetime 'dream journey' on foot to the holy city of Makkah and currently reached Quetta, is again facing visa issues. While speaking to media, Usman said that he didn't get visas for Iraq, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia. "Unfortunately, I have some visa problems on this trip that the Foreign Ministry can assist. In my journey, I will pass through Iran, Iraq, and Kuwait to reach Saudi Arabia and must obtain these visas before arriving," he said. "I already have an Iran visa but facing difficulties in obtaining Iraq, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia visas," he added. "It has been almost ten days since I came from Quetta to Islamabad to solve my visa issues and start my journey again from Quetta," he said. Usman said, "On August 11, 2022, I met with Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto. Bilawal issued orders to the relevant DG to solve the problems but yet the issue is not solved." "I wrote to embassies, tweeted for help, and even went to several offices, but officials are saying that case is under process. I couldn't have waited for my visas to arrive.—APP

EU hands over mobile food-testing lab to BFA

DNA

QUETTA: The European Union (EU) Ambassador to Pakistan Dr Riina Kionka handed over keys to a mobile food-testing laboratory to the Balochistan Food Authority (BFA) at a ceremony held in Quetta on Wednesday. This was part of the Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Progress (GRASP) project, funded by the European Union, and implemented by the International Trade Centre (ITC), said in a press release issued here. Provincial Minister for Food, Engineer Zmarak Khan, Chief Secretary Abdul Aziz Uqaili, Secretary Food Ayaz Mandokhel, as well as officials from the Balochistan Food Authority also attended the event.

Following an assessment of the Food Authorities of Sindh and Balochistan in 2020, the GRASP identified the need to provide mobile food testing facilities to both provinces to help support the implementation of food safety standards and overall quality assurance of food items being supplied to markets.

As part of its duties, the van will also be used to check for food contamination to ensure, in particular processed foods, are free from



undeclared ingredients, are accurately labeled and are compliant with relevant food safety standards and rules. Equipped with a suite of testing technology, along with its crew of technicians, the van will provide expert on the spot scientific expertise to help support both consumer confidence, but also public health. Through GRASP, the officials of BFA have also been trained on Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) compliance issues in relation to requirement for wider market access, including towards potential international exports, in addition to supporting and reviewing regulatory and operational frameworks of the authority, towards its overall strengthening and operational capacity. Speaking at the ceremony,

Dr Riina Kionka said, "The EU is pleased to hand over the first mobile laboratory testing facility to the Balochistan Food Authority. This is a milestone to be celebrated and the starting point of the future commitment of the Balochistan Government to improving food safety not only in the province, but Pakistan as a whole."

Provincial Minister Food Zmarak Khan thanked the EU's support to the provincial government and recognized the investment made through GRASP, which is working closely with the government which is not only supporting Balochistan SMEs in horticulture and agriculture, but also enhancing the capacity of government institutions through targeted trainings. Chief

Secretary Balochistan Abdul Aziz Uqaili appreciated the support EU has provided to the province and stressed on the close partnership and continued support to provide a safe and healthy environment for SMEs, especially in rural areas to become competitive with the national and global markets. The GRASP is working for poverty reduction and sustainable, inclusive growth through development of rural small and medium-sized enterprises in select districts of Sindh and Balochistan provinces of Pakistan. The project's outcome aims to enhance the productivity and profitability of SMEs involved in primary production, service provision, and value addition in and around selected clusters of production.

Collaborative efforts stressed to save local languages in AJK, GB

MUZAFFARABAD, Nov 23 (APP):Speakers at a ceremony held here at the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (UAJK) on Wednesday stressed the need for making collaborative efforts to save the endangered vernaculars being spoken in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB). Addressing the concluding ceremony of a project implemented to build the capacity of public sector Universities of AJK and GB in Language Documentation at City Campus of the UAJK, the speakers highlighted that dozens of local and regional languages in AJK and GB are facing imminent threat of extinction. The project funded by US Government was implemented by the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir in partnership with San Jose State University, California, USA was aimed to strengthen the capabilities of Public sector Universities of AJK and GB in language documentation. The United States Educational Foundation in Pakistan (USEFP) conducted the project. Speaking on the occasion as chief guest Secretary Kashmir Cause, Arts and Languages, Registrar University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prof. Dr. Ayesha Sohail, Project Director Dr. Abdul Qadir Khan and others asserted that regional languages are facing extreme threats and are at the verge of annihilation.

"We must take solid steps to preserve the dying languages that carrying with them the centuries-old history, civilization, and culture of the region". They added.

Sharing salient features and success stories of the project, the Director, Prof. Dr. Abdul Qadir Khan told the participants that under this program, training was provided to the faculty members of AJK and GB universities in basic linguistic analysis, language documentation methods, language documentation software (ELAN, FLEX, Audacity), data management, besides providing an opportunity for fieldwork experience. Terming the initiative a tremendous success, Registrar of the university and Co-PI Prof. Dr. Ayesha Sohail thanked all the individuals and institutions, especially the American Educational Foundation, for their keen interest and support in documenting the endangered languages of the region.—APP

Afghan CG, businessmen agree for efforts to improve trade

PESHAWAR :Afghan Consul General Hafiz Mohibullah Shaker and a Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PACCI) delegation have agreed on initiating coordinated efforts for addressing the issues in commerce and trade between the two neighbouring countries. According to a press release issued here on Wednesday, the agreement was reached during a meeting of business community with the Afghan

Consul General. The business delegation was led by (PAJCCI) Director Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi and comprised of importers, exporters, custom clearing agents and businessmen from Karachi. On this occasion, Admin Consulate General, Mufti Noorullah, Commercial Attache, Waheedullah Himmat, Deputy Commercial Attache, Dr Hameedullah Fazal Khel was also present. Speaking on the occasion, Director PAJCCI, Zia ul

Haq Sarhadi apprised participants of the meeting regarding problem being faced by businessmen including restoration of Afghan document Ilam-o-Nazar in Peshawar, restriction of containers and trucks in Afghanistan at Khowar Maidan area and other problems in Afghan Transit Trade. Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi and other participants of the meeting also presented different suggestions for resolution of these prob-

lems. The Afghan Consulate officials also apprised participants of the meeting about problems being faced by Afghan businessmen including unregistered points near Torikhem border for checking of trucks, harassment of Afghan drivers, non implementation of FBR's directives for reloading of Afghan transit goods in local containers for Afghan businessmen to pay heavy amounts as detention charges etc.—APP

Nothing to happen by PTI's long march

D.I.KHAN :Special Assistant to Prime Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Faisal Karim Khan Kundi on Wednesday termed the PTI's long march as 'Furlong march' and said nothing would happen through the November 26 long march. He expressed these views while talking to the media during his visit to the residence of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) senior leader in D.I. Khan Sardar Malik Iqbal Khan Isar here in Muryali. He said the demand of changing the elected government by bringing a group of people toward the federal capital was uncon-

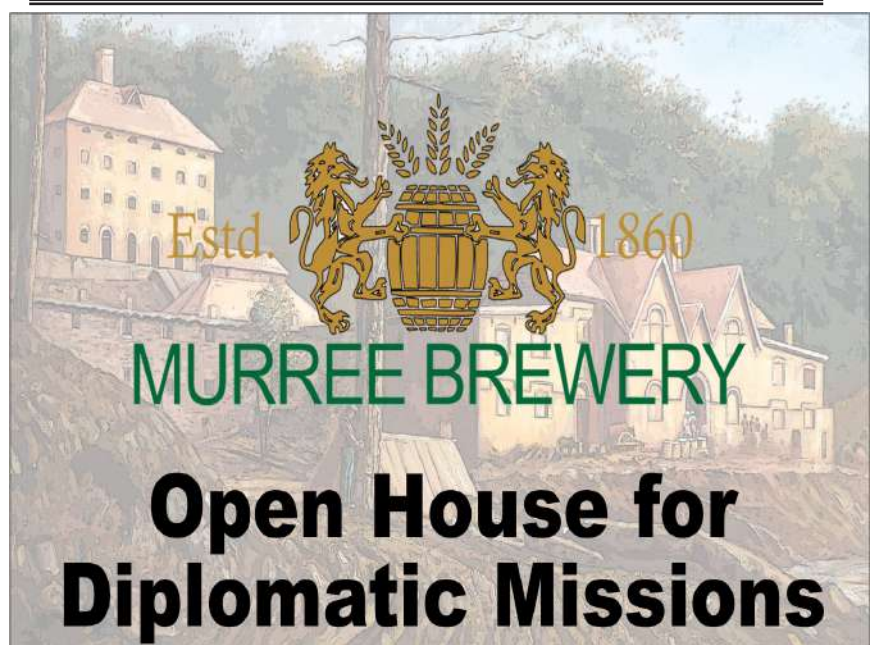
stitutional. He said the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was trying to make national institutions controversial by making hue and cry over sensitive issues.

Faisal Kundi, who is also the PPP central information secretary, said the new Chief of Army Staff (COAS) would be appointed on the basis of merit by next Tuesday or Wednesday. He said the PPP did not believe in the politics of bullets or abuse but the democratic norms. Criticizing the priorities of PTI's provincial government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the special assistant said the PTI was enjoying a second consecutive

term in the province but not a single mega-project in Dera Ismail Khan was on its credit. The PM's special assistant said the injustices done with the district during past rules were being reverted. The district was left deprived of several public serving entities during the past rules," he mentioned. He said the regional offices of several key organizations such as Pakistan Television (PTV), Associated Press of Pakistan (APP), Press Information Department (PID) and a sub-sale office of PIA had been restored in the district while the office of Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority

(PEMRA) would also be restored soon. He said the Dera Ismail Khan airport was not only being revived but it would also get the status of an international airport. It has been officially announced by the Minister of Aviation in his policy statement in the National Assembly and it would be inaugurated by the eve of next year, he mentioned. He vowed that the foundation stone for the construction of Chashma Lift Bank Canal would also be laid soon. Replying to a question, he said the PTI tried to befool the masses in the name of Peshawar to Dera Ismail Khan Motorway and other

mega projects, adding, these were political slogans which could not go beyond wall chalking. Faisal Kundi said the PTI was used to make hollow slogans as it claimed about the provision of best healthcare facilities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab during their rule. Why PTI Chief Imran Khan preferred to go Shaukat Khanum Hospital instead of any local hospital after the Wazirabad incident, he questioned. On this occasion Sardar Malik Iqbal Khan Isar, Malik Farhan Afzal Dhap, Haji Fazlur Rahman Baloch, Malik Shafiq Isar and other party leaders were also present.—APP



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Briefs

12000 women mentored under Women Mentors Initiative

ISLAMABAD The S&P Global Pakistan (S&P Global) has successfully mentored more than 12,000 women under the US-Pakistan Women's Council's (USPWC) "Pakistan Million Women Mentors (PMWM) Initiative".

This was announced by the company during an event co-hosted by the US-Pakistan Women's Council and S&P Global to commemorate Global Entrepreneurship Month featuring S&P Global employee mentors, women mentees, and civil society partners. In the opening remarks, US Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome said, "Mentorship is critical to fostering the next generation of business leaders and entrepreneurs and the Council's Pakistan Million Women Mentors initiative is playing an important role by helping to encourage, inspire and support future women entrepreneurs and leaders in STEM in Pakistan."

He said corporations in Pakistan and the United States had pledged to mentor more than 40,000 women so far, adding "we hope to continue growing this number." The ambassador said S&P's commitment to mentor 200,000 women was critical to catalyzing other companies to step forward in both Pakistan and the United States.—APP

Conference on promoting women MPs role

ISLAMABAD The National Conference of Women Parliamentary Caucus titled 'Promoting the meaningful role of Women Parliamentarians in peace-building and sustainable development' will be held at the Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services (PIPS) on Thursday.

National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf will be the chief guest of the inaugural ceremony. Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Dr Aisha Ghaus Pasha will chair the second session titled "Parliamentarians in Securing Peace and Social Cohesion". The third session will be chaired by Minister for Women Development Department, Sindh Syeda Shehla Raza. The Women Parliamentarians of the National Assembly, Senate of Pakistan, all four Provincial Assemblies of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), Gilgit Baltistan Assembly, representatives of Civil Society, and students of different educational institutions will attend the conference.—APP

Google to commence operations in Pakistan next month

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Senator Afnan Ullah said on Wednesday that Google team would be visiting Islamabad next month to commence operations in Pakistan. "A delegation of Google will visit Pakistan on December 11 to start operations," he said, adding that the platform will provide 15,000 scholarships to Pakistani citizens after starting operations in Pakistan. The senator further said the government will extend the scope of Google services in Pakistan. Earlier in September, Google launched Career Certificates to offer flexible learning paths for all Pakistanis to enable learners to develop their knowledge and acquire digital skills for in-demand jobs. In its mission to Unlock Pakistan's Digital Potential, Google has also reinforced its commitment to enable an equitable and inclusive digital economy by offering 15,000 scholarships by this year through local partners — IRM and Ignite, comprising education institutions, industry partners.



ISLAMABAD: Madam Bushra Rehman President & Malik Sohail Hussain Secretary General Pakistan-Western Canada Trade Association PWCTA Visited Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry and had a great and successful meeting with President Sialkot chamber of commerce and Industry, Abdul Ghafoor Malik & Acting President Sialkot Women Chamber Mrs Waqas Malik Awan and members of Sialkot Chamber.—DNA

ML-1, KCR projects

Pakistan to remove all bottlenecks

DNA

Islamabad: Engaging with the Taliban was the first step to ensure a moderate behaviour on their part, said Ambassador Abrar Hussain. He was addressing a roundtable discussion on the future of Taliban organised by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS). He said that the second coming of Taliban was astonishing for many people. He said that the Intra Afghan dialogue

would have brought broad-based government in Afghanistan. Imprudent decisions by Ghani, his reluctance to form an inclusive government, refusal to recognize Pakistan's role in negotiations and his desire to test the Taliban on the battlefield resulted in his removal. The Taliban government, he said, was either ignorant of the problems of the Afghan army or overlooked them deliberately as the attrition rate reached 30 percent from 10 and many soldiers left the

army. Every warlord would ask of salary for his troops which previously came from the West. The Taliban's presence brought peace to the country as it was the first time since 1979 that the whole country was under one government. They also politically engaged with regional countries despite no one recognizing them, he said. The world had trust deficit with the Taliban as they believed they would give refuge to militants. There were internal differences between the

Taliban too as there were moderators under Mullah Baradar and hardliners like Sirajuddin Haqqani, he said. There were also problems of Taliban relations with the neighbours which were equally concerning. The cessation of foreign aid resulted in loss of 45 per cent of the GDP and loss of overseas assets. Furthermore sanctions by the US and the UN on the Taliban top officials had deeply impacted the Afghan economy. Ambassador Abrar said that either the Taliban could continue,

or some strong group could overthrow them or they could form a more inclusive government. The best strategy, he said, was to interact with the Taliban in order to ensure that they remain moderate. Ambassador Nadeem Riyaz, President IRS said that there was no sizeable opposition to the Taliban rule. The Taliban were now not the same as the previous one as they had learnt and were now more prudent in their approach, however their vision could not be the same as that of the West.

REIT Management Company announces final cash dividend



STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD ISE Towers REIT Management Company Limited announced final cash dividend of Re 0.65 per share for the Financial Year 2022 for its shareholders. Zahid Latif Khan, Chairman, along with the

Board members announced the dividend at the 33rd annual general meeting held here on Wednesday, said a press release. The shareholders of the Company approved the financial statements of the Company for the financial year 2022. The Board of Directors, in view of the continued

growth of the Company, has recommended highest ever cash dividend of Re. 0.65 per share for Financial Year 2022 for its shareholders. The financial position of the Company also stood on strong footing with debt free to ample liquidity. The chairman apprised the shareholders that the com-

pany achieved significant progress for launch of ISE Towers REIT Scheme by submitting requisite documentation to Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan for its approval. Besides the Company is also exploring different avenues for launch of other REIT Schemes, he added.

Senate body allows FBR to submit court case details in 15 days

ISLAMABAD: Senate Standing Committee of Finance and Revenue met under the chairmanship of Senator Saleem Mandviwala here on Wednesday, allowed the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to submit within fifteen days the details of cases pending in various courts of the country. Senator Saleem Mandviwala said that delay in tax cases was causing huge revenue losses and asked the finance ministry to analyze these cases and bring out the reasons for the delay in decision. The Minister of State for Finance, Dr. Ayesha Ghous Pasha during the meeting had request-

ed the committee to give the board 15 days for providing details of tax cases involving trillions of rupees. On the issue of vintage cars' import, the state minister advised the committee to give its recommendations so that it was again raised in the cabinet. She said, earlier, the cabinet committee had rejected the summary regarding the issue. On a matter regarding raids to the tobacco industry, the state minister informed the committee that FBR took action and raided the industry in certain areas in accordance

with the law. She highlighted that 348 non-duty paid cartons were recovered and clarified that women officials conducted the raid operations in houses at Nankana Sahib. The committee was informed that Inland Revenue officials were conducting regular checks on highways and markets. It was also informed that as compared to the size of the tobacco industry, the federal excise duty was very low. Earlier, Senator Dilawar Khan informed the committee that FBR did not find any cartons from the houses rather they recovered the cartons from the shops.

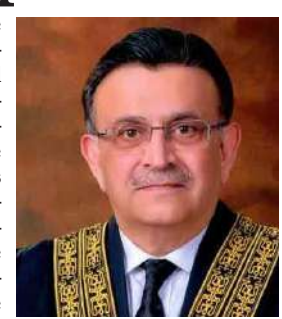
The chairman committee instructed Dr. Ayesha Ghous to investigate the matter. Meanwhile, on a query, FBR told the committee that it was collecting tax ranging from 40-58 percent from electricity bills of commercial and industrial units whereas it was collecting 29% tax on domestic bills. The state minister also assured the committee that she would look into the matter related to illegal harassment by an FBR officer of Senator Dr. Afnan Ullah Khan and would sort it out soon. She said, if the matter remains unresolved, it could be then taken by the privilege committee.—APP

Islamabad police acknowledge efforts of Pakistan Rangers

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Police have acknowledged the efforts of Pakistan Rangers for its assistance in maintaining law and order and ensuring peace in the city. Following the directions from Minister of Interior Minister Rana Sana Ullah Khan, Inspector General of Police Islamabad Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan arranged a banquet at the Sports Complex for the personnel of Pakistan Rangers stationed in Islamabad to maintain law and order. A large number of senior officers and men from Pakistan Rangers including Brigadier Shehryar participated in this feast. The IGP thanked all forces whose personnel are stationed in Islamabad to maintain peace. He said that contingents of Pakistan Rangers, Frontier Constabulary and various wings of the Islamabad Capital Police as well as the administrative officers were working together in Islamabad to maintain law and order and performing very well. "If there is peace, our generations will be prosperous. Our forces have sacrificed a lot for the peace of the country and I thank all of you who are performing duties in tough weather. The educational institutions are open while business life is going on in Islamabad due to efforts of all law enforcers and efficient policing measures," he added. The IGP said that the purpose of today's gathering was to acknowledge the efforts of law enforcers as they were working hard in maintaining peace and order in Islamabad. "With your presence and duty, the citizens are satisfied as businesses are going on and workers are being paid," the IGP said adding all these affairs were possible due to the presence and efficient duties of the law enforcers. Akbar Nasir Khan said that he was also grateful to IG FC, IG Sindh, DG Rangers Punjab, DG Rangers Sindh and all other law enforcement agencies who keep us informed of potential threats in time and were helping us in maintaining peace.—APP

SC seeks report on political interference in police dept

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Wednesday directed the federal and Punjab governments to submit replies in interference in the transfer of police officials. A three-member bench comprising Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial, Justice Athar Minallah heard the case in the transfers and postings. During the course of proceedings of the case to the federal request of the petitioner. The bench directed the federation to submit report on the police department over the petitioner's counsel said



were due to political interference and influence, which was a matter of public importance and fundamental rights. The Chief Justice said that the continuous transfer of police officers made a difference to police command and performance. He said that recently, the district police officer (DPO) of Layyah was transferred from the chief minister's house due to the interference of local politicians, and the event made headlines. The Chief Justice said that he had not seen the headlines pertaining to this matter. The petitioner's counsel said that the DPO eventually dropped charges, despite the police's initial resistance to the transfer. He also read out data provided by the lawyer and stated that according to the data, the average term of DPO in Punjab was five months, and 268 DPOs were exchanged in Punjab in four years. Justice Ayesha asked where the data was obtained from? The lawyer replied that the data was obtained from the commissioner of police office. Justice Athar Minallah said that political changes in the police made a difference to the performance of the criminal justice system. The counsel said that the average term of an inspector general (IG) of police in Punjab was six months instead of three years as per law. He said that police officers were changed in Punjab without reason in the past four years. The Chief Justice said that according to the petitioner's lawyer, the matter was not limited to Punjab. Chief Justice Bandial observed that the former IG of Islamabad was a well-educated and decent officer, who handled the case of the attack on Sindh House very well. However, he was also changed, he added. He said that the transfer of police officers without reason affected the criminal justice system's performance. There was a tendency among officers to get higher positions through political influence in these situations, he added.—APP

Two more infected with fatal coronavirus in RWP

RAWALPINDI: Two more people were diagnosed with fatal coronavirus during the last 24 hours, raising the district's tally of confirmed cases to 47,721.

As per the latest data released by the District Health Authority here Wednesday, the infected cases included 44,091 from Rawalpindi and 3,630 from other districts. The report added that the new cases had arrived from the Taxila and Potohar town area each, while presently, 12 confirmed patients were quarantined at homes, and no one was admitted to any district's health facility. The report further updated that 7,006,011 people, including 44,790 health workers, had jabbed themselves against the lethal coronavirus (COVID-19) across the district since the vaccination administering drive launched on March 10, 2021.—APP

Sustainable water management key challenge to Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, Nov 23 (APP): Chairman Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) Dr Muhammad Ashraf on Wednesday said that water management was a key challenge being confronted by Pakistan due to inadequate water management practices and climate-induced water stress.

Speaking at panel discussion on, "Trans-boundary Water Sharing Issues" organized by PCRWR in collaboration with Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI), he said the situation was further aggravated in form of flooding and prolonged droughts due to the trans-boundary nature of the Indus River which originated from Tibetan plateau and disposes off into Arabian Sea after passing through India and Pakistan. Brig Rashid Wali Janjua, Director of Research, IPRI shared objectives of the panel discussion and its importance to chalk out policy measurements and strategy for improved cooperation with India and Afghanistan for sustainable water management in Pakistan.—APP

Man held impersonating as govt official

RAWALPINDI: Police had arrested a man impersonating as govt official in the jurisdiction of Pirwadi area, here on Wednesday, informed police spokesman. According to details, the accused who pretended to be an officer of govt institution was identified as Fazil. Police had also recovered the card of institution from his possession. Police have registered a case against him and started investigation. SP Rawal appreciated the performance of police team, adding that the arrested accused will be challanged with concrete evidence.—APP

Act subverts int'l trade rules

When US President Joe Biden signed the Inflation Reduction Act in August, which provides excessive subsidies to domestically made electric cars, solar panels and other products, he seemed to be taking a step forward in carrying out his economic policy that focuses on bringing manufacturing back to the United States. "Made in America", as the slogan goes. Yet the sweeping legislation has sparked anger and concern even among the US' allies because it violates the basic rules that govern international trade. The European Union has listed at least nine points in the act that run counter to international trade rules, especially the tax credits granted for electric vehicles made in North America, which it says are "discriminatory" and may break World Trade Organization rules. The Japanese government has also called the tax credits "discriminatory incentives" for US manufacturers.

Thanks to the \$369 billion package, Europe has already started to feel the pinch of its industries and investment relocating to the United States, a trend that has been accelerated by increasing energy costs on the continent, which are now around five times more expensive than in North America. "I think we need a European wake-up on this point," French president Emmanuel Macron told executives from domestic industrial companies in a recent speech. Take Northvolt, a major European battery producer, for example. The Swedish group, backed by Volkswagen, BMW and Goldman Sachs, is now looking to expand production in the US mainly because it would receive subsidies amounting to about \$600 million to \$800 million under the Inflation Reduction Act. That compares to 155 million euros (\$158.9 million) in incentives on the table from Germany. The IRA "is moving momentum a lot from Europe to the US", Northvolt Chief Executive Peter Carlsson told the Financial Times.

This has prompted Luisa Santos, deputy director-general at BusinessEurope, a pan-European lobby group, to warn that the US legislation has sent a "dangerous signal" that could encourage other jurisdictions to take protectionist measures. Yet despite the widespread opposition to the law, the US seems bent on taking a discriminatory attitude when it comes to economic and trade policies to protect its own interests, particularly in sectors where companies from other countries are becoming competitive.

As a member of the WTO, the US should implement relevant industrial and investment policies in line with the WTO, so as to maintain a fair competitive trade order, rather than damaging the level playing fields that all trading countries depend on.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 03 Issue: 99

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A team's silence speaks volumes

On Monday, 11 men defied their leaders in a show of solidarity with protests which have been led by women, but have drawn support from across society. What began as a rejection of the compulsory hijab in Iran has become a collective expression of fury with the repressive regime. Not one member of the Iranian football team sang the national anthem when it was played before their World Cup match against England. Earlier, Ehsan Hajsafi, the Iranian captain, said bereaved families should know "that we are with them, we support them and we sympathise with them" and that "the conditions in our country are not right and our people are not happy". The players risked not fines, not a booking, but retribution from a vindictive state. In doing so, they joined other courageous athletes and stars, as well as hundreds of thousands of ordinary men and women who have taken to the streets in 155 cities. Celebrity offers limited protection: on Sunday, two prominent actors, Hengameh Ghaziani and Katayoun Riahi, were arrested for their "provocative" posts after removing their hijabs on social media. More than two months after Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old Kurdish woman, died in custody, detained by morality police for supposedly "inappropriate hijab", a spokesperson for the UN human rights chief, Volker Türk, warned that this is a "critical" moment. He noted that more than 300 people have been killed already, across 25 of the country's 31 provinces.

Even as Monday's match took place, security forces were firing on protesters in the mainly Kurdish cities of Piranshahr and Javanrud, with a rights group reporting that seven died in the latter alone. Tehran's vindictive reaction extends beyond its borders, with armed police deployed outside the Iran International television studios in London after the channel said two of its journalists had been threatened.

Tehran blames foreign enemies for orchestrating the unrest, but its people know the truth. As the weeks pass, the protests are expanding in scope as well as geographically, with students striking, pupils walking out of schools, and supporters boycotting firms tied to the Revolutionary Guards. Nor are there any signs of splits at the top, which might respond to growing pressure from the grassroots. Though its usual playbook is failing, the merciless logic of the regime, as well as the vested interests of the powerful, mean it is likely to continue escalating its response. But the fundamental contradiction between the priorities and beliefs of the hardliners in charge of the country, and the younger people under their suffocating, corrupt and incompetent rule, becomes more visible and more pronounced with every arrest, every beating and every death.

Chinese economic diplomacy in 21st Century

Engr. Qaiser Nawab



China has opened its doors to sharing high-tech technology with Pakistan. Furthermore, it has encouraged widespread cooperation in a variety of fields, including academia, research, government, industry, and the arts. Pakistan, on the other hand, is devoted to embracing the same technology and providing a stable environment for the development of projects that will promote the rejuvenation of the economy. Although China's Belt and Road Initiative has successfully depicted its softer image as a global and responsible force that seeks to assist the entire globe through economic development and foreign investment while enhancing its political capital and influence

Traveling from Shanghai to Beijing in an economy class from medium speed China rail services was my intentional decision to meet the common Chinese people and to know their perception regarding Chinese developmental expansion around the globe. I and my traveling colleague were the only two foreigners in the economy class cabin. Throughout the trip, I observed one thing that common Chinese people want to know about the world. BRI is an opportunity to integrate Chinese to other parts of the world. I came across the famous statement in China, "China is a sleeping giant. Let her lie and sleep; for when she awakens, she will astonish the world." Traveling inside China and other parts of the world, I came to know that China has a huge potential of integrating the global order due to its acceptability of diversity and plurality. In the 21st century, the world saw the awakening of the sleeping giant and building its significance in the international system through its economic success, military modernization, and soft power influence. From a nascent consumer market to the most influential economy, China is ranked among the most major and powerful economies in the world. With its long-term strategic measures to modernize its society, China has successfully transformed into a high-tech industry economy and become a nation of global influence. The economic policies and goals to boost domestic consumption, accelerate technological development, and lure global investment have made China a dominant power in the global economy. The Asian giant's military might have also been expanding at an astounding pace and scope. Since the 1990s, the military strategy of China has focused more on fighting and winning a high-tech war against a modern foe rather than waging a people's war. China has been modernizing its military forces by putting great stress on the significance of maritime security, cyber operations, offensive operations, and mobility operations, to strategically dominate contemporary warfare. The increasing size of China's military and economy is indicative of the trend that she is now emerging as a new superpower, or rather, has already emerged as a global superpower. In the age of global information, success not only depends on whose military wins but also on whose narrative wins. Therefore, the practice of "soft power" works as an attractive policy option to win the hearts of global nations. China's traditional culture has always been appealing, but now it is entering

the realm of popular culture around the world. The foreign policy of China has also shifted from one of internal development to one of external influence, not only economically but also militarily, diplomatically, and normatively, most notably through a systematic discourse and smart power strategy. China is efficiently portraying its soft image by investing heavily in its domestic infrastructure and, subsequently, in global infrastructure as well. China's worldwide infrastructure development project known as the "Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)" has tremendously boosted trade, encouraged economic growth, and enhanced regional integration. From being a simple regional project to connect Asia, Africa, and Europe, via land and sea networks, BRI has become entirely global and extended into every field imaginable, including infrastructure, culture, finance, people-to-people interactions, education, and interstate politics. BRI has largely been successful not in terms of concrete projects only but in ways that have helped China strengthen its diplomatic and economic ties with 140 partner nations and position itself as the champion of globalization, leading to a new world order where it would be the potential hegemon. Since the rise of China, its broader and integrative geo-economic agenda is seeking to enhance its reach into distant markets and trade enterprises. The mega project of the Belt and Road Initiative is an expression of China's geo-economic strategy that is embedded in the historical trends of globalization and the neoliberal order. In the international political landscape, geo-economic, strategic, and geopolitical areas are deeply intertwined due to the complex multi-layered foundation of international political realities. Unprecedented developments such as BRI are not without certain areas of opportunities as well as challenges. Through its Belt and Road Initiative, China has intended to achieve mutual progress, shared prosperity, and win-win cooperation throughout the region with the goal of fostering infrastructure development and socioeconomic uplift. The country has also been assisting the BRI partner nations to accelerate technological advancement, fight extreme poverty, and achieve high-quality growth. The Chinese investment policies are also set to encourage the development of high technology in nations such as Pakistan. China and Pakistan's bilateral relations are in the

historical milieu of cooperation, shared geo-political outlook, strategic partnership, and economic interdependence. The bilateral engagement has successfully evolved into concrete commitments and pragmatic considerations of interests and values. The entrenched commitments between the two neighboring states have developed further by prospects of consolidation as a consequence of Pakistan being an essential actor in BRI's development.

The BRI initiative has brought forth many positive and long-lasting results for both China and Pakistan. Through the promotion of bilateral connectivity, logistics, construction projects, and economic and trade opportunities, the strategic project has been contributing to the improvement of people's lives in both nations.

China has opened its doors to sharing high-tech technology with Pakistan. Furthermore, it has encouraged widespread cooperation in a variety of fields, including academia, research, government, industry, and the arts. Pakistan, on the other hand, is devoted to embracing the same technology and providing a stable environment for the development of projects that will promote the rejuvenation of the economy.

Although China's Belt and Road Initiative has successfully depicted its softer image as a global and responsible force that seeks to assist the entire globe through economic development and foreign investment while enhancing its political capital and influence, the western ideology propagates the projects under BRI is expanded with China's sole strategy to have an influence over the government of other countries and put a global footprint.

In an effort to counter Western propaganda, China must convey BRI's open, green, and clean core strength to the regional and international mass media and get more sustainable achievements with high construction standards among all member nations. Strategically speaking, BRI is representative of a new era of Chinese economic diplomacy and promotes a network of Free Trade Areas (FTAs) and other forms of economic cooperation among its member nations, which will serve to increase regional cooperation and mark the rise of China in the world.

The writer is currently serving at Commission on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development in the South - COMSATS, is an international expert on Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Public borrowing in Islam

to product development and investments. Islamic banks in Pakistan have emerged from niche to the mainstream now being rated with their conventional counterparts while securing top slots in the ranking which is the outcome of intellectual contributions of such scholars. It is clearly evident that lack of scholarship in most of the contemporary disciplines led to the decline of Islamic civilization leaving current generations into complete confusion that how one can adhere to Shariah principles in advance and sophisticated subjects. There are several factors to blame for the departure of Muslim societies from scientific developments including overall lethargy to probably religious taboos which restricted progress of aspiring scholars. However, in economics and finance every endeavor is driven by the motivation to eliminate the curse of usury from the society. Despite significant progress on banking side there is a lot to do to streamline public finance according to Shariah principles which is responsible to manage country's revenue, expenditures and debt load through various means. Today, tax collection, budget, expenditure, deficit/surplus, and national debt collectively shape overall structure of public finance. But tracing practices of public finance particularly public borrowing back to more than fourteen hundred years of Islamic history remains a daunting task which Dr. Siddiqi attempted and brought forth some important instances from early Islamic history to consider for recent needs of public borrowing. He raised questions such as; did the Islamic state in the past borrow? If so, why and on what terms? Were there any alternatives to borrowing? Dr. Siddiqi argued, "With these and related questions one can explore the historical records of the many governments, spanning vast regions of the globe over the long period of fourteen hundred years. Yet another problem is the Islamic authenticity of what the Muslim rulers have been doing all these centuries in all these regions. Authenticity naturally belongs to the decisions and actions of the Prophet (PBUH). The consensus of the community has extended this authenticity to the period of the

four pious Caliphs". But the problem is that during the reign of four pious Caliphs there wasn't any need for public borrowing because revenues from zakah, ushr, fai, khiraj as well as spoils of war were steadily rising throughout the period which were sufficient to meet all public expenditures. Nevertheless, we can find a few instances of public borrowing from the life of Prophet (PBUH) in the difficult early years in Medina. According to Dr. Siddiqi, "Prophet (PBUH) borrowed as the leader of all Muslims and the head of the state he established at Medina. It is not at all difficult to distinguish between the Prophet's personal borrowing and his borrowing for public purposes since the texts themselves facilitate such a distinction." According to Hazrat Bilal (R.A.), "It was the practice of Prophet (PBUH) that when a man came to him as a Muslim and he saw him in need of clothes he would order me and I would go and borrow and buy a cloak for him, clothe him and feed him. When there are resources available, the Prophet (PBUH) told me 'cheer up, Allah has sent what you can pay back your loan with!'. In another instance, Hazrat Abu Saeed al-Khudhri (R.A.) reported that a Bedouin came to the Prophet (PBUH) asking for repayment of a debt owed by him. Hesent a message to Khawla, daughter of Qais, that if she had some dates she should lend it to him till his own dates arrived out of which he could pay back to her. In this case the lender was a Muslim. The second lender whose lending made possible the repayment to the first lender was also a Muslim. Prophet (PBUH) once said to Safwan bin Umayya "O Abu Umayyad! use your weapons so that we can face our enemy tomorrow with their help". Safwan asked, "O Muhammad do you want to confiscate them?" He said, "No I want them temporarily with their return guaranteed till we bring them to you." He said, there is no harm in (doing) this. So he gave him one hundred coats of arms with the accompanying weapons." It is important to ponder on an interesting incidence reported by Abu Rafi' (R.A.) that the Prophet (PBUH) borrowed a small camel from a man. Then some camels from out of

those collected as zakah came to him and he asked Abu Rafi' to pay back the man the camel (owed to him). Abu Rafi' came back and said he could find only better camels (older in age) who had their four teeth grown. He (the Prophet PBUH) said, 'give it to him. The best among people are those who are good at paying back'. From cases such as above, Dr. Siddiqi concluded, "Borrowing, when there is a need, is a legitimate activity even if it is from non-Muslims. Fulfilling needs is one genuine reason justifying borrowing, while defense is another. While early history does not present any record of borrowing for financing economic development, it does provide an indirect justification of the same in an age in which economic development has become a sine qua non for need fulfillment as well as for defense. State must repay what it borrows even if it does so necessitates further borrowing." I slightly disagree with Dr. Siddiqi's one of the conclusions that since the lender receives no worldly return, public borrowing presumes the lender being motivated by moral and religious consideration to extend qard-e-hassan. During contemporary times qard-e-hassan may not be able to finance huge economic activities. Second, now there are several instruments for Shariah compliant public borrowing. He also traced instances from fourth century of Islam when governments borrowed on suftajah, a kind of letter of credit and even interest bearing loans which referred to as gross mismanagement of the financial affairs of an otherwise prosperous regime as well as the compulsions of circumstances created by the maintenance of a large force of mercenaries in the capital cities; but determining Shariah compliance of such borrowings needs further research. However, work of Dr. Siddiqi will continue to serve as a guideline for future researchers in the field of public finance particularly for those who are exploring options for Shariah compliant public borrowing. May Almighty (SWT) rest his soul in eternal peace!

The writer is Associate Professor Management Sciences Head, Center of Islamic Finance COMSATS University (CU) Lahore Campus

Dr. Abdus Sattar Abbasi

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Demise of Dr. Muhammad Nejatullah Siddiqi saddened Muslims from around the world particularly those who are trying to explore modern-day implications of Islamic finance and economics. A few decades ago it was generally accepted that there is probably no alternative to current banking and finance to comply with Shariah principles. However, dedication and hard work of likes of Dr. Siddiqi opened the door to think creatively to find solutions for economic and financial systems to meet Shariah requirements. On banking front there is significant progress in the Muslim world from processes and procedures

Briefs

Security service raids monastery in Kyiv

KYIV: Ukraine's State Security Service (SBU) on Tuesday raided the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra, a monastery in the capital Kyiv administered by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church which said in May that it cut its ties with the Moscow Patriarchate. "These measures take place jointly with the National Police and the National Guard within the framework of the SBU's systematic work to counter the subversive activities of the Russian special services in Ukraine," said a statement from the agency. The SBU further noted that these measures were placed taking into account "the armed aggression of the Russian Federation, the risk of committing terrorist acts, sabotage, and hostage-taking increases, especially in places with a large concentration of citizens." The statement also indicated that the measures intend to prevent the use of the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra as "a center of the Russian world."—APP

UK plans to scrap thousands of EU laws

LONDON: The UK government's plans to give ministers the ability to tear up around 2400 pieces of EU law on the UK statute have been dismissed as 'unfit for purpose' by the government's own regulation watchdog. The Retained EU law bill (REUL), which is currently at the amendment stage in the UK parliament, would result in thousands of laws copied from the EU to the UK statute being "sunsetted" by the end of 2023 if ministers do not formally state that they will be kept. These include legislation on workers' rights, such as the working time directive and maternity pay, and swathes of environmental protection legislation, financial services and single market law. The Bill gives powers to ministers to decide whether to save or axe laws, bypassing typical legislative processes. Legal experts and opposition parties have criticised the proposed lack of oversight as undemocratic. However, on Tuesday, the government's independent regulation watchdog, the regulatory policy committee (RPC), described it as "not fit for purpose".—Agencies

Johnson criticizes Western attitudes ahead of Russia's war

LONDON: Former British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has said that the attitudes of Western nations varied widely before Moscow launched its "special military operation" in Ukraine on Feb. 24, criticizing French, German and Italian stances on the prospects of war. Speaking to CNN's Richard Quest in Portugal, Johnson said France was "in denial"

'Astana trio to resist plans against Syria's sovereignty'

Several previous rounds of talks have not brought any substantial progress

ASTANBA: Türkiye, Russia and Iran, the guarantors of the Astana peace process established for a solution to the Syrian crisis, on Wednesday renewed their determination to stand against separatist agendas in the east of the Euphrates that aim to weaken Syria's unity and threaten the national security of neighboring countries, including cross-border attacks and infiltrations. The 19th Astana talks on "Syria" ended in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan. In the end, Türkiye, Russia and Iran, the guarantors of the Astana talks, issued a joint statement. The trio pledged in a joint statement after the talks to further resist "separatist plans aimed at undermining Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity and threatening the national security of neighboring countries, including through cross-border attacks and infiltration."

Guided by the agreements reached by the tripartite summit of the guarantor countries of the Astana Process on July 19, 2022, in Tehran, they examined the latest international and regional developments and emphasized the leading role of the Astana Process in the peaceful settlement of the Syrian crisis, according to the statement. As stated, they reaffirmed their unwavering commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Syria as well as to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and highlighted that these principles

should be universally respected and complied with. The trio also "expressed their determination to continue working together to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and stand against separatist agendas aimed at undermining the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria as well as threatening the national security of neighboring countries, including through cross-border attacks and infiltrations." The joint statement condemned the increased presence and activities of terrorist groups and their affiliates under different names in various parts of Syria, including the attacks targeting civilian facilities and IDP camps, which result in the loss of innocent lives. Also, they highlighted

the necessity to fully implement all arrangements related to the north of Syria. "They underlined the need to respect and abide by these principles by all parties," it emphasized. The three countries "reviewed in detail the situation in the Idlib de-escalation area. Highlighted the necessity to maintain calm on the ground by fully implementing all agreements on Idlib." The Astana meeting was initiated by Türkiye, Iran and Russia to bring the warring sides in Syria together to find a permanent solution to the 10-year-long war. The main agenda items

have been the constitutional system, the political transition, security and resettlement. The first meeting of the Astana process was in Türkiye in January 2017 to facilitate U.N.-sponsored peace talks in Geneva. The last Astana format talks on Syria were held this June. A council resolution adopted in December 2015 unanimously endorsed a road map to peace in Syria that was approved in Geneva on June 30, 2012, by representatives of the U.N., the Arab League, the European Union, Türkiye and all five permanent UNSC members – the U.S., Russia, China, France and Britain. It calls for a Syrian-led political process starting with the establishment of a transitional governing body, followed by the drafting of a

new constitution and ending with U.N.-supervised elections. The resolution says the free and fair elections should meet "the highest international standards" of transparency and accountability, with all Syrians – including members of the diaspora – eligible to participate. At a Russian-hosted Syrian peace conference in January 2018, an agreement was reached to form a 150-member committee to draft a new constitution, which took until September 2019. Several previous rounds of talks have not brought any substantial progress. The opposition has been demanding a new constitution, while Assad's regime proposed that the current charter be amended.—Agencies

Raeisi calls for closer ties among independent states

TEHRAN: Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi has called for enhancement of relations among countries that have been targeted by cruel Western sanctions due to resistance to preserve their independence, stating that such an approach could help the states to neutralize the bans and mitigate their repercussions. Raeisi made the remarks in a meeting with visiting Belarusian Prime Minister Roman Golovchenko in the Iranian capital of Tehran on Wednesday. He said the strong determination of top Iranian and Belarusian officials to improve the level of bilateral ties between Tehran and Minsk can help remove potential obstacles on the path to attain such a goal. The Iranian president highlighted that the Islamic Republic has made great progress in various fields despite having come under brutal and unprecedented sanctions, saying, "Iran and Belarus enjoy diverse and significant capacities to develop reciprocal interactions."—APP

Palestine rejects EU-Israeli draft agreement

RAMALLAH: Palestine has rejected the European Commission's engagement in talks with Israel that would allow the exchange of personal data, including that of Palestinian citizens living in areas run by the Palestinian Authority. Member of the Executive Committee of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) Ahmed Majdalani said the talks represent a flagrant violation of international law and the Palestinian people's rights and international protocols. He stressed that these negotiations constitute an alarming "political precedent" and called on the European Union countries to halt them. Majdalani's remarks came in response to a report published in the German magazine "Spiegel," which said that Israel and the European Commission are negotiating an agreement that allows the exchange of data between the EU and Israel.—APP

Over 250 terrorists neutralised in Iraq, Syria

ANKARA: Türkiye has neutralised 254 PKK/YPG terrorists as part of its cross-border air operation in northern Iraq and Syria, the country's national defence minister said. "So far, 471 targets have been brought under fire in the operation, and 254 terrorists have been neutralised," Hulusi Akar said on Wednesday at the operations centre of the Land Forces Command in the capital Ankara. "Terrorists have despicably attacked civilian targets. We will silence them as soon as possible," Akar added. Ankara only targets terrorists and their hideouts during the operation, Akar reiterated, saying: "We do not have any problems with any ethnic, religious, or sectarian group, or with our Kurdish or Arab brothers."—APP

Moldova accuses Russia of energy blackmail

Moldova said on Wednesday Russia had sent no signals that it would stop supplying it with gas next month but that it was ready for any scenario because Moscow was using energy resources as "a tool of blackmail." State-run Russian gas company Gazprom accused Ukraine on Tuesday of keeping gas supplies destined for Moldova and that it could from Nov. 28 start reducing gas supplies to Moldova that pass through Ukraine. Ukraine, which has been invaded by Russia, has denied withholding Russian gas meant for Moldova. Chisinau, which is dependent on Russia for its gas, said on Wednesday it would pay for any gas deliveries. "There are no signals that Russia will stop supplying gas to Moldova in December. But the government is ready for any scenario, as Russia continues to use energy resources as a tool of blackmail," Prime Minister Natalia Gavriluta told PRO-TV television. Dismissing Gazprom's accusations, Moldovan Deputy Prime Minister Andrei Spinu said on the Telegram messaging app: "Gazprom accuses Ukraine and Moldova of something that is not happening." Moldovan President Maia Sandu said on Monday her tiny country could face a harsh winter because of an "acute" energy crisis that risked stoking popular discontent, with Russia's war in Ukraine threatening energy supplies and pushing up prices. Moldova, a former Soviet republic, has also taken in more Ukrainian refugees per head than any other country. Although it has strong historical and linguistic ties to neighboring European Union member Romania, Moldova relies exclusively on Gazprom for gas imports and is largely dependent on Russian energy. Spinu said Moldova had reserved more than 200 million cubic meters of gas in Ukrainian storage facilities for the winter. "There is no more room for pressure, blackmail and deceit. Together we will achieve energy security," Spinu wrote on Telegram. The Gas Transmission System Operator of Ukraine (GTSOU) said on Tuesday that Gazprom had manipulated the facts "to justify the decision to further limit the volume of gas supplies to European countries." "This is an attempt once again to put pressure politically in exclusively commercial relations," Olga Bielkova, director of the Government and International Affairs department at GTSOU, told Reuters on Wednesday.—Agencies

Vital Aid Leaves UK for Pakistan

Virgin Atlantic joins UK with Bestway Group to deliver medicines to the victims of humanitarian crisis



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Over 20 tonnes of vital medicines, has left the UK heading for Pakistan where it will be distributed to victims of the recent flooding disaster and resulting humanitarian disaster. The medicines, donated by Bestway Group being flown to Islamabad by Virgin Atlantic Cargo who is transporting the medication. The medicines will be landing on the ground tomorrow (24.11.22), to help the 3.2million people who have lost their homes and livelihoods and been displaced by the flooding

which left more than a third of the country under water, and damaged more than 4million acres of crops. Ongoing heavy rains are continuing to complicate rescue and recovery efforts and disease has been widespread as the humanitarian disaster increases. Bestway Group is one of the largest privately owned businesses in the UK and the leading overseas investor in Pakistan. Haider Choudry, Chief Financial Officer of Bestway Group, says: "Our teams are on the ground in Pakistan and are seeing first-hand how desperately these medicines are needed to help combat disease

that has taken hold where fresh water supplies have been destroyed and families have lost their homes along with everything they own. "We would like to thank the team at Virgin Atlantic Cargo who has helped us make this happen and are transporting what is a sizeable cargo of medicines out to where it is needed the most". Virgin Atlantic Cargo is one of the leading players in the global cargo industry and played a vital role in the airline's survival following the Covid-19 pandemic, keeping global supply chains running and transporting essential goods around the world. On 21st March 2020, the first ever

cargo only flight in Virgin Atlantic's history took to the skies and over the next 12 months, the airline's cargo business went from strength to strength operating over 5,000 cargo-only sectors, launching 12 new routes as well as carrying over 8.5 million kilos of PPE and essential equipment for the NHS. Now, the airline's essential assistance will facilitate the delivery of the much-needed aid to the most vulnerable with the onset of the winter season in Pakistan. Virgin Atlantic dedicated special climate control vehicles for the collection and delivery of the medicines to its cargo handling facility at London Heathrow.

Indonesia quake survivors appeal for supplies as rain hampers rescue

CIANJUR, INDONESIA :Survivors of an Indonesian earthquake that killed at least 268 people appealed for food and water Wednesday, as heavy rain and aftershocks hampered rescue efforts among the rubble of devastated villages. The calls for help came as authorities warned that debris from landslides caused by the strong quake near the town of Cianjur in West Java needed to be cleared as rains forecast for the coming weeks threatened a second disaster. Two days after the quake flattened their homes, residents were still trying to retrieve priceless belongings including family photos, religious books and marriage certificates. "Although some supplies have arrived, it is not enough. We got rice, instant noodles, mineral water but it's not enough," Mustafa, a 23-year-old resident of Gasol village, told AFP. Mustafa had just dug through the rubble of an elderly neighbour's house at her request, appearing from the destroyed facade carrying a pile of clothes before returning to collect rice, a gas stove, canisters and frying pans. In Talaga village, some residents put signs on the windows of damaged houses and the front of tents that read "We need help!" In the streets, at least three people held up cardboard boxes, asking for donations. A shallow 3.9-magnitude aftershock sent panicked evacuees running from shelters on Wednesday, according to an AFP reporter at the scene. More than 58,000 people have been displaced by the quake, around 1,000 are injured and 151 missing, with more than half of the dead still to be identified, the national disaster mitigation agency (BNPB) said Tuesday. The government has dispatched tents and other supplies to Cianjur for the displaced, and the military deployed 12,000 personnel on Wednesday, officials said. Heavy rain was hampering those efforts in about a dozen villages where more than 22,000 houses had been destroyed.—APP



DUBLIN: Pakistan's Ambassador to Ireland Aisha Farooqi Presented copy of Letter of Credence to Ambassador Paul Kavanagh, Chief of Protocol at the Department of Foreign Affairs . She had a fruitful discussion with him on bilateral relations.—DNA

NOVEMBER 2022

Pakistan's Premier News & Diplomatic Affairs Magazine

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Briefs

Walmart employee kills six in Virginia shooting

CHESAPEAKE: A Walmart employee killed six people and wounded several others before fatally shooting himself at a store in Chesapeake, Virginia, authorities said on Wednesday, in the latest episode of gun violence in the United States. The shooter, who has not been identified, used a pistol in the shooting late Tuesday, wounding at least four people in addition to the fatalities, Chesapeake Police Chief Mark Solesky said at a news conference. Coming on the heels of the shooting of five people at a Colorado Springs LGBTQ nightclub on Saturday, the latest massacre prompted another round of condemnations by public officials and calls by activists for tighter gun control. "Heinous acts of violence have no place in our communities," Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin said on Twitter. The Republican has faced stepped-up calls for policies to address gun violence after three University of Virginia students were shot to death earlier this month. In addition to seven confirmed dead, including the shooter, four people were being treated at hospitals in the area, just south of Norfolk, Solesky said. One employee told ABC News that the shooter was a manager at the store. - Agencies

SC bars personal photos on public expense

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Wednesday barred public office holders, including politicians, from affixing their photographs on public and government documents terming it a violation of their oath. Justice Qazi Faez Isa authored a five-page judgment while questioning affixing the photograph of then Chief Minister Punjab Chaudhary Pervez Elahi on the certificates of properties situated in a Rawalpindi katchi abadi. According to the order, affixing one's own photograph on a public/government document projects personal interest, therefore, this was not permissible as it would violate one's oath of office. It was also not permissible to maneuver or honour oneself through one's subordinates, political associates or in a manner that may call for reciprocal favours. "Paid servants of the State, constitutional office holders and politicians in government must not use their positions for personal, partisan or pecuniary gain. If someone names a public/government place or property after themselves or affixes their own name or image on a public/govt document, it was self-glorification, and if this was done by others, it would constitute obedience, flattery, nepotism and/or corruption," added order. - APP

Shahrukh Jatoi freed from jail after 10 years

DNA
KARACHI: Shahrukh Jatoi - main accused in the high-profile Shahzeb Khan murder case - has been freed from the Malir Jail after 10 years, according to jail authorities. Last month, the Supreme Court of Pakistan had ordered the acquittal of culprits in the Shahzeb murder case. The top court had annulled the Sindh High Court's verdict to uphold the punishment of the accused individuals in the case and ordered their release following reconciliation with the bereaved family. On October 18, the SC had acquitted death the row inmate Jatoi along with other convicts in the case. At the outset of the hearing on October 18, the accused party's lawyer Latif Khosa told the three-member bench, headed by Justice Ijaz Ul Ahsan, that the parties in the case have already reached a settlement. Khosa told the bench that his clients had no plans of spreading terror, adding that the murder case was painted as a terrorist activity.



ISLAMABAD: Chief Guest State Minister for SAFRON Senator Talah Mahmood, High Commissioner of Bangladesh Ruhul Alam Siddique, Defence Attache Brig. General Abdul Fazal Sanaullah and others cutting cake to celebrate the Armed Forces Day of Bangladesh. The Bangladesh High Commissioner and the Defence attaché wished to have even more robust relations with Pakistan. - DNA

United States to keep helping the People of Balochistan
Ambassador of US David Blome visits Balochistan

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: U.S. Ambassador Donald Blome visited Quetta, Balochistan Wednesday to meet with Chief Minister Abdul Quddus Bizenjo, local partners working to advance climate change adaptation, representatives of higher education institutions, leaders of local NGOs, and Afghan refugees. During his visit, Ambassador Blome discussed U.S. efforts to combat the effects of climate change through a Green Alliance with diverse partners in Pakistan and underscored the strong cooperation between the United States and Pakistan on promoting economic development through higher education and women's empowerment. Ambassador Blome participated in a community tree planting drive that will become part of a larger project to develop an urban forest in the city of Quetta. The project, led by youth activists, aims to advance climate change adaptation, raise climate risk awareness, and increase community resilience to climate change by providing a platform to bring diverse groups together for collective societal benefit. At the event, the ambassador highlighted that the U.S. government has provided more than 97 million dollars in flood-related assistance to Pakistan this year, including to individuals and communities in need in Balochistan. "But we know that the effects of the flooding are far from over, and every nation faces the threat of climate change. So, we're working with diverse partners to increase Pakistan's resilience to climate change through a Green Alliance," he said. During the trip, Ambassador Blome also met with leadership from the Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences and



the Sardar Bahadur Khan Women's University to discuss how U.S. government support has helped them respond to local economic development needs in their academic programs. The United States, through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), has provided scholarships to almost 300 students - 56 percent of them women - to pursue higher education at the institutions and further their communities' economic development. In remarks at the launch event of "Empowered-Women Can Do," a program that will provide \$350,000 of seed funding to women entrepreneurs in Balochistan,

Ambassador Blome said, "The United States believes that empowering women is a strategic investment in the future for both private citizens and the global economy. By working together on projects like Entrepowered, we can advance women's equality in the business sector and unleash a vast potential that will help bring prosperity to Quetta and Balochistan." The United States is also proud to support the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' (UNHCR) livelihoods program in Quetta, which fosters economic development for Afghan refugees and local artisans. Since 2009, UNHCR, with U.S. funding, has implemented 251 projects in Balochistan to provide infrastructure upgrades to schools, water and sanitation improvements, and health facility upgrades for both Afghan refugees and Pakistani host communities. Ambassador Blome also visited the Command and Staff College in Quetta and met with Commandant Major General Amer Ahsan Nawaz, XII Corps Commander Lieutenant General Asif Ghafoor and mid-career army officers to discuss the long history of U.S.-Pakistan relations in diverse areas and to emphasize opportunities to work together today, including to build a Green Alliance to support Pakistan's transition to cleaner and sustainable forms of energy, and to advance our shared interests in trade, investment, health security, climate change, inclusive governance and regional security. The United States has a broad, deep, and long-term partnership with the people of Balochistan Province spanning the education, economic, health, and rule of law sectors and beyond. We look forward to continuing to deepen and expand these relationships over the coming years. Together we can promote a more stable, secure, and prosperous future for both our nations.

Alvi appoints JUI-F's Haji Ghulam Ali as KP governor

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday appointed JUI-F's Haji Ghulam Ali as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's governor after Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif nominated him for the slot. The president approved the summary of appointing Ali as the governor in the PTI-dominated province under Article 101 of the Constitution in line with the prime minister's advice. "In terms of Article 101 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973, the President is advised to appoint Haji Ghulam Ali as Governor of the Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and sign the Commission of Appointment / affix the Green Seal," read the summary. Following the resignation of PTI's Shah Farman as the province's governor, KP Assembly Speaker Mush-taq Ahmad Ghani has been performing the duties as acting governor since April. Ali served as a senator from March 2009 to March 2015. He has been a member of the Senate Standing Committee on Commerce from 2012 to 2015. - DNA



ISLAMABAD: The Ambassadors of the Nordic countries+ met with the Acting Foreign Secretary Jauhar Saleem. They discussed matters of mutual interest as well matters relating to the region. - DNA

Zardari meets Shujaat, Salik for consultation

DNA
ISLAMABAD: Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarian (PPPP) President Asif Ali Zardari on Wednesday evening visited Ch Shujaat Hussain at his residence in Islamabad. Both the seasoned politicians of the country made consultancy on the current political situation. Former President Zardari inquired after the health of Ch Shujaat. Federal Minister Chaudhry Salik Hussain was also present on this occasion. A day earlier, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif took former president Asif Ali Zardari, a key ally of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government, into confidence over the crucial posting. According to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), Mr Zardari called on the prime minister and discussed the country's overall political situation. However, a source familiar with details of the meeting said the army chief's appointment was also discussed during the meeting. The source said the PPP leader expressed "full confidence" in PM Sharif and assured that his party will stand by whatever decision the prime minister will take about the appointment of the next army chief.

Earthquake injures at least 50 in Turkey

ISTANBUL: An earthquake struck Turkey about 170 kilometers (150 miles) east of Istanbul, injuring at least 50 people on Wednesday. Authorities said the quake was at a magnitude of 5.9 - lower than the 6.1 given by the US Geological Survey - and its epicenter was in Duzce province's Golyaka district. The quake itself also shook other nearby cities and was felt in Istanbul. The national disaster agency (AFAD) also registered more than 101 aftershocks. The quake woke people from their sleep and many rushed out of buildings in panic in the province that experienced a deadly earthquake 23 years ago. Turkish Interior Minister Suleyman Soyly, who visited Golyaka, said one person was seriously hurt after jumping from a balcony out of panic. Initial images showed people covered in blankets outside their homes during the early morning. Some were seen placing blankets on the floor outside, and lighting fires for warmth. Soyly said there were no reports of heavy damage or building collapses, but inspections were continuing. Power was cut off and schools were closed in the region as a security precaution. Around 800 people were killed in a powerful earthquake that hit Duzce in November 1999. In August 1999, some 17,000 people were killed by another powerful quake that devastated nearby Kocaeli province and other parts of northwest Turkey. - Agencies

Ministry alerts provinces on threat to Imran's life

DNA
ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Interior on Wednesday sensitized the chief secretaries of all four provinces regarding threats to the lives of former prime minister and PTI Chairman Imran Khan and the participants of the long march citing reports forwarded by the security agencies. The ministry has written a letter to all chief secretaries of the provinces alerting them about the danger. The ministry has directed the chief secretaries to take strict measures for the monitoring and security of the long march. In the letter, various reasons for targeting Imran Khan are also mentioned. The letter says that Imran Khan and the people's lives are at risk in the long march as the reports of the security agencies have alerted the ministry. The threat of a terror attack during PTI long march has also been mentioned in the letter.

Power cuts across Ukraine, Moldova as missiles hit

Lviv mayor, Andriy Sadovy, said children had been taken to shelters with their teachers - and urged parents not to pick them up until the alarm was over. Shortly before the fresh reports from Kyiv and Lviv, officials said southern Ukraine had come under renewed assault

NEWS DESK

KYIV: The whole of Ukraine's western city of Lviv is without power after widespread strikes were reported across the country. Ukraine's neighbour Moldova also reported "massive" blackouts, although it has not been directly hit. Kyiv city administration said three people had been killed, and the head of the wider Kyiv region said critical infrastructure and homes had been hit. Russia has recently increased its attacks

on Ukrainian energy networks. More than half of Moldova was without electricity, deputy prime minister Andrei Spinu wrote on Twitter. "Massive blackout in Moldova after today's Russian attack on Ukraine's energy infrastructure," he said. Within a few hours power was starting to be restored in the Moldovan capital Chisinau, a Reuters journalist reported. Earlier, an air-raid alert was issued across Ukraine, followed by reports of explosions in a number of locations. Lviv mayor, Andriy Sadovy, said children had been taken to shelters with their teach-

ers - and urged parents not to pick them up until the alarm was over. Shortly before the fresh reports from Kyiv and Lviv, officials said southern Ukraine had come under renewed assault. The governor of the Mykolajiv region warned of "many rockets" arriving from the south and east. In the nearby Zaporizhzhia region, a newborn baby was killed when a missile hit a maternity unit, emergency services said. Russia was blamed for that attack, but is yet to comment on any of Wednesday's alleged strikes. Scheduled and unscheduled black-

outs have become common in many parts of Ukraine as a result of the recent attacks. Many areas of Ukraine hit by blackouts on Wednesday were close to neighbouring countries, including Lviv, just 80km (50 miles) from Poland, where a Ukrainian air defence missile killed two people last week. The towns of Chervonohrad and Yavoriv, also close to the Polish border, suffered power cuts. Moldova also experienced widespread power cuts as a result of strikes on Ukraine on 15 November, Mr Spinu said. Mobile networks were also badly affected.