

Govt to steer Pak out of challenges

DNA

on



stan Qamai Zaman Kaira says coalition government is facing a daunting task to pull the country out of the crises. He was addressing a public gathering in Lahore on Friday. Expressing dismay over the rising inflation in the country, he said that PTI Chief Imran Khan is responsible for the price hike of essential commodities who made tough agreements with the International Monetary Fund. Castigating the PTI Chief Imran Khan over his poor performance during his regime, he said that economy faced irreparable loss due to his failed policies. He expressed satisfaction that relations with the friendly states have improved now due to smart foreign policy of the incumbent government.

Political adventure not required

DNA

Russian oil import to start from March Russian official says Pakistan will pay in 'currency of friendly countries'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Following a conclusion of the annual inter-governmental commission held between Pakistan and Russia, the two sides agreed on late March as the timeline for crude oil export. Confirming the news, Minister of State for Petroleum Musadik Malik revealed that Pakistan wants to import 35% of its total crude oil requirement from Russia. The state minister also mentioned that currently, Russia does not have liquefied natural gas (LNG) for Pakistan.

Meanwhile, Russia's Energy Minister Nikolay Shulginov, who is visiting the country, also said that Pakistan will pay for energy purchases from Russia, when they start in late March, in currencies of friendly countries. Pakistan's government last year sent officials to Russia, after which the Pakistani state minister for petroleum said Russia would sell crude oil at a discounted rate. Pakistan has not traditionally been a major importer of Russian oil and gas. During the talks, Islamabad and Moscow agreed that after consensus on the technical specifications was achieved, the oil and gas trade transaction will be structured in a way it has a mutual economic benefit for both countries. The officials also agreed to strengthen energy cooperation, enhance energy trade and broaden energy infrastructure investment based on strategic and favourable commercial terms. Both sides have agreed to work on a "Comprehensive Plan for Energy Cooperation", which would form the foundation for future work and is to be finalised in 2023. investment ties, he said and added

Continued on Page 06

PM invites UAE investment

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has urged the businessmen of the United Arab Emirates to utilize the immense opportunities in Pakistan, a market of over 220 million people offering its investors a strong and large consumer market."Energy, infrastructure, e-commerce, agro-based industry and IT sectors are up for grabs," he said in an interview with Khaleej Times during his visit to the UAE last week and published on Thursday. Besides meeting the UAE leadership, the prime minister also witnessed the signing of three memoranda of understanding in the fields of combating human trafficking, information exchange and cooperation between the diplomatic academies of both countries. Asked about the UAE and Pakistan trade relations, Prime Minister Shehbaz pointed out that the bilateral trade with the UAE had increased by 25.40 percent during 2021-22 as compared to the previous year, amounting to US\$10.60 billion. However, he said, "the current level of bilateral trade is still not a true reflection. "We are looking to further strengthen our existing economic, trade and



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani welcomes Ambassador of United States Donald Blome for a meeting. - DNA

'Pak-US ties are mutually beneficial'

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Muhammad SadiqSanjrani has said that Pakistan greatly values its relationship multifaceted with United States and desires to further expand the friendly ties for mutual benefit of the two sides. Chairman Senate expressed these views during a meeting with Ambassador of United States H.E. Donald Blome in Islamabad. A reception was also hosted in honor of the Ambassador at Chair-Senate's residence eral (retd) QamarJavedBajwa, claiming the During the call-on the digniuncertainty started the day his government taries discussed matters of mutual interest, bilateral collaborations and development in the region. The Chairman Senate thanked the US government for its cooperation and collaboration with Pakistan in various fields and appreciated the role of US government in providing much needed support to the Pakistani flood affectees.

Ex-COAS to blame for all the crises, Imran reiterates Says the coalition govt has failed to tackle the economic crisis

ALI HAMZA

LAHORE: As the country is facing enormous economic and political challenges, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan blamed former army chief Gen-



country's history had Pakistan faced a worse economic crisis than the one it "faces these



said on Friday the country could not afford any political adventure at present. Speaking to media in Karachi, he said the economy was facing a severe crisis however there would be no default because the decisions would be in the country's interests, while adding the incumbent government had inherited a vulnerable economy and Pakistan was compared to Srilanka but the economy was handled well. Highlighting the result of local elections, the PML-N's stalwart said the people of Karachi had rejected the divisive politics of PTI because Imran Khan did not provide relief the relief to Karachi during his tenure. He said all parties now needed to save the state instead of their own politics and the party that claimed of having 14 seats in Karachi was whitewashed in the polls.

Holiday Notice

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



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Mental well-being has become an integral part of society – Page 04

To engage or not engage. Hindus and Muslims suss each other out – Page 05

Pakistan finishes 2nd in KSA four-nation cup - Page 06

Subsidized flour should be provided through markets – Page 07

Saudi Arabia rules out Israel normalization - Page 08

Pakistan rules out talks with the TTP Bilawal urges 'dialogue and diplomatic engagement' to resolve Ukraine conflict

News Desk

WASHINGTON: Accusing former prime minister Imran Khan's government of following a policy of appeasement towards the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has said that the new leadership - both political and military - have ruled out talks with terrorist organisations that don't respect the country's laws and constitution. "I am confident that if we can work with the Afghan interim government, which has influence over these groups, we will be suc-

cessful in maintaining our security," he said a wide-ranging in interview with The

Washington Post in

Davos, Switzerland, where he is attending the World Economic Forum.

Continued on Page 06

The foreign minister accused PTI chief Imran Khan of giving TTP a place to hide. He said that Khan not only released the TTP prisoners in Pakistan's custody but also

engaged in dialogue with them. He [Khan] has always been ideologically sympathetic to their point of view," the foreign minister added. In response to a question about

whether Pakistan had hoped that the new Afghan government would act against the TTP, FM Bilawal said: "Our hope - and in fact, their agreement - was that their soil would not be used for terrorism. We do hope to cooperate with them to

Continued on Page 06

Tanks for Ukraine needs agreement from allies'

German Defence Minister Pistorius said he could not say when there would be a decision on the tanks

AGENCIES

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE: Germany said it would need agreement from allies to give the green light for the delivery of German-made tanks to Ukraine to fend off Moscow's invasion, apparently dashing Kyiv's hopes for a quick decision. Defence ministers from NATO and other countries were meeting in Germany amid warnings that Russia will soon reenergise its almost 11-month-old invasion to seize parts of Ukraine's east and south it says it has annexed but does not fully control. The United States and Finland announced large new military aid packages before the gathering at Ramstein Air Base, where the focus was on whether Germany would allow countries in Europe that use its Leopard 2 tanks to re-export them to Ukraine. German Defence Minister Pistorius said he could not say when there would be a decision on the tanks but that Germany was prepared to move fast if there was consensus among allies.

Continued on Page 06

US urges allies to increase military support

DNA

BERLIN: US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin on Friday called on Western allies to increase their military support to Ukraine, stressing that the war is entering into a "decisive" phase. "This is a crucial moment. Russia is regrouping, recruiting and trying to re-equip," Austin told his counterparts at the Ukraine Defense Contact Group meeting at Ramstein Air Base. "This is not a moment to slow down. It's a time to dig deeper. The Ukrainian people are watching us. The Kremlin is watching us. And history is watching us," he said.

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ECP denotifies 35 more PTI MNAs DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Friday denotified 35 more Pakistan Tehreeke-Insaf's (PTI) members of the National Assembly (MNAs) following the acceptance of their resignations by NA Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf. According to an ECP notification, the resignations of the PTI lawmakers have been approved from April 11, 2022. The denotified MNAs includ-Dr Haider Ali Khan, ed

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JANUARY 2023

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was overthrown. "Due to the decision of one person, the PTI-led government was toppled and the crisis started," the former prime minister said while addressing the "Rule of Law" conference via video link on Friday. Khan was ousted from power through a vote of no-confidence in the National Assembly in April last year.

Without naming former army chief Gen (retd) QamarJavedBajwa, he said: "One person decided to change the [PTI] regime and hatched a conspiracy." The coalition government, he said, had failed to tackle the economic crisis as "it does not have any plan' to restore the economy". The PTI chief said

days". He insist ed that the crises were "deliberate-

ly manufactured". "It is not a natural crisis. "Everyone [in the government] is hoping to get money from Saudi Arabia and China,' Khan said, adding that the rulers, in Geneva, requested the international community to provide them funds in connection with the devastation by the environmental changes. Until the 90s, Pakistan's economic indicators remained largely positive in the Subcontinent, the PTI leader said, adding that no one could have imagined that the "country's economy could fall to such levels".

Continued on Page 06

Interim Punjab CM: Its ECP's turn now NA speaker's move **BUREAU REPORT**

'illegal, immoral'

SHUJAAT HAMZA ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-In-

saf (PTI) Friday termed the decision of National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf of accepting the resignations of 35 more lawmakers as "illegal" and "immoral" and urged the government to announce a date for early elections. Earlier, the NA speaker accepted the resignations of PTI lawmakers, dealing a massive blow to Imran

Continued on Page 06

that it has been decided that the names **Continued on Page 06**

LAHORE: The Punjab government and

opposition on Friday failed to reach agree-

ment on appointment of caretaker Punjab

Chief Minister. Speaking to the media af-

ter parliamentary committee meeting on

Friday, former provincial minister Raja

Basharat said that the members of the

opposition didn't agree on their opinion.

Raja Basharat said that the decisions

should be made that are acceptable to

the masses, while the opposition bent on

two names. The Pakistan Muslim League-

Quaid (PML-Q) leader went on to say



NATIONAL

Islamabad **POST** Saturday, January 21, 2023

Govt adamant on strengthening energy generation

DNA

02

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Energy Khurram Dastgir said that current government prioritised generation of energy from domestic resources such as hydel, solar, wind, coal and the new deal to minimise reliance on imports . He was speaking at the concluding session of the 2nd Regional Dialogue 2023 organized by the Institute of Regional Studies here on Thursday. He said that the government was also working on activating wind corridors in Balochistan for energy creation. The government intended to fulfill energy needs while adhering to the SDG commitments and using domestic coal instead of imported coal, he added. The Minister said that there was a need for appropriate advocacy on energy conservation as it was likely to remain expensive for the foreseeable future and was imperative for economic growth.

Previously, the second day of the Re-

AIOU creating archives of

intellectuals

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal

Open University is creat-

ing intellectual archives to

guide the new generation

and connect them with his-

gional Dialogue 2023 featured discussions on contemporary nontraditional challenges confronting the region, climate change and food security and industrial development and technological innovation. Discussing the potential areas of development, Haroon Sharif, former Minister of State said that Pakistan needed to aggressively focus on governance issues, low productivity and the growing challenge of underutilised youth faculties. He stressed the need to invest more in knowledge-based and cultural aspects in addition to augmenting CPEC infrastructural development in sync with relevant policy and institutional frameworks.

Dr Sabina Durrani, DG Population Planning Wing while deliberating upon the challenge of rising population growth rates said that the disharmony between available resources and the current growth rate was highly alarming and required multi-sectoral interventions on part of governments in the region. Health and population were

interlinked and while Pakistan did possess a reasonable health infrastructure, low budget allocation for its sustenance was a major factor behind the hiccups in the system, she added.

Dr Shumail Daud Arain said that while there was a clear burden on the urban areas due to reasons of better access and facilities, the disintegration of the health system had led to increased governance and fiscal problems.

While discussing the growing challenge of food insecurity, Abhas K. Jha, Practice Manager Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management, South Asia Region World Bank, said that Pakistan bore the potential to become an agricultural powerhouse by repurposing subsidies and using resources to support transformative on-farm investments. Other worthy speakers from the three sessions from day 2 of the Dialogue included Ms Aisha Khan, Ms Florence Rolle, Mr Arif Goheer, Ms Afia Salam, Mr Ahsan Javed, Dr Salma Malik and Mr Javaid Iqbal among others.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Sardar Ayaz Sadiq and Minister of Energy of the Russian Federation Mr. Nikolay Shulginov delivering press statements after signing final protocol of the 8th Session of Pak-Russia IGC. - APP

Court postpones indictment of Gill

ISLAMABAD: A local court on Friday once again postponed the indictment of PTI's leader Shehbaz Gill and others in a sedition case and served notices to respondents on the acquittal plea of the accused. Additional District and Session Judge Tahir Abbas Sapra heard the sedition case against PTI's leader. Gill's lawyer said that the appointment of special prosecutor Rizwan Abbasi had been challenged before the high court. The junior prosecutor informed the judge that the high court had not issued a stay in this case and let the special prosecutor pursue the case. Gill's counsel Burhan Moazam Advocate informed the court that his client had arrived here

against the recommendation of his doctors. He said the Lahore High Court had sought the case record and also granted his client a protective bail as another case had been registered against him He also prayed the court to mark the attendance of Shehbaz Gill online from the next hearing as he was medically unfit to travel. Senior Journalist Afzal Butt on the occasion said that was the first time in the history when charges were being framed against any di-

Overseas Pakistani worried about political turmoil in country President Tanzeemul Awam

Pakistan former chairman

QAZI SHOAIB KHAN

ATTOCK: USA-based leader of Pakistan Tehreek in Insaaf and Pakistan origin American businessman Sved Mohammad Arif Naqvi while expressing his views on the economic imbroglio of the country has said that the foreign exchange of oversees Pakistanis is the major chunk of the annual budget of Pakistan. The oversees Pakistani are also much worried about the prevalent political economic of their home land.

The Pakistan-origin American business Syed Mohammad Arif Naqvi was talking to the media after the inauguration ceremony of his agricultural farm here in Attock on Friday. Among others, the prominent socio-political figure Sardar Shabir Khan of Salar, Senior Vice

TMA Attock Malik Ejaz Amjad, Vice President Tanzeemul Awan IG Police (R) Mr. Zafar Iqbal Awan, Brigadier (R) Dr. Haleem Khan, Sadiq Hussain Shah, (America), General Secretary, PPP Attock Mr. Ghiyasuddin Ahmed, prominent lawyer Malik Ashfaq Ahmed, President Anjuman e TajranAttock Sheikh Javed Iqbal, Chief Patron Attock Press Club Syed Raza Naqvi, senior journalist Qazi Shoaib Khan and a large number of elites of the district attended the colorful ceremony. Responding different questions of the media persons, Syed Mohammad Arif Naqvi said that oversees Pakistani have serious concerns regarding their families and properties being forcibly occupied by the land grabbers. Even, their honour and

business are not protected by the government despite highlighting their genuine ordeals in the national media. Resultantly, they are compelled to shift their investments from Pakistan due to lethargic attitude of the law enforcement agencies of the country. He further said that now

oversees Pakistanis have a ray of home on the leadership of Imran Khan who could purge the country from the ongoing quagmire after coming into power once again failing which their entire country will lose its reputation at the world level. Syed Arif Naqvi said that oversees Pakistanis have reposed their full confidence upon the PTI dynamic leadership of Imran Khan who will change the political scenario of the country in the days to come, he added.

Educated women must play role in all spheres of life

FAISALABAD: Governor Baligh-ur-Rehman said on exhibiting patience and for-Friday that educated women

Punjab He advised girls to become ing problems by translating Muhammad part of healthy activities by their theoretic knowledge into the practical form. He bearance, instead of indulgsaid that research acutely

Govt urged to ensure uninterrupted supply of electricity, gas

PESHAWAR: Industrialists in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have demanded of the government to ensure low-cost and uninterrupted electricity and gas supply to manufacturing units for the promotion of industrialisation. Besides, the KP manufacturers have called for prompt steps to resolve the Letter of Credits (LCs) issue which is halting industrialisation. These issues were taken up during Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ghulam Ali's visit to the Industrial Estate, Hayatabad, Peshawar paid on the invitation of Industrialists Association Peshawar (IAP) President Malik Imran Ishaq, said in a press release issued here on Friday. Mayor Peshawar Zubair Ali was also accompanying the KP governor. Malik Imran, in his opening remarks of the

tory. In this context interviews of Iftikhar Arif, Prof. Fateh Muhammad Malik and Kishwar Naheed will be recorded in first spell", said senior advisor, Centre of Excellence, Muhammad Rafiq Tahir in a meeting of "Review and Publication Committee" of Iqbal Chair on Tasawwuf and Muslim Thoughts. The meeting was chaired by the head Iqbal Chair, Prof. Fateh Muhammad Malik and other members of the meeting included Dr. Yusuf Khushk, Khurshid Nadeem, Hameed Shahid, Prof. Dr. Saleem Mazhar, Prof. Dr. Shafiq Ahmed, and Prof. Dr. Abdul Aziz Sahir. Muhammad Rafiq Tahir said that 7 books of Sirat-ul-Nabi have been published. He further added that the initiative of publishing books and recording interviews of intellectuals will continue till the largest archives of sues of industrialists mostly related to electricity, gas, collection of fixed billing charges, and quarter tariff adjustment in power bills, etc. KP is producing natural gas in surplus quantity and new discoveries of gas were also reported in the province, the IAP chief said. He said under constitutional article 158-A, the first right on KP's natural gas is

of the people of KP, howevbeen faced with financial as er, a cheap and uninterruptwell as production losses, ed electricity supply is not Bilour informed. Former FPCCI president being provided to industrial, raised the question: "How commercial, and domestic

consumers in the province. would the industries flour-Similarly, he raised concern ish when the process of export is being halted?" He over fixed billing charges and quarter tariff adjustsaid industrialists have been ments in power bills, saying forced to shut their units owthat KP is also self-sufficient ing to the prevailing circumin electricity production but stances. Malik Imran Ishaq urged the KP Governor to electricity was unavailable to industrial and commerlead the industrialist comcial consumers in the province. The IAP president asked to immediately halt fixed billing charges and collection quarter tariff adjustments besides ensuring the provision of cheap and uninterrupted power supply to industries. Ghazanfar Bilour, while speaking on the occasion, took up the issue of LCs

munity as a representative. "If the issues were not resolved amicably under your leadership then manufacturers would be compelled to stop production units due to unaffordable huge financial losses," he added. KP Governor assured the IAP president and industrialists that he would take up their issues at the central level efbefore Governor KP, saying ficiently and would make all possible efforts to resolve that the process of industriem promptly. He pledged to apprise federal ministers and relevant senior officials of the industrialists issues during an upcoming meeting in Islamabad. He also invited the IAP president to come to the Governor House and requested him to help them writing letters to the central government regarding industrialists' matters and which industrialists have issues.-APP

Pakistan are established in the AIOU.-DNA

Tourists advised to be extra cautious

ISLAMABAD: Tourists visiting hilly areas of the country to enjoy snowy season during the current rain spell expected on the weekend have been advised by the concerned authorities to take extra precautionary measures to avoid any untoward situation. Every year, a large number of local and international tourists plan to visit the hilly areas of the country to enjoy the picturesque beauty of natural scenes including lush green valleys, beautiful mountains, snow peaks, meadows, lakes and water falls. Taking advantage of the of the weekly offs as well as snow fall forecast by the weather experts, this year too, a number of tourists are rushing towards the various hilly spots offering great fun opportunities for the nature lovers. Samia khan a mother of two kids while talking to APP said that the last year incident of deaths in Murree during snow fall is still haunting me and my family so this year we decided not to visit Murree.-APP



ector news. He prayed the court to constitute a committee comprising journalists with regard to Ammad Yousaf. He said the police should have heard the reservations of journalists. special prosecutor The said the journalistic organizations had nothing to do with the court proceeding. The court said that it was

could hear the case.

an open court and everyone

must play a proactive role in all spheres of life including health, education, political and business, and promised that the government would fully complement their efforts to become an equal partner of nation-building activities. He was addressing the 2nd convocation of Government College Women University Faisalabad (GCWUF) here. He appreciated the excellent role of girl students and said that the ranking of GCWUF had improved substantially and its benefit must be passed on to the female students.

ing in negative activities. He stressed the role of women in the socioeconomic development of Pakistan and said that the PMLN had opened doors of higher education on women and, during the tenure of Nawaz Sharif, many women universities were established across the country. These universities encouraged girls to harness their skills and play their role in the overall national development, he added. He said that the universities actually provide a platform to

its students to suggest solu-

tions to current and emerg-

opens new avenues of progress and prosperity and women should also play their role in national development by clearly identifying good from the bad.

He said that girls should not trust rumours as fake news were rife on the social media. Dissemination of such news creates anarchy and chaos in the country and due to this reason intellectuals from all over the world are promoting the philosophy of tolerance. "We should also not shun our moral values, rather defend our self-respect in every field," he added.

The Smooth Maving Connection



ISLAMABAD: PTI leaders taking to media : –DNA

3.5 million displaced students require support to resume education: PCE

ISLAMABAD: The civil society of Pakistan welcomed the pledges of more than \$9 billion made by the international community for flood recovery efforts in a recent UN conference and urged for swift action to rehabilitate those affected by the floods. This was said in a joint statement issued by the civil societv here in Islamabad. Special emphasis was laid on prioritizing education in the distribution of disaster aid to support the swift recovery of the education system in the affected areas. The press statement was jointly issued by the Pakistan Coalition for Education (PCE), an initiative of the Society For Access to Quality Education, Centre for Peace and Development Initiative (CPDI), Pakitan Youth

Change Advocates (PYCA), United Global Organization of Development (UGOOD), and renowned educationist, Dr.A.H. Nayyar. The statement was accompanied by a joint call to action asking state and non-state actors to take immediate measures to bring the displaced children back to school. This entails diverting sufficient disaster aid towards education as well as providing conditional cash transfers to the affected households to facilitate the education of their children. call-to-action also The stressed the need to make

Pakistan's education system resilient to future emergencies by speedy and quality reconstruction of damaged school infrastructure complete with basic facilities

such as boundary walls, washrooms, clean drinking water, utilities, multiple classrooms, teaching aides, and a minimum number of trained teachers. Building back better also demands making a strong preparedness and disaster-risk management component inherent to the education system at the federal, provincial, district, and school levels. Finally, the National Curriculum of Pakistan (NCP) needs to be revised so that it can impart age-appropriate "green", Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Disaster Risk Management (DRM) education to students.

"The 3.5 million students who were displaced as a result of last year's floods in Pakistan belong to the same group of

marginalized children whose education was most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, there were an estimated 22.8 million out-of-school children (OOSC) in Pakistan. The majority, or 77% of these OOSC, hailed from rural areas and 54% of them were girls," shared Zehra Arshad, the National Coordinator for PCE. "It is also important to highlight here that 96% of all the children living with various forms of disabilities out as a direct consequence in Pakistan have no access of prolonged school closures to education at all." She also after the pandemic, spiking added that a significant porthe percentage of out-oftion of these funds should be school children by 4.5%. "As allocated towards providing per data emerging from Pakiresilient education in flood-afstan, a dramatic fall in enrollment was observed among fected areas to ensure that 14-16-year-olds in the poorest children could continue their education and rebuild households.-DNA

their lives in the aftermath of the floods. The statement stressed for the disaster aid to be used effectively, and efficiently and called for its equitable distribution among the most vulnerable communities. The CSOs also called for proper monitoring and accountability mechanisms to ensure across-the-board transparency. The statement highlighted that an estimated 930,000 school-going students in Pakistan dropped





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National Days and Armed Forces Days

JANUARY

Jan 01 / CUBA Revolution Day

Jan 01 / **Palestine** Palestine Revolution Day

Jan 01 / Sudan National Day

Jan 04 / **Myanmar** Independence Day

Jan 06 / **Iraq** Armed Forces Day

Jan 12 / **Tanzania** Armed Forces Day

Jan 14 / **Uzbekistan** Armed Forces Day

Jan 15 / **Nigeria** Armed Forces Day

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President for adopting green, sustainable building practices

The President was addressing the inaugural ceremony of the Building Materials Exhibition 2023 organized by the IAP's Rawalpindi Chapter in Islamabad

DNA

ISLAMABAD: While addressing the Institute of Architects Pakistan (IAP) Exhibition 2023, President Dr Arif Alvi has called for adopting green and sustainable building practices in the country's housing and construction sector, promoting sustainable living and moderate consumption to conserve energy and limited natural resources. He added that rethinking, redesigning, rebuilding and reusing materials and resources had become critical for promoting climate-friendly and resilient infrastructure in the country.

The President was addressing the inaugural ceremony of the Building Materials Exhibition 2023 organized by the IAP's Rawalpindi Chapter, in Islamabad, on Friday. Chairman IAP, Architect Saad Mehmood Khan, Chairman IAP Rawalpindi/Islamabad Chapter, Architect Fawad Suhail Malik, architects, graduates, and members of the housing and construction industry attended the ceremony. Earlier, the President also inaugurated the Building Materials Exhibition 2023.

Addressing the occasion, the President said that the discipline of architecture was important as it provided the basis for the construction industry and provided quality and aesthetically pleasing accommodations to the people. He said that the buildings should be designed with in-built mechanisms to make them differently-abled person friendly as well as by making rooftops



usable by growing vegetables and greenery, besides installing solar panels to provide green and clean energy.

The President said that construction and development activities by the public sector contribute greatly in increasing economic activity and injecting liquidity into the system which further helped in the growth of industry and providing employment to the people. He quoted the examples of the Mughal dynasty and Sher Shah Suri who invested public money in developing roads, buildings, monuments, and other public places which greatly contributed to the prosperity of the Indo-Pak sub-continent. The President said that the trend of parking money in buying plots and buildings prevented its circulation for promoting business, trade and investment, and contributed to slowing down the economic and financial activities in the country. He said that buildings and houses should be constructed with the underlying objective of providing decent and affordable living to all segments of society, including the poor and the underprivileged. He said that the use of black money for buying plots and buildings and investing in the construction sector should be

checked and discouraged, besides systems should be strengthened to disallow the creation of black money at all.

The President said that it was surprising to note that almost \$13 billion of Pakistani wealth had been blocked and invested in Cyber currency which was depriving the economy of much-needed liquidity. He said that in Pakistan, frequent amnesty schemes had been announced to bring black money into the formal economy but instead of offering such schemes, efficient systems should be developed to tax the wealthy and convert the entire informal economy into the formal economy which would help in overcoming the financial and economic difficulties.

The President said that water was a precious commodity and Pakistan was facing unpredictable fluctuations in the weather patterns, nonetheless, Pakistan received sufficient water through the weather system which needed to be preserved and efficiently utilized. He proposed that all buildings should be designed to harness and preserve rainwater to recharge the aquifers. He said that only a limited volume of water should be allowed to be discharged into the sea as was necessary to protect mangroves and prevent the encroachment of sea into the land while the rest should be efficiently utilized. He also stressed the need to set up water purification and sewerage treatment plants in every industry to prevent the discharge of toxic chemicals, pollutants and waste into the sea as it was negatively affecting the marine flora and fauna.

PTA instructs

operators to complete

transition to IPv6

PTA has remained engaged with its

licensees for this transition from IPv4

to IPv6 and arranged several capacity

building activities through Asia

Pacific Network Information Center

(APNIC) and Internet Society (ISOC)

ISLAMABAD: With a focus on innovation and digitalization

PTA has instructed all Telecom Operators and Internet

Service Providers to complete their transition to IPv6 tech-

nology, the latest version of the internet protocol (IP), at

the earliest. IPv6, or Internet Protocol version 6, is used

to identify devices on a network and route traffic between

them. It offers several advantages over its predecessor

42 journalists murdered in last 4 years: Senate told

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi on Friday informed the Senate that 42 journalists were murdered in the last four years across the country. Responding to the question of Jamaat-e-Islami's Senator Mushtaq Ahmed, he said that it was a critical situation and the government should take prompt action against the culprits and journalists should be provided special security. Abbasi directed the Ministry of Interior to prepare a consolidated report on the matter and present it to the House within the period of two months.

Balochistan Awami Party's Senator Danesh Kumar pointed out that there were more than 10 journalists who were murdered in Balochistan instead of three shown in this report.

To this, the minister said that this report was compiled after a thorough consultation with all the quarters concerned of the provinces and if someone had given a wrong figure, he must be accountable as it was a sensitive matter.

Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl's Senator Kamran Murtaza proposed the minister that the journalists who had lost their lives in line of their duty, should be properly probed on which subject they were working before their murder. To this, the minister assured the House that the report would be a comprehensive one. According to the statistics, 15 journalists were murdered in Punjab while 11 in Sindh, 13 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and 3 in Balochistan. – APP

Police hand over 13 stolen motorcycles, a car to owners

RAWALPINDI: Potohar Division Police have handed over 13 stolen motorcycles and a car recovered from





Emergency



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance......115 PIA Flight Info.......114 PIA Cargo.......9280979 Railway Inquiry.....117 Railway Exchange9270831-5 WASA Rawalpindi..5555489 CAA............9281092



Hospitals

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



Departments

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

Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Water Tank Islamabad......0321-5744480

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of UAE Hamad Alzaabi posing for a picture with orphan kids during his visit to Orphanage. – DNA

BISP dynamic survey to be launched soon, says Faisal Kundi

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Faisal Karim Kundi on Friday said that the dynamic survey would start very soon to register more deserving beneficiaries living below the poverty line, under the Benazir Income Support Porgramme. In a meeting with a women's delegation from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa led by Senator Rubina Khalid, the minister gave a detailed briefing about the BISP initiatives. Speaking on the occasion, Faisal Kundi said that the BISP payment system was "fully transparent and digital". He said that around 8.8 million people had become part of the Benazir Kafalat program and were receiving the quarterly payment of Rs. 7000. The beneficiaries can withdraw quarterly installments from Bank Al-Falah and Habib Bank, he added. Faisal Kundi said, "It is our responsibility to convey correct information about the programme to the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa." He stressed that all programmes including Benazir Nashonuma, Benazir Education Stipends, Benazir Undergraduate Scholarships were very important for the welfare of people. The queries of Senator Rubina Khalid and all members of the delegation about the BISP programs were responded in a satisfactory way. The delegation members thanked the Minister of State and all officials of BISP for having this much-needed interaction. - APP

Air Quality unhealthy in Capital: PaK-EPA

Senior Pulmonologist at PIMS, Dr Zia Ul Haq told media that dry and cold air was mainly the reason behind respiratory diseases during winters

ISLAMABAD: The air quality on Friday was reported unhealthy amid dry weather posing vulnerable and sensitive age groups comprising children, women and the elderly at risk of contracting respiratory ailments.

Air pollution in the metropolis remained high since the onset of the fall season as prolonged dry weather, increased vehicular traffic, garbage and wood burning continued to surge. The Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) daily air quality report indicated heightened ratio of air pollutants, recorded above permissible limits, and the air quality was unhealthy. The Agency is responsible to ensure the protection of the environment under the Pakistan Environmental Protection Act 1997.

The hazardous air pollutant particulate matter of 2.5 microns (PM2.5), which was a hazardous atmospheric contaminant, remained 45.5 micro grammes per cubic meter on average which was higher than the NEQS of 35 mic-programmes per cubic meter and denoted the air quality unhealthily.

PM2.5 is generated through the combustion of an engine, industrial emissions, burning garbage or inflammable material and dust blown up by fast-moving cars plying on non-cemented patches of the roads.

Senior Pulmonologist at Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS), Dr Zia Ul Haq told APP that dry and cold air was mainly the reason behind respiratory diseases during winters.

IPv4, including a much larger pool of IP addresses for paving the way to facilitate consumers to control home appliance es through mobile phones, using Internet of Things (IoT) The transition to IPv6 is critical to support the rollout of new technologies such as IoT and 5G. PTA has remained engaged with its licensees for this transition from IPv4 to IPv6 and arranged several capacity building activities through Asia Pacific Network Information Center (APNIC) and Internet Society (ISOC). At the instructions of PTA, mobile operators have enabled IPv6 option for end users. However, due to privacy reasons, the users have to change network op tions themselves from IPv4 to IPv6. Smartphone users can enable IPv6 on their handsets using the method mentioned at PTA website: (https://pta.gov.pk/assets/media/ipv6 graphic_10012023.jpg). Fixed broadband users can also get it configured through their respective service providers. In case of any difficulty, users can contact their operators/ service providers for further assistance. - DNA

> He said the respiratory tract consisting of the throat and lungs had internal surfaces possessing normal bacteria whereas there was no breach in it. However, he said the dry and cold air at different phases due to increased exposure of an individual in the outdoors caused breaches in the lining of the respiratory tract which used to lead to an infection and also damage the normal secretions taking place inside the breathing organs.

> He said the pulmonologists usually advise the elderly above 50 years of age or patients of chronic heart, kidney, and lung diseases to get the flu vaccine during the peak winter season to avoid respiratory diseases.

> The senior pulmonologists said the people were also advised to avoid unnecessary prolonged outdoor visits during the morning and evening timings of cold weather whereas in case of any visit they should properly cover their eyes, and face by wearing face masks and coverings. Moreover, he also directed the masses to ensure the intake of warm fluids as necessary beverages like warm water and hot tea etc. to control damage to the respiratory tract amid bad weather and air quality. – **APP**

the possession of the arrested bike and car lifters to their owners. According to a police spokesman, Potohar Division Police in line with the vision of Inspector General of Police Punjab, Aamir Zulfiqar Khan had accelerated their ongoing operations against outlaws including bike and car lifters.

He informed that Superintendent of Police, Potohar Malik Tariq Mehboob had handed over 13 stolen motorcycles and a vehicle recovered by different police stations of the division to their owners. He said police managed to bust 11 gangs allegedly involved in heinous crimes during this month and arrested their 35 members besides recovering stolen goods including 13 motorcycles and a vehicle.

City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi Syed Shehzad Nadeem Bukhari said that Rawalpindi Police had set an example of tracing several cases including blind swiftly and professionally. He said that some of these cases were of heinous nature including robbery, dacoity, murder and others. In the ongoing month, 11 gangs were busted and 35 accused persons were sent behind the bars. – APP

Home cooked food business at surge for its taste, hygiene

ISLAMABAD: The rise in demand for home-cooked has fascinated many entrepreneurs including women to offer hygienic, tasty, and delicious food meals at reasonable prices. Talking to APP, cook, and baker Samiya Rasheed said that twin cities are the second home of many students and job holders, and their desire for home-cooked meals makes the food business a success. She expressed that professionals, as well as those having a little background in the food industry, are exploring business opportunities in home-cooked food work. She said one kilogram of rice serves up to eight people and bulk purchase offers the opportunity to earn better profits. Samiva said that the advent of food delivery applications has further strengthened this business as people are increasingly opting for home-cooked meals for their hygiene and taste. - APP

Musadik hopes 'seamless' flow of energy from Russia, CARs

He said the geo-political reality confronted by all the regional countries had opened up "a new understanding, new opportunities, and new repositioning"

a seamless flow of energy from

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Petroleum Dr Musadik Malik on Friday expressed confidence that Pakistan would be able to get a 'seamless' flow of energy from Russia and Central Asian Republics (CARs), once various 'mechanisms' discussed during the IGC meeting were implemented. "We have discussed mutual rela-

we have discussed mutual relationship among Russia, Central Asian States and Pakistan; and come up with various mechanisms of connectivity to have

Russia and Central Asia to Pakistan," the minister said while talking to media at the conclusion of the eighth session of the Russia-Pakistan Inter-Governmental Commission (IGC) here. He said the geo-political reality confronted by all the regional countries had opened up "a new understanding, new opportunities, and new repositioning." Keeping these small constraints in the mind and actualizing our dreams, Musadik Malik said the IGC had come up with a plan in the energy sector "over the en-

tire value chain." During the three-day IGC meeting, the minister said Pakistan discussed with the Russian side the upstream areas of working, carrying out seismic studies, and using artificial intelligence in oil and gas production in Pakistan under mutual cooperation. "In the midstream area, we have discussed a very holistic and grand vision of how we basically can have energy sufficiency, unleashing the domestic energy market, and finally hopefully at some point in time, being an exporter of energy in the rest of the world," he said. - APP



04

TWIN CITIES

Islamabad **POST** Saturday, January 21, 2023

Briefs

OGRA takes notice of overcharging of LPG

ISLAMABAD: Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) has taken serious notice of the complaints regarding overcharging of end consumer LPG Price. OGRA Enforcement Teams have been mobilized to take cognizance of the matter and to ensure sale of LPG at notified prices to provide relief to the end consumers and to initiate action against the violators under the applicable Rules/Laws.

OGRA-Enforcement Teams have visited various LPG Plants recently in the vicinity of Lahore & Islamabad to check/ monitor LPG Prices and safety. During the visit, all LPG Plants were directed to ensure proper display of LPG prices at prominent places and to ensure that they will not overcharge LPG prices from end consumers. Further, written instructions to this effect have also been issued to all LPG Plants across the country.

OGRA has also decided that its enforcement teams along district administration will remain in field during the ongoing winter season to ensure sale / availability of LPG on OGRA's notified prices.-DNA

Chairman WAPDA visits Tarbela

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) Engineer Lt Gen (Retd) Sajjad Ghani visited Tarbela 4th Extension Hydel Power Station (T4) and inspected operational and mainte-nance (O&M) activities of the power station, commissioned in 2018. He also had a detailed round of the under-construction Tarbela 5th Extension Hydropower Project (T5) to review construction activities on the sites, said a press release issued here Friday.

The GM (Tarbela Dam), accompanied by the project management, briefed the Chairman about progress on the project. Consequent upon the permission accorded by IRSA for closure of



ISLAMABAD: Students of English debate competition pose for group photo with Chief guest Harris khaleeq in a ceremony held at Islamabad model college for girls F7/2 on Friday.-DNA

Mental well-being has become an integral part of society

The School Director said that, "Ms. Samina Jamshed is a natural healer and always brings joy and happiness to children"

DNA

ISLAMABAD: As it has been discovered that mental wellbeing has become an integral part of the society, whether 1st world countries or 3rd world countries, the traumas are the same with a little difference in situation. All humans are suffering. This is a bold step taken by Ms. Samina Jamshed for the year 2023 to reach worldwide with a series of workshops on Peace & Art through healing circles and art therapy workshops. May it be women, children, girls, boys, men, transgender or you name it, and she is there. It maybe refugees, SGBV survivors, beggars, addicts, PSEA and communities. Samina has a passion for art therapy and helps people in need with a most creative subtle manner. therefore in spite of working with Community World Service Asia, she manages to



out their fears, phobias and deprivations, making it easy for Samina to reach out to them on an individual level in the upcoming workshops. According to our team the children thoroughly enjoyed the two sessions and the room was filled with laughter and smiles. Leading to the final session which was bringing their thoughts on paper and adding color to their thoughts, Ms. Jamshed shared that she calls it "Talking with colors and painting your thoughts" which was true. After the workshop concluded the Samina shared exercises with the school teachers, so

Differences with IMF making the economy lifeless

ISLAMBAD: Former President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt on Friday said it is impossible to stabilize the rupee in the presence of a broken economy. Oil price freeze by the former government and efforts to stabilize the rupee and bring down the value of the dollar by the incumbent government has damaged the economy and annoyed the IMF, he said. Shahid Rasheed Butt said in a statement issued here today that even after the failure of the experiment to bring down the value of dollar artificially, the same policy is being followed which is surprising. How the country's condition can change when there is no change in the important economic policies, he said, adding that IMF is being annoyed which can jeopardise the disbursement of approved loans and grants by other institutions that Pakistan cannot afford. The business leader noted that the focus of policymakers is on reducing the current account deficit by holding back imports but they are forgetting that exports also require imports.

The economy cannot improve unless the exports grow otherwise the government will have to repay the loans through fresh borrowing, he added.-DNA

Poor, not billionaires should get government support

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) on Friday said packages are given to the poor in western countries but billionaires get support packages in Pakistan. The sole purpose of packages doled out to the rich is to increase their fortunes on the cost of the poor, it said. Masses are always told that packages given to industrial, agricultural, stock market or real estate sectors are necessary for national development which is contrary to

Tunnel No.5, construction activities are being carried out simultaneously at five sites of T5 including intake, power house and switch yard. Electricity generation from the proiect is scheduled for July 2025 with completion of its first unit. Unit No.2 and 3 are likely to be completed in August and September 2025 respectively, it was further briefed.-APP

SC stops PPSC from using term of disable

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) on Friday stopped the Punjab Public Service Commission (PPSC) to use the term of disable for the special persons and said that state was responsible to protect their basis rights. An eight pages judgment was issued by Justice Mansoor Ali Shah in a case regarding quota of minorities and special persons in recruitment of BPS-17 employees in Punjab. The court said that the top court had already ordered in another case that the term of disable wouldn't be used for special persons. The court said that the constitution of Pakistan ensured rights to all citizens without any discrimination. It said that according to the international

Marriyum grieved over demise Zameer Nafis

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marrivum Aurangzeb on Friday expressed deep sorrow over the death of senior journalist and columnist Zameer Nafis. In her condolence message, she said that the services of Zameer Nafis in the field of journalism will always be remembered. The minister expressed her condolences to Syed Fawad Kazmi, son of the deceased. She prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to be reaved family to bear this loss with fortitude.-APP

ally for the people in need. During her workshop Ms. Jamshed started with a story telling session with the children as an ice breaker. The children immediately jelled with her, she has that aura as our team witnessed it. The group of 30 children have left a comfortable life

venture on these voluntary

missions of Peace & Art, all

over Pakistan and abroad.

Our team managed to at-

tend this second healing cir-

cle conducted by Samina for

refugee children with multi-

ple issues of health, educa-

tion, protection and basic

needs of a child. The first

circle was with the SGBV

Ms. Jamshed is a well-

known internationally ac-

claimed artist, sculptor,

motivational speaker and

art therapist. She has mas-

tered the art of walking with

all her expertise clubbed to-

gether. She has conducted

more than 1000 workshops

survivor girls.



back in their country, facing problems and starting all over again in Pakistan. This workshop is a series of many workshops to come as Samina shared with our team that she revisits back from time to time so that

the wounds are stitched slowly one at a time that is the healing process. In the process she trains 5 teachers who will continue working with the children making it an ongoing journey of healing. The age group was

from 5 years to 12 years boys and girls. The story narration was with voice effects which the children thoroughly enjoyed, leading to a dialogue session them about their one spein which children created cial wish. -DNA stories in groups venting

that they are able to contin the facts, said Dr. Murtaza ue with the healing journey Mughal, President of PEW. and then she will revisit He said that there is no them in one months' time. Then there was an open concept of tax amnesty schemes in civilized coundiscussion session with the tries, but every government children during which Samin Pakistan provides an ina again amazed our team opportunity for the rich to and the children by asking whiten their black money.

Dr. Murtaza Mughal said that the former government announced the construction package by promising affordable housing for the poor but not a single house could be built for the poor. The scheme helped the builders' mafia earn billions of rupees and it resulted in increased prices of plots, houses and construction materials.-DNA

Two bids to smuggle 480 wheat flour bags foiled

RAWALPINDI: The Food Department Rawalpindi and district police on Friday foiled two bids to smuggle 480 wheat flour bags. According to a district administration spokesman, the authorities of the food department along with Potohar Division police conducted raids in different areas and rounded up two drivers namely Anwar Khan and Ehtesham with 480 wheat flour bags. He informed that the accused were trying to illegally ship wheat flour bags out of the Rawalpindi division. He said the Food Department Rawalpindi and district police on the directives of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rawalpindi were strictly monitoring all the exit points of Rawalpindi district to foil wheat and flour smuggling bids.-APP

Book of Pakistan in the eyes of geologists published in China ISLAMABAD: A book enti-

tled "Pakistan in the Eyes of Geologists", a scientific monograph led by China-SCO Geo-sciences Cooperation Research Center, was published by Geology Press. According to a Gwadar Pro's report, the

China's support helps Pak to cut oilseed imports However, in the first quar-

DNA

ISLAMABAD: China continues to help Pakistan to cut its oilseed imports amid economic challenges., China Economic Net (CEN) reported quoting Experts. As Pakistan has been confronted with severe economic challenges especially after massive countryside floods, with the shrinking foreign exchange reserves, the country's various imports are putting additional financial strain.

Statistics from the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) show that in FY2021, Pakistan's imports of soya beans, whether or not broken, reached about \$1.145 billion, a strong growth of about 50% year-on-year, exhibiting the country's urgent demand for soybeans.

ter of FY2023, Pakistan's sovbean imports were \$269 million, down about 18% year-on-year, which may had been affected by the decline of the country's foreign exchange reserves. Soybean production should be adequately considered

by Pakistan because of the country's over dependence on imports of soybeans. Lack of high-quality seeds, high-yielding planting patterns and machinery restricting Pak soybean "We are deproduction pendent on imports. It is very expensive which causes increase in the price of feed, oil etc. day by day. It is our need to plant it in our country," Hafiz Saad Bin Mustafa, Oilseed Scientist, Avub Agricultural Research Institute According to him, said.

In Pakistan, all crops are non-GMO except cotton. "Most foreign varieties that we import are of mild areas and GMO. They can neither be planted here nor can they survive here. So seeds of local varieties should be multiplied and should be promoted in the potential areas that we have identified by our trials and adoptability studies," Hafiz said. As he sees it, since soy-

bean is mostly cultivated in such countries as America, Brazil and Argentina where there is mild climate, Pakistan needs to develop its own non-GMO soybean verities that can perform well in high temperatures. "We do not produce good quality seeds, and the total seed production is twenty percent in different crops. There is a huge gap. At pres-

ent we are dependent on imported seeds for different crops even for wheat, rice, cotton and vegetables, and the same is with soybeans. We should produce it locally," Dr. Zahir Ahmad, Incharge, Soybean Breading Lab, University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) said. According to Dr. Zahir Ahmad, farmer needs specific planters, harvesters and threshers. "Mechanization is one of the best approaches by which we can increase soybean production. In this way we need less labor, less time and less storage time," he said. Talking about the latest progress of soybean production in Pakistan, Dr. Zahir Ahmad emphasized that now their focus is intercropping-specific sovbean promotion, which is a high-yielding technology from China.

book is divided into six parts, which took the Chinese and Pakistani teams three years to complete. The teams include China-Pakistan Joint Research Centre on Earth Sciences, the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan, the Geological Survey of Pakistan, Bahria University, Chang'an University, Xi'an Liangji Yuhe Brand Culture and Creative Co., Ltd., China Huaye Duddar Mining Co., Ltd., China Metallurgical Group Resource Development Co., Ltd. and other Chinese-funded enterprises in Pakistan. From the perspective of geoscientists, it describes the natural scenery, geological evolution, mineral resources, and highlight projects of northern Pakistan all the way to the south, with Karakoram, China-Pakistan Friendship Highway as the main line. Epitomizing Chinese geoscientists serving the construction of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and supporting overseas investment and cooperation of mining enterprises, it introduces the history of China-Pakistan geoscience cooperation over the past ten years with a combination of graphics and text.-DNA

reports, the special persons hanged back in life due to **3.5m displaced students require support: PCE** negative social attitudes and difficulties in access to the offices. -APP "The 3.5 million students who were displaced as a result of last year's floods in Pakistan belong to same group of marginalized children whose education was most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic

ISLAMABAD: The civil society of Pakistan welcomed the pledges of more than \$9 billion made by the international community for flood recovery efforts in a recent UN conference and urged for swift action to rehabilitate those affected by the floods. This was said in a joint statement issued by the civil society here in Islamabad. Special emphasis was laid on prioritizing education in the distribution of disaster aid to support the swift recovery of the education system in the affected areas. The press statement was jointly issued by the Pakistan Coalition for Education (PCE), an initiative of the Society For Access to Quality Education, Centre for Peace and Development Initiative (CPDI), Pakitan Youth Change Advocates (PYCA), United Global Organization of Development (UGOOD), and re-

nowned educationist, Dr.A.H. Nayyar. The statement was accompanied by a joint call to action asking state and non-state actors to take immediate measures to bring the displaced children back to school. This entails diverting sufficient disaster aid towards education as well as providing conditional cash transfers to the affected households to facilitate the education of their children. The call-to-action also stressed the

need to make Pakistan's education system resilient to future emergencies by speedy and quality reconstruction of damaged school infrastructure complete with basic facilities such as boundary walls, washrooms, clean drinking water, utilities, multiple classrooms, teaching aides, and a minimum number of trained teachers. Building back better also demands

making a strong preparedness and disaster-risk management component inherent to the education system at the federal, provincial, district, and school levels. Finally, the National Curriculum of Pakistan (NCP) needs to be revised so that it can impart age-appropriate "green", Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Disaster Risk Management (DRM) education to students. "The 3.5 million students who were displaced as a result of last year's floods in Pakistan belong to the same group of marginalized children whose education was most affected by the COV-ID-19 pandemic. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, there were an estimated 22.8 million out-of-school children (OOSC) in Pakistan. The majority, or 77% of these OOSC, hailed from rural areas and 54% of them were girls," shared Zehra

Arshad, the National Coordinator for PCE. "It is also important to highlight here that 96% of all the children living with various forms of disabilities in Pakistan have no access to education at all." She also added that a significant portion of these funds should be allocated towards providing resilient education in flood-affected areas to ensure that children could continue their education and rebuild their lives in the aftermath of the floods. The statement stressed for the disaster aid to be used effectively, and efficiently and called for its equitable distribution among the most vulnerable communities. The CSOs also called for proper monitoring and accountability mechanisms to ensure acrossthe-board transparency.

The statement highlighted that an

estimated 930,000 school-going students in Pakistan dropped out as a direct consequence of prolonged school closures after the pandemic, spiking the percentage of out-of-school children by 4.5%. "As per data emerging from Pakistan, a dramatic fall in enrollment was observed among 14-16-yearolds in the poorest households. The loss of learning was also 50% worse for children belonging to underserved socio-economic backgrounds," shared Areebah Shahid, Executive Director of PYCA. If the COVID-19 pandemic wasn't sufficient to reveal the inadequacies of our education system, the 2022 floods have laid them bare. Shedding light on the crisis emanating after the floods, Mukhtar Ahmed Ali, Executive Director of CPDI said, "Over 25,000 schools have been fully destroyed or partially damaged.-APP

Police arrest 5 gamblers; recover money

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi district Police arrested five gamblers and recovered Rs 12,230 stake money, five mobile phones and valuables from their possession here on Friday, a police spokesman said.

He informed that Gujar Khan police conducted a raid and arrested five gamblers namely Khalid, Shahid, Malik Arab, Masood and Adil who were allegedly involved in betting over quail fights. -APP

Ardern's departure:

knowing when to quit acinda Ardern's resignation has sparked shock and dismay, and not only at home, where Labour must now rush to replace the prime minister without an obvious heir in sight. "Jacindamania" waned in New Zealand, but has continued to flourish in the wider anglophone world. Yet her decision should be applauded as well as lamented. Convinced of their own indispensability, politicians often cling on too long. Even successful leaders need to know when it's time to go. Nelson Mandela set the gold standard, stepping down after one term as president though so many were desperate for him to continue. The issue was less his ability to serve than the symbolic importance of a democratic transition in South Africa. In contrast, even admirers saw Winston Churchill's return to office following his crushing postwar defeat by Labour as a mistake. He confided in Rab Butler that he felt "like an aeroplane at the end of its flight ... with the petrol running out". Ms Ardern echoed that sentiment with her remark that she has "no longer [has] enough in the tank to do it justice". The difference is that her judgment was not shared by others. Though her party's ratings are the lowest since it took office in 2017 and her own approval ratings have fallen, she remained the most popular choice for prime minister in polls.

It was not only her empathy but her decisiveness in response to crises - the Christchurch terror attack of 2019 and the advent of Covid-19 - that won her admiration. She saw through firearms reform; a speedy and effective pandemic response; the Zero Carbon Act. There is no doubt that her leadership shone all the brighter as machismo and the deliberate fomenting of division appeared to be triumphing internationally. (Intriguingly, a new study suggests that greater female representation in legislatures may help to ameliorate political polarisation.) She filled a vacuum for progressives seeking hope in the age of Donald Trump, Scott Morrison and Boris Johnson. The respect and admiration she received offered hope that female leaders, too, can triumph, albeit under tougher conditions, following the misogyny so openly dealt out to Hillary Clinton and Julia Gillard. Ms Ardern treated political office as a responsibility rather than a lark or rightful reward for her genius. Part of that responsibility, she noted on Thursday, is "to know when you are the right person to lead, and also when you are not". Just as her "kind, but strong" style of leadership contrasted with the macho posturing seen elsewhere, so her departure looks all the more admirable in a world where Jair Bolsonaro and Mr Trump have sought to cling on even after the electorate voted to boot them out.

slamahad

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World wants good news from China, US

efore visiting Africa, US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen made a detour to Switzerland and held talks on Wednesday with Chinese Vice Premier Liu He, also chief of the Chinese side of the Chi-D na-US comprehensive economic dialogue who is attending the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos. This is the first face-to-face meeting between the two after three video calls. It's also the first meeting between senior officials of China and the US this year. Therefore, it has received high attention and rich interpretation from the international public opinion. During the two and a half hours, the two sides had professional, in-depth, candid and pragmatic exchanges, and the talks were constructive. Both sides believe that it is in the interest of both countries as well as the whole world for China and the US to strengthen macro-policy communication and coordination and jointly address challenges in the economic and financial fields. The relatively positive new look at the beginning of the new year is a long overdue easing and restoration of China-US relations that have been strained for several years. For the cloudy world economic and security situation in 2023, it feels like timely refreshing rain after a long drought. We hope to hear more good news about peace and development from China-US relations, the most important bilateral relationship in the world, rather than bad news of conflicts and confrontation. The meeting between Liu and Yellen has sent a clear signal that the two sides need to cooperate in the fields of finance, economy and trade. It also showed the part that has been deliberately ignored or downplayed in the current US' narrative of the "competition" with China. In fact, despite the enormous difficulties encountered in bilateral relations, 2022 still marked a record for China-US trade volume. As the two largest economies in the world, China and the US have the responsibility to strengthen the coordination of economic and financial policies and promote cooperation in the economic and trade fields between both countries. This is also a heavy but inescapable duty for the two major countries from any angle. The US still has not shaken off the challenge of high inflation, and its economy is facing the risk of recession. While after optimizing and adjusting its epidemic prevention and control policies, China is devoting more energy to economic development. If political factors are not involved, the area of mutually beneficial cooperation between China and the US has actually not shrunk, but become larger. The radical political forces entrenched in Washington have become a huge uncertainty facing China-US relations. To some extent, the China-US relations are at a deadlock, and there is no space to retreat, as doing so would mean terrible conflicts. But moving forward is hindered by Washington's willingness and ability to act. However, one thing is certain: for the two countries with a bilateral trade volume of more than \$700 billion, it is impossible to be satisfied with only a "no war" status. There is much more that Washington needs and should do.

To engage or not engage. Hindus and Muslims suss each other out

James Dorsey

oderate Muslims and militant Hindu nationalists are strange bedfellows at the best of times, particularly when they come together to reshape Hindu-Muslim relations in troubled India. Yet, that is what Indonesia's Nahdlatul Ulama and India's Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) seek to achieve. Nahdlatul Ulama, arguably the world's most moderate Muslim civil society group in the world's largest Muslim-majority state and democracy, is everything the RSS, a notorious Hindu nationalist movement widely viewed as the catalyst of anti-Muslim violence and discrimination in India, is not. What makes the endeavour even more remarkable is that the two groups have strikingly different visions of what Hindu-Muslim reconciliation should entail. For Nahdlatul Ulama, engagement with the RSS is part of a bold and risky strategy to persuade faith groups, including Muslims, to confront their troubled, often violent, histories and problematic tenants of their religions that reject pluralism and advocate supremacy. "Nahdlatul Ulama believes that the only way to overcome entrenched historical grievances and promote peaceful co-existence is to engage all parties and refuse to indulge in the sentiment of enmity and hatred based upon a claim of unique communal victimhood," the group said in a statement in September explaining its engagement with RSS. For the RSS, engagement is about redressing historical grievances dating to centuries of Muslim invasions and rule, defending Hindus against perceived contemporary Muslim threats, and ensuring that India is a Hindu rather than a non-discriminatory multi-religious state. A 2019 amendment to India's citizenship law suggested how the RSS defines a Hindu state. The amendment extends the right to apply for citizenship to members of religious minorities - Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis, and Christians but not Muslims - fleeing persecution in Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan. Nevertheless, Khwaja Iftikhar Ahmed, an Indian Muslim author and intellectual who maintains close ties with the RSS, insisted in an interview with the author that RSS ideology views Indians, irrespective of their religion, culturally as Hindus. "They say that Hindu doesn't have a religious connotation, Hindu being all those people living in this part of the world, they are culturally ... Hindus... The religion is Santana Dharma or Eternal Faith (the Hindu reference to Hinduism). Hindu is the cultural identity... That is the middle ground," Mr. Iftikhar said. In 2021, RSS leader Mohan Bhagwat launched a widely acclaimed book authored by Mr. Iftikhar that argued in favour of Hindu-Muslim togetherness and harmony. Nahdlatul Ulama and the RSS' different visions have consequences for strategy. Although the RSS' Indonesian engagement is with a movement led by clerics, in India, it tends to interact with secular Muslims who have no authority to reform Islamic jurisprudence

rather than religious scholars. Even so, Mr. Iftikhar said numerous Indian Muslim religious leaders of all stripes were in touch with the RSS, although many of them did so privately. These include leaders of Deobandism, a revivalist ultra-conservative Sunni Muslim movement, which counts some 20 per cent of the world's 1.8 billion Muslims among its followers. Deobandism emerged in the mid-19th century around Darul Uloom Madrassa, a religious seminary in Deoband in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, to preserve Islamic teachings under British colonial rule. 'The difficulty is that contrary to the RSS, Muslim authorities in India do not have a strategy. Theologically, they have not accepted India's existence but, for political reasons, do not challenge it. It's an attitude they have yet to abandon," said an analyst of Indian Islam. In a separate interview on an Indian Muslim television channel, Mr. Iftikhar argued that the Muslim community had failed to address its differences with the RSS. "The community has avoided any discussion or debate on that. It has always taken refuge behind others, whereas the challenge was ours. The response should have been from us, and we should have tackled those issues. The issues are challenges that India as a country and we as Indians as one single nation are facing. It is not a Hindu challenge; it is not a Muslim challenge," Mr. Iftikhar said. In a chapter that he contributed to an edited volume on the politics of hate in South Asia, Indian Islam scholar A. Faizur Rehman seemed to spell out Mr. Iftikhar's castigation of the Indian Muslim leadership and align himself with Nahdlatul Ulama's call for reform of Islamic law. Mr. Rehman took the Muslim community to task for not countering their own ultra-conservatives and militants on multiple issues, such as the defense of relations with non-Muslims, the rights of Muslim and non-Muslim minority communities in Muslim lands, and draconic blasphemy laws in countries like Pakistan. "If the Muslim community fails to question and stop these fanatics, it would be unwittingly contributing to Islamophobia," Mr. Rehman said. Mr. Rehman argued that Muslims needed to clarify their beliefs by stating that India is not part of the Muslim notion of an abode of war and, like Nahdlatul Ulama, declare that the concept of the kafir or infidel does not apply to non-Muslims. A gathering of 20,000 Nahdlatul Ulama clerics ruled in 2019 that the concept of the kafir was no longer legally valid. Mr. Rehman contended that Muslims should discard the concept of dawah or proselytisation "as a tool of supremacism" and abolish apostasy and blasphemy as capital crimes under Islamic law. "In short, what is needed...is a radical rethink of Muslim theology," the scholar said. Three years into the dialogue, the jury is still out on Nahdaltul Ulama's interaction with RSS, which started as a cautious dialogue and has expanded into a degree of cooperation. So far, the endeavour, embraced by moderate Indian Muslims and reformers, appears to have worked more in the RSS' favour than that of Nahdlatul Ulama. Nahdlatul Ulama's credentials offer the RSS Muslim legitimisation. The RSS has used the Muslim group's push for reform of religious jurisprudence, the concept of a pluralistic Humanitarian Islam, and unequivocal endorsement of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to tell India's 200 million

Muslims, the world's largest Muslim minority, what their faith should look like. To be fair, there may be no Hindu-Muslim reconciliation without the RSS, a five million-member-strong movement whose disciples constitute the core of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and government. The RSS is the ideological cradle of Mr. Modi, who has been a member since childhood. In a rare recent interview published in Hindi and English by two RSS sister publications, Mr. Bhagwat, the group's leader, discussed the movement's strategy and objectives that frame engagement with Nahdlatul Ulama although he did not refer to the Indonesian Muslims. Mr. Bhagwat's statements offer reasons for both optimism and pessimism. From a tactical point of view. Nahdlatul Ulama is likely to have taken note of Mr. Bhagwat's acknowledgement that the RSS can no longer refuse accountability for what its associates in office do. "People forget that swayamsevaks (RSS associates) have reached certain political positions through a political party. Sangh (RSS) continues to organise society for organisation's sake. However, whatever swayamsevaks do in politics, Sangh is held accountable for it," Mr. Bhagwat said. "Even if we are not implicated directly by others, there is certainly some accountability, as ultimately it is in the Sangh where swayamsevaks are trained. Therefore, we are forced to think - what should be our relationship, which things we should pursue with due diligence," Mr. Bhagwat added. To be sure, Mr. Bhagwat was talking about the RSS's relationship with the BJP and its current accountability rather than the historical responsibilities of the group and Hindus at large. He stressed that the RSS was concerned about "national policies, national interest, and Hindu interest," not electoral politics. By drawing a line between the RSS and the BJP, accepting the principle of accountability, and framing the groups' political involvement, Mr. Bhagwat appeared to hint at a potential divergence between the movement and the party. "The RSS thinks about the endgame. Bhagwat thinks about the future. He is not elected and does not have to worry about re-election. The BIP does. That's why the BIP is more prone to polarisation. The RSS does not need polarization for electoral purposes," said an analyst who closely follows the RSS and BJP. Even so, Mr. Bhagwat did not shy away from polarizing language when he asserted that Hindus were engaged in a "1,000-year war." Moreover, Mr. Bhagwat magnified the notion of war by insisting on the RSS' majoritarian vision of India, or Hindustan in his words. as a Hindu rather than a multi-cultural nation. The RSS leader defined the war as a fight against "foreign aggressions, foreign influences and foreign conspiracies" that seek to force others "to accept their path as it's the only true path. And if you refuse to do so, you will have to choose between our mercy and death." Mr. Bhagwat made clear that he was referring to Muslim rather than Christian proselytisers by insisting that "Muslims should give up the mindset of superiority...(and) 'we can't live with others.'" Mr. Bhagwat asserted, "foreign invaders are no longer, but foreign influences and conspiracies have continued. So, there is a war to defend Hindu society, Hindu Dharma (cosmic law), and Hindu culture." Drawing a contrast with Hindu-

ism, Mr. Bhagwat asked rhetorically: "What is the Hindu worldview? Does a Hindu ever say that everyone should endorse his faith? This is not how we think. We want to present an example for others to see. We want to have (a) dialogue with everyone. Those who wish to improve will follow our example. If they do not, we do not intend to harm them." Mr. Bhagwat's polarizing rhetoric notwithstanding, Nahdlatul Ulama sees common ground in the RSS' rejection of what the Indonesian group describes as obsolete and problematic elements within Islamic orthodoxy that lend themselves to tyranny." Nahdlatul Ulama, a conservative, nationalist organisation in its own right, hopes that its willingness to confront head-on intolerant and supremacist tenants of Islamic law will convince the RSS to develop a Hindu equivalent of Humanitarian Islam and take a critical look at Hindu theology, history, and anti-Muslim attitudes. In an article entitled "What the media has misunderstood about Mohan Bhagwat's interview," Ram Madhav, an RSS executive committee member and associate of Mr. Modi, sought to finetune Mr. Bhagwat's reference to war.

"The UNESCO Constitution begins with the statement that 'wars begin in the minds of men'. Bhagwat's en

phasis was actually on removing that mindset of war. It is a historical fact that India has been subjected to various political and religious aggressions over millennia. That history has left an imprint, leading to occasional aggressive outbursts in sections of the society. Bhagwat was categorical that such aggression was uncalled for," Mr. Madhav said. "If there is a Hindu who thinks like that, he should discard it. A communist should also shed it", Mr. Madhav quoted the RSS leader as saying. In his interview, Mr. Bhagwat downplayed aggression by RSS members. "Since there is a war, people are likely to get overzealous. Although this is undesirable, vet provocative statements will be uttered," the RSS leader said. The dialogue with Nahdlatul Ulama did not stop the Indian group from accusing in its March 2022 annual report "a particular community" of seeking to "enter the government machinery" to further its "malicious" agenda" as part of "a deep conspiracy." The report repeated allegations of imaginary Muslim jihads, such as the alleged forced conversion of Hindus to Islam. "This challenge has a long history, but, of late, different newer ways of converting new groups are being adopted," the report said. Mr. Rehman, the Islam scholar. discounts Hindu fears of a demographic threat to their majority status in India but acknowledges that deep-seated distrust dates to the 12th-century Muslim conquests. "By the turn of the 20th century, a deep distrust developed between Muslims and Hindus. The Muslims came to be seen as outsiders who had come to conquer and convert the original inhabitants of the subcontinent to Islam, "Mr. Rehman said. Noting that Hindu distrust is rooted in the insistence of Muslim conquerors that India was Islamic territory, Mr. Rehman conceded that Hindu fears are fueled by "clerics and televangelists in India (who) continue to display their supremacist arrogance."

Winter a sobering time for west's political elites

Veniamin Popov

US Secretary of State James Baker, during a meeting with Mikhail Gorbachev in Moscow on Feb. 9, 1990, assured that the proposed unification of Germany would not become a catalyst for NATO expansion in Eastern Europe. In exchange for the unification of Germany. Baker offered Gorbachev "iron-clad guarantees that NATO's jurisdiction or forces would not move an inch to the east." He repeated this promise three times

he special military operation in Ukraine has been ongoing for nearly 11 months. Such a long delay is due to some mistakes by our generals in military planning, however, the goals of this operation are natural and justified. Back in December 2021, the Russian Federation invited the NATO countries to sign a security treaty, which would have excluded the further expansion of the alliance and the accession of Ukraine to it. In addition, Russia and NATO would undertake to refrain from deploying weapons and forces in areas that would be perceived by the other side as a threat to national security, and also to confirm that they do not consider each other as adversaries. The parties would exclude the use of ground-based intermediate and shorter-range missiles in areas from which they are capable of hitting targets on the territory of other participants. The US and other NATO countries rudely rejected our proposal. Unfortunately, Western states constantly resort to deception and backtracking on their commitments, even though they made a clear commitment in 1990 not to expand NATO eastwards. US Secretary of State James Baker, during a meeting with Mikhail Gorbachev in Moscow on Feb. 9, 1990, assured that the proposed unification of Germany would not become a catalyst for NATO expansion in Eastern Europe. In exchange for the unification of Germany, Baker offered Gorbachev "iron-clad guarantees that NATO's jurisdiction or forces would not move an inch to the east." He repeated this promise three times. And in a conversation between German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher and his British counterpart Douglas Hurd on Feb. 6, 1990, declassified by the British Foreign Office, Genscher said: "The Russians should have some confidence that if, for example, today the Polish government withdrew from the Warsaw Pact then tomorrow it will not join NATO."

However, in 1999, Poland, together with the Czech Republic and Hungary, joined NATO over Russian objections. Five years later, on March 29, 2004, the gates of the alliance opened even wider: NATO included Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, as well as Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. As you know, in 2014, a coup d'etat took place in Ukraine and the legitimately elected president was overthrown, although the foreign ministers of Germany, France and Poland guaranteed a peaceful settlement of differences.

The people who came to power in Kyiv immediately banned the Russian language, although it is spoken by about 80 percent of the population of Ukraine. This caused legitimate protests from predominantly Russian-speaking regions, primarily Crimea and Donbas. The population of Crimea almost unanimously voted in a referendum to join Russia. As for the Donbas, the leaders of Ukraine at the time immediately began shelling its cities and towns in the Luhansk and Donetsk regions. The indignation of the Donetsk people was so great that, having mobilized a significant part of the male population, they proceeded to retaliatory actions and defeated the Ukrainian troops. Then Kyiv turned to France and Germany and urgently requested a truce – and the so-called Minsk agreements were signed, which provided a significant degree of autonomy for the Donbas within Ukraine.

A lengthy negotiating marathon had begun. However, Kyiv, as it turned out later, was not going to accept the Minsk agreements, which former German Chancellor Angela Merkel recently admitted no one was going to fulfill and that they were needed only to accumulate Ukraine's weapons with the help of the West and to train military personnel. We have evidence from Ukrainian defectors that Kyiv was preparing a powerful military offensive against the Donbas, which they called a separatist entity. As a result, on Feb. 24, 2022, we were forced to launch a special military operation. For Russia, the deployment of NATO military bases in Ukraine is completely unacceptable, because then the flight time of missiles to Moscow is reduced to five to seven minutes. This means that we will not be able to strike back, since the flight of intercontinental missiles takes at least 20 minutes. The military doctrine of Russia does not provide for a nuclear strike first - we use these weapons only for a retaliatory strike. As a result, Western states began pumping into Ukraine a variety of weapons on an unprecedented scale; in addition, they are constantly introducing new sanctions against Moscow (the ninth package of EU sanctions was agreed last month). In total, more than 11,000 sanctions by Western countries have been imposed against us over the past year - this is the largest number of restrictions that have

ever been imposed on one country.At the same time, NATO officials, declaring an actual economic war on Moscow, emphasized that these sanctions would lead to the collapse of the Russian economy and that the decline would be at least 20 percent. Bloomberg also reported this. However, Russia managed to cope with the imposed restrictions. The decline in gross domestic product in 2022 will reach 2.9 percent and, in 2023, according to President Vladimir Putin, it will be 0.9 percent, then we will move in a positive trend. All this demonstrates the resilience of our economy in the face of growing challenges. One of the serious measures that contributed to Russia overcoming the negative consequences of the imposed sanctions was the creation, by presidential decree, of a coordinating council under the government of the Russian Federation headed by the prime minister, in order to meet the needs of a special military operation (including the supply and repair of weapons, military and special equipment, material resources, medical and sanitary services, carrying out repair and restoration, construction and installation and other works, providing logistics). To put it simply, this decree gives the government the right to oblige both public and private organizations to fulfill the necessary orders. The Russians, despite the harsh campaign of the West against us, look to the future with confidence. In addition to grain (our harvest last year amounted to about 150 million tons, of which we are ready to export 50 million tons), we are the world's largest exporter of oil, gas, fertilizers and many metals and other raw materials, while in addition we have more than a quarter of the entire planet's drinking water reserves. By the way, a guarter of the world's diamond production comes from Russia. Our breakthrough achievements in the field of modern weapons show that, in technological areas, we can also feel at ease. The ill-conceived actions of the Western powers, which unleashed a furious anti-Russia campaign, led to a serious aggravation of the energy and food crises. The West crossed all the red lines and began to resort to openly terrorist actions against us: The Crimean bridge was blown up, linking the peninsula with the Krasnodar Territory, and sabotage undermined the Nord Stream 1 and Nord Stream 2 gas pipelines, significantly reducing the possibility of pumping natural gas to Western Europe, which was especially beneficial to the US.

06

WORLD / SPORTS

Briefs

Russian oil import to...

FROM PAGE 01 The Russian side was invited toward potential projects of the federal and provincial governments of Pakistan, including in public-private partnership mode and requested the Russian businessmen to explore these possibilities. "Both sides have resolved the pending issues related to the exchange of information on certificates of origin of goods with the use of an electronic verification system and shall endeavour to finalise the above-mentioned protocols by the end of May 2023," the joint statement is-

sued in this regard read. The officials agreed to nominate focal persons from both sides in order to enhance cooperation and mutual discuss issues concerning connectivity and logistics in Central and South Asia. During the meetings held in the last three days, it was also decided that innovative ways of doing business, including barter trade, would be adopted and they also agreed to explore the option further.

PM invites UAE...

FROM PAGE 01

the average annual trade between the two countries stood at US\$8 billion making the UAE the largest trading partner of Pakistan in the MENA region. Responding to another query on new areas of cooperation, the prime minister said, "We find new avenues of economic cooperation to take our economic relations at par with our excellent political relations". He described Information Technology (IT), Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Financial Technology (Fintech) as new areas of collaboration with much greater potential. About the UAE's humanitarian aid to flood victims in Pakistan, Prime Minister Shehbaz thanked the UAE for its "valuable and timely" humanitarian support for flood-affected people. "The day floods hit Pakistan I received a call from His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed, who said, 'we will immediately start sending relief goods for the flood-af fected areas", he recalled.

Maria Khan scores stunner Pakistan finishes 2nd in **KSA four-nation cup**

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has also congratulated to the national team for finishing second and also praised skipper Maria Khan for her spectacular goal

DNA

RIYADH: Pakistan women's football team finished second in the Saudi Arabia 4-nation football tournament after an exciting 1-1 draw against the home side in the final match of the competition.

The Women in Green started the tournament with a last-minute thrilling win against Comoros before losing their next match against Mauritius by 2-1. Pakistan. despite a fantastic second-half performance, was unable to get past Saudi Arabia as the match ended in a draw. The 1-1 draw was enough for Saudi Arabia to win the tournament as they ended the tournament undefeated. Saudi had earlier registered victories against Mauritius and Comoros.

Saudi Arabia started the match on the right note as they tested the Pakistani defense early on in the first half. Saudi scored the opening goal of the match in the 28th minute courtesy AlBandari Mubarak as they took their lead into the half time. Pakistan struck back in the second half courtesy



of a wonder goal by captain Maria Khan in the 65th minute. From then on, Pakistan took the charge and threatened the Saudi Arabian

defense and almost snatched a victory at the last minute of the game as yet another freekick caused confusion in the box. Unfortunate-

ly, the ball sailed over the goal as the referee blew the final whistle. Earlier, Pakistan lost to Mauritius 2-1 in their second match of

the tournament. Before that, they defeated Comoros by 1-0 in their opening encounter. Celebrations broke out in the

Saudi camp as they lifted the title while Pakistan held their head high with a marvelous performance throughout the competition. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has also congratulated to the national team for finishing second and also praised skipper Maria Khan for her spectacular goal.

"Congratulations to Saudi Arabia for winning this tournament and proud of our Women's National Team Pakistan finishing 2nd. Special congratulations to Maria Khan for scoring this spectacular goal. We are working on policy to promote football and women's sports in Pakistan," the premier wrote in a tweet. Meanwhile, the Pakistan Football Federation (PFF), in a statement, said the national women's team made "history" by finishing runners-up in the friendly event. "We end up the Women's International Tournament as Runners Up. What an achievement by this team. HISTORY MADE!," the

Pakistan rules out...

Islamabad **POST**

Saturday, January 21, 2023

FROM PAGE 01 deal with terrorists that are a concern to us." Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Friday advised world powers to create space for "dialogue and diplomatic engagement" to resolve the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Seperately, commenting on the geopolitical situation during a dialogue session titled Security and Coordination in Davos, the PPP chairman expressed hope to see a more proactive approach from both sides to engage in diploma-

cy in the pursuit of peace. 'I believe diplomacy is the key thing that is missing,' he said. "Our hope is that this does not turn into the next forever war and is resolved sooner than later."

'Tanks for Ukraine ...

FROM PAGE 01

"All pros and cons must be weighed very carefully," Pistorius said, adding that the issue had been discussed on Friday but no decision had been made. Pistorius did not say which, if any, allies were not in agreement with supplying the tanks, or give details of what he saw as the pros and cons of such a policy.

Chancellor Olaf Scholz's government has appeared reluctant to authorise the re-export of the tanks for fear of provoking Russia. Some Western officials have also flagged the concern that Russia might capture advanced Western weaponry and steal its technology. The Kremlin said supplying tanks to Ukraine would not help and the West would regret its "delusion" that Kyiv could win on the battlefield.

'Pak-US ties are...

FROM PAGE 01

He also emphasized on increasing trade links, enhancement of bilateral relations in different sectors. The Chairman Senate said that the multilateral nature of relations between Pakistan and the United States spans across decades. He appreciated the assistance provided by US-AID to the flood affectees of Balochistan province. He said that the community development work in the remote areas of Balochistan in collaboration with USAID is commendable and more needs to be done in this regard. Chairman Senate emphasized on strengthening Pakistan-US bilateral trade and economic relations and said that cooperation in health, education and climate change and other fields is need of the hour. The US is Pakistan's largest trading partner and Balochistan is emerging as an attractive destination for investment due to the Gwadar port.

Australian Open-2023 Swiatek into the 4th round as Lehecka beats Norrie

simply no answer to Swiatek's all-court game and the Spaniard only managed to avoid the dreaded 'double bagel' 6-0 6-0 scoreline by holding her last service game. "My main goal was to keep my focus till the end because sometimes it's hard when you feel like you control everything, your mind can wander off," Swiatek said. "I'm pretty happy that I was solid till the end. I didn't really let Cristina play her game. I know she can be solid, so I'm pretty happy that I was just disciplined." Swiatek has made at least the fourth round at Melbourne Park for the last four years and said she felt she was right where she should be heading into the second week of the year's first

Schedule for HBL PSL season eight unveiled

ta Gladiators, National Bank

• 19 Feb - Multan Sultans v Islam-

abad United, Multan Cricket Stadi-

um; Karachi Kings v Lahore Qalan-

dars, National Bank Cricket Arena

• 20 Feb - Quetta Gladiators v Pe-

shawar Zalmi, National Bank Crick-

• 21 Feb - Quetta Gladiators v

Lahore Qalandars, National Bank

• 22 Feb - Multan Sultans v Kara-

chi Kings, Multan Cricket Stadium

• 23 Feb - Peshawar Zalmi v Islam-

abad United, National Bank Cricket

• 24 Feb - Quetta Gladiators v Is-

lamabad United, National Bank

• 26 Feb - Karachi Kings v Multan

Sultans, National Bank Cricket Are-

Cricket Arena

et Arena

Arena

Cricket Arena

Cricket Arena

al-Aqsa, perform provocative dances

stormed the al-Aqsa Mosque compound in occupied East al-Quds, in yet another provocative move against Palestinian worshipers. Eyewitnesses told Ma'an news agency that the raid by the radical settlers was carried out under heavy protection from Israeli forces. They said the settlers raised Israeli flags and performed provocative dances inside the vicinity. The occupation troops also deployed soldiers inside and around the mosque to secure the settlers' intrusions, said the evewitnesses. Israeli soldiers also attacked scores of Palestinians, including young men, in the mosque's courtyards through the Bab al-Amoud area and the Old City. They tried to force the Palestinians to leave the site to allow the colonizers to tour it, leading to protests.

Palestinian resistance movement Hamas called upon Palestinians from all walks of life to mobilize en masse, increase their presence at the mosque's compound, and protect the sacred site against recurrent incursions by Israeli settlers. "We hail the Palestinian people in occupied Palestinian territories and across the West Bank who stand steadfast against the Israeli occupation violations and crimes," it said



OCCUPIED JERUSALEM: Dozens of Israeli settlers

US urges allies to...

FROM PAGE 01

Around 50 defense ministers and senior officials are attending the meeting, including Ukrainian Defense Minister OleksiiReznikov and NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg. Speaking via video link, Ukrainian President VolodymyrZelenskyy has repeated his plea to international partners for stronger military assistance. "I'm truly grateful to all of you for the weapons you have provided. Every unit helps to save our people from terror," he said. But he underlined that Ukraine's allies should speed up the delivery of weapons, and provide Ukraine with tanks, artillery and air defense systems for victory.

Ex-COAS to blame for...

FROM PAGE 01

Referring to the deepening economic crisis, Khan said the country's reserves had fallen to a historic low, add ing, "We do not have money to open the Letters of Credits (LCs)." "No one is ready to give funds to Pakistan," he further said.

NA speaker's move...

FROM PAGE 01 Khan's plan to dislodge the Shehbaz Sharif government through a trust vote. A total of 70 resignations were accepted this week after the PTI chief announced to return to the assembly. Speaking outside the Parliament House, the PTI leaders reiterated the need for early elections in the country. Condemning the move, former National Assembly Speaker AsadQaiser said that Parvaiz Ashraf called them to his office and told them that the resignations will not be accepted unless he talks to the MNAs separately. On the occasion, PTI Senior Vice President Fawad Chaudhry berated the speaker's decision and asked about the PTI MNAs who he [Raja Parvaiz Ashraf] had claimed were in touch with him regarding their resignations.

MELBOURNE: Top seed Iga Swiatek continued to carve her way through the Australian Open draw on Friday, dismantling Cristina Bucsa 6-0 6-1 in bright

sunshine on the Margaret Court Arena to reach the fourth round at a canter.

Danny Ings joins West Ham from Aston Villa

EST Ham have signed Aston Villa striker Danny Ings in a £15m deal. The Hammers have paid an initial £12m for the 30-year-old, which will rise to £15m if David Moyes' side avoid relegation from the Premier League. West Ham said paperwork was submitted to the Premier League by 12:00 GMT and as a result they expect Ings to be available to face Everton on Saturday. Ings joins on a deal running until 2025 after almost 18 months at Villa, who he joined for £25m in

lamabad United, National Bank Cricket Arena • 17 Feb - Multan Sultans v Pesha-August 2021. "I'm really war Zalmi, Multan Cricket Stadium excited to join West Ham • 18 Feb - Karachi Kings v Quet-United," said Ings. - APP



SCHEDULE OF MATCHES (af-

ternoon matches will start at 2

pm; evening matches in Karachi,

Lahore and Rawalpindi will start

at 7 pm. Evening matches in Mul-

tan will begin at 6 pm except for

the tournament opener, which

• 13 Feb - Multan Sultans v La-

hore Qalandars, Multan Cricket

• 14 Feb - Karachi Kings v Pesha-

war Zalmi, National Bank Cricket

• 15 Feb - Multan Sultans v Quetta

Gladiators, Multan Cricket Stadium

• 16 Feb - Karachi Kings v Is-

will commence at 8 pm)

Stadium

Arena

The 21-year-old world number one, who is looking to add a first Melbourne Park crown to the French and U.S. Open titles she won last year, was all business as she whipped through the first set in 23 minutes. World number 100 Bucsa had

Grand Slam. "I feel I'm more and more confident since day one here. I'm not even talking about matches, but also practices," she added. "I feel like I've done so much work to feel more confident, more relaxed on court. I'm pretty happy that I did it because it's just a little bit easier. When you actually played those matches, you can feel the rhythm a little bit more." - DNA

in a statement. Hamas also called on the Arab and Muslim Ummah, along with the free people of the world, to "support the steadfastness of the Palestinian people and work toward protecting them against the Israeli occupation's violations." On Friday morning, thousands of Palestinian worshipers reached al-Aqsa Mosque to perform Friday prayers in its courtyards amid the strict Israeli measures. According to local news agencies, the number of Palestinians attending the prayers reached 75,000. - Agencies

na: Lahore Qalandars v Peshawar

• 27 Feb - Lahore Qalandars v Is-

• 1 Mar - Peshawar Zalmi v Karachi

2 Mar - Lahore Qalandars v Quet-

3 Mar - Islamabad United v Ka-

rachi Kings, Pindi Cricket Stadium

• 4 Mar - Lahore Qalandars v Mul-

• 5 Mar - Islamabad United v

Quetta Gladiators, Pindi Cricket

lamabad United, Gaddafi Stadium

Kings, Pindi Cricket Stadium

ta Gladiators, Gaddafi Stadium

tan Sultans, Gaddafi Stadium

Stadium

Zalmi, Gaddafi Stadium

League Exhibition Match 1, Pindi Cricket Stadium; Peshawar Zalmi v Quetta Gladiators, Pindi Cricket Stadium

• 9 Mar - Islamabad United v Lahore Qalandars, Pindi Cricket Stadium

• 10 Mar - Pakistan Women's League Exhibition Match 2, Pindi Cricket Stadium; Peshawar Zalmi v Multan Sultans, Pindi Cricket Stadium

• 11 Mar - Pakistan Women's League Exhibition Match 3, Pindi Cricket Stadium; Quetta Gladiators v Multan Sultans, Pindi Cricket Stadium

• 12 Mar - Islamabad United v Peshawar Zalmi, Pindi Cricket Stadium; Lahore Qalandars v Karachi Kings, Gaddafi Stadium

• 15 Mar - Qualifier (1 v 2), Gaddafi Stadium

• 16 Mar - Eliminator 1 (3 v 4), Gaddafi Stadium • 17 Mar - Eliminator 2 (loser Qual-

ifier v winner Eliminator 1), Gadd-• 19 Mar – Final, Gaddafi Stadium

– DNA

Pakistan remembers victims of January 20 tragedy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of Azerbaijan in Pakistan, together with the Institute of Political Studies, one of the leading think tanks of this country, held a seminar dedicated to the memory of the martyrs of January 20, "National will and determination of the Azerbaijani people - commemoration of January 20, 1990". Leaders of various think tanks, students, embassy employees, Pakistani public and media representatives participated in the seminar.

After the national anthems of both countries were played, the dear memory of the martyrs of January 20 was commemorated with a minute of silence. Khazar Farhadov, Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan, spoke at the event and said that 33 years have passed since the events of January 20, which entered the history of our country as the Black January tragedy.

Kh. Farhadov noted that the massacre of civilians was committed on January 20 by the leadership of the USSR in order to suppress the voice of the Azerbaijani peo-

ple against the deportation of hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis from their historical lands in the territory of Armenia and Armenia's groundless territorial claims against Karabakh.

The ambassador reported that 147 people were brutally killed and 744 people were seriously injured as a result of the military aggression carried out by the Soviet army against Azerbaijan on the night of January 19-20, 1990,

violating the norms of international law and the laws of the country. Kh.Farhadov emphasized that despite the fact that the January 20 tragedy was called "Black January", this event was a heroic page in the history of the struggle for freedom and independence of the Azerbaijani people. The diplomat emphasized that the National Leader Heydar Alivev came to the permanent representation of Azerbaijan in Moscow on January 21, 1990 and

showed solidarity with our people, strongly condemned this crime, demanded a political and legal assessment of the massacre, and punishment of the guilty. The ambassador said that after the coming to power of Great Leader Heydar Aliyev at the request of the people, the January 20 tragedy was given a political and legal assessment at the state level on his direct initiative.

Stating that all actions against Azerbaijan's independence and



sovereignty will always be resolutely responded to, Ambassador Muzaffar emphasized that the brave Azerbaijani Army under the leadership of Commander-in-Chief Ilham Aliyev ensured the territorial integrity of our country as a result of the 44-day Patriotic War. At the end of his speech, Kh. Farhadov, who also touched on Azerbaijan-Pakistan friendly relations, paid tribute to the heroic martyrs who died for the territorial integrity of both countries. Director of the Institute of Policy Studies Khalid Rahman, Deputy Director Seyid Abrar Huseyin, Executive Director of the Research Center for a Shared Future

Society Khalid Teymur Akram and Dean of the International Peace and Stability Center of the National University of Science and Technology of Pakistan, Associate Professor Tughral Yamin spoke about the friendly relations between Azerbaijan and Pakistan. . Talking about the events of January 20, they noted that this day plays a very important role in the fate of the Azerbaijani people and is a symbol of the country's struggle for freedom. A video about the events of January 20 was shown at the event.

ECP denotifies...

FROM PAGE 01

NA-2 Swat-I; Saleem Rehman, NA-3 Śwat-II: Sahibzada Sibghatullah, NA-5 Upper Dir; Mehboob Shah, NA-6 Lower Dir-I; Muhammad Bashir Khan, NA-7 Lower Dir-II; Junaid Akbar, NA-8, Malakand Protected Area; Sher Akbar Khan, NA-9 Buner; Ali Khan Jadoon, NA-16 Abbottabad-II; Engr Usman Khan Tarakai, NA-19 Swabi-II; Mujahid Ali, NA-20 Mardan-I; Arbab Amir Ayub, NA-28 Peshawar-II; Sher Ali Arbab, NA-30 Peshawar-IV; Shahid Ahmed, NA-34 Karak; Gul Dad Khan, NA-40 Bajaur-I; Sajid Khan, NA-42 Mohmand; Mohammad Iqbal Khan, NA-44 Khyber-II: AamerMehmoodKiani, NA-61 Rawalpindi-V; Syed Faizul-Hassan, Ch Shoukat Ali Bhatti, NA-87 Hafizabad-I; Umar Aslam Khan, NA-93 Khushab-I; Amjad Ali Khan, NA-96 Mianwali-II; KhurramShahzad.

Interim Punjab CM..

FROM PAGE 01

proposed by both the parties will now be sent to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). The former provincial minister further said that they will approach judiciary if any controversial figure is chosen to become the caretaker CM.

On the occasion, PTI leader and former Punjab minister Mian Aslam Iqbal said that the one who has good character and administration experience should be made caretaker Punjab CM, adding that Ahmed Nawaz Sukhera has worked in the tenure of both PML-N and PTI.

• 6 Mar - Quetta Gladiators v Karachi Kings, Pindi Cricket Stadium • 7 Mar - Peshawar Zalmi v Lahore Qalandars, Pindi Cricket Stadium; Islamabad United v Multan Sultans, afi Stadium

Pindi Cricket Stadium • 8 Mar – Pakistan Women's

07

BUSINESS / WORLD

Briefs Suicide rate up in Japan

TOKYO: The suicide rate among the unemployed people in Japan almost doubled last year while the overall trend also increased in the country of around 126 million people which is also grappling with an aging population, accounting for 28.5% of its total population. Government data released on Friday showed the suicide rate among men also has increased, for the first time in the past 13 years. Suicide among the unemployed in 2022 nearly doubled to 1,038 people, while among those living on pensions or employment benefits rose by 705 to 5,347, the data showed. It added the number of men who committed suicide last year rose by 604 to 14,543, leading to 21,584 overall suicides in the country - an increase of 577 from the previous year.

The number of suicides had seen a fall for around a decade through 2019 at 20,169, but since the pandemic, the trend saw an uptick. "The rise in men in their 40s through 60s, as well as

pensioners or those who are unemployed, stands out,' an unnamed Health Ministry official told Tokyo-based Kyodo News. "Suicides by famous people may also have had an effect."-APP

Lula to meet with Biden in February

BUENOS AIRES: Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva will meet with his US counterpart Joe Bid-en in Washington, D.C. on Feb.10. Lula met in early December with White House National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan, where he received an invitation to meet with Biden. According to the G1 news outlet, Lula's invitation to the US was reinforced in a phone call between his Foreign Affairs Minister Mauro Vieira and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

Lula's first official trip abroad since assuming office on Jan 1. will take place next week, when he heads to Argentina on Jan. 24, where the former union leader will meet with Argentine President Al berto Fernandez. In Argentina, Lula will participate in the summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and also visit Uruguay. In the near future, Lula is also expected to head to China and Portugal. although no dates have been confirmed according to G1 Lula has previously highlight ed the need to strengthen Brazil's position internationally following what analysts have described as former President Jair Bolsonaro's isolationist policies regarding the South American nation's foreign policy. Last month, Vieira touched on Brazil's foreign policy, underscoring that Lula is keen to "rebuild bridges" with "traditional partners" including the US, China and the European Union and resume cooperation with Africa. China and the US are two of Brazil's biggest trade partners.-APP

Subsidized flour should be provided through markets

He assured that efforts will be made to supply wheat to flour mills in Islamabad through Passco so that they do not face any shortage of wheat

DNA Islamabad: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said that flour is the staple food of the people, but due to the wheat and flour crisis, the prices of flour have increased manifold in Islamabad like the whole country due to which the common man is facing great problems. He said that the strategy of providing subsidized flour from specific points has not delivered the desired results as many people have to go without buying flour despite standing in long queues. He stressed that the subsidized flour should be provided to the people through shops in markets to ease the troubles of people. He said this while talking to Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon during a meeting with him along with a delegation including the representatives of Flour Mills. ICCI Senior Vice President Faad Waheed,



Vice President Engineer Muhammad Azharul Islam Zafar, representatives of flour mills including Sheikh Tariq Sadiq, Abdul Rahman Khan, Chaudhry Mukhtar Ahmad, Dr. Muhammad Usman, Chaudhry Muhammad Ali, Ameer Hamza, Khalid Chaudhry, Saifur Rahman Khan and others were in the

delegation. Ahsan Bakhtawari said that the government should make all possible efforts to stabilize the prices of flour. He said that the flour mills of Islamabad are facing difficulties in procuring wheat from Punjab because sometimes their quota is reduced which not only makes the flour expen-

sive but also affects the business of the flour mills. ICCI Senior Vice President Faad Waheed emphasized that instead of Punjab, the government should supply wheat to the flour mills of Islamabad through Passco to save any flour crisis in the federal capital and keep the prices stable.

ICCI Vice President Engineer Muhammad Azharul Islam Zafar said that supply of required quantity of wheat to the flour mills is an important responsibility of the government and stressed that the government should evolve a system in consultation with the flour mills to ensure them regular supply

UK ambulance workers announce 10 fresh strikes

Islamabad **POST**

Saturday, January 21, 2023

of what in order to avoid

crisis has been overcome in

Islamabad due to the better

efforts of the administration.

while 50% will be provided

would be lifted soon after the

supply wheat to flour mills

shortage of wheat. Sheikh

Tariq Sadiq, Abdul Rahman Khan, Ch. Mukhtar Ahmed,

Dr. Muhammad Usman,

Ch. Muhammad Ali, Ameer

Hamza, Khalid Chaudhry, Sai

fur Rehman Khan and others

also spoke at the occasion

and gave useful proposals to

overcome the flour crisis in

and young women from class-

rooms in Afghanistan could

wipe out huge gains made in

education and create 'lost gen-

eration', the UN's educational

and cultural organization has

warned. The Paris-based UN

Educational, Scientific and Cul-

tural Organization (UNESCO)

announced on Thursday that it

was dedicating the Internation-

al Day of Education on January

girls. "No country in the world

should bar women and girls

from receiving an education.

Education is a universal human

right that must be respected,"

UNESCO's Director-Gener-

the city.

Deputy

Islamabad

Commissioner

Irfan Nawaz

BIRMINGHAM: As the UK's pay dispute continues, a union representing ambulance workers said their members will stage 10 more strikes in the coming weeks and threatened additional walkouts unless a resolution is reached. The announcement of fresh strikes came ahead of the latest day of industrial action with the Unite's ambulance workers set to walk out next Monday. In a written statement, the union's general secretary Sharon Graham said: "Rather than act to protect the NHS (National Health Service) and negotiate an end to the dispute, the government has disgracefully chosen to demonize ambulance workers. Ministers are deliberately misleading the public about the life and limb cover and who is to blame for excessive deaths.' Unite national lead officer Onay Kasab said: "The resolution to this dispute is in the government's hands. This dispute will only be resolved when it enters into proper negotiations about the current pay dispute." Ambulance workers will bolster the ranks of their paramedic colleagues with the GMB, a general trade union, which announced that over 10,000 of their members in England and Wales will also strike on the same dates.-DNA

Inflation hits poorer families in Germany hardest

BERLIN: Poorer families in Germany were hit the hardest by inflation in December, at 9.8%, while single people with very high incomes got off relatively easy with 7.1%. The figures come from the monthly inflation monitor published by the Hans Bockler Foundation's Macroeconomic Policy Institute (IMK), based in Dusseldorf. According to the German Federal Statistical Office, annual consumer inflation in Germany in December was 8.6%, down from 10% in November. The authors of the IMK study attribute the decline from November to December primarily to a one-time state subsidy for natural gas and district heating. But according to the study, this measure was not able to fundamentally narrow the gap between the highest and lowest household-specific inflation rates. Over the course of 2022, inflation for low-income families was 8.8%, significantly higher than the general inflation rate of 7.9%. The reason IMK gives for the heavier burden on poorer households is that they have to spend a larger percentage of their income on energy and food than wealthier ones. However, due to the energy crisis in Germany, price hikes in these areas in particular have recently been above average.-APP

23rd Jan Western media's 'dictatorship' Int'l Day of Education to craze returns ahead of Turkish vote Afghan girls NEW YORK: Barring girls

News Desk

ISTANBUL: "Empire" and "dictatorship" conveniently made their way into prominent London-based weekly The Economist's cover ahead of yet another election in Türkiye with President Recep Tayyip Erdo an at the country's helm. Weekly's report accompanying the body which reads "Turkey's Looming Dictatorship" claims Türkiye is on the brink of a disaster as it may go from a "deepindustry against multiple ly flawed democracy into a full-blown dictatorship." security threats it is subject to. Thus, they hope that an The piece, again conven-

opposition admitting defeat. willingly earlier," the article Upcoming elections are critsays. However, it is forced ical for the opposition and to acknowledge that Türseemingly for foreign mekiye is "still a functioning dia obsessed with tagging representative democracy." democratically elected pres-This line is more or less idents as "dictators." For adopted by most major methe opposition, it is the last dia outlets, from The Guardchance to unseat Erdo an ian to the New York Times from office as their vote whose opinion pieces or erodes with every election news reports repeatedly they lose. For foreign mehighlight the so-called "authoritarian" or "autocratic" dia, it means the West will have to face an uncomproregime of Türkiye, usually mising Türkiye which purbefore every election. sues global diplomacy while "An English magazine can-'sticking to its guns' and not determine Türkiye's fate, it is my nation that will improving its local defense

niversary of the 1950 elections, the first time Türkiye had a multi-party vote, more than two decades after the declaration of the Republic. Communications Director Fahrettin Altun slammed The Economist for engaging in "cheap" anti-Türkiye propaganda, over its latest issue. "Here we go again! The Economist recycles its intellectually lazy, dull, and purposefully ignorant depiction of Türkiye. It seems like they feel obligated to announce the end of Turkish democracy through regurgitating cliches, misinformation and blatant propaganda.

remind audiences that this is sensationalist journalism based on cheap propaganda and disinformation," Altun said on Twitter.

"Turkish people have demonstrated their commitment to democracy, equality, and freedom time and again. Our political system has undergone many tribulations including a treacherous coup 24, to the Afghan women and attempt in 2016 when our people spilled their blood to save our democracy. When our President Erdogan called on our citizens to resist the putschists, their response was a al Audrey Azoulay, said in a lesson for the ages. The

French unions call for more protests

NICE: Trade unions in France called for fresh protests and strikes on Jan. 31 to ramp up pressure on the government to withdraw its controversial plan to hike the age of retirement.

The call came as hundreds of thousands poured out for massive nationwide protests on Thursday, which brought transport services and life in general to a virtual standstill in major cities. According to the country's largest union CGT, at least 2 million peo ple protested across France, including some 400,000 in the capital Paris. The Interior Ministry, however, claimed the number was significantly lower at around 1.12 million. In a meeting on Thursday evening, union leaders urged workers to "intensify actions everywhere in the country" as the government looks to formally adopt the proposal at a Cabinet meeting on Jan. 23. "We are united and determined to get this project withdrawn," unions said in a statement cited by local media, calling for "a fair retirement system." Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne, who unveiled details of the reform plan on Jan. 10, said last week that the minimum pension amount would rise to 85% of the minimum wage meaning around 1,200 (\$1,288) per month.-APP

iently, ignores more than two decades of democratic elections the ruling Justice and Development Party (AK Party) and its leader Erdogan easily won, mainly with a landslide victory, with the

early exit will be better for Erdogan as a recent article on Foreign Policy called for. "(His) political legacy would have been different if he stayed less committed to holding power and resigned

'No appetite for

of that change beyond that right across the country."-APP

have been "human rights vi-

olations and arrest" of many

leaders participating in the

freedom movement." He

said that many young peo-

ple have been imprisoned

while prominent Kashmiri

Mohammed Yasin Malik was

sentenced to life in prison

last year. "Still the resist-

ance movement is there,"

Chaudhry added, saying that

millions of people are part

of such movements. Mus-

lim-majority Kashmir has

been divided between India

and Pakistan since British

colonialists granted it in-

dependence in 1947. Both

countries claim the region in

its entirety and have fought

two wars over its control.

Tensions escalated again

when India unilaterally re-

voked the autonomous sta-

tus of its part of Kashmir in

2019. In 2019, Prime Minis-

leader

pro-independence

Istanbul on Friday in response to The Economist's cover. These were similar to his comments earlier this week when he signaled that 2023 elections might be held on May 14, on the an-

determine it," President

Recep Tayyip Erdogan said

in remarks to reporters in

Outrageous and provocative imagery might help them sell their so-called journal, so we congratulate them on their ingenious marketing techniques! But we must

headlines so-called journalists and editors at the Economist obviously never bothered to engage in decent journalism on our people's struggle for our democracy," Altun said.

"The international statement. community has the responsibility to ensure that the rights of Afghan girls and women are restored without delay. The war against women must stop," she added. - APP



BERLIN: Pakistan ambassador to Belarus, Sajjad Haider visits Pakistan embassy Germany and meets ambassador Dr Muhammad Faisal. - DNA

No military solution to end Kashmir conflict

WEB DESK

ANKARA: There is no military solution that could resolve the yearslong conflict over the contested Jammu and Kashmir region, said Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry, president of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). In an exclusive interview with Turkish Newspaper during Chaudhry's visit to Türkiye, the president called for a dialogue, reiterating that unrest has dominated the region since Iammu and Kashmir's status was changed four years ago. "Since then, there has been a struggle, a movement in occupied Kashmir. Currently, it is like a direct rule of Delhi in occupied Kashmir." Chaudhry said, describing the latest situation in the region, adding that there ter Narendra Modi's government reorganized Jammu and Kashmir, then India's only Muslim-majority state, into two federally administered territories, aiming to spur development.

For many of Jammu and Kashmir's Muslims, the Janata Party's Bharatiya (BJP) policies upending decades of autonomy and privilege represent a dangerous new phase in what they see as a nationwide push to champion the rights of the Hindu majority over minority groups. "They are changing the demography of the region," Chaudhry said in an accusation toward India, likening the process to the Israeli policies in occupied Palestine. "Moreover, they are settling non-Kashmiris into occupied Kashmir, such as Indian Hindus and other Indians," the president highlighted. Chaudhry further accused New Delhi of engaging in changes that would enable it to elect a Hindu chief minister in the region. "As the region is Muslim-majority – they (India) just want to show the world that a Hindu chief minister can be elected," Chaudhry added, saying that the move indicated their intentions. Jammu and Kashmir is divided into two parts. Jammu has about 5.3 million inhabitants, 62% of whom are Hindu while Kashmir Valley has 6.7 million, 97% of them Muslims, according to a 2011 census. Estimates from survey officials and senior bureaucrats suggest the population stood at 15.5 million in 2021. From 1954, the Indian region enjoyed special status under India's Constitution. The shift in the political landscape came in 2019 when the BJP-led

parliament in New Delhi revoked this status, which had denied rights to many Hindu communities not considered

indigenous to the region. Until the region's special status was revoked, secular left-of-center parties with Muslim leaders controlled the local assembly and whoever governed India from New Delhi tended not to dabble in the region's polit-

ical autonomy. The assembly, which controls the state budget, spending, employment, education and economic activity, was dissolved and a lieutenant governor was appointed to run the region until local elections can be held which could be as early as this spring. Chaudhry said that due to such contested developments in the region, there is no dialogue between India and Pakistan. "The sit-

uation is getting dense in the meantime."

On the other side, he indicated that the Indian policies caused minorities to suffer not only in Kashmir but also within India.

"It is damaging the Indian reputation. Once upon a time, India was claiming it is the largest democracy and a secular state in the world. No more," Chaudhry said. 'We are always up for a solution," the president underlined and warned of the consequences that could arise from further conflict between the two archrival nuclear powers. "Any small incident or accident could trigger a war. If there would be a war, it could be a nuclear war. It would not only affect India, Pakistan and South Asia, it would be a catastrophe for the entire world," he emphasized.

Amazon saw worst deforestation levels in 2022

BUENOS AIRES: Brazil's Amazon experienced its worst levels of deforestation in 15 years in 2022, losing the equivalent of nearly 3,000 soccer fields a day, a report found. The report, released Wednesday by the Brazilian non-profit research institute Imazon, which promotes conservation and sustainable development in the Amazon, found that the region registered a fifth consecutive record in felling. The report said that between January and December 2022, deforestation reached 10,573 square kilometers (4,082 square miles), while overall deforestation from 2019-2022 reached 35,193 km (13,588 square miles). Bianca Santos, a researcher at Imazon, said she hopes the administration of President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva will prioritize the protection of the Amazon. Amid the high levels of deforestation, Santos underscored the need for effective measures to combat the ecological degradation, including "the demarcation of indigenous lands, the restructuring of inspection bodies and the incentive to generate income with the standing forest."-APP







Briefs PTI devises strategy to deal with 'minus-Imran Khan plan'

DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreeke-Insaf (PTI) leadership held a meeting on Friday and devised a strategy to deal with the 'minus-Imran Khan plan'. The PTI's senior leadership concluded its session in which the party leaders discussed thwarting every strategy to minus Imran Khan from Pakistan's politics.

According to sources, the leaders prepared an action plan and considered making Imran Khan patron-in-chief of the PTI. The move will enable Imran Khan to head the political party with maximum powers as the patron-in-chief. Sources said that currently there is no post of patron-inchief in PTI, however, there will be no need to amend the constitution for creating a new position. Yesterday, former premier and PTI Chairman Imran Khan said that his political party's vote bank will not be affected by his disqualification as the people will vote for his party's narrative. Imran Khan, while talking to senior journalists, said that Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) failed to deliver to the Pakistanis on all fronts. He directly blamed Finance Minister Ishaq Dar for intensifying the crises.

He said that voices are being raised within the ruling Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N). "I still have many cards to surprise the PDM. The dissolution of the Punjab Assembly was a brilliant stroke against the PDM which will be remembered for decades."

42 journalists murdered in last 4 years: Senate told



ISLAMABAD: State Minister for Poverty Alleviation Faisal Karim Kundi, Xing Lijun Third Secretary Chinese Embassy, Zhao Li Ru, Executive Vice President ZTE, CEO Monal Group Luqman Ali Afzal and others cutting cake to celebrate Chinese New Year at the Asian Wok restaurant. – DNA

Saudi Arabia rules out Israel normalization

The West Bank and the Gaza Strip plus Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem were long touted as the basis of a Palestinian state in a "two-state" solution to the long-running conflict

News Desk

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia will not normalise ties with Israel in the absence of a two-state solution with the Palestinians, the kingdom's top diplomat has said, according to a tweet by the foreign ministry on Friday.



But that goal has become ever more distant, with the occupied West Bank fragmented by Jewish settlements. Netanyahu plans to pursue a policy of increased settlement expansion in the West Bank, with ultra-Orthodox Jewish parties in his coalition advocating the annexation of some of the territory. Meanwhile, Israeli troops shot dead two

the 2019-2025 period. the dead two "After repairing the armed

ISLAMABAD | RAWALPINDI | PESHAWAR

Netherlands mulls sending F-16 to Ukraine: Media

DNA

AMSTERDAM: The Dutch government may consider supplying F-16 fighter jets to Ukraine in case of a request by Kyiv, according to local media on Friday.

Speaking at Thursday's parliamentary debate, Dutch Foreign Minister Wopke Hoekstra said the Cabinet would look at such a request by Kyiv on F-16 jets with an "open mind," NL Times reported. He said there are "no taboos" for the delivery of regular equipment, adding that the Netherlands only sends items that Ukraine asks for.

According to the report, D66 party lawmaker Sjoerd Sjoerdsma asked the Cabinet to supply F-16 jets and infantry fighting vehicles to Ukraine. Meanwhile, some countries like the US and UK have already announced to accelerate military support to Ukraine.

France to boost defence spending by a third

DNA

MONTDE MARSAN: President Emmanuel Macron on Friday announced plans to increase France's defence budget by a third for the next seven years, after Russia's invasion of Ukraine last year rattled Europe. The announcement came a day after more than a

a day after more than a million people protested in France against a proposed reform to cut pensions deficits. Macron said he would ask parliament to approve a new budget of more than 400 billion euros (\$430 billion) for 2024-2030, up from 295 billion euros for the 2019-2025 period.

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi on Friday informed the Senate that 42 journalists were murdered in the last four years across the country. Responding to the question of Jamaate-Islami's Senator Mushtaq Ahmed, he said that it was a critical situation and the government should take prompt action against the culprits and journalists should be provided special security.

Abbasi directed the Ministry of Interior to prepare a consolidated report on the matter and present it to the House within the period of two months. Balochistan Awami Party's Senator Danesh Kumar pointed out that there were more than 10 journalists who were murdered in Balochistan instead of three shown in this report. To this, the minister said that this report was compiled after a thorough consultation with all the quarters concerned of the provinces and if someone had given a wrong figure, he must be accountable as it was a sensitive matter. Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl's Senator Kamran Murtaza proposed the minister that the journalists who had lost their lives in line of their duty, should be properly probed on which subject they were working before their murder.

The comments by Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in Davos came as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu discussed normalisation with Saudi Arabia in talks with White House National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan in Jerusalem on Thursday. "True normalisation and true stability will only come through... giving the Palestinians a state," Prince Faisal told Bloomberg at the summit.

Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil exporter, is a close partner of the United States but it has repeatedly refused to normalise ties with US-ally Israel due to its occupation of Palestinian territories. The US-brokered Abraham Accords in 2020 saw the kingdom's neighbours – the United Arab Emir-

ates and Bahrain – establish full diplomatic ties with Israel. Netanyahu has repeatedly expressed his desire to see Saudi Arabia join the list. In their talks on Thursday, Netanyahu and Sullivan discussed "measures to deepen the Abraham Accords... with an

emphasis on a breakthrough with Saudi," the Israeli leader's office said.

The West Bank and the Gaza Strip plus Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem were long touted as the basis of a Palestinian state in a "twostate" solution to the long-running conflict.

Palestinians, including a 57-year-old schoolteacher, in the occupied West Bank on Thursday during a dawn raid in the flashpoint city of Jenin, officials and medics have said. Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh has called on the world's countries to intervene and try and prevent the crimes of the Israeli occupation against the Palestinian people. He also held Israel fully responsible for the continuation of such crimes. Teacher Jawad Bawakna, the father of six, and Adham Jabarin, 28, were both shot in the Jenin refugee camp.

The two deaths bring to 17 the number of Palestinian fatalities since the start of the year, including four children. Nine of the fatalities have been in Jenin. Fifteen people were arrested during the raid.

forces, we are going to transform them," he told soldiers at the southwestern air base of Mont-de-Marsan. "We need to do better and do it differently," Macron added. We need to "privilege rapid action and increasing power because we won't choose the conflicts we will have to wage." Macron also said the budget for military intelligence would be increased by 60 percent for the same period, and he hoped to double the country's ability to respond to major cyber-attacks.

IHC orders FO to assist Dr Aafia's sister

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In the case pertaining to the return of Dr Aafia Siddiqui – a Pakistani neuroscientist jailed in the United States – the Islamabad High Court Friday directed the Foreign Affairs ministry to ensure assistance to Dr Fauzia Siddiqui, younger sister of the imprisoned scientist, at the legal front. The government, while ensuring the provision of assistance for Dr Aafia, apprised the court about its officials' meeting with the American Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome regarding the matter. The government told the court that the case of the Pakistani national's release has been raised at the diplomatic level in the US. Last month, the court had directed the

Foreign Affairs ministry to raise Dr Aafia's matter with the American envoy while shar-

ing its dissatisfaction towards the efforts for her release and sought a signed report from the ministry and its secretary.

Justice Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan held the hearing of the plea filed by Dr Fauzia for her sister's return to Pakistan, while the petitioner arrived at the court with her counsel. Responding about the government's action in the case, Additional Attorney General Munawwar Iqbal Dogal said that Pakistan's officials had met the US diplomat following the court's orders. Justice Ejaz said that "neither the foreign secretary nor the foreign minister is aware" of the court's orders.

The court sought details of the meeting's proceedings questioning if it was merely held over "coffee and cake". "Any idea what happened in this meeting?" he asked Iqbal to which he responded by saying that the matter had been raised at the diplomatic level.

China plays down Covid outbreak with holiday rush at full tilt

That policy U-turn, which followed historic protests against the govt's tough anti-virus curbs, unleashed Covid on a population of 1.4 bln that had been largely shielded from disease since it emerged in city of Wuhan in late 2019

WEB DESK

BEIJING: People across China crowded into trains and buses for one of its busiest days of travel in years on Friday, feeding fears of new surges in a raging Covid-19 outbreak that officials say has hit its peak. In comments reported by state media late on Thursday, Vice Premier Sun Chunlan said the virus was at a "relatively low" level, while health officials said the number of Covid patients in hospitals and with critical conditions was on the decline.

But there are widespread doubts about China's official account of an outbreak that has overwhelmed hospitals and funeral homes since Beijing abandoned strict Covid controls and mass testing last month.

That policy U-turn, which followed historic protests against the government's tough anti-virus curbs, unleashed Covid

on a population of 1.4 billion that had been largely shielded from the disease since it emerged in the city of Wuhan in late 2019. Some health experts expect that more than one million people will die from the disease in China this year, with British-based health data firm Airfinity forecasting Covid fatalities could hit 36,000 a day next week.

"Recently, the overall pandemic in the country is at a relatively low level," Sun said in comments reported by the state-run Xinhua news agency. "The number of critical patients at hospitals is decreasing steadily, though the rescue mission is still heavy." She spoke on the eve of one of the most frenetic travel days in China since the start of the pandemic, as millions of city-dwellers travel to their hometowns for the Lunar New Year holiday that officially begins on Saturday. More than 2bn trips are expected to take place across China between January 7 and February 15, the government estimates.

20 % DISCOUNT FOR CHINESE NATIONALS From January 20th - February 10th, 2023

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