



# Daily Islamabad POST

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**Extremist movements  
are biggest threat to  
world democracy**

Detailed News On Page-07

**Mushahid Sayed  
condemns G20  
moot in IIOJK**

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**Wales' greatest  
Gareth Bale  
bids farewell**

Detailed News On Page-06

## Briefs

### FM thanks global community

DNA

GENEVA: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has expressed gratitude to the entire international community, including the UN Secretary General, for standing with Pakistan in efforts to rebuild and rehabilitate the flood affected areas. In a video statement, the Foreign Minister said we have received pledges amounting to more than 9 billion dollars from the world at the International Conference on Climate Resilient Pakistan.

**Geneva  
Conference  
a big success**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb has termed Geneva conference a big success for Pakistan and the flood victims. In a statement on Tuesday, she said the conference is a recognition at the international level of the coalition government's collective efforts. She said the pledges made at the moot will be utilized transparently to bring change in the lives of the people. She said provision of resources will help the flood victims start a new and better life. The Information Minister thanked the global and national media for effectively highlighting the cause of humanity and climate change. Marriyum Aurangzeb said Geneva conference made the world aware of the serious effects of climate change.

**'Sharifs  
never did any  
pure work'**

### BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Chaudhry Parvez Elahi called Nawaz Sharif and Shehbaz Sharif skillful in misfeasance and said they had not done any productive work for Pakistan while saying dishonest rulers bring bad luck for the country. Talking to the media after laying the foundation stone of the Samanabab Underpass on Tuesday, he said that there is no blessing in this task if the rulers are corrupt.

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## PML-N claims required numbers Shebaz Sharif son meets Jehangir Tareen to seek his support

### BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Atta Tarar, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister, on Tuesday claimed that their numbers in the Punjab Assembly had been completed. Speaking to the media, Atta Tarar said their 177 members were present in the assembly on Monday while the number of the Punjab government members was 140. "I am telling the numbers after a complete work and I am confident that our numbers will be complete while Parvez Elahi's numbers will not be complete as women candidates have also been saying they do not want to vote for Parvez Elahi," he said.

Mr Tarar further said Parvez Elahi was reluctant to take the vote of confidence and the government had run away along with Moonis Elahi. Sooner or later, the vote of confidence would have to be taken since a hollow person was sitting on the chair of the chief minister. He further claimed that the federal ministers could not enter the Punjab Assembly. "The Punjab Assembly is not the district council of Gujarat and will not be allowed to be so.

Continued on Page 06

### PTI accuses PDM of 'horse-trading'

### DNA

LAHORE: Former information minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Fawad Chaudhry has accused Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) of 'horse-trading' ahead of the Punjab Chief Minister (CM) Pervaiz Elahi's vote of confidence. Talking to journalists in Lahore, the former federal minister said that Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) offered Rs1.20 billion to five MPAs to switch loyalties ahead of the Pervaiz Elahi's vote of confidence. Fawad Chaudhry claimed rumours are circulating that PTI MPA Momina Waheed has received Rs50 million to vote against Punjab CM Pervaiz Elahi. Speaking of the numbers game, Fawad said that they have 188 lawmakers in Punjab Assembly today.

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India's mindset is to limit us, says Ramiz Raja – Page 06

EU, NATO sign joint call for co-op amid Russian threat – Page 07

Russia throws forces into assault on Ukraine's Soledar – Page 08

## MBS directs to enhance investment to US\$10 billion

KSA agrees to deposit \$ 2 billion more in the State Bank

### NEWS DESK / DNA

RIYADH: In a crucial financial relief for Pakistan, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has hinted at increasing its investment in the country to \$10 billion. It has also suggested to deposit \$2 billion more in country's central bank in order to shore up its foreign reserves. Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has directed to study increasing the Kingdom's investments in Pakistan to reach \$10 billion. According to an announcement made by Saudi Press Agency (SPA) on Tuesday, the Saudi crown prince also directed to assess steps to increase deposits in the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) to US\$5 billion. The announcement came a day after the Saudi crown prince's meeting with Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir. The investments in Pakistan were previously announced in August. The Saudi deposit to the central bank was extended in December.



Continued on Page 06

## PM to visit UAE on Thursday

### MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif will undertake a two-day official visit to the United Arab Emirates on January 12-13. The prime minister will visit UAE on the invitation of President of the United Arab Emirates Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Foreign Office spokesperson said in a press release on Tuesday. The prime minister will be accompanied by a high-level delegation, including key members of the cabinet. This would be the prime minister's third visit to the UAE after assuming office. During the visit, prime minister will meet the UAE president with particular focus on advancing economic,

Continued on Page 06

*Daily*

# Pak achieves historic success by receiving pledges

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Faisal Karim Kundi Tuesday said that Pakistan had achieved historic success in the Geneva Conference by receiving pledges worth Rs 9.7 billion dollars. "This was the result of effective diplomatic efforts of the Foreign Minister, Bilawal Bhutto who in a very short span of time visited various countries and sensitized the international community about the post flood situation being faced by Pakistan," he said during a presser. Flanked by Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Media Coordinator, Nazir Dhoki during the news conference, the SAPM said the total pledges of 9.7 billion dollars included 9.04 billion dollars, 570.50 million Euros and 36 million pounds which is approximately PKR 2204 billion.

Faisal Kundi said that the funds acquired through pledges would be spent on the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the flood affected areas and people across the country. The way Bilawal Bhutto fought the case of Pakistan at international forums by visiting different countries and inviting United Nation Secretary General to Pakistan for creating awareness and sense of sympathy about the flood damages which reflected his diplomatic wisdom, he said. He said that still water had not receded from many of the flood affected parts of the country including Sindh, Balochistan, South Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and South Punjab. "The country needs serious efforts and financial help for the complete rehabilitation of infrastructure and agriculture sector of the country", he added. Criticizing the Pakistani Tehreek-i-Insaf propaganda against Bilawal Bhutto visits, Faisal Kundi said that all the political parties should support the efforts of foreign minister for this national cause keeping aside the political differences. He also criticized PTI for ruining diplomatic relations with the foreign countries and said that the incumbent government was eager to rebuild ties with the friendly countries including Saudi Arabia, Turkey, China, UAE and others who have extended their support in difficult times. Talking about the climate change repercussions being faced by Pakistan and other countries, Faisal Kundi emphasized on engaging national and international community to fight the challenge of climate change which was caused by various reasons including illegal deforestation. About the Benazir Kafalat disbursements under the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP), he said the first tranche of Rs 55 billion had been released to the designated banks and retailers for around 7.7 million families. While a separate amount of Rs 12 billion is being released for the children of Benazir Kafalat beneficiaries under Benazir Education Stipend. These stipends were being disbursed without any deduction and if a person demands any kind of deduction or fee for payment, the beneficiaries should immediately report to BISP, he said and assured that zero tolerance policy would be adopted in case of any illegal deduction by any means. Faisal Kundi said that the BISP was closely working with National Database Registration Authority (NADRA) to re-include the Benazir Kafalat beneficiaries who were exited without any verification during the PTI tenure. He said that the preparation for the launch of BISP dynamic survey had been finalized and would be inaugurated by the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Foreign minister, Bilawal Bhutto soon. The flood hit people having less poverty score will also be included in the BISP through resurvey, he said. Talking about the recent wheat crisis in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Kundi criticized PTI Chairman for not playing any role in resolving the crisis. He said that Imran Khan was hiding in the Zaman Park and not asking chief ministers of his own governed provinces of Punjab and KP to redress the wheat crisis which he termed as criminal negligence. To a question, Faisal Kundi said that Imran Khan should be made accountable for the public amount of Rs 15 billion which were collected for flood relief activities through telethon. Responding to another question, he said 70 billion rupees had been disbursed among the flood hit families through adopting a transparent procedure.

## Zong 4G places seed pouches at Customer Care centers

ISLAMABAD: As a part of Zong 4G's ongoing efforts to battle the effects of climate change and create a 'Green and Low Carbon Pakistan,' their CSR team has initiated their Seed Pouch campaign. Zong 4G will be sending more than 10,000 Seed Pouches to CSCs all across the country.

Zong 4G will be placing Seed Pouches comprising of fruit, vegetable as well as flowering seeds in their CSCs (Customer Service Centers) for walk-in customers. These seeds can be easily planted and don't require much upkeep, therefore, making this an effective method to promote tree plantation and increase the number trees planted in the country. "Creating a sustainable environment is one of the core focus areas of our CSR strategy and our Seed Pouches Campaign is an innovative way to do that," said Zong 4G's official spokesperson. These fun and creatively designed pouches will directly contribute to the efforts to create a better environment for a better tomorrow. The execution will be actively addressing Climate Change and contributing towards the SDGs on a national scale. The main focus will be in the following cities; Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Quetta and Peshawar. The monumental effect of this activity alone is a great example of how Zong 4G believes in involving all stakeholders to make a difference and bring about a positive change.

Zong 4G is aware of the ongoing Climate Change challenges faced by our country. Therefore, their fight against environmental concerns will continue with multiple projects lined up for the future.—DNA

## Secretary Health KP inaugurates mobile lab at KMU

PESHAWAR: The Secretary of Health Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Aamir Sultan Tareen on Tuesday said that he will talk to the federal government to make the Liver Transplant Institute being built in Khyber Medical University (KMU) Peshawar functional as soon as possible. The outstanding services rendered by KMU in the field of clinical and basic medical sciences as well as public health during the last few years are commendable. He expressed these views while addressing the inauguration ceremony of KMU Mobile Laboratory here Tuesday. He visited the Liver Transplant Institute and witnessed the signing of Memorandum of Understanding between KMU and Faisalabad Medical University for adopting of MBBS modular

curriculum and completion of four-year degrees under the Higher Education Commission scholarships scheme for Afghan students. Afghan Consul General at Peshawar Hafiz Mohibullah, Vice Chancellor Faisalabad Medical University Prof. Dr. Zafar Ali Chaudhry, VC KMU Prof. Dr. Zia ul Haq, Principal Punjab Medical College Faisalabad Muhammad Faisal Bilal Lodhi, Registrar KMU Prof. Dr. Muhammad Saleem Gandapur, Pro vice chancellor Prof. Dr. Lal Muhammad Khattak, Dean PGMI Sahibzada Mahmud Noor, and Director KMU-IHPE Dr. Baraikhana Jameel, Heads of different institutions, faculty and a large number of students were also present at the occasion. Aamir Sultan Tareen said that KMU has proved with its outstanding perfor-

mance that it is not just a degree-granting institution, but a center for knowledge and research as well as tackling the serious health challenges faced by society. He said that the KMU mobile lab will open new avenues to deal with any possible pandemics and outbreaks in remote areas and help the health department in this regard. He thanked USAID for donating the mobile lab to KMU and hoped that this lab would help the people in the remote and backward areas of the province in the timely diagnosis and treatment of various diseases. He said that it is a matter of honor not only for KMU but for the entire province that the MBBS modular curriculum designed by KMU is being provided to Faisalabad Medical University after Bolan Medical University.—APP



KARACHI: Council General of Iran in Karachi Hassan Norian gave invitation to Syeda Shehla Raza to attend "The First International Influential Women Congress in Tehran." —DNA

## PAC demands strict compliance of audit paras from Railway division

ISLAMABAD: The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) on Tuesday demanded from the Ministry of Railways to ensure strict compliance with audit paras for a transparent probe into irregularities highlighted in the detailed report and help secure precious national exchequer funds in various projects of the Ministry. The meeting was chaired by PAC chairman Noor Alam Khan who directed the representatives of the Ministry of Railways to make the institution a profitable entity. Pointing out an issue of misappropriation and misuse of power by a Railways official, MNA Noor Alam Khan told the Secretary Railways that the Deputy Director of Property and Land of Rail-

ways in Peshawar harassed a businessman for giving him bribes. He directed the authorities concerned to conduct an inquiry against the said officer by taking stern disciplinary action to set a precedent for others. He also requested all PAC members and conveners to recommend blacklisting of the Akeel Karim Dhedhi Securities Private Limited (AKD) company for its poor performance, and outstanding lease dues for the Pakistan Railways' land of 10,207 square kilometers in Karachi. He also directed to send the issue directly to National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and Federal Investigation Agency (FIA). The Committee recommended that the briefing on

para no. 2.5.65 brief should be given by the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), Auditor General of Pakistan, Pakistan Railways and Finance Division to resolve this issue within 15 days.

"The responsibility should be fixed after inquiry on officials concerned and the lease shall stand canceled from today and it should be vacated by force in Akeel Dhedhi case and Auditor General office should be part of this process," the chair noted. MNA Sheikh Rohale Asghar pointed out that the General Manager of the Railways department was hanging up telephone calls of the Committee members and lacked the courtesy to respond. The PAC chairman urged all the secretaries that they were

civil servants and bound to respond to the parliamentarians' telephone calls, saying that the parliamentarians were representatives of the public. Noor Alam Khan apprised the committee that he had sent a letter on the above matter of misappropriation by the Railways official in Peshawar on Dec 26, 2022, but the Secretary did not reply to it. "People will prefer to commute on trains if the Railways department provided them proper basic facilities," he said. Deputy Auditor General said the Railways have not collected the tax liable deposited in FBR from various contractors while the FBR tax authorities can elaborate on the matter. The chairman Kashif Noor apprised the committee that the land inquiry is underway and apparently it was given for welfare purposes.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Faisal Karim Kundi, Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation & Social Safety addressing a Press conference at PID. —APP

## KP governor commands AKF services

PESHAWAR: KP Governor Haji Chulam Ali has commanded the services of Al-Khidmat Foundation (AKF) and said that his affiliation with the organization is spread over decades. He was talking to a delegation of AKF, which called on him under the leadership of its KP chapter president, Khalid Waqas, the other day, said a press release issued here on Tuesday. Other members of the delegation were Mohammad Shakir Siddiqui, Professor Dr Abdul Malik, Hafiz Hameedullah, Fida Mohammad, Dr Adil Mohammad, Mohammad Adnan Raz and Manager Media Noorul Wahid Jadoon. The delegation congratulated Haji Ghulam Ali on assuming the office of the Governor and also briefed him regarding the ongoing welfare projects of the AKF. —APP

## PSX becomes signatory of WEPs

KARACHI: In a positive move forward signifying Pakistan Stock Exchange's (PSX) efforts to promote increased women participation, gender equality and adopting gender-responsive policies, PSX has become a signatory of Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs). WEPs, the founding partners of which are UN Women and UN Global Compact, are a set of Principles aimed at advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in the workplace, marketplace and community. WEPs provide guidelines for corporates to deliver on gender equality standards of the 2030 agenda and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). —DNA

## Afghan Transit Trade PAJCCI expresses concern over excessive documentation in clearance

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: Director Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI), Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi has expressed concern over excessive documentation and demand of irrelevant documents at Karachi port causing delay in clearance of containers imported under Afghan Transit Trade facility. Leading Afghan traders including Khan Jan Alkozey who is also Co-Chairman of PAJCCI, Youna Mohmand, President Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry and government representatives recently held a press conference in Kabul to raise this issue that is affecting the business, he added.

The Afghan businessmen, Zia continued, said they are not facing such kind of hindrance while importing goods from other countries. He demanded of the quarters concerned to take no-

tice of this practice which is not only causing delay in clearance of goods, but is negatively affecting revenue generation due to shifting of business to ports of other countries. Zia said thousands of people are associated with Pak-Afghan Transit trade from landing of imported goods in Karachi to its transportation from sea port to Afghanistan and if the business is shifted to other countries it would render hundred of thousands of people job less. In the prevailing circumstances of global economic recession, it is need of the hour that our concerned departments should chalk out policies with focus on providing ease of doing business to promote commerce and trade and create livelihood for people, he stressed.

## Prof Fateh Malik for promoting Ibn-e-Insha work

ISLAMABAD: Noted literary person, Professor Fateh Muhammad Malik on Tuesday urged to further promote the works and ideas of Ibn-e-Insha in order to create awareness about his great literary contributions for Urdu Literature. In an exclusive chat with APP, about one of the most celebrated Urdu Poet and author Ibn-e-Insha in connection with his 45th death anniversary to be marked on January 11 (Wednesday), Prof. Fateh said that Ibne-

Insha was a multi-dimension literary figure who with his unique style and command over expression will continue to impact the literature lovers in the times to come. The scholar emphasized that the present share of Insha's works and contributions in national curriculum was limited whereas adding more from his literary contributions into the cur-

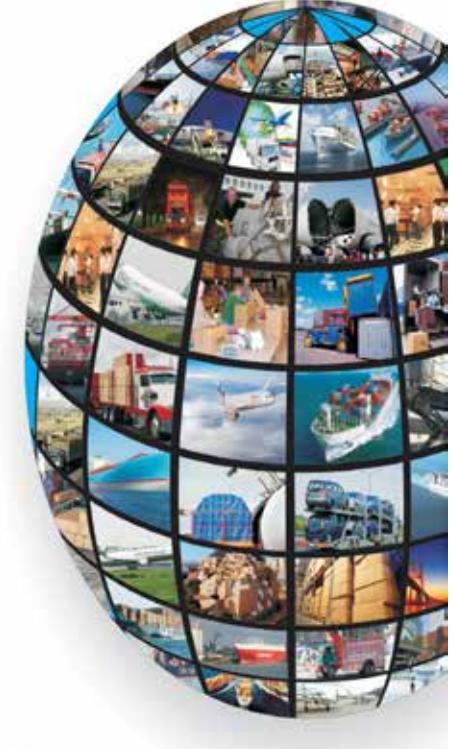
**Nominal change**  
I have changed my name from Mushaim Abbas to Muhammad Mustafa Abbas.  
FBISE K SSC New Registration No. 2424340381 for 2022 record to be corrected.  
Muhammad Mustafa Abbas son of Madah Abbas POF School Campus 4 Gadwal Wah Cantt.

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## National Days and Armed Forces Days

### JANUARY

- Jan 01 / CUBA Revolution Day
- Jan 01 / Palestine Palestine Revolution Day
- Jan 01 / Sudan National Day
- Jan 04 / Myanmar Independence Day
- Jan 06 / Iraq Armed Forces Day
- Jan 12 / Tanzania Armed Forces Day
- Jan 14 / Uzbekistan 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  
Monal.....0334-5421092



### Airlines

TurkishAirlines.....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



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WASA Rawalpindi..5555489  
CAA.....9281092



### Hospitals

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



### Departments

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

### Islamabad Metropolitan

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

### Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480



ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority Chairman Captain (Retd) Muhammad Usman Younis inaugurates the rainwater rechargeable well. — DNA

## UNICEF to continue restoring health facilities

As families begin to return to their villages, our response has moved with them and our mobile health, nutrition, and water teams continue to respond to an immediate lifesaving need," said Abdullah Fadil, UNICEF Representative in Pakistan

### AGENCIES

ISLAMABAD: United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) will continue to respond to urgent humanitarian needs in flood-affected areas, restoring and rehabilitating existing health, water, sanitation, and education facilities for families returning home in the months ahead.

"As families begin to return to their villages, our response has moved with them and our mobile health, nutrition, and water teams continue to respond to an immediate lifesaving need," said Abdullah Fadil, UNICEF Representative in Pakistan. He said, "We will continue to help restore and rehabilitate existing health, water, sanitation, and education facilities, supporting

the government's efforts in climate-resilient recovery and reconstruction. We know the climate crisis played a central role in supercharging the cascading calamities evident in Pakistan." He said, "We must do everything within our power to ensure girls and boys in Pakistan are able to fully recover from the current disaster and to protect and safeguard them from the next one."

Acute respiratory infections among children, a leading cause of child mortality worldwide, have skyrocketed in flood-stricken areas. In addition, the number of cases of children identified as suffering from severe acute malnutrition in flood-affected areas monitored by UNICEF, nearly doubled between July and December as compared to 2021 as an estimated 1.5 million children are still in need of lifesaving nutrition interventions. Nearly

10 million girls and boys are still in need of immediate, lifesaving support and are heading into a bitter winter without adequate shelter. Severe acute malnutrition, respiratory and waterborne diseases coupled with the cold are putting millions of young lives at risk," Abdullah Fadil added.

UNICEF and partners have started providing items such as warm clothing kits, jackets, blankets, and quilts, aiming to reach nearly 200,000 children, women, and men. In response to the worsening child survival crisis, more than 800,000 children have been screened for malnutrition, 60,000 were identified as suffering from Severely Acute Malnutrition - a life-threatening condition where children are too thin for their height - and referred for treatment with Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF).

UNICEF health interventions have reached nearly 1.5 million people with primary health care services so far, and 4.5 million children have been immunized against Polio in 16 flood-hit districts. UNICEF and partners have also provided more than one million people with access to safe drinking water, and one million with hygiene kits. UNICEF Pakistan has permanent field offices in all four provinces and has established four hubs to bring UNICEF operations and programmes closer to the hardest hit areas. "We have been working with the government of Pakistan, UN agencies, and NGO partners to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable populations in 55 calamity-affected districts, both for displaced populations and those returning to the location of their destroyed villages.

## Argentinian ambassador calls on the minister for IPC



### DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Argentinian Ambassador to Pakistan HE, Mr. Leopoldo Francisco Sahores, called on the Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC) Ehsan ur Rehman Mazari in Islamabad. Federal Minister greeted and congratulated the ambassador on Argentina's victory in the Football World Cup. Federal Minister said that there is a great scope of cooperation between the

two countries in the fields of Sports, especially football, polo, squash and mountaineering. He added that Pakistan is home to a larger number of youth population, and it would be a great investment in developing the skills of youth in the field of sports. The Minister expressed his desire that Pakistan can learn from invaluable Argentinian experience and expertise in the coaching and training of football. The Federal Minister for IPC also discussed

about the possibility of football coaching and training for Pakistan female football players; the Ambassador told that he had a detailed discussion in this regard with SAPM on Youth Affairs Pakistan and lots of matters relating to bilateral cooperation focusing specifically the youth were discussed. HE expressed his desire that Argentinian government wants a long term engagement with Pakistan especially in the field of Sports. He also talked about

the potential visit of Argentinian female football players to Pakistan early this year, to train and coach female football players in Pakistan. He further said that Pakistan female football players from Quetta have a great talent for the sport. It was mutually proposed that both the countries can work together on exchange of sports specialists for the development of bilateral relations and also fight together against the menace of doping among the players.

## HEC invites research proposals from faculty members

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has invited research proposals from faculty members, under the RAPID Technology Transfer Grant (RTTG) programme. The official sources told APP that HEC, in that regard, had invited faculty members of public and private sector universities/degree awarding institutions (DAIs) to submit research proposals focused on the transfer of university developed technologies and products to the industry and commercial sector. The RTTG is a key element of the Higher Education Development in Pakistan (HEDP) project supported by the World Bank and implemented by the HEC. It is a fast-track funding mechanism dealing with themes, topics, and issues of severe urgency for quick-response research on Flood Response, Climate Change and Environment. The grant is anticipated to support proposals in applied research, product innovation, and commercialization of developed technological research and solutions. The RTTG will provide funds to selected institutions based on a competitive, peer-reviewed evaluation of proposals. The amount of funding for RTTG awards may range between PKR 10 - 20 million with a maximum project duration of six months. Sharing the details of applicant eligibility, the sources stated that Lead Principal Investigators (PIs) must be a regular faculty member of higher education institutions (public and private), or hold a contract equivalent to the length of the project duration. The priority sectors for RTTG support are Flood Response, Climate Change and Environment, including but not limited to climate mitigation, adaptation, policy dialogue interventions and disaster management (focusing on climate modelling and disaster surveillance, environment monitoring, and geological monitoring), Metro-scale pollution reduction technologies, protection of available trees through artificial intelligence system controls, and use of membrane systems for gaseous and water industrial waste treatment. The other sectors, including design and development of hybrid membranes and classical system per the requirement of site and location, identification and development of hospital waste treatment processes, removal of arsenic/other toxic metal elements from industrial effluents and water underground aquifers, Climate Change and Environment. — APP

## Chairman CDA inaugurates rechargeable well at H-8/2

### DNA

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority Chairman Captain (Retd) Muhammad Usman Younis on Tuesday inaugurated the rainwater rechargeable well constructed in PMD Sector H-8/2. On this occasion, DG Water Management and other officers were also with him.

Chairman Capital Development Authority Captain (retired) Muhammad Usman Yunus was told that 100 recharge wells have been constructed at different places in the city. In which 60 rechargeable wells have been completed while work on 40 rechargeable wells is going on rapidly and soon all these rechargeable wells will be completed.

Chairman CDA was further informed that more than one million gallons of rain water has been saved from these recharge wells. These wells are built in a place where water used to stand for 12 to 14 hours due to rains, which was lost by flowing into the rivers. These water rechargeable wells also have a special filtration system that keeps the water clean from polluted elements. The depth of these wells is about 150 to 160 feet. This water gets absorbed into the underground layer which helps in raising the underground water level. The Chairman Capital Development Authority was further informed that flow meters and other devices have been installed at the rechargeable wells which help in monitoring the amount of groundwater and the amount of water absorbed into the ground. The Chairman Capital Development Authority was further informed that it has been observed that even a little rain increases the level of underground water.

## No early elections: Javed Latif

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Mian Javed Latif of Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Tuesday said that the government would complete its constitutional term and amendments for electoral reforms would be made before the election to maintain transparency. While talking to a private news channel, he said the coalition government was ready to talk about early elections, but the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) should come to parliament and work out a framework for the transparency of elections. PML-N leader alleged PTI leaders of having "double standards," as they were receiving remuneration and using the facilities of parliament houses while also playing politics in the name of resignations. — APP

## SMEDA to organize training on tax management

ISLAMABAD: The Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) is going to organize a one-day training programme on "Tax Management and E-Filing for SMEs" for profitable business growth on January 17. 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 an official source.

The training programme aims to equip participants with emerging concepts, proven skills and knowledge on the subject that will help SMEs to establish and strengthen their organization systems to achieve future profitable growth. The training will provide information about income and sale tax law, income tax management, sale tax management and income and sale tax e filing. Female participants are strongly encouraged to apply. The training session will be attended by small business owners and their relevant staff, existing and emerging entrepreneurs. — APP

## Senator Nuzhat Sadiq appointed Rapporteur



ISLAMABAD: The 13th plenary session of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA) has gotten underway in the Türkiye city of Antalya. A Parliamentary delegation of Pakistan is participating in the prestigious event, comprising members from both National Assembly and Senate, said a message received here on Tuesday. Earlier, in a related move, Senator Nuzhat Sadiq, who is leading the Pakistan delegation, earned another laurel for the country when she was appointed unopposed as the Rapporteur for the 13th APA plenary. On the sidelines, the Pakistan delegation undertook extensive parliamentary diplomacy, holding meetings with delegations of Qatar, UAE, Iran, Bahrain and Türkiye. During the meetings, matters pertaining to promoting bilateral, economic, trade, investment, cultural and inter-parliamentary ties came under discussion. The plenary session, held under the theme "Promoting multilateralism in the changing global dynamics", brings together representatives of parliamentary delegations from 27 APA member countries. APA Secretary-General Mohammad Reza Majidi, Speaker of the Turkish Grand National Assembly of Türkiye, APA Acting Chairman Mustafa Sentop, as well as the speakers of the parliaments representing the member countries, delivered opening remarks. In his opening remarks, Mustafa Sentop also commended Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani for having officially registered the nomination in favour of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan for the "Nobel Peace Prize" for his efforts to resolve the Ukrainian crisis in a letter addressed to Norwegian Nobel Committee. It is worth mentioning here that APA consists of 42 Member Parliaments and provides a forum to parliamentarians for exchanging views, ideas and experiences to develop common strategies for the promotion of peace development and cooperation in Asia and the world. Pakistan has been at the forefront to make APA a vibrant parliamentary forum of the region and remained as APA President during 2013-15.

## Briefs

### Asad briefed on NHA apartments

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications and Postal Services Asad Mehmood was given a detailed briefing on Tuesday regarding the construction of apartments for the employees of the National Highway Authority (NHA). The minister was informed that 456 apartments would be constructed in the A, B, C and D categories. He was informed that the project would be completed in the time of three years and two months. The minister instructed the authorities to consult the relevant departments and start the project at the earliest. He said that apartments should be built on international standards. He said that after the completion of the project in Islamabad, similar residential projects would be started for the NHA's regional offices. The minister affirmed to do his best for the employees of NHA in his tenure and said that no negligence would be tolerated in the project. He also passed instructions for the construction of two additional loops at the junctions of Motorway M1 and M2 which will provide ease to the passengers traveling towards the airport.

### AIOU holds an extension lecture on Seerat

ISLAMABAD: Seerat e Nabi (SAWW) chair, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) on Tuesday organized an extension lecture on "Society manners: in light of Seerat e Tayyiba". Renown scholar, Dr. Younas Farooqi presided over the event. A well-known researcher, and religious scholar Jamia Islamia Imdadia Faisalabad, Maulana Mufti Muhammad Zahid, gave a detailed lecture on "Society manners: in light of Seerat e Tayyiba". Sahibzada Sajid Ur Rehman hosted the event. Senior Advisor, PMU, Muhammad Rafiq Tahir, faculty members, and students also attended the event. Mufti Muhammad Zahid, in his lecture, shed light on the etiquette and manners of society considering Seerat e Tayyiba. Every hadith of Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) is full of ethics. His whole life revolves around ethics and respect. Quoting the events and hadiths of the Prophet's life, Mufti Zahid said that no one can negate knowledge and information focused on ethics and manners, provided in Qur'an and the Hadith. He further said that the work of preservation of hadiths was done the most in the subcontinent. There is a need to convey Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH)'s life to the common people in simple words for the betterment of individuals and society. Prof. Dr. Sahibzada Sajidur Rehman introduced Maulana Mufti Muhammad Zahid in his welcome speech and said that Maulana Zahid has a great command on the Seerat e Tayyiba. Dr. Younas Farooqi said that there is a close relationship between society and civilization, and Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) created a civilization. Mohammad Rafiq Tahir explained the aims and objectives of the center of excellence and chairs established in AIOU.—APP

### 1325 institutions receive fresh affiliation with FBESE

ISLAMABAD: On the directives of its Chairman Qaiser Alam, the Federal Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (FBESE) has approved 1325 applications for affiliation with the Board from across the country and abroad during the previous two years. From the establishment of the Federal Board in 1975 to 2020, the total number of institutions affiliated to the board was 1740 which has now increased to 3065 in a short period of time by granting affiliation to 1325 more schools. "This indicates confidence of the people in the Federal Board," the statement said. In the last two years, the Federal Education Board had started the online affiliation web portal, due to which the number of affiliated schools and colleges has increased with the use of information technology including online affiliation.—APP

# Ambassador of Hungary calls on chairman HEC

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Hungary in Islamabad Mr. Béla Fazekas called on Chairman Higher Education Commission (HEC) Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed at Commission Secretariat here on Tuesday. Various opportunities were discussed for bilateral educational cooperation. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed acknowledged the long-standing educational partnership between the two countries that includes offering of scholarships to Pakistani nationals since 2016. The Ambassador informed Chairman HEC that the number of scholarships offered per year will be increased from 200 to 400 and that the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two countries will be effective from 2023 to 2025. Chairman HEC affirmed that the Commission would make full use of these scholarship opportunities. Mr. Fazekas



also emphasized the importance of investing in skills-based education in addition to degree courses. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed agreed that the global economy is increasingly mov-

ing towards a focus on skill-based employment, and suggested collaboration between skills focused universities in Pakistan and Hungary to promote investment in skills. The Ambassador also pointed out that Pakistan and Hungary have similar priority areas for research and development, specifically in fields such as Agriculture, Veterinary Sciences, Sports Sciences, Engineering and Technology. He also suggested to create a forum for promoting the exchange of best practices between universities in both the countries. Mr. Fazekas stressed that Hungary places great value on its relationship with Pakistan which is built on shared interests and that Pakistan-Hungary Alumni Network has been set up in the same context. The network fosters cultural exchange and understanding, helping to break down barriers and promote mutual respect and understanding between the two countries.

## China can provide insights to Pakistan on food security

DNA

ISLAMABAD: China's food security strategy has become a hallmark for many countries to emulate and Chinese food security strategy can provide forward guidance to Pakistan policymakers, said Shan Saeed, Chief Economist at Jiwai IQI. Shan told Gwadar Pro that China is leading from the front in terms of storage capacity, supply chain, quality of staple food, and above all timely connecting the farmers and sellers through the use of technology. "Grain storage capac-

ity runs over 650 million tonnes for the country. All credit goes to the leadership of the Chinese government and policymakers. China has got 150 million people out of poverty since 2013 and 900 million people out of poverty since 1986," he added. He further said that the technology-driven food security has provided peace of mind to the masses and rising income for hard-working farmers. Masood Chaudhary, economic expert and businessman, shared with Gwadar Pro his thought that lack of awareness is the biggest issue in Pakistan, as farm-

ers don't have proper education, and policymakers need to improve policies according to international standards. "Adoption of successful business models of multinational companies like Chinese companies could help Pakistani enterprises learn their methods and techniques which could help boosting their business through joint ventures".

He further said that China is very good in AI, Big Data, IOT. These kinds of technologies are necessary to enhance business, whereas strict checks and follow-up mechanisms should be launched where

they can analyze their progress and weakness on a monthly basis.

"I hope more Chinese companies would invest in the agriculture sector here and teach us all kinds of methods to improve this sector, particularly in technologies," he said.

Masood mentioned that Pakistan needs to improve the technical skills of their labor and China may help establish vocational training through MOUs with prestigious educational institutes in different fields, where China can provide solutions.

## SC confirms bail of Aijaz Jakhrani

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Tuesday confirmed the bail of Special Assistant to Chief Minister Sindh Aijaz Hussain Jakhrani in NAB reference. A three-member bench headed by Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial heard the bail petition of Jakhrani. Additional Prosecutor NAB said that the bureau had not opposed the interim bail petition of the petitioner as the reference was worth less than Rs 500 million. After listening arguments, the court accepted the bail of accused. The court noted that the petitioner had assured that he would become the part of trial process. The court said that it hoped that the concerned court would increase the pace of trial and it would be concluded within two months. Meanwhile, a woman witness Madeha Malik said that this reference was prepared on the directives of the top court. She said that her statement had been recorded by the trial court but she was being threatened. The chief justice asked the woman to approach the police if she had some threats. She could also file a separate case if she had other issues, he added. The chief justice remarked that an accused remained innocent until charges proved against him as per the law. It may be mentioned here that Aijaz Jakhrani had moved a bail case in reference worth Rs 311 million.—APP

## President directs FUUAST to provide justice to student

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi, endorsing an order of Wafaqi Mohtasib (WM), has directed Federal Urdu University of Arts, Science and Technology (FUUAST) to update the result of a student who had been earlier declared as fail on account of non-submission of a paper. The student had submitted his paper of Pakistan Studies and its receipt was also acknowledged but he was declared fail on account of the non-receipt of the paper for marking in the examination department, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release on Tuesday. While upholding the findings of the Wafaqi Mohtasib, the president observed that due to the Corona lockdown as per the policy of the university.—APP

## CRBC's \$100,000 donation in place for Pakistani flood victims

China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC), a longstanding partner of Pakistan in transport and infrastructure network development, donated a total of USD 100,000 to the flood-hit families in Pakistan, China Economic Net (CEN) reported it on Tuesday. In October, 2022, Wang Lijun, Deputy Secretary of the Party Committee and General Manager of the

company, attended the donation ceremony at the Pakistani Embassy in China. According to the company, the donation will be divided into two parts, RMB 100,000 will be donated to the Pakistani Embassy in China and PKR 20.08 million will go to Pakistani Prime Minister's Flood Relief Fund. Wang expressed sincere sympathy to the families of the victims and those injured in

the flood. He believed that with the joint efforts of the Pakistani government and people, they would overcome the difficulties and life and work would go back to normal at an early date. Wang talked with Pakistani Ambassador to China Moin ul Haque about the company's key project progress in Pakistan, and expressed his heartfelt thanks to the Embassy for its long-term guid-

ance and help. Speaking at the occasion, Ambassador Moin paid tribute to CRBC's contribution towards Pakistan-China friendship and its role for successful completion of many vital infrastructure projects in Pakistan including Khunjerab-Raiot section of Karakorum Highway and KKH realignment projects at Attabad Lake and Havelian-Thakot sections.

## Large number of Chinese tourists expected to visit Pakistan in 2023

DNA

ISLAMABAD: After three gloomy years of cross-border tourism between Pakistan and China due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the year 2023, the Pakistan-China Year of Tourism Exchanges, is expected to witness a boom in the tourism sector in both countries.

"Exchanges have already started online. We are also working with Chinese tourism associations to develop business linkages. Soon we'll finalize a calendar of events and activities", Afzal ur Rehman Rana, Managing Director of Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) told China Economic Net (CEN). He believes that China, one of the biggest players in the tourism economy at the global level, will find a lot to explore in Pakistan, where a lot of business opportunities are coming up for

individual investments in the tourism and hospitality sector. "Many Chinese people working under CPEC returned to China during the pandemic, now it's time for them to come back with their families for a good visit. I expect that a number of Chinese tourists will visit Pakistan if we have better facilitation of border crossing, economical air ticket

packages, and inter-city transportation between major cities like Beijing, Urumqi, Islamabad, Lahore...", he said. The traffic will be two-way. He told CEN reporter that in China, the silk route is a very popular travel route that has also attracted many tourists from Europe. In Pakistan, the rich history, culture, festivity, and music will offer a unique travel experience. In this

regard, PTDC has already developed a detailed guidebook on Pakistan in Chinese. Video films on Pakistan will also be developed with subtitles in Chinese to help Chinese tourists know more about Pakistan. A working committee having representatives of both the sides will be formed to make the collaboration in tourism promotion more fruitful.

## IGP directs for foolproof security at red zone

*Dr Akbar directed the deployed staff to stay alert during duty hours, "as the Red Zone is a sensitive area." He asked the personnel to ensure foolproof security in the area*

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Dr Akbar Nasir Khan has directed for comprehensive security measures at Red Zone and asked the personnel to ensure foolproof security of important buildings, including offices and embassies. During a visit to the Red Zone, the IGP examined all the checkpoints and issued necessary directions with regard to security measures. Capital Police Officer Security Division, Hassan Raza and Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations, Malik Jamil Zafar briefed the IGP over the checking procedure and other security measures. Dr Akbar directed the deployed staff to stay alert during duty hours, "as the Red Zone is a sensitive area." He asked the personnel to ensure foolproof security in the area. All the officers and jawans on duty were directed to wear bulletproof jackets and helmets for their safety.—APP

## SC adjourns case regarding NAB amendments

The US Supreme Court's judge had remarked that the house had right of every legislation, he said. The American court had declared that it would assist the public if it wanted to go towards the hell with its representatives

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) on Tuesday adjourned hearing till January 11, on petition filed by PTI's chairman Imran Khan against amendments in National Accountability Bureau (NAB)'s law. A three-member bench headed by Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial heard the petition. During the course of proceeding, federal government's lawyer Makhdom Ali Khan argued that there was no important points in the petitions to be answered. A law could only be terminated when there was no other option, he said. He said that the institutions including Parliament, executive and judiciary should work in their defined limits. The judiciary was not given powers in the constitution to terminate the law,

he added. The Supreme Court had granted this authority to the judiciary through a judgment, he said, adding that this authority was also conditional. Makhdom Ali Khan said that the legislation was also challenged under 'shariah' but the top court could not evaluate it under 'shariah' rules as the only forum for this was Federal Shariat Court. The lawyer said that the legislation was the domain of the Parliament and judiciary could not interfere into it. The top court, in its judgments, had also declared that court could not raise question on the intention of the house. Since 1947 the burden of proof was always on the shoulders of complainants, he said. The chief justice questioned that what should be the strength of mem-

bers in the house at the time of voting. How many members of the parliament were in attendance at the time of NAB amendments, he asked. The lawyer said that no law was terminated till this day for being approved by the majority of members. The chief justice said that it was mere a question. The lawyer said that members of Parliament took oaths for taking all decision under the constitution. Justice Ijaz ul Ahsan remarked that it was also in their oaths that they would take decision for development and prosperity of the country. Whether the legislation against country's development would not be violation of oath, he asked. Makhdom Ali Khan said that no any court could determine the intention of members'

Parliament. The judges were bound to take decisions under the law. Justice Mansoor Ali Shah said that it was the difference between the oath of judges and members as the judges took oaths for taking decision as per the law. The lawyer said that the legislation introduced by the members was considered for the development of the country. The US Supreme Court's judge had remarked that the house had right of every legislation, he said. The American court had declared that it would assist the public if it wanted to go towards the hell with its representatives. The advocate said that the court had no authority even on any foolish legislation by the house. After this, the court adjourned further hearing of the case till tomorrow.

## IT Ministry finalises draft of TASRF

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication (MoITT) has finalized the draft of the first-ever Telecom Airwaves Spectrum Refarming Framework (TASRF). "Telecommunication is glad to finalize the framework on spectrum reforming which is first of its kind prepared with recommendations from Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA), Frequency Allocation Board (FAB) and industry stakeholders after multiple consultations," said a news release. Federal Minister for IT & Telecommunication Syed Amin Ul Haque said the draft has been uploaded to the MoITT website for open consultation before approval of the Federal Cabinet. He said frequency or airwaves spectrum reforming is a process governing the repurposing of frequency bands that have historically been allocated for legacy cellular services for new generation of mobile technologies, Internet of Things & 5th Generation Technology for on ground inclusion of 4th Industrial Revolution. Amin said that in view of the increasing demand for cellular and radio communication services worldwide, emerging technologies, Spectrum reforming is considered a powerful and innovative approach to manage the spectrum dynamically so as to make it available for newer commercial applications 5G, Internet of Things, broadband wireless access and digital broadcasting.

The framework shall enable the effective utilisation of the available frequency spectrum for front-end and backhaul frequencies, increase potential business viability for licensees, better quality and coverage of mobile broadband services and emerging technologies including additional revenues for the national exchequer. The framework shall enable Operators to have a sufficient contiguous spectrum to support the simultaneous operation of multiple technologies in a frequency band.—APP

## Sherry hails Pledges for recovery

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change, Senator, Sherry Rehman on Tuesday said the pledges announced by the international organisations and countries of over \$10 billion for assisting the implementation of Resilient Recovery, Rehabilitation, and Reconstruction Framework (4RF) implementation to steer



flood rehabilitation activities was commendable. The Minister in a series of tweets expressed her gratitude to the world community, donor agencies and development organisations for giving an overwhelming response to the International Climate Resilient Pakistan Conference in Geneva that was aimed to garner cooperation for burden sharing of climate catastrophes triggered in the region due to heightened greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs).

Senator Rehman said the international partners had reiterated full support at the forum with the government of Pakistan and the United Nations at the Geneva conference. She said the finances pledged would be used for the complete rehabilitation and reconstruction of the flood victims. "The world has acknowledged the ravages of floods and climate change in Pakistan. Pakistan needed resources to rehabilitate flood victims and rebuild infrastructure and this is a great achievement of Pakistan", Senator Sherry Rehman said. The Minister underscored that in this entire process, the continuous efforts of UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres were appreciable. "After the floods, he emerged as the voice of vulnerable and affected people in Pakistan at the global level," Sherry Rehman said.—APP

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## Brazil's far right: a clear and present danger

The storming of the three branches of Brazilian government is the most significant threat to the country's democracy since the end of its dictatorship in 1985. Rioters ransacked Brazil's Congress, its presidential palace and its top court in the capital, Brasília. They had been led to believe false claims by Jair Bolsonaro, the far-right populist, that last October's presidential election had been stolen by the victor, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. They hoped to trigger a military intervention by tapping into pro-Bolsonaro sentiment in the armed forces. Mercifully, this did not materialise. Far-right protesters ended up being arrested by the very soldiers whose arrival they had cheered. President Lula, the 77-year-old leader of the Workers' party, will now need all his considerable political skills to navigate a dangerously divided nation. His immediate – and understandable – reaction was to call protesters "vandals, neo-fascists and fanatics". He singled out Mr Bolsonaro, with good reason, for "inciting" the invasion. The blueprint looks to have been the January 6 US Capitol attack by a mob of supporters of Donald Trump. But while Mr Trump whipped up the crowd personally to rush the US Congress weeks before his opponent Joe Biden took office, Mr Bolsonaro fled Brazil and spent inauguration day in Florida. He has yet to concede defeat in October's election. He did condemn Sunday's violence but not the goal that inspired it. Mr Bolsonaro is a clown missing his circus. He is now looking over his shoulder, fearing extradition back to Brazil on corruption charges. The Bolsonarista bloc was consolidated not by good governance but by keeping supporters mobilised with bigotry and conspiracy theories. Lawmakers were bought off with a "secret budget" that was set to hit R\$19.4bn (£3bn), six times what Brazil spends on the environment, until it was deemed illegal last month. Without their leader, and locked out of institutionalised power, Bolsonaristas represent a powerful constituency waiting to be courted. There is likely to be no lack of opportunists who will attempt to win them over. That is why President Lula has not only to root out the political cancer of the far right, but also to deal with the social and economic conditions that caused it. Lulism lasted longer than its originator's time in office. President Lula won two terms from 2003 to 2011, but his ideology remained ascendant until 2016. The transition to Bolsonarism was marked by the rise and fall of the economy, corruption scandals and the collapse of the political system. The key figure in this shift was a rightwing president, Michel Temer, installed in power after the impeachment of his Workers' party predecessor, Dilma Rousseff, in what Mr Temer later referred to as a "coup". During this time deregulation and exploitation were recast as personal freedom and entrepreneurship. Simultaneously, racism and sexism were presented as a defence of Christian family values, to which many Brazilians retreated in the face of economic uncertainty. Mr Bolsonaro's base was then built on deforestation – he won in agribusiness's heartlands, where he had been cheering illegal mining and logging. President Lula is right to want to reverse the reforms passed by the last two presidents. He says erasing poverty and hunger would be the "hallmarks" of his government.

**Marwan Bishara**

They have proven incapable of rising to the challenge or unwilling to do what it takes to face the imminent threat.

Their appeal to the United Nations for salvation smacks of desperation and escapism.

It is no victory to extract yet another resolution when previous resolutions collect dust at UN headquarters. If history is any guide, Israeli obstinacy and aggression have only increased with every resolution. It pains me to watch smug Palestinian spokespeople speak of an inevitable "end of apartheid" or the "demise of the Zionist regime" when, in reality, Israel has become the Middle East's most

A new fanatical Israeli government is putting the old flailing Palestinian leadership to the test – and this could be its final test. How it responds will determine the future of Palestine, Israel and the entire Middle East. The coalition of religious Zionist and far-right parties now in power in Israel rejects Palestinian

## Palestine: Unite or die

statehood and claims exclusive right to all of historic Palestine. It tramples over past agreements as it prepares to annex much of the occupied West Bank, which makes up the backbone of a prospective Palestinian state. This week's provocation by Israel's minister of national security, Itamar Ben-Gvir, in entering the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound, is only the beginning of what threatens to be a protracted campaign of incitement and violent escalation until this pyromaniac government sets Palestine on fire. The Palestinian reaction has thus far been meagre at best. Politically divided, diplomatically isolated and terribly unpopular, Palestinian leaders have resorted to the same old empty slogans and tired manoeuvres. They have proven incapable of rising to the challenge or unwilling to do what it takes to face the imminent threat. Their appeal to the United Nations for salvation smacks of desperation and escapism. It is no victory to extract yet another resolution when previous resolutions collect dust at UN headquarters. If history is any guide, Israeli obstinacy and aggression have only increased with every resolution. It pains me to watch smug Palestinian spokespeople speak of an inevitable "end of apartheid" or the "demise of the Zionist regime" when, in reality, Israel has become the Middle East's most

aces are no replacement for national bonds, the sooner they can prepare to weather the Israeli hurricane coming their way. Indeed, the international community will remain largely indifferent to their pleas unless or until the Palestinians make a real difference on the ground, which requires them, first and foremost, to make amends and reunite their efforts. The West Bank-based Fatah leadership and the Gaza-based Hamas leadership must stop sacrificing the national struggle at the altar of their power struggle. They must recognise that their factional friction is paralysing the popular struggle for freedom, that national unity is indispensable for national liberation. If they must compete, it should not be over the manning of the open-air prisons of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, rather over ending the occupation of Palestine altogether. It has been more than a decade now since Fatah, Hamas and other factions met in various world capitals to end their 2006 friction. They have reached a variety of agreements, most recently in Algiers, that should pave the way to a true national unity. To no avail. Their personal, factional and ideological differences continue to trump their common struggle against the Israeli occupation. Their pursuit of conflicting regional and international agendas has confounded their friends and comforted their foes. President Mahmoud Abbas may be lamented for having put all his eggs in Washington's basket or later desperately seeking salvation in Moscow, but Hamas's pursuit of relief and redemption in Damascus and Tehran is no less short-sighted – read disastrous. Pursuing such relationships undermines, even betrays, the most basic value at the heart of the Palestinian struggle, namely, seeking justice. Bloody thugs and cynics do not make for good saviours. Never. Both sides will need to transcend their opposite approaches to the conflict – nothing but diplomacy vs anything but diplomacy – in light of mounting Israeli intransigence that demands Palestinians surrender as a prerequisite to diplomacy. None of that is to say that the Palestinian

leadership should not pursue UN involvement and international support for their cause. On the contrary. But such support should be channelled and instrumentalised by a well-defined national agenda and strategy for liberation, one that is put to a national vote. Since 2006, both Abbas and the Hamas leaders have ruled like incompetent autocrats, overly dependent on foreign powers. It is time that changes, but not by subjugating the Palestinians to another divisive election under occupation, rather by solidifying and strengthening their unity through a popular vote. Once an overwhelming majority of Palestinians supports such a united agenda, no regional or international power, including Israel, would be able to ignore, divide or blackmail the Palestinians for their cynical ends. United, national leaders could tap the infinite capacity and willingness of Palestinians to fight for their cause and the passionate and overwhelming popular Arab support for Palestine and opposition to Israel. Together, they will make the Israeli fanatics regret waging holy war against Palestine. United, the Palestinians will be reinvigorated and better suited to stand up to the fanatics ruling Israel, using all means necessary to effect change. Lest we forget that it was Palestinian unity in the first Palestinian Intifada that forced both Israel and the United States to recognise and negotiate with the PLO and their unity in the second Intifada that forced them, albeit theoretically, to embrace the two-state solution. United, they could build bridges to the Palestinians within Israel and reach out to other disenchanted Israelis and Jews who oppose fascism and support liberty and justice in Israel and Palestine. United, they are better positioned to garner international support now that the new Israeli government faces greater scrutiny by its American and other Western backers. Where there is unity, there is victory.

*—Courtesy: Al Jazeera*

## S-400 and its implications

India and Pakistan can agree on one thing: neither wants the other one around", writes Tim Marshall in his book "Revenge of Geography". The states that consider each other their rivals are always embroiled in security dilemma. If one state adds any new weapon in its defenses, then other states comprehend this as power imbalance. Hence, in return, the second state will also boost its defense to maintain the balance of power. This spiral goes on and both states continue developing their defense. Such is the case of Pakistan and India, archrivals since independence have fought four wars. India wants hegemony in the region while Pakistan is a major obstacle for India. India is following an offensive realist policy to maximize its power, its acquisition of S-400 and deployment at Pakistan border is destabilizing the regional stability. S-400 is "mobile air-defense system" that has the capabilities to engage the cruise missile, aircrafts and ballistic missiles. S-400 attracts many states to buy because of its advanced technology. It has engagement radar, surveillance radar and can fire four types of missiles, including short range up to 40km, medium range up to 120km, long range up to 250km, and missiles up to the range of 400km. India has been trying hard to acquire the S-400 air defense system. The only hindrance was the danger of sanctions imposed by US under CAATSA (Countering American Adversaries Through Sanctions Act), which allows the US President to impose sanctions on states that engage in arms deal with Russia. New Delhi is Washington's partner in countering Beijing. India has got waiver from the US because Washington cannot impose sanctions on New Delhi as it would create ill-feelings against America in India. US needs India in

the Indo Pacific. It is major non-NATO ally of the US being part of the QUAD that is meant to counter China in the region. There are several ambitions that have pushed New Delhi to acquire S-400. Obviously, military might is considered as major determinant to acquire hegemony in the region. As Mearsheimer states, the "states must accumulate maximum power for themselves and should contend to flip the balance of power in their favor"; India is thus following the same hegemonic designs. It has found this as state-of-the-art weaponry which can strategically upgrade its military. In addition to this, New Delhi wants to establish multi-layer air defense over Mumbai and the capital. It is using indigenous air defense systems i.e. "Prithvi Air Defense" (PAD) and "Advanced Air Defense" (AAD). S-400 will provide India a second layer of air defense. Moreover, India wants to deter Pakistan's aircrafts as stated by Air Chief Marshal (retd) B S Dhanoa, who says the purpose of the S-400 missile system and Rafale is to hit Pakistani aircrafts inside the Pakistan air space and not when they come inside the Indian territory". Another important factor behind the Indian acquisition of S-400 is that Beijing deployed the same S-400 in 2018. India and China have engaged in war in 1962 and skirmished in Ladakh and Gwlan valley in 2020. The Indian acquisition of S-400 has serious implications for Pakistan. If India deploys the S-400 in Jalandhar, then it can target Islamabad. While if India decides to deploy it in Amritsar, then Pakistani cities including Peshawar would be in its range. The deployment of S-400 would make India think that it is invincible and this feeling would lead to aggressive postures by India. New Delhi will further in-

## Political paralysis looms after house speaker fiasco

Republican Congressman Kevin McCarthy was elected speaker of the United States House of Representatives early on Saturday, after making extensive concessions to right-wing hardliners in his party. McCarthy's victory in the 15th ballot ended the deepest congressional dysfunction in over 160 years. But it sharply illustrated the difficulties he will face in leading a narrow and deeply polarized majority. What this drama on Capitol Hill exposes is the political instability that will have an impact on the future of the United States and interests of its people. The fact that McCarthy was elected only after agreeing to a demand by hardliners that any lawmaker can call for his removal at any time makes it very difficult for him to exercise his power as speaker. Which means legislation will be very hard to be passed on critical issues such as funding the government, addressing the nation's looming debt ceiling and other crises that may arise. In addition, the main tool for the speaker, on behalf of the majority, in controlling the House floor is the Rules Committee, which sets the terms of legislative debate, including which bills can be considered, for how long and – crucially – what amendments may be offered and by whom. As part of McCarthy's compromise with the dissidents, he agreed to give the ultraconservative wing of the Republican Party approval power over one-third of the Republican members of the panel. In effect, that gives the extreme faction the ability to block any legislation it does not like from the floor, by banding together with Democrats on the panel who are all but certain to oppose most Republican bills. Some Republicans might be inclined to vote for spending bills and a debt ceiling increase, not wanting to see a government shutdown or a debt default. They would have an incentive to work with Democrats on bipartisan deals that could make it through the Senate to President Joe Biden's desk. But in the past couple of decades Republican speakers have followed an unofficial, but hard-and-fast rule – known as the Hastert Rule – for the GOP speaker to not put forward any legislation that does not have the support of a majority of the majority. That means if conservatives are not on board, a bipartisan deal can never see the light of day on the floor. As a result, under the new speaker, Congress will in all likelihood be a paralyzed one, and even the speaker himself runs the risk of being removed if he ever angers the right-wing faction. The problem is that very few politicians in Washington are willing to put the interest of their country and people before that of the political factions that have an inordinate influence on US politics. This is exactly the root cause of this crisis around the election of the house speaker, and also the root cause of the political instability the country faces.

**Muskan Moazzam**

Moreover, India wants to deter Pakistan's aircrafts as stated by Air Chief Marshal (retd) B S Dhanoa, who says the purpose of the S-400 missile system and Rafale is to hit Pakistani aircrafts inside the Pakistan air space and not when they come inside the Indian territory".

Another important factor behind the Indian acquisition of S-400 is that Beijing deployed the same S-400 in 2018. India and China have engaged in war in 1962 and skirmished in Ladakh and Gwlan valley in 2020. The Indian acquisition of S-400 has serious implications for Pakistan. If India deploys the S-400 in Jalandhar, then it can target Islamabad.

While if India decides to deploy it in Amritsar, then Pakistani cities including Peshawar would be in its

crease the threats to Islamabad. The recent firing of missile in the territory of Pakistan from India is an example of any adverse event that can give rise to war between the two rivals. India can exacerbate any such situation because now it has a solid defense system. In addition to this, New Delhi has though "No-First-Use-Policy", yet recent statements by Indian officials suggest that India can change this policy. The country that can face the aggressive designs of India is Pakistan. There are multiple options for Pakistan. First, it can follow New Delhi and purchase the same defense system although, given the condition of Pakistan's economy, it is currently not possible for Islamabad. Another option for Pakistan is to develop the delivery systems that can exhaust the Indian defense system. The recent achievement of Pakistan was the development of "Ababeel" like Multiple Independently Targetable Reentry Vehicle (MIRV). It has a range of 2,200 km and can target multiple missiles that can exhaust the S-400. Moreover, the indigenous missiles of Pakistan have capabilities to bypass the S-400. Another option for Islamabad is to develop hypersonic missiles that cannot be detected by S-400. In addition to this, Pakistan can develop the electric technologies that can be used to jam the S-400 radars. In nutshell, Pakistan will definitely be impacted by the deployment of S-400 air defense system by India. But, the threat needs to be countered as immediately as possible. It is not insurmountable, however. Pakistan would have to take the above measures in order to counter the Indian air defense system in case of any hostility.

*The writer is studying International Relations*

**Briefs****Any attack on Afghanistan to prove fatal**

FROM PAGE 01 not focusing on talks with its Afghan counterpart as Bilawal was roaming around the world but had no time to visit to neighboring country to find out amicable solution to stop the reoccurrence of unfortunate incidents at the Pak-Afghan border. PTI Chairman warned that another war against terrorism would become a curse for the country if relations with Afghanistan deteriorated.

He went on to say that the imported stopped development funds for the war-ravaged merged tribal areas and even the provinces did not give the promised shares of the NFC award to the ex-FATA, which was once considered the most peaceful region. He noted that creation of opportunities could keep the tribal people at bay from falling into hands of terrorists.

He said that the rise in terrorism in the country would hit KP the hardest, noting that the country's tribal belt suffered the most during the last wave of terrorism.

"I pay tribute to the people of KP who came to the streets against terrorism," he added. He pointed out that the federal government did not invite KP chief minister in the recent meetings of National Security Councils (NSC). Imran Khan urged the government to brainstorm over the evolving situation, because Pakistan cannot sustain another wave of terrorism.

**PTI accuses PDM of...**

FROM PAGE 01 "A day earlier, the bills in the provincial assembly were passed with majority," he maintained. Terming party chairman Imran Khan an asset of the country, Fawad said that those who wants to minus the former premier were weakening the country. "There is no future of Pakistani politics without Imran Khan," he claimed. Referring to Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), the former information minister said that the officials serving in the electoral watchdog have no knowledge of the law. "The ECP should resign if they cannot hold elections" he added. He reiterated that his party wants to build a working relationship with institutions. "We are trying our best to go towards the elections", he said, adding that political stability was only possible through immediate elections.

**PM commends Team...**

FROM PAGE 01 all concerned ministries and departments in making Geneva's Resilient Pakistan conference a success. He acknowledged the role played by Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal, Climate Change Minister Sherry Rehman, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar, Sardar Ayaz Sadig and Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb. He assured that as a trust, the financial assistance would be provided to the deserving through a third-party audit. Shehzad Sharif mentioned the special financial support extended by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman besides the pledges of the conference.

**Aid slap in face of...**

FROM PAGE 01 country's economy during last four years. He said that Pakistan was not going to default. Those who are talking about default global help is a slap in their faces. He said the assistance pledged yesterday in Geneva reflected world's trust in Pakistan. He said that government was hoping to raise \$8 billion "but we have collected more than \$11 billion so far". "Pakistan is not going to default. The entire world is standing with us," Sanaullah added. Talking about the Punjab political situation, the interior minister said that Chaudhry Pervez Elahi was imposed on the province. He claimed that the PTI-PMLQ government did not have the required numbers in the Punjab Assembly.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addressing Pakistani delegation and officers of Pakistani Mission in Geneva. — DNA

# India's mindset is to limit us, says Ramiz Raja

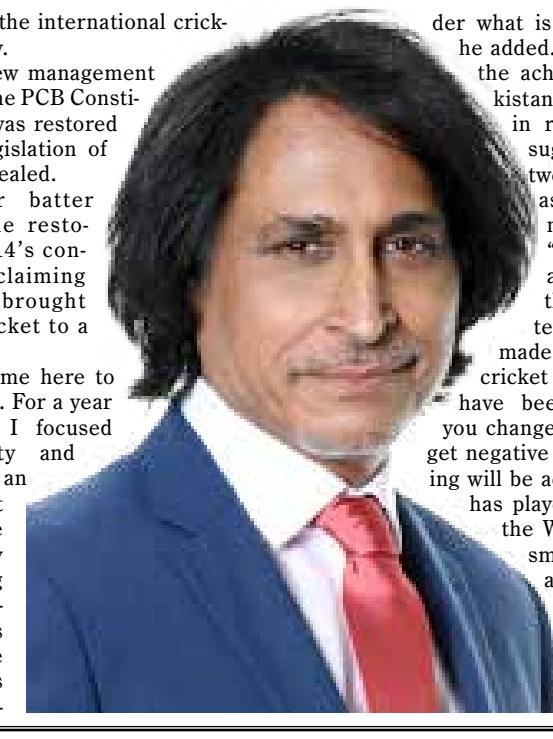
The statement came out after BCCI secretary Jay Shah stated that India will not go to Pakistan for the Asian event. His announcement caught Pakistan by surprise, with PCB officials warning that the move could 'split' international cricket community

DNA

LAHORE: Former chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), Ramiz Raja, has said that India has the mindset to limit Pakistan. Raja was dismissed as the PCB chief in December after a 14-member committee, led by Najam Sethi, was established by the government. In an interaction at the Government College University in Lahore on Tuesday, the former cricketer said: "India's mindset is to limit us. The International Cricket Council (ICC) gets revenue from India and it becomes influential. The Asian Cricket Council (ACC) gave us the Asia Cup, and I took a strong stand when it came to taking it away." It must be noted that in October last year, former PCB chairman Ramiz Raja said that Pakistan will not go to India for ICC World Cup 2023 if India pulls out of Asia Cup 2023 in Pakistan.

The statement came out after BCCI secretary Jay Shah stated that India will not go to Pakistan for the Asian event. His announcement caught Pakistan by surprise, with PCB officials warning that the move

could "split" the international cricket community. Under the new management committee, the PCB Constitution 2014 was restored while the legislation of 2019 was repealed. The former batter criticised the restoration of 2014's constitution, claiming that it has brought Pakistan cricket to a "dark age". "I did not come here to fight my case. For a year and a half, I focused on continuity and growth. It's an abuse that you come forward by bulldozing the constitution. This is an abuse of youth, as they will won-



der what is going on here," he added. Raja also lauded the achievements of Pakistan white-ball teams in recent times and suggested not to tweak the team as it will cause negative results. "There have been attempts to force things. A great team has been made for white-ball cricket as many stars have been developed. If you change the team, it will get negative results and nothing will be achieved. Pakistan has played in the final of the World Cup, is it a small thing? Babar and company's focus is on cricket," he said. The former commentator also said that

## Krejcikova, Kudermetova roll on in Adelaide

*The 2021 French Open champion, now ranked 21, won the last four games of the opening set and secured the match in straight sets after seeing a match point slip by at 6-2, 5-4*

ADELAIDE: World number nine Veronika Kudermetova battled back to beat two-time Australian Open champion Victoria Azarenka and join Barbora Krejcikova in the Adelaide International II second round on Tuesday. Kudermetova, who had a stunning 2022 in which she claimed almost 40 match wins, triumphed 2-6, 7-6 (7/4), 6-4. "Of course I'm really happy about this win because it means a lot against Vika," said Russia's Kudermetova, 25, ahead of next week's Australian Open.

"She's a two-time Grand Slam champion so for me it's really important to play against that (level) of player and beat them. With every win I have a little bit more confidence."

A resurgent Krejcikova, who was

ranked as high as second

in the world last year, won

two titles and 10 of her last

11 singles matches to end 2022 on a roll. She brought that form to Adelaide, beating 2022 finalist Alison Riske-Amritraj of the United States 6-2, 7-6 (7/3) to start her season. The 2021 French Open champion, now ranked 21, won the last four games of the opening set and secured the match in straight sets after seeing a match point slip by at 6-2, 5-4. The Czech player's reward is a clash with fifth seed Daria Kasatkina. American Amanda Anisimova, semi-finalist at Roland Garros in 2019 and Wimbledon quarter-finalist last season, won her

first tour-level match since August, overcoming error-strewn Russian Liudmila Samsonova 7-5, 6-3. Her progress was in stark contrast to last week's performance in Adelaide I, where she claimed only three games in a first-round defeat to Kudermetova. China's Zheng Qinwen set up a second-round contest with two-time Wimbledon winner Petra Kvitova with a 4-6, 6-4, 6-0 victory over American Shelby Rogers. In the men's draw, world number 35 Tommy Paul won his season-opening match 6-4, 7-5 against Australian Christopher O'Connell. — DNA

## France captain Lloris retires from int'l football

PARIS: The Tottenham captain's decision comes three weeks after France were beaten by Argentina on penalties in the 2022 World Cup final on 18 December. Lloris had captained his country to World Cup victory four years earlier when they won the 2018 tournament. "I've decided to stop my international career, with the feeling that I have given everything," said Lloris. Speaking to French publication L'Equipe, he add-ed: "I think it is important now, two-and-a-half months before qualifying," been drawn to star, Greece, and Republic Euro flying group, his international as a 21-year-old against Uruguay 2008. He won his 145th cap in the World Cup final defeat by Argentina which made him France's record appearance maker. Lloris captained France 121 times, which is also a record. "I have really been thinking about it since the end of the World Cup, but there has been something deep inside of me for maybe six months now and which grew during the competition, leading me to make this decision," he said. Lloris' decision has come after France manager Didier Deschamps extended his contract until June 2026. "There comes a time when you need to step aside. I have always said the French national team does not belong to any one person," added Lloris. — APP

## Harry Brook named ICC Player of the Month

LONDON: England's star middle-order batter Harry Brook has been adjudged by the ICC as Men's Player of the Month for December 2022 for his recent performances against Pakistan. Brook alongside Pakistan skipper Babar Azam and Australia's Tavis Head competed for the honour, and the start of Euro France have with Gibraltar-Netherlands of Ireland in 2024 qualifying. Lloris made his debut in a friendly November 2008. He won his 145th cap in the World Cup final defeat by Argentina which made him France's record appearance maker. Lloris captained France 121 times, which is also a record. "I have really been thinking about it since the end of the World Cup, but there has been something deep inside of me for maybe six months now and which grew during the competition, leading me to make this decision," he said. Lloris' decision has come after France manager Didier Deschamps extended his contract until June 2026. "There comes a time when you need to step aside. I have always said the French national team does not belong to any one person," added Lloris. — APP

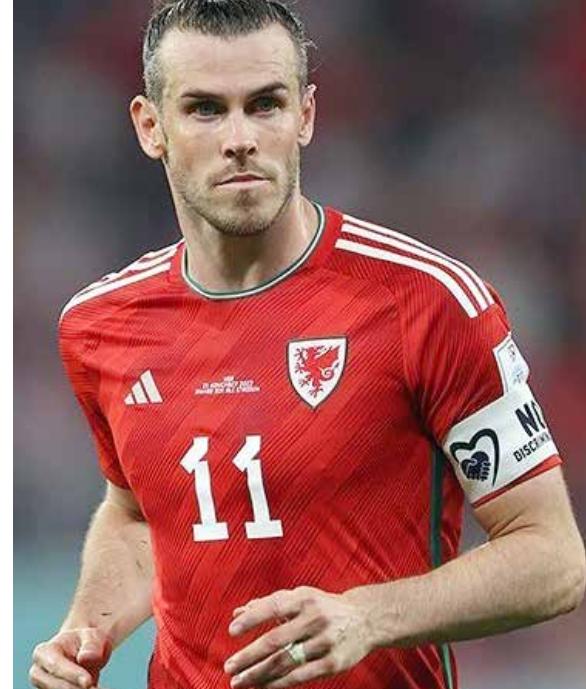
## Wales' greatest, Gareth Bale departs

WEB DESK

LONDON: It was a moment Welsh football had been dreading for what felt like an age, a long-looming inevitability that a nation had put to the back of its mind for fear that it might actually become true. And yet when it finally arrived, Gareth Bale's announcement of his retirement still came as a shock of seismic proportions. This was a day Wales could see coming - just not this soon. Speculation regarding Bale's future had raged for years, dominating the final stages of his glittering career at Real Madrid and following him at the past two major tournaments with Wales. Optimists clung to the fact that he had departed the World Cup with the vow that he would "keep going as long as I can and as long as I'm wanted". Some dreamed that he might even have carried on forever; there were times when he did seem immortal. But there is no escaping time. While 33 might be a relatively young age to retire, Bale had been showing signs of slowing as his body bore the toll of a superhuman 17-year career. Logic suggested

this day would come but, then again, Bale had kept defying logic to conjure moments of magic even as he appeared to be losing some of his powers of old. His retirement marks the end not only for arguably the finest player Wales has ever produced, but also the beginning of the end for the greatest era in the country's footballing history. Bale elevated Wales to new heights, embodying his nation's rise from lowly underachievers to major tournament regulars. In doing so, he transcended his sport, a phenomenal athlete whose global renown brought Wales to the world's attention. To quantify such an impact is a near-impossible task and, although boiling Bale's career down to numbers and achievements is reductive, they bear repeating.

Real Madrid made him the world's



## ECP issues arrest warrants for Imran, others

FROM PAGE 01

The decision was announced by a three-member bench, headed by Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial and comprising Justice Athar Minallah and Justice Ayesha A Malik but it had restrained the ECP from issuing a final order. Last year, the top electoral body initiated contempt proceedings against the PTI leaders for allegedly using foul language against Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja and ECP. It had served several notices on them, asking them to appear in person and explain their point of view. However, the PTI leaders did not appear before the ECP and later challenged its powers to initiate contempt proceedings under Section 10 of the Election Act 2017 in different high courts.

## MBS directs to enhance investment..

FROM PAGE 01

Prince Mohammed's directives have come to affirm the Kingdom's position in supporting the economy of Pakistan and its people, the Saudi Press Agency said early Tuesday. The move, SPA stated, confirmed Saudi Arabia's position on supporting the economy of Pakistan and its "sisterly people".

The development was reached within the framework of the existing communication between Prince Salman and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, it added. The development came after the visit of Pakistan Army Chief General Syed Asim Munir to Saudi Arabia. The COAS called on Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on Sunday night. He held talks with top Saudi officials, including the defence minister, on his first official trip to the Gulf kingdom as the country is facing an unprecedented economic crisis. General Syed Asim Munir, who took charge in November, has followed in the footsteps of his predecessors in visiting Saudi Arabia - a close defence and economic ally - on his maiden overseas trip. The army chief also visited the United Arab Emirates and held a meeting with UAE President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan during the nearly one-week trip.

## PM to visit UAE on Thursday

FROM PAGE 01

trade and investment ties between the two brotherly countries and creating increased opportunities for the Pakistani workforce in the UAE. The two leaders will also exchange views on a range of regional and global issues of mutual interest. The prime minister will meet with the UAE Prime Minister and Vice President and Ruler of Dubai, Sheikh Muhammad bin Rashid Al Maktoum. During the visit, the prime minister will hold meetings with the Emirati businessmen and investors to discuss ways to enhance bilateral trade and investment. The UAE is home to around 1.7 million Pakistanis who have been playing a pivotal role in the success story of the UAE, for the last five decades, contributing to the progress, prosperity and economic development of the two brotherly countries.

## PML-N claims...

FROM PAGE 01

The PTI and its allies are fighting over who did more corruption," he added. Earlier, the special assistant was stopped from entering in the Punjab Assembly. Meanwhile, Suleiman Shehzad, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's son, met Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) estranged leader Jahangir Khan Tareen, sources told on Tuesday. Suleiman conveyed PM Shehbaz's "message" to Tareen, they added. The meeting, which was held at Tareen's house in Lahore and attended by Adviser to Prime Minister Awan Chaudry, as the political temperature of Punjab has increased on the issue of a vote of confidence which CM Parvez Elahi refused to take under the directions of Governor Baligh-Ur-Rehman by terming it "illegal".

## Briefs

**12 die in fresh clashes in south eastern Peru**

LONDON: At least 12 people have died in a south-eastern Peruvian city during clashes between security forces and protesters reportedly trying to overrun a local airport. The fatalities were caused on Monday in the city of Juliaca. Those killed had gunshot wounds, an official at the local Calos Monge Hospital told a Peruvian TV channel. The dead included two teenagers, the local health ministry was quoted by Reuters as saying. At least 38 other people had also been wounded during the violence, the ministry added in a statement published on Facebook. "What is happening is Peruvians are slaughtering each other. I ask for calm," said Juliaca's Mayor Oscar Caceres. Demonstrators had already tried on Saturday to overrun Juliaca's airport, which is being protected by police and soldiers. Juliaca is located in the country's Puno region, which has proven to be a flashpoint for violence since the country started to experience its latest spate of political unrest, almost a month ago. The unrest began after former president Pedro Castillo was arrested and jailed amid his attempt to dissolve Congress and rule by decree. Castillo is serving 18 months of pre-trial detention on charges of rebellion. He denies the charges. The protesters have a whole host of demands, including departure of President Dina Boluarte, who has replaced Castillo, and the former head of state's return. —APP

## Spain repatriates 15 including from Syria

MADRID: Madrid has repatriated two Spanish women who were married to Islamic State group fighters, flying them home from jihad camps in Syria with 13 children, the government said on Tuesday. They arrived at Torrejon de Ardoz military airport near Madrid late on Monday, nearly two months after the Spanish government agreed to bring them home. "The government has just repatriated two women and 13 Spanish minors from Syrian refugee camps," a foreign ministry statement said. The two women were arrested on arrival and would be brought before a judge at the Audiencia Nacional, Spain's top criminal court, it said. A court spokesman confirmed the women would appear in court on Wednesday morning on "terrorism-related charges". The 13 children were taken into the care of the Madrid region's social services, it said.

The ministry said the extradition had taken "several months" because of the "complexity (of the operation) and due to the high-risk situation in the Syrian camps". —APP

## Belgium extends life of its nuclear power industry

BRUSSELS: The Belgian government announced on Monday it has signed an agreement with French energy company Engie to extend two of the seven nuclear reactors operated in Belgium for ten years, starting in November 2026. The two parties had been negotiating hard for months over the conditions of the extension, decided in March 2022 by Belgium to guarantee its energy supply beyond 2025, against a backdrop of uncertainties linked to the war in Ukraine.

The Belgian state and the energy company had already agreed to create a 50/50 joint venture to manage the two extended reactors, under a pre-agreement announced in July. Announcing the deal at a news conference in Brussels, the Belgian Prime Minister Alexander De Croo said it would allow the country to take back control of its "energy destiny". "This energy production which is naturally extremely efficient, is a form of energy which does not produce greenhouse gases and where the Belgian State will become an important partner," said Mr De Croo. —APP

# EU, NATO sign joint call for co-op amid Russian threat

NATO was established during the Cold War, mainly with the aim of securing Western European countries against the threat of Soviet Union. It has 30 members today, and Ukraine's desire to join the alliance has long been a bone of contention for Russia

## NEWS DESK

BRUSSELS: The European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) formally signed a joint declaration to strengthen partnership to counter Russia's war on Ukraine and boost security in the broader region. The European Union Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and European Council President Charles Michel, along with NATO's Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, signed the joint declaration to improve cooperation between the two institutions at the NATO headquarters in Brussels, Belgium. This joint declaration is the third between the two organizations and builds on the previous two declarations signed in 2016 and 2018, respectively. Stoltenberg said that the three officials met almost a year ago in the same place – NATO headquarters – after Russia invaded Ukraine last February. "Putin wanted to take Ukraine in a few days and divide us. On both counts, he failed," Stoltenberg said.



The NATO chief said that Russian President Vladimir Putin wants a different Europe and his ambition would have long-term consequences for the region for which they need to prepare. He said they "recognize the value of

a stronger and more capable European defense that contributes positively to global and transatlantic security and is complementary to, and interoperable with, NATO." Stoltenberg added he was determined to take partner-

ship between the EU and NATO to the "next level" as security threats keep evolving in scope and magnitude. European Council President Charles Michel said "Putin wanted less NATO, but he has achieved the opposite,"

referring to the pending accession of Sweden and Finland to the alliance. "We are closer today than ever," Michel said, adding that the EU was determined to contribute more effectively to the security in the broad-

er Euro-Atlantic area. Von der Leyen said the bloc would keep pressure on Russia for "as long as it takes" and that Ukraine should get all the military assistance that it needs. She said the EU would extend sanctions to "those who militarily support Russia," naming Belarus and Iran. The joint call makes clear that the North Atlantic Treaty "remains the foundation of collective defense" for the region and the broader Euro-Atlantic area, officials said. The principle of collective defense, which states that an attack on one member of NATO is an attack on all its members, is the cornerstone of the US-led military alliance. Both NATO and the EU have played important roles since Russia's war on Ukraine started. The EU was established after the Second World War and has expanded significantly since then, with 27 members part of the group today. NATO was established during the Cold War, mainly with the aim of securing Western European countries against the threat of Soviet Union. It has 30 members today.

## Maduro '100% defeatable' - Opposition

CARACAS: With the end of his symbolic interim government, which Juan Guaido hoped would push President Nicolas Maduro from power, the opposition leader is now proposing primary elections to reunify fractured opposition, insisting that Maduro is "defeatable". "The problem we have today is to reunify the democratic alternative. Once the democratic alternative is reunited, Maduro is 100 percent defeatable," the 39-year-old said Monday in an interview with AFP in Caracas, ahead of presidential elections slated for 2024. Guaido, who is the target of numerous judicial processes in his country, hopes the primaries can take place in the first half of this year. Riven by divisions, the opposition itself has recently eliminated the "interim government" that in January 2019 had been recognized by the United States and fifty other countries due to challenges to Maduro's re-election a year earlier. Are you disappointed with the old allies who withdrew support for the "interim government"? "We are focused on what we have demanded from early on: free elections, a presidential election that we have been owed since 2018, and the pending task is to reunify the democratic alternative, which is the majority."

## Myanmar jails more than 100 Rohingya

YANGON: Myanmar authorities have sentenced 112 Rohingya, including a dozen children, to between two and five years in prison for attempting to travel to Malaysia "without legal documents", state media reported Tuesday. The group were arrested last month in the southern Ayeyarwady region and sentenced on January 6, according to a report by the Global New Light of Myanmar, which cited local police. The children were transferred to a "youth training school" near commercial hub Yangon on January 8, the newspaper reported, without giving further details. The report referred to the group as "Bengalis," using a pejorative word for the Muslim minority, who are denied citizenship in Buddhist-majority Myanmar and often require permission to travel. A military crackdown in Myanmar in 2017 sent hundreds of thousands of Rohingya fleeing into neighbouring Bangladesh with harrowing stories of murder, rape and arson. Myanmar is facing genocide accusations at the United Nations' top court following the mass exodus. —DNA

## 11 people killed in Philippine storms

MANILA: At least 11 people have died in storms across the Philippines in the past week, with more heavy rain expected in already sodden regions of the disaster-prone country, authorities said Tuesday. Bad weather has plagued the country's southern and central islands since the Christmas weekend when downpours triggered flooding and landslides that left 52 people dead and forced hundreds of thousands to flee their homes. Since January 3, back-to-back storms have killed 11 people as floodwaters swept through houses, cut roads and swamped crops, the civil defence office said.

The state weather forecaster warned Tuesday of "serious flooding" in low-lying areas and landslides in the mountains of the central island of Samar. Heavy rain has already inundated villages, with water levels reaching three metres (10 feet) in some places. So far, one person was missing and more than 2,200 people had been evacuated from their homes, said Josh Echano, Northern Samar provincial disaster officer. The number of evacuees was expected to rise. "The flood is progressing since yesterday, it's not subsiding," Echano said. "This could be fatal. This could be one of the worst (floods)." The Philippines is ranked among the most vulnerable nations to the impacts of climate change. —APP

## 'Italy, Japan to forge strategic partnership'

ROME: Italy and Japan are to forge a strategic partnership, Premier Giorgia Meloni said after talks in Rome Tuesday with Prime Minister Fumio Kishida. Saying that ties between the two countries would be raised to that new level, Meloni hailed the already high level of bilateral trade, at 12 billion euros. "We had a long talk starting from the excellent bilateral relations that exist between Italy and Japan, which have trade of 12 billion euros a year," said the Italian premier. "I recall the launch on 9 December together with the United Kingdom of a programme aimed at developing a sixth generation vehicle on civil sectors and scientific

research. "We agreed to elevate our relationship to the status of strategic partnership, a significant step and a strengthening of our contacts with the opening of new opportunities". Meloni went on: "In addition to ensuring full support to Ukraine, we want to work with the Japanese presidency (of the G7) on certain priorities proposed by Japan, such as the protection of the rules-based international order, strengthening economic security, protecting supply chains and upping the fight against climate change. "These are all challenges on which there is a lot of work to be done, we will deepen these issues related to international politics, starting with the consequences of the war in Ukraine". The partnership would entail a mechanism of bilateral consultations on foreign policy and defence which will cover "all the areas of global and regional themes of mutual interest." Meloni added. Among the fields of heightened cooperation, Kishida, speaking through an interpreter, cited diplomacy, investment, railways and cinema. The Japanese leader began a tour of key Western partners on Monday after unveiling his country's biggest military buildup since World War Two as Tokyo weighs steps to counter China's growing power. Kishida hosts a summit of the Group of Seven (G7) industrial powers in May, which he said would reiterate the G7's commitment to helping Ukraine in its efforts to repel Russia's invasion and also focus on the security of the Indo-Pacific region. Last month Japan, Italy and Britain announced the Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP) venture to develop by 2035 a next-generation jet which would combine the British-led Tempest project with Japan's F-X programme. —Agencies

## Extremist movements' are biggest threat to democracy, peace

*First, the systematic use of lies to get more followers. Second, resorting to insults and verbal violence to poison harmonious societies*

OVIEDO: Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez warned about the dangers of "extremist movements" after thousands of supporters of former President Jair Bolsonaro raided Brazil's Congress and presidential offices. "The news from Brazil reminds us that the biggest threat to democracy, peace and prosperity around the world – from north to south, east to west – is the resurgence of extremist movements willing to destroy everything," Sanchez said at an ambassadors' conference in Madrid. The Spanish premier broke down the methods of these "extremist" movements, which he said follow the exact same pattern in nation after nation. "First, the systematic use of lies to get more followers. Second, resorting to insults and verbal violence to poison harmonious societies ... and finally, an attack of democratic institutions and democratic legality." He argued that values like democracy, gender equality and international law are the "best antidotes" to the "repulsive phenomenon" that triggered assaults on both Washington and Brasilia. Sanchez emphasized his support for Brazil's President Lula da Silva and said Spain would continue promoting democratic values with "intense" foreign policy activities in 2023. In the second half of the year, Spain will assume the presidency of the Council of the EU. —APP



BAGHDAD: Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani meeting with the senior chairman of the Iraqi Foreign Relations Committee, Aamer H. Al-Faez. —APP

## Maduro denounces US policy in Venezuela a 'failure'

President Maduro, in his remarks on Monday, also extended his solidarity to his Brazilian counterpart, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, following attacks from the extreme right that he said "does not accept the legitimate power of the people's votes, that does not accept the sovereignty of countries"

## NEWS DESK

CARACAS: Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro has denounced the US parallel institution policy in his country, calling Washington's attempt to assault and replace the public institutions of his country a "failure." Maduro made the remarks during the opening ceremony of Venezuela's now-defunct opposition-led National Assembly (NA) session in the new year, according to TeleSurTV website.

Criticizing the US attempt to shift political powers in his country, he said the "Trumpist policy against Venezuela of assaulting and replacing the public powers of appointing us a president, to name us a National Assembly, to name us a judicial power from outside failed." "The US

Empire and its representatives in Venezuela have no shame in criticizing themselves and saying that we made a mistake and failed in Venezuela," the Venezuelan president asserted. "Venezuela knows that the one who makes the laws, who legislates, who appoints, who governs in parliament in Venezuela is the National Assembly elected in December 2020, installed on January 5, 2021, which with this new board of directors enters its third year of five years of unappealable period". He urged Brian Nichols, the US Deputy Secretary of State for the Western Hemisphere, to learn about ways of legislation in Venezuela by visiting the Latin American country. President Maduro further called on the Venezuelan opposition and its backers in the US to stop stealing government resources through fake

institutions. The Venezuelan head of state broke off relations with the US when the administration of then-president Donald Trump said it would refuse to recognize the Latin American nation's election results of the previous year, which had reinstated Maduro in power. Washington instead began throw-

ing its weight behind opposition figure, Juan Guaido, as Venezuela's so-called interim president. Last month, Venezuela's US-backed opposition voted to remove the so-called "interim government" led by Guaido in a sign that Washington has conceded it cannot overthrow the democratically-elected government of Maduro. The opposition groups are reportedly seeking a "united front" ahead of presidential elections tentatively scheduled for 2024 after failing to remove Maduro, who won re-election to a six-year term in 2018. The US, along with dozens of allied countries – mainly in Western Europe – have refused to recognize the democratically-elected Maduro government in Venezuela, terming it "fraudulent", while backing the opposition-led so-called interim government. Also in November 2022, Washington

lifted its oil embargo on Caracas by allowing the second-largest US oil company to resume production in Venezuela and to import the South American country's crude into the United States. Chevron Corp received an expanded US license to revive existing oil projects in the US-sanctioned country and bring new oil supplies to refineries in the United States. However, it restricts cash payments to Venezuela, in order to control the amount of money entering the country. President Maduro, in his remarks on Monday, also extended his solidarity to his Brazilian counterpart, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, following attacks from the extreme right that he said "does not accept the legitimate power of the people's votes, that does not accept the sovereignty of countries."



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## Briefs

### Dutch grant licence to exiled Russian TV channel

THE HAGUE: The Dutch media regulator has granted a licence to Russian independent channel Dozhd, or TV Rain, the network said Tuesday, after Latvia revoked the broadcaster's permit. The channel, which moved to Latvia after Russian authorities blocked its broadcasts for critical coverage of the war in Ukraine, was barred after Latvia accused it of breaching local laws. "TV channel Dozhd received a European licence for broadcasting. It was given by the Dutch media regulator for five years," the network said on messaging app Telegram.

"This means Dozhd may return to the cable network from which it was disconnected because of the revocation of its licence," the network said. Dozhd said it would move its editorial offices to Amsterdam and the studio there "will become the main one as soon as employees receive work permits in the Netherlands". It will however maintain some staff in Riga as Latvia remains "the most important" country for the channel in terms of editorial strategy. Latvia had accused Dozhd, which was founded in 2010 as the main opposition TV channel in Russia, of multiple violations that included allegedly supporting Russian soldiers fighting in Ukraine. The channel was also accused of showing the annexed Crimean peninsula as part of Russia and failing to ensure Latvian language translation. - APP

India set to demolish buildings in Himalayan town

#### WEB DESK

NEW DELHI: Hundreds of people in the northern Himalayan town of Joshimath have been evacuated and authorities are set to demolish some of the damaged buildings, Indian officials and local media reported on Tuesday. In early January, large cracks began appearing on the roads and buildings in the town. This was due to a process called land subsidence, which is a gradual sinking of the ground due to movement of materials underground, according to the US National Geodetic Survey (NDS).

The NGS states that the usual causes are due to "the removal of water, oil, natural gas or mineral resources out of the ground by pumping, fracking or mining activities." The exact cause of the land subsidence in Joshimath remains unclear. However, experts and residents have blamed the damage on large scale construction projects undertaken by government run-companies. Nearly 700 houses have suffered cracks and close to 400 people have been moved to safer locations. "We will demolish some unsafe buildings based on the recommendation and under the guidance of federal experts," Himanshu Khurana, a senior district official in the region, told Reuters.

# Russia throws forces into assault on Ukraine's Soledar

## NATO, EU vow more support for Ukraine

Troops from both sides have been taking heavy losses there in some of the most intense trench warfare since Russia invaded Ukraine nearly 11 months ago

DNA

KYIV: Ukrainian forces are facing waves of assaults by Russian forces on the small salt-mining town of Soledar, Kyiv officials said on Tuesday, as Moscow strives to make its first breakthrough in the east in months. Britain's Defence Ministry said Russian troops and mercenaries of the Wagner group were probably now in control of most of the town after advances in the last four days. Seizing Soledar would give an advantage to Russian forces as they fight to capture the city of Bakhmut, a few kilometres (miles) to the southwest. Troops from both sides have been taking heavy losses there in some of the most intense trench warfare since Russia

BRUSSELS: NATO and the EU vowed Tuesday to bolster their backing for Ukraine to fight off Russia's invasion and ramp up cooperation between Europe and the US-led alliance. Longstanding designs by NATO and EU to forge greater cooperation have gained impetus from the West's support of Ukraine. "We must continue to strengthen the partnership between NATO and the European Union. And we must further strengthen our support to Ukraine," NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg said after signing a joint declaration with the EU's top officials. Countries in NATO and the EU – which share 21 members – have funnelled billions of dollars of arms to Kyiv that have helped it push back Moscow's forces. The United States, Germany and France have announced they will now also supply Ukraine with armoured fighting vehicles – but Kyiv has pleaded for modern heavy tanks to be sent as well. "I think that Ukraine should get all the necessary military equipment they need and they can handle to defend the homeland," European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said. "This means of course, advanced air defence systems, but also other types of advanced military equipment, as long as it is necessary to defend Ukraine." Stoltenberg said Kyiv's Western backers will meet next week with Ukraine's defence minister "to discuss exactly what types of weapons are needed and how can allies provide those weapons". "This is not only about adding more systems, more platforms, more weapons, but also ensuring that the platforms, the weapons we have already provided, are working as they should," he said. Moscow's attack on Ukraine has upended the European security order and spurred calls for the EU and NATO to work more closely together to protect the continent. - APP



LAHORE: Mehran Mohdpar, the new Consul General appointed in Lahore, Islamic Republic of Iran, began his duties by visiting the mausoleum of poet Allama Dr. Muhammad Iqbal. - APP

### US dollar pushes Pak rupee further down

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The rupee was depreciated by another nine paisas against the US dollar in the interbank trading on Tuesday apparently ignoring the positive outcome of the Geneva conference where billions of dollars were pledged to rebuild Pakistan's flood-affected regions. According to currency dealers, the greenback continued its upward trajectory during morning trading activity and appreciated by nine paisas. It was traded at Rs227.50. Yesterday, the PKR slid 27 notches down letting US dollar to settle at Rs227.41 towards the close. The local unit is constantly under stress due to bleak macro indicators, dwindling forex reserves and delay in the IMF's tranche. But after yesterday's Geneva conference, it is hoped that the country would get a respite. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday asked the IMF for a pause in its demands for economic reforms before releasing more financial aid, as the country tries to rebuild after catastrophic floods. "We had to again connect with the IMF and resurrect an agreement which was violated by the previous government – and accept even harsher conditionalities," said Shehbaz. He said Pakistan was complying with the IMF's conditions "as best as possible" but asked "how on earth" the additional burdens could be shouldered by the country's poorest.

## Mushahid Hussain lambasts int'l community on G-20 moot in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Senate's Standing Committee on Defence Mushahid Hussain Sayed on Tuesday lambasted the world community for its double standards and silence over India's attempts to hold the Group of Twenty (G-20) Summit 2023 in the disputed territory of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). It was rather incumbent upon the world to foil such Indian attempts in solidarity with the oppressed innocent Kashmiris facing the worst state-sponsored human rights abuses, he said while talking to a private news channel. Senator Mushahid said, "If the world is much concerned then G-20 forum should hold its session in Kyiv, the capital of Ukraine, which is under Russian attack." He said the inter-

national community should not turn a blind eye to the plight of Kashmiris facing the worst violence and persecution at the hands of Indian occupant forces. But its silence over the Kashmiris' loud cries for justice and the just right to self-determination, and India's unilateral decisions on the disputed territory's issues showed its duplicity, he added.

The Group of Twenty (G-20) is a leading international economic cooperation forum that has played a key role in shaping and strengthening international governance and framework on all major international economic issues. India got its presidency for a year on December 1, 2022.

According to the G-20 official website, the summit logo was inspired by the

## China suspends visas for Japan, South Korea

BEIJING: China suspended issuing short-term visas to South Korea and Japan on Tuesday, after announcing it would retaliate against countries that required negative COVID-19 tests from Chinese travellers. China has ditched mandatory quarantines for arrivals and allowed travel to resume across its border with Hong Kong since Sunday, removing the last major restrictions under the "zero-COVID" regime which abruptly began dismantling in early December after historic protests against the curbs. But the virus is spreading unchecked among its 1.4 billion people and worries

over the scale and impact of its outbreak have prompted Japan, South Korea, the United States and other countries to require negative COVID tests from travellers from China. Although China imposes similar testing requirements for all arrivals, foreign ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin told reporters on Tuesday entry curbs for Chinese travellers were "discriminatory" and China would take "reciprocal measures". In the first retaliatory move, the Chinese embassy in South Korea suspended issuing short-term visas for South Korean visitors. It would adjust the policy subject to the lift-

ing of South Korea's "discriminatory entry restrictions" against China, the embassy said on its official WeChat account.

The Chinese embassy in Japan later announced a similar move, saying that the mission and its consulates had suspended the issuing of visas from Tuesday. The embassy statement did not say when they would resume. The move came soon after Japan toughened COVID-19 rules for travellers coming directly from China, prescribing a negative result of a PCR test taken less than 72 hours before departure, as well as a negative test on arrival in Japan. read more

With the virus let loose, China has stopped publishing daily infection tallies. It has been reporting five or fewer deaths a day since the policy U-turn, figures that have been disputed by the World Health Organization and are inconsistent with funeral providers reporting surging demand. - Agencies

## China-Pakistan joint drills strengthen ties: Naval Chief

BEIJING: Chief of Naval Staff of Pakistan Admiral M Amjad Khan Niazi has said that the interaction between the navies of Pakistan and China provided an opportunity to enhance interoperability, share experience to optimally utilize common sensors, iron out procedures and "further elevate our relations." In that regard, the Sea Guardian series of exercises serve the objectives of fostering interoperability and sharing professional experience to deal with contemporary traditional and non-traditional security threats, he said in an exclusive interview with Global Times.

Pakistan Navy plans to host the AMAN-23 multinational maritime exercise in February this year, with the Chinese Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) Navy, having taken part in previous editions, are again expected to participate.

China and Pakistan have been maintaining close naval and maritime exchanges and cooperation in re-

cent years, including joint drills. Elaborating briefly on the upcoming exercise, Admiral Niazi said that Exercise AMAN was the premier multinational maritime exercise of Pakistan Navy which "has been conducted biennially since 2007." "The exercise is conducted with the aim to develop synergy between participating naval units to tackle maritime security challenges by enhancing interoperability between regional and extra regional navies at different levels of technological prowess", he added. He said that the eighth series of Exercise AMAN would be held in Karachi from February 10 to 14, this year. "The format of the exercise has two distinct phases: First, the harbor phase which will be held from February 10 to 12, followed by the sea phase from February 13 to 14", he added. During the harbor phase, various professional and social activities will be conducted to share experiences on

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**SHC rejects MQM-P's petition against delimitation**

DNA

KARACHI: The Sindh High Court (SHC) on Tuesday turned down a petition filed by the Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) against delimitations for second phase of local government elections in Karachi and Hyderabad. A larger bench of the high court issued the verdict after hearing arguments from the MQM-P ahead of the LG election in the port city and Hyderabad on Jan 15. The MQM-P counsel claimed the Sindh government made the delimitation of towns and union councils (UCs) keeping in view its own political benefits. It also sought orders for the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to conduct afresh delimitation. While rejecting MQM-P's petition, the SHC remarked that it had already issued verdict on the political party's plea against the ECP notification on delimitation in Karachi, adding that it was also upheld by the Supreme Court. Earlier, a two-member bench sent a petition of the MQM-P seeking a larger bench to the chief justice. A day earlier, the top electoral body rejected a petition of the MQM-P, seeking use of new voter lists for the Karachi and Hyderabad local government elections.

**Canada announces additional US\$25 mln for flood victims**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Harjit S. Sajjan, Minister of International Development and Minister responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada, has announced an additional US\$ 25 million in funding in response to the flooding in Pakistan, which will support development projects focused on recovery, reconstruction, and resilience.

The minister announced financial support at the International Conference on Climate Resilient Pakistan, held in Geneva, Switzerland, said a news release issued here by the Canadian High Commission Islamabad on Tuesday. The focus of the conference was on mobilizing financial and technical support for flood response and recovery. Canada's participation underscored its continued engagement in and response to the ongoing situation in Pakistan.

The funding announced by Minister Sajjan will go toward supporting projects aligned with the Government of Pakistan's Resilient Recovery, Rehabilitation, and Reconstruction Framework. This multi-sectoral strategy for climate-resilient rehabilitation and reconstruction in response to floods was presented at the conference in Geneva.

It is pertinent to mention here that Minister Sajjan visited the flood-hit region in September 2022 and observed the humanitarian response underway to gain a better understanding of what the people of Pakistan face.