



Islamabad POST

Wednesday, February 08, 2023

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 25

UK's Sunak shuffles top posts ahead of expected elections

Detailed News On Page-07

Iran, Pakistan enjoy excellent relations: Envoy

Detailed News On Page-03

Waseem hurt over Naseem's honorary post

Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

Dar vows to overcome challenges

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance and Revenue Ishaq Dar says the government is determined to put economy on positive trajectory despite all challenges. He was talking to Chief Economist of Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank Erik Berglof who called on him in Islamabad on Tuesday. The Finance Minister shared the current economic outlook of the country and briefed the delegation about the economic policies and reforms of government for sustainable economic development and social uplift of poor segment of society.

Post-arrest bail plea rejected

DNA

ISLAMABAD: An Islamabad district and sessions court rejected on Tuesday Awami Muslim League (AML) chief Sheikh Rashid's post-arrest bail petition in a case pertaining to his remarks against former president Asif Ali Zardari. The Islamabad police had arrested the PTI ally on Feb 2 for allegedly making defamatory remarks against the PPP leadership after which the court had granted the police his two-day physical remand. Upon completion of his physical remand, an Islamabad court had on Feb 4 sent Rashid on a 14-day judicial remand in the case filed at the city's Aabpara Police Station, rejecting the police request for another physical remand.

Masood conveys condolences

DNA

WASHINGTON: Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States Masood Khan has telephoned his Turkish counterpart in Washington Hasan Murat Mercan, and expressed his heartfelt sympathies and deep condolences over loss of precious human lives due to devastating earthquake. Speaking on the occasion, Masood Khan said that he was shocked and saddened to see the tragic devastation in Türkiye.

Turkiye, Syria Earthquake

Relief fund established for victims

Federal cabinet to contribute one month's salary; Erdogan declares emergency

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has decided to establish a relief fund to help the victims of a deadly earthquake in Turkey that has claimed over 5,000 lives. "To help the victims of the earthquake in Turkey at this difficult hour, PM Shehbaz Sharif has decided to establish PM Relief Fund," Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb said Tuesday after a plane load of relief goods and rescue team from Pakistan reached Turkey. The minister said that the federal cabinet has announced to contribute one month's salary while the PM has appealed to the philanthropists to extend help. Turkey and Syria have witnessed a devastating earthquake of a magnitude of 7.8, killing over 5,000 people and injuring innumerable people. Earlier, Pakistan sent two aircraft carrying a 51-member search and rescue team and relief goods to Turkey to provide assistance in rescue operations. According to a Pakistan Air Force (PAF) statement, a C-130 Hercules aircraft carrying rescue team members and blankets from PAF Base, Nur Khan has landed in Istanbul. Taking to his official Twitter handle, the premier stated that "24 hours after the devastating earthquake hit Türkiye and Syria, [the] scenes of death & destruction are mind-numbing". "It breaks the heart to witness [the] sheer scale of unfolding human tragedy," he added. Federal Minister for Information Marriyum Aurangzeb

Continued on Page 06

APC postponed as PM to visit Türkiye

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The government has postponed the All Parties Conference due to be held on Thursday (February 09) after the deadly earthquake in Turkey and Syria. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had called the APC for consultations on terrorism, national security, and economic stability. The Conference was expected to frame a line of action to deal with the national issues. In a tweet uploaded on Tuesday, Federal Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will leave for Ankara tomorrow morning to express his condolences to the people of Türkiye after thousands of people killed in the attack. The minister further said due to Prime Minister's visit to Türkiye, the APC convened on Thursday (February 9) is being postponed. A new date for the APC will be announced in consultation with the allies later.

Continued on Page 06

Pak will continue to be 'stalwart partner'

"We've talked in recent days about our commitment to stand with Pakistan", says Ned Price

NEWS DESK



WASHINGTON: The United States has reiterated its support to Pakistan in the fight against terrorism, saying the latter will continue to be a "stalwart partner" of the US in the face of recent terrorist attacks. US State Department spokesperson Ned Price made this statement in response to a query at a weekly press briefing on Monday. On Jan 30, a powerful explosion ripped through a mosque in Peshawar's Red Zone area where between 300 and 400 people – mostly police officers – had gathered for prayers. The suicide blast blew away the wall of the prayer hall and an inner roof and claimed 84 lives. The outlawed Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) initially claimed responsibility for the attack. It later distanced itself from it but sources earlier indicated that it might have been the handiwork of some local faction of the outlawed group. Commenting on the renewed wave of terrorism in Pakistan, Price said "this is a scourge that affects Pakistan, it affects India, it affects Afghanistan. It is something that we're focused on throughout the entire region". When it comes to Pakistan, he said, "they are an important partner of the US, and a partner in any number of ways". "We've talked in recent days about our commitment to stand with Pakistan in the face of these security threats," the spokesperson underlined. Over the past few months, terrorism has been rearing its head again in the country, especially in KP and Balochistan. Pakistan has seen a rise in terrorist attacks across the country, believed to have been planned and directed by the TTP leaders based in Afghanistan. The TTP, which has ideological linkages with the Afghan Taliban, executed more than 100 attacks last year, most of which happened after August when the group's peace talks with the Pakistan government began to falter. The ceasefire was formally ended last year on Nov 28 by the TTP.

Ukraine says Russians endure deadliest day in war so far

The last few weeks have seen Russia boast its first gains for half a year

MONITORING DESK

KYIV: Ukraine said on Tuesday the last 24 hours were the deadliest of the war so far for Russian troops, as Moscow pressed on with an intensifying winter assault in the east bringing tens of thousands of freshly mobilised troops to the battlefield. The Ukrainian claim could not be independently verified and Russia has also claimed to have killed large numbers of Ukrainian troops in recent weeks. Tallies of enemy casualties from either side have typically been seen as unreliable, and Kyiv offered few details of the latest battles. But the assertion that the fighting was the deadliest so far fits descriptions from both sides of an escalating campaign of close contact trench warfare, which has left snow-covered battlefields of eastern Ukraine littered with corpses. The Ukrainian military increased its running tally of Russian military dead by 1,030 overnight to 133,190, and described the increase as the highest of the war so far. For its part, Russia said it had inflicted 6,500 Ukrainian casualties in the month of January.

Continued on Page 06

Russians seen reinforcing east

KYIV: Tens of thousands of Russians are being sent to eastern Ukraine as part of an offensive planned after 15 February, according to the Ukrainian governor of Luhansk region. "We are seeing more and more reserves being deployed in our direction," said Serhiy Haidai, who expected a three-pronged Russian advance. Ukraine has warned repeatedly of an imminent offensive. But there is widespread scepticism of significant Russian success. The UK's defence intelligence briefing said Russia's aim was almost certainly to capture parts of Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region that were not already under occupation. But the UK said "it remains unlikely that Russia can build up the forces needed to substantially affect the outcome of the war within the coming weeks".

Continued on Page 06



LAHORE: NDMA dispatches another PAF C-130 Aircraft carrying 9 tons load which includes Winterized Tents & Blankets on behalf of People of Pakistan for Quake-hit people of Türkiye. – DNA

Turkish Embassy expresses gratitude

The Embassy thanks the Pakistani nation for sending support

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: The Turkish Embassy expressed gratitude on Tuesday towards Pakistan for sending relief teams and supporting Türkiye when the chaotic earthquake damaged the country. As per a tweet from the Turkish Embassy, Pak Army's Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams reached Adana safely with relief packages. Moreover, the Embassy thanked the Pakistani nation for sending support after the disaster. Pakistan sent two aircraft carrying a 51-member search and rescue team and relief goods to Turkey to provide assistance in rescue operations. According to a Pakistan Air Force (PAF) statement, a C-130 Hercules aircraft carrying rescue team members and blankets from PAF Base, Nur Khan has landed in Istanbul.

Imran Khan says

Efforts underway to debar me and bring Nawaz back

Meanwhile, court postpones Imran Khan's indictment

ABID RAZA



LAHORE: Former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan has asserted that his decision to extend former Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Gen (ret'd) Qamar Javed Bajwa's tenure in 2019 was a 'blunder'. Meanwhile, PTI chairman Imran Khan could not be indicted in Tosha Khana reference Tuesday and the court accepted former Prime Minister (PM) plea for exemption from appearance. The matter of criminal proceedings against Imran Khan in Tosha Khana reference came up for hearing before Judge Zafar Iqbal of district and sessions court Islamabad. A team of 4 lawyers comprising Ali Zafar, Ali Bokhari, Khawaja Haris and Gauhar

Continued on Page 06

Govt incompetence plunges country into quagmire: Asad

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Central Secretary General Asad Umar said that the unending infighting among the handful self-centered power greedy political elites and incompetence of the imported government plunged the country into quagmire of problems, because they were more interested in clinching to power rather than finding solution to pull the country out of the morass. Launching Insaf Doctors Forum's nationwide

Continued on Page 06



Experience
Hospitality, Culture and Luxury
in the heart of
Peshawar

PESHAWAR SERENA
HOTEL

For reservations, please call +92 (91) 588 9000
or email at reservation.psh@serena.com.pk

Inside...

PRCS donates \$50,000 for Türkiye earthquake victims – Page 02

Iran, Pakistan enjoy excellent relations, says Ambassador – Page 03

Boosting exports through CPEC solution to fiscal pressure – Page 04

Terrorism, Nordic bids, NATO's revolving doors – Page 05

Pakistan wins three medals in Fujairah Int'l Taekwondo C'ship – Page 06

Rescuers battle cold as death toll hits 5,000 – Page 07

Sri Lanka on path to economic recovery – Page 08

PRCS donates \$ 50,000 for Türkiye earthquake victims

Ambassador of Turkey, Dr. Mehmet Pachachi, has said that we appreciate this initiative and salute the passion and sincerity of the leadership of Red Crescent

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Red Crescent Society has donated a generous sum of US dollars 50,000 to the Turkish Embassy in Pakistan, for the relief and recovery of Türkiye earthquake victims. The donation cheque was presented by Chairman PRCS Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari to the Ambassador of Türkiye, Dr. Mehmet Pachachi in a simple ceremony held in Turkish Embassy here on Tuesday. Speaking on this occasion, Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari said that

PRCS has stood with the people of Türkiye in this hour of grief and distress and would do all possible cooperation and support for the relief and recovery of the earthquake victims. Chairman PRCS expressed heartfelt condolences to the brotherly Turkish people on the tragic loss of life and destruction of property caused by the earthquake in Türkiye. He said that Türkiye and Pakistan are brothers, and both have always stood side by side through thick and thin. He said Pakistan-Türkiye partnership is destined to remain a vital factor in the peace, sta-

bility, and progress of our two peoples in an increasingly turbulent world. Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari said that PRCS doors are always open for the Turkish brothers, he also offered to send a response team to Türkiye. On this occasion, the Ambassador of Turkey, Dr. Mehmet Pachachi, thanked the PRCS for giving the relief donation and said that we appreciate this initiative and salute the passion and sincerity of the leadership of Red Crescent. Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari also recorded his comments on the condolence book kept in the embassy.



ISLAMABAD: PRCS Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari giving donation check to ambassador of Türkiye, Dr. Mehmet Pachachi for earthquake victims. —DNA

Iran ready for cooperation with Pakistan

QUETTA: Deputy Consul General of Iran Pir Lorin on Tuesday said that Pakistan-Iran relations have always been exemplary and Iranian territory would not be utilized against any country and was ready for all possible cooperation with Pakistan. He expressed these views while talking to journalists on the occasion of his visit to Quetta Press Club. Quetta Press Club President Abdul Khaliq, newly elected President of Balochistan Union of Journalists (BUJ) Irfan Saeed and other journalists were also present. Iran's Deputy Consul General Pir Lorin congratulated the newly elected cabinet of Balochistan Union of Journalists and expressed hope that the journalist community would play a key role in further strengthening Pak-Iran relations. He said that as a good neighbor, Iran has friendly relations with Pakistan. Peer Lorin said that Iran was ready to provide gas, petrol and electricity to Pakistan because there was no international restriction regarding the supply of Iranian gas. He said that Iran was supplying 104 megawatts of electricity to the border city of Gwadar and would now provide another 100 megawatts this year. The activities of armed organizations in Iran were exaggerated by hostile countries and unrest in Balochistan was not in Iran's interest. —APP

Unresolved Kashmir dispute to remain a stigma on UN face

ISLAMABAD: The Chairperson of Peace and Culture Organisation, Mushaal Hussein Mullick lashed out at the UN and world powers for their failure to resolve the decades-long Kashmir issue and said that the unresolved Kashmir dispute would remain a stigma on the face of the world body. Speaking at a seminar organised by Shaheed Bhutto Foundation and JK-PSF to mark Kashmir solidarity day, as a chief guest here on Tuesday, she said that

bleeding Kashmir would remain a constant threat to regional as well as world peace. Mushaal, wife of jailed Kashmiri Hurriyat leader Muhammad Yasin Malik, said that Hindutva regime unleashed a wave of terrorism in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) but ironically the world largely remained oblivious to the world's worst human catastrophe. The Hurriyat leader stated that settlement of Kashmir dispute was not only inevi-

table for Kashmiris to live free life from fascist Narendra Modi government's subjugation but it was also vital for the UN to restore its fast losing credibility and effectiveness. Rehana Hussein Mullick Co Chairperson Peace and Culture Organisation said that the oppressed people largely considered the UN as a protector of the interest of mighty oppressors rather than guardian of the oppressed and weak nations. —APP



KARACHI: Funeral prayer of former President of Pakistan, General (r) Pervez Musharraf, was offered at Polo Ground Malir Cantt today. General Sahir Shamshad Mirza, CJSC, senior serving / retired Army officers, relatives of deceased and a large number of civil / military officials and public attended the funeral. —DNA

Political parties urged to play imperative role to curb terrorism, extremism

PESHAWAR: The participants of a seminar on "Protection and Rights of Citizens: Political Consensus" on Tuesday emphasised upon the political parties to focus on making serious efforts to implement national action plan, take stern actions to curb terrorism and extremism and introduce measures to address outstanding human rights issues. The seminar was organised by Centre for Social Justice (CSJ). Executive Director of CSJ Peter Jacob, former MNA Bushra Gohar (NDM), Sardar Hussain Babak (ANP), Dr. Khadim Husain, Arshad Aziz Malik, Syed Ayub Shah Advocate (PPP), Shahid Mehmood, Augustin Jacob Social, Human Rights Activist and Suneel Malik were among

the speakers, while Naina Samson moderated the seminar. At this juncture, CSJ's report titled "Promises to Keep & Miles to Go" based on the analysis of pledges, actions, and performance regarding minorities rights made by political parties was launched which the political parties in the government and opposition largely failed to implement their pledges fully in the last three parliamentary tenures. The study found that (PTI) fulfilled none out of five promises made in election manifesto 2018, though it made partial progress on two promises. Peter Jacob said that CSJ shares the grief of families

and the entire nation affected by the attack on police lines Peshawar a week ago. The civil society of Pakistan welcomes the meeting of the Apex committee and the all-parties conference, being convened in Islamabad, and supports the national resolve against extremism and militancy. He said that civil society strongly believes that the success against extremism will hugely depend on changes in the policy paradigm aimed at equality of rights and removing discrimination on the basis of religion or belief, particularly the impunity available to preachers of hate and intolerance. He demanded that upcoming census has to ensure the maximum inclusion of Pakistan's di-

versity and the political process should enable substantial changes in the legal framework including the constitution of Pakistan to inculcate the standards of justice and equality envisioned in the speech of Muhammad Ali Jinnah on 11 August 1947. Bushra Gohar said that the political parties have failed to address human rights abuses, and they compromised on their mandates and political will due to the pressure exerted by religious groups, which results in making them use religion in their narrative and policy actions for political point scoring. She added that textbooks of different subjects including English and Urdu carry the religious content which leads to di-

viding citizens on religious and sectarian lines and developing a typical world-view amongst students, which should be contained to implement Article 22(1) of the constitution of Pakistan. Sardar Hussain Babak said that there are curbs on freedom of expression, thought, conscience and religion in Pakistan. The powerful state institutions tend to challenge the supremacy of the constitution and parliament, which makes the democratic institutions weak and marginalised. He added that the country is in the grip of religious intolerance and extremism sponsored by the state, it is time for the state authorities to reject the ideals that promote hatred and exclusion. —APP



PESHAWAR: President Dr. Arif Alvi inquiring after the health of the patients, injured during the Police Line terrorist attack at Lady Reading Hospital. —APP

KP Caretaker Minister meets ambassadors of Uzbekistan, Indonesia, Philippines

ISLAMABAD: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Caretaker Minister for Industry, Commerce and Revenue Adnan Jalil on Tuesday met the ambassadors of Uzbekistan, Indonesia, and the Philippines in Islamabad. Matters of mutual interest were discussed in detail in these meetings. On this occasion, the caretaker provincial minister invited the ambassadors to invest in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and assured full cooperation from the provincial government in this regard. He also said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had its own unique identity in terms of tourism as there were vast opportunities for investment in the field of travel, hoteling, and tourism in Pakistan. Ambassadors thanked the caretaker minister for the invitation to visit the province and assured the full cooperation of their respective governments and people in terms of cementing bilateral ties and investment in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. On this occasion, the ambassadors also expressed regret over the loss of precious lives in the Police Lines Mosque explosion in the city of Peshawar and the tragedy of Tanda Dam in Kohat in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in the recent days. They also expressed their complete solidarity with the provincial government and the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. —APP

KPK Governor supports LCCI demand for Charter of Economy

LAHORE: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) Governor Haji Ghulam Ali on Tuesday supported the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI) demanding a Charter of Economy for exports promotion and economic wellbeing of the country. He was talking to business community during his visit to LCCI here, he added that all segments of society including politicians and the business community should think beyond all kinds of political affiliations and play their active role for economic development of the country. The KPK Governor said that collective approach had to be adopted to resolve the issues being faced by the business community, economy and the state. He said that when the state was weak, its foundations were shaken, citing that trade and industry were the main pillars of state. "We have to think about the development of economy, industry, elimination of unemployment and to control the inflation," he

maintained. He said that all 54 chambers of commerce should stick to their demand of election boycott if the Charter of Economy was not signed. He said that only the business community could bring the country out of economic difficulties. The Governor said that KPK was enriched with vast mineral resources which would not be exhausted even in the next hundred years. He said that the business community should invest in the mineral sector of KPK, assuring that full support would be extended to the investors and a seminar would also be organized in this regard in Governor House of KPK. "I have suggested that all the political parties should be persuaded to sit together and hold the election on the same day," he said and added that it would cost only Rs. 50 billion instead of Rs. 200 billion. He said that Punjab was a big brother, if there was any problem in Punjab,

the backbone of the whole country would be broken. He cited that Turkey also got out of economic difficulties and achieve the goals of economic development. In his welcome address, the LCCI President Mian Kashif Anwar demanded a Charter of Economy by all the political parties instead of elections. He said, "Our country is currently suffering from severe political instability which is having a direct impact on our economy. The conditions of our country require that a charter of economy should be signed without any delay and whichever political party comes to power, should fully implement this charter." He said that Pakistan could not afford inflation rate of 27 percent, asserting that economic problems had multiplied due to hike in dollar rate against Pak rupee. This situation, he said, was not only keeping the foreign direct investment away but also discouraging the local investors. —APP

DRO takes notice of ECP's guidelines violation

PESHAWAR: District Returning Officer (DRO) Swabi on Tuesday took notice of the violation of guideline/code of conduct for by-elections in NA-18 and NA-19 announced by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). The action has been taken on the complaint filed by Bilal Iqbal Tarakai with the DRO for NA-18 and NA-19 Swabi regarding advertisement/notice for development projects inviting tenders dated February 6, 2023 to be opened on February 9, 2023 by the office of Ex-

ecutive Engineer (XEN) PHE Division, Swabi, said a press release issued here on Tuesday. The notice said that the ECP has announced schedule for the conduct of election in NA-18 Swabi-I and NA-19 Swabi-II while schedule for general election to provincial assemblies of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are to be announced shortly. In the light of the foregoing the ECP vide Notification No.F.(No2(1)2023-Cord, dated January 22, 2023 have not to announce/execute any kind of develop-

ment scheme in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces except those which are ongoing and approved before the announcement of election schedule. Moreover, the provincial government and the local governments of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have been directed not to issue tenders of such schemes till the culmination of general elections of both assemblies. The Executive Engineer concerned has been directed to cancel the notice inviting tenders in the light of the notification. —APP

The Smooth Moving Connection

freeline MOVERS

PACKING, SHIPPING & FREIGHT FORWARDING

Our Services

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

Head Office
3rd Floor, Yasin Plaza, 74-West, Blue Area, Islamabad.
Tel: (+92-51) 2822471, 2274221, 2878029, 2272273, 2822711, 2874289 - Fax: (+92-51) 2825132, 2274227.
E-mail: moving@freelinemovers.com - Website: www.freelinemovers.com

Branch Offices:

Karachi Room No. 14 & 15, 3rd Floor, Kalkatran Mall, Main Tariq Road, 172-1 Block-2, P.E.C.H.S, Karachi. Tel: (+92-21) 3508026, 34701979 Fax: (+92-21) 3457147 E-mail: karachi@freelinemovers.com	Lahore F-4, Gulberg Centre, Main Boulevard, Lahore. Tel: (+92-42) 3575887, 35751985 Fax: (+92-42) 3571452 E-mail: lahore@freelinemovers.com	Peshawar Office No. C-8, 2nd Floor, Zuhair Plaza, Left Aboard, Ring Road, Peshawar. Tel: (+92-91) 2520779 Fax: (+92-91) 2520898 E-mail: peshawar@freelinemovers.com	Kabul House # 4, Street # 4, Chahat Anwar Road, Shahr-e-Naw, Kabul - Afghanistan. Tel: +93 795511733, 93 797891808, 93 773468208 E-mail: kabul@freelinemovers.com
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

National Days and Armed Forces Days

FEBRUARY
Feb 04 / Sri Lanka National Day
Feb 06 / New Zealand National Day
Feb 06 / Uganda Defece Forces Day
Feb 11 / DPR Korea National Day
Feb 16 / Lithuania National Day
Feb 18 / Gambia National Day
Feb 19 / Nepal National Democracy Day
Feb 23 / Brunei National Day
Feb 23 / Guyana National Day
Feb 23 / Russian Federation National Army Day
Feb 23 / Tajikistan Armed Forces Day
Feb 25 / Kuwait National Day
Feb 27 / Dominican Republic Independence Day



Hotels & Restaurants

Serena Hotel.....111 133 133
Marriott.....051- 2826121
Monal.....0334-5421812



Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

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



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115
PIA Flight Info.....114
PIA Cargo.....9280979
Railway Inquiry.....117
Railway Exchange9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi..555489
CAA.....9281092



Hospitals

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



Departments

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

Islamabad Metropolitan

Corporation.....9209224
Potohar Town.....9209224
Rawal Town.....5773343

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Iran, Pakistan enjoy excellent relations, says Ambassador

Issues message on 44th anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution of Iran

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Seyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Pakistan has said it was a matter of pride for him to congratulate all the lovers and admirers of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Pakistan and other parts of the world on the 44th anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution of Iran. From the very beginning of the movement, the Iranian nation pursued sacred goals in its movement, which manifested in three words: independence, freedom and Islamic Republic, and rooted in the basic principles of resistance and stability. He said, by the grace of the Almighty Allah and the efforts and resistance of the brave and patient people, today Iran is witnessing the unique growth and prosperi-

ty of the country in all the fields: including science, industrial technology, military etc. Iran has attained amazing achievements. Despite the unprecedented and inhumane sanctions, conspiracies, treachery, sabotages and hostile efforts to create hurdles in the path of the growth and progress of Iran and to prevent the Iranian nation from reaching its goals and objectives, Iran has become stronger and more determined, more resolute and dynamically continues to step on the path of progress, development and prosperity The ambassador further said, The February eleventh is the anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, and now the brave nation of Iran is preparing to celebrate the 44th anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution, which triumphantly overcame the hardships and difficulties through the history and now moves forward



determinedly in the whirlwind of the events. The adversities and scourges of the era, tears and sufferings, the sorrow of the loss of our loved ones and the cruel pres-

sures have made us more resistant and determined. The Iranian nation is determined to determine its own destiny and the destiny of the future generations, the realization of human dignity, the exaltation of its national, religious and cultural ideals and values. 'While I am celebrating the 44th anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution of Iran in the last year of my mission in Pakistan, I am witnessing more solidarity, solidification and strengthening of the relations between the two countries in all fields. The governments and people of the two countries are well aware of the importance and value of the friendly relations with each other, and we are witnessing its crystallization in the deepening of friendships and comprehensive development of relations and ties'. Talking about bilateral relations he said, Pakistan and Iran are

two brotherly and friendly countries with a strong historical background of links and civilization, historical, ethnic, linguistic, cultural and religious commonalities. These commonalities, along with the unique capacities and opportunities in the two countries, should lead to stronger economic and commercial relations. Both countries should take a step forward to benefit from the available opportunities, including in the energy tourism sector and other sectors. 'Today, the solidarity and friendship between the two countries of Iran and Pakistan promises the realization of the common goals of the two countries and the He emphasized that the Islamic Republic of Iran has always conveyed the message of peace and friendship to everyone and calls for the development of relations, elimination of misunderstandings and all-round cooperation.

Imran using delaying tactics instead of facing cases: Tarar

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Interior Attaullah Tarar on Tuesday demanded the apex court to ensure hearing of the cases against Imran Khan on day to day basis as the PTI chairman had been using delaying tactics instead of facing them. Addressing a press conference, he said Imran Khan was scared of facing cases and imprisonment because he had been involved in crimes of stealing gifts from Toshakhana and others. It is to mention here that a sessions court in the federal capital Tuesday deferred the indictment of former prime minister Im-

ran Khan in the Toshakhana case after the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief skipped the hearing citing health reasons. He said Imran Khan did not appear even through video link and had been using delaying tactics instead of making arguments and resorting to technicalities for the delay. During the trials against PML-N leadership in past, Attaullah Tarar said that the hearing was conducted on day to day basis but Imran Khan had been trying to die down the cases instead of pursuing it. The SAPM said that PTI leadership considered itself as 'untouchable' but this 'ladla syndrome' would not be effective further. 'He is such a leader who never struggled for public issues

and remained missing during the lawyer's movement when all political parties particularly PML-N were on the roads for the restoration of the then deposed judges', he maintained. Referring to another case, Attaullah Tarar said that an affidavit was submitted in the court declaring the aunt of Tyrian White as her guardian but Imran Khan had now challenged the jurisdiction of the court instead of facing the case about it. In both aspects of this particular case, Attaullah Tarar viewed that Imran Khan would be disqualified because he had concealed facts being a public figure as information about kids was necessary to be submitted to the Election Commis-

sion of Pakistan and Federal Board of Revenue before contesting elections. Attaullah Tarar said that an amount of Rs 1.6 billion was embezzled and transacted into the accounts of Farah Gogi, a close aide of Imran's wife Bushra Bibi. He also screened various slides during the press conference about 959 transactions by the 'cash boys' into the account of Farah Gogi in three years. The advisor said that all this amount was bribed money and 10-12 accounts were opened to get it. He said that a huge amount was received for the posting and transfers in the Punjab and nexus including the wife of Usman Buzdar, Bushra Bibi and Farah Gogi were involved in it.

Imran Khan's politics frivolous, misleading: Sherry Rehman

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change, Senator, Sherry Rehman on Tuesday said the politics of Imran Khan was frivolous and misleading as he flouted the Constitution, democracy and fundamental freedoms during his rule. In a flurry of tweets, the federal minister alleged that the former prime minister Imran Khan was now doing politics in the name of real freedom and democracy. Senator Rehman said, "Sometimes, Khan says his politics is Jihad, and sometimes claim that his politics is not politics rather war." She accused that Imran Khan was ready to sacrifice the national interest and that of the people for his personal political gains. "Whenever we are close to emerging from an economic crisis, Khan becomes active to create instability," Senator Sherry Rehman said. She added that Imran Khan was trying unsuccessfully to be the saviour by pushing the country into debt and economic crisis. - APP



PTA blocks 175,000 stolen IMEI devices

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) blocked 175,000 International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) devices to prevent the use of stolen mobile phones under the Device Identification Registration & Blocking System (DIRBS) during the last fiscal year. Besides, the DIRBS identified and suspended around 29.56 million IMEIs identified as duplicates, according to the annual report of PTA for 2021-2022. It also blocked 0.88 million cloned IMEIs identified as being used against 5.28 million MSISDN numbers. During the year under review, mobile subscriptions registered a healthy annual growth of 6 percent. In the domain of subscriber growth, Zong took the lead with 9 per cent growth, followed by Jazz (8 percent), Telenor (1.4 percent), and Ufone (0.7 percent). In terms of mobile subscriptions, Jazz led with a share of 38.6%, followed by Telenor (25.3%), Zong (23.1%), Ufone (12.1%) and SCO (0.9%). Over the last four years, Jazz and Zong have successfully increased their market shares while Telenor and Ufone saw a decline owing to lower investments and late entry in 4G market. Currently, 78% of Pakistan's population is covered by 3G and 75% by 4G mobile signals, meaning that the needs of a vast majority are being catered. Pakistanis have access to internet and broadband services at the most affordable rates in the region. Notably, mobile 1GB data cost has further declined to 0.58% of the Gross National Income per capita—well below the UN Broadband Commission's recommendation of less than 2 percent. The broadband and data cost targets listed in the National Broadband Policy 2021 (draft available on the MoITT website) envisage 80% broadband penetration by 2025 and 90% by 2030, with a greater than 30 Mbps average broadband speed by 2025, and 50% reduction in average price per gigabyte by 2025. - APP

Tapas Adhikari urges Pakistan businessmen to invest in Nepal

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Nepal, Tapas Adhikari has urged Pakistani business community to translate the goodwill of the two friendly countries into economic cooperation and enhanced interactions. "Nepal and Pakistan are enjoying excellent bilateral relations based on friendship, mutual trust and cooperation," he said while talking to Chamber President Mohammad Tariq Yousuf and

office bearers of the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said a news release issued by the Embassy of Nepal in Pakistan. He said that the government of Nepal has devised economic policies to attract foreign direct investment that could be useful for Pakistani businesses to promote trade and investment. The Nepalese envoy said, "As neighboring country, both Nepal and Pakistan have similar cultural and social backgrounds and shared that the Chamber

has great role to mobilize the entrepreneurs and businessmen." He urged that Pakistani businessmen to visit Nepal to explore business opportunity. He said that Nepal was a hub of tourism in South Asia and it had an excellent hospitality industry. He urged Pakistanis to visit Nepal with friends and family for their business, official or family holidays to enjoy Nepali hospitality, food, culture and other tourism activities. The President of Chamber and members

appreciated the visit and information on business opportunities in Nepal. They expressed their eagerness to work with the Embassy to strengthen economic relations between Nepal and Pakistan. They assured that they will make a program to visit Nepal to explore business opportunities and to interact with Nepali businesspersons and assured full cooperation of Chamber to the Nepal Embassy in promoting Nepal-Pakistan economic relations.

ISLAMABAD: As many as five reports of various standing committees including Overseas Pakistanis and Human Development, States and Frontier Regions and Maritime Affairs were presented in the Senate on Tuesday. Asad Junejo on behalf of the Chairman Standing Committee on Overseas Pakistan and Human Resource Development Manzoor Ahmed presented three reports of the com-

Five reports of standing bodies presented in Senate

mittee on the Industrial Relations (Amendment) Bill, 2022, the Emigration (Amendment) Bill, 2022, and on a point of public importance raised by Mushtaq Ahmed regarding problems being faced by overseas Pakistanis in the House. Bahramand Khan Tangi on behalf of the Chair-

man Standing Committee on States and Frontier Regions presented the committee report on arising problems in the merged district after the merger into the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the House. Meanwhile, Kamran Michael on behalf of the Chairperson Standing

Committee on Maritime Affairs presented the committee report on "Review of budgetary allocation and its utilization by the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and its attached Departments during the first six months of financial year 2022-2023" in terms sub-rule (4) of Rule 166 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Senate, 2012. - APP

Pak-Egypt agree to enhance academic linkages

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: An MoU signing took place between the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) and the Strategic Studies Center (SCC), Nasser Higher Military Academy, Egypt, which was facilitated by the Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East and Africa (CAMEA). The ISSI was represented by its Director General, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood and SCC by its Director, Major General Tarek Mohamed Hilal. The MoU signing ceremony was also attended by H.E. Dr. Tarek Dahroug, Ambassador of Egypt to Pakistan; Col. Mokhtar Ahmed, Chairman of Planning, Nasser Higher Military Academy, Egypt; Brig. Mohamad Saad and Col. Mahmoud Hassan of the Egyptian Defence Attache Office; Dr. Raza Shahid, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Pakistan in Egypt; Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman Board of Governors (BOG), ISSI and Ms Amina Khan, Director, Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East and Africa (CAMEA). Director CAMEA, Ms. Amina Khan, while giving her introductory remarks, stated that signing of MoU was a reflection of warmth and desire on both sides to expand the scope of bilateral interaction. She hoped that the MoU would help further the

relationship between Pakistan and Egypt, through such institutional linkages between both sides for collaborative research and dialogue on issues of mutual interest. Welcoming the conclusion of the MoU, Director General ISSI, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood said that ISSI highly valued its relationship with the Nasser Higher Military



Academy. The two institutes had interacted in the past and this MoU formalized the institutional linkages between both sides and laid the framework for building a collaborative partnership in the future. He added that Pakistan-Egypt relations were firmly anchored in history, common faith and convergent perspectives on regional and international issues. This was also in line with Pakistan's "Engage Africa" initiative. He added that Pakistan accords high importance to its partnership with Egypt, which had historically played a pivotal role in the region. Ambassador Sohail also referred to the historic agreement on establishment of the 'Loss and Damage' Funds at the COP27 in Sharm-el-Sheikh where, as the host, Egypt's role and support was invaluable. A closer and stronger Pakistan-Egypt relationship was of vital importance in these times of global flux and uncertainty, he said, adding that it would continue to grow as the two countries celebrate the 75th anniversary of their diplomatic relations this year.

Director Strategic Studies Centre in the Armed Forces of Egypt, Major General Tarek Mohamed Hilal, said that Pakistan and Egypt are very important countries in the region and friendly ties between these countries are of utmost significance. Both countries have a long-standing history of solidarity. He said that the entire team at the Nasser Higher Academy looks forward to a fruitful partnership with ISSI and this mutual cooperation will be beneficial for both countries. This MoU reflects both sides' keenness to work together to counter the challenges faced by the two countries.

ITA impounds 4 PSVs over sub-standard condition

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Transport Authority (ITA) on Tuesday impounded four Public Service Vehicles (PSVs) for sub-standard condition to ply on roads. On the directives of the Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), the Secretary ITA inspected 48 PSVs in various bus and wagon stands, impounded four, and issued challans to other 18 vehicles for not having fitness certificates. The ITA teams also fined Rs. 14,000 to different vehicles over violating Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). The Secretary ITA also directed teams to expedite action against violators. ITA officials also fined smoke-emitting vehicles, warned public transport drivers of stern action, and said that vehicles without fitness certificates would not be allowed in Islamabad. - APP

Railways earns Rs28 billion in six months

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways has earned significant revenue of Rs 28.263 billion during the last six months from July to December 2022 from its regular operations despite closures of train operations during flood devastation. "The expenditure in the same period was Rs. 52.990 billion, out of the total expenditure, whereas 35 percent of it was related to pensions and 33 percent to salaries of the department," said an official document available with APP. In the same period, July-December, 2022, Pakistan Railways received a subsidy of Rs. 21.750 billion as a grant in aid from the federal government. However, the net deficit for the period July-December was Rs. 2.977 billion, it said. Pakistan Railways is trying its level best to transform itself into a profitable organization despite financial constraints. The department in this regard has developed a two-pronged action plan that included concentration on core activities and emphasis on revenue generation through non-core activities. Pakistan Railways has been serving the nation since independence. There have been decades of neglect when it comes to investment in railway infrastructure and rolling stock. This neglect has adversely impacted the financial need of the department. The document said during the first half of the current financial year 2022-23 brought more bad news for the department as the unprecedented floods due to climate change played havoc with the already dilapidated infrastructure. - APP

Urdu University organizes seminar

ISLAMABAD: Federal Urdu University Islamabad yesterday organised a seminar regarding "Kashmir Solidarity Day" which was participated by a large number of students and heads of all departments to express solidarity with the Kashmiri brothers. On the special invitation of In-charge Islamabad Campus Dr. Hafiz Muhammad Ishaq, the leader of All Parties Hurriyat Conference Mr. Parvez Shah participated as a special guest. Islamabad Campus in-charge Dr. Hafiz Mohammad Ishaq in his address while welcoming Mr. Parvez Shah and all the participants said that only those living in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) can understand the pain of the people of Kashmir who are victims of brutal oppression and tyranny of India for many decades. "Today we are going to come together to express solidarity with our Kashmiri brothers and I believe that very soon Kashmir will get freedom from the illegal rule of India" he added. Addressing the participants, Chief Guest Mr. Parvez Shah shed light on the various periods of Kashmir's freedom struggle since the establishment of Pakistan till now. - APP

Briefs

All projects
to be
completed
on time

RAWALPINDI: Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Liaquat Ali Chhatta on Tuesday said that all delayed development projects including mega project Ring Road would be completed on time. While talking to APP, the Commissioner Rawalpindi said that the Ring Road project was a game changer and very important for the people of Rawalpindi region, which would provide ample employment opportunities besides promotion of business activities. He said that all available resources would be utilized to complete the Ring Road project. "No leniency will be tolerated and all kinds of hurdles will be removed in this regard." The Commissioner said that a special task has been given to security agencies to eliminate encroachment mafia and illegal occupation without any discrimination. "No influential person will ever be allowed to grab the land of the citizens," he warned. Chhatta added that the price control committees would be activated to control inflation along with improving the clean drinking water, and sewage system in the city. Commissioner Rawalpindi said that in order to provide entertainment facilities to the citizens of Rawalpindi, along with the construction of modern parks, installation of water filtration plants, improvement of sewage system and transportation system will also be installed. —APP

Cooperation
crucial for
addressing
global
challenges

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf said Tuesday inter-parliamentary cooperation was crucial for addressing global challenges, such as climate change, terrorism, and transnational crime. He said this while talking to Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) President Daurte Pacheco while discussing the role of parliamentary diplomacy in promoting peace and stability in the region, as well as the importance of strengthening inter-parliamentary cooperation here. They emphasized the need for parliamentarians to work together across borders and political divides in order to find solutions to these complex and interconnected issues. The speaker also expressed his appreciation for the IPU President, who always remained at the pole position to ensure continued engagement between the National Assembly and other IPU Member States. He noted that this relationship was key in ensuring that parliamentarians remained at the forefront of the global dialogue and action on democracy, peace, human rights, and sustainable development. Daurte Pacheco expressed his gratitude to the speaker for his kind remarks. He also conveyed his deep condolences for the recent incident of terrorism in Peshawar and extended his sympathies to the families of the victims. —APP

RPO holds
Khuli
Katchery

RAWALPINDI: Regional Police Officer (RPO) Rawalpindi, Syed Khurram Ali under Punjab government open door policy held a 'Khuli Katchery' here on Tuesday in his office to address grievances of the people, informed police spokesman. Bakht Mir resident of Rawalpindi, Junaid Akhlaq resident of Rawalpindi and Aftab resident of Kahuta submitted application. RPO issued orders to the officers concerned to complete inquiries and send reports within given time frame. The RPO said all-out efforts were being made to ensure dispensation of speedy justice purely on merit to the people and improve service delivery standard in the region. The spokesman informed that the RPO was holding 'Khuli Katcheries' here to provide relief to the citizens. —APP



ISLAMABAD: Students performing in tableau during function in connection with Kashmir Solidarity day.—Online

Boosting exports through CPEC
a solution to Pak fiscal pressure

DNA

ISLAMABAD : As Pakistan's external debt is piling up and foreign exchange reserve is hitting a ten-year low, Miftah Ismail, former Finance Minister stressed the importance of boosting exports through CPEC in easing Pakistan's fiscal pressure. "Under the CPEC framework, we have got power plants and roads that are very much needed in Pakistan. The only problem is that when we doubled the electricity in Pakistan,

we did not double our industrial production; we did not double our exports", he pointed out in an interview with China Economic Net (CEN). According to Mr. Miftah Ismail, the debt issue has been there for the last twenty to thirty years. In the most recent year, floods have incurred permanent and irreversible losses to Pakistan. Loans are required to recover but will drive the country's debt further up. He told CEN that Pakistan is in debt of PKR 50,000 billion. For an average Pa-



kistani, he has a debt of around PKR 250,000. Half of this debt is in foreign exchange, most from countries aside from China, a major infrastructure provider of the country. "The infrastructure that China has worked on is very important for Pakistan and has proved to be very good for Pakistan's economy. In the second phase of CPEC, we wish to see that Chinese companies come to Pakistan and set up their businesses here, and together, we can export goods to other countries and help mitigate the financial deficit in

Pakistan", he said. He cited the example of Pakistan's first all-steel radial truck/bus tire plant set up jointly by Pakistani and Chinese companies in Nooriabad, where five to ten percent of the products will be sold in Pakistan, and ninety percent will be exported. "It is important for us to provide easy opportunities to the Chinese factories to open here, then our people will get employment and exports will increase, so we can earn some foreign exchange and return the debt", he said.

PAYF holds
diplomacy workshop

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pak Afghan Youth Forum (PAYF) in collaboration with the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) launched and organized a Public Diplomacy Workshop; kick starting the first "Of Discourses and Narratives: Digiplomacy, Stratcom, and Storytelling" in the series. With two sessions, led by Mr. Umar Sheraz and Mr. Salman Javed respectively, the purpose was to build the understanding regarding the narration of our indigenous tales and to make sense of what Singer and Brookings refer to as, "how a new kind of communication became a new kind of war" in their "Like War: The Weaponization of Social Media", Deputy Spokesperson, Ministry of Foreign Af-

fairs, Pakistan and Director General Stratcom, Ms Saima Syed was the guest of honor. Young scholars and researchers working in different think tanks across Islamabad attended the day-long workshop. The aim of launching this series in general and this first workshop in particular was to inculcate an understanding of narrating our indigenous stories and to enhance the sense of digital interaction in the youth that is specifically working in roles of building and furthering narratives and discourses. It was also intended to deliver hands on knowledge to the audience regarding how sentiments are used and manipulated and how vulnerable we are to being used as contributing to a certain narrative or agenda. In the first session, Mr.

Umar Sheraz, Futurist and Senior Research Officer at CPS, Comsats, elaborated how our assumptions are a hurdle in the way of not just imagining a future but also insightfully seeing and predicting what future holds. As a futurist himself, Mr. Umar told the audience that there is no right or wrong future, and that any early helpful statement about the future may seem ridiculous at first. Questioning our assumptions can be our first step to building a future. The second session, following the lunch break, focused specifically on storytelling. Mr. Salman Javed, Director Pak Afghan Youth Forum (PAYF), took the audience to a journey of how mediums of storytelling transformed over time and how they are so capable of creating new realities. Through

different interactive activities, this session focused on making the audience understand what stories do to us and how a story told differently is a history written and re-written, in a way that it dictates a people's perception of themselves. Throughout the workshop, the audience were divided into four groups to take part in activities as teams. Active engagement from the groups made the workshop a huge success, and the young audience left with key takeaways on digital diplomacy, strategic communication and storytelling. In the concluding session, President IRS – Ambassador Nadeem Riaz, pointed out that over the last decade, diplomacy has become more challenging and demanding for the diplomats and policy makers.

4000 sqm China-
Pakistan trade centre
unveiled in Shenzhen

ISLAMABAD: A centre dedicated to China-Pakistan trade and investment cooperation was unveiled by the Pakistani ambassador in China Moin ul Haque at an unveiling ceremony in Shenzhen, according to China Economic Net (CEN). Located at the Shenzhen Hi-tech Park, the centre "covers an area of 4000 m2 with an investment of RMB 30 million and is estimated to start operation in May," Jian Peng, Pakistan's honorary investment counsellor in China told CEN in an interview. Jian noted, the centre will act as a permanent showroom for Pakistan, with multiple functions to promote bilateral collaboration. "It will primarily serve the purposes of Pakistani commodity display, distribution channel development, and commercial liaison establishment," he added. The honorary investment counsellor added that the platform will also be "a window" to show Pakistani history, culture and art as well as "a bridge" for the people of the two countries to communicate with each other. It is learned that the trade and investment centre will be jointly operated by the commercial sections of the Pakistani embassy in China and the Pakistani consulate in Guangzhou, and Chinese operators. In a post on Twitter-like Weibo, the Pakistani embassy said that the centre will be "a significant platform for strengthening Pakistan-China economic ties." The launching ceremony was also attended by Ghulam Qadir, Commercial Counselor in the Embassy of Pakistan, Rabbia Nasir, Third Secretary of the Embassy, Sardar Muhammad, Head of Mission/Acting Consul General of Consulate General of Pakistan in Guangzhou, and Muhammad Irfan, Commercial Counselor of Consulate General of Pakistan in Guangzhou.—DNA

2-day int'l road
safety conference

ISLAMABAD: A two-day international conference for parliamentarians on road safety will kick off on February 8, with the theme of "A Safer Future Together - Action for Road Safety." The conference, titled "Road Safety Conference for Parliamentarians: A Global Perspective Pakistan 2023," will be held in a hotel and will focus on capacity building for an effective legislative framework on road safety. Several distinguished guests will attend the conference, including Retired Police Chief Commissioner (UNAMID) Sultan Azam Temuri, Chief of the National Transport Research Center Hameed Akhter, Head of Orthopedics at Shifa International Hospital Dr. Amer Noor, Mental Health Professional Dr. Mona Gauhar, Director General of the Punjab Emergency Service Department Dr. Rizwan Naseer, and former chairperson of the Citizens-Police Liaison Committee Ahmed Chinoy. The conference will cover a range of topics, including Institutional road traffic management, global and local perspectives on road safety, vulnerable road users, psychological trauma caused by road traffic crashes, safe vehicles and safe roads, post-traffic crash first responders, and road safety in metropolitan cities.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani meetin with Duarte Pacheco President of the Inter Parliamentary Union at the Parliament House. —DNA

How does human brain create consciousness, why?

ISLAMABAD: How the brain conjures conscious awareness from the electrical activity of billions of individual nerve cells remains one of the great unanswered questions of life. Each of us knows that we are conscious, in terms of having thoughts, perceptions, and feelings, but we are unable to prove it to anyone else. Only we have access to the mysterious essence that allows us to experience those thoughts, perceptions, and feelings. In the 1990s, the philosopher David Chalmers described this inaccessibility to external, objective scrutiny as the "hard problem" of consciousness. He proposed that an easier task for scientists to tackle would be its "neural correlates" — where and how brain activity changes when people have conscious experiences.

Apart from curiosity, scientists are most likely motivated to discover the neural correlates of consciousness in order to help diagnose and treat disorders of consciousness, such as persistent vegetative states and some psychiatric disorders. Three dimensions of consciousness Consciousness has several distinct dimensions that they can measure. Three of the most important ones are: wakefulness or physiological arousal awareness or the ability to have conscious mental experiences, including thoughts, feelings, and perceptions sensory organization, or how different perceptions and more abstract concepts become woven together to create a seamless conscious experience. These three dimensions interact to produce our overall state of consciousness from moment to moment. For

example, when wide awake, we are in a state of high awareness, but as we drift off to sleep at night, both wakefulness and awareness subside. Awareness and physiological arousal return during REM (rapid eye movement) sleep, which is when vivid dreams are mostly likely to occur. But these sensory experiences are mostly disconnected from external stimuli and detached from the concepts that anchor us to reality while we are awake. In a similar way, altered states of consciousness, such as those induced by psychedelic drugs or low oxygen levels, involve normal levels of arousal but disorganized sensory experiences. These can include hallucinations of sounds, smells, or sights, but also synesthesia, when there is cross-talk between usually discrete senses, such as sounds

that evoke visual experiences. People in a coma, or under anesthesia, can have levels of wakefulness and awareness that are even lower than during non-REM sleep. Meanwhile, in a strange hybrid state of consciousness known as unresponsive wakefulness syndrome, or a vegetative state, patients undergo daily cycles of sleep and wakefulness, but without showing any sign of awareness. Despite spending long periods with their eyes open, they do not exhibit behavioral responses to external stimuli. Some of these patients will recover limited signs of awareness, known as a "minimally conscious state" Trusted Source, such as the ability to respond to instructions or follow a moving object with their eyes. The neural correlates of consciousness Patients in different states of consciousness

have provided vital clues about the neural correlates of consciousness. Techniques such as functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) and electroencephalography (EEG) have revealed the neural activity that accompanies these states. Scientists detect patterns of activity through measures of functional connectivity, using statistical techniques to reveal correlations between the timing of neural events in different parts of the brain. This reveals the networks of brain regions that are involved in working memory, attention, and mind-wandering, for example. When they combine data from fMRI and EEG, researchers discover that activity deep inside the brain, in the thalamus Trusted Source, varies during wakefulness in step with activity in the default mode network.—Online

Simple
nasal wash
'reduces
COVID-19
severity'

ISLAMABAD : Simple nasal washes with mild saline water can prevent hospitalisation and deaths from COVID-19, if applied twice daily following a positive diagnosis, according to research led by the US-based Augusta University. Reducing the amount of virus entering the body cuts the severity of the disease, says the study published September in the Ear, Nose & Throat Journal. It found that nasal washes conducted within 24 hours of diagnosis can prevent the virus from entering the lungs and possibly causing permanent or fatal damage to patients. Amy Baxter, corresponding author of the study affiliated with the department of emergency medicine at Augusta University, says that extra hydration of the sinuses makes them function better. "If you have a contaminant, the more you flush it out, the better you are able to get rid of dirt, viruses and anything else," she explained. "If you have a contaminant, the more you flush it out, the better you are able to get rid of dirt, viruses and anything else" Amy Baxter, Augusta University ACE2 receptors in cells — which bind to the spike protein of the virus resulting in COVID-19 infection — are plentiful in the nasal cavity, lungs and mouth and a nasal saline wash can help prevent the virus from attaching to receptors, they said. The researchers say nasal washes are inexpensive and safe and can be administered at home using half a teaspoon each of salt and baking soda in a cup of boiled or distilled water. "In areas remote to health-care, this simple intervention can reduce the likelihood of severe disease," said Baxter.—Online

Sufi Ghulam
Mustafa
Tabassum
remembered

ISLAMABAD: Famous Urdu poet and literary figure, Sufi Ghulam Mustafa Tabassum best known for his creation of the beloved character 'Tot Bato' was remembered (today) on his 45th death anniversary. He was born in Amritsar, India, to parents of Kashmiri descent, Tabassum was an amazing talent who earned a Master's degree in Persian from Forman Christian College in Lahore and went on to spend his entire career at Government College Lahore, eventually rising to head the Department of Persian Studies. Tabassum was best known for his creation of the beloved character 'Tot Bato' and for his translations of numerous poetical works from Urdu and Persian into Punjabi. He was a prolific writer and speaker, and his works and speeches were widely recognized for their beauty and insight. He was also a sought-after speaker on radio and television, where his engaging personality and deep understanding of the literary arts made him a popular figure. Throughout his career, Tabassum received numerous awards for his contributions to the literary world, including the Tamgha-e-Nishan-e-Sipah award from the Government of Iran in 1966 and the Sitara-i-Intiaz by the Government of Pakistan.—APP

IRSA
releases
68,500
cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 68,500 cusecs of water from various rim stations with inflow of 51,000 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1488.62 feet and was 90.62 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam were recorded as 18,100 cusecs while outflow was 32,000 cusecs. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1129.65 feet, which was 79.65 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 11,400 cusecs and 15,000 cusecs respectively. —APP

Turkish-Syrian earthquake: tragedy on tragedy

Though the full scale of the catastrophe is still emerging, the earthquake that struck Turkey and Syria in the early hours of Monday morning is already known to have been one of the most deadly in decades, claiming thousands of lives. A 7.8-magnitude temblor is extremely powerful, and all the more damaging when it strikes at a relatively shallow depth and is followed by a second major shock. But even when disasters are natural in origin, their impact is shaped as much by human actions before and in the aftermath as they are by their inherent force. Poor and otherwise vulnerable people are almost always disproportionately affected. Photos and footage testify to the terrible destruction wreaked on the Turkish side of the border, where the highest death toll is currently recorded. Bitter winter storms have worsened the plight of survivors. Among the victims will be some of the 4 million Syrians who fled the war; many have been living in southern Turkey, often in overcrowded conditions. More remain in northern Syria, where war has pulverised homes and essential infrastructure, and traumatised the population. Millions have taken refuge in rebel-held Idlib, where most of them are dependent on aid. Then came the Covid-19 pandemic and a cholera outbreak, which a threadbare health service in Idlib – deliberately targeted by airstrikes – is struggling to handle. Turkey faces an immense challenge. It does so with trained and experienced rescue workers, due to its history of quakes, and support from 45 countries. Both rescue and relief efforts will prove far harder on the Syrian side of the border. Providing aid is likely to be diplomatically as well as logistically challenging. Its White Helmets have had to become expert at rescuing people from rubble. But they are in desperate need of search-and-rescue equipment, spare parts and fuel. The mandate for Syria cross-border aid via Turkey has, thankfully, been extended until July. But, at present, Damascus allows it to enter via only one border point. It would be unconscionable if the others remained closed at this time of desperate need. Though the regime bears the primary responsibility for the suffering of its people, others must step up. Ankara’s attempts to accelerate the return of Syrian refugees would exacerbate the situation were they to continue. The humanitarian response plan for Syria was already severely underfunded; less than half of the \$4bn needed has been provided – the lowest level since the crisis began. The need is all the greater now. Ensuring that aid reaches the most vulnerable will be difficult in the extreme. But every effort must be made. It would be not only tragic but shameful if the international community’s failures were to compound this disaster.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti

Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

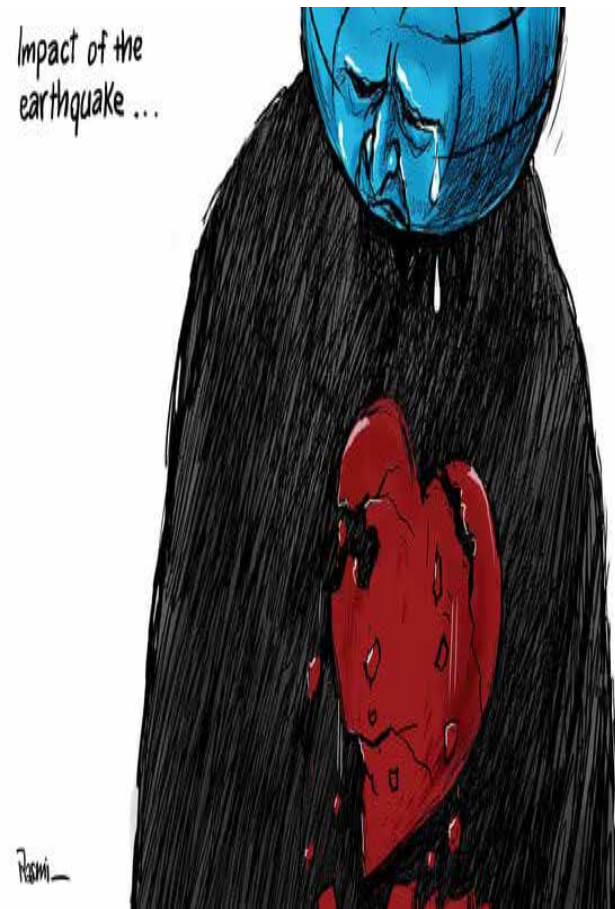
Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 03 Issue:162

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

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



Terrorism, Nordic bids, NATO’s revolving doors

Burak Elmali

Bloody murderers who transgressed the right to live, which is the most fundamental human right, are protected under the pretext of seeking political asylum and can live freely without being subjected to any legal investigation,” President Erdogan stated. Two points regarding Türkiye’s foreign policy position can be made. First, the primary criticism is the selective interpretation of terrorism among some NATO allies and other countries. The PYD/YPG is a case in point. This terrorist group has been a major factor in escalating diplomatic tensions between Ankara and Washington since the time

To earn Türkiye’s trust and address its concerns, the security grouping cannot have different yardsticks for different terror groups. Since the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, NATO’s protective umbrella has become much sought after in Europe. The Nordic bids to become NATO members only exemplifies these security dynamics. The requests were met positively by most alliance members. However, Hungary and Türkiye opposed these applications. Hungary’s Viktor Orban stated that the Hungarian Parliament would ratify the membership protocols soon. Ankara is also supportive in principle but has long-standing legitimate demands for its national security that are yet to be met by Finland and Sweden. The trilateral memorandum signed between Türkiye, Finland, and Sweden during the NATO Madrid Summit in June 2022 was a significant step towards reconciling views around terrorist actors, such as PKK and FETO. However, recent developments have shown that there is still a long way to go. Underlining the necessity of concrete cooperation against terrorism, Ankara underlines that the PKK, which is on the terrorist list of the US and EU, is allowed to fester and recruit freely via NGOs in northern Europe. Similarly, FETO-affiliated individuals sought with a red notice in Türkiye easily found safe havens in Sweden and Finland. “Bloody murderers who transgressed the right to live, which is the most fundamental human right, are protected under the pretext of seeking political asylum and can live freely without being subjected to any legal investigation,” President Erdogan stated. Two points regarding Türkiye’s foreign policy position can be made. First, the primary criticism is the selective interpretation of terrorism among some NATO allies and other countries.

The PYD/YPG is a case in point. This terrorist group has been a major factor in escalating diplomatic tensions between Ankara and Washington since the time of the Obama administration. The PYD/YPG, whose ties with the PKK terrorist organisation are organic and entrenched, was long supported by Washington under the mantra of the fight against Daesh. But now that Daesh has been damaged beyond repair, the Pentagon still grooms this terrorist group. The same goes for several other European governments, which adopt a lax attitude towards the PKK and its offshoots. Some go to the extent of providing material support and a safe haven. Such ambiguous positions, unfortunately, hinder the effective fight against terrorism. Under the guise of the International Coalition Against Daesh, Western countries have turned a blind eye to the organic links and deep ideological connections between the PKK and YPG, making the latter a favoured Western proxy in Northern Syria. The second factor is the Western selective use of human rights and freedoms as a pretext to shield terror-linked individuals and organisations. Terrorist organisations, such as the PKK/YPG, and FETO, carry on recruitment activities and ideological propaganda in many ways under the name of freedom of expression and assembly. Recently, during a demonstration in favour of the PKK/YPG terror group, terror supporters living in Sweden publicly expressed their hatred of Türkiye and used insulting methods against the Turkish President. Such activities, which repeatedly display the emblems of the PKK, are not limited to Sweden and Finland. How can a terrorist group enjoy such a latitude when the West has long used terrorism as a bandwagon to test loyalties, as per the Bush paradigm, “you are

either with us or against us”? Therefore, the alliance members must avoid double standards to instill trust, as the safety of one is the safety of all. For Türkiye to trust its alliance members, they have to share its concerns and act along to fight terror actors that threaten the safety of its citizens. Considering the selective interpretation of terrorism and Machiavellian use of liberalism in the West, Ankara’s demands are not mere political bargaining actions. Indeed, they are clear articulations of cooperation against terrorism. The reluctance or indifference expressed by some today can turn out to be tomorrow’s grave concerns against the national security of other actors. This is simply because of the very changing and pervasive characteristics of terrorism. Two decades after 9/11, one would have thought that the debate on terrorism would be closed. How can one publically legitimise and romanticise terrorist actions by resorting to the lexicon of human rights and freedoms? How long should the world wait before taking a holistic approach against terrorism, whose nature is nothing but harming innocent civilians? While maintaining its open-door policy, NATO must revise its 9/11-centric understanding of the fight against terrorism as the latter morphs into new forms and progresses whenever it faces laissez-faire. Therefore, collective action is essential for a staunch security alliance like NATO, and mutual trust is crucial to keeping allies together. In this context, it will be vital for a stable and peaceful North Atlantic alliance to re-evaluate counter-terrorism strategies in the case of Sweden and Finland, the latest aspirants of the open-door policy.

—Courtesy: TRT World

Why some EU countries in east are still pro-Russia

Soňa Muzikářová

Awareness campaigns that caution users about online spaces’ misuse and risks should be instituted to shield the general public, especially vulnerable groups, such as the elderly, as social media platforms are now a dominant source of information, as well as a space for social interaction. Brussels is also late to adopt policies on digital literacy for children and young adults. In a 2021 study, only about half of 15-year-olds in the EU reported being instructed on how to detect fake or biased information, despite the pandemic having hastened the trend towards internet use and online learning

Russia’s large-scale invasion of Ukraine, launched a year ago, changed Europe overnight. It has set in motion tectonic shifts in political and economic relations, disrupting energy markets and upending existing supply chains. It has challenged the very core of the post-World War II European project: peace. The brutal attack on Ukraine has been particularly unsettling for Eastern Europe, which has relatively recent memories of Russian hostility and occupation. This explains why there was such significant support in the region for severe sanctions on Russia, financial, military, and humanitarian aid for Ukraine, reinforcement of NATO’s eastern flank and a warm welcome for millions of Ukrainian refugees. Yet, there are some countries in Eastern Europe that still harbour baffling sympathies for Russia, despite having faced Russian aggression in the past. Slovakia, Bulgaria and Hungary have stood out over the past year as particularly pro-Russia in their attitudes. A September poll conducted in Slovakia shows that the majority of Slovaks would welcome a Russian military victory over Ukraine. In another survey conducted in May, only 33 percent of Bulgarians and 45 percent of Hungarians perceived Russia as a threat. Hungary, Slovakia, and Bulgaria also tend to show the weakest support in the region for European Union sanctions against Russia, according to a Eurobarometer survey conducted in the fall of 2022. These attitudes have been reflected in government policies and rhetoric. Bulgaria and Hungary are the only NATO and EU members to have officially refused to deliver arms to Ukraine, echoing the popular belief that doing so would drag these countries into the conflict. Bulgaria’s previous government had to secretly provide Kyiv with ammunition and fuel, concealing the fact from the public. While the Slovak government has extended bold and open help to Ukraine, including supplies of heavy weaponry, and is among its top backers internationally in terms of aid given as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP), it has sided with Hungary when it comes to economically uncomfortable decisions, such as last year’s EU oil ban, for which it negotiated an exemption. Both Bratislava and Budapest have also threatened to pay for Russian gas in roubles, if push came to

shove, following Moscow’s decision to receive gas payments only in its currency. The Hungarian administration has repeatedly blocked sanctions against Russia in Brussels, while ramping up domestic anti-EU propaganda. The persistent pro-Russian sentiments in these three countries have a lot to do with recent history and Russian opportunism. The transition from communism in Eastern Europe came with high expectations for freedom, democracy and prosperity that have not always been met. The pursuit of the Western model of development not only failed to deliver in the eyes of some Eastern Europeans, but produced feelings of inadequacy and disillusionment. This disappointment created a space for foreign malignant interference, buttressed by the growth of social media and other unregulated digital spaces in the past 15 years. Moscow, using its Cold War propaganda toolkit, cleverly tapped into these anxieties and irrational nostalgia for the “comfort” of communism, exploiting the ideas of pan-Slavic unity, and similarities across languages, history, and culture. Of course, these strategies succeed better where weak democratic fundamentals enable them to. Surging energy prices, the cost-of-living crisis, poverty, and high inflation have also fed popular frustration and further fuelled pro-Russia sentiments. This is not just Slovakia, Bulgaria and Hungary’s problem, but the EU’s at large and it must be addressed. Clinging to such attitudes perpetuates the long-standing east-west rift within the EU, weakens the EU resolve on backing Ukraine, and opens the door to Russia’s “divide and conquer” tactics. Tackling the economic crisis and intergenerational change in institutions can help mitigate some factors that feed Euroscepticism and pro-Russia sentiments. But they are in no way a comprehensive solution. Pro-Russian propaganda across Eastern (and Western) Europe should be tackled head-on. The average share of Eastern European households with internet access has risen markedly compared to a decade ago, to 93 percent in 2022, providing malignant actors with an excellent opportunity to reach the masses. Social media platforms have been, indeed, shaping the ways in which events – such as the COVID-19 pan-

demic or the war in Ukraine – are understood, narrated, and remembered. That is why Moscow has ramped up its disinformation campaign after the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Restrictions imposed by the EU on its propaganda channels, such as RT and Sputnik, have not limited the reach of its fake news. The Kremlin has not only looked for new online channels to reach targeted audiences, but also weaponised its diplomats and expanded a network of paid commentators in various European countries, who push its propaganda on traditional media channels. In Bulgaria, for example, a senior member of the previous government revealed that public figures are paid 2,000 euros (\$2,150) to spread pro-Kremlin propaganda in the public space. There are several things that can be done to take the narrative back. In Europe, the war has highlighted the benefits of information space regulation, personal data protection, policies that increase the transparency of online platforms, and understanding of algorithms and content moderation. Awareness campaigns that caution users about online spaces’ misuse and risks should be instituted to shield the general public, especially vulnerable groups, such as the elderly, as social media platforms are now a dominant source of information, as well as a space for social interaction. Brussels is also late to adopt policies on digital literacy for children and young adults. In a 2021 study, only about half of 15-year-olds in the EU reported being instructed on how to detect fake or biased information, despite the pandemic having hastened the trend towards internet use and online learning. The displacement of traditional, more carefully curated information sources, such as encyclopedias and journals, demands new skills, including fact-checking and critical thinking, for students and teachers to be able to navigate this new complexity. Indeed, information resilience may look like an uphill battle, but it is crucial for the EU to pursue it. The unhindered spread of falsehoods can threaten the integrity and security of entire nations and undercut an effective EU response to the war in Ukraine.

Courtesy: Al Jazeera

Briefs

Relief fund established for victims

FROM PAGE 01
announced that PM Shehbaz will be travelling to Ankara tomorrow to express his condolences to Turkish President Erdogan for the destruction and deaths caused by the quake.

APC postponed as PM to visit Türkiye

FROM PAGE 01
The All Parties Conference (APC) that was originally scheduled to be held on Tuesday (February 07) was deferred to Thursday as the agenda was not yet ready. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has called for supporting Türkiye and Syria after the devastating earthquake flattened many buildings and caused deaths and destruction.

Ukraine says Russians endure...

FROM PAGE 01
The war is soon entering its second year at a pivotal juncture, with Moscow attempting to regain the initiative while Kyiv holds out for Western tanks to mount a counter-offensive later in 2023. After Russia failed to capture the Ukrainian capital last year and lost ground in the second half of 2022, Moscow is now making full use of hundreds of thousands of troops it called up in its first mobilisation since World War Two. Kyiv and the West say Russia has been pouring troops and mercenaries into eastern Ukraine in recent weeks in hopes of being able to claim new gains around the time of the first anniversary of its full-scale invasion later this month.

The last few weeks have seen Russia boast its first gains for half a year. But the progress has still been incremental, with Moscow yet to capture a single major population centre in its winter campaign despite thousands of dead. Fighting has focused for months around the Ukrainian-held Bakhmut in eastern Donetsk province, a city with a pre-war population of around 75,000. Russia has made clear progress towards encircling it from both the north and south, but Kyiv says its garrison is holding fast. Moscow has also launched an assault further south against Vuhledar, a Ukrainian-held bastion on high ground at the strategic intersection between the eastern and southern front lines.

Since the New Year, Western countries have pledged hundreds of tanks and armoured vehicles to Ukraine to give it the firepower and mobility to push through Russian lines and recapture occupied territory later this year. A new U.S. package of weapons is expected to include longer-range rockets, which would give Ukraine the ability to hit Russian supply lines in all of the territory it occupies in Ukraine's mainland and parts of the Crimea peninsula. But it will take months before they arrive, and meanwhile Ukraine faces a Russian force with its manpower replenished by Moscow's call-up of reservists. Moscow says the Western supplies of arms only widen and extend the conflict.

Russians seen reinforcing east

FROM PAGE 01
Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu said seven Ukrainians towns had been "liberated" in recent weeks and operations were progressing "with success" in two more, Bakhmut and Vuhledar. For six months, Russian mercenaries now joined by regular troops - have tried to capture Bakhmut, a small city with a pre-war population of 70,000. - Agencies

Pakistan wins three medals in Fujairah Int'l Taekwondo C'ship

Pakistan's star player Haroon Khan won the bronze medal in the +58 kg category of the event, while Arbaaz Khan and Hamza Umar Saeed won the bronze medals in the +63 and +87 kg categories as the championship matches will continue till February 8

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's ace taekwondo players won three bronze medals in the 10th edition of Fujairah Open International Taekwondo Championship underway at United Arab Emirates (UAE). More than 700 players from 36 countries took part in the tournament in three age-categories (12-14 year juniors and seniors) organised by Fujairah Martial Arts Club (FMAC). It is the biggest Taekwondo event ever held in the UAE since the tournament started 11 years ago as the Pakistani contingent participated in the senior category. Pakistan's star player Haroon Khan won the bronze medal in the +58 kg category of the event, while Arbaaz Khan and Hamza Umar Saeed won the bronze medals in the +63 and +87 kg categories as the championship matches will continue till February 8. President of Pakistan Taekwondo Federation (PTF) Colonel (R) Waseem Ahmed Janjua, Chief



Executive of Combaxx Sports Umar Saeed have congratulated the players for their excellent performance and hoping that the talented players will show their skills in future international

tournaments to bring more medals for country's pride. Pakistan Taekwondo Federation is also highly obliged to Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) and Ministry of Inter Provincial Coordination

(IPC) for the continued support as well as approved financial grant for this prestigious event however, the federation also managed to take this huge contingent through sponsors, their

annual grant and self-financed by the athletes. The main aim for participation in this mega event was to give exposure to athletes and also bring a soft image of Pakistan to other countries.



GUJRAT: President of Gujrat Chamber of Commerce and Industry presenting bouquet to the Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov during his visit to Chamber. - DNA

Mbappe, Messi and Neymar being outscored by Balogun

Glenn Hoddle is the only English player to score more goals in a Ligue 1 season, with 18 for Monaco in 1988-89. Balogun has 16 games left to score five goals and beat that record

LONDON: Have you heard the one about the English youngster outscoring Kylian Mbappe, Lionel Messi and Neymar in France - and who is set to give Arsenal a "positive headache"? When Reims signed a striker on loan from Arsenal who had scored three times for Middlesbrough last season, it made few headlines - but now many eyes are on Polar in Balogun. The England Under-21 forward is the top scorer in France's Ligue 1 with 14 goals for a mid-table team managed by fellow Englishman Will Still, who is only 30 and did not play professional football. Balogun's past 10 days have included an added-time equaliser against Paris St-Germain and a hat-trick against Lorient. "The goals are great, but it is everything else," said French football writer Julien Laurens. "When you look at a striker you look at the goals - but the movement, the awareness, the intelligence, all of that is as important and he has all of that." Across Europe's top-five leagues, only Erling Haaland, Harry Kane and Victor Osimhen have scored more times than Balogun this season. Reims had only won one game when Still replaced Oscar Garcia as manager, initially as caretaker, on 13 October - but are unbeaten since. The 21-year-old's form has been impressive throughout, starting his time in France with five goals in his first six games under Garcia. Balogun's importance to this Reims team cannot be underestimated. He has scored 54% of their league goals (14 out of 26) - a higher share of any player for a team in Europe's top-five leagues. Only six Reims players have scored in the league this season. Their next top scorer, Junya Ito, has scored four times. "He is a super complete striker," said Still. -Agencies

SL selectors await invitation for picking squad

BIPIN DANI

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) national selectors are awaiting an invitation to select red and white ball teams for the forthcoming tour of New Zealand where two Test matches and three ODIs and three T-20Is are to be played. "We have not yet sent them the invitation to meet and select the team", one of the sources confirmed. "Hopefully, we hope to select the players after the completion of the 2nd unofficial 4-day Test against the visiting England Lions", the source added. "We are awaiting the sports ministry's advice on the selection committee. If no change in the committee is notified the same selectors will be sent the invitation by the SLC to pick the players. Even if the selectors are changed at a later date, they (new selectors) will have the liberty to make the changes", the source also clarified.

Waseem 'hurt' after Naseem given honorary DSP post

DNA

KARACHI: "I'm really hurt that this country only values cricketers, and even worse is that high achievers on international and national level from Balochistan are ignored, as if we don't exist," said Pakistan's only World Boxing Council belt winner and professional boxer Muhammad Waseem, as he expressed his disbelief when cricketer Naseem Shah was given the honorary DSP post and was made the goodwill ambassador of the Balochistan Police. The 19-year-old cricketer, who has far fewer international achievements than many of the athletes from Balochistan, does not even belong to the province and yet he was bestowed with the honour, leaving the athletes from the province feeling left out and ignored. "I was asked by the Balochistan Police officials to attend this ceremony and it left me extremely disappointed and hurt," Waseem told The Express Tribune. "It feels so bad because they never honour us. Not just me, but other athletes

from Balochistan too. "We have done so much for this country, for our land, but we are invisible to them despite competing and winning at the top international level in one of the toughest sports in the

departments ever. What about that?" Waseem holds the impressive record of winning 12 bouts, with eight knockouts, out of the 14 professional boxing matches he has played



world. The invitation that I get from our own organisation like Balochistan Police is to come and sit through as an attendee instead of our achievements ever being recognised. It is like cricket is the only sport they care for. "Naseem is from Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P). We have never gotten any honour from K-P Police or their

professionally. He was the first Pakistani to win the WBC silver belt in 2017 in flyweight and then defended the title successfully. Just last year he took on England's Sunny Edwards as well for the International Boxing Federation world flyweight title. Waseem is looking for another shot at the world title this year.

Efforts underway to debar...

FROM PAGE 01

Ali Khan was set up by Imran Khan to contest the case. The power of attorney by these four counsels was filed in the court. At the inception of hearing plea was filed by Imran Khan for exemption from attendance on medical grounds. Speaking to international media, the former premier continued his criticism of Gen (ret'd) Qamar Javad Bajwa, saying that terming the extension of former army chief's tenure a 'blunder' Imran Khan claimed that ex-COAS Bajwa acquired the services of former Pakistani ambassador to US Hussain Haqqani to lobby against him in United States. "For the first time in Pakistan's history, the people did not accept the regime change," he said. In response to a question, the PTI chairman lambasted the postings and transfers in Punjab following the dissolution of provincial assembly, saying that such people were being appointed who were involved in 'violence' during party's May 25 long march. Imran Khan said he feared the upcoming by-elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) will be rigged. He added that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif wants his disqualification. "Efforts to debar him underway in bid to bring former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif back to the country's political scenario," he said. Speaking of the terror wave, the former premier said that the country cannot afford terrorism. However, he said, the incumbent government in Afghanistan was not anti-Pakistan. Speaking of the peace in Afghanistan, Mr Khan took a dig at Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, saying, "Mr Bhutto-Zardari could go to the United States for lunch. But, he is not willing to land in Afghanistan for the sake of peace."

Govt in-competence plunges...

FROM PAGE 01

membership drive here on Tuesday, Asad said that Pakistan was currently passing through a historic phase, which was occupied by a selfish group. However, he made it clear that the next week was of paramount importance which would set the direction of the country's future, as the 22 crore people would most likely be given the right to run the country, who did not accept the rotten-old system anymore. Asad said that the imported government used different tactics to defer the polls; however, they cannot run anymore from the elections come what may since the nation now had made their mind to make Pakistan a truly independent welfare state envisioned by Quaid-e-Azam. He urged the nation that it was not a war of one political party but it's a war of the future of the country; hence everyone should play its due role to get it rid from the clutches of these power hungry selfish group once and for all. He said that the imported government sensed the gravity of the situation; hence they resorted to fascist tactics, as Fawad Chaudhry was dethroned and then Sheikh Rashid was arrested. He said that Pervaz Elahi house was raided and a case of sedition was filed against Shandana Gulzar, which was the clear manifestation of the fear of the imported government. Asad said that open threats were being hurled that polls would not be held within stipulated 90 days. He advised to stop talking about breaking the constitution and come to the field and face the PTI in the elections. Talking about the country economic meltdown, Asad said that the country's economic situation cannot be improved until election was held because those seized the power through foreign conspiracy was responsible for the current mess up. Therefore, he said that they neither had the ability and capacity nor will to pull the country out of this prevailing crises. Asad said that the mission of IMF was in Pakistan presently, but strange stories were being told on TV about the economic crisis, as the imported government shifted the blame onto Imran-led government but ground situation spoke otherwise, as the country's economy was booming, remittances witnessed considerable spike while industrial and crops productions were exemplary well.

STFC coaching programme showcases UK-Pak ties

Swindon Town Football Club Vice-chairman, Xavier Austin, and Coach, Alex Pike, attended the game to support the players, as did the British Deputy High Commissioner, of the Deputy High Commission Karachi, Martin Dawson

DNA

KARACHI: On Monday February 6, the Karachi Football Club and Saber Sports Academy teams played a friendly football match at the Karachi Port Trust stadium. The match, which highlights growing UK-Pakistan sporting ties, comes as coaches and senior management from the English football club, Swindon Town, visit their football training academy in Karachi where Karachi Football Club players are being trained. The match proved to be a thrilling spectacle with both teams struggling to gain ascendancy leading to a 2-2 draw. Swindon Town Football Club Vice-chairman, Xavier Austin, and Coach, Alex Pike, attended the game to support the players, as did the British Deputy High Commissioner, of the Deputy High Commission Karachi, Martin Dawson.



Swindon Town Football Club started a coaching partnership with the Karachi Football Club in 2021. Now 18 Pakistani teenagers are on paid contracts and are being given football coaching alongside being taught English. A holistic approach to their development both on and off the pitch. Following this high profile Swindon Town Football Club visit to Karachi, one of the Karachi Football Club coaches will be travelling to the United Kingdom to join the Swindon team for 12 days. Martin Dawson, while commenting about the coaching programme, said the following: "Swindon Town Football Club's presence in Karachi is good for sport, good for Pakistan and good for UK-Pakistan relations. Sport plays an important role in promoting inclusion by transcending boundaries and unlocking talent, which I have seen here today in Karachi. I hope British football clubs roll out similar training programmes for female players in Pakistan soon."

Briefs

French unions launch third wave of nationwide strikes

PARIS: Trade unions in France have launched a third wave of nationwide strikes against President Emmanuel Macron's proposed pension reform plan, a day after the controversial bill began its passage through parliament.

According to reports, rail services were canceled, schools were closed and refinery deliveries stopped working as workers across sectors joined nationwide strikes in response to calls by unions to take to the streets in large numbers. French government defends the plan that seeks to increase the minimum retirement age – from 62 to 64 – in order to keep the pension systems in the black. Macron's ruling party lost its majority in elections last year, even though it continues to remain the largest faction. His government wants to pass the legislation with the help of allies on the political right.

Left-wing opponents of the Macron-led administration filed thousands of amendments ahead of the parliamentary debate on the controversial plan. The shipping of petrol products from French sites was interrupted by the latest strike, European multinational integrated energy and petroleum company TotalEnergies said in a statement. A spokesman for the CGT trade union said there was disruption to deliveries at the Donges, Normandy, Feyzin, Oudalle, and Flanders sites. An initial count showed about 75 percent of staff were on strike, CGT spokesperson Benjamin Tange said.—Agencies

EU ministers gather to discuss Russian sanctions

BRUSSELS: EU ministers gathered to discuss the bloc's latest response to Russia's war on Ukraine as well as to prepare for the EU leaders' summit to be held later this week.

On the way to the meeting, Jessica Roswall, Swedish minister for European affairs, first expressed "terrible regret" on the earthquake in Türkiye and Syria, and said her "thoughts go to families and victims."

Other EU ministers also expressed their solidarity with Türkiye, including EU ministers Tytti Tuppurainen from Finland, Peter Burke from Ireland, and Laurence Boone from France.

"We have to address this together and show that Türkiye is not alone in this disaster," Tuppurainen told reporters. "The European Emergency Mechanism has been activated and the President of the (French) Republic has offered to send rescue teams to the ground," Boone asserted. Roswall explained that "Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, economic affairs, and migration will be key topics" of the meeting of European ministers in charge of EU affairs.

She also confirmed that "the Russian war against Ukraine will be the main topic" of the Swedish EU presidency after her government assumed the chairmanship of the Council of the European Union in January. The ministers will discuss details of the 10th round of sanctions that the bloc aims to impose on Russia by Feb. 24, the first anniversary of the war.

They will also assess plans on setting up an international tribunal prosecuting war crimes, as well as the fate of frozen Russian assets that should be used for war reparation, according to several members of the European Commission, including President Ursula von der Leyen and Vera Jourova, commissioner for values and transparency. The EU ministers will also address key topics of the special summit of EU leaders. The meeting will take place on Thursday and Friday with the main focus on migration. In a speech at the European Parliament, von der Leyen said she would submit an action plan to the EU leaders.—APP

Türkiye-Syria quake

Rescuers battle cold as death toll hits 5,000

"My whole family is under there – my sons, my daughter, my son-in-law... There's no one else to get them out," said Ali Battal, his face streaked with blood and head swathed in a wool shawl against the bitter cold

SANLIURFA: A massive rescue effort in Türkiye and Syria battled frigid weather in a race against time Tuesday to find survivors under buildings flattened by an earthquake that killed more than 5,000 people.

Tremors that inflicted more suffering on a border area already plagued by conflict left people on the streets burning debris to try to stay warm. Rescuers were working on collapsed apartments with heavy equipment as a worldwide relief effort promised food, search teams and equipment for the disaster zone. "We live on the first floor out of three, we're too scared to return," said Imam Caglar, 42, in the Turkish city of Sanliurfa. "Our building is not safe at all." "My mother-in-law, my father-in-law, and two of my father-in-law's sons (are trapped)," said Mahmud al-Ali in the Syrian city of Aleppo. "We are sitting here in the cold

and rain and waiting for the rescuers to start digging." The 7.8-magnitude quake struck Monday as people slept, flattening thousands of structures, trapping an unknown number of people and potentially impacting millions. Whole rows of buildings collapsed, leaving some of the heaviest devastation near the quake's epicentre between the Turkish cities of Gaziantep and Kahramanmaraş. The destruction led to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan declaring Tuesday a three-month state of emergency in 10 southeastern provinces. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced on Tuesday a state of emergency for three months in 10 southern provinces hit by Monday's massive earthquakes.

"Based on the authority given to us by Article 119 of the Constitution, we de-

clared to declare a state of emergency," Erdogan said at the State Information Coordination Center in the capital Ankara.

"We will quickly complete the presidential and parliamentary processes about the state of emergency decision, which will cover 10 provinces where earthquakes have occurred and will last for three months," he added. "We are facing one of the biggest disasters not only of the history of the Turkish Republic but also of our geography and the world," Erdogan said.

"Our biggest relief is that over 8,000 of our citizens have been rescued from the rubble so far," Erdogan said. A winter storm has compounded the misery by rendering many roads – some of them damaged by the quake – almost impassable, resulting in traffic jams that stretch for kilometres in some re-

gions. The cold rain and snow are a risk both for people forced from their homes – who took refuge in mosques, schools or even bus shelters – and the survivors buried under debris.

"It is now a race against time," said World Health Organization chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. "We have activated the WHO network of emergency medical teams to provide essential health care for the injured and most vulnerable," he added.

Türkiye put the latest death toll at 3,419 in that country alone – bringing the confirmed tally in both Türkiye and Syria to 5,021.

There are fears that the toll will rise inexorably, with WHO officials estimating up to 20,000 may have died.

WHO warned that up to 23 million people could

be affected by the massive earthquake and urged nations to rush help to the disaster zone. The Syrian Red Crescent appealed to Western countries to lift sanctions and provide aid as President Bashar al-Assad's government remains a pariah in the West, complicating international relief efforts.

Washington and the European Commission said on Monday that humanitarian programmes supported by them were responding to the destruction in Syria. The UN's cultural agency UNESCO also said it was ready to provide assistance after two sites listed on its World Heritage list in Syria and Türkiye sustained damage.

In addition to the damage to Aleppo's old city and the fortress in the southwestern Turkish city of Diyarbakir, UNESCO said at least three other World Heritage sites could be af-

fected. Much of the quake-hit area of northern Syria has already been decimated by years of war and aerial bombardment by Syrian and Russia forces that destroyed homes, hospitals and clinics.

Residents in the quake-devastated town of Jandairis in northern Syria used their bare hands and pickaxes to for survivors, as that was all they had to get the job done.

"My whole family is under there – my sons, my daughter, my son-in-law... There's no one else to get them out," said Ali Battal, his face streaked with blood and head swathed in a wool shawl against the bitter cold.

"I hear their voices. I know they're alive but there's no one to rescue them," adds the man in his 60s.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Mr Erik Berglof, Chief Economist, AIIB called on Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, today. They discussed the role of AIIB in infrastructure development projects & investment in Pakistan and future cooperation especially in eco- friendly and climate resilience projects.—DNA

20 escape Syria prison holding ISIS inmates

ANKARA: Prisoners mutinied in a northwestern Syria prison Monday following a deadly earthquake, with at least 20 escaping the jail holding mostly ISIS group members, a source at the facility told AFP. The military police prison in the town of Rajo near the Turkish border holds about 2,000 inmates, with about 1,300 of them suspected to be ISIS fighters, said the source. The prison also holds fighters from Kurdish-led forces, said AFP. "After the earthquake struck, Rajo was affected and inmates started to mutiny and took control of parts of the prison," said the official at Rajo jail, which is controlled by pro-Turkish factions. "About 20 prisoners fled... who are believed to be ISIS militants." The 7.8-magnitude quake – which was followed by dozens of aftershocks in the region – caused damage to the prison, with walls and doors cracking, the source added. The British-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights war monitor said it could not verify whether prisoners had escaped, but confirmed there was a mutiny. At least 1,444 people died Monday across Syria after the devastating earthquake that had its epicenter in southwestern Türkiye, the government and rescuers said. In rebel-held parts of the country's northwest, at least 733 people were killed and more than 2,100 injured, according to the White Helmets rescue group. The incident in Rajo comes on the heels of an ISIS attack in December on a security complex in their former de facto Syrian capital of Raqa, which aimed to free fellow militants.—APP

Earthquake death toll in Syria crosses 1,400

ANKARA: The death toll in Syria from the magnitude 7.8 earthquake that hit southeastern Türkiye on Monday climbed to nearly 1,400 overnight, according to figures compiled from multiple sources.

The quake-damaged area in Syria is divided between the Bashar Assad regime-held territory and the country's last opposition-held enclave, which is surrounded by government forces and borders Türkiye.

While the Syrian Health Ministry reported casualties in areas under the regime's control, the Syrian Civil Defense was reporting casualties in the opposition-held areas.

The death toll in government-held areas of Syria climbed to 656 people, with some 1,400 injured, according to the Health Ministry. In the country's opposition-held northwest, groups that operate there said at least 450 people died, with many hundreds injured.

Time is running out to save hundreds of families still trapped under the rubble of destroyed buildings after the devastating earthquake, the head of the Syrian opposition-run civil defense service said Tuesday.

Raed al-Saleh told Reuters that urgent help was needed from international groups for the rescue effort by the organization known as the White Helmets in rebel-held northwest Syria, where hundreds were killed and injured.—APP

Turkish army launches retaliatory strike against YPG/PKK

ANKARA: Turkish army targeted YPG/PKK terrorists in retaliation for rockets fired into the Türkiye-Syria border area, the National Defence Ministry said.

The ministry said on Tuesday that YPG/PKK terrorists carried out a multi-barrel rocket attack from Tel Rifaat in northwestern Syria to the area of the Oncupinar border post in the southern Turkish province of Kilis. The ministry also accused the YPG/PKK of "taking advantage" of the earthquake and carried out the "vile attack" earlier on Tuesday. There was no damage or loss in Turkish units, it added. The YPG/PKK terror group mostly carries out terror attacks from Manbij, Ayn al Arab, and the Tel Rifaat district of Aleppo. The terror group uses those areas as bases for its attacks. Türkiye made separate agreements with the US and Russia for the withdrawal of YPG/PKK elements in the area, as the Turkish Armed Forces were carrying out Operation Peace Spring, which began on October 9, 2019, in northern Syria. After pledging the withdrawal of the YPG/PKK terror group 30 kilometres (18.6 miles) south of the Turkish border in line with the agreements, the US and Russia have failed to keep their promises for two and a half years.—Agencies

Iran Army unveils first underground air force

TEHRAN: Iran Army has unveiled its first underground air force base, called "Oqab 44" (Eagle 44), which is capable of accepting and operating various types of fighter jets and bombers as well as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) of the Air Force. Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Baqeri and Major General Abdolrahman Mousavi, the chief commander of the Iranian Army, visited the underground base on Tuesday. The large underground base will also have the ability to receive and operationally use the new fighters of the Air Force.

This is the first underground air base of the Iranian Army which is being publicized. No more information has been made available about other underground bases of the Army.

The Iranian Armed Forces have constructed underground bases over the recent decades. The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) has built the first ever underground base or city to protect its missile units.—APP

EU to open new center fighting Russian disinformation

BRUSSELS: The European Union will create a new center fighting "Russian disinformation," the EU foreign policy chief announced on Tuesday. Josep Borrell gave a speech while opening the European External Action Service's "Beyond Disinformation: EU Responses to the Threat of Foreign Information Manipulation" conference.

He said "Russia is using information manipulation and interference as a crucial instrument" of its war on Ukraine, which it started last February. "This is not only using explosives, bombs bullets, killing people. It's about the mind, it is about how to conquer your spirits," he added. In order to fight these phenomena, Borrell announced that the EU will open a new center that will gather information on threats stemming from disinformation and follow information manipulation. "This will promote the sharing of information among all stakeholders about the root causes, about incidents and threats, sharing experience, knowledge, and analysis," he asserted. He underlined that the EU must have the right tools and prepare for a "long-range fight that is not going to end overnight." The 27-member bloc, as part of its unprecedented sanctions on Moscow for its "special military operation" in Ukraine, has suspended broadcasting activities and licenses of several news outlets it says are Kremlin-backed, including Sputnik and Russia Today. "These outlets have been used by the Russian government as instruments to manipulate information and promote disinformation about the invasion of Ukraine, including propaganda, aimed at destabilising the countries neighbouring Russia, the EU and its member states," the EU says on its website.—APP

Sunak shuffles top posts ahead of expected election

LONDON: British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has reshuffled the members of his government, shortly after marking his 100th day in office.

He has also split up two larger government departments and created some new new ministries.

There will be a new Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, which will have been "securing the UK's long-term energy supply, bringing down bills and halving inflation", according to Downing Street.

A new, dedicated Department for Science, Innovation and Technology will have to "deliver improved public services, create new and better-paid jobs and grow the economy".

The business and trade departments will be combined into the Department for

Business and Trade.

And the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport loses digital from its portfolio and become simply the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

• Grant Shapps has been appointed as Secretary of State in the newly created Department of Energy Security and Net Zero.

• Lucy Frazer has been appointed Secretary of State in the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

• Michelle Donelan has been appointed Secretary of State in the newly created Department for Science, Innovation and Technology.

• Kemi Badenoch, who ran against Sunak for the leadership of the party last autumn, has been appointed Secretary of State in the newly created Department for Business and Trade.

She also remains as President of the Board of Trade, and Minister for Women and Equalities.

The timing of this mini-reshuffle has surprised some in his party, but after firing his party chairman over a financial scandal, and with an investigation into bullying allegations against his deputy prime minister, Dominic Raab ongoing, several lawmakers said PM Sunak might be seizing a chance to stamp his mark on his government.

The prime minister also named the new chair of the party, a position made ever more important before the next general election expected in 2024, after Nadhim Zahawi was sacked over his tax affairs.

London MP, and former minister, Greg Hands becomes the new Conserv-

ative Party Chairman and said he was "excited" to be asked by Sunak to take on the role.

Since entering Downing Street in October, Sunak has been under pressure to assert his authority not only on his government but also over his party, which ousted two prime ministers last year over scandals and economic chaos.

He has so far failed to reduce the commanding lead in the opinion polls held by the opposition Labour Party, which is increasingly presenting itself as Britain's next government.

In January, Sunak promised to tackle Britain's most serious problems, from cutting inflation to reducing illegal migration, in a move aimed at convincing his lawmakers he can lead them into the next election.—DNA



ISTANBUL: EU team arrives in Türkiye to take part in rehabilitation process.—DNA

Russia's Lavrov arrives in Mali for talks

Russia's foreign minister Sergei Lavrov arrived in Mali early Tuesday for talks with its junta leaders seeking Moscow's help in battling an Islamist insurgency that remains entrenched despite years of fighting. Lavrov, who was in Iraq on Monday, was welcomed upon his arrival by his counterpart Abdoulaye Diop. The two men did not make any statements to journalists. The visit of fewer than 24 hours will be his third trip to Africa since July, part of a bid to expand Russia's presence on the continent amid broad international isolation after Moscow's invasion of Ukraine last year. Since taking control of Mali in two coups since August 2020, the military junta led by Colonel Assimi Goita has embraced Russian support to aid its anti-jihadist fight after evicting the forces of former colonial ruler France. Several Malian officials have travelled to Moscow, but the visit by Lavrov is "the first of its kind" aimed at cementing "a new dynamic" for security and economic cooperation between the two countries, according to Mali's foreign ministry.—APP

Briefs

Turkiye, Syria
quake could
affect up to
23 mn: WHO

GENEVA: Up to 23 million people could be affected by the massive earthquake that has killed thousands in Turkiye and Syria, the WHO warned on Tuesday, promising long-term assistance. "Event overview maps show that potentially 23 million people are exposed, including around five million vulnerable populations," the World Health Organization's senior emergencies officer Adelheid Marschang said. "Civilian infrastructure and potentially health infrastructure have been damaged across the affected region, mainly in Turkiye and north-west Syria," she said. The WHO "considers that the main unmet needs may be in Syria in the immediate and mid-term," Marschang told the WHO's executive committee in Geneva. She spoke as rescuers in Turkiye and Syria braved freezing cold, aftershocks and collapsing buildings, as they dug for survivors buried by a string of earthquakes that killed more than 5,000 people. "It is now a race against time," said WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, explaining that the UN health agency was urgently sending aid to the area. "We're mobilising emergency supplies and we have activated the WHO network of emergency medical teams to provide essential health care for the injured and most vulnerable." - APP

US seeks
Chinese
balloon
remnants

DNA

WASHINGTON: The U.S. Coast Guard on Monday imposed a temporary security zone in waters off South Carolina during the military's search for debris from a suspected Chinese spy balloon shot down by a U.S. fighter jet, and the White House said it would keep a calm approach to relations with Beijing. President Joe Biden told reporters it was always his view that the balloon needed to be shot down and brushed off a question about whether the incident would weaken U.S-China relations. "No. We made it clear to China what we're going to do," he said. "They understand our position. We're not going to back off. We did the right thing and it's not a question of weakening or strengthening - it's reality." White House national security spokesperson John Kirby said the balloon's flight over the United States had done nothing to improve already tense relations with China and dismissed Beijing's contention it was for meteorological purposes.

Musharraf's
funeral prayers
offered in
Karachi

DNA

KARACHI: Former army chief and military ruler retired General Pervez Musharraf's funeral prayers were Polo Ground in Karachi's Malir Cantonment on Tuesday afternoon. In a statement, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (JCSC) General Sahir Shamsad as well as senior serving and retired army officers attended the funeral. The ex-president, who passed away in Dubai on Feb 5, will be laid to rest at an army graveyard near Kala Pull, APML spokesperson Tahir Hussain said in a statement. The spokesperson said former army chiefs Qamar Javed Bajwa, Ashfaq Parvez Kayani and Aslam Beg were among those attended the funeral. Politicians including MQM-P leaders Khalid Maqbool Siddiqi, Dr Farooq Sattar, PSP's Mustafa Kamal, PML-N leader Amir Muqam, PTI leader and former Sindh governor Imran Ismail, former federal information minister Javed Jabbar, former FBR chairman Shabbir Zaidi and Musharraf's son Bilal were also in attendance, the APML spokesperson said.

INDEPENDENCE DAY OF SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka on path to
economic recoveryHigh Commissioner of Sri Lanka Vice Admiral Mohan Wijewickrama
says relations between Sri Lanka and Pakistan excellent

CENTRELINE REPORT

ISLAMABAD: High Commissioner of Sri Lanka Vice Admiral Mohan Wijewickrama has said Sri Lanka is the oldest democracy in Asia, in terms of universal suffrage, that was granted by Donoughmore Constitution in 1931, before achieving independence being a British Crown colony for over a century. He expressed these views while speaking on the occasion of the Independence Day of Sri Lanka. Chief guest Rana Tanveer Hussain Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Mushahid Hussain Chairman Senate Defence Committee, Fmr Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood and a large number of diplomats and members of the civil society attended the event. The high commissioner further said, the 75th anniversary of Independence is celebrated at a juncture when the country is quietly making an economic recovery with the generous support of our friends, after undergoing our worst political and economic instability, attributed mostly to the intolerable losses we experienced associated with Covid virus that plagued the humanity. The Independence Day of Sri Lanka is a great national event celebrated by Sri Lankans all over the country with parades and cultural pageants, combined with the spirit of patriotism and national pride, he added. He said, the Independence Day also holds much significance for our people as it reflects the history of great sacrifices made by Sri Lankans in the realisation of its freedom at various stages under the colonial rule and also to remember and pay tribute to all who made the supreme sacrifice to ensure the independence, sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Sri Lanka.



'Nicknamed as the pearl of the Indian Ocean, Sri Lanka is famous for its scenic natural landscape, wealth of biodiversity, rich cultural heritage and above all for its hospitable people and is famous orthodox tea that is grown mainly in the mountainous terrain'. The high commissioner said, Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe has emphasized that the top most priority of his government is to ensure economic revival from the situation the country experienced in 2022. 'Sri Lanka has chosen a neutral foreign policy, with its principle of friendship towards all and enmity towards none'. Hon Minister, Ladies and Gentleman While talking about bi-

lateral relations he said, Pakistan and Sri Lanka have always been trusted partners with brotherly relations having historical linkages dating back to the period of Gandharan civilization. Since achieving independence both Pakistan and Sri Lanka have extended cooperation to each other in different sectors and share similar perceptions in various international and regional fora. He said, there had been frequent high-level visits by the leaders of both nations and the visit by Ms Hina Rabbani the state minister for Foreign Affairs in Pakistan, to participate at the forthcoming Independence Day Ceremonies in Colombo as an honoured guest has further complement our friendship.

Syria newborn
pulled alive from
quake rubble

JINDAYRIS: Extended family members pulled a newborn baby alive from the rubble of a home in northern Syria, after finding her still tied by her umbilical cord to her mother, who died in Monday's massive quake, a relative said. The infant is the sole survivor of her immediate family, the rest of whom were all killed when the 7.8-magnitude quake that struck Syria and neighbouring Turkey flattened the family home in the town of Jindayris, Khalil al-Suwadi said. "We heard a voice while we were digging," Suwadi told AFP Tuesday. "We cleared the dust and found the baby with the umbilical cord (intact) so we cut it and my cousin took her to hospital." Video of the rescue went viral on social media. The footage shows a man sprinting from the rubble of a collapsed four-storey building clutching a tiny baby covered in dust. A second man runs towards the first carrying a blanket to try to warm the newborn in the sub-zero temperatures while a third screams for a car to take her to hospital. The baby was taken for treatment in the nearby town of Afrin, while family members spent the next several hours recovering the bodies of her father Abdullah, mother Afaa, four siblings and an aunt. Their bodies were laid out on the floor of an adjacent relative's home ahead of a joint funeral that was held on Tuesday. - APP

Biden to try to lift
Americans with State
of the Union speech

WASHINGTON: An optimistic President Joe Biden will seek to lift the spirits of a tense nation Tuesday with a State of the Union address showcasing his efforts to rebuild the US economy - and setting the stage for the 80-year-old's bid for re-election in 2024. After two years of managing the exit from the Covid pandemic, an end to the 20-year Afghan war debacle, the Western response against Russia's Ukraine invasion, and extreme US political tensions, Biden feels he has much to celebrate. "I want to talk to the American people and let them know the state of affairs," Biden said Monday. "Just have a conversation with the American people." On Capitol Hill, he'll address the full Congress, nearly every senior government member, and a vast television audience, buoyed by news that the economy is recovering strongly from the pandemic, with the lowest unemployment in 50 years. "This is a president who is incredibly optimistic," White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said. But the dramatic downing on Saturday of a huge Chinese balloon by a US Air Force fighter leaves the unstable relationship with the communist superpower literally looming over the Biden administration. And there are troubles closer to home, with two new polls showing that well over half of voters do not want Biden, the oldest person ever in the presidency, to seek a second term in 2024. - Agencies

Two more Qatar's visa centers to be
opened in Pakistan: Ambassador

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Qatari Ambassador Sheikh Saud Bin Abdul Rahman Al Thani on Tuesday met with Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Sajid Hussain Turi here. The Qatari envoy informed the Minister that Qatar's Ministry of Interior has approved two more visa centers for Pakistan that would be established soon. Speaking on the occasion, the minister said that Pakistan has full capacity to meet the manpower demand of Qatar and wished to make the immigration process more transparent and faster for meeting up the targets. "It is the need of hour to transform the relationship between the two countries into a solid economic partnership," the minister added. The Ambassador said, "We want-

ed to create more employment opportunities for Pakistani talent in Qatar." Both the dignitaries also discussed bilateral relations, creating more employment opportunities for Pakistanis in Qatar and issues of mutual interest during the meeting. They also reiterated the commitment to work together to further expand bilateral cooperation. Federal Minister Sajid Hussain Turi also congratulated Qatar for hosting the most successful FIFA World Cup ever. The minister said that sports activities like FIFA promote international peace and Qatari ambassador appreciated Pakistani security forces for providing foolproof security during FIFA World Cup event. Pakistanis valued its bilateral relations with Qatar and considered it as their home, Turi added. Ambassador Sheikh Saud bin Abdul Rahman Al Thani was keen to further expand relations with Pakistan as there was a deep affection and love for Pakistan and its people.

'PTI should
participate
in All-Parties
Conference'

ISLAMABAD: Minister of Railways Khawaja Saad Rafique has said on Tuesday that Tehreek-e-Insaaf should show seriousness to participate in the All-Parties Conference keeping in view the challenges being faced by the country. Talking to the media after appearing in the accountability court, he said all the political parties should play a constructive role with a unanimous stance for eliminating terrorism and uplifting the economic condition of the country. Terming APC a great initiative, he said it was the need of the hour that all political as well as religious leaders should work together to help the country come out of its current dilemma. To another question related to provincial assemblies' elections, he said separate elections will cause chaos in the country and in his personal view, the provincial and general elections should be held simultaneously in the country. - APP

30 killed
as coaster
plunges
into ditch

CHILAS: At least 30 people including children and women were killed while several others suffered injuries when a car rammed into a coaster that veered off the road and fell into a ditch near Gilgit Baltistan's Chilas area. The tragic incident took place when a coaster with passengers heading towards Gilgit from Rawalpindi when a fast-moving trailer collided with a passenger coach. Both vehicles tumbled due to the massive impact of the collision. Reportedly, the dwellers of the area, the Rescue teams and the police officers rushed to the spot and began the rescue operation. The deceased's bodies and injured were shifted to the RHQ Hospital in Chilas for medical attention. - DNA

Israeli forces martyr
Palestinian teen

WEB DESK

RAMALLAH: Israeli forces martyred a 17-year-old Palestinian on Tuesday during a raid in the occupied West Bank, the Palestinian health ministry said, and the army described him as a gunman who had fired on troops. Hamzeh al-Ashkar was shot in the face by soldiers who raided the northern city of Nablus at around dawn, the ministry said. "He was armed and was firing on the (Israeli) forces," a military spokesperson said when asked about the incident. The Den of Lions, a group of Nablus fighters with loose factional affiliations, said some of its members exchanged fire with Israeli forces who had "stormed a housing area". The group said the slain teenager was from the Askar refugee camp near Nablus but did not claim him as a member. Also early on Tuesday, Israeli forces arrested at least 18 Palestinians in the northern West Bank town of Burqin near Jenin, the Palestinian Prisoners Club advocacy group said.

10 minutes Drive from
The Monal Islamabad

DINO VALLEY

DINO PARK | 35+ RIDES | CARNIVAL RESTAURANT
CAFES | FOOD CARTS

www.dinovalley.pk | 03005221018/ 03455357094 | 03001769377 | @dinovalleypk