

Saturday, February 25, 2023

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 25

Hungary wants more talkson Finland, Sweden NATO bids

A sister publication of **CENTRELINE & DNA News Agency**

Detailed News On Page-08

Stoltenberg sees progress in Sweden's bid

Detailed News On Page-07



Pak, Uzbekistan sign \$1 billion trade agreement





Briefs

Khan says JIT report being tempered

BUREAU REPORT



sabotage the findings of the Joint Investigation Team (JIT) in its report through deliberate tampering were under way. Taking to Twitter, the deposed premier recalled the assassination attempt on him, saying, "If anyone still has any doubts about who was responsible for my assassination attempt, just see what is happening with the JIT report." Speaking about the anti-terrorism court (ATC), Mr Khan said, "The JIT report should be submitted before the ATC." Mentioning the inquiry, Mr Khan said, "The prosecutor general, after an independent inquiry, found four officers guilty of destroying evidence and asked

Arrest warrant for Rana issued

for action against them.

DNA



anti-terrorism court in Gujranwala, reported media on Friday. A case was filed at the Industrial police station against the minister on August 5, 2022 on a complaint of PML-Q leader Shahkaz Aslam for issuing threats to the then-Punjab chief secretary and his family members. According to the first information report (FIR), the complainant saw the federal minister on television hurling threats. The Gujranwala ATC dismissed the police report today (Friday) and directed them to present Sanaullah on March 7. The court also issued a show-cause notice to the officer concerned, DSP, and SP investigations and ordered them to appear before it on the same day.

Holiday Notice

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

Editor

Apex Committee meets

Political stability crucial

The committee session expresses 'zero tolerance' against terrorism

Ansar M Bhatti

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said that political stability is crucial for economic stability as he chaired the meeting of the National Apex Committee - summoned to overview the country's law and order situation. Addressing the session, the premier said absolute state machinery would be utilized to stop the terrorist attacks in the country and the focus would be on operational preparedness, increasing the capability of the police.

The PM praised, as sources said, the security forces for a successful operation against terrorists who attacked the Karachi police office while condemning in severe terms the incident. The committee, formed in 2015 after the Army Public School (APS) attack to oversee the implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP), met in Islamabad as Pakistan grapples with a fresh wave of terrorism. The apex committee meeting – attended by the civilian and military leadership was scheduled to discuss and formulate a strategy to deal with the terrorism wave in various parts of the country. The meeting came after Defence Minister Khawaja Asif and Director General of the Inter-Ser

vices Intelligence Lieutenant General Nadeem Anjum visited Kabul to discuss the rise in militant activities, including the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan's (TTP) attacks. Such a high-level visit from Islamabad took place after a long pause. It is understood that the activities of the TTP using Afghan territory which is causing great harm to peace in Pakistan did come for detailed deliberations during the stay of the delegation in Kabul. The meeting also holds importance as the Imran Khan-led Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is holding its "Jail BharoTehreek (court arrest movement)" across the country - which also requires the attention of law enforcement agencies. "Unfortunately, there is still a segment of society that wants to get things done on the streets," the prime minister said, without naming the PTI - which was ousted from power in April and has been on the streets with intermittent intervals. He mentioned that after the APS attack, then-prime minister Nawaz Sharif had also invited Khan to attend a NAP meeting, but he refused to attend the moot even back then. The prime minister told the participants that after the Peshawar attack, which claimed

Continued on Page 06

PTI says PDM trying to pressurize judiciary

Inept PM brook 70 years inflation record: Farrukh

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) demanded investigation into the matter as how the note of Supreme Court (SC) Judge Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail containing of his reservations regarding the suomotu notice by the apex reached PPP leader Farooq H Naik. PTI Senior Vice President LAHORE: There was no quick relief

part of the order, reached Farooq Naik. He demanded that there should be an in- was filed to seek release of PTI leadvestigation into the matter and Farooq Naik ers including Shah Mehmood Qureshi, should be asked who delivered this note to Azam Swati, Waleed Iqbal, Asad Umar, him. Lashing out the imported government Murad Ras, Umar Cheema, Muhammad for their inability to get the country out of the Khan Madni, AzamNiazi and Ahsan prevailing crisis, Fawad stated that the lead- Dogar. LHC's Justice ShahramSarwar ership of the ruling parties were well-trained Chaudhry took up the petition on Frifraudulent. He said that on one hand, Khawaja day, directing Punjab government's Asif has been shedding tears for half an hour counsel to present a report in the that he could not audit Islamabad club, on court on February 27 after getting inthe other, the membership of the club was structions from the government. The

Continued on Page 06

No quick relief for court-arrested PTI leaders

DNA

Fawad Chaudhry, in his strong reaction to for nine senior PTI leaders who were the unfortunate development on Friday, stat- court-arrested as part of party's Jail ed that it was very worrisome that Justice Bharo campaign as the Lahore High Mandokhail's note, which was yet to be made Court adjourned hearing of a plea seeking their "recovery". The petition sold for Rs. 10 million during the Zardari and judged observed that they first himself

Continued on Page 06



There were 40 detainees when President Joe Biden took office



DNA

The United ISLAMABAD: States has transferred two brothers from the Guantanamo Bay U.S. detention facility in Cuba to Pakistan, bringing the total number of people held at Guantanamo down to 32, the Pentagon said on Thursday. The Guantanamo camp was established by Republican President George W. Bush in 2002 to house foreign terrorism suspects following the 2001 hijacked plane attacks on New York and the Pentagon that killed

about 3,000 people. It came to symbolize the excesses of the U.S. "war on terror" because of harsh interrogation methods that critics have said amounted to torture. There were 40 detainees when President Joe Biden, a Democrat, took office in 2021. Biden has said he hopes to close the facility. The federal government is barred by law from transferring Guantanamo detainees to U.S. mainland prisons.

Forces kill one terrorist

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Security Forces conducted an Intelligence Based Operation in District Awaran, Balochistan on a credible lead with regards to presence of a hide out of terrorists involved in recent IED attacks in the area.

Polls date suo motu Ruling parties call on SC to form full court

The request was made by Farooq H Naek, when nine-member bench resumed the hearing

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ties - JamiatUlema-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F), Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) - on Thursday asked the Supreme Court to form a full court to hear the suomotu notice taken by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial on the delay in the announcement of a date for elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The request was made in a joint statement read out by lawyer Faroog H Naek, on behalf of the three parties when the nine-member bench resumed the hearing of the suomotu notice. The PPP lawyer also requested Justice IjazUl Ahsan and Justice SayyedMazahar Ali Akbar Naqvi to recuse themselves from the nine-member bench currently hearing the suomotu notice.

Continued on Page 06

Asif comes hard ISLAMABAD: Three ruling coalition parties – JamiatUlema-e-Islam Fazi (IUI-F). on judiciary in NA

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Friday demanded the Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial to form a full court to hear the suomotu notice case regarding delay in the announcement of a date for elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Speaking here in National Assembly, the minister said that a bench comprising nine judges is hearing this case but the matter is of utmost importance and the full court must consider it. "I do not want to give the

Continued on Page 06

US trade ties vital for Pakistan: Ned Price

Says America has been leading investors in Pak

DNA

WASHINGTON: The United States said that its robust trade relationship with Pakistan was crucial as the country recovers from the effects of the devastating floods last year. Addressing a press briefing in Washington on Thursday, US State Department Spokesperson Ned Price said that the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) Council ministerial meeting hosted by the US Trade Representative Ambassador Tai exemplified American commitment to deepening economic and commercial ties with Pakistan. "We believe that a robust trade relationship between the United States and Pakistan is more important than ever to bolster Pakistan's

economic stability as it recovers from devastating floods, while at the same time also providing opportunity to Americans and to American businesses in this country, exposing them to new markets - Pakistani markets in this case," he said.

Continued on Page 06

Ukrainians vow to fight on, a year after invasion

"I'll repeat today what I said one year ago as Russia invaded Ukraine," Biden tweeted

CENTRELINE REPORT

KYIV: Ukrainians paid tribute to fallen loved ones on Friday and vowed to fight on to victory, while Russia said its forces were making gains in battle in the east as its invasion entered a second year with no end in sight. At a ceremony on Kyiv's St Sophia Square, a visibly emotional President VolodymyrZelenskiy bestowed medals on soldiers and the mother of one killed. He fought back tears when a band played the national anthem. "We have become one family. There are no more strangers among us ... Ukrainians have sheltered Ukrainians, opened their homes and hearts to those who were forced to flee the war," he said in a televised address. "We withstand all threats, shelling, cluster bombs, cruise missiles, kami-

kaze drones, blackouts and cold," he said. "And we will do everything to gain victory this year." Zelenskiy was due later to attend an online summit with U.S. President Joe Biden and other leaders of the Group of Seven wealthy democracies, expected to pledge more support for Ukraine and tighten sanctions against Russia. "I'll repeat today what I said one year ago as Russia invaded Ukraine," Biden tweeted. "A dictator bent on rebuilding an empire will never erase the people's love of liberty. Brutality will never grind down the will of the free. And Ukraine will never be a victory for Russia. Never." For ordinary Ukrainians who have spent much of the year hiding in bomb shelters and supporting the war effort any way they can, the anniversary meant reflection. "I buried my son who died in military service. I also buried my husband. I think it's very clear to

G20 tussles over Ukraine war

News Desk

BENGALURU: Finance leaders of the world's top economies sought on Friday to bridge differences over how to deal with Russia following its year-old invasion of Ukraine as the West stepped up sanctions against Moscow. U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen accused Russian officials at the two-day Group of Twenty (G20) meeting in the Indian city of Bengaluru of being "complicit" in war atrocities.

But, underlining the split with those nations which have not joined efforts to isolate the Russian economy, meeting host India avoided mention of the year-long war in inaugural remarks and said the global economy faced a range of other challenges. "I would urge that your discussions should focus on the most vulnerable citizens of the world," Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, adding that stability, confidence and growth had to be brought back to the world economy.

you, I'm on my own now and it's very, very hard," said ValentynaKrysan, 75, a shop employee in Kyiv. "I wish you a nice, peaceful day, and that such a thing will never be repeated in your lives.'

Allies around the world showed their support. Ukraine's blue and yellow colours lit up the Eiffel Tower, the Brandenburg Gate, the Empire State Building and the Sydney Opera House, and were painted on the street outside the Russian embassy in London. "There will be a life after this war, because Ukraine will win," Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo said. There were no major public events to mark the anniversary in Russia, which set off fireworks on Thursday for the annual "Defenders of the Fatherland" holiday and held a pop concert on Wednesday attended by President Vladimir Putin. Tens of thousands of Ukrainian civilians and soldiers on both sides are believed to have died since Putin ordered the invasion a year ago, saying it was necessary to protect Russia's security. Ukraine sees it as a bid to subjugate an independent state. Its outnumbered and outgunned forces repelled Russia's attempt to seize the capital Kviv early in the war and later recaptured swathes of occupied territory. But Moscow still occupies nearly a fifth of Ukraine, which it claims to have annexed.

Russian troops have destroyed Ukrainian cities, set a third of the population to flight and left behind streets littered with corpses in towns they occupied and lost. Moscow denies war crimes. In recent weeks, Russian forces, replenished with hundreds of thousands of conscripts in the first mobilisation since World War Two, have launched a

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Inside.. President for improving

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Pak-Kazakh trade, economic ties

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Problems in the higher education of Pakistan - Page 05

Brook, Joe Root centuries put England in charge of NZ Test - Page 06

Pakistan, Uzbekistan sign \$1bln trade agreement Page 07

Hungary wants more talks on Finland, Sweden bids Page 08



PTI award's party ticket to Shahram Tarakai for NA-19 Swabi

DNA

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (PTI) has awarded party ticket to co-founder of Awami Jamhuri Ittehad Pakistan (AJIP) Shahram Khan Tarakai from district Swabi to contest by-poll on NA-19 Swabi scheduled for March. In his statement, Shahram Khan expressed gratitude to PTI chairman Imran Khan for endorsing trust in him and said that he would try to meet the expectations of the party leadership.

Previously, he was a member of the Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from May 2013 to May 2018. During his first tenure as Member of the KP Assembly, he served as Provincial Minister for agriculture, Health between June 2013 and May 2018. He was dismissed as a minister of health on January 26, 2020 by the Chief Minister on the instructions of Prime minister Imran Khan. Tarakai first entered into politics in 2005 after coming from abroad when he ran for District Nazim in 2005 Local Government Elections and won the office by a huge margin. He co-founded Awami Jamhuri Ittehad Pakistan (AJIP) in 2010 and ran for the seat of National Assembly of Pakistan as a candidate of AJIP from constituency NA-13 Swabi-II in 2013 general elections against PTI's candidate Asad Qaiser but was unsuccessful. In the same election, he was elected to the Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as a candidate of AJIP from Constituency PK-32 Swabi-II by receiving 20,111 votes and defeating Amir Rehman, a candidate of Awami National Party

Commissioner reviews services available at

PESHAWAR: Commissioner Peshawar Division, Mohammad Zubair Friday visited Service Delivery Centre (SDC) at Deputy Commissioner's Office and reviewed services available at various counters, Besides, Deputy Commissioner Peshawar, Shah Fahad, and other officers of the district administration were also present on the occasion. The Divisional Commissioner was given a detailed briefing regarding the performance of district administration.

The Commissioner also visited the old record room at Tehsil Building and inspected the ongoing beautification work on it. During the visit to SDC, the Deputy Commissioner briefed him about the services available to the people. He also met applicants and after collecting firsthand information from the visitors about their problems, directed the staff for their immediate redressal. Commissioner Peshawar directed the officers staff of the district administration to perform their duties with honesty and provide maximum relief to the people by disposing of their work. - APP

President for improving Pak-Kazakh trade, economic ties

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has called for improving Pakistan-Kazakhstan trade and economic relations, adding that both countries had great scope to expand cooperation in the areas of trade and economy. He pointed out that the potential of trade between the two brotherly countries was much greater than the current level of bilateral trade, and there was a clear need to explore new avenues to boost bilateral trade for the mutual benefit of the two countries.

The President said that the potential for enhancing trade in the fields of agriculture and agro-products needed to be materialized, adding that maximum facilitation to investors from Kazakhstan should be provided to establish their businesses, in the already established Special Economic Zones across Pakistan.

The President expressed



these views while talking to Pakistan's Ambassador-designate to Kazakhstan, Mr Nauman Bashir Bhatti, who called on him. at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. Talking to the Ambassador, the President said

that Pakistan attached great importance to its ties with Kazakhstan as both the brotherly coun-

tries shared historical and cultural bonds. He further stated that Pakistan was committed to build sustainable and result-oriented relations with the Central Asian Republic (CARs) under its "Vision Central Asia" policy, and enhancing regional connectivity with CARs constituted a pivotal part of Pakistan's

policy towards the region. He also stressed the need to keep up the momentum in taking forward regional connectivity initiatives with Kazakhstan, such Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran (KTI) railway

While emphasising the need to enhance people-to-people

ident called for increasing cooperation in the field of higher education through ioint degrees, and student and faculty exchange programmes. He said that the Virtual University of Pakistan (VU) was offering online education, which was cost-effective and students from Kazakhstan could

that 8000 foreign students were already enrolled in VU's various virtual education programmes.

The President asked the

Ambassador-designate to convey his gratitude to the Government and the people of Kazakhstan for their generous assistance to the flood-affected people of Pakistan. The President asked the Ambassador to highlight the anti-Muslim and anti-minority policies of India, particularly the atrocities and human rights violations being committed by the Indian Occupation Forces against the Muslim population of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. He also asked him to work for improving the country's image. The President congratulated Mr Nauman Bashir Bhatti over his appointment as Pakistan's Ambassador-designate to Kazakhstan and urged him to take effective steps for further improving bilateral relations between the two countries.

PESCO notifies power suspension program in KP

PESHAWAR: Electric Supply Company (PESCO) on Friday notified power suspension from various grids of the province owing to unavoidable maintenance work. Power supply would remain suspended from 132 KV Jamrud Grid Station on February 25 and 28 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. resultantly consumer of 11 KV Hayatabad 1,2,3,4,5,New Hayatabad, Health Care Hospital, Health Exultance, North West Hospital, Academy Town, RMI, Kacha Ghari, Karkhanoo, Gul Abad, PIC, Hayatabad Surgical, Peshawar General, Shakas 1, Health Net Hospital, Northern Bottling, Mohmand Steel feeders would face inconvenience.

Power supply would remain suspended from 132 KV Phase 7 Hayatabad Grid Station on February 25 and 28 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. resultantly consumer of 11 KV Hayatabad 6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,Old Hayatabad, Deans Heights, Shoakat Khanam feeders would face inconvenience. Power supply would remain

suspended from 132 KV Nowshera City Transmission Line on February 26 from 9:00 a.m.

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of

Bulgaria in Pakistan Madam Ire-

augurated "Future World Model

United Nations (FWMUN)" 2023, with the theme of the promotion

and protection of human rights in a digital age" The Ambassador

expressed her delight in witness-

ing the event and emphasized

the importance of investing in

education for the country's fu-ture. She shared her own MUN

experiences as a student and how

Gancheva here on Friday in-

MOU signing ceremony to make Rawalpindi Green



dum of understanding has ernment of Punjab. been signed at Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) with Parks & Horticulture Authority - PHA, Directorate of Education Colleges, Forest Department, and RCCI to make Rawalpindi Green

RAWALPINDI: A memoran- under the initiative of Gov- Rafiq, signed and exchanged Hamza Sarosh, Vice Pres-Punjab Interim Minister for Health Dr. Jamal Nasir, **Education Interim Minister** Mansoor Qadir, and Commissioner Rawalpindi Liagat Ali Chatha witnessed

the MOU ceremony.

the representatives from PHA, Directorate of Education Colleges and Forest Department at a ceremony held at Chamber house. Group leader RCCI Mr. Sohail Altaf, Senior Vice Muhammad

the MOU documents with ident Faisal Shahzad, President Small Chamber Tariq Jadoon, Women Chamber President Riffat Shaheen, Sheikh Hafeez, executive committee members and members were also present on the occasion.-DNA

Bulgarian envoy inaugurates future "World MUN 2023"

DNA

they helped shape her diplomatic career said a news release. Ms. Gancheva also highlighted the long-standing friendly and economic cooperation between Bulgaria and Pakistan and the opportunities for the two countries to further strengthen their ties. The Future World Model United Nations FWMUN 2023 provides a platform for students to come together and find solutions to problems through constructive debate and an exchange of ideas.

The event is a mix of cultural diversity and an intellectual mindset. The exclusive "Future World Model United Nations (FWMUN) 2023 conference is a timely reminder that together as a nation, we can overcome any calamity, pandemic or disaster if we stand united. The event marks the beginning of the inspiration for the youth to help shape the world based on justice, solidarity, liberty, and peace for all. It opens opportunities for the students to be truly engaged in the learning process, living their learning experience as young diplomats. The Future World Model United Nations FWMUN 2023 promises to be a transformative experience for all participants and will play a significant role in sensitizing the international community and maximizing the skills of diplomacy amongst educated youth.

People will never accept minus Imran formula

President RCCI Mr. Saqib

QAZI SHOAIB KHAN

ATTOCK: Central leader of Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf, expected candidate for NA-50 Attock Syed Zulfigar Abbas Bokhari(alias Zulfi Bokhari) while addressing a public gathering has also offered court arrest here on Friday in line with the jail filling call of PTI leader Imran Khan. He said that thousands of PTI workers from Attock were also ready to embrace shackles to join hands with their political party fighting against the anti-democratic policies of the imported government of PM-L(N) alliance. Zulfi Bokhari while lashing out the targeted operation against PTI workers and atrocities of the government said PTI is only national political in Pakistan which would never accept the minus one formula as Imran Khan is the their red line.

Speaking on the occasion, Central leader of Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf, expected candidate for NA-50 Attock Syed Zulfiqar Abbas Bokhari(alias Zulfi Bokhari) claimed that PTI under the bold leadership of Im-

prevailing imbroglio of political economic default like situation of Pakistan after coming into power again. Among others, the public gathering was also participated by candidate for MPA Attock Sardar Mumtaz Hussain Mahjia, Col. (R) Mohammad Anwar, Vice President, PTI Malik Kamran Khaki, Sardar Farukh Khan, Malik Liaquat Ali Khan, Sardar Mohammad Ali Khan, as well as former chairmen, councilors and thousands of people from Tehsils Fatehang. Syed Zulfiqar Abbas Bokhari (alias Zulfi Bokhari) further has said that PDM alliance Government had compelled the poor people to beg before the political pundits for provision of bread and butters. These pundits are only desirous taking over the rule of the country at their own wish and whims pushing their people to the age of slavery but now time has come to get rid of all these political big wigs who were exploiting their masses for the last many decades. Mr. Zulfi Bokhari said that the political cheaters are exposed before the people.

PFOWA contributes to relief efforts

ISLAMABAD: PFOWA has donated assistance money for the earthquake-affected people of Turkiye and Syria. President PFOWA Zunaira Asad while leading a delegation handed over the cheque of donation to Ambassador of Turkive Mehmet Pacaci and Svrian ambassador Ramez Alraee, FO said. President of PFOWA expressed heartfelt condolences on the tragic loss of lives and widescale devastation during the dreadful earthquake. She prayed for the departed souls and wished speedy recovery for the resilient brotherly people. The donations made by PFOWA demonstrate solidarity and support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the fraternal people of Turkiye and Syria in this critical time of need. - APP

Chairman Muslim Hands urges help for quake victims

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Muslim Hands Pakistan Syed Lakht-e-Hasnain Shah has urged the nation to come forward and help the people in helping the Turkish and Syrian brethren in this hour of need. In a video message, he said Muslim Hands is doing its efforts to do maximum rehabilitation and relief work for the victims of this disastrous calamity. He said helping those in need is a very noble deed. Chairman Muslim Hands also shed

a light on the work Muslim Hands is doing in earthquake affected areas of Turkiye and Syria. A day earlier, On behalf of Commanding Officer 8th FP, the ceremony has been arranged in recognition of INGOs/NGOs providing relief support in Operation MADAD (floods-2022) with Pakistan Navy. Commander Coast Rear Admiral Raja Rab Nawaz HI (M) acknowledged the support and service of Muslim Hands in Sindh and Balochistan with the Pakistan Navy and ensured the same kind of support in the future for serving the vulnerable communities.

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For further information please contact the following.

Maj (r) Sabih Ur Rehman Mobile: 0300 8553342

PRCS to broaden spectrum of its humanitarian services in Sindh province

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Pakistan Red Crescent Society broaden spectrum of its humanitarian services in Sindh province and National Headquarter will take all possible measures to strengthen Red Crescent Sindh to ensure efficient delivery of humanitarian services to the vulnerable communities, PRCS Chairman, Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari stated this on his visit to PRCS Provincial Headquarters Sindh here on Thursday.

Chairperson PRCS Sindh Branch Ms. Farzana Naik and branch management welcomed PRCS man Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari on his visit to Sindh PHQ. Members of PRCS Managing Body from Sindh including Am-



bassador Dr. Jamil Ahmed Khan, Mr. Khalil Ahmed Morejo, Bilal Ageel, Syed Hashim A Hassan were also present on this occasion. PRCS Secretary General

Abaidullah

Muhammad

Khan gave a detailed briefing to all participants on the ongoing relief operation in Sindh. The success in rescue and relief work and the support of PRCS National Headquarters in this regard

was highly appreciated by all the participants. On this occasion, deliberations were made on strengthening district branches network. PRCS Chairman made special em-

coordination with National Headquarters. "We have to make our district branches more dynamic, active and stable so that humanitarian services can be rendered to vulnerable communities in a more effective and efficient manner", Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari added. The Chairman assured full support and cooperation from the National Headquarters to make PRCS as a united, stable, active and dynamic National Society. He said all the challenges faced by the provincial branch would be solved on priority basis. "National Headquarters playing the role of a big brother, all the problems of the Sindh branch will be solved and its reputation and image will be increased through

full cooperation", he added.

phasized on improving the

Sindh PHQ's capacity, its

National Days and Armed <u>Forces</u> Days

FEBRUARY

Feb 04 / Sri Lanka National Day

Feb 06 / New Zealand

National Day
Feb 06 / Uganda

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

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Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

ICCI to set up facilitation centre for youth programme

PM's Youth Program is scheduled to disburse Rs.30 billion among about 40,000 young entrepreneurs till June 2023. Half of these will be the business loans for small and medium enterprises.

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) would set up a Facilitation Centre for the mentorship of Prime Minister's Youth Loan Scheme beneficiaries of the Capital and its surrounding areas. This was said by Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, ICCI during an interaction with Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Youth Affairs during Cheque Distribution Ceremony of Prime Minister's Youth Business & Agriculture Loan Scheme held

al Minister for Human

Rights Mian Riaz Hus-

sain Pirzada said that the

people of Pakistan were

indebted to the Japanese

generosity towards the

developing world with

their development assis-

tance through Japan In-

ternational Cooperation

Agency (JICA). He said,

Pakistan attaches great

value to its relationship

with Japan and the impor-

tant contributions made

by Japan in Pakistan's

development efforts over

the last several decades.

The minister said this

while addressing as



at PM House. Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that youth is the future of Pakistan and is blessed with a lot of potential and

talent. He said that it is very

Pakistan to celebrate

His Majesty the Emper-

or's 63rd Birthday here

The minister extended

the warmest felicitations

to the government and

the people of Japan on

the joyous occasion and

said, we honor the rich

cultural heritage of Ja-

pan, a country that has

made immeasurable con-

tributions to the world

especially, in the scien-

tific domain. The Japa-

nese people are known

for their deep respect for

traditions and their untir-

ing commitment to inno-

Thursday night.

important to focus on youth development and empower them so that our youngsters could utilize their talent and abilities for making Pakistan a strong economy

HR minister Riaz Pirzada

lauds Japanese generosity

Pakistan's

nomic development with

assistance worth 13 bil-

lion US\$. He further ex-

pressed that we are par-

ticularly grateful to the

people and Government

of Japan for its assistance

in the aftermath of devas-

tating floods in Pakistan

in 2022 especially for the

support that Government

of Japan extended during

the Resilient Pakistan

Conference held in Gene-

He stated that Pakistan

and Japan always had

friendly bilateral rela-

tions in political, eco-

va on 9 January 2023

socio-eco-

of the region. He appreciated the government for launching several initiatives under the Prime Minister's Youth Program including the Youth Program and

this relationship to a new

and higher level of coop-

eration, with particular

focus on economic and

business ties, human re-

source development ini-

tiatives, defense, cultur-

al and people-to-people

The minister affirmed

that Japanese companies

have made a remarka-

ble contribution in the

development of Paki-

stan-Japan and invest-

ment relations. There

are more than 80 Japa-

nese companies work-

ing in Pakistan in auto,

pharma, textile, steel,

contacts"

Agriculture Loan Scheme to empower the youth of urban and rural areas. He said that ICCI would mentor the beneficiaries of this program to enable them to

THR can help Pak

end combustible

smoking

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan needs to embrace tobacco harm

reduction as a critical pathway for reducing the preva-

lence of combustible smoking and embark on the journey

of a smoke-free future. "Tobacco harm reduction allows

adult smokers a choice of completely quitting or turning

to safer alternatives," said Dr. Ehsan Latif, Senior Vice

President, Grants Management and Health and Science

Strategy, Foundation for a Smoke-Free World (FSFW). He

was speaking at a lecture on Thursday on "Why Pakistan

should embrace Tobacco Harm Reduction to end combus-

tible smoking", which was organized by Alternative Re-

search Initiative. The lecture was attended by the civil so-

ciety representatives, academicians, researchers, social

scientists, and health professionals. Dr. Latif has more

than 20 years of experience managing the development

and implementation of cohesive strategies to achieve

public health gains by linking global health priorities to

the needs on the ground. He represented the civil society

from the EMRO region in all FCTC negotiations and im-

plementation meetings. Previously, he served as senior

adviser for non-communicable diseases and director of

tobacco control at the International Union Against Tuber-

culosis and Lung Disease, managing global teams.-DNA

ment of the country. ICCI has already signed an MoU with PM's Youth Program to cooperate in mentorship and support of its beneficiaries to help them start their own businesses. PM's Youth Program is scheduled to disburse Rs.30 billion among about 40,000 young entrepreneurs till June 2023. Half of these will be the business loans for small and medium enterprises. Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif had distributed cheques among the successful applicants

start their own businesses

and play an effective role

in the economic develop-

depth was reported at 150 kilometres, however no loss of life and property was reported, private news channels reported.—APP COMSTECH seeks nominations for Awards-23

4.1

magnitude

earthquake

jolts Islamabad

SLAMABAD: An earth-

quake of 4.1 magnitudes hit

Islamabad, Haripur and its

adjoining areas on Friday

According to the National

Seismic Monitoring Cen-

tre, the epicenter of the

earthquake was located

n Tajikistan along with

the China border and the

DNA

ISLAMABAD: COMSTECH seeks nominations for COMS-TECH Awards in nine categories this year. The scientists and researchers who are citizens of, and currently working in OIC member states are eligible to submit nominations for these awards by March 31, 2023. COMSTECH seeks applications for Lifetime Achievement Award in two fields of basic sciences, Physics and Mathematics, and for Excellence in Science & Technologv Award that includes, Young Researcher Award, Best Scientific Book Award, Best Patent Award, and Best Research Paper Award in biology, chemistry, mathematics, and physics. COMSTECH recognizes outstanding research work carried out by the scientists working and living in OIC member states through its prestigious awards. Each award carries a certificate, shield of honor and cash prize. The President of Pakistan confers the award to the basic sciences award

Unity among political parties need of the hour, Saleem Haider

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Sardar Saleem Haider Friday stressed the need for national unity to counter the current political and economic challenges in the country. Talking to the PTV news channel, he said that all political parties need to rise above their political interests and work unitedly to solve the problems faced by the people. "Despite our political differences, we will have to work together for the sake of the country," he added. The coalition government wanted to hold a national debate with the consensus of all political parties to discuss country issues but Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leadership was not serious to come forward and sit with the government to discuss the issues related to the public, he mentioned. The country is facing the challenges of poverty, political unrest, national unity and a failing economy. "We all have to forge unity to face these challenges and to emerge as a sovereign nation, he added. "The political instability of the last four years must be quickly reversed if we are to plan for rapid economic recovery", Saleem Haider added. Replying to a question, he said the government understands inflation and problems faced by the public, adding, the government is taking very tough and unpopular decisions to revive the economy and to provide maximum relief to the people of the country as soon as possible.-APP

Edible oil output grew 11.62%

ISLAMABAD: Domestic output of cooking oil and vegetable ghee during the first six months of the current financial year grew by 11.62 percent and 3.37 percent respectively as compared to the production of the corresponding period last year. During the period from July-December, 2022-23, about 252,563 metric tons of coking oil were manufactured locally as compared to the manufacturing of 226,267 metric tons of the same period of last year. Meanwhile, 737,461 metric tons of vegetable ghee were also produced and manufactured in order to fulfill the domestic requirements as well as for exporting as against the production of 713,442 metric tons in the same period of last vear, according to the data of the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. On year on year basis, domestic production of cooking oil grew by 15.01 percent in December 2022 as about 45,395 metric tons of oil were locally produced. – **APP**



 ${\bf ISLAMABAD: A\ visitor\ takes\ interest\ in\ pictures\ depicting\ miseries\ of\ the\ Ukrainian\ people\ affected\ by\ war,\ in\ Islamabad.-DNA}$

Better hygiene at schools-a gigantic task

ISLAMABAD: Better hygiene at educational institutions is as important as education itself to create healthy minds and well-equipped nations and establish countries on sound technical, scientific, cultural and economic footing. The schools are not only expected to impart better education to children but also better hygiene to fulfill the undeniable right of every child to get proper education in a clean and healthy environment. Therefore, keeping in view the importance of hygiene facilities in educational institutions, the Federal Government is all-set to launch "Oral Hygiene Program" at 423 public sector schools and colleges functioning under the Federal Directorate of Education (FDE). Under this Program, the federal government through the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training would distribute 'Hygiene Kits' among the students of the government educational institutions within Islamabad Capital Territory jurisdiction. Doctors would be engaged to guide students on the use of these kits consisting of tools for teeth cleanliness and soap and sanitizers. "Hygiene Kits distribution program will be launched in April 2023 with the distribution of as many as 100,000 kits among the students, said Director Academics Federal Directorate of Education Riffat Jabeen. "The government will hire doctors to execute this program who will guide students about cleanliness and check their health conditions. If any student is found suffering from any disease, he

or she will be referred to the hospital for a detailed check-up," she informed. She said facilities like dispensers for clean drinking water, liquid or soap for hand washing after the use of toilets are already being provided at each government school and college of Islamabad. "Students are also guided about cleanliness, taking bath regularly, washing hands, brushing their teeth and ablution for prayer etc." Riffat Jabeen said that some private organizations are also engaged with FDE to provide missing facilities at schools especially clean drinking water and Pakistan Council for Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) played an important role in this regard. Despite her claims, there are complaints of missing facilities at schools, especially for female students as poor cleanliness and substandard food supplied by canteens inside the school premises and private vendors outside, was proving to be hazardous for the students' health. In many cases, there is also a deficiency of bathrooms as compared to the number of students with many needing immediate repair and up-gradation as Director Monitoring FDE Malik Sohail assured to provide missing facilities. "We are on way to bridge this gap and missing facilities are being ensured for all such institutions," Sohail said. Principal Islamabad Model College for Boys F-6/2 Ali Ahmad Kharal has informed that Prime Minister's Education Reforms Program worth Rs four billion was launched for betterment of ICT Schools and Colleges especially in rural areas. -APP

Police warned violators to obey traffic rules

Qazi Shoib Khan

ATTOCK: Attock Excise and Traffic Police on Friday warned all the violators on routes to follow traffic laws while travelling on inter cities as well as inter provincial routes besides impounding 48 undocumented vehicles include auto rikhsha, motorbikes, 68 vehicles imposing fine along with recovery of token tax of Rs:5.00 lacs from the defaulters during a crackdown launched at different spots of district Attock here on Friday. Police said, following the instructions of the Director Excise and Taxation Rawalpindi Mr. Tanvir Abbas Gondal, the excise police squads headed by ETO Attock Mr. Zafar Eshaq with excise inspectors Mr. Tasleem Malik, Mr. Arshad Iqbal, Inspector Mr. Jalal

Ahmed, Inspector Mr. Tahir Ali, Mr. Ali Raza, Mr. Shahwaiz Khan, Mr. Imran Jahangir and Mr. Zeeshan Haider with their heavy police contingent while checking vehicles on national highways and inter city routes have seized 18 non-registered vehicles .which were booked in respective police stations while 38 violators were imposed fine in different attempts. Meanwhile, District Traffic Officer Attock Syed Faisal Shah also started prompt actions against law breakers of traffic rules and took into 10 custody auto rikhsha motorbikes while 30 were challaned under different legal sections.

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Briefs

Pak earns \$429 mln by exporting transport services

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan earned US \$429.900 million by providing different transport services in various countries during the six months of the current fiscal year (2022-23) as compared to the corresponding period of last year. This shows a growth of 14.38 per cent as compared to \$375.840 million earned through the provision of services during the corresponding period of the fiscal year (2021-22), the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported.

During the months under review, the exports of sea transport services witnessed an increase of 69.63 per cent, going up from \$55.080 million last year to \$93.430 million during the months under review. Among the sea transport services, the exports of freight services increased by 150.92 per cent from \$31.500 million last year to \$79.040 million whereas the exports of other sea transport services decrease by 38.97 per cent from \$23.580 million to \$14.390 million current year, the PBS data revealed.-APP

FGEHA allocates 1,188 category-I plots

ISLAMABAD :The Federal Government Housing Authority (FGEHA) has allocated around 1,188 category-I plots in Park Road Housing Scheme, Islamabad for allotment to federal government employees as per the approved layout plan. "As per the decision of the 142nd meeting of the executive committee of the authority, a 3.5 per cent quota was further segregated into constitutional serving (2.5 per cent), constitutional retired (0.5 per cent) and constitutional widows (0.5 per cent) categories with the criteria "age-wise seniority" and "length of service" respectively," said a document available

with APP. It said a number of plots to be allotted as per the above-approved quota reserved in the Park Road Housing Scheme for the registered members of constitutional bodies/ quota. The bodies included in the said quota were the Supreme Court of Pakistan, Islamabad High Court, Federal Shariat Court, Election Commission of Pakistan, Senate Secretariat, National Assembly Secretariat, Islamic Ideological Council, Wafaqi Mohtasib Secretariat and Federal Tax Ombudsman Office, the document said.-APP

Barkhan incident probe be expedited: Sherry

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman on Friday demanded that the Barkhan district incident should be investigated as soon as possible and the criminals involved in the incident should be severely punished.

In a series of tweets, the federal minister expressed her resentment on the tragic incident of torture and killing of innocent people in the reported private jail of Balochistan Minister for Construction and Communications Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran.

Sherry posted on her twitter handle, "Whatever the motives a "What century do we live in where the powerful have built private prisons? Where people, women, and children are tortured and their bodies are thrown into a well?", she wrote.

The senator said that the revealed postmortem heart-wrenching "Nothing can undo what the victims and their families

have gone through. Heinous violence, killings, and desecration of dead bodies have left us all bowed

in shame", she said.-APP



ISLAMABAD: Japanese drummers perform on the occasion of the 63rdh Birthday of the Emperor of Japan, at Islamabad Serena Hotel.— DNA

Int'l moot on climate change from March 13

RSGCC facilitates the establishment of dialogues leading to long-lasting technical cooperation amongst the scientists and engineers of developing and developed countries

ISLAMABAD: National Center The conference will provide the of GIS and Space Applications (NCGSA) in collaboration with different partner institutions will hold International Conference on Remote Sensing, GIS and Climate Change (RSGCC-2023) from March 13-15.

The conference, to be held at the University of Punjab, Lahore, is being arranged in collaboration with the Remote Sensing, GIS and Climatic Research Lab (RSGCRL) and the Association of Professionals for Remote Sensing, GIS and Climate Change (ARGC).

participants with a golden opportunity to interact with world-renowned scientists, researchers, and academicians in person to discuss research challenges and solutions, unleash and share new ideas and avenues, and initiate joint projects and collaborations with industry and research institutes working in Remote Sensing, GIS, Climate Change and allied research domains.

RSGCC facilitates the establishment of dialogues leading to long-lasting technical cooperation amongst the scientists and engineers of developing and developed countries.

According to an official source, the conference is an event to provide an international forum where scientists, researchers, engineers, academicians, industry professionals, entrepreneurs and students get a chance to interact and discuss the latest themes and trends related to remote sensing, GIS and Climate Change.

This will provide a platform to share experiences, foster collaborations across industry and academia, and evaluate emerging technologies and developments across the globe in the fields of space science, technology and their various applications.

The conference will revolve around themes including Climate Change, Meteorology and the Atmosphere, Geo-hazards and Disasters, Agriculture and Food Security, Agriculture and Food Security, Forest, Biodiversity and Ecosystems, Water Resources and Water Cycle, Marine and Coastal Environment Resources and Dynamics, Urbanization, Sustainable/Smart Societies and Industrialization Public Health, Change and Adaption in Deltaic and High Mountain Hydrological Systems, Geological studies, mineral resources and applications, Data and Information Systems and Spatial Data Infrastructures, Capacity building, networking, resource sharing and other related fields. During the conference, the best paper and posters will be awarded with cash prizes, shields, certificates and membership of "The Association of Professionals for Remote Sensing, GIS and Climate Change (ARGC)".- APP

PR doles out Rs 2 mln for platform's upgradation

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways has allocated around Rs 2 million more funds for completing the renovation and construction of a platform of Shaddadpur Railway Station, to be spent during the current financial year. "Shaddadpur Railway Station, operating with three platforms, is one of the important stations situated on mainline where most of the mail and express trains have their stoppages," an official in the Ministry of Railways told APP. He said the contractor had stopped the construction work due to non-payment of bills and funds, adding 50 per cent of the renovation work had been already been completed.

However, the official said the requisite funds are being arranged for the remaining work. The official said the platform condition on the downside was dilapidated and therefore it was decided to carry out its repair under the head of improvement and welfare expenditure. He said the total budget for the construction and renovation work was Rs 22.686 million, out of which Rs 5.679 million was released and utilized by June 2022. To a question, the official said Pakistan Railways was a big organization comprising of around 63,000 employees and its network stretched across the country. He said the employees have well-cared under the welfare activities like health facilities through an intensive network of hospitals.-APP

China, Pak sign agreement to promote modern agri tech

ISLAMABAD: In a move to promote China-Pakistan modern agricultural cooperation, a framework agreement on Belt and Road agricultural cooperation was signed at the China-Pakistan Symposium on Modern Agriculture Cooperation at Northwest A&F University, China.

According to China Economic Net (CEN), the agreement was signed by the Northwest A&F University, China National Machinery Industry Corporation (SINOMACH), and the Office of Foreign Affairs Commission, Shaanxi Provincial Party Committee. The three sides agreed to work together in promoting

der the Belt and Road Initiative, training agricultural talents, building overseas agricultural parks and enhancing agricultural industrial chain of BRI countries. Professor Zhang Lixin from Northwest A&F University told China Economic Net (CEN) reporter that to facilitate agricultural technology transfer, the University will establish a mechanism for expert exchange with agricultural universities and research institutes in BRI countries. A resource-sharing platform is proposed at the symposium to share and promote success models.

Cooperation on agricultural industrial chain will also be stepped up. Projects including agricultural mechanization, deep processing international agricultural of food, cross-border agricul-

technology cooperation untural trade, agricultural warehousing, international logistics and overseas agricultural parks will be promoted via SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) Demonstration Base for Agricultural Technology Exchange, Yangling Area of China (Shaanxi) Pilot Free Trade Zone and Yangling Comprehensive Bonded Zone. To support the above efforts, new scholarship programs are in pipeline to train agricultural talents. The overseas agricultural project bases under SINOMACH, including those in Pakistan, will offer opportunities to local students and researchers for study, internship, employment, and entrepreneurship. The university is also launching new research projects jointly with Pakistani partners.

"We are going to cultivate green chilies in Pakistan, particularly in Sindh and Punjab", Abdul Ghaffar Shar, a doctoral candidate of Northwest A&F University who has been studying in China for nine years told CEN, adding, "I brought from China linseed back to Pakistan last month. It is a variety most Pakistani farmers are not familiar with but can produce edible oil much needed in the country. Experiment has started at Sindh Agricultural University, Tandojam". He told CEN that delegations from Habib Bank Limited (HBL) and People's Bank of China (PBOC) Xi'an Branch also attended the symposium to concentrate on ways to facilitate Pakistani farmers to use China's high-yielding varieties.

ISLAMABAD: Group Photo of ITU's Regional Director, Asia-Pacific region, Atsuko Okuda, Project Coordinator ITU, Rury Demsey with Member Finance PTA, Muhammad Naveed and PTA officers at PTA Headquarters, Islamabad. - DNA

Challenges to China's 'economic diplomacy'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: China's economic diplomacy is under strain because of intensified 'alliances politics' at the global level in general, and Asia-Pacific in particu-

lar. Geopolitical tensions are bound to impact negatively on China's peaceful economic rise. Pakistan needs to be better prepared for future crises. These were the views expressed by panelists at a roundtable discussion organized

by the Institute of Regional Studies on 'Challenges to China's Economic Diplomacy'. The session was moderated by Ms. Nabila Jaffer, Ph.D Scholar and a Research Analyst at IRS. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Aneel Salman, Chair Economic Security, Islamabad Policy Research Institute, said that 'while looking at the current situation, the way competition

between US and China is unfolding, it is impossible to predict what kind of 'world order' would emerge in the future', adding that, there was 'chaos vs order' because of contemporary shift in the 'centre of economic gravity' from global north to global south. Dr. Salman was of the view that though China had emerged as the biggest player at the global level.

FDI from China rises to over \$200 million in FY 22-23

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has received US\$ 200.2 million as Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from China in the first seven months of the current Fiscal Year 2022-23. Gwadar Pro reported on Friday quoting the Board of Investment (BOI). China accounts for 29.3% of the total US\$ 683.5 million in FDI received by Pakistan in the current fiscal year 2022-23. Chinese FDI in Pakistan totaled US\$102.5 million from July to November. Pakistan received another US\$97.7 million from China in December and January, bringing the total investment to US\$200.2 million. According to BOI data, Japan was the second largest investor in Pakistan with US\$133.9 million between July and January, followed by Switzerland with US\$106.5 million, the UAE with US\$83.2 million, Hong Kong SARC with US\$46.4 million, the Netherlands with US\$45 million, the UK with US\$24 million, and the US with US\$9.2 million. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Pakistan received US\$531.6 (28.46% of the total) FDI from China in FY2021-22, while in FY2020-21, Pakistan received US\$751.6 (41.3%) million.-DNA

Shah urges UN chief to take cognizance of IIOJK's issue

ISLAMABAD: The incarcerated senior leader of All Parties Hurriyat Conference, Shabbir Ahmed Shah on Friday urged the United Nations Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, to take cognizance of the grave situation prevailing in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, where people are being maimed, tortured, arrested and humiliated with impunity by Indian troops. According to Kashmir Media Service, Shabbir Ahmed Shah in his message from New Delhi's infamous Tihar jail termed the prevailing situation in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir as extremely critical where arbitrary, detentions, harassment by the Indian forces and snatching of local rights of people by the puppet regime have become a routine matter. Expressing serious concern over the upsurge in so-called cordon and search operations by the Indian forces and police personnel in IIOJK, he said the people of the occupied territory have been left at the mercy of over one million Indian troops, paramilitary and police personnel, enjoying unbridled powers under draconian laws to kill, arrest, torture and humiliate anyone with impunity. Rule of law is a distant dream and human rights have lost their meaning in IIOJK, he added. Shabbir Ahmed Shah also demanded that world human rights organizations play their much-needed role and stop the vicious cycle of violence, abuse.-APP



War in Ukraine: reshaping the world

he shock of Russia's full-scale invasion has been replaced, one year on, by horror at the toll that it has taken on Ukraine. Tens of thousands of lives have been lost, including those of civilians; tens of thousands have been injured, and more bear psychological scars. The country's infrastructure has been pulverised. In September, an estimate suggested that rebuilding Ukraine would cost upwards of \$349bn, a figure that will have risen sharply. Millions have fled their homes and often their country too.

The reverberations of Vladimir Putin's attack have been felt, too, far beyond its borders. This illegal act of aggression has entrenched a growing food crisis, claiming more lives and threatening stability in other nations. Its reshaping of international relations will define the decades to come.

Yet this was never, as some initially portrayed it, simply a story of Russia against the rest – nor even, as many in the west still believe, the emergence of a bipolar world in which the west and allied democracies face off against a Chinese-Russian bloc. (The Sino-Russian relationship is itself complex despite its strengthening, as China continues to try to straddle conflicting interests.) India abstained on a previous denunciation of Moscow at the general assembly; many of the countries that backed the resolution – such as Brazil – were unwilling to take further action.

The sense of hypocrisy is heightened by the lack of attention in the west to what has probably been a much deadlier war in Ethiopia, and the welcome given to Ukrainians compared with other refugees. For many, a swift end to the conflict also looks more attractive than the best outcome for Ukrainians. Russia seems no threat to them, and soaring food prices have hit the world's poorest the hardest. The contrast in perspectives stretches beyond the war itself to the kind of world that lies beyond it. Research published by the European Council on Foreign Relations shows that while Europeans and Americans think the future will probably be defined by US- and Chinese-led blocs, people in China, India, Turkey and Russia foresee a multipolar world, in which many powers shape outcomes. The report's authors point to a paradox: while the war has consolidated the west, the international realm is diversifying. Unlike in the cold war, trade and security partners may be quite distinct. Instead of looking back to the past, the west must prepare for the future. As repugnant as Mr Putin's war is, moralising about other countries' responses will be less useful than recognising and reflecting on the distinct interests of rising powers.

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Time to jointly press stop button on conflict

n February 24, 2022, when the first gunshot at the Russia-Ukraine border shattered tranquility, most people did not anticipate that it would evolve into the largest military conflict on the European continent since World War II. A year later, the Russia-Ukraine conflict has profoundly changed the international geopolitics, and severely weakened the foundation for international cooperation. Its spillover effects in various areas such as politics, security and the economy have far exceeded people's imagination. This geopolitical conflict has become a microcosm of the turbulence of this era.

On Tuesday, Russian President Vladimir Putin and US President Joe Biden delivered speeches in Moscow and Warsaw, respectively, about the conflict. Both showed determination to achieve their respective goals. This may indicate that the conflict will continue for some time. Also during the past two days, the UN General Assembly resumed its 11th emergency special session to discuss the situation in Ukrain. The European continent is at a critical crossroads: on one side, if the confrontation continues to escalate, it could lead to unforeseeable catastrophic consequences, including the risk of using nuclear weapons; on the other side, there are increasing calls for a political solution to the crisis and for achieving peace as soon as possible, which has become a universal desire of the international community. The Russia-Ukraine conflict has a complex historical context, and ignoring this fact may lead to an incomplete understanding of the path to resolving the conflict, or even to unrealistic solutions. Ukraine was once a part of the Soviet Union and has a complicated domestic ethnic situation, coupled with its geographic location sandwiched between NATO and Russia. These objective circumstances require Ukraine to exercise extreme caution when dealing with its foreign relations, clarify and grasp its own interests, and become a bridge for promoting positive relations among major powers. There are no winners in conflicts or wars, and complex problems do not have simple answers. Confrontations between great powers must be avoided. This is the biggest warning left by the Russia-Ukraine conflict, which should prompt deeper thinking about security in Europe and other parts of the world.

The Russia-Ukraine conflict should not continue any further. The parties deeply embroiled in the conflict need to calm down as soon as possible and stop pushing the narrative of the conflict toward a bloc rivalry. We need to be aware that the Russia-Ukraine conflict originated from a confrontation between camps, rather than so-called "democracy vs autocracy." Bloc rivalry only intensifies the conflict and makes the possibility of peace more remote. Resolving the conflict between Russia and Ukraine requires the establishment of a universal and sustainable security concept, rather than a unilateral and hegemonic one. While the international community is focused on the Russia-Ukraine conflict today, there are over 30 military conflicts and wars of varying scales happening in other parts of the world. The theme of peace and development requires serious reconsideration and readjustment by the society. It is now time for the international community to work together and press the stop button on this conflict.

Problems in the higher education of Pakistan

Wajhullah Fahim

All the stakeholders are responsible for the current condition of our higher education. Our attitude towards education is the basic problem for all the levels of education not only higher education and all stakeholders are involved in formulation such type of educational attitude. This attitude is based upon receiving knowledge which is memorizing and reproducing in exams. This issue is not a new issue, if we study our history, we can see our attitudes towards education are not up to the mark. During Mughal Empire, Muslim kings were highly busy in making of Taj Mahal and enjoying romantic poetries

Ducation promotes long-term economic growth, spurs innovation, strengthens institutions, and fosters social interconnection for any society. But in Pakistan university graduate students are facing serious problems and issues which become a barrier for the students in contributing well-being of themselves and as well as on whole society. The researchfindings of the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) have revealed the education system in Pakistan especially the higher education system is facing serious crisis. The research findings showed more than 30% of university graduate students are unemployed and 50% of students want to leave Pakistan.

All the stakeholders are responsible for the current condition of our higher education. Our attitude towards education is the basic problem for all the levels of education not only higher education and all stakeholders are involved in formulation such type of educational attitude. This attitude is based upon receiving knowledge which is memorizing and re-producing in exams. This issue is not a new issue, if we study our history, we can see our attitudes towards education are not up to the mark. During Mughal Empire, Muslim kings were highly busy in making of Taj Mahal and enjoying romantic poetries. They did not focus on the construction of educational institutes. During British colonization, more than 8000 religious scholars issued fatawa against English education. This attitude also introduced obedience education among us which is conceptualized as not allowing questions. The obedience education has eroded the critical thinking of the students. Our education system doesn't allow challenging the existing knowledge. Along with this if any professor wants to inculcate critical thinking among students he/she expel from the university.

Another problem is politicized of the HEC. Since 2002 when HEC is established, the chairman of HEC is appointed based on political affliction due to which he works according to willing of politicians, not for improving quality education. By chance when any chairman appoints on merit then he/she cannot work, such as in the case of Dr.Banuri. In addition to this HEC has no transparency and predictable policy. They appoint VCs of the university according to the direction of the government. There is no mechanism to evaluate the performance of university professors and lecturers. They get promotions on the number of their publications. The VCs of the university are appointed on the basic political support and affliction. Due to which quality of the higher education in public sector universities is declining day by day.

During 2021-22 federal government reduced the budget for the HEC which created financial problemsfor the public sector universities. As there is no alternative source of funding for the public sector universities, they have started spring intake, weekend classes and evening/self-supporting programs due to the quality of higher education is deteriorating. With the increased student intake, the number of students is increasing while the numbers of faculty staff are constant.

The global standard of pupil-teacher ratio is 20:1 while in Pakistan this ratio is more than 30:1. Along with the increase in student strength, infrastructure development such as class rooms, libraries, hostels, transportations, and sport grounds also need to increase, but in Pakistan universities administration only focusing on increasing student strength. In addition to this, the numbers of university sub-campuses are also increasing. According to reports, there are more than 5000 university sub-campuses in Pakistan. This shows excess

demand for degree certification by students which further intensifying the poor quality of higher education.

Now we need to revisit our higher education policies. For quality higher education HEC along with universities should be given autonomous status. Political influences on the HEC and the university campus need to be neutralized. As the majority of public universities hold vacant land, they can use this as revenues generating opportunity. A proper accountability mechanism for university administration and faculty members needs to be designed. As university receives billion of rupees as development and research budget from HEC, but noone is accountable and the designed mechanism to evaluate and promotion of theteaching faculty is the number of publications which is not the appropriate way. Together with these, there is a requirement for evaluation programsforall universities (Public or Private), in which average and below averageuniversities should be banned.

Along with HEC and university administration, the teaching faculty and students are also the main stakeholders. The professors and other teaching faculty should encourage students for critically thinking during classes and also in exams. Without the direct involvement of the student in the whole process, the current situation cannot change. Instead of using the top-down approach, bottom-up approach is needed in the current scenario. For the implementation of the bottom-up approach, the ban on student unions should be uplifted.

Along with higher education, we need to shift some attention towards vocational institutes. In 2021-22 allocated budget for vocational education was only PRS 3 billion which should be increased, so that people can acquire some skills according to market demand. In this way, we can reduce the youth unemployment rate.

Fading conventional sociology vs rising digital sociology

Sher Zada



The growth of digital data and the increasing use of algorithms and data analytics in decision-making processes also became an important area of study for digital sociologists. Researchers began to examine the social implications of big data, including issues related to privacy, surveillance, and social control. Digital sociology although reshaping the conventional scope area

Hough we come across surface definition of the subject Sociology is a scientific study of human social behavior, relationships, and institutions. However, many of people don't consider that this is the subject encompasses a vast range of topics, including the examination of social institutions like family, religion, education, government, and economic systems. Sociology studies how social class, race, gender, and other forms of inequality impact individuals and society, and analyzes the factors that drive social change, including cultural, political, and economic shifts. Sociology investigates how social structures and processes shape individuals' thoughts, emotions, and behaviors, exploring the ways in which social psychology are impacted by these structures. It studies population trends, migration patterns, and other demographic factors that impact society, as well as the beliefs, values, norms, and practices of different cultures and how they shape social behavior. Sociology also examines the social, cultural, and economic implications of globalization and how it affects different societies and cultures. It investigates various forms of social protest, resistance, and mobilization, including civil rights, feminist, and environmental movements. As sociology covers a wide range

As sociology covers a wide range of human folds, that's why the era of evolution of sociology has been

divided to two sphere i.e. convensociology, contemporary sociology. Conventional sociology typically refers to the early, classical form of sociology, which developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It is characterized by its emphasis on grand theories, such as functionalism and conflict theory, and its focus on macro-level analysis of society. Where it covers the macro picture of society, that how the institutions do function and how they affect our society, where the conflicts arise due to lack of access to resources and have hands to control the power. Conventional sociology is also known for its positivist approach, which assumes that social phenomena can be objectively studied and understood through scientific methods. Contemporary sociology, on the other hand, encompasses a wide range of theoretical and methodological approaches, including both traditional and newer ones. It also encompasses a wide range of topics and subfields, such as race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, social stratification, and globalization, among others. Contemporary sociology is more diverse and pluralistic than conventional sociology, and it is characterized by a greater emphasis on micro-level analysis and interpretive approaches, as well as greater attention to issues of identity and power. However, the scope and popularity graph of above two categorical dichotomies are being gradually limited to academia and traditionally written paper books written by

classically trained authors, average writers and teaching faculties. The emergence of digital sociology has been reshaping every aspect of the subject matters covered by the former style of sociology, which has also been affecting the scope and directions of sociological analysis. Digital sociology is a relatively new field of sociology that emerged in the late 1990s and early 2000s with the increasing prevalence of digital technologies and their impact on social life. The history of digital sociology can be traced through several key developments and milestones. Here, a brief sketch of elements which played roles to make sociology digital is presented. The excessive use of internet and the development of the World Wide Web in the early 1990s and its rapid adoption by individuals and organizations marked the beginning of the digital age and set the stage for the emergence of digital sociology. In the mid to late 1990s, the study of on-line communities became a focus of interest for sociologists. Researchers began to explore how these virtual communities were formed, how social ties were established and maintained, and how they were influenced by the broader social context. The rise of social media platforms such as Facebook (Meta), Twitter, and Instagram in the mid-2000s transformed the landscape of digital sociology. Sociologists began to examine how these platforms were changing patterns of social

interaction, social identity, and the formation of social networks. With the increasing prevalence of digital technologies, concerns about digital inequalities and the "digital divide" also emerged as a key focus for digital sociologists. Researchers began to explore how access to digital technologies and online resources was distributed across different social groups, and how these disparities were related to broader patterns of social inequality. The growth of digital data and the increasing use of algorithms and data analytics in decision-making processes also became an important area of study for digital sociologists. Researchers began to examine the social implications of big data, including issues related to privacy, surveillance, and social control. Digital sociology although reshaping the conventional scope area of the subject matters, and this is a problem ofserious concerns for those who are attached with academia. However, the market is still not fully saturated; the flood of cyber world has opening new windows for all, including sociologists. Climate change and its impacts, rising conflicts, food insecurity, digital nomadism, biotechnology wars and several other problems are calling to be explored. However, zeal and passion are the only formulas that can keep one's energies on the right

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WORLD / SPORTS



Political stability crucial

From Page 01 over 80 lives, the government also invited all the stakeholders but a particular party did not bother to attend the meeting.

"They still want to resolve the matter on the streets that were highly condemnable," he remarked. The premier also told the participants that after a terrorist attack in Peshawar on February 3, the civil and military authorities had held a seven-hour long session and took several decisions.

PM Shehbaz also added after the attack on the Karachi Police Office (KPO), the personnel of Sindh police, Rangers, and Pakistan Army bravely fought the terrorists. He also prayed for high ranks in the paradise for the soldiers martyred during the operation.

Three militants were killed during the KPO operation, which continued for around four hours on one of the main arteries of the city, Sharea Faisal. Police and Rangers personnel were also injured in the shootout.

Ukrainians vow to fight on, a year...

From Page 01 winter offensive of intense trench warfare, making only small gains despite fighting that both sides call the bloodiest so far. There is no sign of any peace process. Putin says he is battling the combined might of the West in what he now depicts as a fight for Russia's survival. Kyiv says there can be no peace until Russia withdraws. In the latest reports from the battlefield, Russia's Wagner private army, run by a Putin ally who has quarrelled with the regular military brass, claimed to have captured another village on the outskirts of Bakhmut, the small mining city in the east that is the focus of Moscow's offensive. Russia has made clear, if slow, progress towards encircling Bakhmut, but failed to capture it in time to deliver a victory for Putin to announce on the anniversary.

Costly Russian assaults have yielded little in the way of advances elsewhere on the front. Ukraine, for its part, is awaiting new Western weapons before starting a counter-attack. Polish Prime Minister Ma teusz Morawiecki, visiting Kyiv, said a first batch of four German Leopard tanks - among scores promised in a breakthrough a month ago - were already in Ukraine.

Ruling parties call on SC...

From Page 01

The bench is headed by CJP Bandial and comprises Justice Ahsan, Justice Syed tice Munib Akhtar, Justice YahyaAfridi, Justice Naqvi, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Athar Minallah. At the outset of today's hearing, the attorney general told the court that they had not received the copy of the court order which is why all parties did not appear today.

At this, CJP Bandial remarked that the purpose of today's hearing was to inform the relevant authorities about the suomotu notice. On this point, Naek came before the bench and read out the joint statement of PPP, JUI-F and PML-N regarding their objections about the bench.

The lawyer said that both the judges had made their observations on the matter when they heard Ghulam MehmoodDogar's plea regarding his removal as Lahore police chief.

The counsel also shared the dissenting note of Justice Mandokhail. Naek stated that they were objecting to the two judges' inclusion in the "interest of justice, fair play and to protect the fundamental right to a fair trial and due process as guaranteed under Article 10A". On this, Justice Minallah asked the lawyer if he felt there was a need to form a full court for the case.

Briefs Brook, Joe Root centuries put England in charge of NZ Test

Bracewell then produced a collective gasp from a sell-out crowd that got full value for tickets that cost just NZ\$35 (£17) for all five days, diving full stretch to his left at slip when Ben Duckett pushed at Southee on nine

SPORTS DESK

LONDON: England have kissed a fair few frogs over the years but on a typical Wellington pitch that started out as green as Kermit himself came the latest evidence that, in Harry Brook, they have discovered a new middle order prince.

Not that the crown is slipping from the existing one. Joe Root recently questioned his role amid England's aggressive resurgence and on the opening day of this second Test against New Zealand, came the answer that seemed obvious to all but him: just be Joe Root. He built his 29th Test century here by getting his head down and simply batting, the milestone coming from 182 balls and seconds before rain brought stumps. But as Root delivered his latest masterpiece at one end, picking off seven fours, pinching ones and twos in wing-heeled fashion, and bringing out the reverse scoop party trick only towards the end, Brook's remarkable start to his England career continued at the other in a flurry of 24 fours and five sixes. The 23-year-old had walked out to the middle early with England a perilous 21 for three, Matt Henry and Tim Southee having got the red Kookaburra ball to zip off a baize surface at the Basin Reserve. By the time he strode off he was 184 not out from 169 balls, his fourth hundred in his sixth Test match and unquestionably his best.

The two Yorkshiremen had put on an unbroken fourth-wicket stand of 294 to see the tourists reach 315 for three from 65 overs. This master and apprentice alliance was also a record for any English pairing on New Zealand soil, going past the 281 runs shared by Graham Thorpe and An-



drew Flintoff at Christchurch back in 2002. Root batted out of his crease, Brook often stood deep, and so despite a surface offering bounce and a bit of nibble, New Zealand's lengths were thrown at times. Test cricket is supposed to be a daunting arena and yet Brook already has more runs - 807 - than any player in history

after nine innings, and has done so at a strike-rate of 99.38. His anticipation of a bowler's intention is quite something and, allied with serious power, seemingly well-stationed boundary riders are still beaten. As Root put it last week during that surprising admission of his own uncertainty, the kid who once claimed his

wicket in the Headingley nets with filthy seam-up is bullying international attacks. None felt more bullied than Neil Wagner, the left-armer's once productive bouncer tactic - one that has delivered more than 250 Test wickets - treated with contempt. At times Brook simply backed away and carted him baseball-style, Wagner shipping nearly seven an over and at one stage forced to station Kane Williamson directly behind him on rope for a bob-each-way bet. Into his work early after England's false start, Brook enjoyed a back-and-forth battle with Henry, the right-armer driven straight when he went full but also beating the bat on occasion. The odd duffed pull shot landed safe too. Otherwise, with a New Zealand batting lineup bolstered by one and thus Daryl Mitchell asked to send down nine overs of medium pace, it was one-way traffic inside this roundabout of a ground. Brook brought up his century during the afternoon from 107 balls, his 150 taking just 38 more.

"I'm sure it'll come down very quickly," replied Brook, when asked about a batting average that sat at 100.87 overnight. "One of the things I've tried to work on over the last few years is staying as level-headed as possible. There could be a bad moment around the corner. [Starting at 21 for three] I was a bit flustered, but I got out there and just tried to be as positive as possible."

It certainly was an ominous start for the tourists. Though chastened by last week's defeat under lights at Bay Oval, New Zealand strode onto their spiritual home to the soundtrack of their World Test Championship triumph two years ago - Vangelis's haunting Conquest of Paradise - and Southee now had a genuine new-ball partner following Henry's swift return from paternity leave.

Italian politicians

upbeat on resuming

exchanges with China

ROME: Italy looks forward to full resumption of bilateral ex-

changes with China at an early date and aims to strengthen

co-op - especially in economy and trade - to better benefit the

two peoples, senior figures in country's political circle have

said. China and Italy are both members of the Group of 20

(G20) and representatives of extremely important civilizations

in world, Gian Marco Centinaio, vice president of the Italian

Senate, said at a welcome reception on Wednesday evening

for Jia Guide, China's new ambassador to Italy. "As in the past,

trade is a key element in the relations between our countries

today," Centinaio said, adding that he expects two-way tourist

flows to significantly increase after the easing of pandemic re-

strictions. The relations between Italy and China have a long

history and a bright future, Centinaio told Xinhua. Italy and China have lively economic and cultural relations, he said. He

praised China's efforts in managing the pandemic and to im-

prove bilateral ties, which "allow trade relationship to improve

further." China is an important and expanding market for Italy,

Centinaio said, recalling that he served as his country's min-

ister of agriculture about five years ago. Chinese consumers

have shown growing interest in Italian brands and products

across fashion, engineering, automotive, and agricultural in-

dustries, he said, adding that Italian wine and food products

are also entering daily life of Chinese consumers. - Agencies

SUNDAY 07:00 PM FEBRUARY 26, 2023 National Stadium, Karachi, Pakistan **Asif comes** hard on...

From Page 01 impression that Parliamentarians are trespassing in the jurisdiction of the judiciary but I, as a political worker, demand to resolve this complicated situation which is being faced by the country during the last 7-8

months," he added. Asif said that a full court must start from the Panama case and give a decision which would have a great impact on the future of the country. All the stakeholders must be listened and such a solution be given which should be a roadmap for all. "There are some ex-judges like Justice Muneer Hussain and Riaz Sheikh who are criticized but others like Saeed uz Zaman Siddiqui and Nazim Siddiqui are known for their dignity," he said and appealed to the judiciary to review why some amongst them are criticized yet.

US trade ties vital...

From Page 01

The US trade relationship with Pakistan has helped both Pakistani industries and consumers, he said, adding, "We have long been Pakistan's largest export market, with potential for even further growth."

State Department spokesman said that his country believed that there was great potential to expand bilateral trade with Pakistan further, particularly in enerand products, franchising, retail trade, information and communications technology products and services. America has been a leading investor in Pakistan for the past two decades, and in the past year the country's investments have increased by some 50 percent, he maintained.

TASHKENT: President of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev received the Minister for Finance of Pakistan, Ishaq Dar and noted the importance of accelerating the construction project of the Trans-Afghan railway corridor. - DNA

PM Volleyball Talent Hunt Islamabad trials concludes

ISLAMABAD: Under the auspices of Prime Minister's Youth Program (PMYP) and Higher Education Commission, Pakistan (HEC), Prime Minister's Volleyball Talent Hunt Islamabad trials concluded successfully here on Friday. The two-day activity held on February 23-24, is part of Federal region trials, being executed by COMSATS University Islamabad and Fatima Jinnah Women University. Men's volleyball trials were held at National University of Modern Languages (NUML) Islamabad while the women's volleyball trials were held at Fatima Jinnah Women University (FJWU) which was participated by a large number of youngsters. Speaking as a chief guest of the ceremony, Former Minister of State for Capital Administration and Development of Pakistan Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, congratulated PMYP and HEC on the successful conduction of volleyball trials at Islamabad. He said that it was a great joint initiative of PMYP and HEC to conduct a series of volleyball trials not only in the Federal region but in the different regions of the whole country. He further said that it was a great opportunity for youth to participate in the trials to showcase their talent in different sports. This will, he continued, help youth to bring their hidden talent to limelight and ultimately represent the country on an international level. - Agencies

PCB, PSL franchises refuse to succumb to govt's demand

DNA

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) conducted an emergency meeting with all PSL franchise owners on Friday, in order to decide the fate of PSL matches scheduled to take place in Lahore and Rawalpindi. The interim Punjab government had demanded PKR500 million from PCB to conduct the matches in Lahore and Rawalpindi. The board has already paid PKR50 million to Punjab government for expenses on food. The provincial government is now demanding the remaining

PKR450 million for lighting and security purposes. In order to save these expenses, the board is now considering to shift the Punjab-leg of PSL 8

to Karachi. According to details, the meeting took place via video conference call, where the PSL franchise owners gave PCB management committee chairman, Najam Sethi, the final authority to take the call on the aforementioned matter.

Najam Sethi believes that succumbing to the provincial government's demand will set a wrong precedent for the future and will also result in financial losses for the board and PSL franchises. PSL franchises have million bill demanded by the provincial government. PCB is still negotiating the matter with the provincial government. In the meeting held between PCB and provincial government on Friday evening, Sethi presented details of approximately PKR 700million provincial tax to Punjab government

matches in Punjab. "Government's bid and pay fees to host sports events due to the positive economic activity generated as a result. Here, we are being penalised for hosting matches in Punjab," PCB tells Punjab govt.

PCB has told Punjab gov-

exclusively due to PSL

will be paid for security services and the board is ready to shift the matches from Punjab to Karachi.

Another emergency meeting will take place between PCB and PSL franchises tomorrow, in case the issue is not resolved. According to Express News correspondent, Muhammad Yousuf Anjum, PCB has presented an alternate plan to PSL franchises regarding shifting the rest of the PSL 8 matches to Karachi. The correspondent further added that if the remaining PSL matches are shifted to Karachi, then the matches scheduled for Lahore during New Zealand series, are also

PTI says PDM...

From Page 01

Sharif regimes and all clubs were destroyed. PTI General Secretary Central Punjab HammadAzahr said that the matter of the holding of the polls was very simple and clear as no legal complications were involved in it. He said that elections were to be held within 90 days

assembly and it was clearly and explicitly mentioned in the constitution. HammadAzhar went on to say that the matter was so simple that even a magistrate could easily interpret

it what to talk of a full bench

of the dissolution of the

of the Supreme Court. He challenged that the PML-N should better to test their strength in the field of the elections instead of attacking the state institutions all the time.

PTI Central Secretary Information Farrukh Habib said that the inept Prime Minister broke 70-year-old record of inflation, as the SPI inflation reached a record 41.5%. He said that the prices of the flour, pulses, ghee, vegetables, electricity, gas, petrol and diesel were getting out of the reach of the people.

No quick relief for...

From Page 01 surrendered to authorities and now they were urging the court to call them. 'This way they are burdening the court," he said. The petitioner's lawyer argued that the government should present them in court. On this point Justice Shah-

ram remarked first present arguments about the admissibility of the petition. **Justice Sharam again said** that the PTI leader had offered themselves for arrest, they themselves went inside the police trucks.

Olunga shines as Duhail set up Al Hilal semi-final

Nervous Al Shabab defence conceded two corners in quick succession and Olunga took advantage of an excellent delivery from Edmilson Junior off second to find net with a powerful header in 75th minute area by Moteb al-Arabi saw Olun-

DNA

DOHA: Michael Olunga produced a second-half brace as Qatar's Al Duhail knocked out Al Shabab 2-1 to prevent an all-Saudi clash in the last four of the AFC Champions League on Thursday. Hernan Crespo's Al Duhail will now meet Al Hilal on Sunday to decide the top team in West Asia after the holders and title-favourites from Saudi Arabia edged out Iran's Foolad Khuzestan 1-0 in another quarter-final match. Matches in the tournament's east zone were completed last August with Japan's Urawa Reds sitting pretty, having already booked their spot in the final by beating South Korea's Jeonbuk Hyundai in their last-4 clash. Kenvan Olunga was the star for Al Duhail with his two clinical finishes against Al Shabab, who remarkably had six clean slates in the tournament leading up to their latest match. Al Duhail had domi-

nated the exchanges for most part of the encounter but could only break the deadlock in the 75th minute. The nervous Al Shabab

defence conceded two corners in quick succession and Olunga took advantage of an excellent delivery from Edmilson Junior off the sec-

ond to find the net with a powerful header in the 75th minute. Seven minutes later, some terrible defending outside the penalty



Meanwhile, star-studded and cash-rich Al Hilal were frustrated no end by the defence-oriented Foolad at the Al Janoub stadium. The most successful club from the Gulf region - they have won the tournament five times and are aiming for their third title in four years - Al Hilal were stonewalled by Foolad, which translates to steel in Persian. But their iron resolve eventually gave way three minutes from time when Saleh al-Shehri managed to thread the ball to MoussaMarega and the Malian forward made no mistake with a fine shot into the bottom corner of the net.

ga grab the ball and slot it easily

past Al Shabab goalkeeper Kim

Seung-Gyu following a pass by Is-

close out the tie.



Briefs

EU's largest economy shrinks

economy shrank by 0.4% quarter-on-quarter in the final three months of 2022, the country's Federal Statistical Office reported on Friday. The contraction came in larger than the previously estimated 0.2% GDP drop.

Analysts attribute the worse than expected reading to persistently high inflation and lingering concerns over energy supplies, which are weighing heavily on household consumption and capital investment. Data showed that German household spending was down 1.0% in the fourth quarter, while investment in construction was down 2.9% and in machinery and equipment 3.6%.

German exports of goods and services also dropped, by 1% against the third quarter, on lingering supply chain disruptions and high energy prices.

The weaker than expected performance signals a risk of recession, particularly given that the current quarter may also see a contraction, analysts say. Technically, a country is considered in recession after two consecutive quarters of negative growth. Europe's largest economy, Germany suffered from record inflation last year due to a surge in energy prices following the drop in supplies from Russia amid Ukraine-related sanctions.-APP

IMF advises against making crypto legal tender

LONDON: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) believes that crypto assets should not be granted official currency or legal tender status, according to a statement from its executive board released on

The statement summarized discussions on the fund's nine-point action plan for how countries should treat ments of Effective Policies for Crypto Assets,' held earlier this month. The paper provided "guidance to IMF member countries on key elements of an appropriate policy response to crypto assets.

According to the statement. the fund's major recommendation is to "safeguard monetary sovereignty and stability by strengthening monetary policy frameworks and not granting crypto assets official currency or legal tender status." The board noted that the widespread adoption of crypto assets "could undermine the effectiveness of monetary policy, circumvent capital flow management measures, and exacerbate fiscal risks." The IMF therefore urges countries to focus on adopting tax rules and laws regulating crypto assets, noting that failing to do so is now "untenable" given the recent implosions of several crypto exchanges.-DNA

Russia biggest threat for Sweden

STOCKHOLM: The Swedish Security Service (Sapo) now sees Russia as the biggest threat to Sweden's security along with China and Iran.

Russia's war on Ukraine, which it launched a year ago this Friday, has fundamentally affected Sweden, said Sapo head Charlotte

von Essen. Tensions between Russia and Western democracies are constantly increasing, and Russia views Sweden as part of Europe and already as a member of NATO. Russia is unpredictable, and Moscow is willing to take big risks, according to Sapo. Von Essen said that Russia and its actions, along with those of other authoritarian states, have become increasingly aggressive. She said extremism is growing, and the constitutional threat as well, noting that the mission to protect national security has never been more important but is also more difficult than ever. An increase in Russian intelligence activities and Russian threats against the security of Sweden are to be expected, she said.—Agencies

Pakistan, Uzbekistan sign \$1bln trade agreement

Ishaq Dar appreciated the deeper interests of the Uzbek side and the strengthening of the relationship and lauded progress already made in the field of transport, and trade and welcomed Uzbek side to explore the areas in automobiles, information technology and natural minerals

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Among other developments, Pakistan and Uzbekistan Friday signed \$1 billion trade agreement at Inter-governmental Commission (IGC), which will encourage the exchange of goods and services and will also ease the process of trade. The 8th Session of Pakistan-Uzbekistan Inter-governmental Commission (IGC) on Trade-Economic Scientific-Technical Cooperation was cochaired by Minister of Investments, Industry and Trade, Uzbekistan, Laziz Kudratov and by Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar in Uzbekistan, according to a press statement received here. The commission mainly focused on bilateral economic cooperation in various sectors including commerce and trade, banking, industries and production, investment, textile industry, energy, oil and natural resources, transportation



culture and tourism and culture development. The continuous efforts by both countries to encourage closer ties, especially in the fields of trade, transport, banking, and agriculture was

side. On the occasion, Ishaq Dar appreciated the deeper interests of the Uzbek side and the strengthening of the relationship and lauded progress already made in the field of transport, and trade and appreciated by the Uzbek welcomed Uzbek side to explore the areas in automobiles, information technology and natural minerals. Both sides emphasized that there was huge untapped potential in investment cooperation and bilateral trade. Furthermore, the IGC

recognized the importance of closer collaboration in order to bring sustainable development through innovation, technology, and economic partnership. The IGC aims to increasing economic diversification, sustainable growth, building supply chain resilience, and robust regulatory environment. The Commission expressed satisfaction on the bilateral trade volume between the two countries and desired to enhance it further in the future. Moreover, Uzbekistan showed commitment for enhancing bilateral connectivity through diverse modes. Among others, the meeting was attended Special Adviser to Prime Minister (SAPM), Tariq Bajwa, SAPM to Finance Minister, Zulfiqar Younus, Federal Secretary Economic Affairs Division, Dr. Kazim Niaz, along with other ministry representatives from Pakistan and from Uzbek side, the session was attended by Minister of Sport and Youth Policy, Hamraev Oybek Nematovich and Chairman Chamber of Commerce of Uzbekistan, Ikramov Adham Ilhamov-

Both the parties agreed to hold the ninth meeting of Pakistan-Uzbekistan Inter-governmental Commission next vear in Pakistan.

Canada launches

TRENTON: launched an investigation Thursday into social media giant TikTok amid fears its parent Chinese company could collect data on Canadians. The announcement comes on the heels of class action lawsuits in Canada and the US that have been settled. "The investigation was initiated in the wake of now settled class action lawsuits in the United States and Canada, as well as numerous media reports related to TikTok's collection, use and disclosure of personal information," the privacy commissioner said in a statement.

The federal commissioner and his three provincial counterparts want to ensure that TikTok's practices are "in compliance" with Canadian privacy rules.

The commissioners will also investigate whether "meaningful consent is being obtained for the collection, use and disclosure of personal information."

"An important proportion of TikTok users are younger users," the commissioners said. "Given the importance of protecting children's privacy, the joint investigation will have a particular focus on TikTok's privacy practices as they relate to younger users, including whether the company obtained valid and meaningful consent from these users for the collection, use and disclosure of their personal information."—APP

Stoltenberg sees progress in Sweden's NATO bids

BRUSSELS: NATO Secretary-General Stoltenberg said Thursday he saw progress in stalled talks with Türkiye on Sweden's membership after the two countries went through a period of high tensions due to anti-Türkiye and anti-Islam protests in Stockholm recently. Stoltenberg told media he and President Recep Tayyip Erdo an had agreed that Türkiye, Finland and Sweden would meet at NATO headquarters in mid-March "to address the challenges we face when it comes to Turkish ratification of the Swedish accession protocol." Stoltenberg, who met Er-

do an last week in Ankara, sounded more upbeat on the topic than in past

months. "I see progress," he said in an interview. "My aim is to have both Finland and Sweden as full members by the NATO summit," due to take place in Lithuania from July 11-12. Sweden and neighboring Finland abandoned decades of nonalignment and applied to join NATO in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. All NATO members except Türkiye and Hungary have ratified their accession. but unanimity is required. Ankara accuses Stockholm of harboring members of terrorist groups and has demanded their extradition as a step toward giving Sweden's NATO membership its green light. Talks between Finland, Sweden and Türkiye have been stalled since January

after a copy of the Quran was burned outside the Turkish Embassy in Stockholm by Rasmus Paludan, leader of the Danish farright political party Hard Line. Türkiye and Hungary are the only NATO allies that have not vet ratified the membership of Finland and Sweden, though Budapest has said it aims to take that step for both countries in early March. Stoltenberg said that, regardless of the outstanding ratification, both Nordic states were safer than before their NATO application. "As part of the accession process, several NATO allies, including the United States, have issued bilateral security assurances," he said. "So it's inconceivable that Finland or Sweden will face

any military threats from Russia without NATO reacting," he added. Russian President Vladimir Putin has said there would be no threat to Russia if Sweden and Finland joined NATO, but that Moscow would respond if the U.S.-led alliance bolstered military infrastructure in the two Nordic countries.

He has repeatedly cited the post-Soviet enlargement of the NATO alliance eastward toward his borders as a reason for what he called Russia's "special military operation" in Ukraine. Türkiye has frequently voiced that it does not oppose NATO enlargement but criticizes Stockholm for not taking action against elements posing a security threat to Ankara.-Agencies

Republican Party sets first presidential debate in Wisconsin

FOREIGN DESK

WASHINGTON: The body that governs the Republican Party, one of two major political groups in the United States, has announced that its first presidential debate will take place in the city of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. On Thursday, the Republican National Committee (RNC) decided to kick off its debates this August in the crucial midwestern swing state, which narrowly tilted in favour of Democrat Joe Biden in the last presidential election. Details such as the debate's date and location have yet to be decided. "At this time, no other debates have been sanctioned, nor has the final criteria for the first debate been decided," RNC Chair Ronna McDaniel wrote in a message to the party's members on Thursday. "We have a long way to go, but I am confident we will be able to showcase our eventual nominee in a world class fashion." In the weeks ahead, the RNC will lay out criteria for participation in the debates as the contest for the Republican presidential nomination starts to move forward. The committee is considering between 10 and 12 debates, to be held from August until the date of its national convention in 2024, when it will formally choose a nominee to represent the party in that year's presidential election. Only two Republican candidates have launched their campaigns so far, one of whom is former President Donald Trump.

Russia warns US, NATO, and Ukraine over Transnistria

MOSCOW: Any action by Ukraine or the West that poses a threat to Russian peacekeepers or nationals in the Moldovan breakaway region of Transnistria will be seen as an attack on Russia, the country's Foreign Ministry has stated. It warned Kiev and its Western backers against carrying out "provocations" there. In a statement released on Friday, Russian diplomats cited data from the country's Defense Ministry, according to which Ukraine has amassed considerable numbers of military personnel, as well as hardware and artillery on its border with Transnistria. In light of this, Moscow warned the "US, NATO member states and their Ukrainian underlings against any further adventurous steps." While Russia favors "political-diplomatic" ways of resolving issues, "no one should have any doubt that the Russian armed forces will react appropriately to any provocation by the Kiev regime," the statement reads. Moscow stressed that it is determined to protect its citizens, peacekeepers, and military personnel stationed in Moldova's breakaway region. The report of a Ukrainian military buildup along the country's border with Transnistria was issued by the Russian Defense Ministry on Thursday. The territory on the left bank of the Dniester River proclaimed independence from Moldova in the early 1990s, shortly after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Around 1.100 Russian soldiers are stationed in Transnistria as peacekeepers in order to monitor a 1992 ceasefire between Moldovan and local forces.-APP



REYKJAVÍK: Saadia Altaf Qazi presented her credentials as Ambassador of Pakistan to Iceland to Guni Th. Jóhannesson, President of Iceland. Both sides discussed reconstruction after last year's devastating floods. - DNA

Tehran, Baghdad stepping up security coop

Furthermore, the top Iranian diplomat held another meeting with Hadi al-Amiri, head of the Fatah (Conquest) Alliance, where the two sides discussed a range of issues of mutual interest. "Future is bright and the best will come by the grace of God and efforts of all of us," Amir-Abdollahian later wrote in a post on his Twitter account

News Desk

TEHRAN: Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian has discussed security cooperation with Iraqi sides during his ongoing visit to the neighboring state, stressing that this cooperation will improve the security and stability of both countries.

The Iranian minister, who is in Iraq for an official visit, held separate meetings with a number of Iraqi officials on Thursday, discussing a range of topics of mutual interests, including security cooperation.

Talking with Iraq's National Security Advisor Qassim al-Araji, Amir-Abdollahian said he was pleased that Iran and Iraq have succeeded in forming a high-security committee to dispel some existing concerns in the Iraqi

Kurdistan region. He noted that Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) Ali Shamkhani is also set to travel to Iraq to sign a security coop-

eration agreement with Baghdad. Describing the presence of any anti-Iranian and separatist group in the Kurdistan region as "unacceptable", he said that this will pose a threat to Iran, Iraq and even the Kurdistan region. For his part, al-Araji described recent plots to deal a blow to the Islamic Republic of Iran as a delusion, stressing that any threat from Iraq's soil to Iran will be "unacceptable and deplorable". The advisor also pointed to the importance of regional cooperation, noting that if interactions among regional countries are improved, there will be no room for the presence of extra-regional countries.

The remarks come as anti-Iranian terrorist groups residing in the Iraqi Kurdistan region have increased their malign activities, especially in border areas. Responding to the activities, Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) has launched several rounds of airstrikes against their positions since September 24 last year, yowing to continue attacks till the groups are unarmed. Iran has, on countless occasions, warned the Iraqi Kurdistan's local authorities that it will not tolerate the presence and activity of terrorist groups along its northwestern borders, saying the country will give a decisive response should those areas become a hub of anti-Islamic Republic terrorists. Amir-Abdollahian also held talks

with Faleh al-Fayyad, head of Iraq's

Hashd al-Sha'abi. Expressing gratitude for the efforts and struggles of Hashd al-Sha'abi forces in battling Daesh and restoring stability and security to Iraq, he said stability and security in Iraq equal stability and security in Iran. Fayyad, for his part, appreciated Iran for its unwavering support for the establishment of stability on the borders and across the entire region, stressing the need for the Iranian and Iraqi governments to keep up security cooperation. In a separate meeting with Iraqi Supreme Judicial Council Faiq Zidane, Amir-Abdollahian thanked Baghdad's efforts to form a high-security committee between the two countries, noting that the presence of terrorist groups is a threat to all parties, including Baghdad. The Iranian foreign minister

also called on the Iraqi judiciary official to finalize their actions regarding the case of anti-terror commanders General Qassem Soleimani and Abu Mahdi Muhandis who were assassinated by US forces in January 2020. Zidane, for his part, explained the inclusive judicial measures by the Iraqi side to issue an indictment against the perpetrators and orchestrators of the assassination, noting that Iraq is determined to put those who did the attack on trial.

Furthermore, the top Iranian diplomat held another meeting with Hadi al-Amiri, head of the Fatah (Conquest) Alliance, where the two sides discussed a range of issues of mutual interest. "Future is bright and the best will come by the grace of God and efforts of all of us," Amir-Abdollahian later wrote in a post on his Twitter account.

Japanese inflation hits four-decade high

TOKYO: Japan's core consumer inflation index hit a 41-year high last month as companies continue to pass rising energy costs continue on to households, government data showed on Friday. The consumer price index (CPI), which excludes fresh food but includes energy costs, jumped 4.2% in January from a year ago, up from the 4.0% reading the previous month. It was the biggest increase since September 1981, when the ountry suffered spike in fuel costs due to the Middle East oil crisis. On a monthly basis, consumer prices grew 0.4% in Ianuary, following a 0.3% rise in December.

Core inflation has now been well above the Bank of Japan's (BoJ) 2% target for nine months in a row. This is largely attributable to continued increases in the cost of fuel and raw materials, which Japanese companies are passing on to consumers.

"Inflation will probably peak in January but may not fall back below the BoJ's 2% target for some time. But there are questions as to whether the rise in inflation will be sustainable, as it is still driven largely by food and fuel costs," Yoshimasa Maruyama, the chief economist at SMBC Nikko Securities, told Reuters.—APP

UK expands blacklist against Russia

LONDON: The United Kingdom has expanded sanctions against Russia, adding 92 individuals and legal entities, including those affiliated with Rosatom, to its blacklist, the British government said in a statement released on Friday.

'UK sanctions on Russia top 1,500 as FCDO (Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office - TASS) targets 92 individuals and entities, including those connected to Rosatom,' the statement said.

The United Kingdom has imposed sanctions on several members of the management of the Russian state corporation Rosatom.

"Also sanctioned today are senior executives at Russian state-owned nuclear power company Rosatom, plus executives from Russia's two largest defence companies, four banks, and other Russian elites. Rosatom has deep connections to the Russian military-industrial complex · including through Alexander Novak who is both a member of the supervisory board and the Deputy Prime Minister in [Russian President Vladimir] Putin's administration, the British Cabinet said in a statement.—Agencies



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Briefs

North Korea test-fires cruise missiles

SEOUL: North Korea testfired four strategic cruise missiles during a drill designed to demonstrate its ability to conduct a nuclear counterattack against hostile forces, its state media

said on Friday. The exercise on Thursday involved an apparently operational strategic cruise missile unit of the Korean People's Army, which fired the four "Hwasal-2" missiles in the area of Kim Chaek City, North Hamgyong Province, towards the sea off the east coast of the Korean Peninsula, state news agency KCNA said. Other units conducted firepower training at hardened sites without live firing, it added. The four strategic cruise missiles hit a preset target after travelling the "2,000km-long (1,243 mile) elliptical and eight-shaped flight orbits for 10,208 seconds to 10,224 seconds,' the report said.

The drill demonstrated "the war posture of the DPRK nuclear combat force bolstering up in every way its deadly nuclear counterattack capability against the hostile forces," KCNA said, using the initials of North Korea's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The missile launches were not announced by South Korea or Japan, which are often the first to detect and publicly report such launches. - Agencies

China coal mine death toll rises to six, 47 missing

News Desk

BEIIING: China's Inner Mongolia region ordered in spections at all of its openpit mines on Friday, after at least six people were killed in a landslide at a coal mine, with 47 others still missing. The mine, operated by small local firm Xinjing Coal Mining Co, collapsed in an avalanche of rock on Wednesday, leaving workers buried under a pile of debris. Six people had been pulled out alive by 10:30 p.m. (1430 GMT) on Thursday, state media reported. The mine was buried under a pile of debris half a kilometre (1,600 feet) wide and an estimated 80 meters (260 feet) high, said state broadcaster CCTV.

A second landslide halted rescue efforts, state media reported, with the risk of more collapses very high. Around half of Inner Mongolia's coal mines are open-pit operations. It was unclear if the mines will continue operating during the safety inspections.

Poland says it has sent Leopard tanks to Ukraine

WARSAW: Poland has sent first German-made Leopard 2 battle tanks to Ukraine, a government spokesman has said. "The first Leopards from Poland went to our neighbours from Ukraine. Today's visit by Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki has a measurable character for the security of Ukraine and Europe, Polish minister Piotr Muller wrote on Twitter.

Morawiecki is Kyiv on the first anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Poland has pledged to send 14 Leopards to Ukraine and crews are already being trained how to use them, these are on top of over 250 Soviet-era tanks given by Warsaw over the last year.

Speaking at a joint press conference with Ukrainian counterpart vmvr Zelensky in Kviv. Morawiecki said the tanks would help protect Ukrainian troops on the Battlefield and more would be on the way "in a few days". Polish PM also told reporters that 60 PT-91 tanks would also be sent to Ukraine in coming days, the Unian news agency reports. - APP

Joining NATO Hungary wants more talks on Finland, Sweden bids

"Regarding Turkey, they are also our allies, and therefore we need to hear their voice," Orban says

News Desk

BUDAPEST: Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orban said on Friday that more talks between parliamentary groups were needed before lawmakers vote on the ratification of Finland and Sweden's NATO membership bids which they will begin debating next Wednesday. Speaking on public radio, Orban said he had asked lawmakers of his nationalist Fidesz party to support their bid, adding however that some deputies were "not very enthusiastic" about the expansion and sought further discussions on the matter. The parliaments of all 30 members of NATO have to ratify any membership bids for the alliance. Hungary's lawmakers are scheduled to vote on the matter on March 6, ac-

cording to the parliament's agenda published online. Orban added that in the end, it should be made clear that Hungary supports Finland and Sweden's NATO membership, but said Turkey's concerns regarding Sweden's entry should also be heard, otherwise the expansion effort could fail. Sweden to send up to 10 Leopard tanks to Ukraine "Regarding Turkey, they are also our allies, and therefore

we need to hear their voice," Orban said. Ankara says Stockholm has harboured what Ankara calls members of terrorist groups. Turkey recently indicated it would approve only Finland for NATO membership, while Hungary says it has been delayed by a flurry of



legislation required to unlock European Union funds. "We need to pay attention to Turkey as in the end, the entire process will stall. Unless there is a solution to Turkey's problem, then the expansion could fail.' German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock last week

called on Turkey and Hungary to allow Finland and Sweden to join NATO, stating she expects all NATO members to ratify their bids to join the defence alliance "without further delay". Orban said some ruling party lawmakers were concerned over NATO's shared border with Russia extending by over 1,000 kms (620 miles), pointing to potential geopolitical risks arising from Finland's entry.

Other lawmakers took issue with what Orban described as Finland and Sweden spreading "outright lies" about the health of democracy and the rule of law in Hungary. He added however that Hungary, dominated by Moscow for

decades before the collapse of communism, had a "moral obligation" to support the bid of the Nordic countries. Earlier this week, Hungary's European Union funds negotiator flagged a further possible delay in access to billions of euros of recovery money, saying ironing out remaining issues with Brussels over democratic reforms could last until the summer. The bloc has suspended any payments until Budapest's nationalist government implements reforms to improve judicial independence and tackle corruption.

"I fall into the camp of those urging calm," Orban said in describing the debate on NATO expansion among his lawmakers. "I understand, moreover, I agree with the view of the parliamentary group that not all is well. However, I asked them that in the end, it should be clear that in principle we support Sweden and Finland's NATO entry. However, some serious discussions will be needed beforehand."

Taiwan sees China taking lessons from Russia's war

TAIPEI: China's military is learning from Russia's invasion of Ukraine that any attack on Taiwan would have to be swift to succeed, but the Taiwan Strait would make that challenging, the island's defence minister said on Friday. The possible impact of the war on China's military thinking on Taiwan and how China might attack the island, which Beijing sees as sovereign Chinese territory, has been widely debated in official circles in Taipei.

Taiwan Defence Minister Chiu Kuo-cheng said the Chinese military would have taken notes from the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which began one year ago. Russia tried but failed to capture the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv, in the war's opening days. "The Russia-Ukraine war has brought great lessons for them - they will definitely seek speed," Chiu told reporters on the sidelines of parliament in Taipei, referring to China's military. He said even if Chinese forces were planning a speedy attack, they would face difficulties trying to take the island in a sudden move as they would have to cross the Taiwan Strait that separates the two. "They would still have to overcome this," Chiu said. "It wouldn't be as fast as a week or two." China has never renounced the use of force to bring Taiwan under its control and continues to mount almost daily military patrols near the island. "I've said it before - as soon as the guns sound we will keep

going to the end. But we absolutely will not provoke." Taiwan's democratically elected government says only Taiwan's people have the right to decide their future. While Ukraine has won widespread public support in Taiwan, and Taiwan's government has sent humanitarian aid, China has declined to condemn Russia. The two countries announced a "no limits" partnership shortly before Russia launched what it calls its "special military operation" on Feb. 24 last year. China has said that it is a "naked double standard" to seek to conflate the issues of Taiwan and Ukraine as the island has always been part of China and is entirely a domestic matter. - Agencies

Sherry demands speedy probe in Barkhan killings

DNA

ISLAMABAD, FEB 24 (DNA) - Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman on Friday demanded that the Barkhan district incident should be investigated as soon as possible and the criminals involved in the incident should be severely punished. In a series of tweets, the federal minister expressed her resentment on the tragic incident of torture and killing of innocent people in the reported private jail of Balochistan Minister for Construction and Communications Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran. Sherry posted on her twitter handle, "Whatever the motives and reasons behind the tragic and condemnable incident of Barkhan, it is a question mark on the overall consciousness of our society." "What century do we live in where the powerful have built private prisons? Where people, women, and children are tortured and their bodies are thrown into a well?" she wrote. The senator said that the postmortem revealed heart-wrenching facts. "Nothing can undo what the victims and their families have gone through. Heinous violence, killings, and desecration of dead bodies have left us all bowed in shame", she said.

UK bans export of items used by Russia in war

DNA

LONDON: Britain marked the one-year anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine by issuing more sanctions against Russia, including export bans on every item it has used on the battlefield and import bans of iron and steel goods. Britain has frozen assets and targeted a wave of Russian officials and companies in the last year in an effort to cripple Moscow's economy and curb its ability to wage war on its neighbour. In a statement on Friday it said it would target another 92 individuals and entities, including allies of Russian President Vladimir Putin such as the boss of Nord Stream 2, Matthias Warnig.



ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif presenting a shield to H.E Donald Blome US Ambassador to Pakistan in Federal Capital - APP

Pak Army USAR team receives appreciation

The USAR team searched a total of 91 sites while showing the essence of their professional skills in the rescue operation at 39 locations

ISLAMABAD: The Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) team of the Pakistan Army returned to the country after winning the hearts of the people of Turkiye on Friday. The rescue team was recognized by the international and Turkish media for being the first to reach the earthquake victims in Turkiye and the last to leave. The 35-member team - that reached Turkiye immediately after the earthquake - returned on Friday morning after carrying out successful rescue operations in the quake-hit areas of Turkiye. The USAR team searched a total of 91 sites while showing the essence of their professional skills in the rescue operation at 39 locations. Some eight people, including small children, were saved alive by day and night efforts. Besides the solo operations, the team also recovered five other alive persons with the help of other rescue teams. Moreover, the team recovered 138 people who died under the debris and handed them over to Turkish administration. The team also cleared two sites completely for camping. The USAR team of Pakistan Army was also appreciated by international and local news channels of Turkiye. - Agencies

Pakistan, US to enhance economic relationship

ISLAMABAD: Concluding the ninth meeting of Trade and Investment Framework Agreements (TIFAs), Pakistan and United States decided to further enhance bilateral economic relationship for shared prosperity of both the countries. The TIFA meeting was co-chaired by US Trade representative Katherine Tai and Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar, according to joint press

statement issued at the conclusion of discussions. Both the sides discussed issues and concerns related to agriculture, digital trade, intellectual property protection, enforcement, labor rights, good regulatory practices, and women's economic empowerment. They decided to increase dialogue on these sectors to deepen bilateral economic relationship and promote prosperity of working people in both the countries. Recognizing the importance of agricultural and digital trade to the economic relationship, the concerned officials were directed to intensify engagement in these areas in advance of the next TIFA Council meeting.

The US appreciated Pakistan's efforts in improving workers' rights, protections and strengthening of its intellectual property regime. Both sides affirmed the importance of an effective IP regime, achieving high labor standards, and following good regulatory practices. – **DNA**

Pakistan, China, India abstain as UN demands Russia withdraw

"Today, United Nations General Assembly has just spoken very clear," said European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell. "This vote shows that the international community stands with Ukraine."

NEW YORK: The United Nations voted overwhelmingly to key allies. "The vote defies the argument that the Globdemand Russia immediately and unconditionally withdraw its troops from Ukraine, marking the one-year anniversary of the war with a call for a "just and lasting" peace.

Ukraine earned strong backing in a nonbinding vote that saw 141 of the 193 UN members in support, seven opposed and 32, including China, India and Pakistan abstaining. Coming on the eve of the first anniversary of the brutal war, support for Kyiv was little-changed from that of last October when 143 countries voted to condemn Russia's declared annexation of four Ukraine regions.

"Today, United Nations General Assembly has just spoken very clear," said European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell. "This vote shows that the international community stands with Ukraine." President Joe Biden's national security advisor, Jake Sullivan, called the vote "a powerful call for a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in Ukraine in line with the principles of the UN Charter.'

The vote came after two days of debate during which Ukraine Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba urged the international community to choose "between good and evil." He rejected the idea that Kyiv only enjoyed the support of the West - the European Union, the United States and their

al South does not stand on Ukraine's side, because many countries representing Latin America, Africa, Asia voted in favor today," Kuleba said. "The support is much broader, and it will only continue to be consolidated and to be solidified," he added. Andriy Yermak, chief of staff to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, expressed gratitude to all those "who stood up for Ukraine on the anniversary of the unprovoked Russian aggression." "The world understands whose side the truth is on," he said.

The resolution reaffirmed support for Ukraine's "sovereignty" and "territorial integrity," rejecting any Russian claims to the parts of the country it occupies. It also demanded "that the Russian Federation immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw all of its military forces from the territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders," and called "for a cessation of hostilities

The vote showed Moscow's continued isolation on the world stage after 12 months of war. It only earned support from six other nations: Belarus, Syria, North Korea, Mali, Nicaragua, and Eritrea. Despite its limited backing, Russia has used its veto power to block any binding motions against it in the UN Security Council. - DNA

