



# Islamabad POST

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## Briefs

### Pak stresses on trade projects

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabhani Khar has said Pakistan's focus is on investment, trade and connectivity projects to achieve economic revitalization. She was addressing, through video link, a one-day International Conference on Pakistan's Strategic Frontiers organized by Institute of Strategic Studies in Islamabad on Thursday. She said Afghanistan offers immense opportunities in terms of realization of Pakistan's vision to becoming a trade and energy connectivity hub and integration of South, Central and Western Asia.

### IHC grants bail to Sh. Rashid

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad High Court (IHC) has approved bail of former interior minister Sheikh Rashid against the surety bonds in the sum of Rs 50000 besides ordering to release him forthwith. The case came up for hearing before single bench of IHC led by Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani here Thursday. Suleman Akram counsel for Sheikh Rashid and Advocate General (AG) Islamabad appeared before the court. The court inquired during the hearing of the case what allegation has been leveled against Sheikh Rashid.

**Pak condemns raids on BBC offices**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan says raids on BBC's offices in India are another manifestation of shrinking space for freedom of media there and are a stain on India's democratic credentials. Responding to questions at her weekly news briefing in Islamabad today, Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said these raids are reprisals of BBC's documentary on Gujarat massacre of 2002 and India's illegal and unilateral steps in Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir on August 5, 2019.

## CEC SIKANDAR SULTAN SAYS

# Efforts being made to limit ECP powers

The apex court asks CEC to submit written reply today about problems he is facing; SC says Punjab, KP polls in 90 days

SHUJAAT HAMZA / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikander Sultan Raja on Thursday informed the Supreme Court that efforts were being made to curtail the powers of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). The ECP chief made the statement when he appeared before the Supreme Court in a case related to the transfer of former Lahore capital city police officer (CCPO) Ghulam Mehmood Dogar. He was summoned by the apex court to explain the reasons behind the Dogar's removal. During Thursday hearing, Justice Ijazul Ahsan asked why the CCPO was removed despite orders of the Supreme Court and what was the hurry in issuing the transfer orders. The lawyer for the Punjab government informed the bench that Dogar was transferred on the orders of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). At this, Justice Ahsan asked what role the ECP has in the transfer of officers. While Justice Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi remarked that the ECP's role comes into effect after the elections have been announced. Additional advocate general told the court that they had taken approval from the ECP over

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## Punjab Elections: SC judges ask CJP to take suo moto

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: A Supreme Court (SC) bench has asked Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial to take suo motu of the delay in announcement of date for elections in Punjab, media reported on Thursday. According to details, a two-member bench consisting of Justice Ijazul Ahsan and Justice Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi heard a petition against the transfer of Ghulam Mehmood Dogar as the Lahore capital city police officer (CCPO). During the hearing, the Supreme Court sought a detailed report from Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikander Sultan Raja regarding the obstacles in the way of the Punjab elections. The bench referred the matter to CJP Umar Ata

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# Incumbent govt not her govt, says Maryam

PML-N will be responsible for inflation only when Nawaz Sharif is in Pakistan

LAHORE: PML-N senior vice president Maryam Nawaz said the poor man is affected by inflation and the incumbent government is not her government. She further said PML-N will be responsible for inflation only when Nawaz Sharif is in Pakistan. The inside story of delegation of youths with Maryam Nawaz has come to open. To the question from the youths on the ill performance of government Maryam Nawaz said the responsibility of situation of the price hike cannot be placed on PML-N. The poor man is affected by inflation but this is not my government. There will be our government in Pakistan only when Nawaz Sharif is in Pakistan. She went on to say only Nawaz Sharif can take ahead Pakistan. The engagements of Maryam Nawaz are continuing. She met ShahidKhaqanAbbasi in central secretariat of PML-N in Lahore. They exchanged views on political situation and party matters.

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# Egoistic Imran disregarding law: Marriyum

SHUJAAT HAMAZA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb said on Thursday that the person, who had rendered the law of the land as the law of the jungle, had been defying and sheer disregard for the Constitution and the law for the last two days. The entire nation and the world had been witnessing the drama staged by the person, who had no regard for the judicial system, the minister said in posts on her Twitter handle, criticising Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan. It seemed that the entire

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# Violation of Oath: Imran wants inquiry against Gen Bajwa

The PTI chairman referred to a column published in a newspaper earlier this month in which startling revelations about Imran Khan's gov't were made attributing General (ret'd) Bajwa



NEWS DESK

LAHORE: Former prime minister Imran Khan has asked President ArifAlvi to order an inquiry against former chief of army staff (COAS) General (ret'd) Qamar Javed Bajwa for his alleged violation of oath and the Constitution of Pakistan. "Some very disturbing information has now come into the public domain whereby it is clear that Gen ret'd Bajwa as COAS violated his oath of office repeatedly," the PTI chief stated in a letter written to the president, shared publicly on the party's official social media channels today.

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# LHC denies protective bail to Imran Khan

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Thursday disposed of a petition filed by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan, seeking protective bail after he failed to appear before the court. The court had given Imran Khan time to appear before the court until 6:30pm. Despite being given time, the PTI chairman failed to appear before the court after which the two-member bench of the LHC dismissed his plea. Amid rumours about his arrest, the former prime minister decided to appear before the Lahore High Court (LHC). The route outside the former premier's residence had been cleared for presenting him before the court. On this occasion, the PTI supporters chanted slogans to support Mr Khan and his party. Imran Khan had previously decided not to appear in court, citing health concerns after doctors barred him from traveling.

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ANKARA: President of Turkiye Recep Tayyip Erdogan receives Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif upon his arrival in Turkish Presidency. - DNA

# PTI flays govt for political vendetta

Threat to arrest Khan meant to divert public attention from inflation: Asad

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leadership lambasted the imported government for the ongoing politics of revenge, delaying tactics to find escape routes from the elections in Punjab and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP) in sheer violation of the constitution and brining the economic wheel of the country to a grinding halt. The PTI leadership said that the government of crooks could not face the people; hence they were using all lame excuses to delay the polls; however, all such tactics would not work anymore and polls would be held in the both provinces in the stipulated timeframe given in the constitutions. PTI Secretary General Asad Umar made it clear that all those who were too proud of their power should remove their delusions that 'we only bow down to Allah alone'. He said that the imported government threatened to arrest PTI Chairman Imran Khan in the dark of the night to distract the public attention from the back-breaking inflation. Asad said that they could do anything to divert attention of the inflation-stricken

# PM tells Erdogan Pakistan stands with brotherly people of Turkiye

PM meets Turkish President; conveys heartfelt condolences on behalf of Pakistani nation

NEWS DESK

ANKARA: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif reached Ankara on a two-day visit to Turkiye. Turkish high officials received the Prime Minister at the airport. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif met with President of Turkiye Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Ankara. The Prime Minister conveyed heartfelt condolences on behalf of the entire Pakistani nation over the loss of precious lives and the widespread damage caused by the earthquake. The prime minister reiterated Pakistan's firm commitment to stand by the Turkish people during difficult times and to continue extending all possible support to the ongoing relief effort. Meanwhile in a Tweet, the Prime Minister said that he is leaving for Turkiye with a message of unwavering

solidarity and support for Turkish brothers and sisters from the people and government of Pakistan. He said true to the spirit of one nation living in two states, we consider their loss as ours. The Prime Minister said natural disaster as earthquake in Turkiye and Syria are beyond the capacity of any single government to handle. He said it is time the world should come forward and extend support to the suffering humanity. In the wake of the devastating earthquake in southern Turkiye, the prime minister had spoken with President Erdogan on February 6 and assured him of all possible assistance for the rescue and relief effort. All available resources have been fully mobilized to help the Turkish people and the prime minister is personally overseeing the relief effort. Pakistan and Turkiye enjoy deep fraternal ties. The two countries have resolutely stood by each other during every trial and tribulation.

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Ukraine pounded by missiles as Russia eyes capturing Bakhmut - Page 08







## Briefs

### 4th Pak-KSA joint drill 'Al Kassah-IV' concludes

ISLAMABAD: The closing ceremony of the fourth Pakistan-Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Joint Military Exercise "Al Kassah-IV" was held at the Military College of Engineering, Risalpur on Thursday. It was the 4th joint exercise of the Al-Kassah series as part of bilateral military cooperation between both friendly countries. The troops from Royal Saudi Land Forces and Pakistan Army participated in the exercise, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said. The two-week-long exercise was aimed at sharing mutual experiences in the field of route search, area search, vehicle/ personal search, and area clearance operations. The drills and techniques regarding improvised explosives devices (IED), vehicle improvised explosive devices (VIED), anti-suicidal, victim-operated improvised explosive devices and handling of explosive areas were the special focus areas of the joint exercise. The Engineer-in-Chief Pakistan Army witnessed the closing ceremony as chief guest, whereas a high-level military delegation from KSA, headed by Director General Engineers Major General Saad Misfer Alqatani, also attended the ceremony. - APP

### Explosion in Jaffar Express claims 2 lives

CHICHAWATNI: An explosion in Jaffar Express near Chichawatni has left two persons dead and several injured. The explosion occurred in washroom of fourth bogie of the train. 14 persons from Tableghi Jamat were travelling in fourth bogie. The train was on its way from Quetta to Peshawar. On information police, rescue 1122 and other institutions rushed to the scene. As per preliminary information the explosion took place due to gas leakage. The passengers said the explosion occurred as soon as the train left Mian Chunnun. The passengers kept on pulling emergency chain but the train staff did not pay any heed to it. The bodies and injured persons were shifted to hospital. Police have started investigation and they are trying to ascertain the nature of explosion. On the other side the care taker chief minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi has taken the notice of the incident. - Online

### Bilawal to attend Munich Security Conference

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari will undertake a visit to Germany to attend Munich Security Conference-2023 from February 16-20. During his visit, he will participate in several events and engage with international media, a Foreign Office press release said. The foreign minister will also hold bilateral meetings with foreign ministers from around the world. Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar will also attend the Munich Security Conference. Besides, on the invitation of the Lithuanian counterpart, Foreign Minister Bilawal will undertake a bilateral visit to Vilnius on February 20-21. During the visit, MoU on establishment of Bilateral Political Consultations between the governments of Pakistan and Lithuania will be signed. Foreign Minister Bilawal will hold talks with his Lithuanian counterpart and call on the Speaker of the Lithuanian Parliament. In the last leg of his tour, the foreign minister will visit Hungary from February 21-22. He will hold official talks with his Hungarian counterpart where the two sides would deliberate upon the entire spectrum of bilateral relations and exchange views on regional and international issues of mutual interest. - APP

DNA



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal along with the CEO Air Link Communications Muzaffar Piracha, Ambassadors of Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and CEO Serena Hotels South and East Asia Aziz Boolani inaugurating the CEO Book during a function held at the Islamabad Serena Hotel. - DNA

## Ukraine pounded by missiles as Russia eyes capturing Bakhmut

President Volodymyr Zelenskiy's army has received vast amounts of aid, particularly from the United States which has committed more than \$27.4 billion since the conflict began. Senior US officials have advised Ukraine to hold off with an intended counter-offensive until latest supply of US weaponry is in place and training has been provided

DNA

KYIV: Russia rained missiles across Ukraine on Thursday and struck its largest oil refinery, Kyiv said, while the head of the Wagner mercenary group predicted the long-besieged city of Bakhmut would fall within a couple of months. Following a pattern of heavy bombardments after Ukrainian battlefield or diplomatic gains, Russia launched 36 missiles in the early hours, Ukraine's Air Force said, after NATO alliance officials met the previous day to plot more support for Kyiv. About 16 were shot down, it added, a lower rate than normal. The missiles triggered air-raid sirens and landed all over Ukraine, including at its largest oil refinery, Kremenchuk. The extent of damage was unclear at the unit, hit several times during the war with operations halted at least once. "Another massive missile attack by the terrorist state on civilian infrastructure in Ukraine," the Defence Ministry tweeted. Ukraine said the barrage included three KH-31 missiles and one Oniks which its air defences cannot shoot down. Police in Moldova said they again found missile debris near the border with Ukraine. Bolstered by tens of thousands of reservists, Russia has intensified ground attacks across southern and eastern Ukraine in recent weeks, and a major new offensive appears to be shaping as the first anniversary of its Feb. 24 invasion nears. The conflict has killed tens of thousands of people, pulverised Ukrainian cities, destabilised the global economy and uproot-

ed millions of people from their homes. Showing the scale of disruption, Germany said 1.1 million people arrived from Ukraine in 2022, exceeding its unprecedented migrant influx in 2015-16. Russia's current focus is on the small city of Bakhmut in Donetsk, one of two regions making up the Donbas, Ukraine's industrial heartland now partially occupied by Russia. In battles led by the Wagner group swelled by prison recruits, Russia has for months been pounding and encircling Bakhmut. Most of its pre-war population of about 70,000 people have left, leaving Ukrainian soldiers dug in. Bakhmut's capture would give Russia a stepping stone to advance on two bigger cities, Kramatorsk and Sloviansk, further west in Donetsk. But Ukraine and allies say seizing Bakhmut would be a pyrrhic victory given the months it has taken and what they claim is enormous loss of life in waves of Russian assaults. In an interview with a pro-war military blogger, Wagner head Yevgeny Prigozhin forecast Bakhmut would fall next month or in April, depending on how many men Ukraine throw into the fight and how well his men are supplied. "Because there are a huge number of problems that need to be solved. Naturally it will also depend on whether we continue to be bled," he added, referring to the end of prisoner recruits. As Ukraine burns through munitions fast and clamours for heavier firepower, including tanks and fighter jets, NATO members are ramping up production and promised more during meetings in Brussels this week. President Volodymyr Zelenskiy's army has received vast

amounts of aid, particularly from the United States which has committed more than \$27.4 billion since the conflict began. Senior U.S. officials have advised Ukraine to hold off with an intended counter-offensive until the latest supply of U.S. weaponry is in place and training has been provided. Zelenskiy thanked Norway for pledging \$7 billion over five years, its largest aid ever for a single recipient nation. Russia calls the invasion a "special military operation" against security threats and has cast deliveries of heavy weapons to Ukraine as proof that the West is escalating the war. Kyiv and its allies call Russia's actions a land grab. Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen and Canadian counterpart Melanie Joly were the latest in a stream of foreign dignitaries to travel to Ukraine. Cohen was to meet Zelenskiy in the first such visit during the war from Israel, which coordinates with Russia over strikes on suspected Iranian targets in Syria and has stopped short of pledging any direct weapons supplies to Kyiv. Joly met first lady Olena Zelenska and announced C\$21.2 million (\$15.8 million) in aid to address conflict-related sexual violence and demining of Ukraine, among other work. "Canada will continue to support them on the path toward peace and pursue accountability for the horrific crimes being committed across Ukraine for as long as it takes," she said. Zelenskiy, who has become something of a global celebrity during his leadership of Ukraine's war effort, was to open the Berlin Film Festival via video. Belarus, which allowed Russia to use its territory to send troops into Ukraine at the start of the war, said it would only fight alongside its ally if it was attacked.

## SC orders all parties to pay four percent super tax

ISLAMABAD, Feb 16 (APP):The Supreme Court on Thursday accepted appeals of the federal government and the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) and ordered the large-scale manufacturing industries to pay 4 percent super tax. A three-member SC bench comprising Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial, Justice Ayesha A Malik and Justice Athar Minalah heard the case regarding collection of super tax from large scale industries. It should be noted that various industries had challenged the super tax levied in the last year's budget, after which the Sindh High Court had invalidated the collection of 10 percent super tax from last year. The federal government and FBR had filed an appeal in the Supreme Court for recovery of super tax. Last year, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced a 10 percent tax on major industries including cement, steel, sugar, oil and gas, fertilizers, LNG terminals, textiles, banking, automobiles, chemicals, beverages and cigarettes. Through the Finance Act 2022, the government introduced a new section C-4 in the Income Tax Ordinance to impose a super tax on high income earners. Through

this section, FBR had imposed 10% super tax on 13 sectors earning more than Rs 150 million in FY 2022. The decision had since been challenged on various grounds in almost all the high courts of the country. Similarly, more than 100 petitions were filed in the Sindh High Court challenging the constitutionality of the provisions of the Finance Act, 2022. The petitions stated that the federal government has also imposed tax on past transactions in the Finance Act 2022. On December 22, 2022, the Sindh High Court had declared the tax implementation invalid from the previous fiscal year and stated that the tax would be applicable from the next tax year. However, the federal government and the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) filed appeals in the Supreme Court. While ruling on the above appeals, the Supreme Court ordered the payment of 4 percent super tax to all the parties. Earlier on February 6, the Supreme Court modified the interim order of the Lahore High Court and directed taxpayers with higher income to remit 50 percent of their super tax directly to the FBR within a week. - APP

## Rana Sana Ullah demands for Pervaiz Elahi's leaked audio forensic



KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD, Interior Minister Rana Sana Ullah on Thursday demanded the forensic test of former Punjab chief minister Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi's alleged leaked audio tape in which he was allegedly talking about managing the courts. The minister while addressing a press conference, here, urged the chief justice of Pakistan to take notice of the matter to bring the culprits to justice. "If the former Punjab CM

is found guilty after the forensic, then the matter should be presented before the judicial committee," he remarked. He said FIA was tasked to arrest Pervaiz Elahi after the forensic audit of the audio conversation. "Prima facie, Pervaiz Elahi should be arrested after the registration of a case," said the interior minister adding the FIA has been directed to consult the law ministry. Sana Ullah said it was not the first audio leak, such conversations were leaked on multiple occasions but no action was taken so that was why former Punjab CM fearlessly managing the top court of the country. Late issuance of NOCs from other departments like the irrigation department, railways, etc., or due to obstruction in the right of way or removal of built-up properties. Interior Minister Rana Sana Ullah also played the censored leaked audio clip in which the PML-Q leader [Pervaiz Elahi] can be purportedly heard discussing about the cases being heard in the top court. Referring to the audio leaks, Sanaullah said he censored the leaked audio clips as he did not want to reveal the identity of the superior court judge before forensic analysis. "How courageously he [Pervaiz Elahi] was managing the country's top court. I will request the chief justice to take notice of this," he remarked. The minister also criticised PTI chief Imran Khan for not appearing in the hearing despite court orders. "It is obligatory for everyone to show respect and dignity for the courts, but Imran despite repeated summons was not appearing before the court and violating the law," he said.

## Hike in price of petroleum products challenged

LAHORE: Hike in petroleum products price has been challenged in Lahore High Court (LHC). The petition has been filed by a citizen Munir Ahmad through Azhar Siddique advocate making ministry of petroleum, OGRA and others respondents. It has been said in the petition that hike in the prices of petroleum products is illegal. The court should nullify this enhancement in the prices of petroleum products. It is pertinent to mention here government has scaled up the prices of petroleum products and with this increase the new price of petrol per liter has been fixed Rs 272, high speed diesel Rs 280 and light speed diesel Rs 196.68. - Online

## 'Pakistan to welcome investment from UAE'

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar said on Monday that Pakistan would welcome investment from United Arab Emirates (UAE). During a call on meeting with Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director and Managing Director of International Holding Company (IHC), Syed Basar Shueb, Dar explained to him various investment opportunities in Pakistan. He informed the CEO of IHC regarding the recent visit of the prime minister and his various meetings held with Emirati businessmen and investors. - APP

## Lukashenko warns Belarus will join Russia

MINSK: Few people know Vladimir Putin quite as well as Alexander Lukashenko does. The authoritarian leader of Belarus is a firm Kremlin ally and backer of what Mr Putin refers to as the "special military operation" - what most of the world calls Russia's war in Ukraine. Since his full-scale invasion of Ukraine a year ago, Mr Putin hasn't sat down with Western journalists. But in Minsk, Mr Lukashenko took questions from a small group of foreign media, including BBC. "Last year you allowed your country to be used as a staging ground for Russia's invasion," journalist reminded Mr Lukashenko. - DNA

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