



Islamabad POST

Thursday, January 12, 2023

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 25

North Korea's spike in missile tests pose a "serious threat"

Detailed News On Page-08

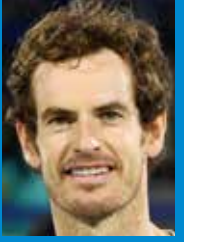
Greece's last king Constantine dies aged 82

Detailed News On Page-07



No career end in sight for Murray

Detailed News On Page-06



President Macron played key role PM praises friends of Pakistan for generous support

Shehbaz Sharif says Pakistan will never disappoint his benefactors; Bilawal assures transparency in utilization of funds on rightful projects

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Wednesday said the world reposed trust in Pakistan and pledged worth over \$9 billion in flood aid despite indiscriminate propaganda by the rivals - Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). Addressing the media the premier said the government would continue to help the people affected by cataclysmic floods till their complete rehabilitation. "At the conference, pledges worth \$9.7 billion were announced for the Pakistan flood victims," the PM said, congratulating his

federal ministers for the hard work they and their teams put in before this critical conference. "Islamic Development Bank promised \$4.2 billion, World Bank \$2 billion, Saudi Arab \$1 billion, Asian Infrastructure Development Bank \$1 billion, Asian Development Bank \$500 million, USAID \$100 million, China \$100 million, Italy €23 million, Japan \$77 million, Qatar \$25 million, UK £36 million, and France \$10 million," the prime minister said. The premier said that the world reposed trust in Pakistan despite the worst propaganda against the government, crediting his team for the success. "The ball is now in our court. We now have to

transparently spend every single penny on the people's prosperity." He said the presence of the representatives of all the provinces at the conference sent the message to the world that "we are united". "The global community showed confidence in the coalition government of Pakistan." The prime minister hailed Saudi Crown Prince Mohamad Bin Salman for his continuous assistance to Pakistan and generous support. Speaking on the occasion, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto, pointing toward PM Shehbaz, said "your foreign policy has been successful".

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif flanked by his allies briefs media about the outcome of the Geneva Conference. - DNA



ISLAMABAD: British outgoing High Commissioner to Pakistan, Dr Christian Turner pays a farewell call on President Dr Arif. - DNA

Ex-COAS helped PTI, Imran: Ch Sarwar

ALI FURQAN

ISLAMABAD: Former Governor Punjab and PTI leader Chaudhary Muhammad Sarwar says that former Army Chief General QamarBajwa helps PTI government and make way for Imran Khan for Prime minister office. In an Exclusive interview with VOA's Ali Furqan he acknowledged that the former Army Chief played a major role for PTI victory in the 2018 election and Imran Khan became Prime Minister. He said condemn Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)'s criticism of General (ret'd) Qamar Javed Bajwa said confrontation will be fine when you are in power. Sarwar says It's not fair to criticize Gen (r) Bajwa on personal grounds after his retirement. He added that "You can only confront when you are in power and once you are out of power the fighting should be stopped."

Continued on Page 06

Turner pays farewell call President Alvi for boosting Pak-UK bilateral trade ties

Appreciates the inclusion of Pakistan in the UK's Developing Countries Trading Scheme

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has underlined the need to take tangible steps to increase bilateral trade between Pakistan and the UK, which stood at \$3.1 billion in 2021, to US\$ 10 billion per year in a short span of time by fully utilizing the existing opportunities, exploring new avenues and markets, diversifying products and services, and ensuring economic and political stability in the country. The President expressed these views while talking to UK's outgoing High Commissioner to Pakistan, Dr Christian Turner, who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. Talking to the outgoing High Commissioner, the President said that enhanced bilateral cooperation to substantially increase trade and investment from the UK in Pakistan would also

Continued on Page 06

'UK desires economic growth in Pakistan'

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner Dr Christian Turner on Tuesday said the United Kingdom had deep relations with Pakistan and had a strong desire for its economic growth. Talking to a private television channel, he said the British government was supporting Pakistan to bring improvement in education and other sectors. As regards climate change, Christian Turner said the whole South Asian region was

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

Our efforts yielding results: Bilawal

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto has said that the efforts being made for the last eight months are yielding results. Addressing a joint press conference on Wednesday, he said that they had shown those who tried to show Pakistan's default how the world generously helped the country. The minister said that the government had collected the amount beyond expectation. "Problems have not yet been resolved. The economic condition of the flood victims will improve after the completion of our mission," he added.

Imran wont dissolve assemblies

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs Qamar Zaman Kaira says Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Imran Khan has no desire to dissolve assemblies in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab. Talking to a private television channel, he said the PTI government in Punjab did not have required numbers to protect CM Pervaiz Elahi. Qamar Zaman Kaira said PTI is blaming its partners in the Punjab assembly over corruption issues. In reply to a question about early elections, he said there is no harm in the elections before time as demanded by Imran Khan. However, he said, we will not accept any condition imposed by Imran Khan on elections.

Trust vote in Punjab PA PTI gets required number of MPs

Fawad Chaudhry says CM Pervaiz Elahi supported by 187 members

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Punjab Assembly on Wednesday went through a chaotic day as government allies demonstrated the support for CM Pervaiz Elahi by bringing the required numbers into the assembly. Earlier, in conversation with a private television channel, Fawad said that a total of 185 lawmakers of the PTI and Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) were present in the session, while two members were on their way to the assembly. Later those members also reached the Assembly, he claimed. Sources privy to the development said the team of the provincial government was in contact constantly to bring the lawmakers to the Punjab Assembly, adding that after the completion of the numbers game, the vote of confidence would



be taken. The development came after the Lahore High Court (LHC) ruled that the "governor is empowered to ask the chief minister to take a vote of confidence during an ongoing session" - a notion that the PTI had strongly rejected time and again. The LHC's order came when it held a hearing on CM Elahi's plea against his de-notification by Punjab Governor Baligh-Ur-Rehman. The governor removed the chief minister from the post last month through a notification after he failed to take a vote of confidence within the stipulated time.

Continued on Page 06

Imran alleges PTI members being intimidated, bribed - Says imported govt turned blind in revenge, violating constitution and law

ALI HAMZA

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman and former Prime Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday alleged that members of his party received threats along with the offers of money by telling them that a red line has been drawn on him [Imran Khan] and he has no future. Addressing the PTI parliamentary party leaders in Lahore on Wednesday, he said that after almighty Allah, the people of Pakistan are the inheritors of Pakistan and only Almighty Allah can draw redline. Imran Khan said that it has been decided to change the opinion of people by force, adding that "I don't know what kind of genius make such decisions." He praised PTI Members of

the Provincial Assembly (MPAs) for attending the session in large numbers despite facing difficulties in movement owing to the foggy condition in Lahore. He said that he is fully aware of how PTI MPAs are being pressurised and offered money to part ways with the political party. He also praised Pakistan Muslim League Quaid (PML-Q) lawmakers and Punjab Chief Minister Pervaiz Elahi for not accepting the pressure. "These people were also asked to part ways with the PTI and join the side of PML-N (Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz)," he said and alleged that PTI lawmakers and its allies are being told that they marked a red line on Imran Khan and they are going to minus Imran Khan. "Pakistan belongs to the Pakistanis. Only Pakistanis can mark a red line on someone but anyone else. If some people are arrogant enough to think about redlining any personality then they have no sense of politics, neither they read the history nor care for the country." He said that not a single political party gains such popularity in Pakistan as compared to the PTI.

Continued on Page 06

WINTER ESCAPE

SERENA ALTIIT FORT	SERENA SHIGAR FORT	GILGIT SERENA HOTEL
DOMESTIC PKR 18,000 PER NIGHT	DOMESTIC PKR 19,000 PER NIGHT	DOMESTIC PKR 15,000 PER NIGHT
INTERNATIONAL \$ 100 PER NIGHT	INTERNATIONAL \$ 110 PER NIGHT	INTERNATIONAL \$ 80 PER NIGHT

For reservations, please call: +92 05811 455894
or email at sales@serena.com.pk

SERENA HOTELS

serenahotelsofficial

serenahotelsofficial

UNODC establishes women, juvenile center in Gujranwala

OUR CORRESPONDENT

GUJRANWALA: The UNODC Country Office in Pakistan opens a Women & Juvenile Facilitation Center (W&JFC) in Gujranwala in collaboration with Punjab Police, with the financial support of the Government of Norway. The Women and Juvenile Facilitation Centre (WJFC) is the second facility of its kind established by UNODC in Punjab after successful operations of its forerunner Centre in Gujrat since 2019. The WJFC is modelled as per international standards, providing comprehensive services and compassionate environment to women and juvenile victims of violence for reporting, recording and investigation of crimes. In order to officially operationalize the Center, an inauguration ceremony was held at Saddar Police Station, Gujranwala today. Officials from the Royal Embassy of Norway, H.E Per Albert Ilsaas, Ambassador of Norway to Pakistan; Anja Myrtevit, Second Secretary Development Program; Per Martin Bjartan, Police Liaison Officer; Bilal Majeed, Program Advisor Development and Dr. Jeremy Milsom, Representative, UNODC Country Office Pakistan along with many senior officials from UNODC and Police Department attended the ceremony hosted by the Police Administration Gujranwala.

The inauguration of the WJFC marked an important milestone as part of a multi-year Government of Norway funded program "Enhanced Capacity of Criminal Justice Actors in Punjab" implemented by UNODC in collaboration with the Government of Punjab. The Program aimed to improve the organizational response of Criminal Justice Institutions toward the victims of crimes and violence and ensure better justice outcome, particularly in the cases of violence against women, girls, and juvenile. Mr. Munir Ahmad Marath, Regional Police Officer Gujranwala, welcomed the guests and extended gratitude to UNODC (COPAK) and Government of Norway for its gracious support and appreciated the Centre as a historic move in Gujranwala region towards protecting the vulnerable victims in need of help. He informed "the Center provides all necessary support and assistance under one roof, including medico-legal, first aid, psycho-social and legal assistance to the victims and complainants of domestic, gender-based violence and child abuse, and also provides two separate rooms for women and juvenile for arbitrary detentions and safe custody". Speaking at the occasion, H.E Per Albert Ilsaas, Ambassador of Norway to Pakistan underscored the need for upholding the rights of women, girls and children, particularly addressing

crimes of violence that are increasing at alarming rate in Pakistan. Dr. Jeremy Milsom, Representative, UNODC Country Office Pakistan highlighted UNODC's continued support towards enhancing the capacity of Criminal Justice sector in Punjab through multiple reform interventions, including training of more than 2,000 officials in Advance Investigation, Crime Scene Management and provision of Mobile Crime Scene Units Handling of GBV and Juvenile Cases and enhancing Police-Prosecution Coordination; establishing E-learning Centers in Gujrat, Gujranwala and PTC Lahore, and a Research Unit at Center for Professional Development for Prosecutors (CPD) in Lahore. In addition, multiple smart classrooms, investigation and interrogation rooms and digital libraries at different policing facilities and training centers for advance learning have also been established. Dr. Milsom thanked H.E. Per Ilsaas and the Government of Norway for their financial support and the Government of Punjab towards strengthening and improving the organizational response of the Criminal Justice System to support the vulnerable groups of women, girls and juvenile victims of violence, and the WJFC is an important breakthrough to serve this end.



ISLAMABAD: Students posing for a picture during the oath taking ceremony held at ICMG, F-6/2.—DNA

Girl hanged to death

STAFF REPORT

ATTOCK: Some unidentified killers hanged to death a ten year old girl after sexually assaulted at the outskirts village Veero of police station Rangoo here on Tuesday. Police that aggrieved father Mr. Karamat Khan reported to the local police that his ten year old daughter Rabia Babu was missing from house who was searched. Meanwhile, her dead body was found in front of his house. Soon after the incidence, police reached the spot of crime scene and took over the evidences.

Skardu's chill welcomes Ice-Hockey championship

ISLAMABAD: The scenic snow-clad mountains of Skardu freezing with chilly winds amid snowfall have welcomed the colorful event of Ice-Hockey Championship 2023 Skardu to promote and project winter sports tourism in the country. Talking to APP, an official of Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) said that the championship would be attended by huge crowds including locals, tourists and adventure seekers. APP

PDMA 's road clearance operation in snow-hit areas

Areas of Ziarat, Kan Mehtarzai and Muslim Bagh choked the major thoroughfares causing heavy traffic jams

ISLAMABAD: Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Balochistan has deployed snow-removing machinery and rescue teams for clearing the road blockades in snow-hit areas of the province to ensure a smooth flow of traffic. In order to avoid any emergency situation, PDMA Balochistan road clearance operation in snow-affected areas is going on in Kan Mehtarzai, Ziarat, Khojak and Lak pass areas of Qila Saifullah districts in Chaman and Mastung respectively. A PDMA official told that an alert has been issued to all concerned departments to take precautionary measures to avoid avalanche-related accidents

across the province. The departments concerned including Rescue 1122, Health, Revenue, Police, Livestock and others were directed to remain alert during this period of severe weather, he said. He added that heavy snowfall in the areas of Ziarat, Kan Mehtarzai and Muslim Bagh choked the major thoroughfares causing heavy traffic jams. However, heavy machinery was deployed that helped to evacuate vehicles stuck in the snow, the PDMA official said. "Roads are now clear and open for light vehicles whereas PDMA and Levies teams are spraying de-icing salt to ensure unimpeded traffic flow," he added.

He also advised people, particularly tourists, to avoid unnecessary travel in snow-bound and landslide-prone areas during the prevailing weather conditions and observe caution as roads were slippery. The provincial emergency centre at PDMA office Quetta is working round the clock and directed to coordinate with local administration and other departments concerned for timely response, he added. The authority has advised DDMA to coordinate with concerned departments for the arrangement and placement of necessary inventory and other essentials along with the availability of emergency services personnel at vulnerable locations.

Man shot dead in Attock

STAFF REPORT

ATTOCK: A person shot dead by some unknown target killers in a broad day light in village Saba Kamala within the jurisdiction of police station Rangoo here on Tuesday causing a severe panic and sense of insecurity among the people of locality. Police, said the one Latif Khan of village Charsad KPK was fired by some identified killers and fled away leaving the dead fluttering on the spot. Later on, the dead body was handed over to its real heirs after getting its post mortem from the local hospital.

California-Punjab sister province accord hailed

WASHINGTON: Speakers at a reception in Sacramento, California, hosted for a visiting Pakistani delegation, said Tuesday that the sister province agreement between California and Punjab marked a significant development towards strengthening US-Pakistan relations. Former Prime Minister Senator Yousaf Raza Gillani said the accord would deepen mutual cooperation in areas such as trade, agriculture, businesses, technology and environment and promote people-to-people contacts. In his remarks, Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States Masood Khan called it an important milestone in strengthening the linkages between California and the largest populated province of Pakistan that would bolster US-Pak ties. The reception, held at the Governor's mansion to celebrate the landmark accord, was attended, among others, by the Lieutenant Governor of California, the Speaker and a large number of California State Assembly members along with Pakistani-American community leaders. Senator Gillani expressed the hope that the agreement would be instrumental in tapping the untapped potential existing between the two countries.—APP

Expatriate shifts his business from Pak

QAZI SHOEB KHAN

ATTOCK: USA based leader of Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf Pakistan origin American business figure Syed Mohammad Arif Naqvi has compelled to shift his colossal foreign investments from Pakistan due to security lapses arisen in the recent wave of target killings in Attock along with lethargic attitude of district management and district police. This he said while narrating his frustrated ordeal to media at his residence here in Attock on Wednesday. While replying questions of the media persons, Syed Arif Naqvi told that he purchased a piece of land to launch an industry of wheat flour in Attock, processing of agricultural food products, besides creating job opportunities for the unemployed job seekers. But he was disappointed when his genuine request was kept under the conventional red carpet of the bureaucratic snags. The Pakistan origin American businessman Syed Arif Naqvi told that he became rolling stone when he approached to the district administration and police to file his formal request on January 10, 2023 to allow retention of weapon by his security guard for protection of his life, honour and property as per the prescribed legal procedure up to January 29, 2023 but they seem reluctant to entertain his genuine request. Even, the staff on duty refused to arrange a meeting with the District Police Officer

under the garb of his routine official business which lasted for an indefinite period. Meanwhile, he was asked to contact the office of Deputy Commissioner and Additional Deputy Commissioner General Attock. On this occasion, the Additional Deputy Commissioner General also shown his inability and advised to take up the matter with the office of Home Department Punjab for issuance of NOC. Syed Arif Naqvi, said that he was disappointed when his genuine request was dragged to the conventional red carpet of the bureaucratic snags under one pretext of the other. Resultantly, he has to get transferred his business from Pakistan if the district management and police failed to provide security cover to his life and property, he added.



KARACHI: Counsel General Turkey in Karachi Mr. Cemal Sangu hosted Mr. Sertan Yüce, a new Karachi General Manager Turkish Airlines, the flag carrier of country here on Wednesday. CG wishes him a great success in his new assignment in Pakistan.—DNA

Speakers call for effective media strategy for geostrategic interests

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The speakers at a workshop on discussed the role of fake news, propaganda and non-state actors working against geostrategic interests and stressed ensuring effective media strategy in this regard. The two-day workshop on 'Strategic Communications' was organized by Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) discussed the themes of digital journalism, social media landscape from democratization to disinformation, Stratcomm in Foreign Policy and Strategic Communications. Talha ul Huda, IPRI Advocacy Specialist; Syed Ali Abbas Zaidi, an activist and Nelson Mandela Award winner; Waqas

Jan, a public communication specialist; Baqir Sajjad Syed, Dawn Foreign Affairs correspondent; Aamir Ghauri, Senior Editor The News; Essa Hasan Naqvi, a senior

journalist; Aoun Sahi, senior producer and Controller PTV World, and Dr Adnan Rafiq, a senior communication specialist. Spokesperson for the Foreign Office Mumtaz

Zahra Baloch delivered the keynote address. The speakers discussed the need for strategizing dialogue, communication and storytelling.

It was discussed that how a professional attitude on part of poles of the State could prove a better scenario for media. It was stressed that with digitalisation, the conventional modes of diplomacy had changed in foreign policy. It was emphasized that the Stratcom's active role could help Pakistan protect its geostrategic interests and cope with emerging realities of statehood. The role of fake news, propaganda, non-state actors in media muzzling and vested corners were deliberated. The event was attended by President IPRI Amb. Dr Raza Muhammad, Director Research Dr Raashid Wali Janjua, Director StratCom IPRI Siddiq Humayun, Amb. Asif Durrani and journalists.



The Smooth Moving Connection

freeline MOVERS

PACKING, SHIPPING & FREIGHT FORWARDING

Our Services

- Packing
- Shipping
- Freight Forwarding
- Land, Sea & Air Freight
- Custom Clearance
- Relocations
- Office Removals
- Fine Art Handling
- Project Management
- Pet Relocation
- Warehousing
- Storage

Head Office
3rd Floor, Yasin Plaza, 74-West, Blue Area, Islamabad.
Tel: (+92 51) 2822471, 2274221, 2678029, 2272273, 2822711, 2874289 - Fax: (+92 51) 2825132, 2274227.
E-mail: moving@freelinemovers.com - Website: www.freelinemovers.com

Branch Offices:

Karachi Room No. 14 & 15, 3rd Floor, Makarim Mall, Main Tariq Road, 17D-Block-2, P.E.C.H.S. Karachi. Tel: (+92 21) 3458326, 3470479 Fax: (+92 21) 3458714 E-mail: karachi@freelinemovers.com	Lahore F-4, Gulberg Centre, Main Boulevard, Lahore. Tel: (+92 42) 3575981, 3576108 Fax: (+92 42) 3571142 E-mail: lahore@freelinemovers.com	Peshawar Office No. C-6, 2nd Floor Zahir Plaza, Laf Ahsan, Ring Road, Peshawar. Tel: (+92 91) 2567979 Fax: (+92 91) 2662988 E-mail: peshawar@freelinemovers.com	Kabul House # 4, Street # 4, Chandri Anzar Road, Shahr-e-Nasr, Kabul - Afghanistan. Tel: (+92 70001) 773, 83 79789, 888, 83 79488, 288 E-mail: kabul@freelinemovers.com
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

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.....	0334-5421812



Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....	8494949
-----------------------	---------



Emergency

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



Hospitals

CMH.....	5611111
MH.....	5611116
Dhant Hospital.....	9270907-11
CHQ.....	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
Rawal Town.....	5773343

Water Tank

Islamabad.....	0321-5744480
----------------	--------------



ISLAMABAD: Vehicles on the way at Islamabad Expressway during rain on Wednesday.—DNA

Light to moderate intensity rain lashes twin cities

ISLAMABAD: Light to moderate intensity rain lashing different parts of the country including the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad on Wednesday has subsided the foggy weather conditions and turned the weather cold. After the westerly wave entered north Balochistan on Tuesday, the rain started on Wednesday morning in the twin cities as per the forecast of the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) and continued with gaps till the present, decreasing the temperatures significantly. The cold weather has compelled the citizens to stay indoors most of the time and wear warm and cozy clothes to prevent themselves from seasonal diseases, especially cough and influenza. The rain after long dry weather conditions during this winter season will also improve the air quality for the sensitive groups by reducing the level of pollutants in the air. The consistent rain has also increased the demand for popular winter season delights like chicken corn soup, doodh jalebi, gajar ka halwa, kashmiri tea, samosas, pakoras, fried fish, dry fruits, etc. The snowfall accompanied by the rain spell in different hilly areas is attracting a number of tourists who are visiting these areas to enjoy the picturesque beauty of the season. According to the PMD, the westerly wave affecting the upper parts of the country is likely to persist till Friday afternoon. On Thursday, the met office indicated chances of rain and snowfall in Islamabad, Potohar region, Kashmir, Gilgit Baltistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and upper Punjab. —APP

Eagle squad checked 4230 suspects in last 24 hours

ISLAMABAD: The Eagle Squad of Islamabad Capital Police is playing a vital role in crime prevention from the city and checked more than 4230 suspicious persons, motorcycles and vehicles during the last 24 hours, a police public relations officer said. He said that, following the special directions of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Eagle Squad is working under the safe city Islamabad which is deployed in different areas of the city for patrolling and crime prevention. During the last 24 hours, the Eagle Squad checked 830 pedestrians, 2100 motorcycles and 1300 vehicles during special and snap checking out of which 60 suspicious persons, 595 suspicious motorcycles and 120 vehicles were impounded at various police stations.

China to provide \$100 mn additional aid to Pakistan

When coupled with the nearly \$200 million in flood relief provided before from the Chinese government, this brings the total China commitment to date to nearly \$300 million. "We have also carried out projects including smart hydrology, rehabilitation housing and mobile medical vehicles

DNA

ISLAMABAD: China will provide an additional \$100 million to continue supporting Pakistan's recovery efforts from the devastating 2022 floods, announced Luo Zhaohui, chairman of the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA), while attending the International Conference on Climate-Resilient Pakistan held in Geneva.

Also, regarding the technical assistance, from 2023 to 2025, China

plans to train 1,000 technical staff and officials focusing on disaster prevention and management, Luo added. According to a report published by Gwadar Pro, this funding reinforces China's commitment to the Pakistani people and will help address the climate crisis.

When coupled with the nearly \$200 million in flood relief provided before from the Chinese government, this brings the total China commitment to date to nearly \$300 million. "We have also carried out projects including smart hydrology, rehabilitation housing

and mobile medical vehicles. We will continue to provide real-time weather and disaster early-warning service; We have provided a post-disaster assessment report after Chinese experts' visit to the disaster sites in Pakistan.

We will be happy to share the experience in reconstruction and engage with Pakistani officials in this regard; We are also considering setting up the South-Asia Disaster Relief Supplies Reserve," he pinpointed. Officials from some 40 countries as well as private donors and international financial institu-

tions are gathering for a meeting in Geneva on January 9 as Islamabad seeks help covering around half of a total recovery bill of \$16.3 billion. Pakistan said that donors had committed to giving more than \$8 billion to help it recover from last year's devastating floods in what is seen as a major test for those who pay for climate disasters. Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb sent a tweet saying that pledges had reached \$8.57 billion - more than the \$8bn it had initially sought. The Pakistani government will provide \$8bn from its own funds towards

the "resilient Pakistan" programme. Responding to this, Prime Minister noted in his Twitter account that the world has witnessed how nations can come together in a show of solidarity to create a model of a "win-win partnership" to lift suffering humanity out of tragedy. "I was deeply moved by the compassion on display at Geneva Conference. Together we will rebuild lives and hopes," he added. Water is still receding from the floods caused by monsoon rains and melting glaciers which killed at least 1,700 people and displaced around 8 million in Pakistan.

Tetra-partite MoU signed to promote InCopy-Pakistan coop

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A signing ceremony for the joint operation agreement of Pak-China Technical and Vocational Institute (PCT & VI), built under CPEC, was held in the presentation hall of China Business Center in Gwadar Free Zone, according to China Economic Net (CEN). The tetra-partite agreement was signed by representatives from Gwadar Port Authority, University of Gwa-

dar, Shandong Institute of Commerce and Technology, China, and China Overseas Ports Holding Company. The event was attended by students, and professionals from all walks of life. According to the agreement, the four parties will be collectively responsible for the operation and management of the institute. For this purpose, an executive body will be formed for policy making and implementation. PCT & VI is one of the many grant projects initiated in Gwadar

by China. The mega-project was completed at a cost of \$10 million and handed over to Gwadar Port Authority in September 2021. This project, among the many other livelihood support programs undertaken by the Government of China, is widely supported by the local people of Gwadar. In the preliminary operation program under National Vocational and Technical Commission of Pakistan (NAVTC), 130 local students - majored in various

technical fields - graduated from the institute. Upon its handover, henceforth, short courses and long diploma certification will be offered in conventional and non-conventional fields with more relevancy to port and free zone operation. The systematic arrangement of the parties offers chances for subsequent on-site training and ultimately job opportunities for the young graduates. It will also yield more skilled manpower for the local community.

FGEHA to launch residential projects in eight cities

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) will shortly start new residential projects in eight major cities of the country to provide housing to government employees and general public. "The authority has already received several applications from land owners, companies and firms interested in the mega projects," sources in the FGEHA told a state run news agency. They said the applications were invited from land owners, developers, firms and eligible individuals for the supply of land for housing schemes (plots, houses and apartments) projects in major cities of the country. The procedure for applications and selection was being followed as per Joint Venture Regulations 2020, they added. They said the authority was planning to launch new residential projects in eight major cities of the country, including the twin cities Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Other cities are Lahore, Peshawar, Quetta, Multan, Faisalabad and Karachi. "The new housing projects will be started for federal government employees and the general public on the basis of a joint venture," they added. To a question, they said the pace of different development projects, being executed under the FGEHA, has been accelerated significantly to provide modern residential facilities to employees in the shortest possible time.—DNA

Sherry condemns Imran Khan's remarks



ISLAMABAD Federal Minister for Climate Change, Senator, Sherry Rehman on Wednesday condemned Imran Khan's statement pertaining to Pakistan-Afghanistan diplomatic relations and terrorism during a seminar on the resurgence of terrorism via video link. In a series of tweets, the minister criticised the former prime minister and chief of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for making irresponsible statements on critical issues of national importance. Sherry Rehman said, "As a former prime minister, Imran Khan is not representing Pakistan but someone else. Imran Khan knows the security issues and history of the region as much as he knows the geography of Germany and Japan." She criticised that the person (Imran Khan) under whose rule Pakistan became a victim of foreign isolation was today exhorting Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on foreign affairs. Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto's eight months of diplomatic achievements had no comparison to Imran Khan's four years of diplomatic isolation, Sherry Rehman said. "Imran Khan had plunged the country into a diplomatic quagmire," she added. The PTI chief had claimed that the ill-equipped police could not confront well-equipped terrorists that had automatic weapons to curb terrorism during his speech at the seminar. Responding to Khan's remarks, the minister said, "Our police and other law enforcement agencies are on the frontline against terrorists and are our first line of defence." She added that Imran Khan had also insulted the brave police of Pakistan. "It is a pity that instead of encouraging the police, Imran Khan is discouraging them," Sherry Rehman said.—DNA

IGP directs for smooth traffic flow

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Dr Akbar Nasir Khan has directed all police officials to ensure smooth flow of traffic on the highways during rush hours and deploy additional cops at the under-construction roads or sites in Islamabad. He visited different areas of the city and reviewed the security as well as traffic situation on the roads across the city. He checked the pickets installed at various places and directed for elaborate security measures. The Islamabad police chief also visited traffic headquarters, met the officials on duty, asked them about their nature of work and directed them to facilitate the public in every possible way. During the visit, Dr Akbar Nasir Khan said that it was their top priority to ensure protection of lives and properties of the citizens. "Presence of police gives the citizens a sense of security and all officials should perform their duties with commitment and dedication", he added. The IGP further said that Islamabad Capital Police was a professional force which "has dealt with all kinds of law and order, security and crime situations in the city." —APP

Company urged to recall defected batch

ISLAMABAD: Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) has directed a drug manufacturing company to immediately recall its defected batch of a product from the market. According to a recall alert issued by DRAP, all pharmacists and chemists working at distributions and pharmacies have been asked to immediately return the stock of a batch of product to the supplier, importer, and the company. The Central Drugs Laboratory Karachi had declared that batch No. CJ170 of Paracetamol 1g/100ml Infusion, active ingredients of Paracetamol, manufactured by M/s. Standpharm Pakistan (Pvt.) Ltd., Lahore as a

substandard and adulterated drug product with a manufacturing date of September 20, 2022, and an expiry date of September 20, 2024. All concerned distributors and pharmacies have been advised to be vigilant and report any suspected batch of product in the supply chain to the DRAP using the online form, or through phone at +92 5191073-17, or Email at gsm@dra.gov.pk. The authority advised the consumers and the general public to stop using this product bearing the affected batch numbers and contact their physician or healthcare provider if they have experienced any problems related to taking or using this drug product, and report the incident to DRAP's National Pharmacovigilance Centre. It said all therapeutic goods must be obtained from licensed pharmacies and other authorized retail outlets. The authenticity and condition of products should be carefully checked and seek advice from pharmacists or other healthcare professionals in case of any doubt, it added. The authority also asked that any adverse reactions or quality problems experienced with the use of this product may be reported to the National Pharmacovigilance Centre (NPC), DRAP using the adverse event reporting form or online through this link. —APP



RAWALPINDI: President RCCI, Saqib Rafiq along with other members posing for a photo after meeting of the standing committee for skills development at Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce.—DNA

Briefs

Ibn-e-Insha remembered on death anniversary

ISLAMABAD: Noted Urdu poet, humorist, travelogue writer, and journalist Ibn-e-Insha was remembered here on Wednesday in the literary circles on his 45th death anniversary. The real name of Ibn-e-Insha was Sher Muhammad Khan while in Urdu literary world he was known by his pen name Ibn-e-Insha. He was born in Phillaur tehsil of Jalandhar District, Punjab and his father hailed from Rajasthan. He did B.A. from Punjab University in 1946 and M.A. from the University of Karachi in 1953. Ibn e Insha was an eminent Pakistani Leftist Urdu poet and columnist. Along with his poetry, he was regarded as one of the best humorists of Urdu. Insha's most famous ghazal Insha Ji Utthoo Ab Kooch Karo (Rise oh Insha Ji, and let us set off) is an influential classic ghazal. He had written several travelogues, showcasing his sense of humour and his work has appreciated by both Urdu writers and critics. He was associated with various government services including Radio Pakistan, the Ministry of Culture and the National Book Center of Pakistan.—APP

Police search 73 houses in different areas

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi District Police on special directives of City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi on Wednesday searched 73 houses and 60 shops in the jurisdiction of different police stations. According to a police spokesman, heavy police contingents, Elite Force, Special Branch personnel and Ladies police under the supervision of senior police officers conducted search operations and searched 73 houses, and 60 shops, besides checking the particulars of 21 tenants. Over 386 persons were also checked during the operations, he added. The spokesman informed that Rawalpindi district police on the directives of Inspector General of Police, Punjab Amir Zulfikar Khan also conducted two major search operations against the land grabbers in Chontra and Chakri areas and rounded up 107 accused on recovery of illegal weapons. Police had registered cases against the accused under the anti-terrorism act and other related sections of the law, he added. City Police Officer, Rawalpindi Syed Shehzad Naadeem Bukhari had directed the police officers to take strict action against the land mafia and zero tolerance policy should be adopted against the land grabbers, he added. He said search operations in line with the vision of IGP Punjab were being conducted to net the outlaws including land grabbers. Senior Superintendent of Police, Operations, Rawalpindi Waseem Riaz Khan said that search operations were being conducted to net criminals and other lawbreakers.—APP

18% surplus witnessed in Pakistan Bangladesh trade

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's goods and services trade with Bangladesh witnessed a surplus of 18.64 percent during first five months of current fiscal year (2022-23) as compared to the corresponding period of last year. The trade surplus during the months under review was recorded at \$329.668 million against \$277.863 million during same months of last year, showing 18.64 percent growth. The overall exports to Bangladesh were recorded at \$365.290 million during July-November (2022-23) against exports of \$316.680 million during July-November (2021-22), showing growth of 15.34 percent, SBP data revealed.—APP

IRSA releases 23,600 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Wednesday released 23,600 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 37,900 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1495.92 feet and was 97.92 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 17,400 cusecs while outflow as 5,000 cusecs. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1120.05 feet, which was 70.05 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 5,900 cusecs and 4,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded 14,300, 13,600, 4,500 and 4,900 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 9,100 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 5,500 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP

World Economic Forum' Global Risks Report 2023

Tensions peak between cost of living crisis and climate action

Pakistan faces digital vulnerability and cybersecurity, rapid inflation, debt crisis, possible state collapse, interstate conflict and terrorism as top risks for the next 24 months

DNA

ISLAMABAD: For the past 17 years the World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report has warned about deeply interconnected global risks. Conflict and geo-economic tensions have triggered a series of deeply interconnected global risks, according to the World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report 2023. These include energy and food supply crunches, which are likely to persist for the next two years, and strong increases in the cost of living and debt servicing. At the same time, these crises risk undermining efforts to tackle longer-term risks, notably those related to climate change, biodiversity, and investment in human capital. On Pakistan, the Global Risk Report identifies that a combination of extreme weather events and constrained supply could lead the current cost-of-living crisis into a catastrophic scenario of hunger and distress for millions. This can also turn the energy crisis towards a humanitarian crisis. Energy shortages – because of supplier shut-offs or natural, accidental, or intentional damage to pipelines and energy grids – could cause

widespread blackouts and fatalities if combined with seasonal extreme weather. The Global Risk Report 2023 identified the top ten risks that pose the biggest threats to Pakistan in the next two years have been identified as: 1) Digital power concentration and monopolies, 2) Failure of cybersecurity measures (including, loss of privacy, data fraud or theft, cyber espionage), 3) Rapid and/or sustained inflation, 4) Debt crises, 5) State collapse, 6) Lack of widespread digital services and digital inequality, 7) Interstate conflict, 8) Terrestrial biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse, 9) Terrorist attacks, 10) Employment and livelihood crisis. Amir Jahangir, Chief Executive Officer Mishal Pakistan, the Partners Institute for New Economy and Societies Platforms of the World Economic Forum said, "the Global Risk Report 2023 identifies that for Pakistan, both the affordability and availability of basic necessities can stoke social and political instability". He further said, "Last year, the increase in fuel prices alone led to protests in an estimated 92 countries, some of which resulted in political upheaval and fatalities, alongside strikes

and industrial shutdowns". He said, "the impact of insecurity will continue to be felt in Pakistan and may also exacerbate instability due to simultaneous food and debt crises. Resulting in the emergence of a possible more technocracy-based decision-making leadership framework. The Report identifies that the cost-of-living crisis is the biggest short-term risk while failure of climate mitigation and climate adaptation are the largest long-term concerns. The geopolitical rivalries and inward-looking stances will heighten economic constraints and further exacerbate both short- and long-term risks. The World Economic Forum in the Global Risk Report says that estimates suggest, over 800,000 hectares of farmland has been wiped out by 2022 floods in Pakistan – this has resulted in increasing commodity prices significantly in a country that is already grappling with record 27% inflation. Water stress is also widespread in Pakistan, this particularly impacts women and girls responsible for water collection, with knock-on impacts for health and education outcomes. More widespread scarcity, combined with

paralysis of international cooperation mechanisms, has necessitated a degree of water nationalism, resulting in prolonged disputes between neighbouring states and countries. In the face of spreading humanitarian crises and state instability, water infrastructure could continue to be used both as a weapon and target, mirroring past water conflicts and terrorism in India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. On the international front, at present, the global pandemic and war in Europe have brought energy, inflation, food, and security crises back to the fore. These create follow-on risks that will dominate the next two years: the risk of recession; growing debt distress; a continued cost of living crisis; polarized societies enabled by disinformation and misinformation; a hiatus on rapid climate action; and zero-sum geo-economic warfare. "The short-term risk landscape is dominated by energy, food, debt, and disasters. Those that are already the most vulnerable are suffering – and in the face of multiple crises, those who qualify as vulnerable are rapidly expanding, in rich and poor countries alike. In this already toxic mix of known and rising

global risks, a new shock event, from a new military conflict to a new virus, could become unmanageable. Climate and human development therefore must be at the core of concerns of global leaders to boost resilience against future shocks," said Saadia Zahidi, Managing Director, World Economic Forum. The report is produced in partnership with Marsh McLennan and Zurich Insurance Group, draws on the views of over 1,200 global risk experts, policymakers, and industry leaders. Across three timeframes, it paints a picture of the global risks landscape that is both new and eerily familiar, as the world faces many pre-existing risks that previously appeared to be receding. Unless the world starts to cooperate more effectively on climate mitigation and climate adaptation, over the next 10 years this will lead to continued global warming and ecological breakdown. Failure to mitigate and adapt to climate change, natural disasters, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation represent five of the top 10 risks – with biodiversity loss seen as one of the most rapidly deteriorating global risks over the next decade.

In parallel, crises-driven leadership and geopolitical rivalries risk creating societal distress at an unprecedented level, as investments in health, education and economic development disappear, further eroding social cohesion. The Report also sheds light on the rising rivalries risk not only growing geo-economic weaponization but also remilitarization, especially through new technologies and rogue actors. The coming years will present tough trade-offs for governments facing competing concerns for society, the environment and security. Already, short-term geo-economic risks are putting net-zero commitments to the test and have exposed a gap between what is scientifically necessary and politically palatable. Dramatically accelerated collective action on the climate crisis is needed to limit the consequences of a warming world. Meanwhile, security considerations and increasing military expenditure may leave less fiscal headroom to cushion the impacts of an elongated cost of living crisis. Without a change in trajectory, vulnerable countries could reach a perpetual state of crisis where they are unable

to invest in future growth, human development, and green technologies. The report calls on leaders to act collectively and decisively, balancing short- and long-term views. In addition to urgent and coordinated climate action, the report recommends joint efforts between countries as well as public-private cooperation to strengthen financial stability, technology governance, economic development and investment in research, science, education, and health. The Global Risks Report is a pillar of the Forum's Global Risks Initiative which works to promote greater common understanding of short-, mid- and long-term global risks to enable learning on risk preparedness and resilience. This year's report also examines how present and future risks can interact with each other to form a "polycrisis" – a cluster of related global risks with compounding impacts and unpredictable consequences. The report explores "Resource Rivalry", a potential cluster of interrelated environmental, geopolitical, and socioeconomic risks relating to the supply of and demand for natural resources including food, water, and energy.

Geneva conference termed Pakistan's success

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain on Wednesday said announcements and commitments of more than ten billion dollars for Pakistan by the international community in the Geneva Conference arranged by Pakistan and the UN is a success for Pakistan. The conference proves successful diplomacy and improvement in Pakistan-US relations by the current government, which will not only provide relief to the thirty million flood

victims but also end the rumours about Pakistan's default, he said. Mian Zahid Hussain said that the success of this conference has also shown that Pakistan's global isolation has ended and the international community stands with Islamabad. Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that the credit for the reduction of tensions with an important country like America goes to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, for which they deserve compliments. Due to the efforts of the Prime Minister, the provinces also participated in this

conference, which was a sign of national unity to the participants of the conference and sent a positive message, he added. The business leader also lauded the dedication, skills, and role of the relevant diplomats and other officials of Pakistan in this regard. Mian Zahid Hussain said that Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and his team have fulfilled their responsibilities. Economic Affairs Minister Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Planning and Development Minister Ahsan Iqbal, Environmental Minister Sherry Rehman and Information and Broadcasting Minister Maryam Aurangzeb also

made great efforts. The Information Minister highlighted the efforts of various ministries, the Minister of State for External Affairs worked hard, and the Foreign Secretary, ambassadors and other diplomats also worked day and night which yielded positive results. He said that after this success, the real challenge is to implement these announcements and promises, for which a transparent method of spending will have to be adopted and all the concerned people should also use their capabilities for it so that the international community is not disappointed.—DNA

Insufficient storage capacity causes 29 MAF water loss annually

ISLAMABAD: As much as about 29 Million Acre Feet (MAF) of water is going downstream Kotri and falling into the Arabian Sea every year due to insufficient water storage capacity in the country. Sources told APP that the country's economy was suffering around \$ 29 billion in annual economic losses on account of the unutilised flow of river water into the sea due to less water storage capacity. They said the economic value of 1 MAF of water was estimated at US\$ 1 billion as one million acre-feet (MAF) water on average irrigated four million acres of land. They said virgin land could be brought under cultivation by increasing storage capacity in the country. Unfortunately, after the commissioning of the Tarbela dam in the seventies, no mega reservoir was built. However, they said, now work was underway on mega dams projects such as Mohmand and Diamer Basha after the lapse of over five decades. They said that they would not only aid in the storage of around 10 MAF of water but also generate over 5,000 MW of cheap hydel electricity. Mangla and Tarbela dams had a storage capacity of 7.3 MAF and 6 MAF respectively but their capacities had been reduced due to sedimentation. They stressed the need for building dams on a war footing in order to reap benefits from the unutilised water flowing down every year into the sea.—APP

ANF seizes over 1011 kg drugs worth US\$18.42m

ISLAMABAD: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) Pakistan has seized 1011.977 kg drugs, 15 bottles of alcohol and 122 cans of beer worth US\$18.42 million internationally, arrested 26 accused including a woman and an Afghan national, impounded 10 vehicles while conducting 23 counter-narcotics operations throughout the country during last week. According to an ANF spokesman, the seized drugs comprised 14.896 kg heroin, 831.726 kg hashish, 11.155 kg methamphetamine (ice), 115.200 kg opium, 39 kg poppy straw, 15 bottles alcohol and 122 cans beer. He informed that ANF Balochistan recovered 307 kg of drugs in two operations while arresting three persons including an Afghan national involved in drugs smuggling and impounded a vehicle.—APP

Deal signed at Hajj expo to launch smart cards for pilgrims

ISLAMABAD: During the Hajj and Umrah Services Conference and Exhibition in Jeddah, the Nosok Foundation for Hajj and Umrah and the General Authority of Awqaf signed a cooperation agreement with the aim of enhancing pilgrims' experiences via electronic solutions. The agreement details the launch of smart cards that contain users' personal, residential and health information linked to an electronic app. The agreement was signed by Dr. AbdulFattah bin Sulaiman Mashat, Saudi deputy minister of Hajj and Umrah, and Imad bin Saleh Al-Kharashi, governor of the General Authority of Awqaf, Arab news reported.—APP

Comedy maestro Majid Jahangir nomore

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly Speaker Raja Parvaiz Ashraf, Deputy Speaker Zahid Akram Durrani on Wednesday expressed deep sorrow and grief over the demise of 'fifty-fifty' acclaimed senior actor and comedian Majid Jahangir. In a condolence message, they paid glowing tributes to the legendary TV star, who shot to fame with his spectacular performance in the Pakistan Television drama Fifty Fifty. Majid Jahangir's services to the Pakistan showbiz industry won't be forgotten, they said adding that Majid Jahangir has been spreading smiles on the faces of millions of people for years.—APP



ISLAMABAD: The ILO Country Director Geir Tonstol called on Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis Sajid Turi.—DNA

Telecom revenues rise to Rs. 694 bln in 2022-23

Moving forward, PTA will continue to provide an enabling environment for the availability of high-quality telecom services and infrastructure across the country in a bid to bridge the digital divide

ISLAMABAD: The telecom sector's outstanding progress has resulted in a record-high revenue of Rs. 694 billion generated in the Financial Year 2021-2022 said the annual report of PTA. Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) Annual Report 2022 released here, said that the telecom, sector attracted an investment of US\$ 2,073 million during the same period and contributed Rs. 325.2 billion to the national exchequer of which Rs. 222.7 billion were in the form of taxes and the remaining Rs. 102.5 billion were proceeds from Next Generation Mobile Services (NGMS) auction and license renewals. The report highlights encouraging telecom statistics and expanding usage of telecom services across

Pakistan due to a progressive and enabling regulatory environment despite a challenging year marked by rising inflationary pressures and profitability concerns. Pakistan has over 197 million telecom subscribers (fixed and mobile), with teledensity touching 90%. Moreover, biometrically verified SIMs/subscribers increased to 194 million, whereas, broadband subscriptions grew to 124 million with 56% penetration and annual mobile data usage touching 8,970 petabytes (6.8 GB per subscriber, per month), showing annual growth of 31%. Furthermore, Pakistan has leapt to an 'Advanced' level of 5th Generation (5G) regulator in the International Telecommunication Union's 2022 regulators' ranking. The Global

System for Mobile Communications Association (GSMA) has rated Pakistan as an 'emerging' telecom market—a recognition that owes itself to multiple interventions. PTA also introduced Short-Range Devices (SRDs) and IoT Framework under which licenses for the provision of IoT (Low Power Wide Area Network-LPWAN) services have been awarded. A massive spectrum rationalization exercise was carried out during the year under review, leading to improved spectrum efficiency that has positively impacted consumer experience. First time in the country's history, the import volume of mobile handsets registered a decline as most of the local demand was met through indigenously manufactured products, reflect-

ing a huge shift in consumer behaviour. Pakistan manufactured a whopping 41.35 million mobile handsets (including 17.3 million smartphones) during January 2021 to September 2022, resulting in the creation of thousands of skilled jobs and local manufacturing of international brands such as Samsung, Nokia, Xiaomi, Oppo, Vivo, Techno and Infinix. The Annual Report also revealed that International Social Media (SM) platforms such as Bigo, Snack Video, and Mico were registered by PTA under the prevailing legal framework. PTA also launched the country's largest 'Digital Gender Inclusion Initiative', whereby the first 'Gender Mainstreaming in ICTs' strategy is being developed. These measures are in addition

to efforts aimed at increasing telecom accessibility, availability, and affordability through telecom operators. According to the report, PTA is focusing on national telecom equipment standards, outside plant code, in-building cabling standards, and the use of the utility infrastructure to save costs. The regulator also believes that active infrastructure and spectrum sharing needed to be implemented to help pave way for the introduction of new technologies and facilitate the 5G launch. Moving forward, PTA will continue to provide an enabling environment for the availability of high-quality telecom services and infrastructure across the country in a bid to bridge the digital divide.—APP

Royal family: harried towards reform

These are brutal reputational days for the House of Windsor, and they are potentially threatening for the constitutional monarchy of Britain's increasingly disunited kingdom too. Prince Harry's memoir, due for publication on Tuesday, is already the most discussed – though not yet the most widely bought or read – book of 2023. It expands the assault, in frequently wounding detail, that was launched two years ago and is being continued in this week's TV interviews. In the court of public opinion, the monarchy has survived the Sussexes' campaign thus far. Polling suggests the institution retains majority support and that more disapprove of Prince Harry's campaign than sympathise with it. Republicanism is not surging. But this is an institution, a system and a culture crying out for some new thinking and reform. Only a fool would be complacent. The Windsors are not the only unhappy family in modern Britain. But they are the only one required to embody the nation as a whole. They are holding up a bleak mirror to the nation's and the world's gaze, from which no one emerges with credit. It reflects badly on Britain's institutions, from the monarchy to the media, and we all know it. There is plenty of blame to go round. Prince Harry's complaints are always indignant, even though their focus ebbs and flows. This week he appeared to deny his earlier accusations of royal family racism. There is, though, little point in taking sides in the family's quarrels. Newspapers should be particularly cautious about taking a one-sided approach when the press has so often played such a destructive role in past royal stories. Britain has worse problems than the monarchy. But the danger to the Windsors exists. It is real and it is growing. It comes at a transitional time for the monarchy, as our oldest ever new monarch prepares for a coronation that, at least in theory, ought to celebrate and help to unify the nation. That feels like an ambition too far, right now. Prince Harry's campaign has renewed the relevance of Walter Bagehot's famous warning about the dangers of letting daylight in upon magic. The clearest solution would be the republican settlement we ultimately favour. In the meantime, however, an enormous chance is being missed to reshape Britain's constitutional monarchy for the post-Elizabeth age. There is responsibility to share here too. King Charles and his inward-looking circle deserve some of it. The danger is that Britain's 21st-century monarchy is being defined ad hoc by an elite consisting of a palace clique and an overly deferential governing culture. Civil society has failed to face these issues. There has been no parliamentary and scarcely any other civic examination of the modern role, powers and appropriate cost of the monarch and the royal family. Rare attempts to do so have instead been stamped on. But it is not too late to do better.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti
Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 03 Issue: 140

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad



EU and 'security guarantee' from US

The European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization issued a joint declaration on cooperation on Tuesday. The third such declaration after the first in 2016 and the second in 2018, it is the first to portray China as a challenge. Although reticent in its wording, Beijing has firmly opposed the accusations as unwarranted and evidence of the Cold War mentality embraced by NATO that was enshrined in the transatlantic security alliance's latest Strategic Concept adopted in June. The guideline for the US-led organization's actions for the next decade, the Strategic Concept had no qualms about falsely portraying China as a challenge to the interests, security and values of the NATO members and makes no secret of the organization's intention to expand into the Asia-Pacific. It does not require any great acumen to identify whose hand has shaped both NATO's concept of security and the EU-NATO joint declaration. The EU and China are economic and trade partners and shoulder a shared responsibility to address climate change and other global challenges. The EU should be steering well clear of the confrontational clique-building of the United States. But the EU-NATO declaration serves to show how far the EU has drifted away from its aspirations of seeking common development, upholding strategic independence and promoting multilateral global governance. The EU should be vigilant to the fact that not only are its interests of different nature to those of NATO, but it has its own security mechanism. NATO, which is under the sway of Washington, is just trying to blur the lines by docking its Strategic Concept with the EU's Strategic Compass and define that move as "a key juncture for Euro-Atlantic security and stability, more than ever demonstrating the importance of the transatlantic bond". The EU should ask why its Strategic Compass, a security initiative the Ukraine crisis prompted it to issue last year, lacks funding. What the US pays NATO is more like a ransom, if not bait, for the European countries to surrender their security affairs to it. That means the EU's lack of funds for its own security is primarily caused by NATO being a guzzler of many EU members' defense budgets. NATO is nothing but the misappropriation of the EU's money by the US in pursuit of the latter's geostrategic goals. The "security guarantee" the EU members are paying for is priced so they surrender their independence to Washington. For that reason, the joint declaration is anything but one on cooperation. Rather it is a declaration of Washington's successful manipulation of the EU and NATO. With the EU wanting to end it and NATO prolonging it, the Ukraine crisis should bring home to the EU what lies in store if it outsources its security to the US via NATO.

For the UAE and others, its business as usual with Israel

James Dorsey

An announcement this week that the UAE would begin teaching the Holocaust in history classes in primary and secondary schools across the country drew immediate praise from the Biden administration. "Holocaust education is an imperative for humanity, and too many countries, for too long, continue to downplay

For the United Arab Emirates, it's business as usual as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's newly formed government wastes no time in implementing headline policies aimed at forcing Palestinians to give up on the notion of an independent state and accept Israeli rule. The UAE made that clear as it welcomed an Israeli delegation to Abu Dhabi this week to discuss security, energy, tourism, education, tolerance, and water security. The 20-person delegation, representing different ministries and headed by Foreign Ministry Director-General Alon Ushpiz, was in Abu Dhabi to prepare for a second Negev summit scheduled for the spring in Morocco. The Israelis flew to the Emirati capital days after a hardline member of Mr. Netanyahu's Cabinet, Itamar Ben-Gvir, paid a provocative visit to the Tem-

ple Mount or Haram ash-Sharif, a sacred place for Jews and Muslims and the third most holy site in Islam. The first summit of foreign ministers of the UAE, Bahrain, Morocco, Egypt, and Israel met last year in the Israeli Negev town of Sde Boker to identify joint initiatives. Last week, the four Arab states condemned Mr. Ben-Gvir's visit. The UAE, together with China, asked the United Nations Security Council to discuss the visit; and postponed rather than cancelled a visit to Abu Dhabi by Mr. Netanyahu. The UAE, Bahrain, and Morocco established diplomatic relations with Israel in 2020, while Egypt became in 1979 the first Arab country to sign a treaty with the Jewish state. The talks, which started the same day Israel slapped a travel ban on Palestinian foreign minister Riyad Maliki, signal that the UAE and other states are going through the motions with their protests rather than telling Israel there will be serious consequences. Last month, Mr. Netanyahu formed a coalition of hardline nationalist and ultra-conservative religious parties with a government program that denies Palestinian rights and potentially could lead to the annexation of territories occupied by Israel during the 1967 Middle East war. It could also lead to Judaizing parts of pre-1967 Israel that have significant Israeli Palestinian communities. The ban on Mr. Maliki was part of a package of sanctions that also included seizing tax revenues Israel collects on behalf of the Palestinian Authority and channeling them to Israeli victims of Palestinian violence, deducting from the revenues the equivalent of payments made to Palestinians accused of perpetrating violence and their families; and freezing Palestinian construction in much of the West Bank. In addition, Mr. Ben-Gvir, who oversees the Israeli police banned the flying in public places of Palestinian flags "that show identification with a terrorist organization." Israel imposed the sanctions in retaliation for backing

by the United Nations General Assembly of a Palestinian request for the International Court of Justice to give an opinion on the legality of Israeli policies in the occupied West Bank and east Jerusalem. Insisting that Palestinians have a right to oppose occupation, Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh warned that the measures could lead to the collapse of the Palestinian Authority. "Israel wants to prevent even the most non-violent way of fighting the occupation," Mr. Shtayyeh said. Israel collects some US\$256 million every month for tariffs on services and goods intended for the Authority but deducts US\$85 million for regular payments, commissions, and sums paid by the Palestinians to families of prisoners deemed terrorists by the Jewish state. Ms. Shtayyeh said he would urge Arab states to live up to their commitment to providing the Palestinians with an economic safety net. "Only Algeria is fulfilling its commitments and transfers US\$52 million a month," Mr. Shtayyeh said. The prime minister will likely attempt to exploit the willingness of the UAE to conduct business with Israel, as usual, to extract financial support as compensation. The question is whether the UAE and other states may seek Palestinian political concessions in dealing with the new Israeli government. That would make things easier for Mr. Bin Zayed and other Arab leaders prepared to move forward in their strengthening of relations with Israel despite the policies of the Netanyahu government and Emirati and Arab public opinion. According to a recent survey, the popularity of forging relations with Israel has plummeted in the UAE and Bahrain in the last two years. In the UAE, support fell to 25 per cent from 47 per cent. In Bahrain, just 20 per cent of the population supports formal relations with Israel, down from 45 per cent in 2020. Arab soccer fans demonstrated

during last month's World Cup in Qatar their opposition to normalisation of relations with Israel by refusing to interact with their Israeli counterparts and declining interviews with Israeli media. At the same time, Qataris and some athletes, including the Moroccan national team, wore pro-Palestinian armbands and waved Palestinian flags. Popular sentiment is also reflected in tourism figures. More than 150,000 Israelis flocked to the UAE in the 2.5 years since the UAE and Bahrain established diplomatic relations with Israel, but only 1,600 Emiratis have visited Israel since it last year lifted coronavirus travel restrictions. Mr. Bin Zayed sees relations with Israel as a hedge against Iran, particularly when he and other Arab leaders are uncertain about the United States' reliability as a regional security guarantor. In addition, Mr. Bin Zayed hopes to benefit from Israeli technological prowess to position the UAE as a cutting-edge 21st-century knowledge economy. Finally, relations with Israel posit the UAE as a beacon of Muslim moderation and earns it brownie points in key segments of Western public opinion, including influential Evangelists in the United States. An announcement this week that the UAE would begin teaching the Holocaust in history classes in primary and secondary schools across the country drew immediate praise from the Biden administration. "Holocaust education is an imperative for humanity, and too many countries, for too long, continue to downplay the Shoah for political reasons. I commend the UAE for this step and expect others to follow suit soon," said Deborah E. Lipstadt, the U.S. special envoy to monitor and combat antisemitism. Ms. Lipstadt was using the Hebrew word for Holocaust.

Russia-Ukraine war may impact South Asia

Muskan Moazzam

One of the strategic impacts of Russia-Ukraine war is that it has challenged the nuclear taboo that has been persistent in the world politics since Cold War. It has challenged the discourse that nuclear weapons have become less useful. Official statements by Russian foreign ministry reaffirm the claim that Russia's sovereignty is threatened and Moscow would not hesitate from using nuclear weapons if needed. If Russia is retreating in various regions, and if President Putin links it to sovereignty, as it has already incorporated three major Ukraine regions into Russia via referendum, it may possibly use nuclear

The Russian invasion of Ukraine in February last year was a turning point for the security of European region. Some scholars call this invasion a strategic blunder by Russian President Vladimir Putin. But the fact of the matter is, the Russia-Ukraine conflict has enormously changed the scale and dynamics of global security. The war has been continuing since February, and there are a few prospects for diplomatic solution. Russia is reportedly on retreat; it has withdrawn from the Kherson region. There is also a possibility that Russia may use its nuclear weaponry. This has alarmed the world community concerned. If Russia uses the nuclear weapons, it may trigger deadly WW-III. One of the strategic impacts of Russia-Ukraine war is that it has challenged the nuclear taboo that has been persistent in the world politics since Cold War. It has challenged the discourse that nuclear weapons have become less useful. Official statements by Russian foreign ministry reaffirm the claim that Russia's sovereignty is threatened and Moscow would not hesitate from using nuclear weapons if needed. If Russia is retreating in various regions, and if President Putin links it to sovereignty, as it has already incorporated three major Ukraine regions into Russia via referendum, it may possibly use nuclear weapons. This war also gives impetus to the debate over the usefulness of nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons make the leader think that it is insane to start a war because of the threat of mutual annihilation. Though the cases of Russia and Ukraine are different because Ukraine is not a nuclear power; this war has challenged the decisions of certain states to not go for nuclear weapons. Although, main powers in the South Asian region including Pakistan and India, have nuclear weapons,

they will boost nuclear weapon programs. Other states in the region may link their security to the acquisition of nuclear weapons, which may contribute to the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the South Asian region. This war has once again demonstrated the importance of stockpiling weapons in case of war. Pakistan and India, which are always at loggerheads over initiating a conflict, will increase their defence spending. Pakistan is already suffering from economic insecurity. If India increases its defence spending as it did in the previous budget, then it will be a strategic imperative for Pakistan as well. India can increase its defence spending because of its strong economy, but it seems not possible for Pakistan under current circumstances. Another important factor in the Ukraine-Russia war is the destruction of tanks on a larger scale. Although some scholars argue that this war has rendered expensive military equipment like warships, fighter jets and tanks obsolete, there are other scholars who argue that the use of anti-tank weapons by Ukraine has given importance to such weapons. Many of the Indian tanks have Russian origins, like T72 and T-90. The poor performance of such military equipment in the Ukraine-Russia war might compel India to look for other alternatives, like western military equipment. This will start an arms race in the region as well. The Ukraine-Russia War has also signified the importance of light tanks. Indian Army is planning to build future-ready combat vehicles (FRCV) by 2030. The use of light tanks in the Russia-Ukraine war can be another factor pushing India to accelerate this program. China has inducted light tanks, and India is also planning to induct such tanks. Pakistan, however, has not inducted light tanks.

The use of light tanks in the Russia-Ukraine war was a turning point because heavy tanks used by Russia were destroyed. In future conventional wars, lighter tanks will be used. This factor will also give rise to an arms race between Pakistan and India. Though the strategic stability of the South Asian region is not directly linked to what's happening in Ukraine, the impacts of war on the global economy are affecting South Asian states like Pakistan and India. The Russo-Indian relations have also changed since the invasion. Similarly, Sino-Russia relations have further strengthened. Pakistan's relations with Russia have reported a new beginning; with Islamabad's willingness to purchase natural gas from Moscow. This will impact future political dynamics at the international level. India may not receive as much Russian support in international forums such as the UN SC as it had in the past. Similarly, New Delhi can no longer rely on Moscow for support against Beijing as both India and China have border disputes. Russia has become dependent on China for both its imports and exports due to western sanctions on Moscow. Russia will not be willing to displease China by siding with India in the event of a Sino-Indian conflict. As a whole, the political dynamics of the South Asian region will change. India could learn from Russia's incorporation of Ukrainian regions into Russian states by doing the same in Kashmir or Ladakh. This will lead to war between India and either Pakistan or China. The arms race will continue between Islamabad and New Delhi, especially a race to get more sophisticated weapons. Despite a race to boost the nuclear program, conventional weapons will also increase in the region.

—The writer is studying *International Relations*

Briefs

PM praises friends of Pakistan...

FROM PAGE 01
The top Pakistani diplomat, who was with the premier at the conference, said the government achieved two targets with one shot. The support from the international community proved that Pakistan is not isolated as propagated by the government's rivals, indirectly referring to the PTI. The PPP chairman added that now they would put in concerted efforts and help flood victims to steer them out of the crisis. It may be mentioned here that the pledges and commitments shall materialize in three years time. Since these are long term commitments therefore it is unlikely that these pledges shall have any positive impact on the economic situation of the country. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed gratitude to Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia Prince Mohammed Bin Salman on announcement of \$1 billion at climate conference held in Geneva. "Pakistan sincerely thanks Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman for Saudi Arabia's generous announcement of \$1 billion at the Resilient Pakistan Conference," he said in a tweet. The prime minister said, "We are immensely grateful for his decision to consider increasing Saudi investment up to \$10 billion and deposits with State Bank of Pakistan to \$5 billion," he said. In another tweet, Shehbaz Sharif also thanked President World Bank David Malpass for pledging \$2 billion for the post-flood recovery, reconstruction and rehabilitation at Resilient Pakistan Conference in Geneva. He mentioned that the World Bank is a longtime development partner of Pakistan. Earlier in a tweet, the prime minister expressed gratitude to United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres for his unwavering support to Pakistan's flood victims and raising his voice for recovery and reconstruction in the wake of floods. Shehbaz Sharif mentioned that the UN Secretary-General played a pivotal role in making Resilient Pakistan Conference a resounding success.

Imran alleges PTI members...

FROM PAGE 01
Khan said that those who are having any doubts should watch the videos of his 65 power shows. He said that millions of nationals came out of their houses to resist the toppling of the PTI government via a conspiracy. He said that the nationals had also backed PTI in the Punjab by-polls and gave a clear message to the powerful circles. He said that all tactics were used to force the nation to accept the 'thieves' as their rulers, but they all failed. While slamming the incumbent government, Khan said that the current rulers did nothing for Pakistan but they only get another NRO and dissolve their corruption cases worth Rs1,100 billion. He said that some people thought that Shehbaz Sharif is a genius but his performance exposed him after he failed to cope with the political and economic challenges. He also criticised the government delegation comprising a lot of ministers to Geneva during the International Conference on Climate Resilient Pakistan instead of attending the session via video link amid a severe economic crisis.

PTI gets required number of MPs

FROM PAGE 01
Fawad added that once the vote of confidence is taken, the petition filed in the high court would be withdrawn and the summary for dissolving both the legislative of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa would be sent today (Thursday). Wasiq Qayyum the Deputy Speaker of the Punjab Assembly while talking to a private media house that the PTI has provided its majority in the House and vote of confidence shall be taken on Thursday.

Govt urged to focus on imports substitution, exports promotion

The business leaders discussed key issues being faced by the economy and passed a solution unanimously to steer the economy out of the current economic crisis

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry organized a Conference on Revival of Economy. Prominent business leaders from across Pakistan including Shehzad Ali Malik Chairman United Business Group (Lahore), Dr. Gohar Ejaz Patron-in-Chief All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (Lahore), S.M. Tanveer former Chairman APTMA (Karachi), Ghazanfar Bilour (Peshawar) & Engr. Darood Khan Achakzai (Quetta) former Presidents FPCCI, Khalid Tawab former Senior Vice President FPCCI (Karachi), Qazi Akbar Vice President FPCCI (Chakwal), Khalid Iqbal Malik Group Leader ICCI, Zafar Bakhtawari Secretary General UBG, Haji Afzal former President Sarhad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (Peshawar), Naima Ansari former Vice President FPCCI (Islamabad) addressed the conference. The business leaders discussed key issues being faced by the economy and passed a solution unanimously to steer the econ-

omy out of the current economic crisis. The resolution called upon the government to cooperate with the private sector in enhancing imports substitution and diversification of products basket and markets to boost the exports that would help in reviving the fragile economy of the country. The resolution said that being an agricultural country,

Pakistan is spending US\$ 12-13 billion on the import of wheat, cotton, pulses and edible oil and stressed that their imports substitution in the country would save this amount and produce exports surplus as well. The resolution said that Pakistan is making 70% exports of only 3-4 products and demanded that the government should support the

business community in increasing the exports of IT, engineering goods, pharmaceuticals and other products. The resolution said that the shortage of dollars is the main cause of the rising economic crisis in the country and stressed that the government should consider offering 10 years' tax holidays on depositing dollars in banks to improve forex

reserves of the country. The resolution further demanded that the government should also consider offering a bonus scheme to exporters and foreign remitters to cover the difference between bank and open market dollar rate. The resolution urged that the government should privatize all loss making public sector enterprises including PIA, Pakistan Steel Mills, Pakistan Railways and electricity companies that would save around Rs.1000 billion annually. Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry welcomed all the business leaders to the Conference and stressed that the government should evolve a new strategy in consultation with the business community to address the current economic troubles. Faad Waheed, Senior Vice President ICCI thanked the business leaders and all the participants of the Conference and hoped that the resolution passed by the business leaders would be given due consideration by the government for implementation.



Man Utd, Newcastle ease into League Cup semi-finals

MANCHESTER: Marcus Rashford came off the bench to score twice as Manchester United beat Charlton 3-0 to reach the League Cup semi-finals on Tuesday, while Newcastle saw off Leicester 2-0. A youthful United side featured eight changes as Erik ten Hag had one eye on Saturday's derby against Manchester City at Old Trafford. One of those retained in the starting line-up on Friday's 3-1 win over Everton, Antony, made the breakthrough with a sumptuous strike on 21 minutes. Charlton were roared on by a travelling support of 9,000 and the third-tier side kept the tie alive despite Ten Hag introducing Casemiro, Rashford and Christian Eriksen off the bench for the final half hour. Rashford finally made the game safe for the hosts in the 90th minute, scoring for the eighth straight game at Old Trafford. The England

international then took his tally for the season to 15 with a thumping finish from Casemiro's pass deep into stoppage time. "We had to be in that semi final and we did the job," said Ten Hag. "I think we had to finish



this off early on but in the end the objective was to get through so compliments to the team." Newcastle are into the semi-finals of the League Cup for the first time since 1976 as Eddie Howe's men moved one step closer to ending a 54-year wait for silverware on Tyneside. "It would mean everything to win a trophy but we just need to focus on the next game," said Newcastle right-back Kieran Trippier. "The supporters here are bril-

liant. They follow us in numbers and it's always a great atmosphere at home. We want to make them proud by giving everything on the pitch." The Magpies swept Leicester aside in a recent 3-0 win at the King Power

in the Premier League and only a lack of ruthlessness from the hosts kept the Foxes in the game for an hour at St. James' Park. Bruno Guimarães, Sean Longstaff and Callum Wilson were guilty of passing up big chances before half-time. Instead, it was the unlikely figure of Dan Burn who opened the scoring. The giant left-back slotted home coolly with his right foot. Joelinton quickly doubled Newcastle's lead with a calm finish from Miguel Almiron's pass to leave the home fans dreaming of a visit to Wembley next month. Manchester City remain favourites for the competition they have won four times in the last five years with Pep Guardiola's men in quarter-final action away to Southampton on Wednesday. Nottingham Forest host Wolves in the other last eight tie. - APP

UCP wins All Pakistan Inter-Varsity Volleyball C'ship

PESHAWAR: University of Central Punjab (UCP) clinched the trophy after upsetting the defending champions, University of Peshawar in the final of the All Pakistan Inter-University Men Volleyball Championship, played here at the university campus on Wednesday. Secretary, Higher Education Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Dawood Khan was the chief guest on this occasion. University of Peshawar Vice Chancellor Professor Dr Muhammad Idrees, Agriculture University Vice Chancellor Professor Dr Jehan Bakhat, Professor Dr Hassan Sher, University of Engineering Technology (UET) Vice Chancellor, Director General Sports UoP Bahre Karam, Secretary Organizing Committee Dr Noor Zada, Assistant Director Saleem Khan, players and officials were also present. The UCP, having services of four international players, handed an upsetting defeat to University of Peshawar 25-21, 25-22 and 25-22. Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan (AWKU) defeated Sargodha University by 3-1, the score was 23-25, 27-25 and 29-27 in a thrilling encounter. In the match played for the third position, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan won the third position by defeating Sargodha University by three sets to one. Dawood Khan in his speech paid tribute to Professor Dr Muhammad Idrees, Director General Directorate of Sports University of Peshawar, and his team for hosting the best competitions. He said hosting such competitions would give ample opportunities to the players to play at national and international levels. He also appreciated the University of Peshawar for providing the best available facilities to the players of all the 16 participating teams who qualified out of 14 zones, wherein more than 200 universities teams initially took part in the first phase. - Agencies

Ex-COAS helped PTI, Imran: Ch Sarwar

FROM PAGE 01

Chaudhry Sarwar says that there were two reasons for Imran Khan's differences with the military establishment, his retention of Punjab Chief Minister Usman Buzdar despite poor performance and the delay in Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) chief's appointment. The former governor says that General (ret) Qamar-Javed Bajwa helped Imran Khan on every occasion from the approval of the budget to the vote of confidence. He said that when there was tension in the relationship with Saudi Arabia, the army restored the relationship between the two countries. He says that when the government faces financial difficulties, only General (Rtd) Qamar-Javed Bajwa gets a financial package from friendly countries. On his possible political journey Sarwar says he is consulting with his friends for his future move but has not yet decided which party he has to join. PTI rejected Muhammad Sarwar remarks by issuing a statement on the former governor's interview with VOA Urdu. PTI spokesperson Zulfikar Bukari in a written statement rejected all allegations and said their government was ousted through conspiracy. He said those who left the party and Imran Khan in a critical time have no rights to talk about PTI.

President Alvi for boosting...

FROM PAGE 01

help in improving the economic conditions of the country, besides creating jobs to reduce unemployment and sustain higher growth rates in coming years. The President said that the UK's Developing Countries Trading Scheme (DCTS), which would replace the GSP in early 2023, would provide tariff reductions and simpler terms to Pakistan including duty-free exports of over 94% of goods from Pakistan to the UK. He appreciated the inclusion of Pakistan in the UK's Developing Countries Trading Scheme (DCTS) and expressed the desire to fast-track the progress on the signing of the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) to substantially enhance trade and signing of an agreement between the two sides for the launch of Trade Dialogue in the coming months. During the meeting, the President appreciated that 120 British companies were operating in Pakistan with cumulative investments of around \$10 billion and noted that FDI increased by 22% in the financial year 2020-21 rising from US\$117 million to US\$143 million. He also appreciated that over the last five years up to 2019, Pakistan averaged as the largest recipient of the UK's bilateral overseas development aid (ODA) in Asia. The President stressed the need to create bilateral Enhanced Strategic Dialogue (ESD) and Enhanced Strategic Partnership by developing a 10-year roadmap for taking relations forward in diverse fields, including trade, investment and climate change. During the meeting, the increasing permeation of Hindutva philosophy in Indian society was also discussed. The President emphasised that the international community should take notice of the increasing intimidation, harassment and marginalization of minorities, especially Muslims, in India and take tangible steps to pressurize India to give minorities their due rights.

'UK desires economic...

FROM PAGE 01

bearing the brunt of global warming and climate change. Pakistan had suffered a lot due to floods in 2022. The citizens of UK had also faced hot days in summer season, he added. To a question about international cricket, he said a negative perception about Pakistan was promoted around the world. However, today the security situation in Pakistan was much better than 10 years ago. To another query about visa policy, he said they were facilitating the applicants for study visa for getting admission in the universities in the United Kingdom.

Felix signs for Blues on loan from Atletico

LONDON: Chelsea have signed Atletico Madrid striker Joao Felix on loan for the rest of the season for a fee of 11 million euros (£9.7m). Arsenal and Manchester United had been linked with the 23-year-old but he favoured a move to the Blues. The Portugal international has also signed a one-year extension to his Atletico contract until June 2027. "Chelsea is one of the great teams in the world and I hope to help the team reach their objectives," said Felix. "I am very, very happy to be here and very excited to play at Stamford Bridge." Atletico made Felix the fifth most expensive player in history when they paid Benfica £113m for the then 19-year-old in 2019. He has gone on to score 34 goals in 131 appearances in all competitions, with 18 assists. Felix was part of the Portugal squad at the World Cup and scored one goal in five outings at the tournament as his country reached the quarter-finals. Since then, he has played for Atletico twice, scoring in a 2-0 win against Elche on 29 December before playing 73 minutes in a 1-0 defeat by Barcelona on Sunday. Felix has scored five goals and provided three assists for Atletico in 20 games this season. He follows Benoit Badiashile, David Datro Fofana and Andrey Santos in joining Chelsea during the January transfer window, and signs with the club 10th in the Premier League - 10 points adrift of a top-four spot. They are also out of both cup competitions after losing 4-0 to Manchester City in the FA Cup third round last weekend. That made it six defeats in nine games in all competitions though boss Graham Potter, who replaced Thomas Tuchel in September, retains the support of the club's board. - DNA

Naval Chief chairs Command & Staff Conference

ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi on Wednesday chaired the Command and Staff Conference of Pakistan Navy that concluded here at the Naval Headquarters. During the conference, matters related to national security, geo-strategic affairs, combat readiness and training of troops were discussed, a Pakistan Navy news release said. The ongoing progress on PN projects, including future plans, were reviewed and ways forward were also deliberated. The conference assessed evolving maritime affairs in the region and beyond. The Naval Chief emphasized on maintaining perpetual combat readiness to effectively thwart any aggression against Pakistan. - DNA

Ronaldo and girlfriend Georgina may be allowed to break Saudi law

RIVADH: Saudi Arabia is known for its strict laws and cultural customs, and one of them forbids unmarried individuals from living with each other, but that could be all about to change! At least, if you're Cristiano Ronaldo. The Portuguese superstar recently completed a mega-money move to the Middle East, joining the Saudi Arabian team Al-Nassr FC on a two-and-a-half year deal worth an estimated €200 million a year. He also took with him his Spanish supermodel and social media influencer girlfriend, Georgina Rodriguez. But the big question on many people's mind is, will they be allowed to live together in the country? Well, Saudi legal experts have reportedly confirmed that the Saudi authorities will "turn a blind eye" to



accommodate for one of the greatest football players of all time, allowing him and his partner to settle into their first luxury property together. According to Spanish news outlet EFE, Ronaldo's status makes a punishment highly unlikely. The agency also cited opinions from two Saudi lawyers, who stated that authorities are unlikely to take any legal action against the legendary player, who

previously played for Real Madrid, Juventus and Manchester United. "The Saudi Arabian authorities, today, do not interfere in this matter [in the case of foreigners], but the law continues to prohibit cohabitation outside of marriage", another added. But while the couple may be allowed to live with one another, they will have to be aware of and respect the other cultural norms and laws of the country. - DNA

Winter tourism booms in Swat with snowfall

MALAM JABBA: Winter tourism got a high boom in Swat district after rains and snowfall in Malam Jabba and Kalam valleys, attracting a substantial number of tourists from across the country to enjoy snowball games and skiing. Following torrential rains and snowfall in Malam Jabba, Kalam, Bahrain and other areas of upper Swat on Wednesday, the tourists along with families from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab provinces thronged to the scenic valleys to enjoy the change in weather amid great fun and excitement. Dressed in overcoats with umbrellas in hand, lecturer Ehtisham Khan, a resident of Wapda Town Peshawar along with friends was seen enjoying snowfall at Malam Jabba by throwing snowballs at each other amid fun and laughter. "Today my dream come true after seeing snowfall for the first time in my favorite tourists' destination of Malam Jabba where the snow-covered valleys and mountains peaks attract visitors' in droves these days," said Ehtisham Khan with a big smile on his face. Enjoying the delectable bites of trout fish with friends, the Peshawar-born tourist said Malam Jabba's lush green mountainous beauty and snowfall features take tourists to a new level of adventure, fun and excitement. "Kalam is our next destination where

snowfall comes relatively in a higher speed than Malam Jabba. The 150-kilometer-long freshwater of the River Swat originating from different glaciers and lakes including Mahodand and Gabral mountains offers unique opportunities for adventure sports enthusiasts to explore in a day trip along with loved ones, especially during summer. Despite poor roads condition due to last year's devastating floods in Upper Swat, he said the view of snowfall in Malam Jabba was worth seeing as many tourists with families were seen enjoying skiing, snowballs and other games inspite of stumbling on



snow-covered mountain terrains. The domestic tourists were arriving in substantial numbers, mostly from KP and Punjab, to Swat following MET office report about moderate to heavy snowfall in Kalam, Malam Jabba and other scenic areas of Northern KP in three days. Riazul Haq, a tourist from Nowshera while talking to APP said Swat was going to become a hub of winter tourism due to its seven unique features including snowfall, Gandhara civilization, water rafting, mountaineering, trout fish, eco-tourism and Swat motorway. Fazaqat, Fatehpur, Barikot, and Chakdara were most

suitable for water rafting. If developed on modern lines could attract a large number of tourists during winter. "I came from Pabi to enjoy snowfall and trout fish together at Kalam and Malam Jabba with my family," said Misal Khan, a retired civil servant while talking to APP. Besides its famous Deodar trees and precious wildlife, he said Swat's snow-clad tall mountain ranges of Falakser, Mankial and Elum peaks offer great challenges to mountaineers and trekkers while its unique orange orchards carried a comparative advantage for farmers. "Buddhists, monks and archaeologists prefer to visit Swat due to its archaeological primitive treasures of Gandhara civilizations besides ancient artifacts housed at Saidu Sharif Museum. "On the request of my son, I have arrived along with my family for the third time to watch Gandhara artifacts, trout fish and snowfall in Kalam and Malam Jabba in a sing day trip despite tourists being charged heavily by hoteliers here," he said. He said one room in a quality hotel per day was being charged at Rs10,000 to Rs15,000 at Kalam while Rs8000 to Rs12000 in Malam Jabba, adding prices of hotels needed to be regulated to avoid Murree-like snowfall tragedy in future. - APP

Briefs

Saudi Arabia ready to receive whatever number of pilgrims

JEDDAH: Director General of Passports (Jawazat) Lt. Gen. Sulaiman Al-Yahya has unveiled a study being carried out by the General Directorate of Passports in cooperation with concerned agencies to open all land crossings to arrivals to the Kingdom, underlying readiness of the Kingdom to receive whatever number of pilgrims during this year's Hajj as part of the efforts exerted in partnership with all concerned agencies to facilitate the performance of rituals in a manner that saves pilgrims' time and efforts. Al-Yahya underscored ongoing efforts to improve arrival procedures, including the introduction of electronic and biometric registration services to identify pilgrims and accelerate their entry to the Kingdom. Participating in a session on the "quality of pilgrims' arrival and reception services", organized on the sidelines of the Hajj Expo 2023, Al-Yahya said, in a panel discussion moderated by the Deputy Minister of Hajj and Umrah, Dr. Abdelfattah bin Suleiman Mashat, that the Kingdom, with its leadership's support, is ready to receive whatever number of pilgrims and Umrah performers thanks to the strong digital infrastructure.—APP

Tigray rebels start handing over heavy weapons

NAIROBI: Tigrayan rebels have begun handing in their heavy weapons, a key part of an agreement signed more than two months ago to end a deadly conflict in northern Ethiopia, a spokesman for the rebel authorities said. "Tigray has handed over its heavy weapons as part of its commitment to implementing the #Pretoria agreement" that was signed on November 2 by Ethiopia's government and Tigrayan rebels, Getachew Reda tweeted Wednesday. "We hope & expect this will go a long way in expediting the full implementation of the agreement. We hope & expect!" The terms of the peace agreement include disarming rebel forces, restoring federal authority in Tigray and reopening access and communications to the region, which has been cut off since mid-2021. Fighting broke out in November 2020 when Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed deployed the army to arrest Tigrayan leaders who had been challenging his authority for months and whom he accused of attacking federal military bases. The precise toll of the conflict, which was largely fought amid media restrictions, is unknown. The International Crisis Group think tank and the NGO Amnesty International have described it as "one of the deadliest in the world."—APP

Influencer Andrew Tate stays in detention

BUCHAREST: A Romanian court on Tuesday dismissed an appeal by controversial influencer Andrew Tate against his 30-day detention while he is being investigated for alleged human trafficking, rape and forming a criminal group. The former professional kickboxer, who is a British-US national, his younger brother and two Romanian women were arrested on December 29. The next day, they were ordered to be detained for 30 days as prosecutors argued they might try to escape or otherwise evade investigation. Dressed in black and handcuffed, Tate arrived early on Tuesday at the court with his brother Tristan for their hearing behind closed doors to appeal their detention. But the court dismissed their appeal, ruling it "unfounded". "They stay in detention," Ramona Bolla, a spokeswoman for Romania's anti-organised crime and terrorism directorate (DIICOT), told AFP. Their lawyer Eugen Vidineac said earlier Tuesday that the defendants "were able to express themselves".—APP

Thousands evacuate California storms with 17 people dead

A fresh storm is set to pound the state with as much as seven inches (18 centimeters) of new rain in northern California

DNA

MONTECITO: Tens of thousands of people were under evacuation orders in California on Tuesday as the state was ravaged by the latest in a barrage of storms that have left at least 17 people dead. Torrential downpours caused flash flooding, closed key highways, toppled trees and swept away drivers and passengers — including a five-year-old boy who remains missing in central California — with even more rain and snow set to batter America's most populous state. Around 110,000 California homes and businesses were without power Tuesday, according to tracking site Poweroutage.us. A fresh storm is set to pound the state with as much as seven inches (18 centimeters) of

new rain in northern California and several more feet of snow in the Sierra Nevada mountains, the National Weather Service said. The NWS described an "endless onslaught of atmospheric river events" that is the most powerful storm system since 2005. California Governor Gavin Newsom said at least 34,000 people had been told to flee the storm, with more danger expected. "The fact is that we're not out of the woods; we expect these storms to continue at least through the 18th of this month," he told reporters. "We now have 17 confirmed — and I underscore 'confirmed' tragically — just confirmed deaths." The town of Montecito, home to Britain's Prince Harry and his wife Meghan Markle, was pounded by rain — threatening dangerous mudslides on hills already sodden by weeks

of evaporation — and sparking an evacuation order. "That's the price of living in such a beautiful place, when it rains like this, it causes a lot of destruction. Montecito, whose multi-million dollar properties are surrounded by breathtaking California countryside, is particularly vulnerable to mudslides because it sits at the foot of a mountain range that was ravaged by fire five years ago. Hundreds of square miles (kilometres) were scorched, stripping the hillsides of the vegetation that normally keeps soil in place. But an evacuation order for the town — home to stars including Ellen DeGeneres, Gwyneth Paltrow, Katy Perry, and Rob Lowe — was lifted on Tuesday. In San Luis Obispo County authorities called off a search for a five-year-old boy as rushing waters were too danger-

ous for divers, Fox News reported, quoting a county official. The child, who fled with his mother from their car as it was inundated by flood waters, has not been declared dead. The mother was rescued. Two motorists died in a crash north of Bakersfield after a tree crashed onto a road. Destruction was widespread, with whole communities flooded in some areas. "All my windows in the back are completely blown out. All my tables are kind of strewn around my floors... and our floors had warped, so I guess the waves came up from under the building. "It's not just me, the whole block has been decimated." Swathes of the Golden State were under flood warnings, and forecasters said the misery would continue. "There will be a brief break in the rainfall in the West late tonight

before the next atmospheric river arrives Wednesday. Moisture will stream ahead of a large cyclone in the eastern Pacific Ocean, which will produce heavy precipitation in northern California," the NWS said. While heavy rain is not unusual for California during winter, these downpours are testing the state. They come as much of the western United States is more than two decades into a punishing drought that has seen major increases in the frequency and intensity of wildfires. Scientists say human-caused climate change, brought about by the unchecked burning of fossil fuels, has supercharged these wild swings in weather. But even the recent rains are not enough to comprehensively reverse the drought. Scientists say several years of above-average rainfall are needed to get reservoirs back to healthy levels.

PTA issues cyber security annual report 2022

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) has released its Cyber Security Annual Report for 2022 on the compliance of its Critical Telecom Data and Infrastructure Security Regulations (CTDISR). The report provides a detailed analysis of the cyber security readiness and resilience of top 15 telecom operators in Pakistan. PTA conducted validation audits of top 15 operators, categorized on the basis of

their size of network and license type, among other factors. According to the report, Pakistan Mobile Communications Limited (PMCL) - Jazz has secured the highest percentage of compliance in Cat-I category (this includes all Cellular Mobile Operators and large fixed-line operators with multiple licenses), followed by Telenor Pakistan as runners up. In Cat-II, which includes medium to large operators/ISPs, Red-Tone has secured the highest percentage of compliance, followed by Multinet

as runners up. The report includes an overall Cyber Security Index (CSI) of the telecom sector, as well as ranking of telecom operators based on their level of compliance to 16 Security Domains comprising 104 Security Controls outlined in CTDISR. The report also highlights strong and weak areas of the telecom sector and provides aggregated anonymized information about major cyber security incidents in the last year. The Cyber Security Annual Report 2022 is based on

the Cyber Security framework published by PTA in 2020 and 3rd party audits performed by PTA's registered cyber security firms. PTA remains committed to securing Pakistan's telecom sector and its users from cyber-attacks by implementing robust cyber security regulations and validating these with regular audits to ensure compliance. PTA also encourages operators to prioritize cyber security and strive for continuous improvement to ensure a cyber-resilient telecom sector for all.

Philippine SC declares deal with China, Vietnam unconstitutional

MANILA: The Philippine Supreme Court declared the country's tripartite agreement with China and Vietnam for energy exploration in the disputed South China Sea void and unconstitutional. "The Supreme Court En Banc, voting 12-2-1, today declared unconstitutional and void the Tripartite Agreement for Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking (JSMU)," it announced in a written statement. "The Court ruled that the JSMU is unconstitutional for allowing wholly-owned foreign corporations to participate in the exploration of the country's natural resources," it said. The court ruling further stressed that the Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking signed by the three countries on March 14, 2005 is void due to its violation of "the 1987 Constitution, which mandates that the exploration, development and utilization (EDU) of natural resources shall be under the full control and supervision of the State." Last week, China and the Philippines hinted that the two maritime neighbors may resume joint energy exploration in the disputed South China Sea. The Philippines had declared an end to negotiations with China on joint energy exploration in the disputed waters in June. In 2018, Manila and Beijing signed an agreement to explore for oil and gas reserves in the South China Sea.—DNA

Pakistan, Saudi Arabia likely to ink oil agreement

The two countries enjoy strong strategic relations and Saudi Arabia was among the first countries to recognize and support Pakistan when it came into existence in 1947

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are likely to ink an agreement of over US one billion dollars in the days ahead in the oil sector, through the Saudi Development Fund, a Saudi news channel said on Wednesday. "The coming days will witness the signing of an agreement between the Kingdom and Pakistan through the Saudi Development Fund for Development with an increase of one billion dollars," Nawaf Al-Maliki, Saudi Arabia's ambassador to Pakistan was quoted as saying by the Saudi Al-Khabaria channel. The Saudi Press Agency earlier in a report said Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown Prince and Prime Minister, has directed to study augmenting Saudi Arabia's investments in Pakistan, which have previously been announced on August 25, 2022 and were slated to reach US \$10 billion. The SPA said the Crown Prince also directed the Saudi Development Fund (SDF) to study increasing the amount of the deposit provided by Saudi Arabia in favor of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). This has been extended on December 2, 2022 to hit a US \$5 billion ceiling, the agency said. The Saudi official news agency said the move strengthened the Kingdom's position to support the economy of Pakistan and support its people. The report pointed that the move followed communication between the Crown Prince and Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. The two countries enjoy strong strategic relations and Saudi Arabia was among the first countries to recognize and support Pakistan when it came into existence in 1947. From the founder of Saudi Arabia to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz and Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman, Saudi Arabia has always supported Pakistan in different spheres.—APP



MINSK: Pakistan ambassador to Belarus, Sajjad Haider Khan received Federal Minister of Power Khurram Dastagir Khan at Pakistan embassy for a briefing session prior to the Joint Economic Commission being held on 12-13. - DNA

Azerbaijani FM, US official discuss situation in Lachin

ISTANBUL: Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov on Tuesday discussed the latest developments concerning protests on the Lachin road connecting Armenia to the Karabakh region with US Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, Karen Donfried, during a phone call, an official statement said on Wednesday. "During the meeting, the parties discussed the cooperation agenda between the two countries and the current situation in the region. (Foreign) Minis-

ter Jeyhun Bayramov pointed out that despite a number of constructive initiatives of the Azerbaijani side regarding the normalization of Azerbaijan-Armenia relations in the post-conflict period, the process was continuously obstructed by various provocations by Armenia," the Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry said. The statement read that Armenia grossly violated its obligations under the cease-fire agreement signed between Moscow, Baku and Yerevan on Nov. 10, 2020 by "using the Lachin road for military

provocations, including the illegal transportation and placement of mines, illegal economic activity and looting of natural resources, and the illegal crossing of third-country nationals." It further noted that Bayramov refuted claims about a "blockade" implemented on Armenians living in Karabakh and the creation of a "humanitarian disaster" in the region as a result of the "closing" of the Lachin road by Azerbaijan based on the "large number of International Committee of the Red Cross, Russian

peacekeeping contingent and other humanitarian vehicles" crossing the road on a daily basis. "Despite the statements of the Azerbaijani side that there are no obstacles to the free movement of Armenian residents using the road, and that they intend to provide assistance to Armenians if necessary, the fact that people who present themselves as the leaders of local Armenians are against the use of the road by the population has been brought to attention," the statement added.—Agencies

Transparency hallmark of BISP: Kundi

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Faisal Karim Kundi Wednesday said ensuring transparency in cash disbursement to deprived and underprivileged women is the hallmark of the working of Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP). Faisal Kundi stated this while discussing various initiatives of the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) with the Ambassador of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) in Pakistan, Ms Dilsad Senol who called on the minister. The SAPM informed the visiting ambassador that BISP had recently released a tranche of over Rs. 55 billion as the first quarterly instalment for the year 2023 for disbursement among women registered under the Benazir Kafalat Programme. An additional release of about rupees 13 billion has been made separately for Benazir Educational Stipends, he continued. He also apprised the visiting ambassador that Benazir Nashonuma Program

has been extended to 118 districts across the country and 169 Facilitation Centers have been made operational so far. The Minis-

ter of State underscored that for complaint redress of the BISP beneficiaries, a Call Centre has been established in the BISP head

office. Instructional videos for awareness and advocacy are also shared on social media platforms on regular basis, he added. Rs.

70 billion have been distributed among the 2.8 million people who were affected by floods, Faisal Karim Kundi added. The devastation of floods in Pakistan has pushed many people below the poverty line. BISP has, therefore, launched Dynamic Survey in the flood-affected areas as well as all over Pakistan for the inclusion of such people in the Benazir Kafalat Programme, Faisal Kundi said. Ambassador Senol noted that floods have put an extraordinary burden on the government of Pakistan to the provision of relief to the affected people. She said that the whole world is exposed to climate changes and climate-related calamities and every country will have to face its consequences, however, the world is still not ready for it, she observed. The visiting TRNC ambassador appreciated the Government of Pakistan for establishing diplomatic ties with TRNC and said that over ten thousand Pakistanis are living in TRNC and we feel that very soon cricket would be introduced in TRNC as well.



ISLAMABAD: Dilsad Senol Representative of TRNC in a meeting with Faisal Karim Kundi SAPM Poverty Alleviation, on Wednesday.—DNA

Greece's last king, Constantine II, dies at 82

ATHENS: Greece's last and former king, Constantine II, died on Tuesday aged 82, state website ERT news reported. The late king, the only son of King Paul and Queen Frederica of Greece, ascended to the throne in 1964. His nine-year reign coincided with one of the most turbulent periods in the country's political history, with a military coup on 21 April 1967 resulting in the installation of a right-wing military dictatorship, commonly known as the "Regime of the Colonels". A few months later, Constantine was forced to flee Greece after leading an unsuccessful countercoup against the then military junta. The late king remained in Rome until the regime abolished the monarchy in 1973. But upon the junta's fall in 1974, things would not revert to how they were before. In a referendum called by a national unity government led by Konstantinos Karamanlis, Greeks rejected the monarchy for a second time, making Constantine the country's last king. Athens later stripped him of his citizenship. In 2002, Constantine and other members of his family were compensated with 13.7 million for their former property in Greece, which includes the Tatoi palace estate north of Athens — that is currently being restored — and a villa in Corfu, the birthplace of the late Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh and now a museum. The former king was married to Queen Anne-Marie of Greece and leaves behind five children. He is also Prince William's godfather, having lived in London for years before returning to Greece.—APP

61 killed under Marcos admin

MANILA: With no letup in the so-called "war against illegal drugs," at least 61 people were killed in the Philippines in the last six months of the last year under the administration of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. "Between July 1 and Dec. 31, 2022, 61 alleged drug offenders were slain in the government's anti-illegal drug operations," Philippine National Police (PNP) spokesperson Col. Jean Fajardo told Daily Inquirer. "That includes joint operations with the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency," the PNP spokesperson said Wednesday. Data from Dahas, a monitoring project run by the University of the Philippines, however, revealed: "There were 175 drug-related killings in the country during Marcos' first few months as President, or between 12 noon of June 30 and December 31, 2022." "This brings the total drug-related death toll to 324 in 2022 — a year that saw both the tail-end of the Duterte administration and the start of the Marcos administration," Dahas noted. "State agents still top the assailants, and pushers the top targets but hotspots have shifted from the National Capital Region and Negros Occidental to Davao City and Cebu," the group claimed. The Philippines' "war on drugs" was launched in June 2016 under the presidency of Rodrigo Duterte.—DNA

French govt to increase retirement age to 64

PARIS: French Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne announced Tuesday that the retirement age will be raised from 62 currently to 64 in 2030 as part of the government's pension reform. Explaining the content of the reform, which was among the election promises of French President Emmanuel Macron, Borne said the current retirement age, 62, will be gradually increased from Sept. 1 by three months each year and reach 64 in 2030. In addition, people will need to have worked for at least 43 years to get a full pension, starting from 2027, she said. The minimum pension will also be increased to 85% of the minimum wage, she said, meaning the minimum pension will be around 1,200 (\$1,288) per month. Mathilde Panot, a member of parliament for the France Unbowed party, criticized the reform on Twitter, describing it as "unfair and cruel."—APP

Briefs

Korean President cites North's serious threat

NEWS DESK

SEOUL: North Korea's spike in missile tests, growing nuclear ambitions and other provocative acts pose a "serious threat" that could lead to a dangerous miscalculation and spark a wider conflict, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said. Speaking with US news agency in Seoul, the conservative leader reiterated his call for closer security cooperation with the United States and Japan to counter the "dangerous situation" being created by North Korea as he played down the prospect for direct negotiations like those pursued by his liberal predecessor. "We've seen a miscalculation leading to serious wars many times in history," Yoon said, adding that the North's advancing nuclear arsenal poses a direct threat to the U.S. mainland as well as South Korea and nearby Japan. Much of the nearly hour-long interview focused on North Korea, which carried out a record number of missile tests last year and just weeks ago violated South Korean airspace by flying drones across the border for the first time in five years. That incursion prompted the South to fire warning shots, scramble jets and fly its own drones over the border. Days later, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un began the new year by ordering the "exponential" expansion of his nuclear arsenal and the development of a more powerful intercontinental ballistic missile.

Uganda declares end to deadly Ebola outbreak

MUBENDE: Uganda on Wednesday declared an end to an Ebola virus outbreak that emerged almost four months ago and claimed the lives of 55 people. "We have successfully controlled the Ebola outbreak in Uganda," Health Minister Jane Ruth Aceng said at a ceremony in the central district of Mubende, where the disease was first detected in September. The move was confirmed in a statement issued by the WHO, whose chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus hailed the East African country's "robust and comprehensive response" to the widely-feared haemorrhagic fever. Aceng said January 11 marked 113 days since the start of the epidemic, which also spread to the capital Kampala. Under the WHO's criteria, an outbreak of the disease officially ends when there are no new cases for 42 consecutive days - twice the virus's incubation period. "Uganda put a swift end to the Ebola outbreak by ramping up key control measures such as surveillance, contact tracing and infection, prevention and control," WHO statement quoted the minister as saying. "While we expanded our efforts to put a strong response in place across the nine affected districts, the magic bullet has been our communities who understood the importance of doing what was needed to end the outbreak, and took action." - Agencies

WB projects Pakistan's growth at 2.0% in 2023

The bank said the figure for Pakistan growth was "half the pace that was anticipated last June, and faces challenging economic conditions, including repercussions of the recent flooding and continued policy and political uncertainty

WASHINGTON: With the World Bank warning that the global economy is "perilously close to falling into recession", the development lender forecast Pakistan's growth at 2.0 percent in fiscal year 2022/23 (July-June), in its annual Global Economic Prospects report Tuesday. The bank said the figure for Pakistan growth was "half the pace that was anticipated last June, and faces challenging economic conditions, including the repercussions of the recent flooding and continued policy and political uncertainty." Overall growth in South Asia is projected to slow to 5.5% in 2023 before picking up to 5.8% in 2024. "This pace reflects still robust growth in India, Maldives, and Nepal, offsetting the effects of the floods in Pakistan and the economic and political crises in Afghanistan and Sri Lanka," the report said. Growth in India is projected to slow

to 6.9 percent in FY2022/23, a 0.6 percentage point downward revision since June, as the global economy and rising uncertainty will weigh on export and investment growth, it said, adding that the South Asian country was expected to be the world's fastest growing major economy. In Bangladesh, growth is expected to slow to 5.2 percent in FY2022/23 (July-June) due to rising inflation and its negative impact on household incomes and firms' input costs, as well as energy shortages, import restrictions, and monetary policy tightening. Food insecurity is rising in the (South Asian) region which consumes about one-fifth of its calories from wheat products, houses more than one-third of the global poor, and where food accounts for a greater share of its consumption basket compared to other emerging and developing economies, according to the

report. "Although global food price inflation appears to have subsided, risks of increased deprivation and inadequate nutrition remain elevated," it said. "Climate change is a significant threat in the region. The recent floods in Pakistan are estimated to have caused damage equivalent to about 4.8 percent of GDP. Extreme weather events can exacerbate food deprivation, cut the region off from essential supplies, destroy infrastructure, and directly impede agricultural production." At the global level, forecasts for growth in 2023 were cut nearly in half, dropping from 3% to 1.7%—the third-weakest pace of growth ever projected by the World Bank, behind paces recorded during the 2009 and 2020 recessions. The bank said major slowdowns in advanced economies, including sharp cuts to its

forecast to 0.5% for both the United States and the euro zone, could foreshadow a new global recession less than three years after the last one. "Given fragile economic conditions, any new adverse development - such as higher-than-expected inflation, abrupt rises in interest rates to contain it, a resurgence of the COVID-19 pandemic or escalating geopolitical tensions - could push the global economy into recession," the bank said in a statement accompanying the report. The bleak outlook will be especially hard on emerging market and developing economies, the World Bank said, as they struggle with heavy debt burdens, weak currencies and income growth, and slowing business investment that is now forecast at a 3.5% annual growth rate over the next two years - less than half the pace of the past two decades.

6 injured in Paris train station knife attack

MONITORING DESK

PARIS: Six people were injured in a knife attack at Paris' busiest train station on Wednesday morning, said the nation's interior minister. A knife-wielding suspect attacked several people at the Gare du Nord train station and injured six of them, including a police officer, Gerald Darmanin confirmed after visiting the scene. He added that two police officers fired three shots and managed to neutralize the suspect. "The attacker is between life and death at this moment, at the hospital," Darmanin said, adding that the suspect was not carrying any identification on him but will be identified soon. Paris prosecutors have launched an investigation into the attack, he said. Darmanin also thanked police officers for their speedy response, security officers of the railway operator SNCF, and passers-by. The causes and motivations for the attack remain unknown. Gare du Nord is not just Paris' busiest railway station, but Europe's, with over 292 million passengers having used the station in 2021, according to SNCF data.

EU oil ban estimated to cost Russia €160 million per day

LONDON: The European Union's ban on crude oil imports from Russia and oil price cap are estimated to cost Russia €160 million (\$171.7 million) a day, according to findings from the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) on Wednesday. The EU banned imports of seaborne crude oil from Russia and insurance and financing of the transport of Russian oil to third countries, particularly through maritime routes. The EU's prohibition came into effect on Dec. 5, 2022. The EU and G-7 group of industrialized nations agreed on a price cap for Russian oil at \$60 per barrel that came into effect the same day. CREA found that Russia's crude oil revenues saw a 32% drop in December due to the crude oil import ban and price cap. After Germany halted imports of Russian oil via the Druzhba pipeline by the end of last month, it caused a further reduction of 5%. The Druzhba pipeline, also known as the Friendship Pipeline, is the main line carrying oil from eastern European Russia to Ukraine, Belarus, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Austria and Germany. A total of 2.5 million barrels of crude oil and 700,000 barrels of petroleum products were transported via the pipeline in October for EU countries. Despite the drop in revenues, Russia is still earning €640 million per day from fossil fuel exports. This amount is set to fall to about €520 million as the EU ban on refined oil imports and the extension of the price cap to refined oil products come into effect by Feb. 5. The EU's oil ban and the oil price cap have finally kicked in, and the impact is as significant as expected. - Agencies



NAJAF: Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani presenting Senate shield to chief scholar of Iraqi Fiqh Academy, Sheikh Allama Dr. Ahmed Hassan Al-Taha. - DNA

Deadly 'suicide' blast outside Afghan foreign ministry in Kabul

WEB DESK

KABUL: At least 20 people have been killed after a suspected suicide bomber detonated himself outside the foreign ministry in Kabul in the second major attack in the Afghan capital this year, according to a Taliban official. Ustad Faraedun, an official at the Taliban-run information ministry, told Reuters that the bomber had planned to enter the foreign ministry but failed. He added that at least 20 people were killed and many others injured in the blast. A photo of the area, confirmed by official sources, showed at least nine people wounded or killed, lying outside the ministry as security forces attended to them. Kabul police chief spokesman Khalid Zadran said security teams have been deployed to the site. He said that at least five people were killed and several wounded in the blast. The blast hit about 4pm local time (11:30 GMT) on Wednesday, Zadran said. Taliban foreign and interior ministry officials have yet to comment on the deadly explosion.

Pakistan condemns terrorist attack in Kabul

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan strongly condemns the brazen terrorist attack that took place in Kabul today resulting in loss of precious lives and multiple injuries. The Government and people of Pakistan extend their deepest sympathies and condolences to the bereaved families. - DNA

Moscow, Kyiv agree prisoner swap during Ankara talks

NEWS DESK

ANKARA: The Russian and Ukrainian human rights commissioners reportedly agreed to exchange 40 war prisoners at a crucial meeting hosted by Türkiye in another sign of advancing negotiations as the war nears to complete a year. Russia's Tatiana Moskalkova revealed via Telegram on Tuesday that she came together with her Ukrainian counterpart Dmytro Lubinets at a meeting chaired by Türkiye's Chief Ombudsman Şeref Malkoç in the capital Ankara. "We discussed issues of providing humanitarian assistance to

citizens of the two countries," Moskalkova said. Before the meeting, Lubinets had noted that the agenda of the discussions was to "return of our heroes and heroines," a reference to prisoner exchanges. "Kyiv wants the return of its civilian hostages, whom the Russian Federation has detained en masse in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine and whom it does not allow to go home," he added. Malkoç also urged "the whole of humanity to strive for a ceasefire and an honorable peace that will protect Ukraine's territorial integrity." The crucial meeting took place on the sidelines of

an international ombudsman conference on "The Future of Human Rights in the 21st Century", organized by the Ombudsman Institution (KDK) and the European Union. The conference emerges as a big opportunity for the sides to make progress in peace talks, which haven't been renewed since initial negotiations in the early months of Russia's invasion collapsed. Following the meeting, Moskalkova on Wednesday further said "important words about the need for a cease-fire" had been exchanged with Lubinets and Malkoç. "A cease-fire is necessary to stop human rights violations,"

Over nine million Ukrainian refugees crossed into Poland

WARSAW: The number of Ukrainians who crossed the border into neighboring Poland since the war began has shot past 9 million, the Polish Border Guards said on Wednesday. Since the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine war on Feb. 24, setting off a large migration flow, as of Tuesday the total number of Ukrainian refugees who crossed over to Poland topped 9 million by a full 74,000, it said in a tweet. It added that yesterday alone some 29,900 people arrived from Ukraine to Poland.

However, during that time, some 7.25 million Ukrainians have since exited Poland, according to the Polish Border Guards, leaving the current number of registered Ukrainian refugees at some 1.5 million, the UNHCR refugee agency said last month. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Poland spent €8.36 billion (\$8.98 billion) on housing, health care and other services for Ukrainians in 2022, the highest amount among member countries, said a separate tweet. - Agencies

Since beginning of the Russia-Ukraine war on Feb. 24, setting off a large migration flow, as of Tuesday the total number of Ukrainian refugees who crossed over to Poland topped 9 mln by a full 74,000, it said in a tweet

OGRA drops gas bomb: Tariff hiked up to 74% from July 2022

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Amid biting inflation and shrinking purchasing power, the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) has dropped a gas bomb on the masses as it increased the tariff for consumers of two sui gas companies by up to 74%, effective from July 2022. The regulator, in a notification issued on Wednesday, hiked the tariff of Sui Northern Gas Company Limited (SNG-PL) and Sui Southern Gas Company (SSG) for household consumers, commercial sector, tandoors, captive power plants and general industries, including export-oriented sector. Interestingly, the regulator has abolished the earlier applicable slabs of gas consumption and their respective rates and fixed the price at 952.17 per Million British Thermal Units (mmBtu) for SNGPL consumers. Likewise, for SSG, the prescribed prices have been fixed

at Rs1161.91/mmBtu. Having a cursory look at the decision, lower slabs who consume less and are almost poor consumers are most affected as their gas prices have tripled, while for the higher slabs, the prices have been literally reduced. The regulator issued its decision after holding public hearings on the petitions of SNGPL and SSG in November 2022, where both companies had demanded a substantial increase in their prescribed gas prices for the current FY23 to help them meet revenue requirements. SNGPL, operating the gas network in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, sought Rs1,294.02/mmBtu, and SSG which feeds Sindh and Balochistan sought Rs667.44/mmBtu increase. According to the latest decision of OGRA on their petitions, the prescribed gas prices for SNGPL have been increased by 74.42% while for SSG, it has been increased by 67.75%. In absolute terms, for SNGPL the average price has been increased by Rs406/

mmBtu to Rs952.17/mmBtu. For SSG too, the gas price has been enhanced by Rs469/mmBtu to Rs1,161.95/mmBtu. The regulator has sent its decision to the federal government. Now, the government would decide on it within 40 days of this notification. If the government does not notify it, then it will automatically come into effect. For domestic consumers, the prescribed prices for the lowest slab, which was earlier Rs121/mmBtu, has now been increased to 952.17/mmBtu depicting an increase of 687%. For the next slab, it has been increased from Rs300/mmBtu to Rs952.17/mmBtu. Interestingly, for the highest two slabs, the prices have been reduced after fixing the rate at Rs952.17. Earlier, the second slab was paying Rs1,107/mmBtu and the last one was paying Rs1,460/mmBtu. Now comparing these prices with the new prices, there is a sizeable reduction in gas prices for rich consumers.

JANUARY 2023
Pakistan's Premier News & Diplomatic Affairs Magazine

Find us on:
www.centrelines.com.pk
www.dnanews.com.pl
www.islamabadpost.com.pk

@PostIslamabad/ @Editordnanews

A sister concern of
Islamabad POST
11# Block 18-A, Awan Plaza,
G-8 Markez, Islamabad-Pakistan
Ph: 051-2261960, 051-2266165

