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Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

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Sarfaraz Ahmed hits ton as Pakistan hold NZ to a draw

**Detailed News On Page-06** 

**Need stressed** for coherent anti-terror policy

**Detailed News On Page-08** 



**PTV Virtual** studio to help bridge tech gap

**Detailed News On Page-03** 



### Briefs

#### Shehbaz, **Khan, Zardari** dangerous

**DNA** 

GUJRANWALA: Jamaat-e-Islami Siraj-Amir

ul-Haq has said that MianShehbaz Sharif, Asif Ali Zardari, and Imran Khan are more dangerous for the country than an atom bomb of the enemy. Addressing a JI workers' convention in Gujranwala on Friday, he said the three political party heads have pushed the country towards inflation and destruction. He said the nation is ready for any kind of sacrifice, but before

that, the assets of Shahbaz Sharif, Asif Zardari, and Imran Khan should be sold. "These people are above the law. Courts and NAB are unable to deal with them." Siraj-ul-Haq said the people of Balochistan are neither terrorists nor against CPEC. "Balochistan is burning and the people who came out for their rights were shot by the police" He added negotiations should be held with the deprived people of Balochistan. JI Amir said the federal government is

#### Attempts being made to kill Khan

planning to sell the insti-

tutions that are the back-

bone of the country.

DNA



lim League (AML) chief Sheikh Rashid Ahalleged that

PML-N-led coalition government was trying to kill PTI chief Imran Khan by giving him "slow poison" "They hatched a plot to kill Imran Khan... first they [government] said Imran Khan was not hit by bullets then did your father's firecrackers hit him?," he said while lashing out at the PDM leaders. Rashid made these remarks on Friday while addressing an "anti-inflation protest rally" outside his Lal Haveli residence in Rawalpindi. "Now they are conspiring to eliminate Imran Khan through slow poising as they don't want to contest elections against him," he added.

#### **Holiday Notice**

The offices of daily Islamabad POST shall remain closed on Saturday on account of weekly off therefore there will be no newspaper on Sunday.

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Sarfaraz Ahmed hits ton as 2nd Test ends in a draw – Page 06

9 million more people risk being pushed into poverty in Pakistan,

warns UNDP - Page 07

Need for coherent counter terrorism policy stressed - Page 08

# Imran, Elahi face off ahead of trust vote

PTI chief warns Punjab CM over his decision against taking trust vote before January 11



#### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

LAHORE: As the date for the trust vote draws closer, an apparent rift emerged between Punjab's ruling allies - Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) - over Chief Minister ParvezElahi's vote of confidence. PTI Chairman Imran Khan has tasked the party's senior leaders to ensure that the provincial chief executive takes a vote of confidence before January 11, but CM Elahi has ruled it out, saying that Punjab Governor Baligh-ur-Rehman's order for the trust vote is "illegal". PTI Senior Vice-President Fawad Chaudhry has said that the party wants the chief minister to take the trust vote before January 11 as the Lahore High Court (LHC) will resume hearing Elahi's petition against his dismissal as the chief minister on the day - and the coalition

### PTI decides to hit the streets again

A sister publication of **CENTRELINE & DNA News Agency** 

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has decided to hit the streets again as it has decided to give tough time to the PDM-led federal government, ARY News reported on Friday. As per details, Imran Khan has become active to give tough time to the federal government. The former prime minister has asked the party leaders to protest against the government. The PTI leaders have been directed by former prime minister Imran Khan to devise a narrative on the increasing inflation, economic condition and early elections in the country. Imran has also hinted to attend the protest movement. Apart from this, the PTI will continue its doorto-door campaign. The local leadership has been directed to fill at least 1,000 forms in every UC of Punjab.

Continued on Page 06

# Prince Harry reveals he killed 25 in Afghanistan

Says he viewed those he killed as 'chess pieces' to be taken off board

News Desk

CALIFORNIA: Britain's Prince Harry revealed in an upcoming book of his memoirs that he killed 25 people as an Apache helicopter pilot during

sion was accidentally put on sale in Spain.

Taliban criticise **Prince Harry** 

DNA

KABUL: The Taliban on Friday his second tour in Afghanistan. Prince Har- slammed Prince Harry after the royal ry's claim in the book, titled Spare, which disclosed he killed 25 people on milwill be available at bookstores in the UK itary duty in Afghanistan and said it next week, came as the book's Spanish ver- was like removing "chess pieces" from a board. AnasHaqqani, a senior Taliban The Duke of Sussex, who has stepped down leader, criticised the Duke of Sussex from his royal duties and left the UK with over the remarks, saying those Harry his wife Meghan Markle, flew during the killed were Afghans who had families. war in Afghanistan and his missions result- "Mr Harry! The ones you killed were ed in "the taking of human lives." He re- not chess pieces, they were humans," portedly said in the book that he was nei- Haqqani tweeted, accusing the prince ther proud nor ashamed of the killings as of committing "war crimes". "The he described those killed as "baddies" who truth is what you've said; Our innotried to kill "goodies." Prince Harry did not cent people were chess pieces to your think of the 25 killed as "people" but as soldiers, military and political leaders.

Continued on Page 06

Continued on Page 06

### Signs of fighting as Russian unilateral truce kicks off

It's bad, very bad. We need to pressure them, get them to leave, maybe more air defence systems would help

AGENCIES

KYIV: Artillery fire could be heard from the front line in Ukraine on Friday, even after the official start of a unilateral ceasefire declared by Moscow and rejected by Kyiv. President Vladimir Putin ordered the 36hour ceasefire from midday on Friday to observe Orthodox Christmas. Kyiv has said it has no intention to stop fighting, rejecting the purported truce as a stunt by Moscow to buy time to reinforce troops that have taken heavy losses this week. Russia's defence ministry said its troops began observing the ceasefire from noon Moscow time (0900 GMT) "along the entire line of contact" in the conflict, but said Ukraine kept up shelling populated areas and military positions. One witness in the Russian-occupied regional capital Donetsk, close to the front, described outgoing artillery fired from pro-Russian positions on the city's outskirts after the truce was meant to take effect. In the hours prior, rockets slammed into a residential building in the Ukrainian

city of Kramatorsk close to the eastern

frontline, damaging 14 homes but with no casualties, the mayor said. Residents described several explosions.

"It's bad, very bad. We need to pressure them, get them to leave, maybe more air defence systems would help. This happens often, not only on festive occasions. Every other day," said Oleksnadr, 36, outside a supermarket at the time of the attack.

One rescue worker was killed and four others injured after Russian forces shelled a fire department in the southern Ukrainian city of Kherson before the deadline early on Friday, the regional governor said. Reuters could not immediately verify this.

Putin ordered the 36-hour ceasefire in the 10-month-long war in a surprise move in Thursday, saying it would run through to the end of Russian Orthodox Christmas on Saturday. But Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy rejected the ceasefire out of hand as a ploy for Russia to buy time. "They now want to use Christmas as a cover, albeit briefly, to stop the advances of our boys ... and bring equipment, ammunition and

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: CEO SK Hydro presenting a cheque of One Hundred Thousand US Dollars to Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif for the flood victims. - DNA

Food prices push weekly inflation to 30.6pc

PBS showed inflation rose 1.09pc week-on-week

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Short-term inflation measured by the Sensitive Price Index (SPI) reached 30.6 per cent yearon-year in the week ending on January 5, up from last week's 29.3pc, as food prices continue to remain high. Data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) on Friday showed inflation rose 1.09pc week-onweek. It had fallen slightly by 0.09pc in the previous week. The SPI monitors the prices of 51 essential items based on a survey of 50 markets in 17 cities across the country. During the week under review, the prices of 23 items increased and nine decreased while 19 remained unchanged. Pakistan has been in the grips of high inflation in the past few months.

**Continued on Page 06** 

# PM says IMF team will visit Pakistan to finalise 9th review

Says Pakistan would try its best to fulfil the terms of the IMF deal

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said on Friday that a delegation from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) would travel to Pakistan in two to three days to finalise the ninth review of Pakistan's \$7bn Extended Fund Facility (EFF). He made the remarks while addressing the inaugural ceremony of Hazara Electric Supply Company (HESC) in Islamabad. Pakistan entered a \$6 billion IMF programme in 2019, which was increased to \$7bn last year. The programme's ninth review, which would release \$1.18bn, is currently pending. It had earlier been put off for two months due to the PML-N-led government's unwillingness to accept certain conditions placed before it by the Fund, and the disagreements have vet to be resolved. During his address, the premier said he had spoken with International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva last night (Thursday) regarding Pakistan's agreements with the international money lender.

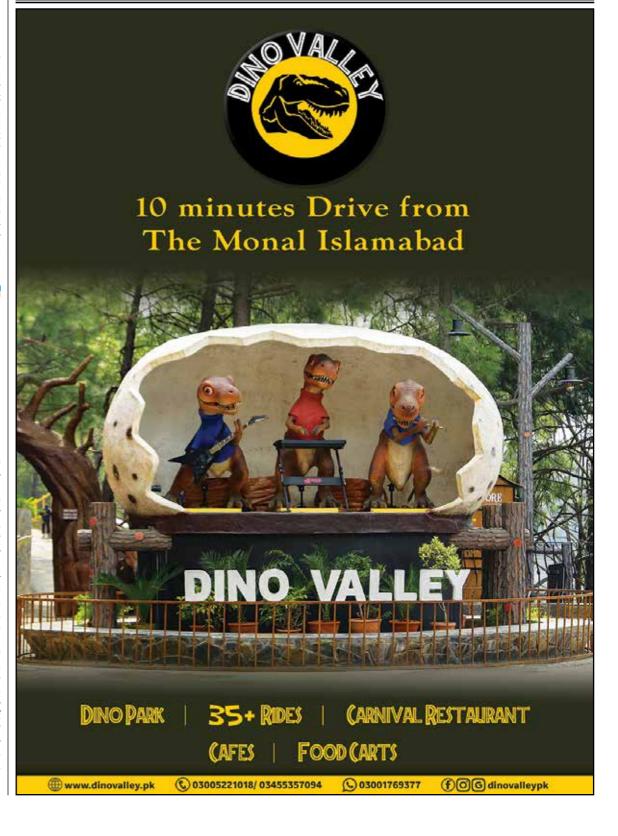
Continued on Page 06

Terrorists cannot demoralise determination

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharii has said that miscreants and terrorists cannot demoralize the determination of the Pakistani nation. While chairing a meeting to review the security situation in the country held in Islamabad on Friday, the Prime Minister said the nation would not hesitate to make any sacrifice for the safety of the beloved country. "We will not hesitate in rendering any sacrifice for the defence of the motherland," he said and emphasized on enhanced collaboration among all the provincial and federal agencies to curb the recent wave of terrorism.

Continued on Page 06



#### Saadhay 14 August: All set to bring laughter to Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: Saadhay 14 August is all set to begin performances in Islamabad after successfully finishing 100 shows in Karachi. The play, which has been written by the eminent Anwar Maqsood and directed by Daawar Mehmood, was able to gather audiences from all walks of life, and individuals of all ages and genders. It drew packed houses from the first performance until the very last.

The famous play will be performed for the first time in Islamabad on January 7, 2023. The play, Saadhay 14 August which features some of the most well-known national figures from both the past and present, is a part of the trilogical series that was first staged as Pawnay 14 August, ten years ago. The series' final chapter, Saadhay 14 August commemorates its conclusion. The play's legendary writer, Anwar Maqsood states "This series is really close to my heart and was made while keeping something positive while also considering the current plight of the nation. We expect that Saadhay 14 August will receive the same level of support in Islamabad as it has in Karachi."

#### KP hills likely to receive rain with snowfall

PESHAWAR: The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has predicted rain with snowfall over the hills in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during January 7 to 9. According to a dispatch of the Provincial Disaster Management Authority issued to all deputy commissioners on Friday, it said that a westerly wave is likely to enter north Baluchistan on January 6 (evening/night) and grip most of the province on the weekend (January 7 and 8), and may persist on upper parts of the province till Monday (January 9). Under the influence of emerging weather system, rain with snowfall over the hills is expected in Chitral, Lower & Upper Dir, Malakand, Swat. Buner, Shangla, Kohistan, Battagram, Mansehra, and Abbottabad districts. Similarly, light to moderate rain with light snowfall over the hills is also expected in Haripur, Mardan, Swabi, Nowshera, Peshawar, Charsadda, Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Kurram, Orakzai, Hangu, Karak, Kohat, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, Tank, Dera Ismail Khan, North and South Waziristan districts.-DNA

#### Woman murder accused held from KSA

GUJRANWALA: Criminal Investigation Agency (CIA) Special Operations Cell of Gujranwala Police carried out an operation in Saudi Arabia and apprehended an accused involved in killing of a woman for resisting robbery 14 years ago. According to the police, fugitive Badar Munir was arrested from Saudi Arabia after 14 years. Besides that, another accused, who killed a youth in Nowshera Virkan, was detained at Lahore airport. Police sources said that the accused was fleeing to Italy after committing the crime. Both the accused have been arrested and handed over to the concerned police department. The Central Police Office (CPO) said that the arrest of the accused was no less than a challenge as both of the accused went into hiding.-DNA



KARACHI: Directorate of Electronic Media and Publications, DEMP, Karachi organised a digital photographic exhibition and quiz competition in observance of 146th birth anniversary of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah at his alma mater Sindh Madresat Ul Islam University Karachi. — DNA

# People of Pakistan have already rejected imported govt

MPA Syed Yawar Abbas Bukhari , Former Federal Minister Syed Wajid Bukhari and Focal Person Syed Khawar Abbas Bukhari (all from PTI) called on Former Federal Minister Sheikh Aftab Ahmad (PMLN) and inquired about his health at his residence on Friday

Qazi Shoaib Khan

ATTOCK: The Central Leader of Pakistan Tehrik e Insaaf Syed ZulfiqarAbassBukhari(Zulfi Bukhari) has said that the imported Government of PML(N) Alliance is manipulating pre-poll rigging besidesmaking all out efforts to get the forthcoming general elections delayed for obtaining results of their own choice but PTI led by Mr. Imran Khan will be the vic-

torious of overwhelming majority whenever the elections are held as the people of the country have reposed their blind confidence over the bold leadership of Mr. Imran Khan and his party manifesto. This he said while addressing a public gathering herein village Chakki of Tehsil PindiGheb where a large number of people led by Qazi Mukhtiar Vice Chairman UC Chakki announced to join PTI along with his political group.

Speaking on the occasion, Syed Zulfiqar Abbass Bukhari( Zulfi Bukhari) said that the people of Pakistan have already rejected the mandated less PML(N) alliance rulers because the general public of the country is also fully annoyed on the day to day price racketeering of petroleum products, flour, bread, cooking oil, chicken, vegetables and other daily use items. He said that he would contest the elections from this constituency (NA 50

Attock) and will get upgraded the socio-economic situation of his constituency which was being ignored since independence. He said, during PTI govt a large number of development schemes have been completed in this constituency at the cost of millions of rupees and recently tenders have been issued for the remaining schemes. Zulfi said, on his request Punjab govt has given approval for upgradation of two schools while the remaining

schools will be upgraded soon. Zulfi said, KhundaJand road has already been carpeted benefiting thousand of people and thanked Qazi Mukhtiar and his group for joining PTI. Meanwhile MPA Syed Yawar Abbas Bukhari, Former Federal Minister Syed Wajid Bukhari and Focal Person Syed Khawar Abbas Bukhari (all from PTI) called on Former Federal Minister Sheikh Aftab Ahmad (PMLN) and inquired about his health at his residence on Friday.

#### 30 mentallychallenged patients escape Karachi hospital

Police informed that incident was occurred on Thursday noon and they took into their custody some of the patients

KARACHI: In an unusual 'mental hospital escape', more than 30 mentally-challenged patients fled the facility situated in North Nazimabad, Karachi. Once the patients got out of the confines of the mental health facility and were on the loose, they slammed the doors of nearby houses with sticks. They also damaged vehicles parked outside these houses. While fleeing, they got hold of the hospital's security guard and gave him a good thrashing. According to police, a mentally-challenged patient drove away a jeep. However, they recovered the vehicle parked a few miles away. Police informed that the incident was occurred on Thursday noon and they took into their custody some of the patients. But many of them have managed to escape, they added. —DNA

#### Constitution binds CM to secure trust vote

DNA

9LAHORE: Punjab Gover-

nor Baligh ur Rehman on

Friday said Chief Minister Parvez Elahi was constitutionally bound to secure vote of confidence in Punjab assembly. Hi statement comes in the wake of fresh talks on the vote of confidence in the province. At a meeting with Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) lawmakers, he said those spreading propaganda regarding economic default in the country would fail adding the incumbent government had put the country's economy on track. "It is the government's top priority to stabilize the economy and friendly nations have hinted at cooperation", he added. Lawmakers included MPAs Rana Mash'hood Ahmad Khan, Khawaja Imran Nazir, Hina Pervez Butt, Sumaira Komal, former MPA Faisal Hayat Jabboana, Rana Abdul Rauf Ghazali, Mian Fida Hussain Wattoo, MNAs Malik Muhammad Riaz, Nawab Sher. Earlier, a political fiasco rose in the province after the deposed prime minister Imran Khan repeatedly announced to dissolve Punjab and KP assemblies. The governor de-notified Mr Elahi as CM that added fuel to the fire. The CM moved the Lahore High Court (LHC) in response, and the LHC suspended the governor's notification that led to restoration of Mr Elahi as the CM. However, the court bound the CM to refrain from dissolving the Punjab assembly until he obtained the trust vote.

#### SHC temporarily hands over custody of minor girl to parents

KARACHI: The Sindh High Court (SHC) on Friday ordered to temporarily hand over the custody of the 14-year-old girl - who was reported missing from Karachi on April 16, 2022, but was recovered from Punjab later and declared that she had run away from her home to marry 21-year-old Zaheer Ahmed - to her parents. Justice Iqbal Kalhoro of the SHC heard the case today during which the minor girl was also presented before the court. During the hearing, Justice Kalhoro asked the girl whether she wants to stay at the shelter home or with her parents. The 14-year-old replied to the judge that "she wants to go to her parents' home and stay with them". The court then asked the parents -Mehdi Kazmi and Saima Kazmi - to submit a bond of Rs1 million. However, the permanent custody of the girl will be decided by the trial court.-APP

# Coop of Police with business community is indispensable

On this occasion, Chamber President Saqib Rafiq said that ADRC should be activated for alternative dispute resolution, street crime should end, Rawalpindi Chamber should solve the problems related to peace and order of the city, Safe City and solve the problems related to the business community.

Khan while talking to the Shahzad Nadeem Bukhari nomic situation is wor

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Police cooperation with the business community is indispensable, the business community plays an important role in running the country's economy, and is the backbone of the country's economy, to improve communication and cooperation with the police, Chamber Police. A coordination committee will be formed, these views were expressed by IG Punjab Amir Zulfiqar

Khan while talking to the delegation of Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce in Rawalpindi Police Lines. The chamber delegation included President Saqib Rafiq, Group Leader Sohail Altaf, Senior Vice President Muhammad Hamza Sarosh. Vice President Faisal Shahzad, former presidents Asad Mashhaddi, Raja Amir Iqbal, Saboor Malik, Nasir Mirza and Nadeem Rauf were included. IG Puniab also issued instructions to RP Onasar

regarding the formation of Police Liaison Chamber Committee. On this occasion, Chamber President Saqib Rafiq said that ADRC should be activated for alternative dispute resolution, street crime should end. Rawalpindi Chamber should solve the problems related to peace and order of the city, Safe City and solve the problems related to the business community. will cooperate with the police as much as possible. Group leader Sohail Altaf said that the eco-

ening the law and order situation which should be controlled, and effective measures should be taken, the interaction between the police and the business community is very important, he said that Rawat Industrial There is a need to activate the police post established in the state, in this regard the police will be co-ordinated. Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce President Saqib Rafique presenting a bouquet to IG Punjab Aamir Zulfiqar Khan.



RAWALPINDI: President RCCI presenting bouquet to IGP Punjab, Amir Zulfiqar Khan.—DNA

# Tourists advised to take precautionary steps He requested the tourists to follow the advisory to avoid any kind of inconvenience.

The Tourism Police and the special squads were also directed to make coordinated efforts to provide the best facilities to the tourists, he added

RAWALPINDI: Commissioner, Rawalpindi Division, Saqib Manan has advised the tourists visiting Murree and adjoining areas to take precautionary measures.

and adjoining areas to take precautionary measures. According to the Commissioner Office spokesman, Saqib directed the authorities concerned to utilize all available resources to facilitate the tourists in Murree. All snow removal machinery should be kept operational, besides arranging salt sprinkler machines and ensuring presence of the required staff, the commissioner said. The spokesperson said that a control room had also

been established at Jinnah Hall Murree, on the special directives of the commissioner. "The tourists, in case of any emergency, can contact the control room on 051-9269015, 051-9269016, 051-9269018", he added. The representatives of all the departments concerned would remain present in the control room, which would work round the clock under the supervision of the Assistant Commissioner, Murree. According to Additional Deputy Commission-

er, Murree, Ahmed Hassan

Ranjha, the district admin-

istration has set up special

facilitation centers at 13 sensitive points to assist tourists and respond to any emergency. Tehsil Head-quarters Hospital, CMH Murree and basic health centers also finalized arrangements for the snowfall season besides setting up two health camps at Lower Toppa and Bansra Gali, for the convenience of the tourists, the ADC added.

Toppa and Bansra Gali, for the convenience of the tourists, the ADC added. He said that strict action would be taken against the violators. Due to the huge influx of tourists towards Murree, the district administration and the City Traffic Police, Rawalpindi had is-

sued an advisory, appealing to the citizens to observe lane discipline. According to the advisory, the tourists are requested to use petrol-based vehicles and strictly prohibited to use CNG-based vehicles which may cause problems in cars due to extreme cold in the snow. Families with infants and asthma patients are also advised to avoid travelling to Murree. The visitors are advised to wear warm clothes and avoid unnecessary travel after 8:00 pm. Tourists are also advised to keep their vehicles' fuel tanks full.

The advisory further says that turn on your emergency lights and other lights of the cars, as well and try to put a metal chain on one tyre. The CTP spokesman said that special traffic wardens had also been deployed at the main sites of Murree to ensure smooth traffic flow. He requested the tourists to follow the advisory to avoid any kind of inconvenience. The Tourism Police and the special squads were also directed to make coordinated efforts to provide the best facilities to the tourists, he added.-APP









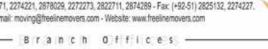




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- Relocations
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Labore
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Main Boulevant Labore
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T-6 (-9-20) 3430025 3430479
T-6 (-9-20) 3430025 3430479
T-6 (-9-20) 3430025 3430479
T-6 (-9-20) 34301476
T-6 (-9-20)

#### National Days and Armed **Forces Days**

#### **J**ANUARY

Jan 01 / CUBA

Jan 01 / Palestine

Palestine Revolution Day Jan 01 / Sudan

Jan 04 / Myanmar

National Day

Independence Day Jan 06 / Iraq

Armed Forces Day Jan 12 / Tanzania

Jan 14 / Uzbekistan Armed Forces Day

Armed Forces Day

Jan 15 / Nigeria Armed Forces Day

Jan 20 / Mali Armed Forces Day

Jan 20 / Laos Armed Forces Day

Jan 25 / Thailand

Armed Forces Day

Jan 26 / Australia National Day

Jan 26 / India Republic Day



#### **Hotels &** Restaurants

Serena Hotel.....111 133 133 Marriott......051-2826121



#### **Airlines**

Turkish Airlines.....8494949



#### **Emergency**

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



Edhi Ambulance11
PIAFlightInfo11
PIACargo928097
Railway Inquiry11
Railway Exchange9270831-
WASA Rawalpindi555548
CAA928109



iiospitats		
CMH	5611111	
MH	561116	
Cantt Hospital.	9270907-11	
DHQ	5556311-4	
RGH	9290301-7	
Holy Family	9290322-7	
PIMS	9261170-79	
Polyclinic	9218300-09	
Shifa Internation	onal.4603666	



#### **Departments**

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

#### **Islamabad** Metropolitan

Corporation......9209224 Potohar Town......9209224 RawalTown......5773343

#### **Water Tank**

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

# NDMA issues advisory ahead of rain, snowfall prediction

The concerned departments have been asked to prepare general and area or region specific awareness campaigns and ensure wide spread propagation of likely threats and hazards

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) here on Friday has issued a detailed advisory for the nationwide preparedness measures to cope with rain and snowfall prediction advising the provinces to ensure mass awareness and sensitization of the travellers and tourists to the high risk areas.

The NDMA advisory mentioned the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) forecast citing that a westerly wave was likely to enter North Balochistan on January 6th (evening/night) and was likely to grip upper and Northern parts of the country from January 6th to 9th. Under the influence of this weather system, following events were forecast as light to moderate rain (with snowfall over the hills) was expected in Quetta, Zhob, Barkhan, Ziarat, Nokkundi, Dalbandin, Harnai, Qilla Saifullah, Qilla Abdullah, Chaman and Pishin on January 7th and 8th. However, moderate rain (with snowfall over the hills) was also expected in Murree, Galliyat, Kashmir (Neelum valley, Muzaffarabad, Poonch, Hattian, Bagh, Haveli, Sudhanoti, Kotli, Bhimber, Mirpur), Gilgit

Baltistan (Diamir, Astore, Ghizer, Skardu, Hunza, Gilgit, Ghanche, Shigar), Chitral, Dir, Swat, Malakand, Kohistan, Mansehra and Abbottabad from January 7th to 9th. The weather prediction may also cause light rain expected in Islamabad, Pothohar region, Charsada, Bajaur, Kurram, Waziristan and Kohat during January 7th and 8th.

Keeping in view the weather situation, all provincial disaster management authorities (PDMAs), Gilgit Baltistan Disaster Management Authority (GBDMA), State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) and Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Administration, National Highway Authority (NHA), National Highway and Motorway Police (NH&MP). Frontier Works Organization (FWO), Rescue 1122, line departments, Ministries and federal agencies were required to undertake measures as per respective mandate.

The NDMA advised that it was to be ensured by all concerned in addition to measures deemed appropriate as per on ground situation to make ensure widespread circulation of advisories and alerts to raise awareness and sensitize travellers and tourists.

The concerned departments were to prepare general and area or region specific awareness campaigns and ensure wide

spread propagation of likely threats and hazards. Moreover, they should also engage local communities at traditionally dangerous and hazard prone sites to enable round the clock monitoring and establish feedback mechanism for early warnings and alerts for at-risk population. It also added that the PDMAs and DDMAs to arrange and preplace necessary inventory and other essentials at strategic locations or vulnerable choke points in coordination with NH&MP, NHA, FWO, local Construct and Works Departments (C&W), Rescue 1122 and line departments.

It also advised that the local administrations to assess and plan deployment of additional resources and exercise control over vehicle movement leading to and in vicinity of vulnerable areas, choke points, tourist spots and attractions to prevent losses and damages and save precious lives. Moreover, medical resources; paramedics, equipment and medicine should be deployed as per the vulnerability and risks identified in different regions to meet respective regional requirements.

The provincial departments and the concerned should also ensure that tourists, visitors, travelers in at-risk and affected areas will be apprised and forewarned about forecast weather and road conditions in coordination with NH&MP, law enforcement agencies (LEAs), NHA and FWO, ensure availability of emergency services personnel during the forecast period.

The travellers on Provincial and National Highways in at-risk/affected areas be forewarned of adverse conditions and may be detoured to safe waiting areas under guidance of respective PDMAs, Local Authorities, National Highway and Motorway Police, LEAs, etc., ensure immediate stocking of basic commodities especially in regions that get cut-off during winters snowfall, ensure round the clock monitoring of situation through emergencies operation centers (EOCs) with regular feedback to provincial and national EOCS (PEOCs and NEOC respectively).

The tourists, visitors, and travelers to check PMD Weather Forecast for information on fog, snowfall, rain, high flows in nullahs and landslides etc. to assess road conditions from control rooms, helplines, websites, social media platforms of NH&MP, NHA, FWO, DDMAs and PDMAs before undertaking journey. The NDMA also instructed all departments concerned that in case of any eventuality, twice daily and routine updates to be shared with the Authority.

#### employees will be investigated. - APP Art, Craft Bazar to open today

Islamabad

police

established

25 pickets

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Police have set up 25 pickets at different

points of the city with a purpose to enhance the

security and to tackle any

untoward incidents. Ac-

cording to police source, all vehicles entering in

capital jurisdiction will be

checked and suspicious

elements to be closely

monitored. He said that it

has been decided to take

strict legal action against

non-sample number plates

and unregistered vehicles

The source said that for-

eign nationals living in

Islamabad have also been

advised to keep identity

documents while travelling

in the city. He said that cit-

izens have been advised to

register their tenants and

employees on a priority

basis at the nearest police

station and Police Khidmat

Markaz. He said those

citizens who have kept un-

registered local or foreign

across the city.

ISLAMABAD: A two-day Behbud Art and Craft Bazar will open on January 7, here at Pakistan China Friendship Center to promote handmade products and support the less privileged women. The festival will feature a variety of products, games for kids, traditional food, live music and fun for the whole family, also providing opportunity to meet the artisans from all over Pakistan.

Behbud Art and Craft Bazar was established in 1967 by Behbud Association of Pakistan, which is a non-profit, non-political social welfare organization run mainly with the help of a team of volunteers, who have a significant record of philanthropic dedication and com-

"It aims to support the less privileged women and make them self-reliant and productive members of the society. This is done by providing skill training together with income generating opportunities, subsidized health facilities and educational services for street children. Behbud has enabled thousands of women and their families, spanning over four generations to improve their quality of life," said the organizers while talking to media. The Association organizes Behbud Art and Craft Bazar, a famous family festival every year in Islamabad, that attracts thousands of people from twin cities and other parts of the country. – **APP** 

ونی مشکل ہے لہذا آپ کواخبار اشتہار مطلع کیا باتا ہے کہ آپ اصالاً وکالاً یا بذر بعیر مخار مورخہ 2023-01-6 وبونت 9 بج صبح حاضر مرالت آویں ورنه کاروائی یکطرفه عمل میں لائی

بتخط امهرعدالت

#### **USC** cuts price of premium brands ghee across the country ISLAMABAD: Utility Store

Corporation (USC) on Friday announced that the corporation has reduced the price of premium brand (Dalda) ghee by Rs 12 per kilogram (Kg). According to press release, the price of 5 kg tin has also been reduced by Rs. 50. 1 kg of premium brand ghee (Dalda) would be available at 500 per kilogram instead of Rs.512 whereas 5 kg tin new price set at Rs 2530 compared to Rs 2580. The New prices have been applied immediately, it added. For purchasing the items other than those subsidized, no terms apply nor any password needs. - APP



<mark>ISLAMABAD:</mark> Secretary Senate, Muhammad Qasim Samad Khan exchanging views with Abdul Mubdi Osman, acting High Commissioner, High Commission of Brunei Darussalam at Parliament House Islamabad. - DNA

### Low gas pressure multiplies problems

ISLAMABAD: With the increase in cold, shut-off or low gas pressure in various parts of the twin cities has multiplied the problems of the domestic as well as the commercial consumers. The low or zero pressure specially during morning and evening timings compelled the residents of the twin cities to buy breakfast, lunch and dinners from markets which is much expensive as well as an unhealthy option for families. A number of families have started using substitutes compressors, cylinders, electric roti makers and electric stoves to cook food which is not risky but also very expensive option for the consumers. Beside the issues of domestic consumers, the commercial users especially restaurants, hotels and Tandoor owners are also facing the same issue and using alternate to run their businesses. They also increased the rates saying that they can't manage the gas expense in the routine prices and are forced to transfer that burden to the customers. Shazia Bibi, a house wife living in Arya mohalla Rawalpindi while talking to APP said,"Normally I prefer to cook healthy and hygienic food for my family but now the outage of gas has compelled us to buy unhygienic food from the restaurants almost regularly which is effecting the health of my family." She said," Many restaurants are also taking advantage of the situation and increased the prices of food which badly disturb the overall budget which is a big concern for me." A working women Sadia Ali said,"The low gas pressure in my area has multiply my problems as I can't finish my kitchen work on time and get late from my office almost every day." She said,"Restaurants and Tandoors are not a good solution as there are long queues outside during breakfast and dinner times which are times of rush for working people." - APP

# Saudi Arabia to launch

gency health cases. - APP

### e-applications for overseas pilgrims

ISLAMABAD: The Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Hajj and Umrah has confirmed that it will soon launch the "Individual Pilgrims" service to apply for the Haji from outside Saudi Arabia. It will also allow pilgrims to issue permits of performing Umrah and praying in the Rawdah Sharif via Nusuk app. The ministry confirmed that it will work in providing the service of registering the vital features of biometrics for pilgrims online, to obtain an immediate Visa from 5 countries, which are: Tunisia, UK, Bangladesh, Malaysia, and Kuwait, via the (Saudi Visa Bio) app of the Interior Ministry, Saudi Gazette reported. Moreover, it has confirmed its intention in launching a comprehensive insurance service for Hajj pilgrims and Umrah performers, which would cover emer-

## Capital's safe city project successfully operating

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Safe City project is playing key role in maintaining law and order situation in the federal capital and assisting the police officials in nabbing criminal elements through surveillance cameras.

According to police source, more than 100 kilometers of optical cable including damaged cameras have been recently repaired and made functional on a priority basis.

The process of installing 750 new cameras has been also completed to further increase the efficiency of Safe City Islamabad in which 50 additional cameras equipped with artificial intelligence technology were installed for effective monitoring at entry and exit points. Similarly, the installation

of 20 additional cameras for reading vehicle number plates under the automatic

system has also been com- Highway were also linked pleted. To further improve the communication system 14 out of 20 ELTV towers have been enabled.

Safe City also established a secure online portal for ongoing recruitment in Islamabad Capital Police to better coordinate all stages from online registration of candidate, submission of applications and conduct of tests.

Flashlight and radar system has been repaired and reactivated on roads while 48 CDA cameras were installed at various locations to maintain law and order situation in Islamabad. Surveillance cameras at metro-bus service were also connected with Safe City while F-10, Shifa International Hospital, Jinnah Supermarket, DHA, various private institutions, shopping malls including

tomatic tracking of vehicle number plates and a new system of auto-alert message on vehicle theft and loss has been introduced at Safe City while the e-challan system has been re-engineered and its performance has been further improved. Islamabad Capital Police Helpline Pukar-15 and Eagle Squad have been linked with Safe City's centralized system while outdated data sharing cables were repaired and connected to the data center. Islamabad Capital Police FM Radio 92.4 has been shifted to the Safe City while SOPs have been issued to improve the performance of all wings of Safe City. Around 3,800 controller servers have been connected with POC through assistance of Huawei. – **APP** 

to the centralized system

Safe City Islamabad. Au-

## **JANUARY 2023**

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### **New Virtual Studio of PTV** to help bridge tech gap and international news as

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb Friday said in the era of modern technology, largest Virtual Studio of Pakistan Television would help in bridging the tech gap. This she said while inaugu-

rating the Virtual Studio of PTV along with Minister for Power Division Khurram Dastgir. The minister said that Pakistan Television had the required assets but there was need to use them in the best way.

Today, with the efforts of PTV staff and management, IT solutions were being used in PTV, which was a requirement of the modern age, she

said. "The establishment of Virtual Studio is another milestone for Pakistan Television which has the distinction of being the largest virtual studio in Pakistan, she said. She said that now the PTV News will now work in a modern way, providing accurate news to the viewers. Pakistan Television's stateof-the-art virtual set will present national, regional

programs to the public in an innovative manner, she said.Pakistan Television has achieved many milestones during its 58-year journey. With its largest Virtual Studio, Pakistan Television News will now keep the public updated with news, analysis and real views of Pakistan in a modern way. With the establishment of Virtual Studio, viewers of PTV News would be able to learn about national, regional news, politics, culture, education, current affairs and world affairs in a modern way. The minister said that best audios, high definition videos, beautiful graphics and PTV News will be part of the screen.

well as weather and sports

news and current affairs

### **Briefs**

### **ANF** seized hashish, opium

ISLAMABAD: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) seized over 256 kg of hashish, 39 kg of opium 2 kg of heroin in two different operations and arrested four drug peddlers. According to a spokesperson, the force had recovered over 256 kg of hashish, and 39 kg of opium and arrested two drug peddles from Islamabad. In a Joint operation, the ANF and Punjab Rangers in Kasur seized over 2 kg of heroin and arrested two drug pushers. The cases have been registered against the accused under the Anti-Narcotics

#### ZTBL to provide financial assistance to PARC

ISLAMABAD: Zarai Taragiati Bank Limited (ZTBL) will provide financial assistance to Pakistan Agriculture Research Council (PARC) to extend its research outreach to the doorsteps of farmers for improving their livelihood opportunities across the country. In this regard ZTBL will collaborate with PARC for the up-scaling of PARC's innovative farming technologies to transform the agriculture sector for enhancing peracre crop output. To this effect, both organizations have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a collaborative relationship in promoting and adapting the latest agricultural technologies, best crop management practices, and agriculture mechanization for improving farm efficiency and for the benefit of the farming community. Under this MoU PARC and ZTBL will work iointly to conduct awareness webinars, field days, seminars, and workshops to disseminate the latest developments in the agriculture sector for uplifting the livelihood of the farming community, and both sides will also develop partnerships for running joint ventures, pilot projects, and research activities. They will also establish demonstration plots, research trials on modern agricultural machinery, agronomic practices, and crop diversification, and ZTBL will conduct Zarai Baithaks as an integrated approach and invite PARC experts for their research outreach for the appropriate benefits of the farming community in various parts of the country. Under the agreement, PARC will also facilitate ZTBL in training and capacity building of bank staff in improved agricultural technology, crop production practices, dairy management, and agricultural entrepreneurship and provide technical assistance and guidance in the transformation of ZTBL Farm Islamabad into an agriculture tourism center. The PARC will also help the bank for devising and developing new agriculture loan products and value addition in existing loanable credit products for the development of the agriculture sector and shares their research outputs with manufacturers, suppliers of agricultural machinery, and progressive farmers across

#### Shahbaz Gill once again skips indictment

the country.—APP

ISLAMABAD: A district and sessions court in Islamabad has once again deferred the indictment of PTI leader Shahbaz Gill in a sedition case. Additional Sessions Judge Tahir Abbas heard the case on Friday. During its last hearing, the court had asked Gill to ensure his presence in the court and issued his bail-able arrest warrants. Though, the PTI leader reached the Islamabad Kuchehry and his presence was marked in the court but he staved in the ambulance wearing his oxygen mask on his face. Gill's lawyer told the judge that his client was unable to come to the court as he could not take off his oxygen mask and he was sitting in the ambulance standing outside. The court deferred Gill's indictment till January 20. However, the court issued bail-able warrants for Imad Yousuf against Rs50,000 surety bonds.-DNA

# Fiber cable project signed between Chinese companies

Previously, Sunwalk Group CEO Pakistan, Lan held a meeting with Federal Minister of IT and Telecom, Sved Amin ul Haque. Lan informed the Minister regarding investment plans for establishing a statewide optical fiber network and facilitating the growth of broadband in Pakistan

#### **DNA**

ISLAMABAD: A Nationwide Optical Fiber Cable Network Project has been signed between PowerChina and Hunan Sunwalk Group, according to Gwadar Pro on Friday. Phase 1, Lot 1 of the said project will aim to improve Pakistan's telecommunication infrastructure for better interconnection with its neighboring countries.

Talking to Gwadar Pro, business manager Sunwalk Group said that the company plans to spend several billion dollars on Pakistan's Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities to establish telecom infrastructure and fiber industry. The nation's broadband adoption will be increased for the digital revolution, which will benefit not only the business-to-business sector but also the government, enterprise firms, and end consumers, the official added.

Previously, Sunwalk Group CEO



Pakistan, Lan held a meeting with Federal Minister of IT and Telecom, Syed Amin ul Haque.

Lan informed the Minister regarding investment plans for establishing a statewide optical

fiber network and facilitating the

is prepared to invest approx-

#### growth of broadband in Pakistan. imately \$2 billion over the He stated that his organization

# Sopore-Massacre fact finding probe an eye-opener

#### **DNA**

ISLAMABAD: Legal Forum for Kashmir (LFK) launches an archival study based reporttitled, "Slaughter in Sopore" on 6th January 2023 to commemorate 30th anniversary of the heinous Sopore Massacre carried out by India's Occupying Forces. The fact finding probe originally compiled by Institute of Kashmir studies-IKS is eye-opener to the world that India and it's occupying forces have a history of perpetrating war crimes and crimes against humanity in IIOJK. LFK has been archiving various investigative reports that have donned invisibility. Our aim is to bring such work into the public domain. This report on the Sopore massacre is an attempt to disseminate the defiant work carried out by IKS. On the morning of January 6, 1993, Indian Occupying Forces of 94 Battalion, Border Security Force (94 Bn. BSF), led by Commanding Officer S. Thangappan, shot and killed 46 people and injured dozens more. In connection with the car-

facts about State terrorism have been brought to light by local and international human rights organizations: (a) State terrorism seems to have crossed all limits when you find such persons among the victims whose age is more than 55 years. The victims include an insane and sick man and a lady traveling in a bus. b) State terrorism has not spared even the State government employees. In the list of victims, most of the victims are government employees. (c) Fourteen passengers traveling in the RTC bus JKY 1901, were killed mercilessly on the spot inside the bus. This is clearly an example of state terrorism. There is hardly any parallel to such brutalities.

(d) Most of the killed and injured persons comprise the victims who were busy in shops or at other business establishments or were out attending to their job. These victims were all civilians engaged in earning their day-today livelihood. Chairman JKSM remembers martyrs of Sopore massacre, pays glorious tributes. Chairman

vation Movement (JKSM) Altaf Ahmed Bhat while remembering the Martyrs of Sopore Massacre of 6th January 1993 said that 30 years passed but still the victims of the worst kind of state terrorism are waiting for justice, which is being denied by the biased legal system supported by an aggressive and fascist indian government. On 6th of January 1993, the Indian Occupation forces carried out Sopore Massacre, killing innocent civilians, setting shops and colleges on fire, just to punish and break the will of the people of Kashmir. According to International print and electronic media, more than 75 lives, hundreds of shops and residential houses were burnt, is glaring example of a planned genocide by Indian occupational forces. Indian Border Security Force (BSF) personals killed 75 civilians and burnt around 120 houses and 350 shops, including Women's Degree College and famous Samad talkies, were gutted in the firestorm. Chairman JKSM Altaf Ahmed Bhat added that the massacre is seen as one

The 'TIME MAGAZINE' had

titled the news report on January 18, 1993 as "Blood Tide Rising". He added that 'The horros of Sopore Massacre are still haunting the people. Despite the thousands of lives lost for freedom, we will never stop the struggle of freedom for our motherland, the Kashmir freedom movement is very much alive. added Chairman JKSM. Bhat lamented that target killing of youth in fake CASO's, razing houses to grounds and destroying whole residential areas with demolitions became a routine for Indian occupation forces. Chairman JKSM further added that we have appealed to the Secretary General of United Nations, Human Rights council, Amnesty International to take concrete steps and hold India accountable for the grave Human Rights Violations India is committing against Humanity in Kashmir, but to no avail. The world is turning a blind eye in case of Kashmir. While India has already started demographic changes in IIOJ&K by defying all international

### PKR suffers 13th consecutive loss to US dollar

rupee as the US dollar's uninterrupted march continued in the interbank market on Friday. The forex dealers divulged to the TV channel that the greenback rose by another 13 paisas against the local currency and was currently being traded at Rs227.25. On Thursday, Pakistani rupee had registered a marginal loss against the US dollar, depreciating 0.07% in the inter-bank market. As per the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), the rupee declined by 17 paisas to close the day at 227.12. The market was exected to see some positive development after Finance Miniseter Ishaq Dar's statement that Saudi Arabia is all set to boost its deposits in Pakistan, but the State Bank's data regarding forex reserves apparently dented such hopes severely. According to the SBP, the foreign exchange reserves held by the State Bank had falled by 4.2% on a weekon-week basis. On December 30, 2022 the forex reserves were recorded at \$5,576.5 million, down \$245 million as compared to \$5,821.9 million on December 23. According to the SBP, the decrease in reserves came due to external debt repayment. Overall, the liquid forex reserves held by the country, including the net reserves held by banks other than the SBP, stood at \$11,422.5 million. Net reserves held by banks amounted to \$5,846 million. Earlier, in the week ended on December 23, the SBP's reserves decreased by \$294 million to \$5,821.9 million as Pakistan repaid some of its external debt. The decline in rupee's value persisted despite Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Ishaq Dar's statement that Saudi Arabia "is expected to beef up its deposits in Pakistan in a few days". The minister was of the view: "All nations of the world opt for borrowing new money to pay old liabilities or they opt for rollover. We are opting for rolling over of deposits." Ishaq Dar stated that Pakistan's reserves were "pure till 2018 and no other country had deposits in Pakistan" at that time. The minister said the country's foreign exchange reserves are projected to be in a much better shape by June 30, 2023. -DNA

#### SECP Chairman for improving insurance industry ISLAMABAD: The Chairman Securities and Exchange Com-

mission of Pakistan (SECP) Akif Saeed emphasized upon improving the corporate image of the insurance industry by introducing new products with greater value to policyholders, upgrading service standards and timely disclosure of customers and claims data. He said this while talking to the representatives of the Insurance Association of Pakistan (IAP) and the Chief Executive Officers of major insurance companies who called on him Friday, said a press release issued here. Akif was accompanied by the Commissioner SECP, Mujtaba Ahmad Lodhi, Head of Insurance Waseem Khan and Executive Director Musarat Jabeen. He highlighted the significance of the insurance sector in the overall financial sector of Pakistan as well as on the economy of the country. He stressed the industry participants to play their due role in the development of the sector, along with the capital and debt markets of the country. The SECP team encouraged industry representatives to share their suggestions and feedback on the way forward for a sound and orderly development of the insurance sector. The industry participants suggested the implementation of mandatory insurance schemes including third-party liability insurance. The IAP pointed out that the sales tax on life insurance, health insurance and reinsurance services by provincial revenue authorities significantly hindered the growth of the sector. -APP

### Delay in tough decisions hurting Pakistan economy said that the local population

of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain on Friday said a delay in unpopular decisions and ignoring the demands of IMF is not benefiting the country but harming it. According to the finance minister, the ninth and tenth reviews of the IMF will be held simultaneously, which indicates a delay in important matters, he said. Mian Zahid Hussain said that if the bitter pill of fiscal discipline is not swallowed, Pakistan will run out of time. Further investment in infrastructure projects that become white elephants should be stopped.

munity, the veteran business leader said that Gwadar is very important for the country therefore unrest among the local population should be calmed urgently. Gwadar is the second most important port after Karachi and Pakistan's future is linked to it, therefore, the issues of the local population deserve the full attention of the authorities, he added. Mian Zahid Hussain said that the masses and the business community are concerned about the disturbing news from Gwadar where people are demanding their basic rights. Locals want access to fishing in their own waters, the inclusion of the locals in jobs, and the provision of proper healthcare and education facilities. He

in employment opportunities and their lifestyle should improve. There is no justification in CPEC except Gwadar and this area is considered an indicator of progress on this flagship project, he added. The business leader said that locals complain that hundreds of large trawlers continue to fish in deep waters without any check and they also catch the small fish depriving locals of fishing opportunities and resulting in poverty and hunger. Local fishermen fear that poverty and hunger will increase, impacting the fishing communities of Gwadar, and the adjoining locations. It may be recalled that locals were promised jobs and

greater participation when

should be given preference

but it remained a promise. Decisions on CPEC and Balochistan are made without taking into account the interest and priorities of the local residents therefore they see all such projects with scepticism. Mian Zahid Hussain said that locals fear that the main beneficiaries of investments in Gwadar will be international investors. They will lose their advantage and may become a minority in their own district. It is an open secret that several powers are CPEC and they are using all means including engaging frustrated elements to disrupt this project, therefore, the government should address these issues and engage with the communities.-DNA

evant sector.-APP

# **ICCI demands 15-years export policy**

**DNA** 

ISLAMABAD: Faad Waheed, Acting President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry has called upon the government to formulate a 15-years export policy to give a long-term direction to the exporters for enhancing exports. He said that many members of ICCI from various sectors including, pharmaceuticals, IT, light engineering, food products including rice, fruits & vegetables, meat, marble, cement, textiles, pipes, furniture are doing exports to many countries and stressed that TDAP should include them in its foreign delegations so that they could explore new avenues of exports promotion. He said this while talking to Muhammad Naseer, Director General, Trade Development Authority of Pakistan, Islamabad during his visit to ICCI. Faad Waheed said that TDAP's trade officers should share market study reports with ICCI on a regular basis so that the business commu-

opportunities of trade and exports in foreign markets. He said that ICCI and TDAP are working for the same goal to enhance Pakistan's trade and exports, therefore, close liaison between them is important to achieve these goals more effec-

tively. Nasir M. Qureshi, Karim Aziz Malik, Aamir Hussain, Hamayun Kabir, Sheikh Muhammad Ejaz, Ameer Hamza, Naeem Siddiqui, Khalid Chaudhry, Ms. Parveen Khan and others also spoke at the occasion and highlighted various issues that needed the attention of

Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Naseer, Director General, Trade Development Authority of Pakistan, Islamabad assured that he would try to address the issues highlighted by the members of ICCI to facilitate them in promoting trade



major focus for exports is on EU and USA, but the recessionary trends in these markets are causing a fall in our exports, therefore, the business community should focus on non-traditional markets including Africa, Central Asia and ASEAN region that offer great prospects for exports.

Muhammad Naseer said that TDAP would cooperate with ICCI in exploring new markets for exports as we need to boost exports to improve the economy. He said that the business community should pay attention to regional trade as Pakistan has good potential to improve trade with Iran, Afghanistan and other regional countries. He said that TDAP is planning to organize an expo for women entrepreneurs in March in Islamabad that would provide them a good opportunity of handholding for exports. He assured that TDAP Islamabad would organize awareness programs in ICCI for the facilitation of exporters and importers.

#### SBP's ban on imports continues

**DNA** 

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF) has stated that the government's strict import policy along with high cost of doing business owing to multiple increases in fuel cost and energy tariffs have almost halted the industrial production, as the Central Bank's undeclared ban on imports continued to affect the business activities in the country. PIAF Chairman Faheem ur Rehman Saigol observed that the State Bank of Pakistan has announced to relax some restrictions on imports pertaining to HS Code Chapter 84, 85 and certain items of Chapter 87 but practically nothing has changed, as trade and industry continued to face hurdles in imports as well as exports shipment proceeds. In a joint statement along with senior vice chairman Nasrullah Mughal and vice chairman Tahir Manzoor. Faheem Saigol said that the industry needs a supply chain to run the whole economy, adding that the big industries require raw material all the time. He said that the economy of Pakistan needed to boost exports for which it is important that the SBP should further relax import restrictions and adopt a more lenient import policy as many export-oriented industries have to import raw materials and intermediate goods to produce the finished products. The State Bank's decision severely affected the pharmaceutical, auto, plastic, mobile phone, engineering and textile industries negatively. The most concerned are those industries whose consignments have reached at the port and are being asked by the suppliers to pay the bill but the banks are still creating hurdles on behest of the State Bank Though importers have the money but are unable to send the amount to them. Those who import goods under Cash Against Document are of the view their clients are getting angry with them as they are not able to make payment timely. -DNA

#### SMEDA to organize training on January 09 (Monday)

ISLAMABAD: The Small

and Medium Enterprises

Development

(SMEDA) is going to organize a one-day training programme on "Regulatory Compliance for Hotels and Restaurants" for profitable business growth on January 09 (Monday). The session is being offered by SMEDA under National Business Development Programme (NBDP) for SMEs, to extend non-financial advisory services to small and medium businesses, according to a source in the authority. The objectives of the training include laws and regulations governing the hotels and restaurants industry, ensuring compliance proactively, building your brand business success through compliance and winning customer loyalty. The training session would be attended by SMEs and staff from rel-

#### One more tests positive for Covid-19

RAWALPINDI, Jan 06 (AP-P):One more person was diagnosed with the fatal Coronavirus during the last 24 hours, raising the district's tally of confirmed cases to 47,743. The latest data released by the District Health Authority, here on Friday, revealed that the total infected cases included 44,111 from Rawalpindi and 3,632 from other districts. The report further savs that the new case arrived from the Potohar town area, and the patient was quarantined at home. No one was admitted to any health facility of the district. The report further said that 7,006,011 people, including 44,790 health workers, had jabbed themselves against the Covid-19, across the district, since the vaccination drive was launched on March 10, 2021. The Authority said that during the last 24 hours, 322 samples were collected, out of which 321 were declared negative, while the positivity rate was recorded at 0.31 percent.-APP

# Europe's heatwave: there is a way out

arm winter days do not instinctively feel like an extreme weather event. Unlike the freezing bomb cyclone endured by the US at Christmas, or the floods that swept through the Philippines, they are unlikely to cause immediate widespread death and devastation. At a time when soaring energy costs have pushed so many into poverty, many will have welcomed the warmth that has been felt across Europe, especially the millions in Ukraine suffering due to Russia's attacks on its power infrastructure. Yet the heatwave should alarm us all. Though it may have been less punitive to experience than last summer's record temperatures, which led to thousands of deaths, it has spread across many more countries. "We can regard this as the most extreme event in European history," said one climatologist. Poland, where the average January temperature is around 1C, saw the thermometer climb to 19C on New Year's Day. At least seven more European countries have seen record highs. Ski resorts closed slopes or resorted to artificial snow. Natural variations in weather demand caution when attributing individual events. But the pattern is unmistakable: rising temperatures and extreme weather events intensified by human-made global heating. On Thursday, the Met Office confirmed that 2022 was Britain's hottest year on record, with the annual average temperature passing 10C for the first time - and the heat made 160 times more likely by the climate crisis. Nasa says that the last decade saw eight of the 10 warmest years since modern records began in the 1880s. Ten years ago, it would have seemed outlandish to talk of the kind of temperatures and extreme weather now witnessed regularly. Frighteningly, all this is happening with a rise of just 1.1C above pre-industrial temperatures. Yet 2022 set other records too: renewables are performing far beyond predictions. A new wind power record was set last May, with the UK producing enough to cover half its electricity needs. The government now needs to turn its emissions targets into action. So far, it has been lamentably slow in doing so and in some cases - such as in offering approval for a new Cumbrian coalmine - is actually going in the wrong direction. It should be smoothing the path for renewable firms and investors. The Oxford Farming Conference currently in progress offers an important chance to drive down the substantial emissions resulting from farming and food production; ministers show no signs of seizing it. There is no real transport strategy; the government is refusing to release the emissions figures behind its decarbonisation plan. It needs to prioritise insulation and other measures to cut domestic emissions. Economics and traditional national security concerns now point in the same direction as environmental protection there is no excuse for delaying further. The door is closing fast, but there is still a way out. The UK, and other nations, must take it while they can.

# Islamabad POST

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# Political virus on entry of Chinese travelers

ecently, there have been some discussions worldwide about the optimization and adjustment of China's epidemic prevention and control policy. A few countries are worried that "a new COVID variant could emerge in China," and thus have adopted new restrictions on travelers from China. On January 4, the World Health Organization (WHO) said that most of the virus strains circulating in China "are known and have been circulating in other countries, and at the present time no new variant has been reported." China's epidemic prevention and control has entered a new stage, and it is normal for the outside world to be concerned about it. At present, several basic facts are relatively clear: First, no new mutant COVID strain has been discovered in China so far. Second, China has been maintaining close communication with the WHO and sharing relevant information and data in a timely manner. Third, the current epidemic in China is controllable, and China is confident that the transition will go ahead smoothly and orderly. But there is another case. Some countries have been putting on a show from the very beginning, and political factors have overwhelmed scientific judgment. The additional prevention and control measures they have taken against Chinese travelers are not based on scientific research and judgment, but are based on prejudice against China and political calculations. For example, Washington seems to be encouraging other countries to follow suit and restrict Chinese travelers. It claims that this is a "prudent health measures to protect their citizens." But why hasn't Washington taken "prudent health measures" to protect its citizens when Delta and other more lethal strains were spreading in the US? At the moment, XBB.1.5, a new COVID variant, is rapidly circulating in the US and spreading to other countries, why doesn't Washington take "prudent health measures" to prevent this new variant? The relevant restrictive measures have attracted criticism in countries including the US, and they are considered to be neither scientific nor effective. US media The Hill said in an article that hundreds of thousands of infected people are already freely circulating in communities around the US. "Given that just a few thousand visitors from China enter the United States on average every day, adding a few hundred infected people each day into the population from China barely increases population risk." Since the outbreak of the epidemic, China's contribution is obvious. When the global epidemic was at its most critical moment, China's production supported the entire world and ensured that the global industrial chain and supply chain were not interrupted. On the other hand, China's prevention and control measures have maximized the protection of people's lives and health. In this context, the political manipulation of the border entry of Chinese travelers not only ignores scientific facts, but also runs counter to the expectations of the world to walk out of the shadow of the pandemic. When we review this period of history in the future, countries that only want to use the epidemic to attack China and pass the buck must bear historical responsibility.

# Pak-Russia relations post fall of Kabul

Muhammad Faisal Yousafzai



For the next ten years their relations were not good even USA imposed sanctions on Pakistan for making nuclear bombs (1998). In 2001, 9/11 event occurred, in which approximately 2760 American civilians were died and this terrorist acts were acknowledged by terrorist group AL-QUAIDA leader USAMA BIN LADEN who was present in Afghanistan. At that time, in Afghanistan there was a government of "Mulla Omer

rom the beginning Pak-US have not a constant relationship, their relationships have been gone through many twists and turns. After independence, to run the country smoothly Pakistan joined CETO and SENTO, however their relation was changed in 1965 and 1971 wars (arms embargo). In 1979 when USSR intervene in Afghanistan,

due to her interests she made a good relationship with Pakistan, she assisted Pakistan to establish a group of jihadis to train, equip them to fight against USSR in Afghanistan and Pakistan did this because of her interest (deterrence). During 10 years of proxies Pak-US relation was at peak and at the end of the day USSR was disintegrated. After the disintegration of USSR, USA left this region as well as Pakistan to deal alone with these jihadists' groups because her interest in this region was achieved. For the next ten years their relations were not good even USA imposed sanctions on Pakistan for making nuclear bombs (1998). In 2001, 9/11 event occurred, in which approximately 2760 American civilians were died, and this terrorist acts were acknowledged by terrorist group AL-QUAIDA leader USAMA BIN LADEN who was present in Afghanistan. At that time, in Afghanistan there was a government of "Mulla Omer", and USA tried to persuade him so that he will take over Usama bin Ladin to them but were failed. Then UNSC passed resolution and started a "war on terror". Before intervening in Afghanistan USA president "Gorge W. Bush" call Pakistan's president "general Pervaiz Musharraf" and asked him "whether with us or against us", Pakistan has no other option except to accept the American proposal and became front non-NATO allay in war on terror, due to which once again their relationship became strong. In this war, Pakistan receives 53,000 deaths, 126 million economic losses, over 500 suicide bombers, 1.4 million registered and 1.5 million non-registered Afghan refugees but Pakistan didn't step back she helped USA in clearing terrorists' sanctuaries in the tribal belt, conducting operations on western borders, she played a role of dismantling, decimating AL-QUAIDA, almost top seven wanted criminals of AL-QUAIDA operatives were taken out with the assistance of Pakistan, bought Taliban to negotiating table in Qatar, helped in safe evacuation of American forces and officials from Afghanistan, even early two to three years success of USA in overthrowing Taliban government and achieving objectives in Afghanistan was also a hard work and sacrifices of Pakistan. Unfortunately, after withdrawal of NATO forces from Afghanistan (15 august, 2021) USA didn't gave credit to Pakistan even imposed a label of "DOUBLE GAME" on Pakistan which was unexpected. After fall of Kabul, there is opportunity for both states to reframe their relationship, this time, in a more realistic manner. Pakistan is the world's only Muslim majority country with nuclear arsenals. Its borders are with India, China, Afghanistan and Iran as well as

have a Gwadar port which falls into Arabian sea and these all factors are important for US foreign policy in different ways, and these are the factors which makes Pakistan more important after the USA withdrawal from this region, because current US foreign policy is revolving around Indo-pacific region, she made QUARDS, arms deals with Taiwan, provide nuclear submarines to Australia, made India strong enough in terms of economy, politically and socially all these is to counter China, which seems a threat to her hegemony. The core dysfunctionality has been a strategic misalignment with regards to Afghanistan. They must need to put their relationship in a more modest plane; not overloaded with every issue under the sun and make a relationship more stable, predictable, and more sustainable, which would avoid the unrealistic expectations that had really curse the past. I think both countries must accept the ground realities which is that Pakistan is a middle income, post-colonial country, struggling with unusual crisis like stagnant bureaucracy, unemployment, poverty, inadequate infrastructure, dysfunctional and corrupt politicians, TTP, outsized military influence and an insurgent group. On the other hand USA have to realize that, in contemporary world the cosmopolitans are more aware of the past motives of USA in this region, it's not a time for USA to "micromanage" events in every part of the world, including in Pakistan and Afghanistan, currently USA is facing a competitor like China and Russia as well as social challenges at home and it would be difficult for USA to control the whole world as she did in the post-cold war era. There is no doubt that both states are duplicitous, because thing that were said were not done or not followed up on both sides. Due to their duplicity their relationship became worsen. However, USA is still the largest exporter destination for Pakistan. The USA is still one of the top five investors, that has been investing in Pakistan, USA is the fourth source of remittances to Pakistan, USA is home to one of the most influential dynamic Pakistani diasporas anywhere in the world. The relationship between Pakistan and USA in future needs not to emphasize so much on security and to curb terrorism, but there must be focus on economic and commercial issues as well. I think this is the area that hasn't been developed overtime and I think Pakistan is a type of country in which American's companies should wanted to invest because of cheap labors, resource rich, unused population/raw materials etc. Currently what Pakistan need is adequate infrastructure, economic

ter refugee's crisis etc. to strengthen democracy. On the other hand, USA was a state which from 1945 wanted/trying to spread and strengthen democracy. Thus, it is the time for both states to move away from misunderstanding and misplaced expectations of the past and to open the possibilities of going beyond government-to-government relationships. USA needs to allow Pakistani businesses and American businesses to interacts and for that the simple path would be to take a second look at the "travel advisory", which is a big barrier for travel by US investors, because not all of Pakistan is in a security threatened zone and there are businesses in Pakistan that are sitting on cash, that would like to invest jointly with Americans partners. Bringing economic stability, greater regional connectivity in Afghanistan for any government will be another priority, and Pakistani government clearly stated and moved from geostrategic to geoeconomics paradigm, where Pakistan's government are very keen to see the point of interests for Pakistan in seeking peace in Afghanistan which will lead to wider region. After 4 decades, there is chance to create a real condition of peace; framing Taliban as the enemy and demonizing Taliban that would help USA to achieve its objectives in Afghanistan is a choice that she made early. However, Pakistan shared its perceptions and perspectives from the last 2 decades that "there is no military solutions", and it is a fact that "when military get involved in any political decisions things became alright, because they have their own objectives". There are various aspects where I believe that both states interests are still aligned and due to which their relationship in future is going be more batter than in the past, some of these aspects are.... 1) There is a continuing threat of terrorism which is directed against the USA by AL-QUAIDA.

aids for quality education, political stability, to coun-

2) USA concerned are about the safety and security of Pakistan's nuclear arsenals which recently President Biden claim that a threat to whole world if Taliban acquired it. 3) There is a need to prevent a future war between Pakistan and India that could escalate to nuclear level. 4) Humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan due to which refugees burden fall on the shoulders of Pakistan and some other European states. Due to this crisis, there is a lot of violation of human rights reported by amnesty international.

5) Climate change, a threat to global world etc. This means whether USA like or not, she must have to finds ways to work together with Pakistan to curb all these challenges.

# Enhancing maritime security cooperation among Indian Ocean countries

Ali Basit

The addition of BRI has provided new avenues to harness the true potential and alleviate the poverty by improving existing socio-economic ties in the Indian Ocean littoral countries. There is a growing concern observed in the level of relevant international stakeholders that the geo-political and geo-economic aspects have diverse dimensions in the region where the philosophy of enhance cooperation of maritime security, peace and stability would be highly needed in order to promote socio-economic uplift and ensure prosperity

here is no doubt that Indian Ocean is one of the busiest and important Ocean of the world trade. The geo-economic and geo-significance of the Indian ocean littorals are interconnected to each other due to large scale of population, trade and cultural roots, sea-based economy, cultural tourism and other interests of leading global powers. IOR has tremendous potential of geo-economic activities, which are not only important to the Asian countries but also equally important for the entire world. The addition of BRI has provided new avenues to harness the true potential and alleviate the poverty by improving existing socio-economic ties in the Indian Ocean littoral countries. There is a growing concern observed in the level of relevant international stakeholders that the geo-political and geo-economic aspects have diverse dimensions in the region where the philosophy of enhance cooperation of maritime security, peace and stability would be highly needed in order to promote socio-economic uplift and ensure prosperity in the region and beyond. The new economic initiative by the Chinese government is promising for the entire region, where Pakistan and Iran would be the major beneficiaries of overall development. The role of major global powers needs to promote peace and cooperation. For which China, Pakistan and Iran need to make extra effort on diplomatic fronts. From Pakistan's perspective, it is important to ally itself with forces of regional progress and for that it has to alter the region and turn itself in mega corridor. For this purpose, Pakistan increasingly realized that its future lies in pursuing the common future of this region including Afghanistan, CARs, Russia, Iran and China. Furthermore, it also realizes that perpetual hostility with India is not going to serve any purpose and the only way to solving the dispute in this region is through shared vision of prosperity for huge population deprives form the opportunities. It deserves to materialize its potential but India has a very typical mind-set with its hegemonic designs in the Indian Ocean region and is trying to pose itself as a maritime regional power. It is interested in holding way over the choke points in the IOR thus, causing turbulence in the existing security of the regions. However, it is not possible going to the magnitude of the China's military and economic competence. The biggest and the most important player to carve out this constructive picture out of this troubled region is undoubtedly

China. China's emerging strategy for the maritime affairs in the IOR has two interconnected building blocks that is the philosophy of two oceans navy initiative of the maritime Silk Road. For which an aggressive work is being done by the China over the last 10 years or so in order to achieve these two milestones in an influencing manner. The strategic significance of Gwadar will certainly help China in addressing its current vulnerability of the Malacca dilemma. The geo-economics of the maritime silk route, present China with interest to acquire, maintain and defend if needed and these interests can only be safeguarded through a strong level. Pakistani ports and Harbours, especially, Karachi Port Qasim have tremendous significance not only for Pakistan but also for landlocked Afghanistan, CARs, Russia and now very much increasingly China in view of the CPEC project. Long coastlines and significant harbours provide Pakistan with a strategic location which is ideal for the sea trade and other commercial activities conducted in mostly foreign ships. The role of Pakistan in international navigation, the Gwadar port and EEZ is very important for development. However, the rise of non-conventional threats near the coastal areas of Pakistan hampers its economic and security interests ignoring all these impacts will intentionally place Pakistan in an adverse position in with landlocked countries to which Pakistan wants to offer a pathway to the IOR. Until or unless these non-traditional threats are resolved, Pakistan will not be able to its national security. It is important to stabilize the economy for acquiring the defence modernization and to deal with NTS threats. Pakistan needs to focus more on the naval empowerment of its naval forces for ensuring security as its sea lanes, and international maritime interest in the IOR. The uninterrupted threats of terrorism have transnational apprehensions of diplomatic interests of Pakistan in IOR. Possible assaults by radical military factions with the assistance of regional powers opposing CPEC, a sea ports and coastline along with the danger of weaponization, human trafficking and smuggling could obstruct global trade activities on the coastline of Pakistan. The serious maritime security threats not only marginalize national security of Pakistan but other coastal states of the IOR. For collective efforts and comprehensive maritime security strategy to safeguard national and regional interests, Pakistan Navy started off multinational naval exercise 'AMAN' in

North Arabian Sea in 2007. This was marked as a blue diplomacy move by the Pakistan Navy bringing together Maritime Nations in the IOR and calling for galvanizing efforts to maintain strong correlations at sea. The exercise has been aptly named "AMAN", which is the Urdu term for "PEACE". It signifies Pakistan's endeavor for peace while remaining fully prepared to ensure peace in the region. Pakistan Navy till to date had conducted seven AMAN exercises. The next year's exercise is the 8th in number, which have been held biennially since 2007. All previous naval exercises of the AMAN series have been highly successful and not only were participated wholeheartedly by navies of friendly countries, ushering goodwill to Pakistan, but have also resulted in all participants including the host Pakistan Navy, gaining tremendous professional experience. The main objective of AMAN series of multinational exercises is to promote regional cooperation and stability, greater interoperability and to display a united resolve against terrorism and crimes in maritime domain including piracy. Whereas in sea phase, the participating navies attend the military drills with their surface and air assets, special operation forces, and maritime teams. They are involved in various activities, including maneuvers, weapon firing drills, maritime interdiction operations, flying operations, search and rescue exercises, and international fleet review-- all of this improves Pakistan Navy's capability to combat nontraditional threats and improve the country's soft image in the international community. Moreover, this time alongside AMAN-23, an important maritime conference is going to be held for the first time at Karachi expo center. Pakistan International Maritime Expo and Conference (PIMEC) is an initiative of Pakistan Navy which is being organized under the patronage of Ministry of Maritime Affairs in order to jump start development of maritime sector in Pakistan and spur Blue Economy. PIMEC is scheduled from 10 to 12 Feb, 2023 and the exhibition will bring together stakeholders and companies from diverse maritime fields to exploit and explore the potential of Blue Economy. It is actually to venture new chapter where we explore the true potential of much more that is to follow. Not only it will give us livelihood and vibrancy to our economy but also provide endeavors to mitigate climate change effects.

### Briefs

#### **Imran, Elahi** face off ahead of trust vote

From Page 01 plans on showing the court that their CM has the house's confidence. But after Elahi's reluctance to take the vote, sources told Geo News Friday that the PTI chief has ordered party leaders that they should ensure the voting takes place and if anyone creates hurdles in the dissolution of the Punjab Assembly, then PTI lawmakers would resign from the house. The warning from Imran comes as CM Elahi, who had earlier said that he would back the

PTI chief's decisions, is now seeking to stay in office for a longer period than the former prime minister's plans. Punjab Assembly Speaker Sibtain Khan has summoned the session for the house on January 9, which was earlier scheduled to take

place on January 11. Although the LHC had restricted the chief minister from dissolving the assembly, the Punjab governor said that if CM Elahi takes the vote of confidence, then it is his prerogative to dissolve the legislative. Problems also seemingly arisen for the chief minister after independent lawmaker Syeda Zahra Naqvi said she is an ally of the PTI and not Elahi, The News reported, with three members of the PTI also set to rebel against the party's decision to back the PML-Q leader.

#### PTI decides to hit the streets again

From Page 01 Imran Khan stresses need for 'strong institutions' to curb corruption Last week, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan asserted that strong institutions were impera-

#### Signs of fighting as Russian unilateral...

From Page 01 mobilised troops closer to our positions,' Zelenskiy said in his Thursday night video address. Shortly after the ceasefire was supposed to come into effect, Russian-backed officials accused Ukraine of shelling Donetsk with artillery, Russia's state-run TASS news agency said.

Denis Pushilin, Russian-installed leader in Donetsk, said on Thursday that Putin's order only covered offensive operations and his forces would hit back if fired upon.

Vladimir Saldo, the Russian-installed administrator of Ukraine's Kherson region, described the ceasefire as "a gesture of goodwill," but said the situation on the front lines would not change because of it. Despite air raid warnings sounding in several regions, no major air strikes were reported by Ukrainian officials after the ceasefire starting time.

#### Taliban criticise Prince Harry

From Page 01

"Still, you were defeated in that 'game'." Abdul QaharBalkhi, spokesperson for the Taliban-led Afghan foreign affairs ministry, also criticised Harry's comments. "The western occupation of Afghanistan is truly an odious moment in human history and comments by Prince Harry is a microcosm of the trauma experienced by Afghans at the hands of occupation forces who murdered innocents without any accountability," he said.

# Sarfaraz Ahmed hits ton as 2nd Test ends in a draw

Haq fell to a rash drive off Sodhi as ball spun in and crashed onto the stumps. Azam and Masood then put on 42 runs and were looking solid when Bracewell came into the act

KARACHI: Pakistan's last pair Naseem Shah and Abrar Ahmed survived 21 balls in fading light on Friday while Sarfaraz Ahmed hit a fighting century to deprive New Zealand of a victory, bringing the second Test to a sensational draw in Karachi.

New Zealand were in sight of a series-clinching victory after dismissing Sarfaraz for a career-best 118 with 39 balls remaining in the match. But as dusk settled, Naseem scored 15 and Ahmed seven to guide Pakistan to 304-9 in pursuit of a 319-run target when umpires Alex Wharf and Aleem Dar declared the light unfeasible to continue with three overs remaining.

The two-match series ended 0-0 after the first Test - also in Karachi - ended in a draw, depriving New Zealand of their first series win in Pakistan for 53 years.

New Zealand took the second new ball and with the fourth delivery Tim Southee dismissed Agha Salman for 30 to break a 70-run stand for the seventh wicket before Bracewell dismissed Sarfaraz to raise hopes of a win. But it was Sarfaraz whose fourth Test century first in eight years - which set Pakistan on course for a fighting draw.

Pakistan were staring at defeat at lunch with the total on 125-5, but Sarfaraz led the fight back during a sixth wicket stand of 123 in three hours with Saud Shakeel who made 32. Pakistan reached 179-5 at tea, needing a further 140 runs in the

31 overs - a point from where Sarfaraz sped up the run rate by smashing three boundaries and a six off spinner Michael Bracewell before driving pacer Matt Henry for two to reach his hundred. But once Pakistan lost Sarfaraz, Hasan Ali (five) and Salman in the space of 14 runs, the target went out of reach.

The previous best winning chase in a Test in Pakistan was 314 by the home team against Australia in Karachi in 1994.

Sacked as captain of all three formats in October 2019, Sarfaraz staged a comeback in the drawn first Test – also in his hometown of Karachi - and top scored the series with 335 runs with three fifties and a hundred. In all, Sarfaraz batted for four hours and 48 minutes, hitting nine boundaries and a six – an improvement on his previous highest of 112 made against the same opponents in Dubai eight years ago. Spinner Michael Bracewell (4-75) and Ish Sodhi (2-59) jolted Pakistan earlier with three wickets in the first session. Resuming two down without any runs on the board, Pakistan lost Imam-ul-Haq (12), skipper Babar Azam (27) and Shan Masood (35) before reaching three figures. Haq fell to a rash drive off Sodhi as the ball spun in and crashed onto the stumps.

Azam and Masood then put on  $42 \mathrm{\ runs}$  and were looking solid when Bracewell came into the act. He first removed Azam with a sharp turning delivery that was edged to wicketkeeper Tom Latham, while Masood miscued a lofted shot and was caught by Kane Williamson at mid-off.



### Pegula stuns tearful Swiatek to give US lead in United Cup semis

SYDNEY: Iga Swiatek was left in tears after Jessica Pegula stunned the world number one on Friday to give the United States a 1-0 lead over Poland in the semi-finals of the inaugural United Cup.

Less than two weeks before the Australian Open, Swiatek had no answers to the American's powerful serve and searing returns, crashing 6-2, 6-2 to a deflating 71-minute defeat in Sydney. "I played her a lot in a lot of different conditions but I felt these were definitely the fastest conditions," said Pegula, ranked three in the world. "I thought I did a really good job playing aggressive, serving smart and returning really well." With the roof closed at Ken

Rosewall Arena on a rainy day in Sydney, Swiatek lost the opening seven points to be broken and go 40-0 down



in the next. She woke up to level at 1-1, but lost focus again and was broken twice more to concede the first set in 39 minutes.

Another early break for Pegula in the second set put Swiatek on the back foot again and she had no way back against a player

in scintillating form. It was a massive blow for Swiatek ahead of the Australian Open after coming into the match as favourite following a dominant 2022 in which she beat Pegula four times, including at the French and US Opens that she went on to win.

Keys v Magda Linette – are played on Saturday ahead of a potentially decisive mixed doubles rubber, if required. The teams tournament began with 18 countries but has been whittled down to over six days in Perth, Brisbane and Sydney.

Poland, USA and Greece all progressed to the last four as city winners, along with "lucky losers" Italy.

Greece, spearheaded by top-10 players Stefanos Tsitsipas and Maria Sakkari, face an Italian team led by Matteo Berrettini and Martina Trevisan on Friday evening. - APP

# Former Italy striker Gianluca dies aged 58

LONDON: Former Chelsea striker and manager Gianluca Vialli, who played 59 times for Italy, has died at the age 58. He was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in 2017 but said in April 2020 that he had been given the all-clear. Vialli was re-diagnosed in 2021 and in December 2022 left a role with Italy's national team to focus on his health. "Gianluca was a splendid person and he leaves a void that cannot be filled," said Italian Football Federation (FIGC) president Gabriele Gravina. "I hoped until the end that he would be able to perform another miracle. Yet I am comforted by the certainty that what he did for Italian football and the blue shirt will never be forgotten." The FIGC confirmed that a minute's silence in memory of Vialli will be held before all Italian matches this weekend. Vialli made his Italy debut in 1985, a year after joining Sampdoria where he would win the Serie A title and European Cup Winners' Cup during eight seasons with the club. Sampdoria said in a statement: "We won't forget your 141 goals , your overhead kicks, your cashmere shirts, your earring, your platinum blonde hair, your Ultras bomber jacket. You gave us so much, we gave you so much: yes, it was love, reciprocal, infinite. A love that will not die today with you." Vialli helped Sampdoria reach the 1992 European Cup final but after losing to Barcelona, he moved to Juventus for a then world record fee of £12m. Vialli spent four seasons with Juve, winning the Champions

> Top seed Novak Djokovic's bid for a 92nd career title and first in Adelaide since 2007 ramps up when he locks horns with seventh seed Denis Shapovalov in an evening clash. The Canadian has failed to beat his Serbian rival in seven previous attempts, with the pair last meeting in Wimbledon semis in 2021. Whoever wins will face either third seeded Daniil Medvedev or fellow Russian eighth seed Karen Khachanov for a place in the final. Women's top seed Ons Jabeur of Tunisia plays Ukrainian Marta Kostyuk later Friday with the winner facing either Czech teen Linda Noskova or two-time Australian Open winner Victoria Azarenka. - APP

#### Men's world number 19 Frances Tiafoe takes on 26th-ranked Pole Daniel Michalski next to try and extend the US lead. The tie's final two singles matches - Taylor Fritz v Hubert Hurkacz and Madison

League, Uefa Cup and Serie A titles. - Agencies

#### Bayern sign Dutch midfielder Blind ka Kudermetova or Roma-

BERLIN: Bayern Munich have signed Netherlands midfielder Daley Blind, the club announced on Thursday evening. The former Ajax and Manchester United player's contract will run until the end of the season, with the possibility of an extension. Blind, 32, terminated his contract by mutual consent with Dutch giants Ajax in December, six months before it was due to expire, and was officially a free agent. Blind said he was thrilled to join the German champions ahead of the business end of the season, "I can hardly wait to play here. We've got the most important part of the season coming up, where it's about titles - and a club like Bayern can win every trophy," Blind said. "The hunger for titles here at the club was key in my decision. I hope I can bring my experience to help the team." In a statement on the club's website, Bayern Sporting Director Hasan Salihamidzic welcomed the new arrival. "We're delighted that Daley is joining our team. Daley is a versatile defender, capable of playing on the left or in the centre. He has great international experience and leadership qualities. - Agencies

### Sabalenka, Nishioka power into Adelaide semi-finals

ADELAIDE: World number five Aryna Sabalenka held off Marketa Vondrousova to book her place in the Adelaide International semi-finals on Friday in a boost to her Australian Open preparations. The Belarusian overcame hot conditions to dimiss her Czech opponent 6-3, 7-5 in 1hr 34mins to continue her strong 2022 late-season form where she finished runner-up at the WTA Finals. The second seed's reward is a lastfour clash with Russian world number nine Veroni-

nia's Irina-Camelia Begu. "It was a tough match and she fought until the end and I was really happy I was able to win this match," Sabalenka, who is yet to win a Grand Slam, said. "I think because I'm staying really calm and I feel like I'm at home here, that's why I play really well. "I haven't dropped a set yet. Hopefully I'll keep going like that." Sabalenka broke for 3-2 in the first set and closed the set out on her 15th winner. A double break in the second set

Vondrousova battled back, only to be denied as the Belarusian regrouped to take the match. The Australian Open starts in less than two weeks. Japan's Yoshihito Nishioka was the first of the men into the final four, outlasting Australian Alexei Popyrin 7-6 (7/4), 6-7 (8/10), 6-2 to continue his storming early season form, having already upset world number 11 Holger Rune. It set up a semi-final with American Sebastian Korda, who defeated Italy's

# Djokovic through to Adelaide semi-final

Canada's world number 18 Shapovalov raised his game to draw level at 3-3 in second set but surrendered his serve after a wayward shot and a double fault as Djokovic surged ahead 5-4 before closing out quarter-final clash on serve

DNA

ADELAIDE: Novak Djokovic will face the biggest test of his Australian Open preparations in a blockbuster semi-final with former world number one Daniil Medvedev after the Serbian beat Denis Shapovalov 6-3 6-4 at the Adelaide International 1 today. Djokovic has been well received on his return

to Australia following his deportation on the eve of the Grand Slam last year for not being vaccinated against Covid-19 and the 35-yearold delighted fans by comfortably going up a set and a break. Canada's world number 18 Shapovalov raised his game to draw level at 3-3 in the second set but surrendered his serve after a wayward shot and a double fault as Djokovic surged ahead 5-4 before closing out the quarter-final clash on serve. Top seed Djokovic has won his previous three meetings with Medvedev, who last beat him in the 2021 U.S. Open final. "It'll be another long night. There's not going to be too many short points unless we both serve well," said Djokovic, who is 8-4 overall against the Russian.



"Against him, you have to be ready to go the distance physically and mentally... game-wise, he's one of the best in the last five years. He's established himself... and he's someone I respect a lot. "We've had some amazing battles over the years and hopefully we can have one more." Third seed Medvedev earlier advanced with a 6-3 6-3 win over compatriot Karen Khachanov in their first tour meeting since 2019 to improve his record against him to 3-1.

"I'm happy that I managed to raise my level, especially in the end of both sets and I'm really happy to be in the semis," Medvedev said. Japan's Yoshihito Nishioka knocked out the last remaining Australian in the ATP 250 event as he beat qualifier Alexei Popyrin 7-6(4) 6-7(8) 6-2 to set up a semi-final clash with Sebastian Korda, seeking a first win over the American. Korda faced sixth seed Jannik Sinner after straight-sets wins over Andy Murray and Roberto Bautista Agut and the world number 33 was unstoppable again in his 7-5 6-1 victory over the Italian who struggled with a hip issue. "It was a great match until something started to bother him," Korda said. "So I just wish him all the best for the coming weeks and the Australian Open coming up."

#### **Food prices** push weekly inflation to 30.6pc

From Page 01 The Consumer Price Index (CPI), which had

spiked to a decades-high level of 27.2pc in August and slowed slightly in the following months, rose again to 24.5pc in December. The finance ministry had

forecast inflation would stay high - between 21-23pc during the current fiscal year. Inflation has been driven in part due to the devastating floods last year that destroyed swathes of agricultural land, leading to shortage of some food items. Consequently, the government temporarily removed duties on the import of onions and tomatoes from Iran and Afghanistan in a bid to reduce prices.

#### PM says IMF team will visit Pakistan...

From Page 01 He highlighted that he assured Georgieva the current government wished to fulfil the terms of the agreement the previous government had "broken and shattered".

He said that Pakistan would try its best to fulfil the terms of the IMF agreement but also highlighted the destruction brought by last year's catastrophic floods.

Shehbaz said he told Georgieva that the "economic situation is in front of you, I can't burden the common man any further [...] She assured me that she understands my difficulty".

The premier reiterated that he told the IMF official that Pakistan would try and complete the terms of the agreement.

The premier further said that he asked Georgieva to dispatch a delegation to Pakistan in order to complete the ninth review of the IMF programme. "She told me that an IMF team will arrive in Pakistan in two to three days".

#### Terrorists cannot demoralise..

From Page 01 The premier said that the

federal and provincial institutions should increase cooperation among themselves to deal with the recent wave of terrorism. Shehbaz Sharif also directed the Interior Minister, the Interior Secretary, and the National Coordinator for National Counter Terrorism Authority to evolve a strategy, after consulting the provinces, and submit a detailed report.

He advised the provincial apex committees to hold their meetings regularly and eliminate terrorism from the country through cooperation amongst all the institutions. Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah and the Interior Secretary presented a detailed briefing on the overall security situation in the country.

Inspector Generals and the Chief Secretaries of all the four provinces apprised the meeting about recent incidents of terrorism and measures taken for maintenance of law and order.

The interior minister and IG Islamabad thanked the prime minister for increasing the salaries of the Islamabad Police and ration allowance of FC at par with other forces. The minister said the morale of Islamabad Police was high.

#### Prince Harry reveals he killed 25...

From Page 01

'chess pieces" that had been taken off the board, according to The Telegraph, which said it obtained a copy of Spare in Spanish. Thousands of Taliban and Al-Qaida-associated militants were killed in the war in Afghanistan alongside thousands of civilians.

Prince Harry served in the British army for 10 years, rising to the rank of captain and undertaking two tours of Afghanistan.

# Business / World



Kazakh

official announces

**January 2022** 

protests as coup attempt ISTANBUL: Kazakhstan's

Prosecutor General Berik

Assylov has announced dur-

ing the delivery of a report

to the Kazakh parliament

that the protests which

erupted in the country in January 2022 turned out to

"We can say that the opera-

tion to dismiss the country's

top leadership in conditions

of controlled chaos was

carefully planned. In fact, it

was a coup attempt," Assylov told the lower house of

the parliament, the Majilis,

on Thursday. The chronolo-

gy of the protests was made

and the identities of their

organizers were determined

under an investigation,

Assylov noted, saying the

investigation determined

those responsible to be

among senior government

officials, as well as crime

rings. "The tragedy of Jan-

uary has deeply affected

our country and has been

an important lesson for all

of us. Speaking here is an opportunity to tell a wide

audience what's going on,

He also said that on the

orders of former internal

security chief Karim Mas-

simov, buildings of the Na-

tional Security Committee

were abandoned by the em-

"As a result, no measures

were taken to stop the pro-

tests in time, and the cities

of Almaty and Taldykor-

gan remained in the grip

of fully armed bandits for

two days. 3,000 gun am-

munition fell into their

hands. The whereabouts

of about 2,000 guns is still unknown," he said, adding

that Massimov is on trial

as one of the main organ-

izers of the protests.-APP

ployees in some regions.

Assylov further said.

be a "coup attempt."

### **Briefs**

# **France** suffered record heat in 2022

PARIS: France experienced its hottest average temperature and lowest levels of rainfall on record in 2022, the national weather office said on Friday. The average temperature for the year was 14.5 degrees Celsius (58.1 Fahrenheit), "very far above 2020 which held the previous record" of 14,07 degrees Celsius, Meteo France said in a statement.

The heat was "a symptom of climate change," it added. The country also suffered a "record rainfall deficit" of 25 percent below the long-term average, the lowest since 1989, the weather office added. Like much of western Europe, France experienced a punishing summer of record temperatures and forest fires that led to a renewed focus on climate change. Autumn and winter have also been exceptionally mild, with rain and warm temperatures reducing usually icy ski slopes in the Alps and Pyrenees mountains to muddy expanses. French President Emmanuel Macron faced criticism from some climate scientists this week over his New Year's Eve address to the nation last weekend, in which he suggested the drought and baking temperatures last year were a surprise. Talking about overlapping problems that buffeted the country, he said: "Who could have predicted the wave of inflation sparked thereafter? Or the climate crisis with spectacular effects again this summer in our country?"-DNA

#### Pilot killed as trainee aircraft crashes in India

NEW DELHI: A pilot was killed and a trainee was injured after a private trainee aircraft crashed into a temple in India's central Madhya Pradesh state, a senior police official said on Friday morning. Navneet Bhasin, a senior police official in the state's Rewa district, told Anadolu Agency the incident happened late on Thursday night when the aircraft on a training mission crashed, hitting the dome of the temple. "The injured has been shifted to the hospital for treatment," he said. Bhasin stated that preliminary investigations indicate that bad weather conditions may have been the cause of the crash and that further investigations are underway.—APP

#### Violence hits Mexico cartel stronghold

MEXICO: The sun wasn't yet up in Culiacan when David Téllez and his family began making their way to the city's airport for a return flight to Mexico City after their vacation. But not long after they set out they encountered the first crude roadblock, an abandoned vehicle obstructing their way. Téllez turned to social media to find out what was going on and saw that Sinaloa's state capital, a stronghold of the cartel by the same name, was filled with roadblocks and gunfire.

It would be hours before Mexico's defense secretary would confirm that the military had captured Ovidio Guzmán, a son of the notorious former Sinaloa cartel boss Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán, on Thursday in a pre-dawn operation north of the city. Just like that, Culiacan was thrust into a day of terror unlike any its residents had experienced since October 2019 - the last time authorities tried to capture the young Guzmán. Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador has railed against his predecessors' aggressive efforts to capture drug lords, but his administration bagged the high-profile cartel figure just days before hosting U.S. President Joe Biden, and at least in the short term locals were paying the price. Culiacan residents posted video on social media showing convoys of gunmen in pickup trucks and SUVs rolling down boulevards in the city. At least one convoy included a flatbed truck with a mounted gun in the back, the same kind of vehicle that caused chaos and mayhem in the 2019 unrest.-APP



ISLAMABAD: Inspector General Police Punjab Aamir Zulfiqar Khan ,Islamabad Chamber Senior Vice President Faad Waheed , Vice President Azharul Islam ,ICCI Former President Zafar Bakhtawari and Former Senior Vice Presidents Khalid Chaudhary and Saif ur Rehman are in a group photo.-DNA

# 9 million more people risk being pushed into poverty in Pakistan, warns UNDP

"We estimate that up to around nine million people - additional people - could be pushed into poverty due to the flood impact" Knut Ostby, the UNDP Resident Representative in Pakistan, said in Geneva

**DNA** 

UNITED NATIONS: An additional nine million people risk being pushed into poverty on top of the 33 million affected by last summer's devastating floods in Pakistan, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) said Thursday, ahead of next week's International Conference on Climate Resilient Pakistan in Geneva. "We estimate that up to around nine million people people - could be pushed into poverty due to the flood impact" Knut Ostby. the UNDP Resident Representative in Pakistan, said in Geneva. His remarks were also released at UN Headquarters in New York. Although the Pakistan flooding was

"unprecedented", it could happen to other countries affected by climate change, Ostby warned. He said that crops had been lost from the last harvest and from the missed planting season. "Agricultural prices - food prices - are therefore increasing and could push double the amount of people into food insecurity, increasing that number from seven to 14.6 million," added. Echoing those concerns, Pakistan's Permanent in Geneva, Ambassador Khalil Hashmi, said that some eight million of the 33 million affected by the emergency remain "acutely displaced", as flood waters have still not receded in some areas. Among the most urgent needs today, Ambassador Hashmi listed

ship passage

base Friday to observe drills while rival China protested the

passage of a U.S. Navy destroyer through the Taiwan Strait.

as tensions between the sides showed no sign of abating

in the new year. Beijing claims self-governing Taiwan as

Chinese territory to be brought under its control by force

if necessary, and regularly protests the passage of U.S.

and other foreign warships through the Taiwan Strait, one

of the world's busiest waterways. Tsai's visit to the base in

the central county of Chiayi comes as Taiwan is seeking to

boost its defenses against the rising threat from China. That

includes expanding the domestic shipbuilding and arms in-

dustry, buying more defensive weaponry from the U.S. and

extending the national service requirement for all men from

four months to a full year beginning in 2024. Along with ob-

serving the display by an army mechanized infantry battal-

ion, Tsai visited the air force's Fourth Tactical Fighter Wing,

whose pilots are largely responsible for intercepting Chinese

military aircraft approaching the the midline of the Taiwan

Strait. "I would like to reiterate that the continuous activi-

ties of the People's Liberation Army (around Taiwan) are not

helpful to cross-strait relations nor to the peace and stability

of the region," Tsai said. "As we are facing the expansion of

authoritarianism, we can only but strengthen the country's

combat capabilities and toughness to secure our national se-

curity and interests," said Tsai. Meanwhile, China accused

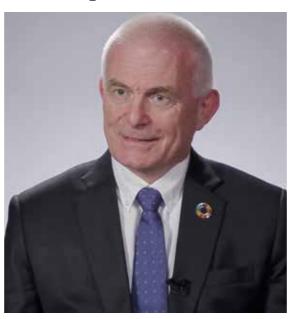
the U.S. of "publicly hyping" the passage Thursday of the Ar-

leigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Chung-Hoon

through the strait, adding that its forces monitored the ship

the entire time. "The Eastern Theater Command of the Chi-

nese People's Liberation Army organized troops to monitor



housing, agriculture and livelihoods. "That's the immediate side of it and that's

said, ahead of the high-level conference on Monday in the Swiss city, where Pakistan Prime Minister the human side of it," he

the event. Concretely, the aim of the conference is to bring together public and private sectors leaders and generate financial and international support to communities impacted by last year's devastating floods in Pakistan, and to rehabilitate and rebuild damaged infrastructure in a climate-resilient manner. Some \$16 billion is needed to help the country's rehabilitation and reconstruction over the long-term. "It's not just a one-year project," said Syed Haider Shah, head of UN division in Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, speaking via Zoom from Islamabad. "The needs have been further classified into four strategic recovery

Shehbaz Sharif and UN

Secretary-General Antonio

Guterres are set to co-host

pacity-building, inclusive reconstruction, gender issues and livelihoods.' More than 1,700 people were killed in the monsoon flooding disaster, UNDP's Ostby said, adding that at least two million homes were destroyed and damaged, along with "13,000 or more kilometres of roads, 3,000 kilometres or more of railway tracks, 439 bridges, 4.4 million acres of agricultural land". Over one million livestock were also lost, the UNDP official said. adding that because there is still standing water in several areas, "many people cannot get back to their regular livelihoods" and therefore remain reliant on humanitarian assistance".

House of Commons Speaker

Lindsay Hoyle expressed sol-

idarity with the flood-affected

objectives: and they deal

with the Government's ca-

#### NATO calls for more military support to Ukraine

BRUSSELS: NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg on Thursday said Ukraine must be strong at the negotiation table to make peace with Russia, and this will be possible with more weapons support to Kyiv. In his speech at the annual conference of the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise in Oslo, Stoltenberg made evaluations about Russia's war on Ukraine that began last February. Pointing out that wars are unpredictable, but most of them end at the negotiation table, Stoltenberg said this war will also most likely end through dialogue. "What the Ukrainians can achieve at the table depends on their strength on the battlefield. If we want a negotiated peace where Ukraine will remain an independent democratic country in Europe, the fastest way to achieve that is to support Ukraine. The way to peace is actually through weapons," he said. Saying that whatever may be the outcome of the war, Stoltenberg argued that the security situation in Europe has changed permanently. Russia wants a different Europe and aims to control its neighbors, he added.-APP

#### Tsai visits base as Pak-UK relations based on shared culture of democracy: NA Speaker China protests US **News Desk** mate justice for Pakistan.

ISLAMABAD :National Assembly (NA) Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf on Friday said Pakistan and the United Kingdom (UK) enjoyed cordial relations based upon a shared culture of democracy and a parliamentary form of government. He expressed these views during his meeting with Speaker of the House of Commons Lindsay Hoyle on the sidelines of the 26th Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of Commonwealth (CSPOC ) in Canberra, Australia. The speaker said these ties could be further strengthened by enhancing parliament-to-parliament contacts. Discussing the innovative initiatives introduced by the parliament of Pakistan, he said it had been at the forefront to guide the nation on the path of progress of development. He informed that it was the first Green Parliament, the first in the region to estab-

on child rights, first to open the doors for those who were real pillars of democracy like women, children, minorities,

mond jubilee celebration. He also said this year parliament of Pakistan also enacted a record number of



# Taliban govt. signs oil extraction deal with China

Xi calls for cooperation with Turkmenistan on natural gas Meanwhile, on Friday, Chinese President Xi Jinping said he wants more cooperation with Turkmenistan on energy, Chinese state television reported

Foreign Desk

the U.S. ship's entire passage.-APP

KABUI: The de-facto Taliban government in Kabul has signed a contract with a Chinese company to extract oil from the Amu Darva basin in the country's northern Sar-e Pul province amid efforts to revive the fledgling economy. The contract was signed on Thursday by the Xinjiang Central Asia Petroleum and Gas Co (CAPEIC), making it the Taliban administration's first major public commodities extraction deal with a foreign company since coming to power in August 2021. "The Amu Darya oil contract is an

important project between China and

Afghanistan," China's ambassador, Wang Yu, told the news conference. Taliban's mining minister, Sheikh Shahabuddin Delawar, said that the condition of the deal was that the oil is processed in Afghanistan. The Chinese company will invest

\$150 million a year in Afghanistan under the contract, the spokesperson for the Taliban-run administration, Zabihullah Mujahid, wrote on Twitter. Its investment would increase to \$540 million in three years for the 25-year contract, he hastened to add, saying the Taliban-run administration will have a 20 percent partnership in the project, which can be increased to 75 percent. The announcement came a

day after the Taliban administration claimed to have killed eight Daesh terrorists during military raids, also including the culprits behind the December attack on a hotel used by Chinese businessmen in the Afghan capital. A Chinese state-owned company is also reportedly in talks over the operation of a copper mine in the east of the country. China has not yet officially recognized the Taliban administration but has a striking interest to be in economic involvement in the region, especially because of its strategic importance to China's ambitious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Xi calls for cooperation with Turkmenistan on natural gas Meanwhile, on Friday,

Chinese President Xi Jinping said he wants more cooperation with Turkmenistan on energy, Chinese state television reported. The comments that were aired on national television during President Serdar Berdymukhamedov's two-day visit to Beijing saw Xi telling Berdymukhamedov that China supports more Chinese firms investing in Turkmenistan. "Natural gas cooperation is the cornerstone of the China-Turkmenistan relationship," Xi was quoted as telling Berdymukhamedov. Being China's single largest supplier of piped natural gas, it has been buying more Turkmen gas.

For the first 11 months of 2022, China's imports of Turkmen gas were

valued at \$9.3 billion, up from \$6.79 billion in the whole of 2021, according to Chinese customs data. China is estimated to have imported 23.03 million tonnes of gas from Turkmenistan in the first 11 months of 2022, according to Rystad Energy, equivalent to more than 50 percent of China's piped gas imports. "Because of the large transmission volume and its abundant gas reserves, it's (Turkmenistan) a very important partner to China on energy imports. Xi and Berdymukhamedov had also discussed energy cooperation when they met last September on the sidelines of a summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Uzbekistan.

#### UK set to introduce new antistrike law

LONDON: The British government is set to introduce a new anti-strike law as the country grapples with a wave of industrial action including from nurses, postal workers and university lecturers amid a bitter costof-living crisis triggered by soaring inflation and a deteriorating economy.

Business Secretary Grant Shapps said in a statement that measures were being introduced to "restore the balance between those seeking to strike and protecting the public from disproportionate disruption."

He said the government has been in talks with the unions about having an honest conversation on pay, conditions and reform.

"Industrial action is disruptive for everyone - from people relying on essential services to get to work or care for their family to hard-working business owners whose sales suffer. It also costs those striking at a time when family budgets are tight," he said.—DNA



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### Briefs

#### **Travel curbs** rack up as **Covid-hit China readies** reopening

AGENCIES

SHANGHAI: More countries around the world are demanding that visitors from China take COVID tests, days before it drops border controls and ushers in an eagerly awaited return to travel for a population that has been largely stuck at home for three years.

From Sunday, China will end the requirement for inbound travellers to quarantine, the latest dismantling of its "zero-COVID" regime that began last month following historic protests against a suffocating series of mass lockdowns. But the abrupt changes have exposed many of China's 1.4 billion population to the virus for the first time, triggering an infection wave that is overwhelming some hospitals emptying pharmacy shelves of medication and causing in ternational alarm.

Greece, Germany and Sweden on Thursday joined more than a dozen countries to demand COVID tests from Chinese travellers, as the World Health Organisation said China's official virus data was under-reporting the true extent of its outbreak.

Chinese officials and state media have struck a defiant tone, defending the handling of the outbreak, playing down the severity of the surge and denouncing foreign travel requirements for its residents. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning warned on Friday of possible reciprocal measures after the European Union recommended pre-departure testing for Chinese passengers. "The EU should listen more to ... rational voices and treat China's epidemic prevention and control objectively and fairly," Mao told a regular media briefing in Beijing.

#### Centre issues dark web advisory to ministries, provinces

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has sent a cybersecurity advisory to ministries and provincial governments to prevent data leaks through the dark web, it emerged on Friday.

The dark web, or darknet, is a part of the internet that lies beyond the reach of search engines. Users are largely anonymous and untraceable and mainly pay with cryptocurrencies like bitcoin. The advisory, titled 'Leakage of Sensitive Data on Dark Web (Advisory No 53), noted that the anonymity offered by the dark web makes it a "gateway to the world of crime" and constitutes 96 per cent of total data available on the internet. "Dark/ deep web is being used by nefarious mindsets, including criminals, terrorists, Hostile Intelligence Agencies (HIAs) and non-state actors," it stated. - APP

# Need for coherent counter terrorism policy stressed

Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed was of the view that there is a need to gain strategic clarity to deal with the menace of terrorism for which National Action Plan should be revisited considering challenging geo-strategic environment

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Senate Defence Committee briefed on Pakistan-Afghanistan Border Situation amid increase in cross border attacks and remedial measures undertaken to ensure peace and security throughout the country, Senator Mushahid Hussain says that there is need to develop coherent counter terrorism policy with NACTA in the lead role.

Senate Defence Committee presided by Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, received a comprehensive briefing on the Pakistan-Afghanistan Border situation and deteriorating internal security situation in the Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with specific reference to the recent attack, capture and hostage situation at

Bannu Cantonment. Secretary, Minty to deal with the menace of terrorism istry of Defence, Lt Gen (Retd) for which National Action Plan should Hamood Uz Zaman Khan, HI (M) be revisited considering challengassured the committee members ing geo-strategic environment. The that Security Forces are adept Chair further emphasized for a and well equipped to counter any coherent counter terrorism policy with NACTA in the lead role, efsecurity threat. He apprized that peaceful and stable Afghanistan fective intelligence sharing mechis in the best interest of Pakistan anism among different security and engagement with the Afghan side on security and border management is a con-Afghanistan. tinuous process. Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed was of the view that there is a

agencies and enhanced border management between Pakistan and Committee expressed resolve that people of Pakistan stand by the valiant

armed forces in such testing

times and appreciated Pakistan Army's successes in the fight against terrorism and continued efforts for bringing peace and stability in the region. The Defence Committee also appreciated the role and sacrifices of the police, the CTD and other law enforcement agencies in combating terrorism. The Committee offered Fateh for Shuhada martyred in various terror related incidents in the recent past.

The meeting was attended by Committee members, Senator Anwar ul Haq Kakar, Senator Umar Farooq, Senator Palwasha Muhammadzai Khan, Senator Dr. Zarqa Suharwardy Taimur, Senator Hidayatullah, Leader of the Opposition in Senate, Dr Shahzad Waseem, Secretary Defence Lt Gen (Retd) Hamood Uz Zaman Khan HI (M) and Secretary Committee, Major ® Syed Hasnain Haider.

#### Karachi LG polls will not be delayed at any cost: CEC

DNA

KARACHI: The Election Commission of Pakistan on Friday reserved the verdict on the MQM petition challenging the voters' lists to be used during the forthcoming local government elections in Karachi.

The MQM has raised objections to the voters' lists under which the local government elections in Karachi would be held. During the hearing, Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja remarked that the commission would not let the Karachi LG polls to be delayed. The MQM lawyer said that the use of old voters' lists during the forthcoming local government elections in Karachi was against the law. The CEC remarked that the MQM used to move to the courts in the past against the delimitations of constituencies.



need to gain

strategic clari-

ISLAMABAD: Secretary Senate, Muhammad Qasim Samad Khan exchanging views with Ambassador of Germany, Alfred Grannas. - DNA

#### Deaths spike as Denmark battles 'triple epidemic'

DENMARK: Around 1,400 people died in Denmark during the last week of 2022, at least 30% higher than estimates, according to the country's infectious diseases agency. The State Serum Institute (SSI) said the ongoing "triple epidemic" - flu, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), and COVID-19 - was possibly the biggest factor, having particularly impacted Denmark's elderly population.

"It's a steeper curve than we usually see, and it surprises us a little bit. We usually see a higher mortality in the winter months, but the figures show that right now there is higher mortality than there usually is at this time of year," Lasse Vestergaard of the SSI said in a

statement on Thursday. While December's last week also saw more hospitalizations for flu, the increase was not as high as previous weeks, the SSI reported, but warned that flu cases are likely to increase in the coming weeks.

At the same time, there was a decline in RSV cases and hospitalizations, but the "level is still high compared to the seasons that preceded COVID-19," the health agency said. From 157 in the previous week, the number of COV-ID-19 infections decreased to 115 per 100,000 people, with a drop recorded in all regions and age groups, except infants, according to the SSI. - APP

### 'destabilisation' bid by officers

N'DJAMENA: The government in Chad has said that it had foiled an "attempted destabilisation" plot by army officers and a prominent human rights activist. A group of 11 officers, led by Baradine Berdei Targuio, president of the Chadian Organisation of Human Rights, were behind the attempt, according to a gov-

ernment statement. The security services arrested those responsible some time after December 8, the statement added. A formal investigation had been opened for "violation of the constitutional order, criminal association, illegal possession of a firearm and complicity", said Communications Minister and government spokesman Aziz Mahamat Saleh.

The investigating magistrate leading the case has charged them and ordered their detention, he added. "The investigation is following its course and the government means to do everything to shed light on this affair and to determine responsibility," Saleh said. Targuio was sentenced in February 2021 to three years in jail on charges of undermining the constitutional order for having written that Chad's then leader, General Idriss Deby Itno, was seriously ill.

Deby, who died in April 2022, has been replaced by his son, General Mahamat Idriss Deby Itno. Outlawed demonstrations were held on October 20 to mark the date when the military junta had initially promised to cede power - a deadline that has now been extended by two years. - APP

## **World food prices hit** record high in 2022

PARIS: World food prices fell for a ninth month in a row in December but hit their highest level on record for the full year in 2022, UN data showed Friday. Food prices soared to a monthly record high in March after Russia invaded agricultural powerhouse Ukraine, a major supplier of wheat and cooking oil to the world. But prices have dropped since then, with more relief brought by a deal brokered by Turkey and the United Nations in July that lifted a Russian naval blockade on Ukrainian grain exports. The Food and Agriculture Organization said Friday its price index, which tracks the monthly change in international prices of a basket of food commodities, fell to 132.4 points in December, a 1.9 percent drop from November. It was also one percent lower than in December 2021. But the index was 14.3 percent higher overall in 2022 compared to the previous year as it reached an all-time high of 143.7 points. "Calmer food commodity prices are welcome after two very volatile years," FAO chief economist Maximo Torero said in a statement.

"It is important to remain vigilant and keep a strong focus on mitigating global food insecurity given that world food prices remain at elevated levels," he said. Torero said many staples are near record highs, with prices of rice rising and "still many risks associated with future supplies". World prices of maize were 24.8 percent higher on average in 2022 than in 2021, according to the FAO. Wheat was 15.6 percent more expensive. But maize prices fell in December, mostly due to "strong competition" from Brazil, the FAO said. Wheat was also down for the month "as ongoing harvests in the southern hemisphere boosted supplies and competition among exporters remained strong". - Agencies

# Chad says it foiled Huge anti-terrorism rally held in South Waziristan's Wana

out to raise voice against rising cases of terrorism and banned outfit Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in Wana, the largest town of South Waziristan district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). Videos posted on social media shows thousands of people took to the streets carrying pro-peace banners and placards with their major demand

gion. People can be heard raising slogans for establishing peace. Pakistan has witnessed surge in terrorism cases, particularly in KP and Balochistan, after the TTP announced withdrawal from ceasefire agreement in November last. Reports said the banned outfit was responsible for around 100 attacked carried out in 2022.

In December last, security officials in Islamabad managed to foil a major terror bid when a suicide bomber had to blew himself up in a tax when he was intercepted for checking on the way to meet his handler. The huge gathering of people in the for-

mer tribal district recalled a historic rally carried out by people of Swat against terrorism after a van of school children was attacked by militants. Leaders of PPP. PTM. PML-N and AWP also joined the pro-peace rally in Wana. In their addresses, they demanded the government to establish writ of state, asserting that terrorism was not acceptable at any cost. Saying attacks of security forces have increased, the speakers highlighted that common citizens wer also unsafe as they are facing threats of extortion and kidnapping. –  $\boldsymbol{DNA}$ 

## Standoff over US speaker grinds on as McCarthy opponents unbowed

McCarthy, who was backed by former President Donald Trump for the post, offered the holdouts a range of concessions that would weaken the speaker's role, which political allies warned would make the job even harder if he got it

WASHINGTON: Republican Kevin McCarthy's perilous quest to become speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives entered the fourth day on Friday, with a scale of congressional dysfunction not seen since before the U.S. Civil War. The House was scheduled to reconvene at noon (1700 GMT), as lawmakers negotiated behind closed doors on a possible deal that McCarthy's supporters hoped could break the logjam and finally allow him to succeed after 11 failed floor votes since Tuesday. "We've got some progress going on. We've got members talking. I think we've got a little movement, so we'll see," McCarthy told reporters. This week's 11 failed votes marked the highest number of ballots for the speakership since 1859. But McCarthy rejected a suggestion it meant he would be a weak leader if he succeeded. "Apparently, I like to make history," he joked.

The California Republican faces a party rift between an overwhelming majority of House Republicans who support him and 20 hardline conservatives who continue to oppose him, even after McCarthy offered to curb his own clout. The speaker's gavel would give McCarthy the authority to block President Joe Biden's legislative agenda, force votes for Republican priorities on economy, energy and immigration, and move forward with investigations of Biden and his administration. But the holdouts want a deal that would make it easier to oust the speaker and give them greater influence within the House Republican caucus and on congressional committees. Some of his opponents also say they don't trust him to mount the political brinkmanship necessary to contain the federal debt and impose spending cuts on Biden and the Democratic-controlled Senate. Late on Wednesday, some Republicans held out hope of a deal on the direction of the party caucus that could persuade at least some of his opponents to yield. "I think that's coming together well," said Representative Patrick McHenry, a Mc-Carthy supporter who is poised to lead a top congressional committee. McCarthy, who was backed by former President Donald Trump for the post, offered the holdouts a range of concessions that would weaken the speaker's role, which political allies warned would make the job even harder if he got it. A possible agreement could also allow for a vote on term limits for members of Congress. But it was not clear how many holdouts would be

persuaded. Some Republicans believed the agreement under discussion might give McCarthy as many as 10 additional votes. Because of its inability to choose a leader, the 435-seat House has been rendered impotent - unable even to formally swear in newly elected members let alone hold hearings, consider legislation or scrutinize Biden and his administration. Republicans won a slim 222-212 House majority in the November midterm elections, meaning McCarthy cannot afford to lose the support of more than four Republicans as Democrats united around their own candidate. Some of McCarthy's opponents showed no sign of yielding. - DNA

