



Islamabad POST

Thursday, February 09, 2023

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 25

Turkish President admits problems with disaster relief effort

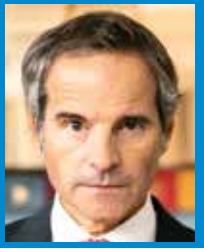
Detailed News On Page-07

Sri Lankan bankruptcy to last until 2026

Detailed News On Page-06

IAEA stresses urgency of Iran deal revival

Detailed News On Page-07



Briefs

Mariyum slams PTI for negative approach

DNA



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb on Wednesday debunked the propaganda launched by the PTI on the ongoing negotiations of the government with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Talking to the media persons here at the Parliament House, the minister said the PTI which pushed the country on the brink of default, was now involved in spreading fake news on the talks with the IMF which harmed the national interest. "Spreading fake news is in nobody's interest," she said, urging the media to abstain from publishing and airing fake news originating from unauthentic sources.

Zelensky meets UK's Charles

DNA



LONDON: President Zelensky has met King Charles at Buckingham Palace, as part of his surprise visit to the UK. The two leaders were pictured standing together as the King held an audience with the Ukrainian president. It was the first time the monarch had met Zelensky. Zelensky told MPs earlier that he would convey his gratitude to the King, from all Ukrainians, for his support even when he was still the Prince of Wales.

No shortage, fuel supplies sufficient

SAIFULLAH



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Petroleum Musadik Malik has rejected all rumours regarding shortage of petroleum products in the country. Addressing a news conference in Islamabad on Wednesday, he said Pakistan has sufficient stock of diesel and petrol. Warning the hoarders, the Minister of State said government will cancel the licenses if someone found involved in creating artificial shortage.

Punjab, KP Assemblies President seeks dates for by-polls

In a letter, Alvi directs CEC to make immediate announcement or be held responsible

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday, in a letter to the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC), asked an immediate announcement of the date of the elections. "The president has asked the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to immediately announce the date of elections for provincial assemblies as per Elections Act, 2017," the letter read, as shared by the media wing of the President's House. In his letter, the President referred to the dissolution of the provincial assemblies of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and said that the election of an assembly is to be held within 90 days of the dissolution as provided by Article 224(2) of the Constitution which emphasized the holding of election in 90 days. He added that the conduct and holding of elections was the primary and essential duty of the ECP as per PART VIII of the Constitution, particularly Article 218 (3) which assigned the duty to the ECP to ensure the holding of fair and free elections. He conveyed that it was ultimately the Commission, which if it failed to discharge its functions and duties, was to be held responsible and answerable for the violation of the Constitution of the country. Referring to Article 42 and Third Schedule, the President stressed that he was under oath 'to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution being the Head of State. He quoted specific text of

Continued on Page 06

LHC suspends ECP order de-notifying 43 PTI MNAs

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: In a major development, the Lahore High Court (LHC) on Wednesday suspended the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) order that de-notified 43 MNAs of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). The high court also stayed the by-elections on the 43 constituencies of the de-notified MNAs till further notice. The directives were passed during the hearing of a plea filed by Riaz Fatyana and other lawmakers against the approval of their resignations by National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf. The ECP had de-notified the lawmakers after the speaker sent their resignations to the electoral body. The de-notified MNAs last week filed a plea in the LHC to set aside the NA speaker's approval of resignations and ECP's notification declaring the seats vacant. During the hearing, presided over by Justice Shahid Karim, the petitioner's counsel Barrister

Continued on Page 06

IBO BASES OPERATION Security Forces kill 12 TTP terrorists

Killed terrorists had martyred 6 police personnel in 2022

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Security forces have killed 12 terrorists of TTP during an intelligence based operation in Lakki Marwat. According to the ISPR, terrorists' movement and activities were being watched by the intelligence agencies over the last one week. The terrorists were lured in by providing a vehicle for escape that was intercepted and neutralised. Weapons, ammunition and Afghan currency was also recovered from the terrorists during the operation. The Security Forces are carrying out clearance operation in the area. The locals have appreciated the operation and lauded the efforts of Pakistan Army in eliminating terrorism. The identification process of the terrorists is underway. According to police the terrorists were going to Tank for conducting terrorist act. The killed terrorists had martyred 6 police personnel in December 2022.

Continued on Page 06

Key Daesh leader arrested

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD), during an operation in Korangi Industrial area of Karachi, arrested a key commander of banned outfit Da'esh. "Acting on a tip-off, the CTD conducted a raid in the Korangi Industrial Area and detained an important commander affiliated with the global militant Islamic State group," the department said in a handout. The CTD identified the suspect as an Afghan national named Abdul Malik. It said that the suspect, who was living in Karachi for a long time, used to collect "donations" in Ramazan usually, which

Continued on Page 06

Bilawal urges IMF to avoid burdening flood-hit people

Says international bodies free to suggest reforms

BUREAU REPORT

KARACHI: PPP Chairman and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has urged the federal government and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to consider the plight of the flood-hit people of Sindh. In inaugurating a post-flood rebuilding project in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Karachi on Wednesday, Bilawal called on the government and the IMF to provide "relief" to flood-hit people similar to the one given during the pandemic days in 2020. The conference was jointly organized by the Sindh government and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to discuss the rehabilitation of flood-affected areas of the province. The funds will be initially utilized in eight flood affected districts of the province including Larkana, Sukkur, Dadu, Hyderabad, Thatta, Shaheed Benazirabad, Umerkot and Tando Allahyar. Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Shah informed, on the occasion, that around two point one million houses

had been damaged in floods in the province. Meanwhile, the Sindh government under public-private partnership signed an agreement for reconstruction of flood affected houses. Hadi Bux of Sindh Rural Support Programme and Chief Executive Officer Housing Khalid Shaikh signed the agreement. Addressing the conference, the foreign minister stressed that it was also the responsibility of international organisations including the IMF to suggest reforms for our betterment but flood affectees must also be provided protection so that they can come out of the current situation". Bilawal said the country faced unprecedented damage in the wake of floods as 33 million people were affected while five million acres of standing crops were destroyed. "Agriculture is the backbone of our economy but this flood broke our back," he said. Bilawal said Pakistan was thankful to the countries who pledged "more than our expectations" at the Geneva conference while the United Nations secretary general deserved equal accolades for his support in this regard.



LAHORE: Ramesh Singh Arora, former member Punjab Assembly calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. - DNA

PM for expediting privatization process

Says public welfare and national progress top priority

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has directed to expedite the privatisation process of the Public Sector Enterprises, recommended by the Privatisation Commission Board. Presiding over an important review meeting regarding the privatisation of Public Sector Enterprises in Islamabad on Wednesday, he said transparency should be the top priority in the privatisation process. The Prime Minister said the government encourages the privatisation of Public Sector Enterprises. He said the process of privatisation should be completed in a transparent manner and in light of the international best practices. Separately, Prime Minister Muhammad

Continued on Page 06

Raids 'fascism': Imran PTI's 'Jail Bharo Tehreek' kicks off with Dogar's arrest

Fawad Ch, Farrukh Habib, Azam Swati condemn the arrest

OUR CORRESPONDENT

MULTAN: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) "Jail Bharo Tehreek" kicked off on Wednesday as party leader Malik Amir Dogar surrendered before police in Multan, media reported. As per details, PTI and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) workers clashed with each other outside the office of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) when nomination papers for the NA-155 constituency were being submitted. The ECP, taking notice of the incident, directed action against the culprits. Soon after, police raided the guest house (dera) of Dogar, and arrested him along with 10 PTI workers. CCPO Rana Mansoor confirmed that a raid was carried out at the guest house of Dogar and 10 workers were arrested in the raid. "If my workers have been detained, I will also go with you,"

Continued on Page 06

Punjab for holding PA polls, NA by elections on same day

ISLAMABAD: Punjab authorities on Wednesday asked the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to hold Punjab Assembly and National Assembly by-elections on the same day to save money and ensure foolproof security. Briefing the ECP meeting, chaired by Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja regarding Punjab Assembly elections, Punjab chief secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman said holding elections on separate days would not only increase the election expenditures twofold but also make the task of law enforcement agencies (LEAs) to provide fool proof security difficult.

Continued on Page 06

Inside...

Fahd stresses overcoming division in society through SM - Page 02

PM annoyed over STZA working, forms committee - Page 03

Road safety awareness, crucial to reduce fatalities: President - Page 04

When calamities strike, it is the poor who bear the brunt - Page 05

Pakistan, Iran celebrate 76 years of diplomatic relations - Page 06

9 mln families to be provided assistance under BISP by June - Page 07

Outgoing Egyptian Defence Attache Col. Mahmoud hosts farewell reception - Page 08



Experience Hospitality, Culture and Luxury in the heart of Peshawar

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

PESHAWAR SERENA HOTEL

Fahd stresses overcoming division in society through SM

LAHORE :Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) Fahd Husain has said that the digital media should be used as a salve to end polarisation in society. He was addressing a two-day AMCAP-PU international conference on "Revisiting relationship between journalism and society in the digital age for common good" at the Faisal Auditorium of the Punjab University, here on Wednesday. He said it was compulsory to adopt the code of conduct and principles of journalism for the right use of social media. The conference is a joint venture of the Punjab University's Department of Journalism Studies and Institute of Education and Research (IER). PU VC Prof Niaz Ahmed Akhtar, Senior Analyst Mujeeb-ur-Rehman Shami, Dean Faculty of Information and Media Studies Prof Dr Khalid Mehmood, Chairperson Department of Journalism Prof Dr Bushra Hameedur Rehman, Chairperson Department of Public Relations and Advertising Prof Dr Abida Ashraf, Director Institute of Education and Research Dr Abdul Qayyum Chaudhry, faculty mem-

bers, students and researchers and experts from Russia, Nigeria, Czech Republic, Sweden, Indonesia and Pakistan participated. Fahd Husain said the digital age is a reality now; however, the relationship between journalism and society is becoming weaker, adding that journalism is no longer our main source of information. He said people need true, complete and quick information while providing reliable information is a challenge based on which a fair analysis is done. The SAPM said there is need for training of social media users and journalists, adding that "many changes are coming in our society and we should use digital journalism to heal the wounds of our society". VC Prof. Niaz Ahmad Akhtar said in view of the emerging changes in the field of journalism, the School of Communication Studies was restructured and the restructuring was playing an active role in the field of journalism. Veteran journalist Mujeeb-ur-Rehman Shami said lack of quality journalism, fake

news and the rise of social media are challenges for journalism. He said that such conferences promote unity and strong linkages among the journalism community at the global level. He said that more measures are needed to promote responsibility and ethics in journalism, to provide security, empower and strengthen the journalistic community. He said that Pakistan's enemy countries want to spread religious and political chaos through the social media; therefore, experts should play a role for remedy. Dr Khalid Mahmood said the social media is leading to promotion of all activities in society. Nico Carpenter said negative and positive activities are covered by the digital media. Youth use social media platforms to learn about culture, lifestyle and religion of different countries, he added. Dr. Bushra, Dr Abida and Dr Qayyum thanked the VC and others for his support for the successful conduct of the conference. They said the PU would continue to play a role for improvement of journalism department.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Turkish Ambassador Mehmet Paçacı called on Chairman NDMA Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik.—DNA

Turkish envoy, Chairman NDMA mull over aid efforts

ISLAMABAD :Turkish Ambassador Mehmet Paçacı called on Chairman NDMA Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik here on Wednesday and both the dignitaries discussed the modalities for jointly working on the collection of aid that people and various organizations within Pakistan desire to send off to quake-hit Turkey. While acknowledging the prompt response of Pakistan for aiding Turkey during these hard times, the Ambassador requested to designate NDMA warehouses as collection points. "People are desperate to help but we need the assistance of NDMA to manage it", a news release said.—DNA

ZEKAB, FJWU hold poster competition

ISLAMABAD: To observe Kashmir solidarity day, ZEKAB international and Fatima Jinnah Women University organized declamation contest and poster competition on 7th Feb 2023. Students from different departments actively participated and showed solidarity with their Kashmiri brothers and sisters. Winners of declamation and poster competition were awarded by cash prizes by the Guest of Honor, CEO ZEKAB International Rafique Ahmed Qureshi. During his remarks, Mr Qureshi encouraged students to amplify their voices for Kashmiri people in their struggle.—DNA

New office bearers of Attock Press club take oath

QAZI SHOAB KHAN

ATTOCK: Central Leader Pakistan Peoples Party, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Sardar Saleem Haider Khan on Wednesday while addressing the oath taking ceremony of Fatehjang Press Club has directed the district administration Attock to retrieve the possession of Attock Press Club besides facilitating the de-

prived journalists for the performance of their professional journalistic assignments. Sardar Saleem Haider Khan on the complaint of the journalists from Attock Press Club asked the aggrieved journalists to apprise him the updates whenever they come to his office which is always open for them. Among the oath taking ceremony of newly elect body of Fatehjang Press Club was also attended by a large number of people from all walk's life including journalists, doctors,

advocates, socio-religious, civil society and human rights activists. Speaking on the occasion, Special Assistant to Prime Minister Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that the freedom of expression was also recognized by the incumbent Government being fourth pillar of the State. He said the importance of the print and electronic media cannot be denied in the present era when the entire world turned into a global village. The journalistic fraternity is the most responsible and essential

organ of our society who have to face multiple challenges for the protection of fundamental rights of the people as guaranteed under the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973 which was legislated by the former Prime Minister of Pakistan Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Earlier, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan administered the oath to the elected office bearers of Fatehjang Press Club and felicitated with a hope to promote constructive and meaningful journalism in the country.

PRCS donates \$ 25,000 for Syrian earthquake victims



ISLAMABAD: PRCS Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari handing over a donation cheque of 25,000 dollars to Syrian Ambassador Dr. Ramez Alraee at Syrian embassy.—DNA

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Red Crescent Society has donated a generous sum of \$ 25,000 to the Syrian Embassy in Pakistan for the relief and recovery of Syrian earthquake victims. PRCS Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari handed over a donation cheque of

25,000 dollars to Syrian Ambassador Dr. Ramez Alraee at Syrian Embassy here on Wednesday. Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari also recited Fatiha for the victims and expressed his grief and sorrow over the destruction and casualties caused by the earthquake. Secretary General PRCS Muhammad Abaidullah Khan was also

present on this occasion. Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari, while assuring all possible cooperation, said that the doors of PRCS are always open for Syrian brethren." It is not possible to fight natural calamity, but we are with Syria in this hour of sorrow and trouble", he added. Syrian Ambassador Dr. Ramez Alraee expressed

his gratitude for the assistance and cooperation, calling Pakistan his second home. He also requested for the supply of medical equipment to save the lives of the injured. Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari indicated all possible support on behalf of Red Crescent to help the Syrian earthquake victims.

NA speaker highlights connectivity as crucial factor for regional prosperity

DNA

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf Wednesday said regional connectivity was the key to drive economic growth and invited Turkmenistan to join efforts for boosting regional connectivity through air, land, and sea. He stressed the need for mutual cooperation in the energy sector to ease out the energy requirements of the country. He said this during a meeting with Atadjan Movlamov, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Turkmenistan and Dean of Diplomatic Corps to Pakistan, and Henra Annamammedov, Third Secretary of Turkmenistan, here at the Parliament House. Raja Pervaiz Ashraf expressed Pakistan's high regard for its relationship with Turkmenistan and extended gratitude for the timely humani-

tarian assistance provided to the flood-affected people of Pakistan. He also highlighted Pakistan's vision of building sustainable and result-oriented engagement with the Central Asian Republics through its "Vision Central Asia" policy, which focused on five key areas, including political, trade and investment, energy and connectivity, security and

defence, and people-to-people exchanges. The speaker emphasized the importance of parliamentary exchanges between the two countries, recalling the visit of Mrs Akja Nurberdiyeva, former Chairperson of the Mejlis (Parliament) of Turkmenistan, to Pakistan in 2016. He urged Turkmenistan to sign the Charter of the Parliamentary As-

sembly of Economic Cooperation Organization (PAECO) to further strengthen parliamentary ties. With regards to trade and investment, the speaker underlined the need to enhance bilateral trade and investment, and invited Turkmenistan to take advantage of Pakistan's Gwadar, Bin Qasim, and Karachi seaports for its trade connectivity with the Middle East, Africa, and beyond. He also expressed Pakistan's commitment to the timely completion of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline project and the TAP power transmission projects, and welcomed the productive meetings of the technical delegation led by Minister of State for Petroleum Dr Musadik Malik, during his visit to Turkmenistan in September 2022. Ambassador Atadjan Movlamov expressed his satisfaction with the current state of bilateral relations between the two countries.—DNA



Senator Raza Rabbani stresses on holding debate over terrorism resurgence

ISLAMABAD :Former chairman Senate and senior Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) Senator Raza Rabbani on Wednesday urged the parliament to discuss terrorism resurgence on a priority basis, expressing surprise that such an important issue was in the list of items of resolution number seven of the orders of the day. Senator Rabbani, while speaking at a point of order during the joint sitting of the Parliament said, "I would like to bring the attention of the government towards the orders of the day specially item number 7. The rising terrorism should be discussed on a priority as the country has rendered huge sacrifices through out the war on terror that left the nation in a bloodbath and

recently the Peshawar incident also left a deep wound on the hearts of the masses." He urged the house to invite all the stakeholders and armed forces to brief the parliamentarians on the state of terrorism in the country; measures taken; and policy decisions. This he said was imperative for an effective response to curb the menace of terrorism. "They are the necessary stakeholders and it's the right of the Parliament and the people of Pakistan to know the prevailing state of terrorism. I request the speaker to bring it on the main agenda," he asserted. He also raised the issue of MNA Ali Wazir from KP. Rabbani said he was not being released despite his bail in all the cases and his production

orders were also not being issued so far, he added. Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazir Tarar responded that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif already gave this direction and it was his desire to brief the house which was not possible at the moment due to his visit to Turkey. "The apex committee's (National Action Plan) decision would also be presented before the house," he said, adding, "its already in the agenda and part of our advice. It might have been a printing error," he further replied. Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi said this session would continue and the agenda item on terrorism would be ensured on the agenda.—APP

Russian language course for students of FUUAST's IR dept started

KARACHI: Inauguration ceremony of the Russian Language Course, for the students of the Federal Urdu University of Arts, Science and Technology -FUUAST's department of International Relations, was held at the Russian Centre of Science and Culture (FRIENDSHIP

HOUSE) here on Wednesday. On this occasion, Russian Consul General in Karachi Andrey Federov was the chief guest of the event. The Russian language course is launched in line with an agreement between the FUUAST's IR department, and the Russian Centre of Science and Culture

President IR department Dr. Asghar Ali Dashti, Director Russian Center for Science and Culture Ruslan Prokhorov, Dr. Nathalia, Dr. Faisal Javed, Dr. Arif Khan, Dr. Amir Farooqui and Dr. Afshan Barohi were also present on the occasion.—APP

Court Notice


IN THE COURT OF
YAQOOB ALI SHEHZAD
CIVIL JUDGE
GUJAR KHAN




Suit For Permanent and mandatory injunction etc. Shehzad Versus Haq Nawaz etc Notice To No 3Naheed Sarfraz 4. Robi Noureen Faisal Daughter of Rabnawaz 5. Muhammad Shehzad 6 Adeel 7 Zain sons 8 Nabeela Daughters 9 Farzana Begum widow Abdul Razaq Resident Mohra Mial Jairo Ratyal Post Office Missa Kaswal Tehsil Gujar Khan District Rawalpindi. The service through ordinary means is difficult, so you are informed to attend the court personally, through counsel or attorney on 13-02-2023 at 9 am avoid exparte proceeding.

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

Karachi
Room No 14 & 15, 3rd Floor, Kalkashan Mall,
Main Tariq Road, 17/1-Block-2, P.E.C.H.S.
Karachi. Tel: (+92-21) 34531747
Fax: (+92-21) 34531747
E-mail: karachi@freelinemovers.com

Lahore
F-4, Gubery Centre,
Main Boulevard, Lahore.
Tel: (+92-42) 35558891, 35581325.
Fax: (+92-42) 3571420
E-mail: lahore@freelinemovers.com

Peshawar
Office No. C-6, 2nd Floor, Zuhair Plaza,
Laf Ameer, Ring Road, Peshawar.
Tel: (+92-91) 2562719
Fax: (+92-91) 2562898
E-mail: peshawar@freelinemovers.com

Kabul
House # 4, Street # 4,
Charya Anwar Road, Shah-e-Akbar,
Kabul - Afghanistan
Tel: +93 799211 771, 93 7979968, 93 779489265
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.....8499494



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 Exchange 9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi.....5555489
CAA.....9281092



Hospitals

CMH.....5611111
MH.....5611116
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



ISLAMABAD: Wives of defence attaches and others female guests of various countries posing for group photo on the occasion of farewell reception hosted by Col. Mahmoud Hassan Defence Attache Egypt and his spouse as they are leaving the country after term completion. – DNA

PM annoyed over STZA working, forms committee

Shehbaz Sharif instructs the committee to present its recommendations within a week and also directed to immediately operationalise the STZA's board

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday, expressing annoyance over the performance of the Special Technology Zones Authority, formed a committee to ensure revival of the STZA operations. The prime minister, chairing a high-level meeting on the STZA, said the committee would be headed by Finance Minister Ishaq Dar and comprise IT minister, law minister, Advisor Ahad Cheema, Senator Afnanullah and Chairman of the Capital Development Authority, a PM Office press release said.

He instructed the committee to present its recommendations within a week and also directed to immediately operationalise the STZA's board of governors which should consist of experts from the relevant field. The prime minister said any wastage of public resources would not be tolerated, adding Pakistani skilled youths were earning livelihood at their own while the relevant authority was lying dysfunctional. He said instead of investing in real estate, the STZA's real objective was to promote technology. No delay in the reformation

and operationalisation of the STZA would be acceptable, he added.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said that in its tenure, the Pakistan Muslim League-N introduced skill education to the youth with a view to enhance IT exports. During the COVID pandemic, hundreds of thousands of youngsters earned livelihood by using laptops given by the government, he remarked. In the briefing, the meeting was informed that 400 companies were registered with the STZA, out of 63% were from Pakistan

and rest belonged to China, USA, Turkey and other countries.

The participants of the meeting were also apprised of the issues regarding the Authority's Board of Governors. The prime minister directed the STZA to ensure effective implementation of the measures for promotion of country's IT exports. Federal ministers Ishaq Dar, Chaudhry Salik Hussain, Syed Aminul Haq, Advisor to PM Ahad Cheema, SAPM Jahanzeb Khan and other officers attended the meeting. – Agencies

E&P companies deposit over Rs3.1bln

ISLAMABAD: The Exploration and Production (E&P) companies operating in Sindh province have deposited Rs 3,108.309 million in bank accounts of different oil and gas producing districts during the last five years to carry out welfare schemes, under the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. "The companies have collectively deposited Rs3108.309 million in joint bank accounts of DCOs/DCs of different districts of Sindh Province to execute development projects in the surrounding localities of their operational fields for the welfare of local communities on a regular basis," according to an official document available with APP. In line with the Petroleum Concession Agreements (PCAs)/Social Welfare Guidelines issued by the Petroleum Division, the E&P companies are obligated to deposit a certain amount in the joint accounts of the concerned District Coordinator Officers (DCOs) and Deputy Commissioners (DCs). The social welfare projects related to health, education, clean drinking water, and road infrastructure are executed under the supervision of district-level committees, having adequate representation of local parliamentarians. – APP

Railways all set to launch 'RABTA'

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways is all set to launch the Railway Automated Booking and Travel Assistance (RABTA) in collaboration with Chinese companies, which will help passengers to plan their journey. "The application will help the passengers to manage their tickets, seats, booking, food, hotel and taxi-related matters during their travel from home to respective destinations and vice versa," an official of Ministry of Railways told APP. He said that a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) had already been signed between Pakistan Railways and two Chinese companies – M/s Easyway and M/s Norinco International Cooperation to launch RABTA. "The RABTA, IT-based solution will not only facilitate the passengers but also help the organization [PR] to generate more revenue and maintain its record through the booking of tickets," he added. Through this application, the official said that parcel booking and tracking facility would also be available while the passengers would also be able to have access to trains' operational management system. – APP

'Both Sit in Silence for A While' Junejo's play makes its Islamabad debut

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: OLOMOPOLLO Media is officially showcasing its hit theatrical production "Both Sit in Silence For a While" featuring renowned actors Ali Junejo and Rasti Farooq at the Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) here from February 10. The play is a dark comedy written, directed, and co-produced by Ali Junejo. Having garnered great success in Karachi and Lahore, the play is now being performed in Islamabad, with the collaboration of the European Union. "Both Sit in Silence for a While" guarantees spectators an edge-of-your-seats experience they would not want to miss, said the organizers. Junejo started his career as a theater artist in Karachi. His previous performances include, 'Waiting for Godot', 'Dead End' and 'Equus'. Junejo then made his film debut in Saim Sadiq's international award-winning film 'Joyland', bagging two best actor awards.

Rasti Farooq, who acts alongside Junejo and is also the co-producer of this play comments, "Both Sit in Si-



Dr. Riina Kionka, EU envoy said, "The EU supports art and culture in Pakistan and globally as part of our commitment to promoting cultural diversity and fostering mutual understanding between people of different backgrounds"

lence For A While tickles that part of my brain that wants to see people be unreasonable and merciless with one another. Because oftentimes that's the place where most of us hide in our most private moments. It's been a supreme joy traversing that space with Ali." Applauded for her commendable acting, Farooq has performed in various plays and short films including 'Stand Alone', 'Gidh' and 'May I Have This Seat?' She

made her feature film debut with Junejo in 'Joyland'. Co-producer Kanwal Khoosat comments, "Join us for when words are more than what we wanted yet less than what we need! OLOMOPOLLO is breaking barriers as usual bringing you an unconventional story, an intimate audience experience, and a boundary-bending take on being coupled". On the collaboration, Dr. Riina Kionka, The Ambassador of the European Union

to Pakistan comments, "The European Union supports art and culture in Pakistan and globally as part of our commitment to promoting cultural diversity and fostering mutual understanding between people of different backgrounds. We believe that it can help to foster a sense of shared identity and belonging, to build bridges between different communities based on mutual recognition and respect."

Govt releases Rs 4.21b for IT project in 1st half 2022-23

ISLAMABAD: The government has released funds amounting to Rs 4.21 billion to execute Information Technology related projects during the first six months of the current fiscal year under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP 2022-23). According to official data available with APP, the government has authorized the utilisation of development funds amounting to Rs 4,211.21 million out of a total allocation of Rs. 6330.70 million for various ongoing and new projects of the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication. Out of the total authorized/dispensed amount, the total amount spent on the development projects during the corresponding period (July-December) stood at Rs 3,662.30 million. – APP

AIOU commences examinations of SSC, HSSC from March 1

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) is conducting examinations of Matriculation, F.Sc, F.A, and I.Com programs offered in the autumn 2022 semester from March 1, 2023, to April 3, 2023, throughout the country. According to Controller Examinations, the date sheet is available on the university website (www.aiou.edu.pk). Roll number slips are uploaded to students' CMS portal and dispatched to the students at their addresses as well. Vice Chancellor, AIOU, Prof Dr. Nasir Mehmood has instructed the examinations department to ensure transparency and provide all facilities to the students during the conduct of examinations. More than 850 examination centers are being established in nearby and easily approachable vicinities of the students for their convenience. Special teams will make surprise visits to the exam centers to eradicate the element of cheating. – APP



ISLAMABAD: Women are stands in a queue to buying Oil, outside a utility store at sector G-6, in Federal Capital. – Online

Islamabad POST
Now Available in

SERENA HOTELS
PESHAWER

Briefs

Pak. China to collaborate in animal IVF, cloning tech

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A Chinese cell biotechnology company and the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) have signed a Letter of Intent (LoI) to collaborate in the research and development of animal In-Vitro Fertilisation (IVF) and cloning technologies.

According to a Gwadar Pro's report, Muhammad Ishaq, Secretary PARC and Dr. Qaisar Shahzad, Director Royal Cell Biotechnology (Pakistan) signed the LoI in the presence of Chairman PARC Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali.

Under the LoI, the Chinese company will assist PARC in establishing an animal IVF lab at the National Agricultural Research Centre (NARC), the research arm of the PARC. Dr. Qaisar told Gwadar Pro. He said that the scientists of the company will also train Pakistani scientists at NARC in animal IVF and cloning technologies.

Dr. Qaisar said that the company had already established a state-of-the-art animal IVF lab in Lahore and will assist PARC in setting up similar labs at NARC. Furthermore, the company will soon receive a delegation of scientists from the Guangxi Buffalo Research Institute of China. "They will place cloning equipment worth around PKR 25 million and also train our Pakistani staff in cloning technologies."

We will then train the NARC scientists", Mr. Qin Junjie, CEO of the company said. He said that the company will be the first organisation to conduct research in animal cloning in Pakistan.

Islamabad police to improve information system

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Dr Akbar Nasir Khan has directed all police officials to improve the "information and coordination system" among various police wings as well as police stations for effectively combating criminal elements. In a meeting with police officers, the IGP directed to take further effective steps to control crime and ensure better security in the city. He asked to adopt a professional as well as responsible attitude to mitigate the sufferings of the people. He said that strict surveillance and patrolling should be made to ensure effective policing and a special crackdown against suspicious elements to be initiated. Modern cameras of the safe city should be used for the purpose and effective checking at the entry and exit points of the city to be maintained, he added.

Dr Akbar stressed that the officials should ensure the use of bulletproof jackets and helmets at duty points while the personnel present in pickets should be equipped with weapons and perform alert duty.—APP

IRSA releases 68,800 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: The Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Wednesday released 68,800 cusecs of water from various rim stations with an inflow of 55,500 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1487.94 feet, 89.94 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow in the dam was recorded as 17,300 cusecs while the outflow as 32,000 cusecs. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1129.75 feet, which was 79.75 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water were recorded at 16,400 cusecs and 15,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 38,700, 39,100, 30,900 and 9,900 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 12,000 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and zero cusecs were released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP



Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce & Industry Industry RCCI President Saqib Rafiq along with Group Leader Sohail Altaf, Former Presidents pose for a group photo after meeting at Chamber House.—DNA

Road safety awareness, crucial to reduce fatalities: President

The conference discussed five pillars of road safety including safety management, safer roads and public mobility, safe vehicles, safer road users, and post-crash response

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday said strict implementation of traffic rules and public awareness about road safety was crucial in the prevention of accidents, thus reducing fatalities.

The president urged the legislators to incorporate comprehensive road safety programmes into national planning. Highlighting the role of parliamentarians in carrying out effective legislation on road safety, he stressed for educating the communities about better enforcement. Addressing at the 'Road safety conference for parliamentarians', the president said with increased traffic volume on roads, the importance of ensuring safety

measures had increased manifold to save precious lives.

Parliamentarians from across the world joined the conference, which was organized by the International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC) in collaboration with 'Mutehtak Parliament', a European Union-funded project, and the Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services.

President Alvi said traffic accidents were one of the leading causes of deaths, mostly due to cranial injuries, and could prove traumatic for the entire family. He said implementation of traffic rules through surveillance cameras, safe road infrastructure, easy-to-understand traffic



illustrations, and proper inspection of vehicles could contribute towards reducing accidents.

The president also emphasized self-discipline by motorists, particularly the use

of seat-belts and wearing of helmets.

He advised road users to remain mentally and physically alert to avoid traffic crashes. Chairman Senate Sadiq

Sanjrani, also the President International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC), said globally around 1.3 million people die and 50 million get injured in traffic accidents annually. In Pakistan, he emphasized prioritizing the efforts to enact road safety laws at par with international standards and educate the stakeholders.

President Inter-Parliamentary Union Duarte Pacheco said road safety must be considered a serious health-related problem due to its direct and indirect costs and called upon the parliamentarians to act together on national health safety programmes. Deputy Head of the EU Delegation in

Pakistan, Thomas Seiler stressed the importance of a holistic approach to road safety and urged the governments and partners to implement an integrated safe system approach. Director General World Health Organization Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus in his video message, mentioned that the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030, emphasized reduction of traffic deaths by half.

The conference discussed five pillars of road safety including safety management, safer roads and public mobility, safe vehicles, safer road users, and post-crash response.—APP

CPEC wind power projects transform Pak energy landscape

DNA

ISLAMABAD: CPEC wind power projects are going to transform Pakistan's energy landscape, according to a report published by China Economic Net (CEN) on Wednesday.

On the vast desert of Jhimpir, Sindh, hundreds of wind turbines are running day and night, providing stable and green power to the national grid.

Peerzada Zain ul Abideen, O&M manager of Power-China HDCE Engineering Company Limited Pakistan proudly told CEN that the 12 projects in Jhimpir of his company have generated 1888.29 GWh of electricity so far.

"Locals also find learning and working opportunities here. Most of the engineers, managers, and workers are from nearby areas", he said, adding, "I myself have also been offered a job that my family and friends are proud of

and a good salary".

Peerzada Zain ul Abideen, recipient of the award in 2022 for outstanding Pakistani staff in CPEC projects, coordinated with the project management teams during the engineering and execution of 12 wind power projects.

As renewable energy including wind is getting higher on the Pakistani government's agenda, Chinese power companies have become a significant part of Pakistan's endeavor to realize its wind potential and transform its energy structure.

Hundreds of miles away in Gharo, Sindh, Muhammad Saleem Munshi, Chief Financial Officer of Hydrochina Dawood Power (Pvt) Limited and recipient of the 2022 award for outstanding Pakistani staff in CPEC projects, is pleased to see that due to the 49.5 MW Dawood Wind Power Project, a closed school in a nearby village with about 600 families living in it can

reopen and provide education to children.

"We were surprised to find that the deserted school was used as a poultry storage house. To convince villagers that we could reconstruct and renovate the school, that our project can change their lives, we hired over 30 villagers as security guards for our project".

He told CEN reporter that the wind speed in the area is up to 7 meters per second. If properly developed, it can meet 5%-10% of the nation's power demand. "The demand is there, and more fund is being attracted to the wind power sector", he said.

With the increasing renewable energy mix mandate by the government and improvements in wind energy technology, this emerging sector is pooling not only investment, but also talents.

Muhammad Waqas, Director Finance of the UEP 100MW wind farm

in Jhimpir and also recipient of the 2022 award for outstanding Pakistani staff in CPEC projects, says the most worthwhile thing he ever did was to choose wind power as his career while he also holds certificates in computer programming, teaching, and accountant.

"I can learn state-of-the-art technologies of one of the most promising sectors. Chinese brothers are transferring the advanced mechanism to Pakistan", he said, adding, "Before the pandemic, I went to China every year to learn about power-related technologies and business know-how". He said, relying on wind power alone, Pakistan can produce twice the amount of electricity needed in the country. With the passage of time, the project development, construction and operations cost are reducing, which will ultimately reduce power tariff, which is connected with high economic activities.

Can diet help improve depression symptoms?

ISLAMABAD: Depression is such a common mental health disorder that it affects around 5% of the world population, according to World Health Organization (WHO) estimates. There are different types of depression — such as major depressive disorder and persistent depressive disorder lasting for at least 2 years. The causes of depression are often manifold, with both genetic and situational risk factors involved — specific stressors or conditions, acting as triggers, leading to recurrent major depressive episodes. And while targeted therapy and medication help many overcome or manage their symptoms of depression, these interventions do not work equally for everyone. This has led researchers to cast their nets even wider in looking for all the factors that may contribute to depression, as well as for novel approaches for depression treatments and symptom management. Recently, diet has come to the forefront of medical research, with experts debating the pros and cons of using dietary interventions to treat or even prevent different medical conditions. Over the past few years, several studies have suggested that opting for healthier diets rich in vegetables, fruit, and whole grains may help improve depression symptoms. For instance, one study from April 2022 from the University of Technology Sydney found that men aged 18-25 years experienced an improvement in depression symptoms after switching to a Mediterranean diet. But it remains unclear what mediates the link between diet quality and mental health. In December 2022, two studies published in Nature Communications looked at the link between gut microbiota and depression symptoms. One of the studies found that 13 types of bacteria, in particular, are associated with depression symptoms. It may be the way in which these bacteria lead to the activation of different signals in the brain that may explain the link between the bacterial makeup of the gut and depression symptoms, researchers hypothesize.—Online

RTO assures to address hardships of taxpayers

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Nasir Khan, Chief Commissioner Corporate Tax Office with additional charge of Chief Commissioner Regional Tax Office Islamabad assured that he wants to work with ICCI to address the hardships of taxpayers in order to facilitate them in tax compliance. He said that FBR intends to create a conducive tax environment to enable the businesses to grow as their better growth would help improve the tax revenue of the country. He said this while addressing the business community during his visit to Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Freedon Akram Shaik Commissioner ICTO, Adnan Inamullah Commissioner Special Zones, Madam Tajamal Balqees Commissioner Withholding Tax and Said Munaf Commissioner North accompanied him at the occasion.

Dr. Nasir Khan said that facilitation camps are intended to be set-up in markets in liaison with

ICCI and market associations to facilitate the business community in completing and filing of tax returns. He said that ICCI should prepare budget proposals and share them with RTO Islamabad that would be forwarded to FBR for consideration and implementation. He said that there is a need to promote tax culture to improve tax revenue of the country. He said that RTO has launched a

drive to register new taxpayers and said that ICCI and market associations should cooperate in this drive to ensure equal distribution of tax burden on all sectors.

Speaking at the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry briefed the Chief Commissioner RTO about the tax issues of the business com-

munity and gave useful proposals for broadening the tax base. He said that FBR should introduce incentives schemes for taxpayers in proportion to their tax contribution that would help in promoting tax culture. He said that FBR should provide POS devices at its own cost to businesses that would encourage more businesses to integrate with this system. He said that preference

should be to bring new taxpayers into the tax system instead of putting more burden on existing taxpayers. He said that the collection of sales tax through the POS system should be adjusted in the income tax of relevant taxpayers. He also shared proposals for introduction of a fixed tax for small traders, avoiding issuance of notices to businesses and streamlining the audit process. Engr. Muhammad Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Vice President ICCI said that the business community is aware of the importance of tax payment and FBR should work to promote its soft image in the taxpayers to promote tax culture. Tariq Sadiq, Zafar Bakhtawari, Mian Muhammad Ramzan, Rizwan Chheena, Maqsood Tabish, Ch. Muhammad Ali, Khalid Chaudhry, Tahir Ayub and others also highlighted various tax issues and gave proposals to simplify the tax system.



Pakistan Railways & two Chinese companies to launch app

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways, state-owned department, has established offices in Gwadar, and it has been assigned the task of increasing relations with Chinese companies working in Gwadar Port Authority, Gwadar Development Authority, Gwadar Port and Free Zones.

According to Gwadar Pro, Pakistan Railways and two Chinese tech companies NORINCO International Cooperation, Easyway have signed an MoU to launch an app named 'Railway Automated Booking & Travel Assistance (RABTA)' to modernize the operations of the department.

Talking to media after the MoU signing ceremony at the Railway Headquarters in Lahore on Monday, Railways Minister Khawaja Saad Rafique said the RABTA app was one top solution for all travel needs where passengers can reserve hotel rooms, taxis and plan their food during traveling. The minister said the agreement with the Chinese companies was totally based on the revenue sharing formula. He further added while admitting the importance of Gwadar Port that there is enough land of Pakistan Railways in Gwadar, they have opened their sub office there and assigned the officers and staff from it. "Apart from this we will set up the railway for the future together with Gwadar Port Authority, Gwadar Development Authority and other companies that are working."

MGI remains largest edible oil importer for fifth year

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Mujahid Group of Industries (MGI), a leading industrial conglomerate with interests in edible oil, construction, steel, and other businesses has clinched the title of the country's largest importer of edible oil for the fifth year in a row.

Pakistan has become the third largest importer of cooking oil after China and India, and we feel proud as MGI is playing its positive role in fulfilling the food requirement of Pakistan, said Chairman of the Group Atif Ikram Sheikh while speaking at a function organized to celebrate the continued success. He said that we have been achieving this milestone because of the efforts of our dedicated team which is honest, loyal, and hardworking. Atif Ikram Sheikh who has also served as Chairman PVMA, VP of FPCCI and President ICCI said that MGI staff deserves appreciation for providing their best to the company.

He added that, "I am truly amazed at what these team members have achieved through their collective efforts and want to thank them for their service." Sheikh said that our domestic production is unable to meet the demand therefore Pakistan has to rely heavily on imports to meet the gap between demand and supply which can be bridged if local cultivation of oilseeds is promoted. One of the biggest food imports for Pakistan has historically been palm oil which is one of the cheapest oils when it comes to cooking food in most countries, he added.

Second relief aircraft arrives in Turkiye

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Air Force (PAF) second C-130 Hercules carrying tents, blankets, and essential items from PAF Base, Lahore has reached Turkiye. According to a PAF news release on Wednesday, under the directives of the government of Pakistan, PAF C-130 Hercules aircraft is carrying 18,634 pounds of humanitarian assistance relief goods from the people of Pakistan for the earthquake-affected brethren of Turkiye. The Pakistan Air Force is also making all-out efforts to repatriate stranded Pakistani students in coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Pakistan Embassy in Turkiye.—APP

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti

Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 03 Issue: 163

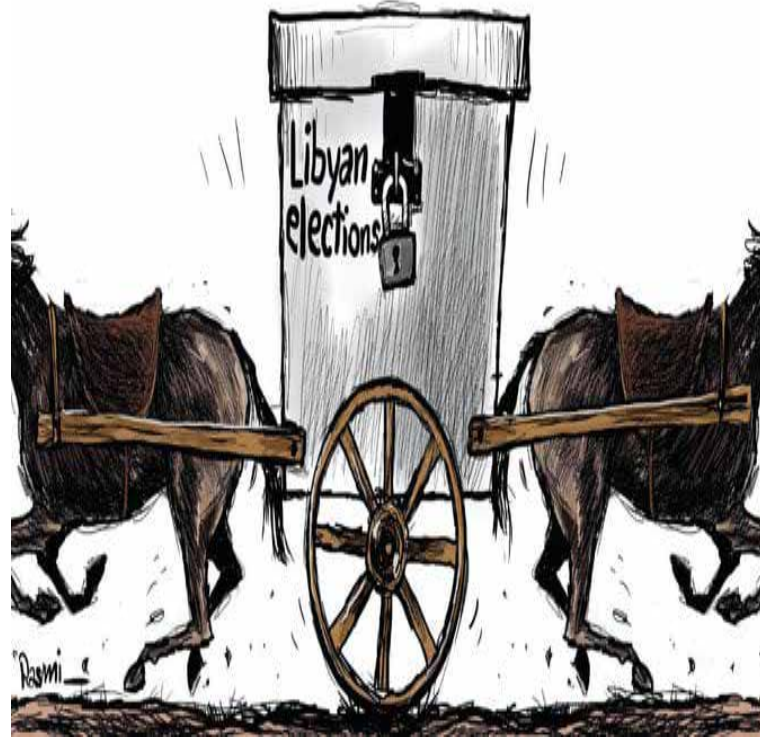
Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

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

US' competition with China

In his State of the Union Address on Tuesday, US President Joe Biden reiterated that the United States seeks competition not conflict with China. Although that makes his administration's China policy appear more focused and balanced than the administration's earlier clarion call based on competition, cooperation and confrontation, it is fundamentally unchanged. For that reason, the US' competition with China is essentially different from that with other countries, including its allies. The latter is for economic benefits, while the former is aimed at the containment of China. While the Biden administration claims that it does not seek to change China's system, it is not because it doesn't want to, but because it has failed to achieve that. Likewise, the Biden administration's stance of not seeking conflict with China is because it has realized that conflict with China will definitely not leave the US unscathed. Meanwhile, given the size of China and its close connections with the world economy, it would be extremely difficult for it to maintain the stability of its socioeconomic life, if the US succeeded with its attempts to decouple China from the rest of the world, particularly before it realizes self-reliance on key resources and technologies. The Chinese side will by no means be hoodwinked by the word play of the Biden administration, which is in fact for domestic consumption rather than reflecting any real changes in its approach toward China. His call that the nation should unite to win the competition with China was essentially in line with the rest of his speech in which he attempted to extend an olive branch to the Republicans. Taking a tough line on China is one of the few things on which the two parties see eye to eye, and Biden is clearly hoping to leverage that to get support from the Republicans for other parts of his agenda. "Winning the competition with China should unite all of us," he declared, getting to the nub of the problem: "For the last few years our democracy has been threatened, attacked, and put at risk." — threats and attacks that come, not from China or other countries, but from the intensifying feuding within the US itself, both its political system and society. The purpose of true competition is to bring out the best of the competitors. It is not China that is trampling roughshod over the rules-based international order, but the US with its tariffs, sanctions, clique building and proxy wars. China is always open to cooperation with the US. And it is also open to competition that is based on the principles of mutual respect, fairness and justice, not long-arm jurisdiction and coercion. Any competition that resorts to such dirty tricks is merely a form of conflict.



UK PM's reshuffle

Rishi Sunak's reshuffle is about both tightening his grip on power and putting more departments on the Treasury list for re-education. By splitting up the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, which had challenged Mr Sunak when he was chancellor, the prime minister has decapitated a rival economic policymaker in government. The new Department for Business and Trade will have some clout because its cabinet minister is Kemi Badenoch, a darling of the Tory right. During her bid to become Tory leader, Ms Badenoch seemed to think that government intervention lies at the heart of everything that is wrong with the British economy. Giving her a ministry designed to use state power underlines the nature of the political coup taking place. Theresa May, Boris Johnson and Liz Truss all in very different ways railed against the economic orthodoxy imposed by the Treasury, tapping into Brexiters' claims it was behind "project fear". What previous leaders were upending was the legacy of George Osborne, the former chancellor who made austerity economics the organising principle of Tory politics. Tying both shifts together is the rise of Greg Hands to be party chair. A former City trader, he was one of Mr Osborne's most trusted Treasury lieutenants. Mr Hands' arrival as the party's cheerleader-in-chief suggests that Mr Sunak is pursuing an ideologically driven agenda that he hopes can be sold as economically necessary. Electoral calculations are never far away. Michelle Donelan, like Mr Hands, voted to remain. With a "blue wall" seat at risk from Lib Dems, her new job as cabinet science supremo gives her a media profile and a position likely to appeal to socially liberal voters. Reshuffling his ministers and creating new departments will not solve Mr Sunak's problems. The Tories have appointed a dozen people to be culture secretary in the past 13 years and are on their ninth business secretary since 2010. Ms Frazer's move sees England get its sixth housing minister in a year — suggesting the issue isn't a Conservative priority. The structural features of the economy as the result of financialisation — rising private debt, regional imbalances and insecure low-paid work — are not being seriously addressed despite the rhetoric on levelling up. Michael Gove refusing to be moved suggests the Treasury won't get its way in every fight. The Tory party remains factional and mutinous. It may be a high-risk act of conciliation to make a divisive critic party vice-chair. But promoting some new faces and rewarding loyalty in others gives Mr Sunak a better shot at leading Conservative MPs. Most prime ministers dislike sacking their colleagues. Mr Sunak is no exception. His shake-up leaves in place Dominic Raab, the justice secretary, pending the outcome of an inquiry into allegations of bullying. Mr Raab may be gone in weeks. If he does depart, he will be the third minister to leave Mr Sunak's cabinet in just a few months. Rather than an embarrassment of riches, too many Conservatives who make it to the top are offering the government an embarrassment.

When calamities strike, it is the poor who bear the brunt

Belén Fernández

Mexican man who, in September 1985, assisted in extracting bodies from the rubble of the Mexico City earthquake that officially resulted in the deaths of 10,000 people but probably killed many more. Shaking his head, he professed to still think regularly of three bodies in particular: a humble mother hunched in vain over her two children, dressed in school uniforms. And as if the poor needed any more reminders as to the negligible value assigned to their lives, the perennial tremors of the earth in Mexico mean that earthquake-related psychological trauma is easily revived. As for things not easily revived, in September 1986, one year after the Mexico City quake

On February 6, massive earthquakes struck southern Turkey and northern Syria, inflicting ghastly damage across a geographic region that has already borne a great deal of earthly devastation in recent decades. The ongoing war in Syria has produced millions of refugees, many of whom have now found themselves victims of seismic activity in the Turkish south. The death toll from Monday's quakes quickly jumped into the thousands and will no doubt soar to far more macabre heights. An untold number of people remain buried beneath the rubble. Traumatized survivors contend with frigid temperatures and aftershocks; refugees contend with the loss of any semblance of refuge. The natural disaster has served to underscore what should hardly be earth-shattering news: that life for the global poor is extremely precarious and plagued by multiple, simultaneous crises from which recovery is often futile. To be sure, the dwellings inhabited by the have-nots of the earth can be structurally less reliable and potentially more vulnerable to tectonic tumult — as was seen, for example, in the Peruvian earthquake of 2007, when homes collapsed across poor neighbourhoods in the province of Ica. But in a world structured upon capitalist foundations, precarity goes much deeper than shoddy construction materials or disregard for building codes. For starters, capitalism's insistence on acute inequality and the tyranny of an elite minority means there are major global fault lines between rich and poor — ones that are becoming ever more pronounced in the era of climate change and attendant ecological calamity. And while aid pledges inevitably come pouring in after high-profile disasters, they often only exacerbate the divide by lining the pockets of the aid industry rather than benefitting the disaster-stricken themselves. There is also the reality that, for much of the world's precarious population, life constitutes a more or less continuous disaster, but one that generates no attention. In June, The New Humanitarian news agency noted gross disparities in disaster re-

lief, with almost half of all emergency funding for 2022 "going to only five protracted — and largely conflict-driven — crises". Citing a recent United Nations estimate that the number of annual disasters will increase to some 560 by the year 2030, the agency described how victims of under-the-radar disasters are often forced to remain in unsafe locations — thereby setting the stage for new crises. Take the case of Afghanistan, where an ongoing dependence on aid has done nothing to make the country safe. In August, floods killed more than 180 people, just two months after an earthquake had killed more than 1,000. In May, the NGO Save the Children reported that the country was suffering its "worst hunger crisis on record", with nearly 50 percent of the population going hungry on account of a raging drought and continuing economic breakdown. Such are the toxic legacies of two decades of a United States-led "war on terror" that devastated the lives, livelihoods and futures of millions of Afghans and sucked in billions of dollars of "recovery funds". For another illustration of how politics, greed and mismanagement overlap with and compound environmental catastrophe, we need look no further than the Caribbean nation of Haiti, where in 2021 a devastating 7.2 magnitude earthquake was followed by a deadly storm and landslides. More than 2,200 people were killed and 130,000 homes destroyed, in addition to a number of schools and hospitals. This came just over a decade after a 2010 earthquake killed some 220,000 people and rendered 1.5 million homeless. Only a smidgen of the billions of dollars that flowed in to "rescue" Haiti actually reached poor Haitian earthquake victims, going instead to aid organisations, international security forces, and other supposedly competent folks — like the UN peacekeepers who promptly unleashed a cholera epidemic upon the nation. In ensuing years, US support for official corruption in Haiti would make the terrain extra fertile for political crisis, while further eroding the country's ability to respond to earthquakes and other disasters. As for me, my own personal experience with earthquakes includes a tremor in southwestern Turkey in 2010 and the magnitude 7.4

earthquake that rocked Mexico's Oaxacan coast in June 2020. I can safely say that the latter episode was akin to feeling my world combust — but only momentarily, as it entailed no lasting damage to my house or person. In other words, it was a far and privileged cry from the experience of the latest earthquake victims in Turkey and Syria, many of whom — displaced by war — had undoubtedly already felt their respective worlds combust even prior to the quake. Following the news of Monday's cataclysm, I spoke here in Oaxaca with a working-class Mexican man who, in September 1985, assisted in extracting bodies from the rubble of the Mexico City earthquake that officially resulted in the deaths of 10,000 people but probably killed many more. Shaking his head, he professed to still think regularly of three bodies in particular: a humble mother hunched in vain over her two children, dressed in school uniforms. And as if the poor needed any more reminders as to the negligible value assigned to their lives, the perennial tremors of the earth in Mexico mean that earthquake-related psychological trauma is easily revived. As for things not easily revived, in September 1986, one year after the Mexico City quake, the Washington Post reported that no fewer than 80,000 people remained homeless. Indeed, the city never quite fully recovered from either the physical damage or the disaster mismanagement. Precarity is nothing new. And yet things are getting more precarious by the minute, as capitalism breaks new ground in the field of obliterating any and all aspirations toward a common humanity or planetary wellbeing — and the "disaster relief" industry concerns itself with maintaining its own viability while poor communities lurch from one disaster to the next. While the rich insulate themselves from the fallout, the poor bear the brunt of military conflict, economic upheaval, climate-related havoc, and the coronavirus pandemic — which has left the earth's have-nots on even shakier ground. As with all other present earthly afflictions, Monday's quakes in Turkey and Syria will hit the poor the hardest. And the only way out of a world where profit for the few means precarity for the many would be a total seismic shift.

—Courtesy: Al Jazeera

Climate change increases risk of human trafficking

Ranvir s. Nayar

Also, increasingly, armed conflicts are being caused or made worse by climate change. Note the conflicts between various tribes over land holdings in many African nations where climate change has begun to render large tracts of land unfit for agriculture or cattle rearing. There are hundreds of small, but sustained, armed conflicts that have been going on for over a decade in Africa. With droughts or floods impacting larger areas more severely, these conflicts will only become more common

The transborder smuggling of humans, though a criminal activity, has been flourishing for years. Even now, as the global economy struggles with inflation or recession, the amount and frequency of human trafficking has been rising at a breakneck speed. A report released last week by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime said there was mounting evidence that climate change was increasing vulnerability to trafficking. The report was based on analysis of data from 141 countries around the world from 2017 to 2021. It says that community-level studies in different parts of the world pointed to weather-induced disasters as root causes for human trafficking. Human trafficking's fortunes seem to improve whenever the world is in turmoil. And this is what has been happening over the past few years. With incidents of extreme weather conditions increasing, such as the prolonged droughts that have hit sub-Saharan Africa, the massive floods that have ravaged South Asian nations including Pakistan, or the erosion of coastal areas in countries including Bangladesh, tens of millions of people have been forced to move from their homes and are displaced either within the country where they live or, as has been happening more frequently, fall prey to human traffickers who promise them a permanent solution and a blissful future in the developed world. The UN says that, in 2021 alone, climate-related disasters internally displaced more than 23.7 million people, while many others fled their countries. The UN office noted that an increase in cases of human trafficking had been observed in Bangladesh and the Philippines after devastating cyclones and typhoons displaced millions. Droughts and floods in Ghana and the Caribbean region, which is increasingly prone to severe hurricanes and rising sea levels, have also led to people abandoning their homes and migrating.

Another category of people who are forced into moving out of their homelands are the victims of civil wars and prolonged armed conflicts. Unfortunately, these have often happened in the same areas which have been hit by rising incidents of climate change, with the Middle East, Africa, and South and Southeast Asia being the location of some of the most violent and long-running armed conflicts. These have also driven millions to head for foreign shores, seeking to escape the bullets and bombs in their backyards and settle in peaceful countries where they can find employment and restart their lives. Unfortunately, in both cases — climate change and armed conflicts — the vast majority of people who are worst-hit are from the poor and marginalized sections of these societies. While the people who are better off are generally able to escape the worst of climate change or conflicts, the poor remain highly vulnerable and hence are over-exposed to human trafficking gangs. Also, increasingly, armed conflicts are being caused or made worse by climate change. Note the conflicts between various tribes over land holdings in many African nations where climate change has begun to render large tracts of land unfit for agriculture or cattle rearing. There are hundreds of small, but sustained, armed conflicts that have been going on for over a decade in Africa. With droughts or floods impacting larger areas more severely, these conflicts will only become more common in the future. And they could spread out of Africa, with Asia and the Middle East being among the most likely regions for this vortex to hit next. This will be music to the ears of human trafficking gangs across the world, as it assures them of a long line of confirmed customers (or, rather, victims) for decades to come. But it is not just the displaced who are victims of human trafficking. The countries that end up receiving these millions of displaced persons

also suffer from the ill-effects of such unplanned and disorganized migration, which fuels societal friction and puts enormous strains on the economies of the recipient countries, even if they are amongst the richest nations of the world. But the world need not be a helpless victim of human traffickers. So far, the international community has failed to act in a coordinated fashion to counter these gangs and, in many cases, some countries, notably the European nations, imagined that just by funneling a few million euros or buying some modern weaponry and gadgets for local police forces in the countries that are the source of these migratory flows, or lie along the migration routes, can solve the problem. But, more often than not, the police forces in these countries are not only completely ill-trained and ineffective, but are themselves in cahoots with the human trafficking gangs, who share their ill-gotten wealth with them. Instead of patchwork solutions, these challenges require the adoption of holistic approaches — whether that is taking adequate measures to mitigate the impact of climate change or helping communities vulnerable to climate change adapt. These measures are in consonance with the commitments that rich nations have made for decades in terms of funding poorer countries to help them deal with climate change — which has been caused for the most part by the developed economies of the world. The global community also needs to improve coordination among various arms of government — be it law enforcement or social services — to map out the areas which may be most vulnerable to climate change and/or armed conflicts — which can often be transnational — and then come up with a joint plan to help communities prepare for climate change and protect themselves from falling victim to the traffickers.

Courtesy: Arab News

Briefs

President seeks dates for by-polls

FROM PAGE 01
Article 214 and Third Schedule of the Constitution for CEC and the members of the ECP about their fundamental duty as per their Oath that says 'I will discharge my duties.....faithfully in accordance with the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan' and the Elections Act, 2017 to avoid serious consequences of breach/violation of the Constitution/law and announce election schedule of the two dissolved Assemblies forthwith. Highlighting the significance of the Preamble/Objectives Resolution, the president said that the Preamble stated in unambiguous words that 'the State shall exercise its power and authority through the chosen representatives of the people'. "Such is the unflinching resolve and commitment by the forefathers of the Nation who drafted the Objectives Resolution duly made part of the Constitution (Article 2A). Thus, there remains no obscurity about the democratic principles and values that are to be adhered to, observed, and followed," he further wrote. The president emphasized that the oldest democracies had never delayed elections even during wars. In this regard, he quoted the examples of the United States, which held elections despite being at war with Great Britain in 1812 under President James Madison. He further stated that in 1864 during the American Civil War, top advisors of the then President Abraham Lincoln wanted to postpone elections due to the civil war but he disagreed with them, and even though he thought that he was going to lose the elections, he never really contemplated suspending the elections.

LHC suspends ECP order...

FROM PAGE 01
Ali Zafar contended that legal requirements were not fulfilled while accepting the resignations. Justice Karim inquired about which legal requirements were not met. At this, Barrister Zafar said that the speaker did not hold an inquiry in line with the constitution before accepting the resignations. Later, the court issued notices to the ECP and other parties, seeking their replies over the plea.

Security Forces kill 12 TTP...

FROM PAGE 01
The terrorists were affiliated with TTP Azhar ud Din group. The terrorists used rocket launchers during the operation. However security personnel remained safe. Terrorist Hassan alias Zafar from TTP Tipu group was also among those killed in the operation.

Key Daesh leader arrested

FROM PAGE 01
were then sent to the IS in Afghanistan. During interrogation, the suspect revealed that he had been in touch with the IS' Mulla Abdul Manan group since 2011, the CTD said. In addition, he disclosed that he was involved in the illegal "hawala/hundi" business and had sent "millions of rupees" to Afghanistan through it, the department added.

PM for expediting...

FROM PAGE 01
Shehbaz Sharif has said public welfare and national progress are among the properties of the federal government and the Pakistan Muslim League-N. He was talking to former members of the Provincial Assembly of Punjab in Lahore who called on him separately. During meetings, the overall national and provincial political situation was discussed. Rana Mashhood, Auneza Fatima, Rahila Khadim Hussain and Rumesh Singh Arora were among the delegates.

Pak, Iran celebrate 76 years of diplomatic relations

Ambassador Sayed Mohammad Ali Hosseini highlighted that bilateral relations have been growing in various fields. He underscored that solidarity between the two fraternal neighbouring countries was based on various commonalities and linkages which paved the way for a stronger relationship

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East and Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad (ISSI), in collaboration with the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, organized a special event on "76 Years of Pakistan-Iran Diplomatic Relations." The speakers included: Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General, ISSI; Ms. Amina Khan, Director CAMEA; H.E. Sayed Mohammad Ali Hosseini, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Pakistan; H.E. Mr. Rahim Hayat Qureshi, Ambassador of Pakistan to Iran; Mr. Ehsan Khazaei, Cultural Counselor of the Embassy of Iran in Pakistan; Amb. Riffat Masood, Pakistan's Former Ambassador to Iran; Mr. Hosseini Ebrahim Khani, Senior Fellow, IPIS Tehran; and Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman, BOG, ISSI. The event also included an exhibition of Iranian artefacts. Ms. Amina Khan, while dilating on the subject, stated that Pakistan-Iran relations were time-tested and based on bonds of brotherhood, mutual respect, and support for each other in times of difficulty. The Treaty of Friendship signed between the two countries in 1950 was a reflection of this relationship. She added that Pakistan-Iran relations were all-encompassing and that interests of



the two countries converged broadly - including on the situation in Afghanistan, fight against terrorism, and relations with China in the context of regional connectivity. Speaking on the occasion, DG ISSI Amb. Sohail Mahmood stated that while Pakistan-Iran diplomatic relations were 76 years old, the ties between the people of Pakistan and Iran went back centuries, based on immutable bonds of common faith, history and linguistic affinities. The cultural dimension was the most manifest, as could be seen in a strong Persian imprint on Pakistan's civilizational heritage. Pakistan-Iran ties were reinforced by a shared commitment to deepen the relationship in its multiple aspects. The two sides' mutual interests ranged from enhanced bilateral trade to energy cooperation to coordination on regional and international issues. The people of Pakistan appreciated Iran's principled support for the just cause of Kashmir. The two countries also shared a crucial stake in a peaceful and stable Afghanistan as that would help advance to agenda of regional economic integration and connectivity. The two countries also supported Muslim

causes such as Palestine and countering Islamophobia. They also cooperated closely in regional and multilateral fora and Iran's membership of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) would enable further expansion of mutual cooperation. In recent years, increased bilateral exchanges had served as a catalyst for enhanced collaboration and important steps were being taken to strengthen the economic relationship. Rapidly transforming global and regional environments posed new challenges such as food and fuel crises as well as exacerbated tensions and polarization. In the wake of all this, it was important that Pakistan-Iran relations continue to grow on a stable and broader basis as this will serve the cause of peace, security and prosperity in the region. Ambassador Sayed Mohammad Ali Hosseini, while talking about Iran-Pakistan ties, highlighted that bilateral relations have been growing in various fields. He underscored that solidarity between the two fraternal neighbouring countries was based on various commonalities and linkages which paved the way for a stronger relationship. He added that the volume of trade exchanges between the two countries will reach more than two billion dollars this year. Shedding light on the expansion of cooperation between the two countries, he also identified the energy sector.

Paris mayor against Russian athletes at Olympics



DNA
PARIS: Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo changed her stance on Russian competitors at the 2024 Olympics on Tuesday saying they should be banned "while the war continues" in Ukraine, her office said. Last month Hidalgo said she believed Russians could take part "under a neutral flag" to avoid "depriving athletes of competition". On Tuesday she told French media her earlier position

was "indecent" because a neutral flag, "does not really exist" although she said there should be a place for "dissenting Russians who want to parade under the refugee flag". Her office said this was a "clarification" of her position. They would, she said, be athletes who do not "support Vladimir Putin in his aggression". The Refugee Olympic Team competed for the first time in the Rio Games in 2016, where it was made up of 10 athletes originally from

Syria, Ethiopia, South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Hidalgo did not address the issue of the participation of Belarusian athletes. While French President Emmanuel Macron and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) did not immediately respond to Hidalgo's remarks, the French ministry of sports and the Olympics told AFP the question of a "possible participation" under a neutral flag in Paris is being "discussed" by the

IOC but "has not been the subject of any decision". The ministry reaffirmed French "support" for "maintaining all economic, political, diplomatic, sports and cultural sanctions" against Russia. Since the beginning of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in late February 2022, Russians and Belarusians have been banned from most world sporting events. The IOC said last month it was exploring a "pathway" to allow competitors from both countries to take part in the Paris Olympics. Ukraine responded by saying it would consider boycotting the Games. The United States said Russian and Belarusian athletes should compete in Paris under a neutral flag, but many countries, particularly in Eastern Europe, have opposed the idea. Poland's sports minister, Kamil Bortniczuk, said last week that as many as 40 countries could refuse to take part in Paris if Russia and its ally Belarus were allowed to compete. Estonia has said it would boycott while the Czech Olympic Committee said on Monday it was opposed to Russian participation but would not boycott.

Sri Lanka bankruptcy to last until 2026, says President

The president said Sri Lanka had reached the final stage of IMF discussions to secure a preliminary \$2.9 billion bailout

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's president said Wednesday the island nation will remain bankrupt for at least three more years as he works to repair battered government finances following an unprecedented economic crisis. Ranil Wickremesinghe took office last year at the peak of national unrest sparked by months of food, fuel and medicine shortages. He has since pushed through tax hikes and negotiated with international creditors after a default on Sri Lanka's foreign debt to clear the way for a sorely needed IMF bailout. "If we continue according to this plan, we can rise out of bankruptcy by 2026," he said during an address to parliament urging support for economic reforms. "Introducing new tax policies is a politically unpopular decision. Remember, I'm not here to be popular. I want to rebuild this nation from the crisis it has fallen into." Wickremesinghe said last month that the economy may have contracted by up to 11 percent in the last calendar year, when Sri Lanka's foreign exchange reserves dried up and left traders unable to import vital goods. But on Wednesday he said the economy would return to growth by the end of 2023 as new revenue measures boosted government coffers. Tax increases and the removal of fuel and electricity subsidies have been unpopular among Sri Lanka's public, already hit hard by the crisis and rampant inflation. Wickremesinghe's policy address took place at the same time as a huge trade union strike, with air traffic controllers, doctors and several other industries staging work stoppages. The president said Sri Lanka had reached the final stage of IMF discussions to secure a preliminary \$2.9 billion bailout. The process has been delayed by protracted debt restructure negotiations with China and other major creditors. Wickremesinghe said Sri Lanka was in direct discussions with China about its outstanding debt but had received "positive responses from all parties" and was working towards a final agreement. - Agencies

Usman Khawaja slams Mickey Arthur

ISLAMABAD: Australia batter Usman Khawaja on Wednesday slammed Mickey Arthur - the manager-to-be of the Pakistan cricket team. According to media reports, Khawaja has criticized former Australia coach Mickey Arthur for the 'homework' gate controversy that took place during Australia's tour of India in 2013. Khawaja, along with three others - James Pattinson, Mitchell Johnson, and Shane Watson - was suspended for one match for not submitting a 'homework' assigned by the then coach, Arthur. The players were assigned to give in writing answers to queries on ways to improve the team's performance, and the four did not submit their answers in time. The left-hander believes Arthur was trying to prioritise everything other than being a better competitor on the field. "All the coaching and support staff with Mickey (Arthur) at the top were trying to concentrate on all the other things, but that wasn't why we were losing," Khawaja said. "At that point, we weren't a more skillful team than India, and that's why we lost. We didn't lose because we weren't fitter than them, we didn't lose because we weren't a better fielding side than them, we were just not as skillful as they (India) were," he said. Khawaja said he felt like an outsider in the dressing room after the incident. "It was already tough enough for a new guy to fit in the team. And when something like this happens, it just made you feel like you were more of an outsider," he added. - Online

Croatia's legendary football coach Miroslav Blazevic dies at 87

ZAGREB: Croatia's famed football coach Miroslav Blazevic - who led the country to a third-place finish at the 1998 World Cup - died on Wednesday, the national football federation said. He was 87. "The whole football family has lost 'the coach of all coaches' today," the federation wrote on social media. Blazevic died in the capital Zagreb after a long fight with cancer, spurring a flood of condolences. Croatia's national team coach Zlatko Dalic paid his respects, saying he mourned his "football father... a true inspiration for everything I achieved in my coaching career". "Ciro was unique - an unsurpassed motivator and speaker... a man with great style and an even bigger soul and that's why we all loved and respected him," Dalic said in a statement, referring to Blazevic by his popular nickname. Born on February 10, 1935, Blazevic started his playing career in his hometown of Travnik in neighbouring Bosnia. In the early 1960s, he began coaching in Switzerland and moved in 1979 to Croatia, which was then part of the former Yugoslavia. In Croatia, he coached Rijeka and later Dinamo Zagreb, where he

led the club to their first Yugoslav championship in 24 years. After winning the title, Blazevic's popularity soared at home where he was known for wearing fashionable white scarves in public. "Dinamo's 1982 win was the crown of my coaching career," Blazevic told local media in 2021. From 1994 to 2000, Blazevic took the helm of the national team and racked up a number of impressive wins, including a third-place finish at the 1998 World Cup in France. The finish provided a much-needed boost to the weary nation following years of fighting during Croatia's 1991-1995 independence war amid the bloody break-up of Yugoslavia. During the 1998 World Cup, Blazevic was famed for wearing a French gendarme's hat during games, as a symbol of solidarity with a security officer who was seriously injured by German football hooligans during the tournament. Eloquent, charismatic and well regarded for his motivational skills, Blazevic remained popular throughout the former Yugoslavia long after he retired in 2015. As he battled cancer back in Zagreb, Dalic dedicated the team's win in Croatia's third-place match at the World Cup in Qatar in December to Blazevic. "This is for you, boss. I can win five medals but you will always remain the 'coach of all coaches'," Dalic said after beating Morocco. Blazevic, however, proved less successful at the ballot box, where he finished with less than one percent of the vote when he ran for the Croatian presidency in 2005. - DNA

Vlahovic among goals as Juve stroll past Salernitana

Vlahovic will face his old club Fiorentina on Sunday in one of the fieriest fixtures in the Serie A calendar. "The most important thing was that we won the match after not winning for three matches (in the league)," said Vlahovic to DAZN

LONDON: Dusan Vlahovic scored his first Juventus goals in nearly four months on Tuesday with a brace in his team's easy 3-0 win at Salernitana. Serbia forward Vlahovic set Juve on their way to victory in Salerno when he rifled in a penalty off the post in the 26th minute and then swept in Juve's third just after half-time. Filip Kostic tapped in Juve's second shortly before the break after Vlahovic's mishit shot fell to his international teammate, helping Juve up to 10th and 12 points off the European positions. A further point away are Lazio and the Champions League spots, an unlikely target for Juve after last month's 15-point penalty for illicit transfer activity. Coach Massimiliano Allegri insisted pre-match that Tuesday's clash was a relegation six-pointer and he continued in that vein after a simple win. "We need to get another 14 points in order to reach 40 for safety, after that we'll see ... I hope we can be in the top half of the table," he told DAZN. Vlahovic's double broke a club goal drought which stretched back to mid-October, when he struck a last-minute derby winner against Torino. Since then the 23-year-old has struggled with injuries,



only coming back to action in Juve's home defeat to Monza last time out after playing twice more in October and then underwhelming at the World Cup. His return was a boost to Allegri who lost Leandro Paredes and Arkadiusz Milik to injury and may not have Paul Pogba back until next week's Europa League clash with Nantes. Vlahovic will face his old club Fiorentina on Sunday in one of the fieriest fixtures in the Serie A calendar. "The most important thing was that we won the match after not winning for three matches (in the league)," said Vlahovic to DAZN. "You don't get back into form without the help of your teammates and manager." Salernitana meanwhile have won just once in their last nine matches, losing six, and are seven points above the relegation zone in 16th. Davide Nicola's side could easily have lost more heavily as Angel Di Maria and Moise Kean both struck the woodwork after Vlahovic put Juve three ahead, and they could yet be sucked deeper towards trouble. On Monday Salernitana travel to Verona, who sit just inside the drop zone and have only lost once since Marco Zaffaroni took charge during the winter break. - Agencies

PTI's 'Jail Bharo Tehreek' kicks off...

FROM PAGE 01
The local media quoted Dogar as saying to the police. Police also said that action would be taken against PML-N workers involved in the clash. PTI workers protested against the arrest and set ablaze tyres, blocking a main road in Multan. Senior PTI leader Fawad Chaudhry told a local news channel that with Dogar's arrest, his party's Jail Bharo agitation movement has kicked off. Taking to Twitter, PTI leader Farrukh Habib condemned the arrest. "PDM should stop using dirty tactics and Amir Dogar should be released immediately," he said. Former finance minister and senior PTI leader Asad Umar termed the arrest another example of growing fascism in the country. Meanwhile Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan on Wednesday condemning multiple police raids at former chief minister Chaudhry Parvez Elahi's residence said that these are "fascist acts". Taking to Twitter, the deposed premier clarified that in PTI government the actions and arrests of PML-N stalwarts were the results of compelling evidence in Panama papers and NAB cases, adding that despite severe allegations against them they were given VIP treatment in jails. He went on to say that multiple police raids at Elahi's residence in Gujarat, abduction of his supporters, and unjustified arrests by the "imported government" are acts of fascism. The PTI supreme added that incumbent rulers would not be able to succeed in their ambitions, adding that these unjust actions will only strengthen their determination.

Punjab for holding PA polls, NA...

FROM PAGE 01
A whopping Rs 42 billion were required to maintain peace in the elections. The provincial chief secretary stated that administrative officials, police officers and teachers have to perform duties during the polls, adding that the same employees would be performing their duties in the census as well. Also, examinations and anti-polio campaigns would also be held, he said, adding that availability of staff for polls will be difficult. The month of Ramzan was coming during elections, in which administrative officers have to ensure price control and security arrangements for worshippers in mosques, so there was a dire need for law enforcement agencies to maintain law and order. Along with this, the security of rallies and gatherings has to be arranged during the elections. He said that the provincial government was also facing a financial deficit. "In such a situation, law enforcement agencies cannot provide foolproof security", the Chief Secretary said. He assured the meeting that transparency would be ensured in the upcoming polls. The provincial government had initiated work regarding the NA by-elections, preparation of a security plan and installation of CCTV cameras in all sensitive polling stations. A control room would also be established in each district during the elections. Punjab chief secretary pointed out that there was a "serious terrorism threat" in the province. In his briefing to the commission, IGP Dr Usman Anwar pointed out the recent terrorist attacks in the province and said that 213 incidents of terrorism were prevented since December 2022. IG said holding elections would be a "difficult task" in the province until a police operation against militants, expected to be completed in four to five months, was over. "It is difficult to conduct the elections until the police operation is completed", he added. Last week, the Punjab police had launched a grand counter-terrorism operation in the highly complex and inaccessible hilly areas of Mianwali district, hours after some heavily equipped militants of the banned TTP attacked a police station in the area in the dead of the night. - APP

Briefs

New Zealand
seizes \$316M
worth of
cocaine

AUCKLAND: A large quantity of cocaine worth more than NZ\$500 million (approximately \$316 million) was seized from the Pacific Ocean and was likely destined for Australia, New Zealand police said on Wednesday. Police Commissioner Andrew Coster said in a statement that the illicit drug was found afloat in the Pacific Ocean during "Operation Hydros," which was carried out in collaboration with customs and defense personnel.

"There is no doubt this discovery lands a major financial blow right from the South American producers through to the distributors of this product," he said, adding that the drugs' likely destination was the Australian market.

"This is one of the single biggest seizures of illegal drugs by authorities in this country. While this disrupts the syndicate's operations, we remain vigilant given the lengths we know these groups will go to circumvent coming to law enforcement's attention," he said in the statement posted on the police department's website.

According to the New Zealand Customs Service, the total value of the 3.2 tons of drugs seized in 81 bales is estimated to be NZ\$500 million (approximately \$316 million).—DNA

Antarctic ice
hits record
low for
January

PARIS: The Antarctic Ocean area covered by ice was the lowest on record for January, exposing Earth to even more planet-warming heat, scientists reported Wednesday. Last month was also the third warmest January on record in Europe, with temperatures on New Year's Day reaching all-time highs on some parts of the continent, according to European Union's Copernicus climate monitor (C3S). Melting sea ice has no discernible impact on sea levels because the ice is already in ocean water.

But it is problematic because it helps accelerate global warming. When white sea ice - which bounces up to 90 percent of the Sun's energy back into space - is replaced by dark, unfrozen sea, the water absorbs a similar percentage of the Sun's heat instead.

Globally, last year was the fifth or sixth warmest on record despite the cooling influence of a natural La Nina weather pattern. Europe clocked its hottest summer ever, which fuelled deadly droughts and wildfires on the continent. Copernicus said Wednesday that much of Europe saw above-average temperatures last month, including the Balkans and eastern Europe "where New Year's Day experienced record warmth".—APP

Blaze at US
drone plant
in Latvia

HELSINKI: Firefighters worked for a second day Wednesday to fully extinguish a blaze at a U.S. company's drone plant in Latvia. Local police said nothing had been found so far to indicate sabotage.

Latvia's State Fire and Rescue Service was alerted Tuesday afternoon that a fire had broken out at Edge Autonomy's drone production plant in Marupe, a town that borders the capital, Riga. The Baltic News Service said that although the blaze was largely contained by 7 p.m. on Tuesday, firefighters continued work to fully extinguish the fire early Wednesday. Edge Autonomy, based in San Luis Obispo, California, is a maker of unmanned system technologies and equipment including drones for civilian and military purposes. The U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps are among its clients. The company's Latvian drone production plant was established in 2009. Among other countries, Edge Autonomy's facility in Marupe has delivered drones to Ukraine. BNS said the two-story drone production building with a floor space of 600 square meters (6,500 square feet).—APP

9 mln families to be provided
assistance under BISP by June

Mr. Michael Schiffer stated that USAID would like to balance its portfolio vis-vis allocation of sectoral assistance in social protection, poverty alleviation, nutrition, and education

DNA

WASHINGTON: A delegation of USAID, headed by Michael Schiffer, Assistant Administrator of the Bureau for Asia, called on Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation & Social Safety Ms. Shazia Marri at Embassy of Pakistan Washington D.C. The meeting discussed in detail various interventions being made under the umbrella of Benazir Income Support Program, to provide relief to the vulnerable sections of the society. The Federal Minister briefed the USAID delegation about the devastations caused by catastrophic floods of 2022, which inundated one third of the country, and affected 33 million people including 04 million children, and hundreds of thousands of pregnant women. She also updated on the latest status of recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts and how BISP was helping in this effort. The Minister said that BISP over the last 14 years has evolved into a successful model and it was



serving the poorest of the poor without any discrimination. She highlighted that National Social Economic Registry has enabled the Government of Pakistan with a scientific database to the reach out to the most deserving and marginalized strata of society in Pakistan. The Minister informed the delegation that around 8.9 million families were being provided

financial assistance under the BISP, which would be increased up to 9 million by June 2023, and up to 10 million by 2024, she continued. She said financial assistance was provided directly to the women as family heads, which clearly reflected the priorities of the BISP program towards women empowerment. Likewise, the conditional transfer in education and

health sector were aimed at socio-economic uplift of the poor families with education, better health and skill development. She informed the delegation that 364 Benazir Nashonuma facilitation Centers were operating across Pakistan to address the nutritional issues of the women and children. On provision of relief in the aftermath of floods, the delegation was informed that

an amount of Rs. 70 billion was disbursed to 2.5 million affected families through BISP. The Federal Minister appreciated continued support of World Bank, ADB and GIZ towards social safety and poverty alleviation. She mentioned about Pakistan Crisis-Resilient Social Protection (CRISP) Program of the World Bank to help establish an adaptive social protection. Minister

informed that through National Poverty Graduation Program (NPGP), BISP beneficiaries were being provided assets and training in order to graduate them out of poverty. The Federal Minister acknowledged the contributions of USAID and said that Pakistan looked forward to scaling up its partnership with the Agency in expanding the outreach of the program. Mr. Michael Schiffer lauded the role of BISP in social protection sector especially in providing swift relief to the calamity affected population. He underscored that USAID and the US Administration looked forward to strengthening its friendship and partnership with Pakistan. Mr. Michael Schiffer stated that USAID would like to balance its portfolio vis-vis allocation of sectoral assistance in social protection, poverty alleviation, nutrition, and education. He informed that he would be visiting Pakistan in late spring. He expressed particular interest in visiting the flood affected areas to obtain first-hand knowledge and experience.

PHMA demands regionally
competitive energy tariffs

DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan Hosiery Manufacturers Association (PHMA) has demanded a level-playing field with regional competitors through continuation of existing concessionary energy tariffs for the export industry, terming the government's proposed decisions to discontinue the tariff concession for five export-oriented sectors unwise and disastrous for exporters. PHMA Zonal Chairman Naseer Butt cautioned the government saying the move of increasing energy tariffs was unwise and would sabotage hard efforts of exporters to enhance Pakistan's exports in previous years. He asked the prime minister and his economic team to ensure a level-playing field by offering competitive energy tariffs and continuing the Duty Drawback of Local Taxes and Levies scheme, as committed in the new five-year textile and

apparel policy. He stressed that energy rates for industries should be brought at par or below the tariff prevailing in the competing regional countries. The PHMA zonal chief pointed out that to enable the textile industry to compete effectively against regional countries, electricity rates of Rs19.99 per unit and re-gasified liquefied natural gas (RLNG) rates of \$9 mmbtu should continue. Utility rates of industrial sector should be reviewed on an annual basis and if rates in the regional countries fall, the tariff for domestic utilities should also be brought at par with it, he said. If RLNG rates are reduced internationally from existing level, then this benefit should be passed on to manufacturers and exporters in the textile value chain. He added that the Duty Drawback of Taxes (DDT) and Drawback of Local Taxes and Levy (DLTL)

schemes were introduced by the government due to exporters' demand to redeem their local taxes paid on export consignments because earlier there were no taxes and levies on exports. Hence, reimbursement of DDT and DLTL to exporters is not an incentive from the government rather it is the amount paid back to traders against taxes, he added. He said that the exports are important source of foreign currency and play a crucial role in its balance of payments. Exports contribute directly to GDP growth, employment generation and provide the only sustainable long-term solution. Pakistan's exports have seen an upward trend especially during FY20-FY22 where textile exports grew by a phenomenal 55% in just two years. Focus on export growth necessarily involves promoting textiles as this sector contributes 62% of all exports. Pakistan's textile

industry, however, is facing a major crisis as it is rapidly losing credibility and competitiveness in the global market. The \$19.3 billion industry, which relies heavily on exports, is experiencing a decline in global shipments. This situation is causing concern among its loyal international customers, who are becoming increasingly skeptical about the industry's ability to meet deadlines and fulfill orders in a timely manner. The situation is further compounded by the shortage of dollars and basic raw materials is causing many exporters to hesitate when booking new orders. As a result of which, the future of the industry looks uncertain, and unless measures are taken to address these challenges, the textile sector in Pakistan may continue to face a downward spiral. Expanding our exports especially in the textile sector and removing all hurdles in this regard should be of utmost importance.

All resources
mobilized after
quakes: Erdogan

ANKARA: Türkiye has taken action with all its institutions and resources since Monday's deadly earthquakes in its southern provinces, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Wednesday. "We have mobilized all our resources. The state is working with municipalities, especially AFAD (Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency), with all its means," Erdogan said as he inspected relief efforts in Kahramanmaraş province, where two powerful quakes that shook the region were centered, affecting nine other provinces and more than 13 million people. Erdogan said that at least 8,574 people were killed and 49,133 others injured in Türkiye after the earthquakes, which were also felt in nearby countries, including Syria and Lebanon. He added that a total of 6,444 buildings collapsed due to the 7.7 and 7.6 magnitude quakes that occurred in the space of less than 10 hours. Noting that certain hotels in the provinces of Mersin and Antalya, including Alanya district, had opened their doors to earthquake victims, Erdogan said: "Our citizens should not worry. We will never allow for them to remain sheltered." Each family affected by the tremors will receive 10,000 Turkish liras (\$530), he added, promising "mass housing operations" to be launched in the 10 provinces hit within the year, "just as we did in other provinces where we experienced disasters." For search and rescue operations to be carried out rapidly, Türkiye on Tuesday announced a three-month state of emergency in the quake-hit provinces Adana, Adiyaman, Diyarbakir, Gaziantep, Hatay, Kahramanmaraş, Kilis.—APP

IAEA chief
stresses urgency
of Iran deal revival

NEW YORK: The head of the UN nuclear watchdog has underscored the urgency of resuming negotiations to revive the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, warning that the situation could quickly worsen if the stalled talks fail. Rafael Grossi, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), said on Tuesday that the diplomatic effort to resuscitate the nuclear deal, or the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), "is not at its best point," but progress is "not impossible." "I hope to be able to re-set, restore, reinforce that indispensable dialogue," he said during a discussion at the London-based Chatham House think tank. "Without that, things are going to get worse." The talks to salvage the JCPOA kicked off in the Austrian capital of Vienna in April 2021, three years after the United States, under Donald Trump, unilaterally withdrew from the deal and slapped draconian sanctions as part of the so-called "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran. The negotiations, which kicked off under the Biden administration, have been at a standstill since August last year due to Washington's insistence on its hard-nosed position of not removing all the sanctions imposed by the Trump administration.—APP

Russia conducting 'hybrid war'
in Moldova: Prime Minister

BRUSSELS: Russia is trying to destabilise Moldova by sponsoring protests and conducting cyber attacks, the country's prime minister told during a TV interview. "We are seeing elements of hybrid war. We are seeing, for example, pro-Russian forces trying to destabilise the country politically through paid protests which quickly subsided when the oligarchs that fled Moldova were put on the sanctions lists and their money flows were restricted," Natalia Gavrilii said. "We've had the biggest cyber attacks in 2022 in the history of our country, and we are seeing

bomb threats. "A lot of the situation in Moldova will depend on the evolution of the war in Ukraine. We see the brave Ukrainians being very resilient and fighting for the security not only of their country, but also for the security of Moldova and for wider for the values that we as Europeans profess," she added. Gavrilii spoke to Euronews during a visit to Brussels to take part in the seventh EU-Moldova Association Council, taking place just months after the country was granted EU candidate status alongside Ukraine. She said that the country's security is highly vulnerable to events unfolding in neighbouring



Ukraine, with the war putting Moldova's economy, energy security and social stability under great strain. Moldova is high on the list of at-risk states, as Russia has numerous openings to exploit its economic

and energy dependence. Before the war, the small country imported all of its gas from Russia but Gazprom has since severely reduced deliveries. "We were expecting growth of 5% in 2022 and instead we saw a decrease in economic growth by 5.5%. We have very high inflation and for example, the tariff for gas went up seven times, the tariff for electricity went up three times," Gavrilii told Euronews. "And although we have targeted social assistance programmes, the bills that people are seeing have increased dramatically," she said, adding that wages have not adjusted accordingly.—Agencies

Biden approves \$10B HIMARS sale to Poland

WASHINGTON: The Biden administration approved a prospective \$10 billion sale of the US's High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) to Poland as NATO continues to push back against Russia's war in Ukraine. Under the terms of the proposed sale, Poland would receive 18 units of the light multiple rocket launcher systems, 468 HIMARS Launcher Loader Module kits, 45 M57 Army Tactical Missile Systems and 461 M30A2 Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System Alternative Warhead (GMLRS-AW) pods with the Insensitive Munitions Propulsion System (IMPS), the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) said in a statement. In addition, the potential sale includes 521 M31A2 Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System Unitary (GMLRS-U) pods with the Insensitive Munitions Propulsion System (IMPS) and 532 XM403 Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System Extended Range Alternative Warhead (GMLRSER AW) pods. Practice rockets, support and com-



munications equipment, spare and repair parts, and a host of other equipment is also included, as well as US government and contractor support services. The principal contractor for the sale would be Lockheed Martin, which manufactures the HIMARS rocket launchers. The announcement comes amid Russia's ongoing war against neighboring Ukraine, which has further heightened Warsaw's efforts to bolster its military. Poland has been a NATO member since 1999. "The proposed sale will improve Poland's military goals of updating capability while further enhancing interoperability with the United States and other allies," the DSCA said. "Poland intends to use these defense articles and services to modernize its armed forces and expand its capability to strengthen its homeland defense and deter regional threats. Poland will have no difficulty absorbing this equipment into its armed forces," it added. Congress was notified of the potential sale on Tuesday.—DNA

EU is doing
its best to
help Türkiye

BRUSSELS: The EU is doing its best to help Türkiye in this difficult time, in the wake of two major earthquakes, said the bloc's foreign policy chief on Tuesday. Speaking to Turkish journalists in Brussels, Joseph Borrell stressed that the union had mobilized its maximum capabilities to help Türkiye following the deadly quakes, including rescue teams and relief materials. He said relations between Ankara and Brussels were tenser when he took his post three years ago but recently got relatively more stable. Borrell added, however, that bilateral relations are not without significant problems. According to him, Ankara's close relations with Moscow and a possible Turkish military operation in northern Syria due to the terror threat by the terrorist group PKK are sources of disagreements between the union and Türkiye. Türkiye is a crucial partner to the union and an important actor in the region, Borrell said, adding that bilateral relations hence should be improved.—Agencies

South Korean
lawmakers
impeach
minister

SEOUL: South Korea's opposition-controlled parliament on Wednesday voted to impeach the country's interior and safety minister, Lee Sang-min, holding him responsible for government failures in disaster planning and the response that likely contributed to the high death toll in a crowd crush that killed nearly 160 people in October. The impeachment suspends Lee from his duties and the country's Constitutional Court has 180 days to rule on whether to unseat him for good or give him back the job. Vice Minister Han Chang-seob will step in as acting minister until the Constitutional Court decides on Lee's fate. Lee is seen as a key ally of conservative President Yoon Suk Yeol, whose office issued an irritated response to his impeachment, accusing opposition lawmakers of abandoning legislative principles and creating "shameful history." Lee issued a statement expressing regret after lawmakers voted 179-109 in favor of impeaching him and said he would defend his case in the Constitutional Court. "(I) hope that the vacuum in public safety (management) created by this unprecedented situation would be minimized," Lee said. Lee is the first ever South Korean Cabinet minister to be impeached by the National Assembly. Lawmakers had previously impeached former conservative President Park Geun-hye in December 2016. Three months later she was formally removed from office by the Constitutional Court and arrested over a huge corruption scandal.—APP

Australia
to dispatch
72-member
search,
rescue team

ANKARA: Australia announced on Wednesday that it would immediately dispatch a 72-member search and rescue team to southern Turkey in the aftermath of two deadly earthquakes that affected 10 provinces. Foreign Minister Penny Wong said the team would help local authorities in their ongoing search and rescue operation. "Early today following advice from my department I agreed to activate AUSASSISTPLAN plan to deploy an urban search and rescue team of up to 72 personnel to take care to assist local authorities," Wong told the parliament. "Our National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) is now conducting an urgent assessment to ensure the safety of Australian personnel. NEMA is working closely with Fire and Rescue New South Wales the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the ADF (Defence Australia) to coordinate the deployment as soon as possible," she added. The team includes urban search and rescue specialists who are highly trained to locate, provide medical assistance to, and remove victims who have become trapped.—APP

Briefs

Sheikh handed over to Murree police

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: An Islamabad district and sessions court on Wednesday granted the Murree police one-day transit remand of Awami Muslim League (AML) chief and PTI ally Sheikh Rashid. Rashid was arrested Feb 2 by the Islamabad police for remarks he made against former president Asif Ali Zardari. Later, another case was also registered against him at the Murree police station for manhandling a police official at the time of his arrest. Ahead of the hearing today, the former interior minister was brought to the court amid tight security. As the proceeding commenced, Rashid's lawyers - Ali Bukhari and Intizar Panjota - and the prosecutor presented their arguments. After listening to both sides, the court instructed the police to present Rashid before a relevant court in Murree by 2pm tomorrow, Thursday. A video posted on Rashid's Twitter account showed him talking to reporters outside the court. "All they want is for me to switch loyalties," he said ahead of the hearing.

NDMA sends special relief to quake-hit Syria

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Education, Rana Tanveer Hussain, and Chairman National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik on Wednesday witnessed the release of a special relief consignment sent for Syrian earthquake victims. According to the NDMA, on the instructions of the Prime Minister, NDMA sent a special relief shipment for the earthquake victims of Syria. The shipment included equipment comprising tents and blankets. The goods were sent to Damascus by a specially chartered plane from Islamabad Airport where the Syrian Ambassador was also present along with the Federal Minister and Chairman of NDMA. However, more relief materials will be sent soon for the Syrian brothers and sisters affected by the earthquake, the NDMA said. It also rendered assurance of all possible support to Syria in this hour of difficulty by Pakistan. The relief goods will be received by Pakistani Ambassador to Syria, Shahid Alvi whereas more relief supplies will be sent by road to Syria and Turkey soon.

Rupee claws back against US dollar

DNA

KARACHI: The Pakistan rupee gained ground against the US dollar Wednesday as the market was hopeful of a positive outcome of the ongoing talks between the government and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In the inter-bank market, the rupee appreciated Rs2.95 or 1.08% against the dollar to close at 273.33, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), up from yesterday's close of 276.28. Meanwhile, the local currency closed at 279 in the open market. Islamabad began its formal talks with the global lender last month to discuss an economy-rescuing plan that also includes an installment of a \$1.1 billion loan payment from a \$6.5 billion bailout package, which was designed to ward off Pakistan's economic meltdown in 2019. To meet the IMF's demand for the much-needed loan, the government has already hiked up the price of petroleum products which will move the already record-high inflation upwards and increase the rates of power, gas and other commodities that are also in the pipeline.

Outgoing Egyptian Defence Attache Col. Mahmoud hosts farewell reception

Says he will miss hospitality of Pakistani friends and COSA colleagues

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The outgoing Defence Attache of Egypt Col Mahmoud Hassan hosted a farewell reception to say goodbye to his friends. A large number of DAs from various countries attended the reception. The Dean of COSA Col Nicolas Presson and the incoming Defence Attache of Egypt Brig. General Mohamed Saad were also present. Col Mahmoud in his speech thanked his colleagues for extending to him fullest cooperation during his tenure in Pakistan. He said will remember for ever time spent in Pakistan - a country his considers his second home. He also wished good luck to his successor Brig General Mohamed Saad and introduced him to other colleagues. Brig Gen Saad in his remarks recognized services of the outgoing Egyptian Defence Attache and wished him best of luck in his future career. He said he was looking forward to working with his colleagues from COSA and the Pakistani friends. He hoped defence relations between Egypt and Pakistan would further be cemented.



ISLAMABAD: Defence Attache of Egypt Col. Mahmoud Hassan hosted a farewell reception to say goodbye to his friends. He also introduced his successor, Brig. General Mohamed Saad. The event was attended by the DAs of various countries including the Dean Col. Nicolas Presson. - DNA

EXHIBITION PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGES AND MATTER

"Japanese Prints of 1970s" inaugurated at the PNCA

Ambassador WADA Mitsuhiro hoped that the viewer will gain a deeper understanding of contemporary art trends of the 1970s which were triggered by the print medium

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Japan Foundation and the Embassy of Japan in Pakistan in collaboration with the Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) have showcased an impressive exhibition of "Photographic Images and Matter: Japanese Prints of the 1970s" here at the premises of the National Art Gallery in Islamabad. H.E. Mr. WADA Mitsuhiro, the Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, inaugurated the exhibition on Wednesday 8th February in the presence of many guests including artists and art students. The Japan Foundation's newly organized travelling exhibition "Photographic Images and Matter: Japanese Prints of the 1970s" which is curated by the curator Kyoji TAKIZAWA focuses on print expressions from the 1970s as seen in the work of 14 artists who helped develop a print movement in the world of Japanese contemporary art. Divided into two sections, the exhibition showcases "The Age of Photographic Im-

ages," which focuses on the use of photographic images in the print medium, and

"Images of Autonomous Matter," which focuses on works that were shaped by the

intentions of matter. The exhibition aims to give a deeper understanding of contemporary art trends of the 1970s which were triggered by the print medium. The artworks of 14 eminent Japanese artists were displayed in the exhibition. Ambassador WADA Mitsuhiro, while speaking on the occasion of inaugural ceremony, said that this exhibition provides a good opportunity to the viewers to take a glimpse of the Japanese prints of the 1970s, an era in which new trend emerged in contemporary Japanese art due to a focus on photographic images and matter. He hoped that the viewer will gain a deeper understanding of contemporary art trends of the 1970s which were triggered by the print medium. The Japan Foundation continuously conducts the "Traveling Exhibitions Programme" to introduce Japanese arts and culture to overseas. This exhibition is one of the Exhibitions which is part of this programme. The exhibition will remain open to visitors till 19th February.



Germany won't be part of supply arms competition: Scholz

BERLING: Germany won't participate in the competition to raise stakes when it comes to decision on providing weapons to Ukraine, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said in a speech at the Bundestag on Wednesday. "What harms our unity is a public competition to outdo each other along the lines of: battle tanks, submarines, aircraft - who is asking for more?" he said. "What is harmful is flamboyant domestic political statements, criticism of partners and allies on the open stage. Germany won't be part of that." Scholz said the decision to send German-made Leopard tanks to Kiev had been reached in the course of confidential talks with the US. "We won't make decisions that will make NATO a party to the conflict," he went on to say. "It's not NATO that's at war with Russia." According to the chancellor,

Russia must "end the war, the sooner, the better for Ukraine, for Russia and for the entire world." Scholz asserted that Russia "won't reach its goals either of the battlefield" or by making peace on its terms. Germany on Tuesday approved the donation of 178 Leopard 1A5 tanks to Kiev. The vehicles will be drawn from industrial inventories. The first shipments of Leopard 1 tanks could be delivered to Ukraine this summer, but most of them are unlikely to be supplied before 2024. German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius said Ukraine would get more than 100 Leopard 1A5 tanks from several European countries. Kiev could get 20 to 25 tanks by summer, and up to 80 by the end of the year. The goal is to provide Ukraine with more than 100 tanks by the first or second quarter of 2024, according to the minister. - Online

PTI govt halted progress on CPEC: Ahsan Iqbal

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday said that Pakistan and China launched a historic programme, China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) that was going to be a game changer for Pakistan economy but the PTI government in 2018 reversed the progress by hurling clueless allegations on the previous government. Speaking at a ceremony held here to celebrate China Pakistan Space Cooperation, the minister said that in 2013, China endorsed the friendship with Pakistan in real term as it approved that it truly was a friend in need. "When no country was willing to invest even a single dollar in Pakistan, China agreed to invest \$46 billion under CPEC and gave a message to the world that Pakistan was a safe haven for investment", Ahsan Iqbal added. Within three years, he said China invested \$29 billion in the sectors which were in deep crisis such as energy and infrastructure. He said China helped Pakistan construct state of the art infrastructure, modern information highway fiber optical cable, Gwadar port besides utilizing long awaited Tharparkar coal for energy production. Similarly in 2017-18, the CPEC was entered to a phase where the world started looking at Pakistan. "The whole world was looking at Pakistan which was going to be the investment center in the region". Pakistan got and missed three golden opportunities to change its destiny. In 2018, he said the big Chinese companies had opened their offices in Islamabad. "I was expecting at that time that in next five years, we will manage to attract \$30-40 billion in private sector investment because the Chinese industry was relocating. - DNA

Biden warns China over threats to US sovereignty

WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden has warned that the US will protect itself if China threatens its sovereignty as he used a joint address to Congress to deliver a defiant message to Beijing and defend his economic record in the White House. "I am committed to work with China where it can advance American interests and benefit the world," Biden said. "But make no mistake... if China threatens our sovereignty, we will act to protect our country." The president's comments during his State of the Union address on Tuesday night came as tensions between the US and China have flared up after the Pentagon detected a Chinese spy balloon flying over the US and shot it down over the Atlantic Ocean. The episode led Antony Blinken, the secretary of state, to cancel a planned trip to China and dashed hopes of a detente between Washington and Beijing after Biden's meeting with Xi Jinping, the Chinese president, in November. In an energetic oration met with cheers from Democrats and boos from Republi-

cans, Biden also said his economic plans, with billions of dollars in subsidies for domestic manufacturing including semiconductor, were helping the US win the economic competition. "I will make no apologies that we are investing to make America strong. Investing in American innovation, in industries that will define the future, and that China's government is intent on dominating," Biden said. "[We are] investing in our alliances and working with our allies to protect our advanced technologies so they're not used against us. Modernising our military to safeguard stability and deter aggression," he added. Domestically, Biden said he is building an "economy where no one is left behind" that will deliver tangible benefits for "blue-collar" America. Twelve million jobs were created under his watch over the past two years, he said, in a bounce-back from the damage wrought by the coronavirus pandemic. "My economic plan is about investing in places and people that have been forgotten," Bid-

en said. After November's midterm elections, Republicans took control of the House of Representatives, which will stymie Biden's legislative ambitions and could lead to big clashes, particularly over raising the debt ceiling. But Democrats still have a majority in the Senate, meaning the president will be able to secure the confirmation of judicial nominations and executive appointments. "To my Republican friends, if we could work together in the last Congress, there is no reason we can't work together in this new Congress," Biden said. He accused Republican lawmakers of wanting to "take the economy hostage" if Democrats do not capitulate to their demands for major spending cuts. The House chamber erupted in jeers when Biden said some Republicans wanted to introduce drastic cuts to Social Security and Medicare for senior citizens. After Republican lawmakers shouted "liar" and cheered in favour of protecting funding for the entitlement programmes, Biden deviated from his prepared remarks. "I'll stop them, I'll veto it... Not today.

Not tomorrow. Not ever. But apparently it's not going to be a problem," he said. With the first anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine looming later this month, Biden said America was "united" in supporting Kyiv and claimed credit for building the global coalition that stood up to Vladimir Putin. "We will stand with you as long as it takes," he said, with Oksana Markarova, Ukraine's ambassador to the US, in the audience. Biden touted his expansive subsidy scheme for clean energy, which could divert green investments from Europe to the US and has sparked rising tensions with the EU. "[It] is the most significant investment ever to tackle the climate crisis," he said. Recommended The Big Read Joe Biden starts making his case for a second term Republican leaders are unlikely to embrace Biden's message of bipartisanship. Sarah Huckabee Sanders, the governor of Arkansas and former White House press secretary, delivered the opposition party's official rebuttal, accusing Democrats of being preoccupied by "woke fantasies". - Agencies

US briefed 40 nations on China spy balloon incident

WEB DESK

WASHINGTON: The United States held briefings in Washington and Beijing with foreign diplomats from 40 nations about the Chinese spy balloon that Washington shot down on Saturday for spying over U.S. territory, a senior administration official and diplomats said on Tuesday. U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman on Monday briefed nearly 150 foreign diplomats across 40 embassies, the official said, while in Beijing the U.S. embassy gathered foreign diplomats on Monday and Tuesday to present U.S. findings about the balloon. "We want to make sure that we are sharing as much as we can with countries around the world who may also be susceptible to these types of operations," the senior administration official said. Sherman's briefing was first reported by the Washington Post. The appearance of the Chinese balloon over the United States last week caused political outrage in Washington and prompted U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken to cancel a trip to Beijing that both countries had hoped would patch their frayed relations. Blinken would have arrived in Beijing on Sunday. A U.S. Air Force fighter jet shot down the balloon off the South Carolina coast on Saturday, a week after it first entered U.S. airspace. China's foreign ministry has said it was a weather balloon that had blown off course and accused the United States of overreacting.

PAF training jet crash lands in Mardan

DNA

MARDAN: A Pakistan Air Force (PAF) training plane on Wednesday made an emergency landing in the fields near Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Mardan after facing issues mid-flight, the PAF said. Both pilots present in the plane - a Super Mushshak training aircraft - survived the crash-landing, the PAF said in a statement. It added that a board of inquiry would be constituted to investigate the incident. In March 2022, two pilots lost their lives when their trainer aircraft crashed on the outskirts of Peshawar. In February 2020, a Mushshak aircraft - separate from the Super Mushshak model - crashed in the Mardan district as well while on a routine training mission. The pilot had ejected safely before the plane crashed. The Super Mushshak aircraft is an advanced variant of the Mushshak basic trainer and basic flight training is provided on the aircraft for aspiring pilots.