



Islamabad POST

Saturday, February 18, 2023

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Finland's NATO membership now in "Turkey's hands"

Detailed News On Page-08

KSA keen to boost trade ties with Pakistan

Detailed News On Page-08



Billionaire tech banker in China missing

Detailed News On Page-06



ALL TERRORISTS KILLED

Terrorists attack Police Chief office

Operation successfully concluded by midnight; Army's SSG, Police and Rangers took part in operation; Banned TTP claims responsibility

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The office of the Karachi police chief, which came under attack on Friday by armed militants, has been cleared, according to officials, with at least three terrorists killed. "I can so far confirm that the Karachi Police Office building has been cleared. 3 terrorists have been neutralised," said Sindh government spokesperson Murtaza Wahab on Twitter at 10:42pm, three-and-a-half hours after the attack occurred. A spokesperson for the Sindh Rangers said the operation had been completed and the clearance process was under way. Earlier, Armed men opened fire at the Karachi police chief's office, situated on the main artery of Sharea Faisal, officials confirmed, the latest attack on security forces as terror incidents see an uptick across the country. The

CTD kills TTP commander in Kala Bagh encounter

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Punjab claimed to have repulsed an attack by militants on law enforcers in Kala Bagh Town of Mianwali district, killing a commander of the proscribed Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). According to a CTD statement, the militants belonging to the TTP attacked law enforcers in Kala Bagh Town of Mianwali district. It said militants opened indiscriminate

attack began at around 7:10pm, while multiple explosions were reported as well after terrorists targeted the five-storey police building. The banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) claimed responsibility for the attack. A spokesperson for the Sindh Rangers said initial estimates suggest there are eight to ten "armed terrorists". Reports of firing on Sharea Faisal - Karachi's main thoroughfare with a number of strategic installations, including the Pakistan Airforce's Faisal Base - emerged around 7:15pm. A police officer, who did not want to be named, told media that the attackers entered the office wearing police uniforms - a similar move used in the Peshawar mosque suicide attack that claimed the lives of more than 80 people.

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ADIAMAN: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meeting Turkish earthquake victims in Adiyaman and offering condolences. - DNA

NA mini-budget session adjourns without vote

NA session to resume on Monday at 5 pm

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly session discussing the recently presented mini-budget was adjourned on Friday without a vote on the amendments proposed. The crucial Finance (Supplementary) Bill, 2023, if passed by the house, will help in reviving the delayed International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme and avert default from Pakistan on its mandatory payments to international lenders. The session will now resume on February 20 at 5 pm. The session today was chaired by NA Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf. Finance Minister Ishaq Dar had formally unveiled a Rs170 billion mini-budget that carried some highly inflationary measures but spared the commercial banks and traders of any new taxation, weakening the coalition government's case of putting burden on the sectors which could bear it the most. The case of commercial banks was more glaring given the fact that the finance minister had announced in the recent past to impose heavy taxes on them to punish them for "currency manipulation". He had stated last year that the banks made about Rs50 billion in undue profits, which the government would recover by imposing additional taxes.

Pakistan to extend maximum support to Turkiye in rehab: PM

The premier hands over the relief goods to Turkish officials, during his visit to Adiyaman city

DNA

ADIYAMAN: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said Pakistan would continue to provide maximum assistance to the Turkiye in its post-earthquake rehabilitation and reconstruction phases. The prime minister expressed these views as he handed over the relief goods, mainly the winterized tents, to the Turkish officials, during his visit to Adiyaman city of Turkiye. A special aircraft of Pakistan Air Force transported relief goods to Adiyaman city, the most-affected area in the southeast Turkiye that suffered heavy damage from the earthquake of February 6. The prime minister interacted with the victims of earthquake who lost their families and conveyed to them sympathies on behalf of the Pakistani nation. Shehbaz Sharif on the occasion assured the Turkish government and the affected people that Pakistan would extend every possible cooperation to the brotherly country to cope with the devastation. He termed Turkiye as

Death toll rises to 44,000

ANKARA: The death toll from the deadly earthquakes in Turkiye and Syria has risen to more than 44,000. Turkish authorities said at least 38,044 people have been killed in the country. While the Syrian government said more than 5,800 people have died there. The United Nations has launched an appeal for one billion dollar in aid to help earthquake victims in Turkiye. Meanwhile, a Syrian family of seven, including five children, has been killed in a fire that struck a Turkish home they moved to after surviving last week's earthquake, local media reported. Turkey's state-owned Anadolu Agency reported citing a written statement from Konya Chief Public Prosecutor's Office that the single-storey house, in which 14 people lived, caught fire on Friday. Seven people injured in the incident were receiving treatment, it said. - DNA

Continued on Page 06

Mariyum meets women victims of earthquake

"The Government of Pakistan stands with its Turkish brothers and sisters in this hour of difficulty," she remarked

ADIYAMAN: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb on Friday met the earthquake-affected women in Adiyaman, Turkiye. The minister on the occasion hugged the victims and expressed her profound grief over the loss of life and property in the earthquake, a press release said.

She expressed solidarity with the government and the people of Turkiye on behalf of the government and the people of Pakistan. "The Government of Pakistan stands with its Turkish brothers and sisters in this hour of difficulty," she remarked. Mariyum Aurangzeb said Pakistan would provide all possible help for the rehabilitation of the earthquake victims. - APP



Briefs

FM meets Kuwaiti, German top diplomats

APP

MUNICH: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari had a meeting with his Kuwaiti counterpart Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah here on Friday. During meeting held here on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference-2023 being held in Germany from February 16 to 20, the two FM agreed to expand bilateral cooperation including in the area of economy. The two sides also exchanged views about celebrations to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Kuwait.

Maryam scolds ex-MPAs for inefficiency

DNA

LAHORE: Quite an embarrassing situation developed for the ex-members of MPAs belonging to PML-N on Friday when the party's Chief Organizer Maryam Nawaz scolded them for their inefficiency and poor performance. During the meeting of PML-N leaders at the Model Town secretariat, Maryam Nawaz admonished the party leaders for failing to spread the party's message and make it more popular.

Holiday Notice

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

- Editor

Punjab, KP Polls

President invites CEC for 'urgent' meeting

Expresses displeasure over apathy and inaction from Commission

SC suspends transfer order of CCPO Lahore

ISLAMABAD: Supreme Court (SC) while suspending his transfer order has reinstated Ghulam Mahmood Dogar again as Lahore Capital City Police Officer (CCPO). The court while rejecting the plea from Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) seeking time for provision of details of posting and transfer and plea from Islamabad High Court (IHC) Bar in connection with election in Punjab has maintained only case of transfer of CCPO Lahore is before us. We have sent matter of delay in polls in Punjab to Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP). A 3-member bench of SC presided over by Justice Ijazul Ahsan took up the case for hearing Friday. On inquiring by the court Secretary ECP Umar Hamid told the court Sikandar Sultan Raja is unable to come to court being unwell.

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has invited the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of Pakistan, Mr Sikandar Sultan Raja, for an urgent meeting on 20th February 2023, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, for consultation in terms of Section 57(1) of Elections Act, 2017, that provides that the President shall announce the date or dates of the general elections after consultation with the Commission (ECP). In his letter to the CEC, the President said that since his letter dated 08th February, some substantial developments (e.g., the Judgment of the Honourable Lahore High Court and recent observations of the Honourable Supreme Court) had taken place.

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'Jail Bharo' movement from Wednesday

Khan says that they had been claiming that the coalition government did not have the mandate and they cannot run the country

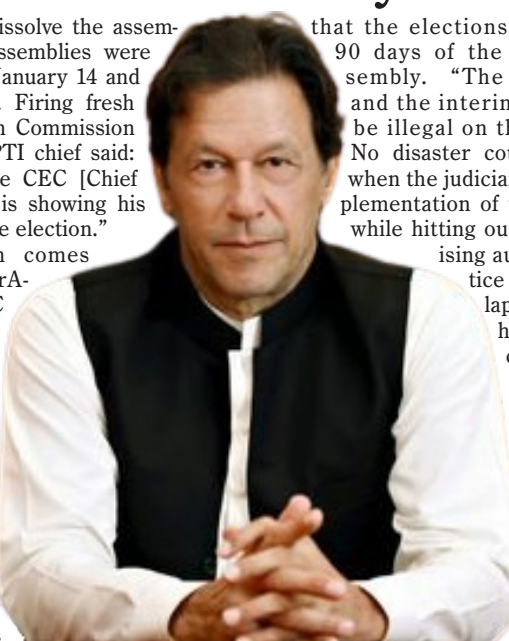
ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Blaming the incumbent coalition government for its "political victimisation" of his party leaders and allies, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan has announced kick-starting the 'Jail Bharo' (court arrest) movement from Wednesday, starting from Lahore. "We will fill jails, they [authorities] will have no space left to hide," he said while warning the Pakistan Democratic Movement-led (PDM) government during his address to the nation via video link from Lahore's Zaman Park residence on Friday, where he has been residing since being shot in the legs on November 3 last year. In the wake of sedition cases filed against his party leaders including Fawad Chaudhry, Azam Swati and Shahbaz Gill, Imran Khan on February 4 announced "Jail BharoTehreek" and asked PTI workers and supporters to prepare for movement across the country. The tensions between the incumbent government and the PTI have heightened, with no sign of respite as the elections in two provinces - Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa - near, following

the party's decision to dissolve the assemblies. Punjab and KP assemblies were dissolved by the PTI on January 14 and January 18, respectively. Firing fresh broadside at the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), the PTI chief said: "It is dangerous that the CEC [Chief Election Commissioner] is showing his inability on conducting the election." Khan's fresh criticism comes hours after President Dr Arif Alvi summoned CEC Sikandar Sultan Raja for an urgent meeting on February 20 (Monday) regarding the announcement of the date for fresh general elections. He said that they dissolved the provincial assemblies of Punjab and KP as per the knowledge that the country's Constitution clarifies

that the elections should be held within 90 days of the dissolution of any assembly. "The caretaker government and the interim chief ministers would be illegal on the 91st day," he added. No disaster could be bigger than that when the judiciary failed to ensure the implementation of the Constitution, he said while hitting out hard at the polls organising authority. "There is no justice where the rule of law collapses." Khan said that they had been claiming that the coalition government did not have the mandate and they cannot run the country. Lashing out at the incumbent rulers over the recently announced mini-budget, Khan asked as if raising prices is a "tough decision." The government has broken the backbone of people by hik-

ing the prices of all daily-use items, the deposed prime minister added. "IMF loans are not the solution to the problems being faced by the country." Taking a jibe at the PDM government, Khan said: "They did not come into power via election but auction. The government does not seem to conduct elections in 90 days. They fear elections." The ruling alliance wanted to win elections through the rigging, he accused the authorities and at the same time warned that the PTI would not "keep silent over snatching of elections". According to the PTI chief, it seems that institutions are under pressure and the government is running away from elections. He also vowed that the PTI would not let the government rig the elections, no matter what they do. Turning his guns towards the ruling Pakistan Peoples Party in Sindh, the former prime minister said the PPP has no vote bank in Karachi but it showed achievement in recent elections in the metropolis. Referring to journalist Arshad Sharif's assassination and alleged crackdown against his party's leadership, Khan said that the government wanted to send them behind the bars, hence, they would launch a court arrest campaign across the country.



LCCI invites budget proposals

LAHORE: The Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) on Friday invited budget proposals from all chambers of commerce and industry, and trade and industrial associations to prepare joint federal budget proposals 2023-24. LCCI President Kashif Anwar said that Pakistan's economy was suffering as a result of unstable rupee-dollar exchange rate, constantly rising business costs, inflation, high-interest rate etc., which were causing financial disruptions for almost every individual business. He said that instead of providing the economy with any relief, the import restrictions had worsened the situation. He said that the Minister of State and Chairman Reforms and Resource Mobilization Committee Ashfaq Tola visited the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry on February 13, 2023. During the meeting, he requested for preparing collective federal budget proposals 2023-24 by taking on board all the trade bodies including chambers and associations. He said that this would ensure better policy advocacy for the issues constraining the growth of business and economy in a more unified manner. Meanwhile, Executive Director at the Policy Research Institute of Market Economy (PRIME) gave a detailed and practical presentation and presented a precise document on the Charter of Economy to the President LCCI Kashif Anwar. The Charter of Economy initial document which was prepared by the LCCI in collaboration with the PRIME includes three sections. The first section is Fundamental Economic Rights and Principles of Economic Policy, the second part mainly focuses on the code of conduct which includes spending restraint, fair taxation, subsidies, budgeting, social protection, free markets & trade, currency and debt, targets and indicators and private property. The third and last section of the document details the implementation process. The President LCCI said that this document would be shared with all the stakeholders and the opinions from different professional organizations also. The LCCI President urged all the chambers and trade & industrial associations and universities to share their proposals pertaining to federal budget 2023-24 with LCCI at the earliest. Earlier, the LCCI President Kashif Anwar thanked Ameer Jamat-e-Islami, Siraj-ul-Haq for a positive response to the LCCI call for Charter of Economy.—APP

PIIB facilitates commissioning of 330 mw cheap fuel based project

ISLAMABAD: Private Power and Infrastructure Board (PIIB) today announced achievement of Commercial Operation Date (COD) of yet another Thar coal based power project located at Thar Block-II. ThalNova Power Project having generation capacity of 330 MW has achieved such a momentous milestone. This significant development is another achievement in PIIB's endeavors to provide cheap and indigenous electricity to the national grid. Sponsored by a joint venture comprising HUBCO, Thal Limited, Novatex Limited, China Machinery Engineering Corporation (CMEC), and Descon with 497.7 million US Dollars investment, ThalNova Power is a mine-mouth lignite-fired power plant at Thar Coal Block II Sindh and is a part of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The plant will be fueled by coal extracted from Thar Block II by the Sindh Engro Coal Mining Company and will utilize 1.9 million tons of coal to generate over 2 billion units of electricity per annum with anticipated annual savings of Rs. 55 billion.—APP

One Day CAMEA-ISSI-FES International Conference 'Pak strategic frontiers: adapting to evolving global trends'

DNA
ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East and Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies (ISSI), in collaboration with the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), hosted a one-day international conference on "Pakistan's Strategic Frontiers: Adapting to Evolving Global Trends." Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Ms. Hina Rabbani Khan, Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, Dr. Asad Majeed Khan, Director General ISSI, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Ms. Amina Khan, Director CAMEA and Dr. Niels Hegewisch, Country Director FES spoke in the inaugural session. The conference was divided into three working sessions: Evolving Dynamics in Afghanistan; Evolving Situation in the Middle East; and Emerging Non-Traditional Security Threats in Afghanistan, Central Asia & the Middle East. Minister of State Hina Rabbani Khan, in her keynote video address, stated that Pakistan, owing to its geographical location, is placed it at the center



of evolving global power dynamics and increasingly complex interplay between traditional and nontraditional foreign policy actors. She went on to say that globalization, interdependencies of economies and challenges of climate change and public health, water, energy and food security are compelling factors for win-win approaches. Geopolitics continues to influence interstate relations. She added that manipulation of interdependencies for geopolitics runs against the spirit of win-win cooperation that has been the hallmark of globalization for the last many decades and it is against the backdrop of these parallel global trends that Pakistan today has to define its interest. Foreign Secretary Dr. Asad Majeed Khan, in his keynote address, said that the global transformations necessitate newer approaches for Pakistan. In the contemporary international politics, economic interdependencies, investment, trade, energy, connectivity are shapers and drivers of interstate relations. He went on to say that, in parallel, we are witnessing new geopolitical contestations, competition for influence, resources and dominance in the domain of technology. Pakistan has to navigate similar competing trends and Pakistan's location also keeps it at the flashpoint of conflict. He also highlighted Pakistan's geo-economic pursuits and stated that CPEC is an opportunity redefining regional connectivity. Polarization and power projection have only brought catastrophe and the world needs cooperation, and not confrontation. Furthermore, he said that Pakistan is committed to good relations with its neighbours. DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood highlighted the flux and uncertainty in the global environment. Specifically, he pointed to intensifying great-power competition, differences and disputes escalating into conflict and wars, food and fuel crises engulfing states big and small, a global pandemic manifesting itself in different variants, and a looming existential threat to mankind in the shape of climate change. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood underlined that a global order marked by cooperative multilateralism, commitment to UN Charter principles and international

law, and strengthening of instruments for collaborative action was essential. In the context of Pakistan, he stated that after long and hard reflection, it had come to the view that comprehensive security – that puts a premium above all on human security – was the paradigm that it must follow. It encompasses everything from food and health security to climate resilience and water security to population and migration as well as gender security. "In essence, in the face of emerging global trends as well as all challenges and opportunities, Pakistan's task is clearly cut out: i.e., to manage the complicated geo-politics and accentuate the pivot to geo-economics," he concluded. Ms. Amina Khan, said that while these evolving global trends pose challenges at the same time and more importantly, they offer an array of opportunities, both economic and political, for Pakistan as well as the world at large. However, this will depend on how Pakistan takes charge and shapes its own future amidst these various scenarios.

2 accused involved in illegal sale of flour held

DNA
ISLAMABAD: Islamabad capital police Tarnol police station team apprehended two accused red handed involved in selling illegally government flour bags and recovered flour and empty bags from their possession, a police public relations officer said. He said that, following the special directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad capital police has intensified crackdown against the accused involved in fraudsters activities. Following these directives, the Tarnol police team arrested two accused involved in selling illegally government flour and recovered flour and empty bags from their possession. The arrested accused were identified as Naseeb Ullah and Abdulhal. Case has been registered against the nabbed accused and further investigation is underway.

One day CAMEA-ISSI-FES International Conference

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East and Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies (ISSI), in collaboration with the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), hosted a one-day international conference on "Pakistan's Strategic Frontiers: Adapting to Evolving Global Trends." Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Ms. Hina Rabbani Khan, Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, Dr. Asad Majeed Khan, Director General ISSI, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Ms. Amina Khan, Director CAMEA and Dr. Niels Hegewisch, Country Director FES spoke in the inaugural session.—DNA

Director PAJCCI urges educational institutions to provide more opportunities to Afghan students

OUR CORRESPONDENT
PESHAWAR: Director Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI), Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi has urged administrations of different educational institutions to provide maximum opportunities to Afghan students in completion of their studies. He expressed these views while talking with newly ap-

pointed Director IMSciences university, Dr. Usman Ghani. Zia Sarhadi said a large number of Afghan students are studying in different educational institutions in Pakistan and hopefully after completion of their studies will contribute in development of their war ravaged homeland (Afghanistan). Director PAJCCI also appreciated the contribution made by IMSciences in providing education facilities to Afghan students. He also recalled a recently organized three weeks long skill training by IMSciences on Fashion Design for Afghans which helped the beneficiaries to learn basic skills and make stitching and embroidery as a source of livelihood. Zia said the businessmen from Afghanistan during meetings of PAJCCI also

express their gratitude and appreciation for Pakistan government and even private educational institutions for accommodating Afghan students under different programme and even on scholarships. On this occasion, Director PAJCCI also congratulated newly appointed Director IMSciences, Usman Ghani and paid tribute to the services of his predecessor, Dr. Mohsin.

Food exports decrease 8.24%, imports increase 6.28% in 07 months

ISLAMABAD: Food group exports from the country during first 07 months of current financial year decreased by 8.24 percent, where as imports swelled 6.29 percent as compared the corresponding period of last year. Different food commodities worth \$2.708 billion exported, where as food commodities valuing \$5.983 billion imported from July-January, 2022-23 as compared the exports and imports of same period last year, according the data of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics.—APP

PBM inks MoU with NUML to support deserving students



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM) inks Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) with the National University of Modern Languages (NUML) here on Friday to keep the deserving students on their educational track. PBM Managing Director Amir Fida Paracha signed

the MoU with NUML Director General Brig Syed Nadir Ali, said a press release. The MoU describes PBM's further support to the deserving students at NUML as PBM will support 250 post-graduate and undergraduate deserving students yearly for their education. Addressing

the ceremony, Amir Fida Paracha expressed his enthusiasm to support the deserving and promising students of the country enabling them to complete their education. He said that PBM is leading the country towards a social welfare state with its eminent pro-poor services. He further highlighted the PBM's

Al Mustafa Welfare Trust helping quake-affected Turkish people

SHUJAAT HAMZA
ISLAMABAD: Al Mustafa Welfare Trust's President Abdul Razzaq Sajid has said that the organization is actively taking part in Turkish earthquake relief efforts. Addressing a press conference after reaching from Turkiye, Sajid said the heart-wrenching scenes we have seen during our seven-day stay in Turkey are heart-wrenching. "We have seen with our own eyes deserted cities, demolished houses and buildings piled up with rubble in places. Hospitals are full of injured. Millions of people are homeless and living in slums. The devastating and deadly earthquake that occurred on February 6, 2023 has caused widespread destruction in Turkey and Syria. The magnitude of this earthquake was 7.8 on the Richter scale. More than 40,000 people have died in both the affected countries, while the death toll continues. More than 25,000

multi-storied buildings have become piles of rubble". Chairman Al Mustafa Welfare Trust further said that thousands of houses have been destroyed. Many markets and plazas have collapsed. The system of life has been badly affected. Millions of children, old people, women are suffering from the struggle of life and death in hospitals. Laughing towns, villages and houses have been destroyed. Seeing these painful situations, the heart is filled with sorrow. Immediately after the most severe earthquake in Turkey and Syria, the Al-Mustafa network already existing in both countries was mobilized on an emergency and combat basis, and volunteers associated with Al-Mustafa in Turkey and Syria participated in the rescue operations and rescued thousands

of people. They were taken out of the wreckage and taken to hospitals. The day after the earthquake, immediate financial aid was sent from the London head office of Al-Mustafa to the people responsible for Al-Mustafa in Turkey and Syria, and the series of feeding and providing life necessities to the earthquake victims was started. Seven days ago, I myself arrived in Turkey with my team from London and reached the earthquake-affected areas after a long journey and joined Al-Mustafa's team, which was already engaged in relief activities. The Al-Mustafa team, which went to Turkey from London, together with the local volunteers of Al-Mustafa, reached a new area every day during seven days and distributed food items and relief materials with their own hands widely.



<p>PUBLIC NOTICE Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Zahid Rafique with regards to moveable & immoveable assets of deceased Mr. Muhammad Rafique citizen number 6110117936811 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Misbah Ejaz (Daughter) 2.Saba Rafique (Daughter) 3.Zahida (Spouse)4.Zahid Rafique (Son)5.Muhammad Tahir Rafique (Son)6.Khalid Rafique (Son)7.Sajid Rafique (Son) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice. INCHARGE SFU, NADRA</p>	<p>PUBLIC NOTICE Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Ikhtlaq with regards to moveable & immoveable assets of deceased Ms. Jani Begum citizen number 3740174470676 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Zulaikhan Bi (Daughter) 2.Nusrat Shaheen (Daughter) 3.Muhammad Ikhtlaq (Daughter) 4.Muhammad Irfan (Son)5.Raja Mohammed Zubair (Son) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice. INCHARGE SFU, NADRA</p>	<p>PUBLIC NOTICE Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Ms. Malaika Khatoun with regards to moveable & immoveable assets of deceased Mr. Pervaiz Sadique citizen number 3740505511349 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Faiza Khatoun (Daughter) 2.Malaika Khatoun (Daughter) 3.Muhammad Awais (Son) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice. INCHARGE SFU, NADRA</p>	
<p>PUBLIC NOTICE Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Rafi Ullah Khan with regards to moveable & immoveable assets of deceased Mr. Kifayat Ullah Khan citizen number 1220114396465 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Mahzaib Khan (Daughter) 2.Zubaida (Spouse)3.Safi Ullah Khan (Son)4.Riffat Ullah Khan (Son)5.Rafi Ullah Khan (Son) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice. INCHARGE SFU, NADRA</p>	<p>PUBLIC NOTICE Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Chaudhary Mehmood Ali with regards to moveable & immoveable assets of deceased Mr. Kifayat Ullah Khan citizen number 6110115005615 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Naeem Akhter (Son) 2.Muhammad Zahoor (Son) 3.Chaudhary Muhammad Saleem (Son)4.Chaudhary Mehmood Ali (Son) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice. INCHARGE SFU, NADRA</p>	<p>PUBLIC NOTICE Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Hamid Junaid with regards to moveable & immoveable assets of deceased Mr. Muhammad Shoaib citizen number 6110135401009 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Summaya Tasleem (Daughter)2.Ayesha Tasleem (Daughter)3.Ghulam Safina (Spouse)4.Muhammad Omer (Son)5.Saad Mehmood (Son) 6.Hamid Junaid (Son) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice. INCHARGE SFU, NADRA</p>	
<p>PUBLIC NOTICE Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Ms. Ayesha Hasan with regards to moveable & immoveable assets of deceased Ms. Atiya Hasan citizen number 4230166087360 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Ayesha Hasan (Daughter) 2.Kashif Hasan (Son) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice. INCHARGE SFU, NADRA ISLAMABAD-DSFU</p>	<p>PUBLIC NOTICE Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Mahmood Ahmad Khan with regards to moveable & immoveable assets of deceased Ms. Shahida Sultana citizen number 6110180138996 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Mahmood Ahmad Khan (Spouse)2.Yasir Mahmood Khan (Son)3.Rana Anmar Mahmood Khan (Son) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice. INCHARGE SFU, NADRA ISLAMABAD-DSFU</p>	<p>PUBLIC NOTICE Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Ms. Sabra Ambar with regards to moveable & immoveable assets of deceased Mr. Sabir Hussain Shah citizen number 6110118091917 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Asma Munir (Daughter)2.Saira Batool (Daughter)3.Fakhra Sajid (Daughter)4.Sadaf Batool (Daughter)5.Sabra Ambar (Daughter)6.Sajida Khatoun (Spouse)7.Syed Ghulam Abbas Shah (Son)8.Syed Haseeb Hussain Shah (Son) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice. INCHARGE SFU, NADRA ISLAMABAD-DSFU</p>	<p>PUBLIC NOTICE Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Irtaza Hussain with regards to moveable & immoveable assets of deceased Mr. Ghulam Mustafa Chaudhry citizen number 3740532831827 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Annah Mustafa (Daughter) 2.Imtiaz Akhter (Spouse) 3.Tahseen Mustafa (Son) 4.Irtaza Hussain (Son) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice. INCHARGE SFU, NADRA SFU ISLAMABAD-DSFU PID NO 5178/22</p>

National Days and Armed Forces Days

FEBRUARY

Feb 04 / Sri Lanka National Day

Feb 06 / New Zealand National Day

Feb 06 / Uganda Defece Forces Day

Feb 11 / DPR Korea National Day

Feb 16 / Lithuania National Day

Feb 18 / Gambia National Day

Feb 19 / Nepal National Democracy Day

Feb 23 / Brunei National Day

Feb 23 / Guyana National Day

Feb 23 / Russian Federation National Army Day

Feb 23 / Tajikistan Armed Forces Day

Feb 25 / Kuwait National Day

Feb 27 / Dominican Republic Independence Day



Hotels & Restaurants

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



Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

Rescue (Police).....15
Bomb Disposal.....15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance.1122 & Rescue Services.4451122
Motorway Police.....9266044
Motorway Police.9270601-20
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ICCI, PM Youth Program ink MoU for entrepreneurship

He said that it is not possible for the government to provide jobs to all youngsters and the best way to engage them in productive activities is to foster a culture of entrepreneurship in them. He hoped that MoU between ICCI and PM's Youth Program would produce beneficial outcomes for youth

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signing ceremony was held in the Prime Minister's Office. Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry and Deputy Secretary on Youth Affairs Dr. Ali Malik signed the MOU to promote youth entrepreneurship in Pakistan. Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Youth Affairs, Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Senior Vice President ICCI, Faad Waheed, Khalid Iqbal Malik, Zafar Bakhtawari, Ch. Javed Iqbal, Sheikh Muhammad Ijaz, Maqsood Tabish, Raja Imtiaz, Khalid Chaudhry, Saif ur Reh-



man Khan, Muhammad Waqas Khan and others were also present at the ceremony. Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce &

Industry said that this partnership is essential for fostering a culture of entrepreneurship in youth and promoting economic growth in the country. He said that through this MoU,

the two organisations can work together to identify and support talented young individuals with innovative ideas, offering them training, mentorship, access to resources and funding to turn

their ideas into successful businesses. He said that by nurturing the young businessmen and women and providing them with the tools they need to succeed, ICCI and PM's Youth Programme can help to create jobs, drive innovation, and boost economic development in the country. Faad Waheed, Senior Vice President ICCI said that youth is over 60 percent of our population and every year, thousands of youngsters are coming out of universities. He said that it is not possible for the government to provide jobs to all youngsters and the best way to engage them in productive activities is to foster a culture of entrepreneurship in them. He hoped that MoU between ICCI and PM's Youth Program would produce beneficial outcomes for youth.

FS for expanding Pakistan-US cooperation in diverse fields

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Secretary Dr Asad Majeed Khan has stressed the need to expand bilateral cooperation between Pakistan and the United States in agriculture, education, and science and information technology sectors. The foreign secretary expressed these views while receiving U.S. Department of State Counselor Derek Chollet here at the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs on Thursday, a press release issued by the ministry said. Welcoming Counselor Chollet, the foreign secretary stated that the frequent bilateral visits were a manifestation of the positive trajectory of the Pak-U.S. relations. He expressed satisfaction with the second Mid-level Defense Dialogue and the upcoming Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) Council meeting in Washington D.C.

Dr Asad Majeed emphasized the importance of sustained cooperation through institutionalized dialogues in trade and investment, energy, security, climate change, and health. Chollet reaffirmed that the U.S. was committed to advancing the bilateral relationship. He expressed U.S. solidarity and support with Pakistan and its people in recovery from the 2022 floods. The foreign secretary thanked the

counselor for the U.S. support and hoped to remain engaged in the long-term recovery and rehabilitation efforts. Counselor Chollet was accompanied by Clinton White, Counselor of the United States Agency for International Development, Ambassador Donald Blome and Elizabeth Horst, Principal Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.—APP

Weekly inflation up by 2.89 percent

ISLAMABAD: The weekly inflation, measured by Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 2.89 percent for the combined consumption group during the week ended on February 16, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday. The SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 234.77 points as compared to 228.17 points during the past week, according to PBS data. As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 38.42 percent. The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 = 100 is covering 17 urban centers and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups. The SPI for the lowest consumption group up to Rs 17,732 witnessed a 2.45 percent decrease and went up to 239.34 points from last week's 233.61 points. Meanwhile, the SPI for the consumption group from Rs 17,732-22,888; Rs 22,889-29,517; Rs 29,518-44,175; and above Rs 44,175 witnessed an increase of 2.73 percent, 2.79 percent, 2.88 percent, and 2.94 percent respectively. The items which recorded a decrease in their average prices on a week-on-week (WoW) included tomatoes (14.27%), onions (13.48%), eggs (4.24%), garlic (2.10%) and wheat flour (0.10%). The items which recorded an increase in their average prices on week-on-week (WoW) basis included cooking oil 5 litre (8.65%), vegetable ghee 1 kg (8.02%), bananas (8.01%), chicken (7.49%), vegetable ghee 2.5 kg (6.76%), non-food items, petrol (8.82%), diesel (6.49%) and cigarettes (6.18%). On a Year-on-Year (YoY) basis, the commodities which recorded a decrease in their average prices included tomatoes (65.30%), electricity for Quarter 1 (7.50%) and chillies powdered (7.42%). The commodities that witnessed an increase in prices on a YoY basis included, onions (433.44%), chicken (101.86%), diesel (81.36%), eggs (81.22%), rice irri-6/9 (74.12%), rice basmati broken (73.05%), petrol (69.87%), pulse moong (67.98%), bananas (67.68%), tea packet (63.89%), pulse gram (56.93%), bread (55.36%), pulse mash (53.42%), LPG (52.68%) and cigarettes (50.02%).—APP

Two Commodores promoted to rank of Rear Admiral

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Two Commodores of Pakistan Navy promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral with immediate effect. Rear Admiral Khyber Zaman is a graduate of Britannia Royal Naval College Dartmouth, UK and was commissioned in Operations Branch of Pakistan Navy in 1994. He is a graduate of PAF Air War College, National Defence University, Islamabad and Interna-



Rear Admiral Khyber Zaman SI(M)



Rear Admiral Shafquat Hussain Akhtar SI(M)

tional College of Defence Studies China. The Flag

Officer is a recipient of Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military). Rear Admiral Shafquat Hussain Akhtar was commissioned in Operations Branch of Pakistan Navy in 1994. The Flag Officer is a graduate of Pakistan Navy War College, Naval War College, Turkiye, National Defence University, Islamabad and International College of Defence Studies China. The Admiral is a recipient of Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military).

PRCS launches appeal for donations

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) has launched an appeal for donations for the victims of Turkiye and Syria, to assist them in dealing with the havoc wreaked by the recent earthquake. Expressing deep grief and sorrow over the deaths and physical loss in Turkiye and Syria caused by the recent earthquake, the Chairman PRCS, Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari said, "PRCS and the people of Pakistan stand with people of Turkiye and Syria in this hour of distress." "Our hearts are saddened by the loss of more than 36,000 lives and massive

destruction of properties." "Our prayers are with the peoples of Turkiye and Syria, and we as a nation will also provide all possible support to them in this hour of need." Calling the social society, traders, and benevolent members of the society to come forward and generously contribute to a noble cause. The chairman PRCS said, "There is no vaccine for the climate crisis and natural calamities but we can only deal with the situation by joining hands and helping each other in critical times. Laghari further said that the earthquake survivors of Turkiye and Syria ur-

gently need our support, rescue, medical aid, shelter, blankets, and food. He said, "Initially, PRCS submitted an amount of US\$ 75000 in the consulates of the Red Crescent society of both countries but still there is a lot more to do for the Muslim brothers and sisters who are waiting for our help." For Turkiye Earthquake appeal people can send their donations in Account Titled: PRCS NHQ-CB-DRRP-MUZAFFARABAD, National Bank of Pakistan's Account number: 4027689858, IBAN: PK07 NBPA 0977004027689858, SWIFT CODE: NBPAPK-KA.—APP

FBR to enhance cooperation with the US on finance, revenue

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Revenue, Tariq Mahmood Pasha here on Friday appreciated the United States (US) engagement with Pakistan in the economic, financial and revenue areas and hoped the ongoing cooperation between the two countries will further strengthen. He was talking to a delegation of the US Embassy in Islamabad, led by Commercial Counselor, Aaron Fishman and representatives of the multi-national beverage companies who visited FBR.—APP

PTA conducts successful raids against illegal issuance of SIMs

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) conducted successful raids in multiple locations against illegal issuance of SIM cards and arrested five accused. In Mingora, Swat, a successful raid was conducted by PTA Zonal Office Peshawar in collaboration with FIA Cyber Crime Circle Peshawar against a mobile company franchisee suspected of illegally issuing SIM cards, said a PTA news release on Friday. The suspects in the guise of BISP disbursements, used to take biometric information (finger/thumb impressions) of subscribers for issuance of. Similarly, in Lahore, PTA Zonal Office and Federal Investigation Agency (FIA)'s Cyber Crime Circle Gujranwala conducted raids against three franchisees of a mobile company suspected of illegally issuing SIM cards in Gujranwala, Pasroor, and Narowal. During the raids, BVS devices issued by mobile company and a bank for BISP disbursements, and active SIM cards were confiscated. Five suspects were arrested. FIA has started further investigations. PTA had previously filed complaints with FIA based on suspicious issuance of SIMs at sale channels. The raids in both locations demonstrate PTA's resolve to stop the illegal issuance of SIMs and prevent the circumvention of the Multi-finger Biometric Verification System (MBVS).—APP

Sanaullah directs FIA to probe into Elahi's audios

LAHORE: Federal Minister for Interior Affairs Rana Sanaullah Khan Friday gave formal permission to Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) for an investigation into the leaked audios of former Punjab Chief Minister Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi. The FIA has launched a formal investigation into the leaked audio after getting formal permission from the interior minister. The sources in FIA said that the agency has decided to conduct forensics of these audios and for this purpose, the material will be sent to the forensic laboratory in Lahore for audit. After the forensic report of the audios, the investigation will enter the next phase, the sources said adding that the forensic report will be provided to the Ministry of Interior Affairs and a case will be registered if proven.—DNA

F-9 park 'rapists' killed in fake encounter: Victim's counsel

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The counsel of F-9 park Islamabad's rape victim has alleged that the suspects were killed in a fake police encounter and demanded answers from the capital police chief. In a gruesome incident that took place earlier this month, two armed men raped a girl in the park at gunpoint in an unlit area, sending shockwaves across

the country. They were, however, later arrested by the police and shot dead under mysterious circumstances. While speaking at a press conference in Islamabad, flanked by human rights activist Farzana Bari, advocate Imaan Mazari raised questions over the performance and handling of the case by the police. According to a police statement, the two men, allegedly involved in the Fatima

Jinnah (F-9) park gang-rape incident, were shot dead at a police picket near Sector D-12 after an exchange of gunfire. "When they were signalled to stop, they attempted to speed away. On being intercepted by the police, the bike riders opened fire at the cops deployed at the post. Luckily, the policemen escaped narrowly," the police said and added that the firing was retaliated. The police version

was countered today by civil society members and the counsel who said that the suspects were already in police custody and the victim had confirmed their identity. Mazari lamented that the victim's identity was also revealed which, she said, is a crime in Pakistani laws. While sharing the details, the lawyer said that the unfortunate incident occurred on February 2 while the suspects were arrested on February 15.

AIOU to hold Int'l moot on Early Childhood Development from Feb 22

ISLAMABAD: The Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) will hold 4th International Conference titled "Early Childhood Development (ECD)" on February 22. The conference being organized under the theme of "Nurturing for Transforming Lives: The Power of Early Childhood Development" and will be participated by National and International ECD experts, practitioners, researchers, policymakers, and teachers for the educational institutions. Speaking about the event the Vice Chancellor, AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood informed that this AIOU is organizing this conference in collaboration with the Ministry of Planning Development and Special Initiatives, UNICEF, World Health Organization, Pakistan Alliance for Early Childhood, Rupani Foundation, Save the Children, Shifa Foundation, Sightsaver, Aga Khan Foundation, and Aga Khan University. Chief Executive Officer, Pakistan Alliance for Early Childhood, Khadija Khan while briefing the representatives of all partner organizations, said that all the arrangements have been finalized. During the event noted scholars will present papers on Good Health, Adequate Nutrition, Security and Safety, Responsive Care giving, Early Learning and development opportunities, and Early Childhood Development in Emergencies while education experts will highlight the opportunities for healthy development at early age of children.—DNA

Urdu poet Shabnam Romani remembered

ISLAMABAD: Renowned Urdu poet and author Shabnam Romani was remembered on his death 14th death anniversary. His real name was Mirza Azeem Baig Chughtai, but he was known in literary circles by his pen name, Shabnam Romani. Romani was born on December 30, 1928, and died after a long illness on this day in 2009 at the age of 81. He wrote a number of books, including Jazeera, Doosra Himala, and Tohmat. Romani was born in Budaun, India, but moved to Pakistan and lived most of his life in Karachi. He was the publisher and editor of Quarterly Aqdar, a literary Urdu magazine. He wrote a regular column in Daily Mashriq, Karachi. Romani's works include Masnavi Sair-e-Karachi (1959), Jazeera, Tohmat, Doosra Himala, Hyde Park, Mozay Chilhoozay, and Hurf Nissbat. One of Romani's two sons, Faisal Azeem, is a poet, too. He is Canada-based and his book "Meri Aankhon Saay Dekho" was published in 2006.—APP

Govt tough decisions to bring it closer to IMF deal

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain on Friday said tax and other measures will comfort the government but add to the problems of the masses. The tough decisions of the government will help it borrow from IMF but will not help address the economy's fundamental flaws, he said. Mian Zahid Hussain said that in the remaining four months of this fiscal year, the government's deficit will be reduced by the new taxes of 170 billion. Details released about the decision include raising the sales tax from 17 to 18 percent and increasing duties on the cigarette industry, air travel, and beverages, among other measures. Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that an increase of 40 billion rupees.—DNA

Briefs

Expert stresses on timely screening

ISLAMABAD: Health expert on Friday stressed the need for creating public awareness on 'Colorectal cancer' also known as bowel cancer and urged civil society groups to play their part in it.

Talking to the PTV news channel, Surgical Oncologist Dr Munazzah Aziz explained that 'Colorectal cancer' stands to be the third-most common cancer among men, worldwide, adding, CRC awareness would make men and women in Pakistan aware of the disease and it could happen to both the genders and often symptoms are difficult to identify in the early stages. She said, "It is important for individuals to learn about the prevention, management, and treatment options, adding, constipation, changes in stool color, blood in the stool, bleeding from the rectum, excessive gas, abdominal cramps, and abdominal pain could be few of the indicators of this disease."

In early stage of this disease, "CRC is found in older adults like sixty years and above, adding, however, in recent years there has been an increase in younger people, especially it is increasing in men as compared to women in Pakistan."

"Poor lifestyle, dietary habits, obesity, and lesser physical activities are the main reason for the increasing cases of this disease," she added. "An active lifestyle has been linked to a reduced risk of 'colorectal cancer'," she added. "More screening for cancer, early detection, and proper treatment are key to controlling the disease at the right time," she informed.—APP

ANF arrests four on recovery of three kg narcotics

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) Pakistan while conducting four counter-narcotics operations seized over three kg narcotics and arrested four accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Friday. He informed that in an operation at Bacha Khan International Airport, Peshawar recovered 127 grams charras from the possession of two Sharjah-bound passengers, residents of Karak going on flight no. ER751. In another operation 70 grams heroin was recovered from a parcel booked for Qatar at Rawalpindi mail office.

In third operation conducted near Multan Airport Road, ANF recovered 1.8 kg charras and 104 grams heroin from the possession of an accused resident of Multan. The spokesman informed that ANF in a raid at Garden Town Karachi managed to recover one kg Ice drug from the possession of two drug traffickers, resident of Karachi. The spokesman said that separate cases have been registered against the accused while further investigations are under process.—APP

Special checkpoints set up for effective security

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad police have set up special checkpoints at various locations and important boulevards to ensure further effective security in the city. In a statement, police said that effective measures were being taken to maintain law and order and enhance security in the city, in compliance with the special directions of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Dr Akbar Nasir Khan. Ambulances, police vehicles, other government vehicles, and police personnel will also be checked at these points. Government officials and citizens have been appealed to keep their identity cards with them while traveling and cooperate with the police during the checking process. IGP Islamabad has said that maintaining law and order and protecting the lives and property of citizens were among the top priorities of the Islamabad Police.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Participants hold a banner during a Anti-Tobacco Walk organized by PANAH outside NPC —Online

'PM to announce major austerity measures soon'

Cabinet members of the federal government had already voluntarily announced not to get their salaries from the national exchequer

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Dr Ayesha Ghous Pasha on Friday said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif would announce major austerity measures in all the government institutions to control the fiscal deficit by minimizing the government expenditures. "The Prime Minister has already formed a Commission to finalize the austerity measures and he himself would announce the recommendation finalized by the Commission," the state

minister said while speaking on the floor of the Upper House of the Parliament here. She said all the cabinet members of the federal government had already voluntarily announced not to get their salaries from the national exchequer. Ms Pasha said the PDM government was acting upon the agreement made by the PTI regime with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) only to save the state at the cost of their politics. Referring to the Finance (Supplementary) Bill, 2023 presented by the government in both Houses, she said the government had



no option but to take tough decisions as the country's economy was on the verge of default. "No doubt inflation is high and the

people are extremely worried but the point is that this is the time to make structural adjustment because without this we will sink in further darkness", she added. However, she said that to safeguard the extremely poor segment of the society from the inflationary shocks, the government had decided to raise the allocation for Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) by Rs 40 billion to Rs 400 billion. The minister also made it clear that whether the government go with the IMF programme or not, it would have to make structural reforms in key areas

of the country's economy without it not get stabilized. The state minister of finance said that the recently increased tariffs in electricity and gas sectors would not apply to the small consumers. She called upon all political parties and other stakeholders to support the government in this hour of need as the country badly needed tough decisions to bring it out of economic crisis. After her speech the Senate Chairman adjourned the Senate Session to meet again on Monday (February 20, 2023).

HEC set to establish NAHE regional centre in Punjab

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan has finalised the groundwork for establishing a regional centre of National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE) in Punjab.

HEC, under its Higher Education Development in Pakistan (HEDP) project, aims to strengthen its NAHE, an academic wing of HEC launched in 2019 to improve the quality of teaching, research, and governance in higher education institutions (HEIs) across Pakistan. Establishment of four NAHE regional centres were envisioned

during the life of HEDP project. Addressing the immediate need for a lack of quality training facilities for academia in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, two chapters were notified in these two provinces last year. Moving forward, two more are to be established in Punjab and Sindh.

In this regard, a two-day consultative workshop was held with the regional stakeholders of Punjab on the establishment of the NAHE regional centre in Lahore, Punjab. The workshop was chaired by Programme Coordinator, HEDP, Dr. Mahmood-ul-Hassan Butt, while more than 40 stakeholders, including Vice Chancellors

and Deans were present. The participants provided their valuable inputs on the envisioned role of the NAHE regional centre and how it would build the capacities of faculty and administration in performing their roles more efficiently. The participants suggested that the centre should also be replicated in other regions of the province to meet their needs. The implementation of the revised Undergraduate Education Policy (UEP) was also discussed in length, and HEIs extended their support to HEC for its implementation. They were also briefed on the upcoming HEC initiatives to further improve the higher education system in the country. They suggested to involve universities in designing capacity building programmes for faculty and administration.

Dr. Salvador Malo, a World Bank consultant, was also engaged during the session via video conference. He is assisting HEDP in assessment of learning outcomes through the use of an international test at national level in Pakistan. The international test has been contextualised for use in Pakistan with his help. Dr. Malo is assisting HEDP to develop and embed flexible integral education and promote relevant competencies and critical learning skills via revised UEP implementation.

Pakistan cannot develop without getting rid of elites

He said that currently, the government is taking strict measures on the orders of the IMF to stabilize the limping economy. The government measures are again targeted towards the poor avoiding any trouble with the powerful elite

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) on Friday said development and poverty reduction is impossible in Pakistan unless the country is out of the shackles of the elite. It is very difficult to counterbalance the elite because a large number of them have joined politics and other influential areas to protect themselves and their communities and reap undue benefits which amount to looting the poor, it said. The entry of the elite into politics has strengthened their grip on the system and they are plundering the resources meant for the masses, said Dr. Murtaza Mughal, President of the PEW. He said that the United

Nations had issued a report in April 2021 according to which the elites who control Pakistan's resources are getting undue benefits worth 17.4 billion dollars annually. Those who are robbing the nation include businessmen, politicians, landlords, and some other groups, he added. Dr. Murtaza Mughal said that according to this report of the United Nations Development Program, an annual benefit of 17.4 billion dollars is being given to the elites, which is six percent of Pakistan's GDP. This systematic plunder of resources is increasing anxiety and poverty in the country and no one is doing anything to reduce it. The report says that the biggest benefit is taken by the corporate sector with a size of 4.7 billion dollars followed by

the richest of the country which is 1.1 percent of the population that owns nine percent of the capital, while twenty percent of the rich own 49.6 percent of the resources. Large landowners constitute 1.1 percent of the population but they own twenty-two percent of agricultural land, he informed. The United Nations report does not mention amnesty schemes, packages, and other initiatives through which the elite siphons off hundreds of billions of rupees every year. He said that currently, the government is taking strict measures on the orders of the IMF to stabilize the limping economy. The government measures are again targeted towards the poor avoiding any trouble with the powerful elite.

NA passes bill for establishment of Pir Roshan Institute

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly on Friday unanimously passed a bill for the establishment of Pir Roshan Institute of Progressive Sciences and Technologies in Miranshah area of North Waziristan district, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, after clause-by-clause reading. Taking up supplementary agenda under the constitutional provision, Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf allowed Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) lawmaker Zeb Jaffar to move the bill on behalf of Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Rana Tanveer Hussain. According to the statement of object and reasons for the bill, the institute would provide a new identity to the district as well as to the Ghulam Khan border (Afghanistan) as a 'knowledge corridor,' connecting South-East, South Asia, and Central Asian states. "The peace-building development driven academic friendly gesture of the federation for the youth of Waziristan may provide a platform to global partners in development to invest in training youth for global peace and development.—APP

NDMA dispatches 21 NLC trailers of relief

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Friday dispatched 21 trailers of the National Logistics Cell (NLC) carrying relief items for the earthquake-affected victims of Turkiye and Syria via Taftan, Iran road route. The NDMA in the directions of the Prime Minister mobilised the NLC trailers that reached Taftan, Iran with relief items, the NDMA spokesperson said. It was the first convoy sent to the people of the friendly countries of Turkiye and Syria affected by the recent severe earthquake reached Taftan which was a border town at Pakistan-Iran international border. The relief items included tents, blankets and other essential items. This relief cargo was consisting of 21 trailers being sent to Turkiye and Syria via Taftan, Iran road.—APP

ICT admin to launch doorstep services

ISLAMABAD: With an aim to ease citizens of federal capital, the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration would launch doorstep services to better facilitate the populace, making their lives effort-less. According to ICT spokesperson Abdullah Tabassum, the citizens of the federal capital would be able to enjoy the doorstep service initiative which includes facilities like domicile certificates, birth and death certificates, issuance of Power of Attorney, international driving permit, fuel permit (domestic and commercial) and vehicle registrations. He said a dedicated helpline would be launched for the said initiative. "The citizens will be able to fix an appointment, time and get the required details from the administration's representative through it. The 'doorstep mobile vehicle' will reach the doorstep of citizens.—APP

Police register case against person domesticating leopard

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad police have registered a case against the person keeping the leopard at the house who injured several persons in a housing society. According to the police spokesman, a case of the incident has been registered at Sihala police station against the unknown accused under section 324/289 of the Pakistan Penal Code. The leopard was domesticated by an unknown person and the accused endangered the lives of citizens by keeping dangerous animals. "The search for the accused is going on and legal action will be taken after arresting him soon," he added. It is pertinent to mention here that a wild leopard entered the house at DHA Phase-II. The people of the neighborhood informed the relief organization and wildlife about his existence in the area. Islamabad Wildlife Management Board (IWMB) and Capital Development Authority took more than five hours to capture a leopard that injured several persons and panicked residents. As per initial reports, three people got hurt, including two staff members of IWMB, during the entire episode which resulted in the capture of the wild cat.—APP

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India's tax raid on BBC: Modi v the media

Following the deadly sectarian riots in Gujarat in 2002 – in which more than 1,000 people, overwhelmingly Muslims, were killed – Narendra Modi, then the state's chief minister, was asked whether he would have done anything differently in retrospect: "The one area where I was very, very weak ... was how to handle the media," the now prime minister replied. This week's multi-day raid on BBC offices in Delhi and Mumbai by tax authorities came just weeks after the government lambasted the corporation and blocked its documentary on his handling of the riots and treatment of the Muslim minority in India. The authorities say this is routine. But, as many in India have made clear, this looks more like retaliation than regular bureaucratic proceedings. A spokesman for the ruling Bharatiya Janata party took the opportunity to describe the BBC as the "most corrupt organisation in the world". Modi's government has overseen a systematic and escalating crackdown on free media, dissent and civil society more generally, particularly where its aggressive majoritarianism has been challenged. Last year, human rights and press freedom groups warned that journalists have been baselessly charged under counter-terrorism and sedition laws and prevented from travelling abroad. Their targeting has emboldened Hindu nationalists to harass them online and in person. Indian companies and journalists are clearly at greatest risk. But the decision to take on the BBC is an indication of the BJP's growing confidence. Allegations that Mr Modi was complicit in 2002's violence are not new, though the documentary revealed that a British government document found him "directly responsible" for not stopping the killing of Muslims. Mr Modi, who has always denied any culpability, was cleared of all charges by a supreme court panel. Similarly, attacking the BBC does far more to discredit Delhi than the broadcaster. India is enjoying being courted by other nations as an economic giant and counterweight to China in Asia. This year, it will host the G20; there is talk of a White House visit for the man who was barred from entering the US after the riots. But its standing rests not only on its economic and geopolitical might, but also its democratic status – despite its erosion by Mr Modi. The contrast between the outspoken criticism from embattled voices in India and complaisance from powerful leaders elsewhere, is glaring and disgraceful. David Cameron's government led the international rehabilitation of Mr Modi. The prime minister, Rishi Sunak, tweeted in celebration of Air India's new multimillion-pound contract with Airbus and Rolls-Royce even as authorities rifled through desks and seized journalists' phones. That Mr Modi cares about his international reputation is evident from the attempts to silence critics. India's partners should urge it to restore and respect the democratic values, including free media, that it boasts about.



Natural disaster sends call for human solidarity

The powerful earthquakes that occurred in southern Turkey last week caused severe casualties in Turkey and Syria. In the face of serious natural disasters, human society has revealed its fragile and resilient sides. After the earthquake, many countries and regions around the world, including China, have expressed their condolences and provided help to Turkey and Syria. It is worth mentioning that Sweden, which recently has had tense relations with Turkey, and Israel, an "old enemy" of Syria, have temporarily put aside their political differences and actively participated in disaster relief efforts. Turkey and Syria, particularly the latter, have long been spots of conflict in international geopolitics. Syria has already experienced the chronic pain of years of turmoil and war, and strong earthquakes are really intensifying the pain. The international community should strive to reach the common goal of providing timely help to the victims and preventing a more serious humanitarian disaster from happening due to the earthquake. Thus, the international community, especially the major powers, needs to achieve unity and coordination at a larger level. Huge disasters are often characterized by shocking scenes that create a strong sense of shared destiny in a short period of time, as well as the expectation and call for human solidarity. This kind of understanding, which has been gained at a tragic cost, is invaluable and should be widely and firmly practiced in human society. However, there is a huge gap between reality and the ideal, which is widening because of some forces. Recently, humanity has faced common challenges, one after another, ranging from the COVID-19 pandemic to regional conflicts to climate change. However, it has not facilitated the formation of the true solidarity necessary to deal with global issues. Needless to say, there isn't much optimism on how long the current unity or harmony can last. Just a few days before the earthquake, some Western countries including the US, the UK, Germany and France temporarily closed their consulates in Istanbul or issued security warnings about Turkey citing "security concerns," triggering fierce protests in Turkey, which can be called a "diplomatic earthquake." The matter has not been resolved. It is conceivable that in the land where the earthquake occurred, disaster relief and post-disaster reconstruction may still encounter obstacles and resistance at the geopolitical level. The Chinese sci-fi movie *The Wandering Earth 2*, which is currently being screened, shows that true unity and cooperation can be achieved when the entire human race is at a critical juncture of life and death and will be destroyed if humanity doesn't unite. We hope that in the real world we will not wait until the last minute to be forced to make a choice, but will be one step ahead, and take the initiative as soon as possible. Every time after a disaster, people sympathize with the victims from the bottom of their hearts, and sincerely hope to provide help as much as they can. It is a shining part of universal humanity. It allows us to see the deep strength of building a community with a shared future for mankind, and be confident that the world will eventually become a better and warmer place.

An end to Ukraine war remains a long way off

Dr. Diana Galeeva

While the rhetoric and actions on the ground (including new waves of missile attacks) have not changed their character, there have been some challenging escalations in the last week, including the possibility of bringing a potential NATO member into the conflict.

Last Friday, Moldova's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration summoned the Russian ambassador to protest that a missile crossed the country's airspace, over the village of Mocra in the Transnistria region. The missile was followed as it made its way over Cosauti in the Soroca District

The Ukraine war is approaching its anniversary and the situation complicates daily. Kyiv has accused Russia of bombarding power facilities across Ukraine, while on Monday Ukraine's energy minister insisted that the country's power system was meeting people's "electricity needs." Chechnya's leader Ramzan Kadyrov argued in an interview with the Rossiya-1 channel that Russia could take Kyiv, Kharkiv and Odesa, while Yevgeny Prigozhin, the leader of the Wagner Group, stated that Russian forces are facing resistance as they attempt to capture the Ukrainian city of Bakhmut.

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Last Friday, Moldova's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration summoned the Russian ambassador to protest that a missile crossed the country's airspace, over the village of Mocra in the Transnistria region. The missile was followed as it made its way over Cosauti in the Soroca District, heading toward Ukraine. This technically only relates to bilateral relations, since Moldova has traditionally taken a neutral stance on NATO membership, but since the start of the Ukraine war its position has shifted, with President Maia Sandu stating in January that there was "serious discussion" about joining "a larger alliance."

Moldova has already been indirectly impacted by the war, as it has faced severe economic shocks due to its disrupted transport corridors. This is mainly because Moldova is fully dependent on Russian gas. The country is suffering an energy crisis and household energy tariffs are soaring. Exports to Russia of medicines and apples have been disrupted and there has been a drop in re-

mittances due to EU sanctions. The country is also affected by electricity blackouts caused by Russian missile strikes on neighboring Ukraine. At the beginning of the crisis, there were concerns that Moldova would be drawn directly into the conflict; though this remains unlikely, last week's incident has certainly complicated its position.

Surely significantly, the day after the missile incident, the pro-Western government of Moldova resigned after 18 months in power, citing political and economic crises due to the Ukraine war. Nonetheless, the prime minister-designate who has stepped into the breach, Dorin Recean, supports strong relations with the West, meaning the course of the country will likely not be changed in terms of its foreign policies. Instead, there are suggestions that further steps may be taken to join NATO or, as a minimum, strengthen military collaborations.

There is, however, one matter preventing its membership of NATO, which is that the eastern Moldovan region of Transnistria has a large Russian military presence, in addition to a minority Russian population. Any overt approaches to the Western alliance would carry significant risk. Therefore, limited collaborations will most likely be pursued, at least in the immediate term. This is one of several factors in the possible de-escalation of the conflict.

While Moldova's position is not generally considered critical in the context of the Ukraine war – with it not formally being a NATO member – Romania's is vital. This NATO member state has denied that Russian missiles flew over its territory last week. The official statement given by Bucharest was that it detected an "aerial target launched from the Black Sea from a ship of the Russian Federation," but "at no point did it intersect with Romania's airspace." This was a denial of Kyiv's claim that two Russian rockets crossed

Moldovan and Romanian airspace.

Romania has also been hit by humanitarian, economic and political fallout from the war and it has supported its northern neighbor in various ways. However, its position is both complex and critically important – it is a NATO ally but is juggling several possible outcomes from the progress of the war. Different possible scenarios can impact hugely on the state's future.

The second dimension that mitigates against de-escalation is Volodymyr Zelensky's first visits to Britain and France since the outbreak of war, pressing the Western alliance to offer more weaponry and fighter jets. In France, Emmanuel Macron vowed that Paris would assist in Ukraine's fight, stating that the country is "determined to help Ukraine to victory and the re-establishment of its legitimate rights." Similarly, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz showed strong support by stating he would back Ukraine "financially, with humanitarian aid and with weapons." In the UK, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak promised that "nothing is off the table" with regards to sending military support to Ukraine. He also stated that, as part of the talks with Zelensky, he was looking at the "supply chain" involved in deploying British fighter jets, suggesting that other states might have to sign off a UK decision to supply them to Kyiv. The overall picture is that Ukraine has support, but material aid will not appear as quickly as it would like – this most likely indicates a prolongation of the conflict.

In December, the Kremlin warned of a "long" war after US President Joe Biden offered support to Zelensky during his visit to Washington. The developments of the last week, involving both the dilemmas facing Ukraine's near neighbors and Western powers' conditional support, suggest it will be some time before a clearer picture – let alone an end to the hostilities – emerges. Courtesy: Arab News

Pakistan-Japan relations -new avenues

Syed Ali Nawaz Gilani

In 80's bilateral relations were further bolstered due to Pakistan's role in securing the withdrawal of the Soviet forces from Afghanistan and the sea lanes security through which Japan receives bulk of its oil. Pak-Japan bilateral relations saw a difficult phase following the nuclear tests conducted by Pakistan in 1998, the engagement at the political level continued. Japan has always given the prime focus on social development by

Japan was among the first nations to recognize Pakistan's sovereignty, doing so three days after the latter's independence on 14 August 1947. Although diplomatic relations between the two were officially established on 28th April 1952 following the end of the Allied occupation of Japan. Pakistan and Japan formally established diplomatic relations on 28th April 1952. Since then, Pakistan & Japan have been enduring to strengthen these ties further. That's why with the passage of over 70 years of this long journey, both prove to be good friends even today. The year 2022 was the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Pakistan. Many programs were held in Japan and Pakistan to celebrate the event in a befitting manner.

Our bilateral relations have been quite friendly. In fact, our relations are characterized by a shared sense of history and common perceptions on important issues. Both countries enjoy fraternal ties based on mutual trust, cooperation, people-to-people contacts as well as cultural and civilizational linkages. During the tenure of Ambassador Imtiaz Ahmad who has served in our Mission in Japan for more than sixteen years in different positions and speaks fluent Japanese, mentioned that despite limited bilateral interactions in 2020 and 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the relations between Pakistan and Japan have gained enhanced momentum. The mainstay of our relationship has been trade and economic, with Japan being a key development partner and a major investor in Pakistan. Japan has played important role in socio-economic development of Pakistan. Both friendly countries need to further deepen their engagement in the fields of economy, culture, tourism and people-to-people exchanges. Pakistan opened its Embassy in Tokyo and Mr. MianZiauddin became the first Ambassador of Pakistan to Japan. Similarly, Japan opened one of its earliest trade offices in Karachi. In the early 50's Pakistan was a major import destination for raw cotton for Japan. During the Korean War and in the Cold War, Pakistan and Japan found themselves on the same side of the divide. President Ayub Khan visited Japan in 1960. That was followed by Prime Minister Iqbal's visit to Pakistan in 1961. In 80's bilateral relations were further bolstered due to Pakistan's role in securing the withdrawal of the Soviet forces from Afghanistan and the sea lanes security through which Japan receives bulk of its oil. Pak-Japan bilateral relations saw a difficult phase following the nuclear tests conducted by Pakistan in 1998, the engagement at the political level continued. Japan has always given the prime focus on social development by mainly working in areas of health, agriculture, water supply and disaster management. However, a new era in diplomatic ties between Islamabad and Tokyo. Presently, a total of 20000 Pakistanis are living in Japan, while every year a large number of tourists come to see Buddha sites in Pakistan. Apart from that, Japan is one of its largest trading partners of Pakistan with an annual trade of \$1.5 billion annually and efforts are underway to improve it further. To expand the fruit industry, options relating to processed fruits and better packaging can be explored and Pakistan in cooperation with Japan can open up factories. Tokyo has so far funded different projects in Pakistan which include the Indus Highway, Thermal Power Station Jamshoro, Bin Qasim Thermal Power Station and Kohat Tunnel. In

addition, 'Gravity Flow Water Supply Scheme' in Haripur city is built with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) assistance. The project is based on cost-effective water supply arrangements and it will provide drinking water to the residents of Haripur city. (The most significant is to provide an opportunity to Japanese investors to invest in different sectors in Pakistan, which will help Pakistan to minimize unemployment and improve the economy by initiating economic activities in the country. Japan is a major trading partner as well as a donor to Pakistan. Japan has been a member of the Aid to Pakistan Consortium since 1961 and has been regularly assisting Pakistan with its development programs by providing financial support. Standing as the third largest economy of the world, Japan has a nominal GDP of over five trillion Dollars, while that of Pakistan's nearly 350 billion and fast growing. Currently, there are over 85 Japanese Companies now operating in Pakistan providing employment to over ten thousand and helping the government exchequer annually with over Rs 60 billion in taxes. In the industrial sector, Japan leads the automotive sector with almost all known Japanese brands with their presence; the first amongst them to start in 1980. To protect such investment and to further promote it, an agreement was signed between the two governments in 2002. Japan over the period, through JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) and its ODA (Official Development Assistance) launched technical assistance programs in Pakistan with sole purpose to put Pakistan on right track of progress and development. These two unique initiatives have helped Pakistan's economic development. Japan acknowledged Pakistan's role in war against terrorism. In addition, Japan helped Pakistan financially to develop the infrastructure damaged by the devastated earthquake in 2005 and floods in Pakistan. In 2020, to protect Pakistanis from Corona-19 epidemic, the government of Japan had released Rs 1.54 billion. As per the Japanese embassy in Islamabad, this huge amount was given to purchase medical equipments, especially ventilators and oxygen cylinders and the then Japanese Ambassador had praised Pakistan for taking the best kind of steps to deal with deadly Corona.

Japan has won the hearts of Pakistanis again when it recently announced financial aid of \$38.9million to Pakistan for providing life-saving assistance to the flood victims, as the July 2022 flood created a multi-faceted humanitarian crisis. Japan has recently announce additional amount for earthquake victims. Pakistan & Japan economic relations started back in

the 60s when then GandharaNissan and Atlas Honda were established and various leading Japanese brands became household names and known to the masses. Everyone here knows very well about the famous Japanese brands and their products that are even being preferred over any European or Asian brands. The famous –Toyota, Suzuki, Yamaha, Nissan and Honda, Hitachi, Toshiba, National and others a long list are still popular in Pakistan and these brands established their credibility over the period of time.

Japan and Pakistan signed two Memoranda of Cooperation on Technical Training Programme on Technical Intern Training Programme and Specified Skilled Workers in 2019. It will provide the opportunity for Pakistani workers to find jobs in Japan.

A few years back at a dialogue held at the Pakistan National Language Authority (NLA), they praised the services of Osaka and Tokyo universities, which have been teaching Urdu for 105 years and have a separate department for the language that is widely spoken in the subcontinent. The Urdu Services from Japan official broadcasting House NHK successfully broadcasted Urdu Services first in 1924 and later in the 50s. Japan is among the largest importer of textile products and mangoes from Pakistan. President DrAri-falvi has recently expressed his desire to improve diplomatic ties further between Islamabad and Tokyo especially focusing on economic, trade, and human resource development initiatives. Moreover, the President appreciated the continuous support of Japan to Pakistan on the FATF platform and Pakistan is grateful to Japan for the decision to suspend the payment of debts. Sincere efforts must be taken to enhance trade between Pakistan and Japan in near future. Furthermore, Islamabad must increase cooperation with Japan in field of digital technology and IT as advancement and expertise in artificial intelligence need of the hour. It is hoped that the leadership of both sides will pay special attention to further promote trade, exchange of cultural and journalists groups, which will help to develop people to people contacts between the two states. Pakistan-Japan Business Forum (PJBF) is a bilateral forum established in 2001 with a view to promoting trade and investments between the two friendly countries. PJBF is playing vital role in this connection. There is great need to further strengthen the Pak-Japan Relations especially from economic point of view as presently around the world countries and nations are activity working for mutual beneficial economic relations and encouraging socio economic developmental activities by all available resources.(email: syed.gilani@gmail.com)

Briefs

CTD kills TTP commander in Kala Bagh encounter

FROM PAGE 01
fire on security personnel, prompting law enforcers to retaliate. During the exchange of fire - which lasted for almost 20 minutes, a TTP commander - identified as Habib-ur-Rehman - was killed. However, other terrorists managed to flee from the spot. The CTD team has recovered a Kalashnikov, suicide jacket and TTP stickers from the possession of the killed terrorist. A case against the attack has been registered at CTD police station Sarogodha while the law enforcers have launched an operation to find the remaining suspects. Earlier on Feb 14, the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) on Tuesday foiled a terrorist attack and claimed to kill seven of them in crossfire in North Waziristan. The terrorists attacked the CTD team in North Waziristan when they were moving suspected terrorists to Bannu. Security sources said that the attack took place last night at Mir Ali Bypass. In the crossfire with the security forces, three suspects in the custody and four terrorists of the banned outfit, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) was shot dead, while 5 to 6 terrorists managed to flee the scene by taking advantage of darkness, the sources said. Security sources said that the slain terrorists were identified as Irshadullah, Abdul Rehman, and Mehredin, the dead outlaws were wanted by the CTD in several serious terrorism cases.

Pakistan to extend maximum support to Turkiye in rehab: PM

FROM PAGE 01
the friend and brotherly country of Pakistan and hoped the country would overcome the challenging times with resilience. He also met the rescue teams from Pakistan that took part in the search operation. Earlier on his arrival at Adiyaman airport, the prime minister was received by Turkish trade minister Mehmet Mus, Minister for Communication Adil-Ismaïloğlu, Governor of Adiyaman Mahmut Cuhadar, President of Turk-Pakistan Friendship Group in the Turkish parliament Ali Shaheen, and senior officials. The prime minister arrived in Turkiye's capital Ankara on Thursday on a two-day visit as a special gesture of solidarity with the Turkish nation. The federal cabinet on Thursday also decided to send 20,000 quilts to the earthquake victims and directed the Finance Department to release Rs.50 million for the purpose. Pakistan mobilized relief assistance for both Turkiye and Syria in the wake of massive earthquake. The country sent an 85-member urban search and rescue team, 10-member search and rescue team and a 10-member medical team to support the relief efforts.

Terrorists attack Police Chief office

FROM PAGE 01
As the operation to eliminate the terrorists was underway, two militants had been killed and five people - including two Rangers personnel and a police officer - have been injured. Police officials said that armed suspects - whose total numbers are unknown at the moment - fired several rounds at the head office - located adjacent to the Sadar Police Station. A rescue official was injured after being shot and has been shifted to the Jinnah Post-graduate Medical Centre, confirmed hospital sources. It was learnt that the person, who sustained two bullets, was out of danger. As the police bid to beat the terrorists, Rangers have been called in and the roads leading towards the police office for traffic - to ensure that citizens remain safe.

Rossouw, Usama help Multan defeat Peshawar

Usama bagged Tom Kohler-Cadmore in 11th over followed by back-to-back wickets by him in 15th over. Cadmore (3) misjudged the length and gave a simple catch

SPORTS DESK

MULTAN: Usama Mir was on song as Multan Sultans managed to make a comeback in middle overs against Peshawar Zalmi in fifth match of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) on Friday at Multan Cricket Stadium. Saim Ayub was leading the charge when Usama came in and did the massive destruction. Usama went on to hit perfect lengths and picked up quick wickets in the middle overs to put Zalmi on the back foot. Usama bagged Tom Kohler-Cadmore in 11th over followed by back-to-back wickets by him in 15th over. Cadmore (3) misjudged the length and gave a simple catch. Bhanuka Rajapaksa and Saim fell to Usama in 15th over which gave Sultans a way into the match. Set to chase mammoth 211 runs, Saim and Mohammad Haris rescued Zalmi followed by skipper Babar Azam's departure after scoring just nine runs. The two batter scored 47 runs together. Saim, who started his innings with a solid cover drive, scored his maiden half-century to stabilize Zalmi's innings after Haris' run-out. Haris got run-out after scoring 40 off 23 balls including a boundary and four maximums. Saim got bowled out for 53 runs off 37 balls laced with three boundaries and as many maximums. Ihsanullah, who bagged five wickets in previous match, picked up three wickets



after Saim hit him for some boundaries. Abbas Afridi also took two wickets while Carlos Brathwaite managed a scalp. Previously, Sultans set Zalmi a target of 211 runs after fifties by skipper Mohammad Rizwan and middle-order batter Rilee Rossouw. Sultans scored 210-3 in their allotted 20 overs. Rossouw played an explosive knock of 75 runs in 36 balls, with the help

of 12 fours and two massive sixes. Meanwhile, Rizwan, who opened the innings, scored 66 runs in 42 balls. The right-hander's knock included nine fours and a six. Pacer Salman Irshad was the pick of the bowlers for Zalmi, who claimed figures of 2-38 in four overs. Earlier, Zalmi had won the toss and decided to bowl first in fifth match of PSL 8.

After this win, Sultans retain their dominance on the points table with four points in three matches. Multan lost their first match against Lahore Qalandars but bounced back to defeat Quetta Gladiators in their second game. Meanwhile, Zalmi suffered a defeat after a winning start to the tournament with a win over Karachi Kings.

Iran protesters march in mourning for executed men

WEB DESK

TEHRAN: Iran has seen its most widespread anti-government protests in weeks, after small crowds marched overnight in Tehran and a number of other cities. Videos showed people chanting "Woman, life, freedom" and "Death to Khamenei" - a reference to the Supreme Leader. It followed calls to mark the 40th day of mourning for two men executed on protest-related charges, Mohammad Mehdi Karami and Seyed Mohammad Hosseini. The UN said they had faced unfair trials based on forced confessions. Protests swept across the country in September following the death in custody of Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old woman who was detained by morality police for allegedly not wearing her hijab properly. Authorities have portrayed them as "riots" and responded with force. So far, at least 529 protesters have been killed and almost 20,000 detained, according to the Human Rights Activists' News Agency (HRANA). Four protesters have been hanged since December, while 107 others have reportedly been sentenced to death or charged with capital offences. Seyed Mohammad Hosseini and Mohammad Mehdi Karami were hanged on 7 January. Footage posted on social media showed small protests took place on Thursday night in several parts of the capital, Tehran, as well as in nearby Karaj, the eastern city of Mashhad, the central city of Isfahan, the northern cities of Qazvin and Rasht, and the western cities of Arak, Izeh and Sanandaj. In Karaj, a crowd chanted the names of Mohammad Mehdi Karami and Seyed Mohammad Hosseini, according to footage verified by BBC Persian. The two men were accused of killing a member of the paramilitary Basij force during a protest there in November. Opposition activist collective 1500 Tasvir meanwhile shared a video from Mashhad in which a group of men and women are seen shouting: "My martyred brother, we shall avenge your blood."

Usman Khawaja, Handscomb lead Australia fight in 2nd India Test

NEW DELHI: Gritty half-centuries from Usman Khawaja and Peter Handscomb guided Australia to a fighting 263 all out against inspired Indian bowlers on Friday's opening day of the second Test. India reached 21 for no loss at stumps with the hosts still trailing Australia by 242 runs in New Delhi. Skipper Rohit Sharma, on 13, and KL Rahul, on four, were batting. Australia worked with spin right from the second over with debutant Matthew Kuhnemann and Nathan Lyon bowling six overs between

them. Handscomb (72 not out) and Khawaja (81 played key knocks to boost Australia's total after the tourists, who lost the opener of the four-match series inside three days, again elected to bat on another turning track. Fast bowler Mohammed Shami took four wickets while spinners Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja had three each. "It is always challenging when you have quality bowlers like Ashwin and Jadeja, it is always tough work," Khawaja told broadcaster Star Sports after the day's

play. Australia's 263 was "very competitive, it's not easy out there," he added. "There are few cracks. I think tomorrow will tell the tale which way this game is going." Shami wrapped up the Australian innings in the final session as he bowled Kuhnemann for six. Khawaja's knock came to an end before tea, with a stunning one-handed catch from KL Rahul giving left-arm spinner Jadeja his 250th Test wicket. Rahul dived full stretch to his right to grab the ball on a reverse sweep from Khawaja, who fell to his knees in absolute disbelief. Handscomb and Khawaja had put on 59 crucial runs in the second session before the latter's departure. But Handscomb kept up the grind and reached his fifth Test half-century in an eighth-wicket stand with skipper Pat Cummins, who made 33 before being trapped lbw by Jadeja. Earlier Ashwin dismissed wicketkeeper Alex Carey for a duck for his third wicket of the day as India once again called the shots after a mini Australia fightback. - APP

India's top cricket selector quits after TV sting

NEW DELHI: The chairman of India's cricket selection committee has resigned following a sting operation by a local television channel. Chetan Sharma, a former top cricketer, was caught on camera making startling allegations about the selection process and certain players. The video sparked controversy after

it went viral on social media. A senior cricket official said that Mr Sharma had "resigned voluntarily" and that his resignation had been accepted. "Yes, Chetan Sharma has tendered his resignation to BCCI secretary Jay Shah," a senior official of the Board of Control for Cricket in India told PTI news agency. "His position had

become untenable after the sting operation." Mr Sharma had been in post since December 2020, and was re-appointed last month. On Tuesday, Zee TV released footage that showed him talking about matters related to the men's cricket team. In the video, he alleged that Virat Kohli, former captain of the Indian team, had "ego clashes" with former BCCI president, Sourav Ganguly. He said Mr Kohli had falsely claimed that he

had been removed from the ODI captaincy without any communication from the governing body. "There was no need to bring up this topic... but he [Mr Kohli] did so intentionally," Mr Sharma can be heard saying in the video. He also alleged that some players take injections to speed up their recovery after injuries and that they play even when not match-fit. Mr Sharma has made no public comment since the footage emerged. - APP



LAHORE: View of Polo match between BN Polo and FG Polo team during AR Developers 3rd Jinnah Gold Cup 2023 at Jinnah Polo Fields. - APP

Billionaire tech banker in China reported missing

NEWS DESK

BEIJING: One of China's most high-profile billionaire bankers has gone missing, his company has reported. Bao Fan, the chief executive of China Renaissance Holdings, had not been able to be reached in recent days, the firm said in a market update on Thursday. Mr Bao is a leading deal broker in China whose clients include top tech companies Didi and Meituan. His firm's announcement has renewed concerns of a potential Beijing crackdown on finance and tech figures. Shares in the investment firm plunged on Friday, after it told shareholders it had "been unable to contact Mr Bao Fan". The board added it was not aware of "any information that indicates that Mr Bao's unavailability is or might be related to the business and/or operations of the group". When asked for further comment, China Renaissance referred the BBC to its notice to the Hong Kong Stock Exchange. The company did not specify how long Mr Bao had been missing. Chinese business newswire Caixin cited sources saying staff had not been able to contact him for two days. The business wire also reported the firm's president, Cong Lin, had been taken by authorities last September over his previous work at the state-owned ICBC bank.

NZ v England: 1st Test poised after Tom Blundell hundred

The day-night conditions and pink ball were criticised by Robinson and James Anderson in the run-up to this Test, yet there is no doubt the challenge of batting in the twilight is adding extra intrigue to a superb contest

SPORTS DESK

MOUNT MAUNGANUI: England's first Test against New Zealand is fascinatingly poised after Tom Blundell's superb century kept the hosts afloat on day two in Mount Maunganui. Responding to England's first-innings 325-9 declared, New Zealand found themselves 83-5 and 182-7, either side of Devon Conway being dismissed for 77. But wicketkeeper Blundell battled to his fourth Test hundred to drag New Zealand to 306 all out, a defi-

cit of only 19, despite Ollie Robinson bowling superbly to claim 4-54. Even though England's second innings started under floodlights, openers Ben Duckett and Zak Crawley added 50 in just 52 balls. Duckett fell for 25 and Crawley 28, the latter signalling the arrival of Stuart Broad as England's 'night-hawk' for the first time. Comically, Broad got away with skying Scott Kuggeleijn from his second ball - Kuggeleijn and Blundell watched as the ball dropped between them - leaving England 79-2, leading by 98.

The day-night conditions and pink ball were criticised by Robinson and James Anderson in the run-up to this Test, yet there is no doubt the challenge of batting in the twilight is adding extra intrigue to a superb contest. New Zealand should have been able to bat well early in the day in warm sunshine on a good pitch, but instead came close to imploding. Blundell, though, was able to coax 124 runs out of the last three wickets. He added 53 with Kuggeleijn and 59 with Blair Tackner - last man Tackner's contribution to the 10th-wicket stand

was just three. With the deficit negligible, New Zealand arguably had the upper hand, especially with England having to start their second innings just as darkness was falling. England did not take a backward step, staying true to their attacking instincts against some below-par New Zealand new-ball bowling. It is the tourists who should have the advantage in the daytime on Saturday, eyeing the opportunity to have New Zealand begin a run chase under lights on the third evening.

Blundell has form against England - he was prolific last summer despite New Zealand going down to a 3-0 series defeat in the UK - and he has kept his team in this Test. While many of his team-mates gifted their wicket away in blameless conditions, Blundell was compact, patient and determined. He overturned being given caught behind off Anderson on 74 and had moved to 82 by the time he was joined by last man Tackner. Blundell attacked the spin of Jack Leach, taking 14 off an over, then watched

Tackner keep out Robinson, with every defensive stroke cheered from the spectators on the grass banks. After Blundell swept Leach to go to three figures, he changed gear. His first 100 runs came from 143 balls, his next 38 off 37. He was dropped by flying wicketkeeper Ben Foakes off Ben Stokes on 117 and a miscue evaded a flailing Broad at mid-off Anderson when Blundell had 130. England also failed to review when Tackner edged Broad behind before Blundell heaved a caught-and-bowled to Anderson.

PSL 8th Edition



SATURDAY 07:00 PM
FEBRUARY 18, 2023
National Stadium,
Karachi, Pakistan



SC suspends transfer order of CCPO Lahore

FROM PAGE 01
The secretary ECP told the court the caretaker government Punjab made verbal request in connection with transfer of CCPO Lahore Ghulam Mahmood Dogar. Justice Muneib Akhtar inquired on this occasion does ECP make posting and transfer on verbal request. Is there such like precedent available before it. Who telephoned Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and made request for transfer. How CEC is making all decisions by becoming the entire election commission. DG Law ECP Arshid Khan told the court that after verbal request Punjab Caretaker government made request in writing on January 24. On it CEC gave permission for transferring other officers including Ghulam Mahmood Dogar on February 06. Justice Ijazul Ahsan inquired on this occasion has the ECP to give permission for postings and transfers during the caretaker setup as per act. He raised the question had the election commission delegated powers to CEC in respect of the proposed postings and transfers. DG Law ECP took the plea there is no such like written permission available. Election commission issued transfer orders in the light of SC observation. SC had given observation in its decision in 2013. Justice Muneib Akhtar remarked legislation has been enacted in the light of court's decision. Court decision was only with reference to secretaries. On the other hand election commission issued orders for transfer of assistant commissioners. How can the commission issue orders without the written request of the government. Justice Mazahir Naqvi remarked "inform us about the legal position of verbal orders. SC has issued several decisions with reference to verbal orders. Justice Muneib Akhtar remarked the clock is running very fast. Tick, tick, tick. 90 days have to end. Election commission is seeking more time. Justice Ijazul Ahsan remarked Election commission job is to hold transparent election and it is seeking time for it as well. The court maintained prima facie the order regarding transfer of Ghulam Mahmood Dogar was against the law. The order for transfer of Ghulam Mahmood Dogar was earlier given verbal and then in writing. The court while suspending the transfer order of Ghulam Mahmood Dogar has referred the case to a five members larger bench of SC. - Online

President invites CEC for 'urgent' meeting

FROM PAGE 01
He expressed displeasure over the apathy and inaction on the part of the Commission that didn't respond to his earlier letter as yet. The President stated that he had waited anxiously that the Commission would realize its constitutional duties to proceed and act accordingly, but he was extremely dismayed by ECP's poignant approach on this important matter. In his letter, the President once again reminded the ECP that being conscious of his constitutional responsibility of preserving, protecting and defending the Constitution, he was inviting CEC for an urgent meeting on 20th February 2023 in his office to consult on the date or dates of the general elections.

Briefs

Pakistan's rice exports to China increase by 53 pct in 2022

DNA

BEIJING: Pakistan's rice export to China in 2022 surpassed USD 455 million with a volume of more than one million tonnes, for the first time between China-Pakistan rice trade, said Ghulam Qadir Commercial Counsellor at Pakistan's Embassy Beijing, Gwadar Pro reported on Friday. Ghulam Qadir indicated that according to the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (GACC), last year, bilateral trade in agriculture products increased significantly and China imported more than 1.19 million tons of different types of rice from Pakistan, an increase of 53% year on year. "Our rice exports to China surpassed one million tons for the first time, due to facilitation from both governments and hard work of businessmen. With the opening up of China, these exports are forecasted to grow more", he added. He further said that according to statistics from the General Administration of Customs, in 2022, China's imports of Semi or wholly milled rice (Commodity Code: 10063020) from Pakistan touched USD 211.88 million, while two kinds of Broken rice (Commodity Code: 10064020, 10064080) reached USD 162.78 million and USD 80.74 million respectively. "The Chinese Government is supporting Pakistan by establishing offline and online Pavilions and Pakistani rice has hit the e-commerce platform in China and sales are expected to grow further. We are working with GACC to ensure more Pakistani rice enterprises to register and increase our exports even further", Qadir mentioned. Commercial Counsellor told China Economic Net that Pakistani rice is getting popular in the Chinese market due to its finest taste and quality while the total number of Pakistani enterprises registered with GACC also increased last year and now the number currently stands at 62.

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Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif handing over the relief goods to Turkish authorities sent by Pakistan for earthquake victims. Adiaman, Türkiye. — DNA

UNSC reform process**Pakistan warns against any imposed solutions**

Nor should new permanent members be added to the Council, with or without veto, in particular since this would deny equitable representation to the rest of the UN membership and make it even most undemocratic and unaccountable."

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan has called for evolving a "model" for restructuring the UN Security Council through patient exchanges, mutual accommodation and compromise acceptable to the widest possible majority of member states, saying that any other course of action would lead to a "dead-end". "We remain opposed to attempts to steer member states towards solutions imposed by votes and majorities," Ambassador Munir Akram told delegates when the long-running Inter-Governmental Negotiations (IGN) aimed at reforming the 15-member Council resumed on Thursday, while noting that some permanent members were behind those attempts in their bid to preserve

their own privileged position. "That course of action is a siren call to deadlock and a dead-end," the Pakistani envoy warned, adding that such attempts in the past led to an impasse and the breakdown of negotiations. "We remain convinced that the IGN process offers the best avenue to reach an agreed outcome to the question of equitable representation and reform of the Security Council," Ambassador Akram said. "It is only through patient exchanges, mutual accommodation and compromise that we can broaden the areas of convergence and reduce the points of divergence and thus evolve a 'model' for the reform that can be accepted by the widest possible majority of

Member States, as stipulated in Decision 62/557 of the General Assembly," he added. Full-scale negotiations to reform the Security Council began in the General Assembly in February 2009 on five key areas - the categories of membership, the question of veto, regional representation, size of an enlarged Security Council, and working methods of the council and its relationship with the General Assembly. Progress towards restructuring the Security Council remains blocked as G-4 countries - India, Brazil, Germany and Japan - continue pushing for permanent seats in the Council, while the Italy/Pakistan-led Uniting for Consensus (UfC) group firmly opposes

any additional permanent members. As a compromise, UfC has proposed a new category of members - not permanent members - with longer duration in terms and a possibility to get re-elected. The Security Council is currently composed of five permanent members - Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States - and 10 non-permanent members elected to two-year terms. In his remarks, Ambassador Akram said the most important change in global realities was that, in contrast to 1945 - the year the UN was established by 51 countries - today it is constituted by 193 mostly small and medium-sized

States largely from Asia, Africa and Latin America. "An expanded and reformed Security Council must offer equitable representation, in accordance with their numbers, to these small and medium-sized States," the Pakistani envoy said. The regional approach, espoused by the UfC and the African Group, he added, offered the best avenue to achieve this objective. As regards the issue of veto, Ambassador Akram said it has been responsible often for preventing the Security Council from taking decisive action for the maintenance of international peace and security. "It is precisely for this reason that the UfC believes that a reform of

the Council should not add permanent members which would add several additional States with the possibility to block and stymie its effective functioning," he said. Noting various proposals put forward in this regard, the Pakistani envoy said, "We believe that the veto rights of the existing permanent members should be abolished or at least severely restricted, and that the right of veto should not be expanded. Nor should new permanent members be added to the Council, with or without veto, in particular since this would deny equitable representation to the rest of the UN membership and make it even most undemocratic and unaccountable."—APP

Avalanches kill at least 12 in northeastern Afghanistan

KABUL: Several avalanches in the northeastern Afghan province of Badakhshan had killed at least 12 people in the last four days, a local official said on Friday. The avalanches occurred due to excessive snowfall in Raghistan and Deraim districts of the mountainous province that borders Tajikistan and Pakistan, said Maulvi Mohammad Akram Akbari, director of Natural Disaster Management. The avalanches also injured 12 people and destroyed 50 homes, he added.—APP

Markets drop as traders eye higher-for-longer rates

LONDON: Stock markets fell Friday on the prospect of more US interest rate hikes after two Federal Reserve officials hinted at ramping up its monetary tightening campaign in the face of stubbornly high US inflation. In Europe on Friday, London and Paris stock markets also slid one day after striking record peaks on recovery hopes. The greenback topped 135 yen and the dollar index, comparing it with a basket of currencies, hit a 1.5-month peak. The Fed news also sent oil prices tanking on concerns over the impact on crude demand in the world's biggest economy. Separately, European TTF gas prices sank under 50 euros for the first time in nearly a year and a half, as a mild winter curbs heating demand. "It was only days ago that investors seemed confident we would only get one or two more small increases in US interest rates and then the Fed might start cutting rates later in the year. The rhetoric has now changed," said AJ Bell investment director Russ Mould.—APP

PSX gains 39 points

ISLAMABAD: The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) on Friday gained 39.96 points, a positive change of 0.10 percent, closing at 41,118.61 points against 41,078.65 points the previous day. A total of 110,366,624 shares were traded during the day as compared to 141,865,637 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs. 4.677 billion against Rs. 7.438 billion on the last trading day. As many as 317 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 133 of them recorded gains and 157 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 27 companies remained unchanged. The three top-trading companies were Bank of Punjab with 12,157,000 shares at Rs 4.76 per share; WorldCall Telecom with 12,095,785 shares at Rs.1.19 per share, and Bank Islami Pakistan with 7,351,000 shares at Rs.13.20 per share. Rafhan Maize witnessed a maximum increase of Rs.391.00 per share price, closing at Rs.9,190.00, whereas the runner-up was Bata (Pak) with a Rs.114.99 rise in its per share price to Rs.1,989.99. Unilever Foods witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs.1,216.00 per share closing at Rs.18,210.00; followed by Sapphire Fiber with Rs.57.99 decline to close at Rs. 972.00.—APP

PAF contingent participates in spears of victory, 2023 drill

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A contingent of Pakistan Air Force (PAF) participated in Exercise Spears of Victory, 2023 which has concluded at Air War Centre Dhahran (King Abdulaziz Air Base), Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The PAF contingent consisted of pride of Pakistan, JF-17 Thunder, and F-16 aircraft which roared in the aerial boundaries of our Muslim brethren country while participating in the exercise, a PAF news release said. The exercise also witnessed the participation of modern fighter jets and support elements from PAF and friendly countries. Deputy Chief of the Air Staff (Air Defence) Air

Marshal Abdul Moeed Khan witnessed the closing ceremony of the exercise and appreciated the efforts of PAF contingent for making the exercise a great success. While interacting with the air and ground crew he said, "The existing global security scenario coupled with the evolving dynamics of air warfare calls for an enhanced partnership between Pakistan and friendly countries. International and regional strategic situation is undergoing profound changes with growing complexity in the security environment and such exercises provide an opportunity to enhance interoperability in the face of shared challenges". third version of the exer-



cise started in the Eastern Region of Saudi Arabia during the first week of February. Besides, the host country, Saudi Arabia, Air Forces from Bahrain, Greece, Jordan, Pakistan, Qatar, UK, and USA took part in the event. The exercise aimed at providing an opportunity to enhance interoperability with participating countries. In addition to fostering military relations, the exercise

also provided a platform to practice integrated employment of combat & combat support assets along with formulation and validation of tactics against contemporary threats. The scenario contained a high number of offensive and defensive complex training missions with the presence of electronic warfare and air defence systems supplemented with the presence of aggressive fighter aircraft to simulate enemy capabilities. The exercise profoundly enhanced the operational capability, tactical maneuvering skills, the concept of joint employment, alliance-building among friendly countries, and war-time preparedness of the participating air and ground crew.

Senior diplomat calls for closer China-France coordination

PARIS: A senior Chinese diplomat called here on Thursday for closer coordination between China and France to firmly support globalization and multi-polarization, jointly practice multilateralism, safeguard the authority of the United Nations (UN) and the basic norms governing international relations. China and France, as permanent members of the UN Security Council and major countries upholding independent foreign policy, should shoulder their responsibilities in the face of global uncertainties, Wang Yi, director of the Office of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, told Laurent Fabius, president of the French Constitutional Council, during a meeting. Noting that China has optimized its COVID-19 prevention measures, Wang, also a member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, said that the Chinese economy is expected to usher in a strong and steady growth. China will keep the momentum for high-quality development, promote high-level opening up, and firmly adhere to the Chinese path to modernization, which will bring new opportunities for China-France cooperation in various areas, Wang added. Fabius, also former French prime minister, said that the France-China relations have developed smoothly. In recent years, global challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, have highlighted the necessity for the international community to strengthen cooperation. France and China share extensive consensus on major international issues, and should join efforts in steering the international situation develop in the right direction of balance and multipolarity, Fabius added.—APP

US sponsors Pakistani entrepreneurs

KARACHI :The United States Consul General Karachi Nicole Theriot Friday highlighted the valuable contributions of the US-Pakistani diaspora, who are a key partner in the humanitarian, social, and commercial sectors in Pakistan. At a US-Pakistani diaspora conference here, the Consul General Theriot highlighted the longstanding US-Pakistan partnership to advance Pakistan's economic growth and emphasized continued opportunities for future partnership. While addressing the need for strengthening climate resilience in the country, CG Theriot said, "We are one team working toward the same goal, and the United States is committed to helping the US-Pakistani diaspora and local investors find opportunities and work with Pakistan through the Green Alliance framework to strengthen climate resilience, pursue energy transformation, and foster economic growth." This conference continued the momentum built at a January 25 conference in Islamabad where USAID signed a five-year memorandum of understanding with the Organization of Pakistani Entrepreneurs of North America (OPEN) to accelerate investments by Silicon Valley entrepreneurs in Pakistan's technology sector.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Labourers busy in construction work of IJP Road during development work in the city.—APP

Boao Forum for Asia to hold annual conference in March

BEIJING: The Boao Forum for Asia (BFA) will hold its annual conference from March 28 to 31 in Boao, a coastal town in China's island province of Hainan, according to the official website of the forum. This year's forum will be held entirely offline under the theme "An Uncertain World: Solidarity and Cooperation for Development amid Challenges." Representatives of governments, businesses, academia and media from all over the world will be invited to attend the event, seeking strategies for development in the post-COVID era and ways to deepen cooperation in the international community.—APP

Briefs

WHO extends over Rs 70 mln medical relief package for South Punjab

MULTAN: World Health Organization (WHO) extended medical relief package of Rs 70 million for flood-hit areas of South Punjab here on Friday. WHO Country head, Dr Palitha Mahipala, along with his team handed over medical equipment, medicines, and vehicles for monitoring of service delivery in DG Khan and Rajanpur to Secretary P&SHC, Muhammad Iqbal at South Punjab Health Secretariat. Speaking on the occasion, Dr Mahipala informed that the package included 48 medicines for each flood-hit district while 53 medical equipment for Rajanpur, and 48 for DG Khan. "Four vehicles are also part of the relief package," he maintained and added that WHO would send medical relief goods worth Rs 30 million more in days to come to flood-affected districts. He stated that the total worth of it was over Rs 70 million including over Rs 40 million for Rajanpur and over Rs 30 million for DG Khan. Mr Iqbal termed WHO's support as a welcoming gesture, adding that it would help in the rehabilitation of health centers in the areas. - APP

Ex-attorney general, CJP(R) Malik Qayyum dies

LAHORE: Former president Supreme Court Bar Association, former attorney general and retired chief justice of Pakistan Malik Muhammad Qayyum has died. Death of former Chief Justice Malik Muhammad Qayyum was confirmed by his family. According to family, the funeral prayer (Namaz-e-janaza) of former attorney will be performed in Johar Town Lahore. Justice (R) Malik Qayyum is the brother of interim health minister Punjab Dr. Javed Akram. The deceased was former justice of Lahore High Court and former Attorney General of Pakistan. He also was former president of Supreme Court Bar Association. - Online

Advices worker to 'Jail bharo', himself hides: Asif

ISLAMABAD: Defence minister and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (Pmln) leader Khawaja Asif said he (Imran Khan) advised all party workers to 'Jail Bharo' and himself hidden in home like mouse. In tweet on Friday criticised Imran and said He is calling his workers to arrive Zaman Park and save me (from arrest). Tells court that he is aged and injured so he could not appear before court, Khawaja continued, and his companions get imprisonment for two days and starts crying on Television. While referring to Nawaz Shareef he said, that was Nawaz Shareef who held daughter hand and came back to country for imprisonment. - Online

ATC grants bail to accused in attack on Imran

GUJRANWALA: Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) Gujranwala has granted bail to Ahsan Nazir accused in murderous attack on Imran Khan. The case pertaining to murderous attack on Imran Khan came up for hearing before ATC Gujranwala Friday. The ATC announced the reserved judgment on bail pleas of the accused Waqas and Ahsan Nazir. The court accepted bail plea of the accused Ahsan Nazir against surety bonds in the sum of Rs 5 lac. The court dismissed bail plea of accused Waqas. It may be mentioned accused Ahsan Nazir who has been granted bail is brother of Mudassar Nazir who is district information secretary of PML-N. - APP

Senate chairman, Saudi envoy discuss issues of interest

The chairman appreciated Saudi Arabia's leadership's role in the Islamic world and its efforts to promote regional security and stability, adding Saudi Arabia had always supported Pakistan in difficult times

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Senate Chairman Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani and Saudi ambassador to Pakistan Nawaf bin Said Al-Malki on Friday discussed issues of mutual interests especially further strengthening of bilateral relations and regional development. In the meeting, both dignitaries reiterated maintaining strong and historical relations between the two brotherly countries. They agreed to further enhance economic cooperation between the two countries. The Senate chairman said that Pakistan valued its relations with Saudi Arabia. He thanked Saudi Arabia for extending support to Pakistan at various international forums. Both sides discussed to further improving existing cooperation between the two countries in the fields of trade, investment and energy. The chairman appreciated Saudi Arabia's leadership's role in the Islamic world and its efforts to promote regional security and stability, adding Saudi Arabia had always supported Pakistan in difficult times. He said Pakistan and Saudi Arabia were in harmony on many regional and global issues. The chairman stressed the need to further promote strategic and broad-based partnership between the two countries in



various fields. He urged Saudi Arabia to take advantage of vast investment opportunities in Pakistan. Gwadar and China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects would help ensure bright future of the region, the chairman added. He said over two million Pakistanis serving in Saudi Arabia were playing important role in progress of Saudi Arabia. He said the people of Pakistan

prayed for the good health and long life of the custodians of the Haram Sharif. Saudi ambassador said his country wanted to further improve bilateral and trade relations with Pakistan.

US-Pakistan discuss strengthening economic ties

ISLAMABAD: Counselor of US Department of State Derek Chollet discussed a wide range of issues with Pakistan including strengthening of economic ties, cooperating to address the impacts of the climate crisis, and expanding people-to-people connections. "The US and Pakistan have a robust partnership based on decades of bilateral cooperation and support, and we look forward to strengthen our relationship in trade, investment, climate, clean energy, health, security, education, and other shared priorities," said Counselor Chollet who is in Pakistan on two day visit along with a delegation of senior US govt officials, including Counselor of the US Agency for the International Development Clinton White, and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Pakistan Elizabeth Horst to highlight the importance of our bilateral partnership and reaffirm our countries' shared goals. Following the January 9 Conference on Climate Resilient Pak in Geneva, Counselor Chollet's visit provided a chance to learn more about the progress Pakistan has made so far in response to the floods and how the United States, other donors and partners can most effectively support Pakistan's resilient recovery, said a news release issued by the Embassy of UN in Pak. - DNA

Consultation necessary for good legislation: IHC

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad High Court (IHC) has remarked it is essential for good legislation that consultation should be made with all stake holders. The case on protection of rights of the journalists came up for hearing before a single bench of IHC led by Chief Justice Aamir Farooq here Friday. Umar Ijaz Gillani counsel for Journalists Association appeared in the court. Additional Attorney General (AAG) told the court chairman ITN was called some weeks before but he is not present. The court remarked this is job of law ministry. You have to get work done from them. Have you shared this draft with law ministry. Chairman ITNE has sent you a thing. You have to see the next work. If work is underway it then its pace should be accelerated. Then election will come. New government will come and the work will linger on. The court remarked I am hearing this case of former chief justice. Do you want that

next chief justice should hear this case after me. The counsel for PBA told the court PBA wants to become party in this case. The court remarked tell us this that its own job is not being done by PEMRA and you want to get this job done by it too. I can understand your pressure is on the ministry that this work should not be done. Cases ranging between 100000 and 150000 in respect of newspapers employees come to us. The consultation with those employees who are real stake holders is must. The counsel Umar Ijaz Gillani advocate told the court PEMRA draft copy should be shared with them. The court directed to share draft copy of PEMRA with respondents. The court remarked this case was being heard by the previous chief justice. Now you want some one else should hear it after me. I don't understand why any one is not ready to take the responsi-

bility now. Nothing happens if work is stopped. But loss is caused only. This does not happen that the courts take all decisions hundred percent correct. Counsel for PBA told the court this matter runs in the jurisdiction of PEMRA. The court remarked PEMRA does not do its own work. I don't know why such situation prevails in media industry. There can not be any bigger example of media exploitation than this. Pressure of your client is on ministry of information too that it should not be done this way. Let it go if this matter is going for legislation. The counsel for PBA said exploitation of working journalists cannot be denied. PBA has raised objection over proposed amendments. If relief is not provided from PEMRA then the matters finally comes to court. The court remarked consultation should be made with all the stake holders of media for legislation. This case is running since 2021. I cannot under-

stand why this is being delayed. If legislation is not enacted now then the matter will linger on for one year more. Owners are too stake holders because directions for making payments will be sent to them. What work you have to get done you get it done within 24 hours. Afzal Butt president PFUJ told the court media workers of Pakistan are waiting for fresh whiff of air. PEMRA has said if the salary payment is not made then council of complaints can be approached. A full service structure is needed here. The court remarked it is essential for good legislation that consultation should be made with all the stake holders. Afzal Butt told the court there is concept of members and tribunals with chairman ITNE which should be implemented. The court remarked the proposals in this regard have been sent to ministry of information. We ask from them why these have not been implemented. - Online

Ahsan Iqbal questions judiciary over audio tape

ISLAMABAD: Federal minister Ahsan Iqbal has said the alleged videotape of former Chief Minister (CM) Punjab Chaudhry Pervez Elahi is not ordinary tape and if this tape is true then it will be big taint on the character of judiciary. Talking to media men outside Supreme Court (SC) the alleged tape of Pervez Elahi has come wherein he is trying to go for match fixing with a judge of superior judiciary. This tape has come as question mark on the character of the judiciary, he said adding like Pakistan Bar Council I will demand that it should be investigated. If tape is false then those who are causing harm to judiciary should be punished and if it is true then it will be a big taint on character of judiciary. Those responsible for this audio leak should be punished. This all arrangement has been made by Imran Khan. Transparent investigation into audio leaks should be carried out. The previous government is responsible for the prevailing economic instability. The country turns into jungle if the law is not upheld. We cannot afford more judicial disputes in the prevailing situation when country is facing crisis. All will have to play their role with responsibility. He underlined CPEC is very significant project for the development of the country. - Online

Pak rupee knocks out US dollar in interbank

DNA
ISLAMABAD: The Pakistani rupee kept up the momentum of its upward trajectory against the US dollar as the local unit was appreciated by Rs2.13 in the interbank trading on Friday. According to money dealers, the rupee sailed smoothly during the early trade and gained Rs2.13 in its value against the greenback which was being exchanged for Rs262.25. Yesterday, the US dollar was depreciated by Re1 and culminated the day at Rs264.38. As the government is steadfast in reaching an agreement with the IMF for the resumption of stalled \$1.2 billion tranche and is making progress on the implementation of prior actions as demanded by the global lender, the market anticipates a possible deal between the two. Things are progressing positively with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), sources in the federal finance ministry said on Thursday. The IMF was informed about government actions and the progress on the implementation of the conditions, the insiders said as Pakistan and the Fund resumed their virtual talks over the release of the ninth tranche of the Extended Fund Facility (EFF).
Biden, 80, is healthy, 'fit for duty,' doctor says after physical
BETHESDA: Doctors declared U.S. President Joe Biden, 80, healthy and "fit for duty" on Thursday after a physical examination that included removing a lesion from his chest and declaring him free of symptoms of long COVID after his bout last year with the virus. "The president remains fit for duty, and fully executes all of his responsibilities without any exemptions or accommodations," White House physician Kevin O'Connor said in a summary of the health exam. The exam was closely watched as Biden prepares for his expected run for a second term in 2024. The summary said Biden did not have any "long COVID" symptoms and that his stiff gait has not worsened since his last exam in November 2021. Biden said his physical went well. "Everything really went well... Thank God for small favors," he told NBC News. Biden's three-hour session with doctors at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in the Washington suburb of Bethesda, Maryland, was his second extensive exam since taking office in January 2021. - Agencies



ADIYAMAN: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb meets the earthquake-affected people in Adiyaman, Turkiye. - DNA

UK aviation team shares best practice on air safety

ISLAMABAD: On Friday February 17, experts from the UK State Safety Partnership (SSP) team, funded by the UK Department for Transport concluded their 12-day visit to share best practice on air safety performance and build relationships with the Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority. The visit was funded by the UK as part of its ongoing support to the Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority on safety performance. During the two-week visit, the UK SSP team worked closely with the Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority and industry to lay the foundations for long-term collaboration on safety performance. While the support of the SSP team will not directly lead to the removal of Pakistan from the UK Air Safety List, the programme is designed to support Pakistan's authorities to implement steps to achieve this. Andrew Dalgleish, Chargé d' Affaires at the British High Commission Islamabad, said the following "Direct flights between the UK and Pakistan are a helpful channel for businesses and people to people contact - the British High Commission understands how important this is for Pakistani airline companies. - DNA

Finland's NATO membership now in "Turkey's hands"

Finland's parliament decided on Friday it would vote on Feb. 28 to approve the necessary legislation to allow country to eventually become a member of NATO, the head of its foreign affairs committee said

DNA

HELSINKI: The fate of Finland's bid to join NATO is in "Turkey's hands", President Sauli Niinisto said on Friday, after the Finnish parliament agreed it would ratify NATO's founding treaties on Feb. 28. Last May, Finland and neighbouring Sweden applied to join the Western military alliance in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. But existing member Turkey has opposed their memberships, accusing the Nordic countries of harbouring what it calls Kurdish terrorist groups. Finland's parliament decided on Friday it would vote on Feb. 28 to

approve the necessary legislation to allow the country to eventually become a member of NATO, the head of its foreign affairs committee said. "It is an expression of our will. Turkey's stance towards our will is exclusively and only in Turkey's hands," Niinisto told reporters on the sidelines of the Munich security gathering. The legislation that ratifies NATO's founding treaties in Finland is likely to be passed, given that most members of parliament are in favour of joining the alliance, bringing Finland a step closer to membership ahead of Sweden. Niinisto said Finland would go ahead with its membership without Sweden if Turkey decided to

ratify the Finnish bid but not the Swedish one. "We don't want to and also can't withdraw our application," Niinisto said. Finland will not become a member of the Western military alliance until Turkey and Hungary ratify its bid. "The goal is that the national legislative process required to join NATO is finished during this electoral term," committee chief Jussi Halla-aho told reporters on Friday just two weeks before the parliament breaks for elections. Turkey has said it was not supportive of Sweden's bid, though Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan in January said he was open to ratifying Finland's application. "We are not taking part in any bazaar negotiations... we take care of our own part (in the rat-

ifications)," the foreign affairs committee's vice chairman Erkki Tuomioja told reporters. NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg said last Tuesday it does not matter whether the Nordic countries join together as long as the bids are ratified "as soon as possible". Both Sweden and Finland had applied for membership last May and while insisting they wish to join simultaneously, leaders of both countries have said they cannot rule out Finland going first. The parliament's foreign affairs committee maintained in its report that the use and storage of nuclear weapons will remain forbidden in Finland, also as NATO member.

