

held PTI chairman Imran Khan responsible for economic destruction and inflation in the country. In a tweet, she said the PTI chief, escaped from Zaman Park residence by dodging party workers, fearing imminent arrest in Toshakhana case. Sharing a picture of Nawaz Sharif, she said that genuine leaders bravely face arrest even in fake cases, but cowards like Imran Khan flee away.

PTI threatens mass protest

STAFF REPORT

Fawad



Lahore residence and he told media outside Zaman Park that the purpose of calling Imran to these courts was to "attempt yet another attack on him". "They want that he [Imran] comes to court

'public trial'

ICT police fails to arrest Imran, PTI Chairman terms the cases against him as "comical"

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan on Sunday demanded a public trial of the Toshakhana case before a crowd gathered at Zaman Park, hours after police claimed he was avoiding arrest. Islamabad police on Sunday travelled to Lahore to arrest Imran in relation to warrants issued in the Toshakhana (gift repository)

was not there when the police arrived. Sharif, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah and PEMRA noted that airing of "baseless

Continued on Page 06

PEMRA bans coverage of Imran Khan

KHAYAM ABBASI

case against him. According to police sourc- ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Electronic es, the former premier is avoiding arrest. SP Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) City Rana Hussain Tahir went to the room in has imposed a ban on broadcasting Imran's Zaman Park's residence where the 'live and recorded' speeches and press PTI chairman was expected to be but he conferences of former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chair-Addressing PTI workers from his residence, man Imran Khan on all satellite TV however, Imran said that he had invited them channels with immediate effect, me-"to express gratitude" towards them and dia reported on Sunday. "It has been not to "build his own confidence". Equating observed that Imran Khan [Chairman his cause with a holy mission saying his "ji- PTI] in his speeches/statements is had for true freedom" will continue, Imran continuously alleging state institustressed he was "not going to bow in front tions by leveling baseless allegations of anyone and nor allow anyone else [from and spreading hate speech through his his party and supporters] to do so". He also provocative statements against state claimed that he was not behind the cases institutions and officers which is prejuregistered against the Pakistan Democratic dicial to the maintenance of law and or-Movement (PDM) leaders while implying der and is likely to disturb public peace that the same was not true in his case. Im- and tranquility," stated the notification ran claimed that Prime Minister Shehbaz issued by the regulatory authority.

Continued on Page 06



ECP to issue schedule this week

No workforce from judiciary

Shujaat Hamza

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has started its preparations for holding elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa following the Supreme Court (SC) orders, media reported. According to sources, the election watchdog is likely to announce schedule for Punjab and KP general elections this week. The

PM appreciates Qatar's support in various initiatives PM Shehbaz Sharif, Qatari Emir hold talks on a range of issues

CENTRELINE REPORT

DOHA: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif met with Qatar Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani on Sunday and appreciated the country's "continued support" for Pakistan's development initiatives. Earlier, the premier had arrived in Doha on a two-day visit to attend the fifth United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries (LDCs). In a handout, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said that PM Shehbaz was received by Qatar's emir soon after arriving in Doha. "The two leaders held talks on a range of issues of mutual interest and discussed ways to further enhance excellent cooperation in economic and investment areas between Pakistan and Qatar," the PMO said. The statement said the emir

PM to address UN LDC conference

DNA

DOHA: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said on Sunday that he would share Pakistan's perspective on the socio-economic challenges faced by the LDCs in Asia and Africa, when he addresses the 5th United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC) happening in Doha, Qatar. The premier touched down in the Qatari capital to attend the five-day UN conference, starting today to deliberate upon the steps for accelerating sustainable development in the least developed

and the terrorist - who are of their own making - get a chance to take Imran Khan's life," he said alleging that the government was behind the assassination plot. He also said that both the federal and the caretaker Punjab governments wanted "to cause anarchy so that polls can be ducked" and "we are dealing with the legal matters as per law in the courts".

PML-N ready for elections

ABDUL RASHID

of

FAISALABAD: Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah has said holding elections is responsi

bility of the Election Commission and PML-N is fully ready to participate in the democratic process. Talking to the media after inaugurating tent pegging championship in Faisalabad on Sunday, he said if the court orders for Imran's arrest, he would instantly comply with the orders. The interi or minister clarified that in present instance, the police had gone to Zaman Park to comply with the court orders, and the government had nothing to do with it.

inside.

Punjab govt won't hinder Aurat March in province – Page 02

Ambassadors show keen interest in RCCI **Education Summit** – Page 03

Chairman PEMRA assures for Radio, TV license to ICCI – Page 04

Again, the lioness is roaring - Page 05

Army lifts Combaxx-Roshan Khan Team Squash Title – Page 06

Time now to do justice for least developed countries – Page 07

China looks at reforms to deepen Xi Jinping control - Page 08



need to be fulfilled", says Bilawal

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Sunday raised concerns about the country's first-ever digital cen-

sus, terming it a "flawed" exercise while calling on the federal government to address the PPP's concerns in this regard. The self-enumeration process, part of the country's first-ever digital census, began on Feb 20 and was supposed to end at 12am on Saturday but was extended for another seven days after requests from various

Continued on Page 06

Continued on Page 06

Fazal wants

elections delayed

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Democrat-

ic Movement (PDM) President and

Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUIF-F)

Chief MaulanaFazlurRehman on

Sunday sought postponement of the

upcoming elections in Punjab and

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) amid a

"deteriorated law and order situation"

in the country. Addressing a press

conference, the PDM president said,

ECP has decided not to acquire workforce from the judiciary for performing duties of District Returning Officers (DROs) and Returning Officers (ROs), they say. Moreover, the electoral watchdog would also send letters to the Ministry of

Continued on Page 06

Poor nations' leaders lash out at UN summit

DNA

DOHA: Leaders from the world's poorest nations out their disappoured pointment and bitterness at a UN summit on Sunday over the treatment of their countries by richer counterparts. Many made pointed calls for the developed powers to come good with billions of dollars of promised aid to help them escape

Continued on Page 06

Continued on Page 06

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PML-N slams Khan for 'avoiding arrest'

ABID RAZA

LAHORE:Leaders of the ruling coalition parties on Sunday reacted to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan's possible arrest, stating that the deposed prime minister is "afraid to get arrested". Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Senior Vice President Maryam Nawaz took to Twitter to criticise Imran and said that "today the country knows the difference between a leader and a jackal". "Even if the lion is innocent, he holds his daughter's hand and comes to Pakistan from London to give his arrest and if a

iackal is a thief, he hides by making other people's daughters a shield for fear of arrest!" she said. In another tweet, PML-N's chief organiser asked the party supremo Nawaz Sharif to lend some of his courage to Imran. Meanwhile, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah said that the "day the government decides to arrest Imran, it will not be a difficult task to do so and he will be arrested within no time". Read Warrants against Imran does not concern US: Price "If the government had wanted, he [Imran] could have been arrested during his appearance in the high court," he added.

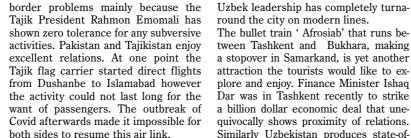
Continued on Page 06

Increasing bonhomie between Pakistan and CARs

ANSAR M BHATTI

HE Central Asian states undoubtedly have acquired huge regional and global significance because of their strategic importance and business potential. Most

of the states, after their independence, have made huge progress in human as well economic development. The infrastructural improvement in these states has also been phenomenal. Having visited Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan I can say with confidence that these three states, especially Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, have never looked back after declaring independence. Tajikistan, among these states, happens to be a struggling economy mainly because the country did not come by enough natural resources as compared with the other states at the time of the independence, yet its leadership is making strenuous efforts to bring the country at par with the other neighboring states. Another factor that has perhaps impeded its growth appears to be tensions at the borders with Afghanistan and sometimes with Kyrgyzstan as well. Afghanistan particularly has always been a source of tension for this country like Pakistan and Uzbekistan, however Tajikistan appears to have overcome its



CASA 1000 project is yet another important engagement which would cater to at least 25 per cent of the energy needs of Pakistan once completed. Work on this project is under way however its completion largely depends on the situation in Afghanistan.

With Uzbekistan Pakistan's engagement is multi-faceted. The trade and economic activity between the two countries continues to grow with each passing day. Uzbekistan is well known for its religious tourism potential. People-to-people contacts between Islamabad and Tashkent increased manifold after the start of direct flights between Tashkent and Lahore. Somehow this air link got disturbed because of Covid but as reports suggest both sides are working hectically to re-activate this route. Infrastructural development in Uzbekistan has also been tremendous in recent years. The holding of the SCO summit in Samarkand in September 2022 proved yet another feather in Uzbek cap. The city was already well known for its historical importance but after this summit it has become a must-visit place as the

round the city on modern lines.

The bullet train ' Afrosiab' that runs between Tashkent and Bukhara, making a stopover in Samarkand, is yet another attraction the tourists would like to explore and enjoy. Finance Minister Ishaq Dar was in Tashkent recently to strike a billion dollar economic deal that unequivocally shows proximity of relations. Similarly Uzbekistan produces state-ofthe-art machinery used for cotton crops. The Uzbek embassy in Islamabad, from time to time, holds road-shows exhibiting its products, which can certainly enhance the capacity of the Pakistani agriculture sector. It is up to the Pakistani side to cash in on this opportunity in order to increase its agri produce. The rail link from Uzbekistan to Peshawar is going to further spur regional trade and economic activity therefore the stakeholders are trving their best to put this project in operation sooner rather than later.

Kazakhstan, during the past few years, has intensified its engagement with Pakistan for which credit must go to former Ambassador Barlybay Sadykov, Ambassador Akan Rakhmetullin and now Ambassador Yerzhan Kistafin. The incumbent Ambassador Kistafin is zealously pursuing the goal of diversification of relations between the two countries. It is because of his tireless efforts that the direct air link between Almaty and Lahore is going to be established from April 26, 2023, while in May Almaty and Karachi shall be linked with a direct flight. Apart from trade and economic relations, cultural and academia

links between the two countries have also been strengthened. With the establishment of direct air links one can hope both countries would be able to cement relations besides working earnestly to make the direct air link a sustainable activity. With Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan too Pakistan is desirous to have close links and vice versa. Kyrgyzstan is also part of the CASA 1000 energy project. Besides, both countries have explored a number of other avenues as well in order to further solidify bilateral relations. There is a direct flight from Islamabad to Bishkek now and plans are afoot to have similar air links from other Pakistani cities as well.

As regards ties with Turkmenistan, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India (TAPI) is indeed an important project. The Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India pipeline will be a 1,814km trans-country natural gas pipeline running across four countries. The investment agreement for the development of the TAPI project was signed by the four countries in February 2016. The ceremony marking the beginning of construction of the Afghanistan-Pakistan section of the pipeline was held in February 2018. Designed to serve for 30 years, the pipeline was expected to commence operations in 2021 but after the lapse of so many years the project is far from completion. The progress on this project has not been made because of the Indian presence. There is a consistent view among the people who matter in Pakistan that as long as India is part of TAPI its fate will continue to hang in balance. However if Pakistan and India are able to mend fences then it is a whole new ball game.

Azerbaijan is not part of Central Asia however its engagement with Pakistan has been extra-ordinary. Particularly after the 44 day Patriotic War in which Azerbaijani forces successfully regained its territories from Armenia, relations between Islamabad and Baku touched new horizons. Pakistan had extended whole-hearted support to Azerbaijan - a gesture duly recognized by the Azerbaijani people and government. It was after the frantic efforts of former Ambassador Ali Alizada and the sitting Ambassador Khazar Farhadov a direct air link was established between Islamabad and Baku. But unfortunately the flights had to be discontinued mainly because of some bureaucratic hurdles on the part of the Pakistani authorities.

Afghanistan holds the key when it comes to making projects such as CASA 1000, TAPI etc a success therefore all these regional players must work collectively for peace and stability in Afghanistan. Afghanistan also belongs to the Central Asian region therefore it should be part of all Central Asian initiatives.

Quite recently the Rawalpindi and Islamabad Chambers of Commerce and Industry opened Central Asian facilitation desks at the respective chambers by allocating a special space for this purpose. Undoubtedly, businessmen can surely contribute a lot towards promotion of trade and economic links but for this they need to undertake sustainable and practical initiatives. Mere photo sessions may not do any wonders.

OPINION

02

NATIONAL

Islamabad **POST**

Politics of blame games. character assassination

detrimental

to harmony,

democracy

PESHAWAR: Political par-

ties are the pre-requisite of

every democratic system

to run government affairs

through its elected repre-

sentatives and solve peo-

"In democratic countries,

the success of political

parties in general election

largely depend on the polit-

ical behaviour and psycho-

logical-economic factors,

past service record and

manifestos of political par-

ties rather launching of per-

sonal attacks, blame games,

characters assassination of political leadership and

dragging state institutions into politics," Professor Dr

A.H Hilali, former Chair-

man Political Science De-

partment, University of

Peshawar while talking to

APP on Sunday. He said

issues-based political de-

bates help in broadening

of voters' understanding

and resolution of socioeco-

nomic and political issues

besides promoting political

He said a permanent polit-

ical divide with no channel

of communication and po-

litical intolerance retards

country despite holding of

In democratic process, he

said the doors to political

dialogue among religious

and political entities were

always open to take deci-

sions in national interest

and for people's well being.

He said unfortunately our

politicians did not learn les-

sons from our history and

general election.

harmony.

ple's problems.

Monday, March 6, 2023

PML N leader slams PTI leadership

QAZI SHOAIB KHAN

ATTOCK: Central Leader Pakistan Muslim League (N) former Federal Minister Sheikh Aftab Ahmed in his special talks with the media on Sunday has strongly criticized the financial mismanagement of PTI Imran Khan leaving the country into serious crisis arisen aftersigning foreign loan agreements of billions dollars with IMF first ever in the history of 70 years besides dissolving provincial assemblies only for his ego satisfaction and stubbornness. While expressing his views on the prevailing economic juncture, Sheikh Aftab Ahmed saidall responsibilities of these circumstances rest upon Imran Khan when the nation compares with the tenure of Muslim League supremo Mian Nawaz Sharif. Sheikh Aftab Ahmed said that the country was facing worst kind of load sheding of power, gas, of 18 hours when Mian Nawaz Sharif took over as Prime Minister in 2013. He said that more than 14000 mega volts electricity was produced as a result the agonized load sheding was minimized while people was prosperous who were able to earn their livelihood as the industry was at fast track leading to increase in growth rate as par with other developing countries of the region.

Man martyred, two injured in Bannu IED blast

PESHAWAR: Man martyred and two others were injured in an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) blast near Bakakhel Mandi in Bannu on Sunday. Police control Bannu said that IED, planted in a motorcycle, detonated causing the martyrdom of a citizen identified as Khan Muhammad son of Saifullah, while Arif Khan son of Shayer Khan and Zahid son of Zair Muhammad got critical injuries. The police cordoned off the area soon after the incident and started a search operation to arrest the persons involved in the incident. The injured were rushed to a



ISLAMABAD: A girl slides along one of the world's most extended zip line during Islamabad Test Festival at F-9 Park.- Online

Punjab govt won't hinder Aurat March in province

LAHORE: Punjab Interim Information Minister Amir

Mir has promised that the caretaker government will not place any obstacles for Aurat March protesters in the province, adding that all the reservations of the event's organisers had been addressed.

The Aurat March organners for awareness of womising committee had last en's rights and the strong month requested a no obreservation of the general jection certificate (NOC) public and religious orfrom the district adminisganizations, especially JI's tration to hold a rally on (Jamaat-i-Islami) women's March 8 at Nasser Bagh, and student wings, who Lahore, followed by a had also announced a pro-

ter of the park.

march around the perimegramme against the Aurat March."

Subsequently, Aurat March However, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rafia Haider organisers petitioned the had rejected the plea citing Lahore High Court on Sat-"the current security sceurday night, saying that the nario, threat alerts, and law DC's order was "arbitrary, and order situation, and in discriminatory and ultra light of activities like convires" of various constitutroversial cards and bantional articles.

The petition has been fixed for March 6 (Monday) and will be heard by Justice Muzammil Akhtar Shabbir. In a statement released

today, Mir said that the government has decided to provide security to Aurat

March protesters. "Complete police security will be given to the participants." He said that the caretaker government won't become a hindrance for the demonstrators, adding that "our caretaker government believes in the freedom of all individuals".

The minister further said that all the reservations put forward by the protesters will have been removed "We hope the Aurat March

will be held in a peaceful manner," h added.

Earlier, civil society, political parties, and rights organisations condemned the deputy commissioner for rejecting the plea to organise Aurat March on International Women's Day on March 8.

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan also strongly condemned the Lahore district administration for rejecting Aurat March organisers permission to hold a public rally marking International Women's Day on March 8.

SACM Haroon Shah to perform duties sans perks, privileges

DNA PESHAWAR: The Special Assistant to the Caretaker Chief ster of Khyber Pakhtunk



again started wrangling by closing the doors of politi-

cal dialogue ahead of election despite the country's difficult economic situation. He said the absence of poala armoleib leaitil

the political and economic right to peaceful assembly development, besides widis routinely challenged by ening the economic gap bethe district administration tween influentials and the 'controversial' because underprivileged. placards and 'strong res-He said if the existing trend ervations' from the public of political intolerance, and religious organisations accusations and blame ostensibly create law-andgames among politicians order risks. This is a poor continued in Pakistan, then defence." it would be extremely dif-The HRCP demanded ficult to bring political and economic stability to the

that the caretaker Punjab government uphold the Aurat March's right to freedom of peaceful assembly and provide the marchers with full secu-

"It is regrettable that their rity.-Online

Sehbaz Khan promoted as conservator reforestation



nearby hospital where their situation was stated to be $stable._APP$

Change of Name

I have changed my name from Nasreen Akhtar to Nasreen Hassan Niazi. Name may please be changed in all official documents. Nasreen Hassan Niazi W/O Amir Hassan Khan. CNIC No. 54400-6889784-8

Change of Name



Maaz s/o Jehad Ali resident of Ghauri Town Phase 7 4c-2 Islamabad

registered with FBISE at SSC level under Registration No. 2114501072 passed SSC Annual Examination 2021 under Roll No. 1011591 do announce that I have decid ed to substantially change my name from Maghaz to Muhammad Maaz which is written as Muhammad Maaz in Board's documents record. Hence the same may be changed. That the statement give above is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, belief and nothing has been concealed or withheld.



MUMTAZ AHMED BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Shahbaz Khan has been promoted as Conservator Reforestation Muzaffarabad Circle performance of Muzaffarabad Reforestation Circle will be much better now.. Muhammad Shahbaz Khan has started work after taking charge. Officers of AJK Forest Department expressed their happiness on his promotion and expressed the hope that Shahbaz Khan will now do

better with hard work. Shahbaz Khan is one of the few officers in AJK's Forest Department who has always increased the positive reputation of the department. Conservator Muhammad Shahbaz Khan has played an important role from design & documentation of TBTTP to successful plantation. Shahbaz Khan, without taking any kind of pressure, has boldly released the encroached land of the Forest Department from powerful encroachments. Shehbaz Khan is known not only in AJK but in entire of Paki-

stan as a competent, hardworking, expert in documentation, respected by senior officers and kind by junior officers.

Shahbaz Khan is always ready for the technical assistance of the forest officers not only in AJK but also all over Pakistan for the improvement of forests. The promotion of Shahbaz Khan will definitely prove better for the Forest Department.Shahbaz Khan's performance as Divisional Forest Officer was exemplary and he was appreciated at all levels.

> responsibility on the shoulders of the force to move forward as a team for establishing peace in the entire province and the country. He mentioned that the officers, from constable to the rank of IG, have rendered sacrifices for the bright future of the country and nation.

He said that the provincial police always fulfilled its responsibility with bravery in all difficult situations even by putting their lives at risk. The entire nation acknowledge the sacrifices of the police, he added.-APP

IGP for activation of protection centers

Supremacy of law, welfare

of force top priority: IGP

by Regional Police Officer

(RPO) Dera Abdul Ghafoor

Afridi, DPO Dera Abdul

Rauf Babar Qaiserani, DPO

Tank Waqar Ahmed, DPO

South Waziristan Shabir

Hussain and other senior

On this occasion, a smartly

turned contingent of police

presented salute to the

IGP. The IGP also visited

'Yadgar-e-Shuhada' at po-

police officers.

Qazi Shoaib Khan

ATTOCK: Inspector General Police Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar on Sundaywhile addressing through video link has directed all the Regional Police Officers and District Police Officers of the Punjab to activate "Protection" centers in all regional police offices of the province by Sunday March 5 and by March 12 in all district police offices. The director public relations of Punjab Police Mr. Nayyab Haider told media that IG Punjab has directed RPOs and DPOs to activate these "Protection Centers" as per

the issued instructions and leave no stone unturned in serving and protecting the vulnerable sections who deserve help and attention from transgender apart and helpless children. IG Punjab said that these "Protection Centers" will play a significant role in helping and protecting transgender, destitute children and homeless children suffering from mental problems. IG Punjab ordered the RPOs, DPOs to ensure best measures under personal supervision for the security of foreign nationals, especially Chinese residents. Dr. Usman Anwar said that

D.I.KHAN: Inspector Gen-

eral of Police (IGP) Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa Akhtar Hayat

Khan on Sunday said that

the supremacy of law and

justice and the welfare of

the police force were the

top priorities of the depart-

He stated this during his

visit to Ejaz Shaheed Police

Lines, Dera Ismail Khan

where he was welcomed

ment.

the security of Chinese citizens is the first priority, so security inspections of all working sites including Chinese citizens' residences, offices should be done regularly. IG Punjab directed all the RPOs and DPOs to initiate strict crackdown across Punjab to protect the precious human lives from kite flying and said that the law breakers involved in manufacturing, buying, selling and using metallic strings and kites should be brought under the grip of the law and should be severely punished. He said that the concerned circle officers and DPOs will

be held accountable in future where the incident of metallic kite string comes to light. IG Punjab gave Shabash to the district police officers for registering more cases on calls of 15 and reprimanded other officers for less registration of cases.

lice lines and laid wreaths

on the memorials of police

martyrs. The KP Police

chief also planted a sapling

in the premises of Police

Lines in connection with

the ongoing spring planta-

While addressing a gather-

ing of officers and officials

of police, the IGP said the

police job was a sacred pro-

fession which puts a heavy

tion drive.

He said that the indicators which were considered negative in the past for police performance are now being considered as a sign of positive performance. IG Punjab while giving orders to make the ongoing crackdown more effective for the arrests of proclaimed offenders stressed to accelerate comficers.

munication with Interpol and more effective follow-up to arrest proclaimed offenders involved in serious cases. He said that if there is a need to enlist absconders proclaimed offenders, as they should be enlisted proclaimed offenders without any delay because untill we know the exact targets; our line of action will not be correct. He said that the CPOs and DPOs of the districts who enlist more proclaimed offenders in the police files are worthy of praise and their performance is worthy of emulation for other of-

wa Mr. Pir Haroon Shah made a big decision by not getting a salary and other benefits despite his entitlement. He said that he personally took this decision, keeping in view the current financial situation. He said that he has joined provincial caretaker cabinet in the spirit of public service and can't become a burden on the government treasury by taking salary and benefits in the current economic crisis.

Pir Haroon Shah said that his purely attention would be to deliver his services to the people of the province to the Caretaker Chief Minister whose trust on

him by making his cabinet member. He said that on serving humanity, needs to sacrifice ownself and current fiscal situation of the whole country, especially the province, requires that tough decisions be applied from one's self, so they have decided to be members of the caretaker provincial government without getting

salary and other privileges.

rigging and corruption allegations and confrontation politics had led to the dismissal of several political governments in the past. The government of former

Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto was dismissed after the nine religious and political parties under the platform of Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) had launched an agitation movement claiming electoral fraud despite strong rejection by the PPP and subsequently democracy was packed up for the third time on July 5, 1977.–APP



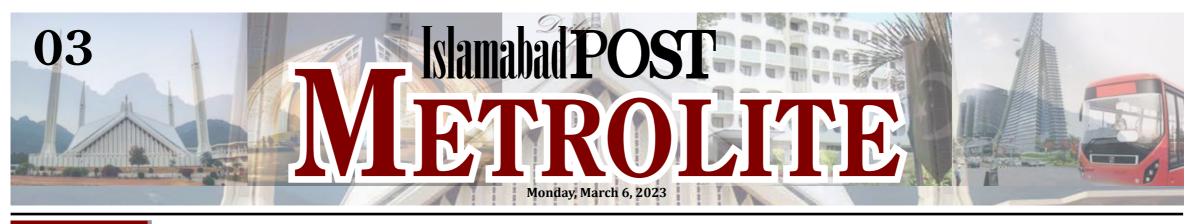
Murree Brewery Company Limited located in Rawalpindi is an icon reflecting the past and the present history of the subcontinent.

Murree Brewery Company is pleased to invite friends from diplomatic missions to visit us and share the experience of our efforts towards keeping it afloat for over 160 years of operation.

We cordially invite diplomatic missions to visit us on any Saturday from 10 am to 1:30 pm to enjoy our hospitality and our products tasting. However, since, we are located in the Red Zone / Prohibited area and it will be mandatory to obtain No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs well in advance of the intended visit date. We look forward to welcoming you all soon.

For further information please contact the following. Maj (r) Sabih Ur Rehman

Mobile: 0300 8553342



National Days and Armed **Forces Days**

MARCH

March 01 / Bosnia National Day

March 03 / Bulgaria National Day March 06 / Ghana

Independence Day March 12 / Mauritius

National Day March 17 / Ireland

St. Patricks Day March 20 / Tunisia **Independence** Day

March 21 / Namibia National Day March 25 / Greece National Day

March 26 / Bangladesh **National Day**

March 27 / Myanmar **Armed Forces Day**



Hotels & Restaurants

Serena Hotel....111 133 133 Marriott......051-28261210334-5421812 Monal



Airlines Turkish Airlines.....8494949

Emergency

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

Ambassadors show keen interest in RCCI Education Summit DNA

RAWALPINDI: Foreign ambassadors have shown keen interest in the two-day international education summit and expo organized by the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) here on Saturday.

Svrian Ambassador Dr. Rameez Al-Rai, Indonesian Ambassador Adam Togyu and Moroccan Ambassador Mohamed Karmoune visited the stalls set up by various universities at the Education Expo and took information. Indonesian envoy Adam Tugio informed that Pakistani students are being offered under Kemitraan Negara Berkembang (KNB) programme, and added that it will provide an opportunity

DNA

sentatives and education

experts from all over Pa-

kistan. A conference was



post-graduate degrees in Indonesian universities. The RCCI International Summit and Expo brings an excellent opportunity for all interested students to gain first-hand information on for local students to pursue

various Indonesian scholarships and International programs, he added. Students will be acquainted with all the relevant information on the scholarship programs of their preference.

Earlier, Chamber President Saqib Rafiq said that we have to bring such an education system that attracts young people towards business and they can get jobs, the government has to in-

providing a platform for

students to seek guidance

on applying for the varied

Scholarships which will cer-

tainly foster people to peo-

ple contact and strengthen

the cultural and academic

ties among both nations.

In 2021, Pakistani students

were the largest recipients

of scholarship awardees

More than 30 stalls have

been set up representing

the best universities in

Pakistan as well as some

world leading universi-

ties, colleges, and repu-

table education consul-

tancies, including NUST,

The Millennium Univer-

sal College, University

of Management Technol-

ogy, SI-UK, as students

to study in Indonesia.

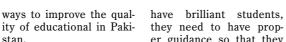
crease the education budget, make policies according to the demand of the industry. A panel discussion was also held on the occasion of the conference in which the speakers emphasized on in-

creasing the communication between the industry and academia. The purpose of the conference is to increase communication between industry and academia in view of contemporary challenges, to discuss and find solutions to problems related to emerging technology and employment opportunities, e-commerce, scholarships, expensive education and industry demand.

Indonesian envoy encourages students from Pakistan

stan.

Rawalpindi: The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia is participating in a two-day International Education Summit 2023, first-ever on 4-5 March 2023 to promote education system in Indonesian and provide access information on scholarships being offered by universities in Indonesia. The event is organized by the Rawalpindi Chamber Commerce Industry (RCCI) with the objective to inspire Pakistani students with a great educational prospect in Pakistan and overseas and provide a platform for consultation and interaction with repre-



er guidance so that they Ambassador Tugio comcould excel to their full mended the initiative of potential", he added. The Embassy's stall attracted RCCI in organising the the interest of students educational expo and underscored the from the twin-cities who important role of universought detail information sity as incubator of innoon educational systems vations. He encouraged in Indonesia and scholarships being offered by business community to play proactive role by universities in Indonesia, connecting innovations including those from five the world-class best Indofrom university labs to the markets. "The expo nesian universities based on the QS World Ranking is also good opportunity for the Embassy since we 2023, namely Gajah Mada University (UGM), Instican introduce some best universities in Indonesia, tute of Technology Bandespecially because many ung (ITB), University of Indonesia (UI), Airlangga of them offer full schol-University (UNAIR), and arships to Pakistani stu-Bogor Agriculture Univerdents", the envoy added. sity (IPB). Speaking on the occasion, President of RCCI,

Representatives from the Embassy assisted students Mr. Saqib Rafiq reminded the audience that to with free advising servic-

Spring

flowers

becoming

attraction for

citizens

ISLAMABAD: With the on-

going spring season, a num-

ber of multi-coloured flowers

around the Capital city's

roads and its nurseries had

become a key attraction

for commuters where resi

dents in large numbers are

thronging nurseries to buy

plants to enhance the beau-

Spring season starts from

February in Pakistan and is

considered one of the most

ideal weather for growing

plans and flowers, said a

worker in H-9 nursery while

talking to PTV news chan-

nel. Colorful flowers adorn

nurseries and roads which

was attracting to plant lov-

ers towards themselves, said

a resident. "With the start

of this season demand for

indoor and outdoor plants.

flowers, bulbs has been tre

mendously increased.-APP

ty of lawns.

Govt raises BISP stipend by 25pc, says Kundi study at over 30 accredited Indonesian universities. Visitors appreciated the ISLAMABAD: Special Embassy's endeavour in Assistant on Poverty Alle-



ple are receiving the stipend through BISP. The Special Assistant said Benazir Income Support Porgramme has also started a dynamic survey to register more beneficiaries. He said dynamic survey offices have been established in all Tehsils of the country and people should visit them to get themselves registered.

The SAPM said the government is also providing subsidies on essential food items through Utility Stores to the beneficiaries of BISP aiming to extend the maximum relief to the vulnerable segment of society.Faisal Kundi said the present government is fully cognizant of the suffering of the people. Talking about the Dynamic Registry sur-

Leopard-car collisions indicate thriving population

ISLAMABAD: The northern areas particularly Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) amid steady increase in leopard encounters along highways in the tourism rich areas were recently hit by motorists leaving the wildcat either dead or injured on different occasions. The rising leopard-vehicle collisions along the highways of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in different districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province indicated a thriving population of the endangered Common Asian Leopard that demanded a national level community awareness to respect the habitats and ecosystems of wildlife while venturing into the scenic hilly areas of the country. Talking to APP, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Wildlife Department senior official said a Common Asian Leonard was found injured on Kaghan Highway that was actually hit by a fast moving car leaving it traumatised and unable to walk on her hind limbs.-APP





Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115 PIA Flight Info.....114 PIA Cargo......9280979 Railway Inquiry.....117 Railway Exchange9270831-5 WASA Rawalpindi..5555489 CAA.....9281092



Hospitals

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



Departments

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



Islamabad Metropolitan

Corporation.....9209224 PotoharTown......9209224 Rawal Town......5773343



also held representing panelists from practitionhave a strong economy, it ers. education experts. is very important to first and business community make Pakistan academia to discuss challenges and stronger.

'Modi regime

rendering IIOJK

ISLAMABAD: In Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kash-

mir, political experts and analysts have said that Narendra

Modi-led fascist Indian government is rendering the Kash-

miris homeless in their own homeland on one pretext or

another. According to Kashmir Media Service, the occupa-

tion authorities attached the ancestral houses of two Kash-

miris under draconian law Unlawful Activities (Prevention)

Act (UAPA) in Srinagar and Sopore and properties of 168

Kashmiris in Doda, Kishtwar, Rajouri and Poonch districts

of Jammu region. The political experts and analysts in their

interviews and statements in Srinagar said confiscation of

the properties of Kashmiri people is sheer political ven-

detta on part of the Modi regime. They said the Indian

authorities are confiscating the properties of Kashmiris to

punish them for their affiliation with the ongoing freedom

movement. Political experts and analysts pointed out that

the Indian troops are regularly destroying Kashmiris' houses

during violent military operations. "Killing of Kashmiris in

fake encounters and destruction of people's properties has

become a norm in occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Modi re-

gime is pursuing a policy not only to render the Kashmiris

homeless but also to deprive them of their identity," they said.

The political experts and analysts deplored that India is using

every brutal tactic to suppress the ongoing Kashmir freedom

movement. However, they said the Indian machinations will not

deter the people of Jammu and Kashmir from carrying on their

just cause. They added that the world must wake up to take

occasion

notice of Modi regime's brutal actions in IIOJK._APP

people homeless

es that entails offering accurate, comprehensive, and up-to-date information "Although opportunities we about

to tional universities

vey, Faisal Kundi said survey has been inaugurated in all sought information to districts across the country including Gilgit-Baltistan and enroll in the top-ranked Kashmir to identify and register more deserving benefi-Pakistani and internaciaries living below the poverty line.-DNA

Haj quota cut for locals, doubled for overseas pilgrims

ISLAMABAD: As it grapples with the US dollar shortage, the government decided in principle to increase the special Haj quota for overseas Pakistani nationals from 25 per cent to 50pc, as Finance Minister Ishaq Dar vowed that Haj operations of 2023 will not be affected by low forex reserves in the country. Though Mr Dar claimed that the pilgrimage will not be impacted despite the economic meltdown, there has been a 25pc reduction in Haj quota for citizens living in the country. The formal decisions to this effect was taken in a meeting of Finance Minister Ishaq Dar with Religious Affair Minister Abdul Shakoor. As per decisions, the overseas Pakistani will avail the 50pc quota in the government Haj scheme 2023 by doing payment in US dollars, in a bid to minimise outflows of dollars and minimise pressure on the already dwindling forex reserves of the country.

The Haj Sponsorship Scheme is only for overseas Pakistanis or their relatives. Pakistanis remitting foreign exchange from abroad to designated accounts will be able to benefit from this scheme. Moreover, Pakistani passport will be required to join the sponsorship scheme. For the remaining 50 quota, Mr Dar has held out an assurance to the religious minister to arrange foreign exchange for Haj despite the difficult economic situation, an official source told Dawn on Saturday. The remaining 50pc quota of the government Hai scheme will be distributed for public and private Haj schemes. Under the regular Haj scheme, applications will be collected in designated Pakistani banks. Under the government scheme, the designated expenditure per pilgrim will be Rs1.1 million to Rs1.2 million as per the current exchange rate. It would fluctuate with changes in the exchange rates. The Saudi Arabia government is reportedly also increasing the tax rate on Haj by 18pc to 20pc, which might also raise the cost for pilgrims.

According to the official, the decisions along with the Haj policy 2023 will be placed before the cabinet for formal approval next week.-APP

IRVI kicks off 'debunking of colonial history'

ISLAMABAD: Indus River Valley Institute (IRVI) has started debunking colonial history of the subcontinent that is home to the world's unique culture, traditions, heritage, arts and linguistics through exposure visits and architecture exploration. The IRVI has adopted a unique stratagem to transform a mundane activity into an exciting learning experience through travelling to archaic heritage sites, map reading, drawing, sitting in natural environment without any chair and layers with bare feet to redevelop a connection with the ancient buildings not merely a structure of stones and bricks rather the heritage of their ancestors lost after the advent of British colonial rule. The Institute has kicked off exposure visits and activities in the federal capital where public, experts, students, academia, media and history lovers have given an overwhelming response to the initiative. –**APP**

ICCI for capitalizing on export potential of GB 59 kite sellers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, said that Gilgit-Baltistan region can earn millions of dollars from the export of almonds, walnuts, apricots, cherries and many other dry fruits, as the annual production of almonds alone in the region is over 120,000 tons, so he demanded that the government should extend full cooperation to the private sector in promoting the export of dry fruits to potential markets. He expressed these views while talking to Gilgit-Baltistan Minister for IT and former FPCCI Vice President Mohammad Ali Quaid and Group Leader of

Gilgit-Baltistan Chamber of

Commerce Qurban Ali during

their visit to ICCI. Former

President ICCI and Secretary

General UBG Zafar Bakhta-

that the dry fruits are in demand around the world, so he emphasized that the economy

of the region can be improved Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawri said by capitalizing on this export potential of Gilgit-Baltistan. He assured that ICCI will provide all possible support in promot-

ing business and investment in Gilgit-Baltistan and solving the problems of the business community of the region. Gilgit-Baltistan Minister for

ushers in a new era of devel opment in the region. He said that many new opportunities can be created for the youth by promoting IT in the region and

many projects are under consideration for this purpose. He said that Gilgit-Baltistan has great potential to promote business activities of forestry, livestock and poultry farming and many other sectors, but there is a need to provide all possible facilities to the business community of the region in this regard. He also discussed many other matters of mutual interest with President ICCI. Gilgit-Baltistan Chamber of Commerce Group Leader Qurban Ali said that Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Gilgit-Baltistan Chamber of Commerce should focus on solving the problems of the business community of both regions through close cooperation, thereby improving business activities in both regions. Will be promoted.

arrested during crackdown RAWALPINDI, Mar 05 (AP-

P):Police on Sunday arrested 59 kite sellers and kite flyers during a crackdown here, informed a police spokesman. Rawal Town police arrested 12 kite flyers and recovered 108 kites and strings from them.

Similarly, Potohar Town police held 45 kite sellers and recovered 725 kites and strings from their possession. While, Saddar Division Police arrested 02 kite flyers and recovered kites and strings from them. Police have registered separate cases against all the accused. City Police Officer Syed Khalid Mahmood Hamdani said the ongoing crackdown against kite flyers and kite sellers will be intensified.-APP

IT and former Vice President FPCCI Muhammad Ali Quaid said that CPEC has increased the importance of Gilgit-Balti-

stan and this historic project

04

TWIN CITIES

Islamabad **POST** Monday, March 6, 2023

Briefs

4349 emergency calls received in Feb: Rescue 1122

RAWALPINDI: The District Emergency Officer, Engineer Kamran Rasheed reviewed the performance of all the stations during the last month of February with the aim of improving the delivery service.

He said that delivery of emergency services of the same quality would be continued without any discrimination.

Media Coordinator Rescue Rawalpindi released the data and said that Rescue 1122 received 4349 emergency calls in the last month and 3942 emergency victims were responded timely.

Some 1214 of these emergency calls were related to road traffic accidents. Similarly, 115 minor fire incidents and 482 special rescue operations were conducted whereas 05 incident of gas explosions and 02 building collapse incidents were reported, 2378 medical emergencies and 153 crime incidents were included in the report. He further said that most of the traffic accidents due to rash driving and one wheeling on motorcycles were reported.-APP

59 kite sellers arrested during crackdown

RAWALPIND: Police on Sunday arrested 59 kite sellers and kite flyers during a crackdown here, informed a police spokesman. Rawal Town police arrested 12 kite flyers and recovered 108 kites and strings from them. Similarly, Potohar Town police held 45 kite sellers and recovered 725 kites and strings from their possession. While, Saddar Division Police arrested 02 kite flyers and recovered kites and strings from them. Police have registered separate cases against all the accused.City Police Officer Syed Khalid Mahmood Hamdani said the ongoing crackdown against kite flyers and kite sellers will be intensified. He made it clear that strict action will be taken against those involved in illegal activity.-APP

Chairman PEMRA assures for Radio, TV license to ICCI

Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Vice President ICCI, said that many TV channels normally highlight negative aspects of Pakistan while the ICCI radio and TV channels would highlight the positive aspects of Pakistan to promote a soft image of the country

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari President, Is-lamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) leading a delegation met with Chairman PEMRA Muhammad Saleem Baig in his office and discussed with him the plan of starting an ICCI radio and TV channel. Wakil Khan, Director General Licensing, PEMRA was also present on the occasion.

Addressing the delegation, Chairman PEMRA Muhammad Saleem Baig appreciated the plan of ICCI to start its own radio and TV channel and assured that he would issue their license on priority basis after fulfilling the documentary requirements. He further assured that he will fully cooperate with ICCI for the completion of this important project as it will benefit the business community and and the economy. He said that ICCI should coordinate with foreign universities for providing quality business education to students to



meet the needs of businesses and industries. Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President. Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) briefed the Chairman PEMRA about the aims and objectives of starting radio and TV channels. He said that these

channels would educate the young generation about the importance of exports promotion, which the country desperately needs at this time. He said these channels would promote business role models for youth to motivate them to launch business start ups and create jobs for others. He said

that Pakistan's business and economic potential will be highlighted to attract local and foreign investment to Pakistan. He said that prominent business leaders and economists will be invited on radio and TV channels to discuss the key issues of economy and find their optimum solutions.

markets for Pakistan. He

He said that these channels will create better awareness in the business community about various business & economic issues to facilitate them in business development. He said that the channels will focus on expanding the tax base and identifying new exports

Book launching on March 08

ISLAMABAD: A book titled 'International Peacekeeping, perspectives from Pakistan' by Dr Tughral Yamin will be launched on March 8 which includes research work on international peacekeeping. The book will be launched

under the banner of the Inhoped that with the support of PEMRA, ICCI would stitute of Policy Studies in collaboration with the Nasoon be able to start its own tional University of Science and Technology. radio and TV channel.

Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar,

Vice President ICCI, said

that many TV channels nor-

mally highlight negative as-

pects of Pakistan while the

ICCI radio and TV channels

would highlight the positive

aspects of Pakistan to pro-

mote a soft image of the

country. He said self-made

business persons would be

promoted by highlighting

Zafar Bakhtavari, former

President ICCI, said that

the business community

is playing a key role in the

economic development of

the country, but is not given

the due respect in the soci-

ety, so the ICCI channels

will promote the respect

and dignity of the business

community. He said that

PEMRA should take action

against those TV channels

which are promoting po-

larization in the society as

Pakistan desperately needs

national unity and consen-

sus to get out of the current

their achievements.

According to Institute of Policy Studies, Prof. Dr. Tughral Yamin was a professional soldier before he opted for a second career in academia.

He served in the elite 7 Frontier Force Regiment and retired as a brigadier after 36 years of active service. He was awarded Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military) for his meritorious service.

The book is the first brief academic account on international peacekeeping focusing on Pakistan's perspective, a press release said. Its various chapters provide a detailed account of different aspects of the UN peacekeeping missions around the world. The book includes 14 chapters each covering several subjects by different authors related to the peacekeeping. The book also gave an insight into various areas of UN peacekeeping operations, including its historical background. "UN peacekeeping forms an important tenet of Pakistan's foreign policy. Pakistan began participating in UN peacekeeping operations in 1960. Since then the country has earned the distinction of being one of the most consistent and professional peacekeepers. Along the way, it has acquired the reputation of being one of the largest troops countries contributing among the UN member states," Institute of Policy Studies said on its website. Prof. Yamin has been involved in peacekeeping training and has authored several articles on the sub-

ject of peacekeeping. He had also written a book about UN peacekeeping operations in Somalia (1992-1995) in which his unit participated with distinction.-APP

Media

Pak-US counter terrorism dialogue to start next week countering the financing of of the US Department of selor of the US Agency for

ISLAMABAD: The United States (US) and Pakistan are set to hold a two-day Counterterrorism Dialogue starting from March 6 in Islamabad. The American delegation, led by Christopher Landberg, is expected to arrive in Pakistan for the talks. According to the spokesperson of the US Department of State, the inter-agency delegation will discuss a joint strategy to combat terrorism with their Pakistani counterparts.

"They will discuss the 'shared terrorist threats

DNA

partment said. The development comes against the backdrop of increasing terror incidents in Pakistan and Washington's assurance to help the country deal with the worsening law and order situation. Both countries share the

terrorism," the State De-

view that Afghan soil is being used for terrorism against Pakistan. The deteriorating relationship between Islamabad and Kabul is a result of the Taliban government's failure tocrack down on terrorists operating from Afghanistan. The talks come amid tensions between the two

State clarified that it was a problem for the Pakistani people to deal with and not the concern of the US. The United Nations had recently revealed in a report that the Taliban have failed to fight terrorists in Afghanistan. The talks between the US and Pakistan are expected to form a plan of action to deal with the threats of terrorism and to improve cooperation between both nations. During February, US Department of State Counse-

International Development (USAID) Clinton White and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Pakistan Elizabeth Horst, visited Islamabad February 16-17 to highlight the importance of our bilateral partnership and reaffirm our countries' shared goals," said the US Embassy in a statement. Chollet met with Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari to discuss strengthening the US-Pakistan bilateral partnership, including increased economic cooperation and Pakistan's lor Derek Chollet visited Pakistan and held a series of needs as it continues to remeetings with the civil and cover and rebuild following the floods. In a meeting with military leadership as a man-

Third power tariff hike in two months unacceptable

political.

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) on Sunday said the cost of electricity has been increased three times in two months due to the pressure of the IMF which is unacceptable. The burden on the masses has been increased by almost Rs450 billion while the burden on the wealthy and the elite is not being increased, it said. Instead of increasing the burden on the public, the theft of electricity should be stopped and bills should be collected from the users of free electricity to give some relief to the masses, said Saifuddin Sheikh, Executive Director of PEW. In a statement issued here today, he said that the Federal Cabinet has approved the imposition of an additional burden of 335 billion rupees on the consumers by fulfilling the third condition of the IMF. A surcharge of three rupees 23 paise per unit is being imposed on the bills. The increase will be applicable to domestic, agricultural, commercial, and K-electricity consumers. The government has already imposed a burden of Rs76 billion on electricity bills from March to June due to which the poor and the salaried class have become more vulnerable. However, he said, there is no intention on the part of author-

facing the two countries' and develop 'policy-oriented strategies' regarding cooperation in critical areas such as border security and

countries following an arrest warrant issued against Pakistani prime minister Imran Khan by a court in Pakistan. However, the spokesperson

ifestation of a positive trajectory of relations with the US."Chollet and a delegation of senior US government officials, including Coun-

Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir, Counselor Chollet discussed security cooperation and counter-terrorism.

ities to collect bills from those consuming thousands of units of free electricity. There is no serious to reduce the theft of billions of rupees in the power sector, he said, adding that stealing power is not limited to influential people. Consuming electricity without payment is illegal.- DNA

awareness about census stressed

ISLAMABAD: Spokesperson of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. Muhammad Sarwar Gondal on Sunday stressed for media awareness for the society about the first-ever digital population census 2023 in the country which would continue for one month to help make future development plans, creation of jobs, assembly seats and for keeping development funds for urban and rural areas. Around 121000 field enumerators have been deployed for the purpose, he said while talking to PTV news channel.

Muhammad Sarwar Gondal further said during this phase, the enumerators are visiting door-to-door with the latest tablet technology to collect household family data, adding that the aim of the census was to collect and collate details about property usage, types of businesses and the demographics of individuals, nationals and residents alike. "The government aims to conduct this census to plan better policies for the growth and development of the society", he added.

To a question, Gondal re-"There are already plied, many reservations over the sixth population census conducted in 2017, and now after a long gap of five years, we are again conducting a digital population census with the coordination of all provincial stakeholders."

He urged the citizens to actively participate in the census and their personal information would remain confidential. "All the nationals and residents, families and private sector companies should co-operate with the census teams, as it benefits everyone and contributes to advancing the development of the country's services." "Every piece of information provided to the census teams contributes to serving the community. whose members are an integral part of the country's comprehensive developmental policy plans," he men-tioned. He said, "The census teams, instead of recording complete details, will only collect UTN numbers, which will be provided to those citizens who will save their data digitally._-APP

IRSA releases 97,200 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Sunday released 97,200 cusecs water from various rim stations with an inflow of 54,000 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1449.30 feet and was 51.30 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam were recorded as 16,800 cusecs while outflow as 55,000 cusecs. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1106.30 feet, which was 56.30 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water were recorded 20,000 cusecs and 25,000 cusecs respectively. -APP

Dar acknowledges China's response to western media

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Ishaq Dar applauded the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China's response to the western media who raised a question regarding China's loans awarded to Pakistan. Pakistan is experiencing economic testing times and China has extended its financial support. Bloomberg asked Mao Ning, spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, China, at the Regular Press Conference on March 2, "Both Moody's and Fitch say Pakistan has \$7 billion of debt due by June, including those from China. So will the loans be rolled over?" The diplomat responded, "To give you our principled position, China and Pakistan are all-weather strategic and cooperative partners and iron brothers. The two sides have always shared weal and woe together and supported each other. China has been in close economic and financial cooperation with Pakistan and supported its efforts to maintain economic stability, improve lives and achieve self-generated development." She noted, "I need to point out that the radical financial and monetary policies of a certain developed country and their serious spillover effects are the primary cause of the financial difficulties experienced by Pakistan and many other developing countries. The Western-dominated commercial creditors and multilateral financial institutions account for the lion's share of developing countries' debt.



ISLAMABAD: Artisans busy in their work stall during a "Her Hunar" exhibition at Pak China Friendship Center.-DNA

Heavy bike show organised for special children

ISLAMABAD: The Heavy Bike Riders Group and a private restaurant on Sunday jointly organised a bikes show in order to promote healthy activities for differently abled special children. After the opening ceremony of the new restaurant in the federal capital, the heavy bike show was organized for the special children. The event titled "Healthy Activity for Special Children" was participated by social and business personalities including Head of Care for Special Persons Foundation Hina Hasnain, businessmen Abdul Hafeez Chaudhry, Mian Zohaib, Mian Shoaib, Sajjad Chaudhry, social activist Dr. Eshal, well-known heavy bike riders of Rawalpindi Omar Ashraf, Zeeshan Aftab, Abdul Rehman, Major Arsalan and Anjam Minhas participated on this occasion. Talking to the journalists, the participants said that it was the responsibility of all of us to pay attention to the care, education.-APP

Record hike in markup to shut local industry

NAZIR SIYAL

policies that require structur-KARACHI: The Federation of al reforms. He stressed need Pakistan Chambers of Comfor a revisit of government merce & Industry's Businesspolicies including the coordimen Panel (BMP) on Sunday nation exercise between the said that the country's econ-Ministry of Finance and SBP, omy has nosedived partly as no independent economist due to external factors but could support the economic majorly due to non-serious policies that are currently and poor domestic policy dein place. He said that rupee cisions and mismanagement has plummeted 6.66% against of the economic managers, the US dollar during the tradas the rupee saw yet anothing session on Thursday, as er dramatic fall in just over it settled at 285.09 against a month, plummeting 6.66% the greenback, a decline of while the key interest rate Rs18.98 in the inter-bank marhave been escalated by the ket. Earlier during the day, central bank by 300 basis the rupee had depreciated to points to the record historic 284.88 against the US dollar level of 20%, which will dein the inter-bank market bestroy the economy completefore posting a minor recovery ly. Asking the authorities to that proved short-lived. The include serious and progresrupee had plummeted against sive fiscal reforms in the IMF the US dollar on Wednesday program FPCCI former presas well but the fall was less ident and BMP Chairman severe as the currency settled Mian Anjum Nisar observed at 266.11 after a depreciation that it is very clear that IMF of 1.73% or Rs4.61 in the inprograms focus on stabilizater-bank market. The local

tion and crisis management currency had earlier suffered a dramatic fall when it went rather than growth-oriented from 230.89 to 255.43 on January 26 as the government loosened what were seen as administrative measures to keep the currency in check. In the open market, the rupee lost 14 rupees for buying and selling against USD, closing at 285.00 and 288.00, respectively. He said that reports around International Monetary Fund (IMF) are not positive, denting investor sentiment. He added volatility would remain until IMF program is revived and inflows are materialized. He said the delay in IMF funding is creating uncertainty in currency market and added that a number of payments related to imports have been made, leading to pressure on the rupee, as the move to a market-based currency exchange rate regime is one of a list of actions the IMF wants Pakistan to complete to clear its 9th review.

'Vaccination could reduce risk of long COVID'

ISLAMABAD: After studying thousands of people's symptoms post-COVID-19, researchers have found that getting vaccinated could potentially reduce the risk of long COVID. The new study - which looked at patients 3 months after their COV-ID-19 infections across pre-Delta, Delta, and Omicron variants - at first saw that long COVID symptoms were more common in the pre-Delta period than in the Delta and Omicron periods. But these differences across variants became less important when researchers adjusted for vaccination status, suggesting that the vaccine could play a key role in lessening the risk of long COVID and making its symptoms less severe. Another important finding of the study, from researchers at Chicago's Rush University Medical Center and the University of California San Francisco and published in the journal Clinical Infectious Diseases, was the sheer number of people post-COVID-19 who reported severe fatigue. "Mild fatigue is much different than severe, life-impacting fatigue," lead author Michael Gottlieb, MD, said at a media briefing Wednesday. "One in eight affected with COVID had severe, prolonged fatigue at 3 months. ... That speaks to the impact we're seeing as a society." The study included 2,402 COVID-positive and 821 COVID-negative people, with 463 falling into the pre-Delta category, 1,198 during Delta, and 741 during Omicron. The authors did not weigh how severe the patients' initial COVID infections were versus their prolonged symptoms, but Gottlieb told reporters that the group is currently working on supplemental survey research to see if there are any parallels between the two. Gottlieb said the research team is continuing to follow patients beyond the 3-month mark, to see what the paths of their symptoms look like. Some early data, he said, shows patients' symptoms going in both directions: Some people who have minimal symptoms at 3 months might convert to severe symptoms at 6 months, and others with severe symptoms at 3 months might be better at 6 months. All of these lingering questions, including how reinfection plays into long COVID, will be the focus of future research for Gottlieb's team.

We need to understand long COVID better, and we need to define it better,' Gottlieb said. "Long COVID isn't a singular concept, there are different phenoypes and versions of it. As researchers, public health leaders, and as a society, we need to better understand what people are going through."-Online

Cruel schemes to relocate refugees ast weekend, at least 67 people drowned when a wooden boat carrying

about 150 people ran into trouble on rocks off the coast of Calabria, Italy. There were 20 children, including a newborn baby, among the dead. It is an appalling reminder of the risks some people are willing to take to flee desperate circumstances - often including conflict and torture - in their home countries. This movement of people across borders is age old and governments have never been able to fully control it despite developments in border enforcement and technology. It is driven primarily by patterns of conflict and economic deprivation and will increasingly be shaped by the climate crisis. Yet Europe has shirked its legal and ethical responsibilities to the world's refugees. And perhaps nowhere is this more true than in Britain. The numbers of people crossing the Channel in dangerous boats to seek asylum in the UK have increased significantly in recent years: from 9,000 in 2020 to 46,000 last year. But the number of asylum applications relative to population size in the UK remains well below the average for the EU at nine asylum applications for every 100,000 people. The UK offered asylum or protection to 15,700 people in the year ending June 2022; which amounts to just 24 people per parliamentary constituency.

The number of people crossing the Channel should therefore be understood primarily in terms of the risks to their own safety rather than as any existential risk to the UK. But so much of the government's rhetoric in recent years has sought to brand them as bogus or illegitimate; Priti Patel when home secretary wrongly claimed that 70% of people coming to the UK in small boats are not genuine asylum seekers. In fact, the Refugee Council has estimated that based on the nationality data of people arriving on small boats, at least 60% would be granted asylum.

The UK's own international ambassador for human rights has criticised Rwanda's human rights records The government's approach has been to focus on policies that might discourage people from making the crossing, either by making it more dangerous still or through deporting asylum seekers to have their claims processed offshore thousands of miles away. Last year, it announced it had struck a financial deal for a five-year trial to deport asylum seekers to Rwanda, where they will be expected to claim asylum instead. The biggest issues in the asylum system remain the huge delays it takes to process people's claims - a staggering 83% of asylum applications made since 2018 are still awaiting a decision - and the fact that sometimes highly skilled asylum seekers are forced to subsist on state handouts of less than £6.50 a day for the years they spend in limbo, instead of being allowed to work and pay taxes. That is where the government should be focusing its efforts instead of dreaming up unethical schemes that are highly unlikely to significantly reduce the number of people applying for asylum here in the UK.

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US to blame for broken communication

ne week after US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said the United States would resume economic talks with China "at an appropriate time", US Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo told the media that she is considering a trip to China this year. US President Joe Biden is "looking to engage with China in all ways that are good for America, commercially, diplomatically – that communication is intended to de-escalate. That's where we want to be in our relationship with China – not escalating", Raimondo said on Thursday. There was no response from China to Yellen's remark, and Raimondo's statement had not yet met with a reply as of Sunday. Washington should have anticipated that, given the series of anti-China moves it took last week – four bills supporting "Taiwan independence" were passed on Tuesday, a potential arms deal worth \$619 million to the Chinese island was approved on Wednesday, and another 28 Chinese entities were blacklisted on Thursday, exactly the same day the US commerce chief said she hopes to de-escalate trade tensions with China.

A problem both Yellen and Raimondo should realize is that although their respective departments or sectors might have a practical need to mend ties with China, the overall political system of the US, including the legislature, government and military, is doing the opposite, leaving no stone unturned to contain China, feeling no qualms about shaking the foundation of Sino-US relations and poisoning the atmosphere for bilateral communications.

It is the US side that should be held accountable for blocking exchanges between the two sides. China will never engage in any talks that are not based on equality and mutual respect.

That Sino-US trade reached a record high of more than \$690 billion, according to US statistics, shows the strong resilience of the trade relations of the two sides that originates from their highly complementary economic structure and the mutually beneficial nature of China-US economic and trade cooperation. However, the China-bashers see that the other way, viewing the US reliance on China as a threat to US security, with China being seen as a country with both the ability and will to overturn the international order dominated by the US. That strategic misjudgment is a deliberate distortion aimed at disguising the nature of the US' strategy to contain China, whose objective is to protect the US' hegemony.

That the US was not mentioned at all in the Government Work Report delivered to the country's top legislature during its annual gathering in Beijing on Sunday shows Beijing's prudence, objectivity and foresight in dealing with relations with the US despite the latter's continuous reckless provocations. If it really wants meaningful communication with Beijing, Washington first needs to show that it too upholds the fundamental principles of a rules-based international order, namely multilateralism, equality, fairness and justice.

Again, the lioness is roaring

Qamar Bashir



Intriguingly, despite Imran Khan's continued relevance, she outmaneuvered him through shrewd political management, depriving him of power from the center and, later, Punjab and KP provinces, leaving him vulnerable and exposed Ometimes in 2016 Ms. Maryam summoned a team led by the Secretary of the Ministry of Information, Mr. Imran Gardezi, of which I was a member to investigate why the media does not present the government's perspective on visae-vis establishment. This was the first time I met Ms. Maryam, who used to oversee the government's Social Media Cell at the time. I found Ms. Maryam Nawaz a highly intelligent, aggressive, and resolute individual who was extremely goal-oriented, never willing to accept defeat, and able to remain resolute in the face of adversity. However, she would face formidable obstacles in the future that would test her leadership abilities. The rift between the government and the establishment which started in 2014 during sit-ins was heightened in 2016. During various high-level meetings, one could sense the ministers' inability to carry out their responsibilities due to the establishment's immense pressure and weight. Perhaps the establishment was preparing to launch another experiment with the goal of altering the political landscape of the country by destroying the two-party ecosystem for good. The tension gave birth to dawn leak in 2017 which solidified the establishment's grip on the civilian affairs and leveled the ground for further chastising of Mr. Nawaz Sharif. Maryam defended the Dawn leaks by declaring it factually correct and asserting that it was the government's responsibility to take steps to address the concerns raised in the article. Further elaborating in an interview, she stated that it was the government's job to "remove misperceptions" and "correct the course" of the country's foreign policy. The government being wounded by the dawn leaks incentivized the establishment to solidify its grip on civilian matters. In connivance with with judiciary, it finally removed Mr. Sharif from power by a highly controversial decision of the Supreme Court made by an utterly biased judge who declared Nawaz Sharif guilty of violating Article 62 and 63 of the Constitution of Pakistan on account of non-disclosure of his unreported sources of income and whimsically declared him dishonest and untrustworthy.

Maryam Nawaz, who was recognised as one of the BBC's 100 Women in December 2017 and by The New York Times the 11 Powerful Women Around the World for the year 2017, stood by her father after his unceremonious and unjust ouster from power, but more against the injustice and inappropriateness of the operation against his government, which perhaps was a precursor to the launch of Imran Khan in the upcoming elections. Ms. Maryium, who has become the only crowd-puller not only in the PML but out of all opposition parties put together, took center stage during her countrywide campaign against the injustice meted out to her father and roared like a lioness. She took the establishment by the horns, accused the military of attempting to undermine the democratic process and demanded an independent investigation into the matter, unfazed by the potential repercussions. But the lioness's struggle was just beginning, as she was destined to face formidable obstacles, intimidation, and harassment, which however, did not deter her from her protracted political struggle. Despite imminent threat to her life, imprisonment, or harass ment, Maryam fought the military tooth and nail, relying on her indomitable spirit, proven grit, and courage. Her tenacity was reflected in her words when once she was asked by a reporter if she was afraid of imprisonment and threats to her life, to which she replied, "Go and threaten someone else; I am not afraid of any cruelty, intimidation, or threats to my imprisonment or life." She however seemed unaware of what the future held for her. During her 2017 campaign, Maryam Nawaz Sharif advocated eloquently for civilian supremacy in the country, arguing that the military should stay out of politics, economics, and foreign affairs and stop monopolizing key economic sectors. She also advocated for the protection of civil liberties in Pakistan and spoke out against censorship and media restrictions, which she believes are used by the establishment to repress dissent and restrict free speech. Her stance caused unending tensions between her family and the military establishment, but she persisted in pursuing her cause vehemently and without relent. But, she was now faced with another formidable rival, Mr. Imran Khan, who assumed power in 2018, allegedly with the establishment's support. In her various public discourses, she claimed that Imran's government was illegitimately chosen as a result of rigged and engineered elections. She criticized Imran Khan for his failures on the economic front, mismanagement of the economy, and signing a highly toxic agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which, in her view, had harmed the nation's sovereignty and the common people. She objected to the government's poor human rights record, mismanagement of the COVID-19 pandemic, usurpation of the country's civil liberties, corruption and authoritarianism. She also confronted the government over its failure to address the country's security challenges and its clandestine deals with militant groups operating in the country, arguing that these deals had put the country's security and the lives and safety of its citizens in grave danger. Her fears were later confirmed, as the entire country now faces imminent terrorist attacks due to a poorly conceived and secretive agreement between the then-establishment and the Taliban, who have taken refuge in Afghanistan. She roared like a fearless lioness at numerous rallies, demonstrations, and protests. Her fiery rhetoric demanded the removal of the government and the restoration of democracy. Her public speeches helped galvanize support for PML (N) and contributed significantly to the erosion of public support for Imran Khan, but they also presented her with numerous challenges. As in 1999, when she was arrested and subjected to untold miseries after Nawaz Sharif's government was overthrown in a military coup led by General Pervez Musharraf, Maryam Nawaz and her father, former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, she was again imprisoned in July 2018 for her convictions in a frivolous and baseless corruption charges. She spent weeks in the National Accountability Bureau's lockups, and months in Kot Lakhpat and Adiala Jails. She was released on bail in September 2018, arrested again in March 2019, and then released on bail once more in November 2019. During her incarceration in Adiala Jail she was kept under substandard living conditions, overcrowded places lacking adequate sanitation facilities, hygienic food and water. She did not receive adequate medical care and her complaint of chest pains was never responded to. Her room was raided by NAB operatives several times at odd hours of night and she was subjected to humiliating body search and search of her meager belongings. She was permitted only to meet with her family and attorneys for brief periods and under close supervision and their conversations were monitored. Her passport was confiscated and her name was placed on the exit control list. In April 2022, her name was finally removed from the Exit Control list after being re-arrested by NAB on corruption charges in 2020 and again released on bail. However, her ordeal appeared never-ending, and her rhetoric against military dominance and in support of civilian supremacy continued to gain traction, escalating the friction, heat, and difficulties; but, she was perhaps now able to handle challenges of any size. The biggest challenge confronted to her was to build a strong opposition against the incumbent government of Imran Khan which was a yet another test of her leadership qualities. Her leadership qualities were demonstrated while spearheading the campaign against Imran Khan's rule when she successfully persuaded the leaders of all political parties in opposition to unite against the incumbent administration. She actively campaigned for the alliance and finally succeeded in forging the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM). In addition, she successfully mobilised the PML-supporters to attend PDM's rallies and public meetings as a proven crowd-puller. She emerged as one of the most vocal leaders of the PDM and was instrumental in coordinating the activities of the alliance. She mastered the PDM's political agenda, and her fiery and well-prepared speeches helped galvanize opposition and garner public support for the PDM's cause. It is also interesting to note that the next generation of PML(N) and PPP in action both Maryam and Bilawal led from the front and successfully amassed substantial political capital which ultimately culminated in defeating Imran Khan in the National Assembly. They were also the impetus for Imran Khan's removal from power through democratic means and dissuaded the establishment from considering undemocratic intervention. After successfully achieving the objective of installing a coalition government headed by Mr. Shahbaz Sharif, Maryam Nawaz was once again faced with the daunting task of defending the newly installed government which was plagued at the very beginning with formidable financial, economic, political, and constitutional crises. On the party front, she had to deal with rift between Mr. Ishaq Dar and Mufta Islameel, schism of Mr. Khakan Abbasi who obliquely expressed his displeasure with party affairs and its narrative against extremely delicate national matters. Moreover, by dint of her merit, she emerged as the only member of the PDM with a strong connec-

tion to the public and her ability to defend government policies and actions, which was without a doubt a daunting task. She has to defend his father's narrative against Mr. Bajwa, but also her party's position for doling out, out-of-proportion share in the government to PPP, albeit with minimal accountability. She must defend the government against hyperinflation and rising prices of common man necessities, but she must do so with extreme caution. She had to pursue her narrative while avoiding a head-on collision with the establishment. She had to construct a narrative against the judiciary for its role in the unjustifiable exit of Nawaz Sharif from politics, his conviction on flimsy grounds, but without crossing the red line, and most importantly, she had to erect a roadblock against the rising popularity of Mr. Imran Khan, who very successfully used inflation as a magic wand to gain popularity waves.

Intriguingly, despite Imran Khan's continued relevance, she outmaneuvered him through shrewd political management, depriving him of power from the center and, later, Punjab and KP provinces, leaving him vulnerable and exposed. But, unfortunately, she had to pause and leave for London to undertake long delayed life threatening throat surgery but only to return with increased vitality, vigor, and energy but with added challenges and threats to handle. Following her return from a four-month stay in London, she resumed her roaring. In her first public meeting upon her arrival in late January-2023 and later while addressing a packed public meeting in Saiwal in late February, she highlighted the issue of Nawaz Sharif's disqualification as a rallying point and demanded the removal of the titles of Godfa ther and Cicilian mafia pinned on him by the judiciary without reason, justification, or qualification and demanded reversal of his conviction as a prerequisite for holding upcoming elections. She denounced the partisan role of the judiciary and the remnants of former ISI chief General Faiz Hameed for their unwavering support of Imran Khan and vowed to sever those shoulders if offered to Imran Khan in the future as a free ride to victory. She criticised the "troika" of Gen. Faiz Hamid, Baba Rehmatay, and former chief justice Khosa for their role in granting unlawful and inappropriate concessions to Imran Khan. By doing so, she seemed to have attracted the ire of the judiciary and powerful establishment, which appeared to be waiting for the right moment to reclaim complete control over civilian matters but she seemed unintimidated and fearless of the possible consequences It appeared that Ms. Maryam's struggle against tyranny and for civilian supremacy is unending. She is opposed by Mr. Imran Khan, the Judiciary, and the establishment. She is determined to bring her father back to the country at any cost. Currently, the PDM is still unified due to their vested interests. They are riding for free on PML(N), which is bearing the brunt of the nation's current financial and economic situation. Following the announcement of elections, PDM's future is uncertain. Currently, she is the one fighting on multiple fronts and advancing the PML(N) narrative, which is based on four main pillars: the honourable and fully exonerated return of Mr. Nawaz Sharif to lead the party in the next general election, eroding the public support of Imran Khan, who is currently riding a popularity wave, limiting the establishment, judiciary and and all other institutions to their constitutional role and regaining lost public support to win the upcoming general elections. She seemed confident and determined in pursuit of her set objectives, but what if she doesn't succeed?.

-The writer is the Press Secretary to the President(Rtd) And Former Press Minister at Embassy of Pakistan to France

Bahrain prosecutes religious reformers: traditionalists fight back

James Dorsey

In the code, expressions that mock Bahrain's "recognized religious texts" are illegal. By venturing into religious matters, Al-Tajdeed violated its license as a cultural group, the authorities claim. In a convoluted 51-page response to the prosecutor's charges, the group defended its call for religious reform. Human Rights Watch said the men were being tried for "merely exercising their right to free expression and belief"

ulf autocrats are trying to squash calls for reform of Islamic law with three Bahraini men on trial. Redha Rajab, his son Mohamed Rajab, and researcher Jalal al-Qassab are members of the Al-Tajdeed Society, which encourages discussion and questioning of Islamic law. They're accused of violating articles 309 and 310 of the Bahraini penal code, says Bahrain's cybercrime prosecutor.

In the code, expressions that mock Bahrain's "recognized religious texts" are illegal. By venturing into religious matters, Al-Tajdeed violated its license as a cultural group, the authorities claim. In a convoluted 51-page response to the prosecutor's charges, the group defended its call for religious reform. Human Rights Watch said the men were being tried for "merely exercising their right to free expression and belief." European diplomats described the proceedings as "religious persecution." A Bahraini analyst suggested Western embassies and non-Bahraini civil society groups supported Al-Tajdeed. Human Rights Watch pointed out that the trial kicked off on the eve of a Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly (IPU) meeting in Bahrain on "Promoting peaceful coexistence and inclusive societies: Fighting intolerance." The assembly groups members of 178 parliaments from across the globe. "The Al-Tajdeed Society has been the target of widespread hate speech and incitement from powerful clergymen in the country, and the government has turned a blind eye," a source told the human rights group. Al-Tajdeed's leader Redha Rajab is the brother of Najeeb Rajab, a member of Human Rights Watch's Middle East and North Africa Division. As a human rights activist, Najeeb Rajab has been in and out of prison. Last month, Mr. Naieeb tweeted that "Islamic reformists in...Bahrain (were) threatened by some extreme clerics." He included an audio clip of one cleric demanding death for the defendants. Mr. Najeeb argued that "even though reforms (are a) very difficult and sensitive mission, it has become a necessity for our great Islam and our great nation!'

Nader Rajab, a third brother, posted clips of other clerics. A Bahraini Shiite religious scholar quoted his Iranian counterparts as accusing the defendants of apostasy. According to another cleric, they shouldn't have any "sanctity" of life because they're heretics. A powerful Indonesian civil society movement, Nahdlatul Ulama, was calling for and enacting changes to Islamic jurisprudence as the three men's trial began, putting state-aligned Muslim clergy on the spot, especially in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. In 2019, 20,000 Nahdlatul Ulama scholars issued a fatwa, or religious opinion, removing the concept of kafir or infidel from Islamic law. They replaced it with the notion of citizens. At an international conference of Islamic scholars last month, the group called for replacing the concept of a caliphate with the notion of nation-states and anchoring the United Nations in Islamic law. What's at stake in what amounts to a battle for Islam's soul is who defines moderate Islam, what constitutes a moderate interpretation, and how it's defined. This is a competition between Nahdlatul Ulama's Humanitarian Islam, which advocates pluralism and embraces the UN Declaration of Human Rights with no ambiguity, and Gulf states' autocratic interpretations of the faith that are socially liberal, politically repressive, demand absolute obedience to the ruler, and involve social, economic and political but no change in Islamic jurisprudence. Nahdlatul Ulama isn't a pushover. Approximately 90 million people follow it. It has a paramilitary militia of 5 million people, 18,000 religious seminaries, 44 universities, tens of thousands of Muslim scholars who have their own authority and are not beholden to Middle Eastern religious institutions, and a political party in the coalition government of Indonesian President Joko Widodo. In advance of this year's summit under India's chairmanship of the Group of 20 that brings together leaders of the world's largest economies. Nahdlatul Ulama is competing with Saudi Arabia's Muslim World League and UAE funded Muslim clerics , along with an American interfaith group supported by the Emirates, to shape this year's G20 religion engagement track. Considering Bahrain is closely tied to Saudi Arabia and the UAE, well-placed Bahraini sources said the trial against the three Al-Tajdeed members was a way to deter calls for reform of religious jurisprudence as much as it was

a an effort by the Sunni Muslim Bahraini government to gain goodwill with traditionalists in the island's majority Shia Muslim community. "The logic is that Al-Tajdeed went too far. The opposition to questioning religious principles unites Sunnis and Shiites," said a Bahraini analyst.

Al-Tajdeed has existed in various guises for several decades, but is haunted by its controversial roots .Abdul-Wahab Basri, the group's founder, became a mystic in prison. He convinced fellow inmates he could interpret dreams, according to Bahraini sources. In addition, Mr. Basri claimed he possessed secret powers that let him communicate with the hidden imam. Twelver Shiites believe Muhammad al-Mahdi, the 12th imam in Prophet Mohammed's succession, is in occultation until God lets him reappear. Mr. Basri's alleged psychic abilities have sparked allegations that Al-Tajdeed is a cult. A public spat involving the dominant Rajab family complicates Al-Tajdeed's credibility. An Al-Tajdeed former member, nephew of the Rajab brothers, and trauma and orthopedics specialist for Britain's National Health Service, Ali Rajab, alleges he fled from a group he called a "doomsday cult." Mr. Basri described himself as the "Doorway to the Lord," Ali Rajab said. He said the psychic claimed to deliver messages from the messiah. Mr. Rajab said, "We, as cult members, were told to wait for orders to fight for world justice." In support of his three brothers. Ali Rajabs's father, Nayef, said his son should report to the police his allegations of having been psychologically tortured while others allegedly were "physically assaulted, captured, and put under house arrest

A Bahraini who knows the Rajabs said, "It's a nasty family feud."

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WORLD / SPORTS

Islamabad **POST** Monday, March 06, 2023

Imran evades

arrest.wants 'public trial'

FROM PAGE 01

Briefs Army lifts Combaxx-Roshan Khan Team Squash Title

Jahangir Khan lauded the zeal shown by players during the entire event and advised them to focus on their game and sheer talent so that they can shine as world-class players to regain lost glories in squash for country once again

"Dirty Harry" were still in power and that another plan to assassinate him had been hatched. "I went to Lahore and Islamabad high court and there was no security." he claimed while adding that his legal team was to pen a letter to the chief justice of Pakistan to take notice of the matter. "It seems as though the ones who should be responsible to provide safety are the real danger," he said as he amped up his rhetoric against Shehbaz, Sanaullah and "Dirty Harry" in particular. Terming the cases against him as "comical" Imran also called for a public trial of his Toshakhana case. "Your and your children's future is very bleak," he said taking note of the state of the country's economy as well as the condition of rule of law. Imran also thanked all 'Jail Bharo' movement participants for having made him proud.

PEMRA bans coverage of Imran Khan

FROM PAGE 01

allegations, hateful, slanderous and unwarranted statement" against state institutions and officers were in sheer violation of Article 19 of the Constitution of Pakistan and a judgment of Supreme Court of Pakistan (SC) passed in Suo Moto Case. The authority further said that after analysing the content of Imran's speech, it has been observed that the content was aired live by the licensees without effective time delay mechanism which is the violation provisions of Pemra laws and in disobedience of judgements passed by the honourable courts.

"The competent authority i.e. Chairman PEMRA in view of the above mentioned background and reasons, in exercise of delegated powers of the Authority vested in Section 27(a) of the PEMRA Ordinance 2002 as amended by PEMRA (Amendment) Act 2007, hereby prohibits



AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: In a superb display of talent, Army players, were in command all through the event, and won both Men

shan Khan National Team Squash Championship organized by Pakistan Navy in collaboration with Combaxx Sports at Pakistan Navy Roshan Khan Jahangir Khan Squash Complex Karachi.

and emerged as ultimate runners-up. The following are the results of the fi-

nals, both men's and women's and other position matches played on the fifth

and final day of the tournament.

In Men's Final, Army beat Wapda 2-1. Farhan Mehboob Lost to Hamza Khan 9-11, 4-11, 6-11 (23 mins) while wap-da's Nasir Iqbal Beat Sadam Ul Haq 11-1, 11-8, 11-5 (21 mins), and Noor Zaman Lost to Army's Ashab Irfan 3-11, 2-11, 7-11 (20 mins).

In the Women's Final, Army thumped WAPDA 2-0. Sammar Anjum Lost to Amna Malik 11-4, 10-12, 9-11, 6-11 (34 mins) while Noor Ul Ain Lost to Marium Malik 6-11, 13-11, 5-11, 8-11 (34 mins). Women's Final Standing:

Squash Legend and former World No. 1 Jahangir Khan was the Chief Guest at the medals ceremony and gave trophies and other individual prizes while Omar Saeed. CEO Combaxx Sports, Adnan Asad, President SSA, Lt Cdr Ramatullah, Media Advisor Pakistan Olympic Association Asif Azeem, General Manager Combaxx Sports Zubair Macha, Tournament referee Naveed Alam, and Tournament director Tahir Jameel Khanzada were also present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, Jahangir Khan lauded the zeal shown by players during the entire event and advised them to focus on their game and sheer talent so that they can shine as world-class players to regain lost glories in squash for the country once again.

MONDAY 07:00 PM MARCH 06, 2023 Pindi Club Ground. Rawalpindi

PSL 8th Edition

Fazal wants

elections delaved

FROM PAGE 01 "Law and order situation in the country is not suitable for elections." The general elections in Punjab are scheduled for April 30, while the date for the polls in KP is yet to be announced as Governor Ghulam Ali has not made a decision yet. In light of the Supreme

Court's split ruling earlier this week, President ArifAlvi announced the date for Punjab polls after consulting the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). But the KP governor is yet to "open" the letter that the ECP has sent to his office. MaulanaFazl also held Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)-led government responsible for the prevailing economic crisis and ruining the country's economy.

PM Shehbaz appreciates Qatar's...

FROM PAGE 01

"highly appreciated" the contribution by Pakistani workers in the development of Qatar and "particularly praised the role played by the Pakistani security personnel towards successful hosting of the FIFA World Cup 2022 in Doha".

During the meeting, PM Shehbaz appreciated Qatar's continued support for Pakistan's development initiatives and highlighted the enormous potential for enhanced cooperation between the two countries. "He also reiterated Pakistan's commitment to further strengthening bilateral ties with Qatar and discussed ways and means to enhance collaboration in the areas of bilateral investment, trade, and export of skilled and highly skilled manpower from Pakistan," the PMO said.

Super Kharala Cricket Club win Jhelum Cricket League Jhelum, which was played

KAMRAN GUJJAR

JHELUM: The final match of Jhelum Cricket League (JCL) organized by Jhelum Forum was played at Zameer Jafri Cricket Stadium Awan Cricket Club made

only 165 runs. The Super between the Super Awan Kharala Cricket Club won Cricket Club and Super the tournament defeat-Kharala Cricket Club. ed by defeating the final match. Ehtisham Khata While chasing the 205 runs made by Super Kharafrom Super Kharala Crickla Cricket Club Super et Club played spectacular innings of 60 runs. On this

occasion, Ilyas Gondal, Dr. Asmat Javed, Chaudhry Anwar Yaqoob, Jamil Bhatti, Ghulam Rasool, Khubeb Butt congratulated the players and the organisers and distributed prizes among the players.



Mbappe targets 'more history' at PSG

PARIS: Kylian Mbappe became Paris Saint-Germain's all-time top scorer with his 201st goal for the club as the Ligue 1 leaders warmed up for their crunch trip to Bayern Munich with a 4-2 win over Nantes on Saturday. The France superstar had equalled Edinson Cavani's previous record mark of 200 goals with a brace in last week's win at Marseille and went one better by netting in stoppage time at the Parc des Princes. PSG had earlier squandered a two-goal lead, with Lionel Messi putting them ahead and a Jaouen Hadjam own goal making it 2-0 inside 17 minutes before Nantes fought back to draw level.

Ludovic Blas pulled one back for the visitors and Ignatius Ganago equalised, but Mbappe set up Danilo Pereira to put PSG back in front on the hour mark and then claimed his record-breaking goal late on. Mbappe reached the record in iust 247 appearances since signing from Monaco aged 18 in 2017. Uruguay star Cavani needed 298 games, and seven years, to establish the previous record in 2020.

The 24-year-old Mbappe was handed a trophy by the club after the game to mark his record in an on-field presentation. "I play to make history and I have always said I wanted istory in France, in the capital of my country, in my city, and I am doing that. It's magnificent, but there is still a lot to be done," Mbappe, who finished the game as captain, told broadcaster Canal Plus. "For me, as a native Parisian, this is special. If someone had said to me I would score the goal to beat the record while wearing the captain's armband, I would not have believed it." The result saw PSG open up a lead of 11 points at the top of Ligue 1 before the Qatar-owned club go to Bayern for the second leg of their Champions League last-16 tie on Wednesday. PSG trail 1-0 from the first leg against the Bavarians and failure to progress to the quarter-finals in Europe would put a major dampener on the end of their season. Injured Moroccan star Achraf Hakimi watched from the stands at the Parc des Princes a day after he was charged with rape following accusations made by a 24-year-old woman. - DNA

broadcast of live speech of Imran Khan on all satellite TV channels with immediate effect," it added.

Bilawal threatens to leave...

FROM PAGE 01 quarters that the time allotted for the exercise was too short. Addressing a function in Karachi, FM Bilawal said that judging from the feedback received so far, the PPP and many citizens from other provinces had reservations about the exercise. "I got to know that a digital census is under way when it was extended. If this is a census where you have to enter your information yourself on the internet and if I as a federal minister did not know, then it means the people must not know [about it] either."

ECP to issue schedule...

FROM PAGE 01 Interior and Ministry of Finance for security and funds for the general elections in the province. The development comes a day after President Alvi announced April 30 as the date for elections in Punjab. "President Dr Arif Alvi has announced to hold general elections of Punjab Assembly on April 30, Sunday," tweeted the President's office. "The decision was made by the president after considering the dates proposed by the Election Commission of Pakistan," it added.

Poor nations'...

FROM PAGE 01 poverty and battle climate change. Central African Republic's president told the UN Least Developed Countries meeting in Doha that his resource-rich but impoverished nation was being "looted" by "Western powers". But the opening day of general debate at the once-in-a-decade summi saw no major announcement of desperately needed cash - apart from \$60 million that host Qatar said it would give to United Nations programmes.

PM to address...

FROM PAGE 01 countries, and helping them to progress on the road to prosperity. PM Shehbaz, who is participating in the moot on the invitation of Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim ibn Hamad Al Thani, said that the LDCs had been badly affected by climate change, post-pandemic and geo-strategic disruption in food and energy supply chains.

"These global events have left them vulnerable. LDCs will be better served by putting welfare of people at the center of public policy," the premier wrote on Twitter. PM Shehbaz Sharif will address the summit today (Monday). He will hold bilateral meetings with participating leaders and heads of delegation on the sidelines of the conference.

PML-N slams...

FROM PAGE 01

While talking to the media in Faisalabad, the federal minister maintained that the PTI chief is getting arrested on the court's order and the government is not taking the initiative. Sana also said that "conducting elections is the job of the Election Commission of Pakistan [ECP] but the current situation is in front of everyone". He furthered that "such elections should be held after which the country moves towards improvement." Sana claimed that "Imran's story of an assassination attack on him is based on lies, he does not have anything else to say." The comments by the PDM leaders come as Islamabad police travelled to Lahore earlier in the day to arrest the PTI chief in relation to arrants issued in the Toshakhana (gift repository) case against him.

Fiorentina deny Milan second spot

MILAN: AC Milan missed the chance to go second in Serie A on Saturday after falling to a 2-1 defeat at Fiorentina, ending a recent upturn in form for the reigning champions. Nicolas Gonzalez's penalty three minutes after the break and a late Luka Jovic header earned Fiorentina the three points and ended Milan's four-match winning streak ahead of their Champions League showdown at Tottenham on Wednesday. Theo Hernandez netted in stoppage time for Milan who are fourth, level on 47 points with local rivals Inter. Stefano Pioli's side, without suspended star attacker Rafael Leao, are one behind Lazio after their stunning win at runaway leaders Napoli on Friday moved the capital club second. "Fiorentina were better than us today, but not because our minds were on Tottenham," said Pioli to Sky. "That will be a different match, it's a knockout game and tonight's performance won't affect us, just as Tottenham won't be affected by their two consecutive defeats." Fiorentina meanwhile stay 12th, level on 31 points with Torino, after a win which came on the fifth anniversary of former Viola captain Davide Astori's death. Astori died in his sleep in a hotel room on this day in 2018, aged just 31, when Pioli was in charge at Fiorentina. - Agencies

Azerbaijan struggles to revive life in war-hit cities

ISLAMABAD: The government of Azerbaijan is currently carrying out the gigantic task of bringing life back to the war-hit areas of Nagorno-Karabakh by rebuilding civic facilities, worship and recreational places as well as water reservoirs.

The representatives of foreign media visiting Azerbaijan to attend a summit of Non-Aligned Movement's Contact Group held in Baku on March 2, were escorted to different war-ravaged areas which had been reclaimed by Azerbaijan from Armenia following a three-decade war.

The Azeri government is carrying out rehabilitation work in Shush city, once a hill resort and cultural centre which now gave a deserted

look owing to the massive destruction during the war period. During a visit to the site, the Azeri authorities told the media that rehabilitation work was going to restore a 150-year-old Gazanchi Church and two historical mosques.

The media men were also given a guided tour of the newly constructed Fuzuli International Airport which was built within eight months considering the urgent need for relief supplies as well as the influx of foreign delegates. Two more airports were also in the pipeline in the Karabakh region. The heavy machinery was engaged in the restoration of a huge water reservoir in Fuzuli which used to be a main source of irriga-

tion to the area, famous for its agricultural products. A massive tree plantation was also underway in the region to revive its green look as well as economic activity.

On one side, there were the remains of the erstwhile city centre of Fuzuli, while across the road, the ongoing construction of around 1,000 residential apartments was emerging as a ray of hope for the displaced population which was eagerly awaiting return to their native areas. Amidst all massive reconstruction activities, the major challenge of clearing the region of around 1 million landmines still existed as the government was diverting a major chunk of its funding for the purpose. - APP

Bayern's season 'judged against PSG': Nagelsmann

Bayern are currently on a streak of 10 consecutive Bundesliga titles but their success means results in Europe hold major significance in the Bavarian capital. Speaking with German broadcaster Sky, Nagelsmann explained what he told the team when he locked the dressing room doors after victory

DNA

BERLIN: Julian Nagelsmann believes Bayern Munich's season will be judged on their performance at home against Paris Saint-Germain in Wednesday's last 16 Champions League clash. Speaking after his side returned to the Bundesliga summit with a 2-1 win at Stuttgart, Nagelsmann said he hoped the "manner and style" of the game would matter more than the result.

"For me, it's the manner and the style which matters. The result might depend on a few things - and we have the better chances (due to the 1-0 lead from the first leg) but the style of our game is how the season will be seen," said the Bayern coach. Bayern are currently on a streak of 10 con-

secutive Bundesliga titles but their success means results in Europe hold major significance in the Bavarian capital. Speaking with German broadcaster Sky, Nagelsmann explained what he told the team when he locked the dressing room doors after the victory.



"I told them that on Wednesday we have a very important game and that we need to bring our intensity. "They're a very difficult team to beat - they're among the best teams in Europe." Veteran Bayern for-ward Thomas Mueller told Sky that the tight match against relegation-threatened Stuttgart was the perfect preparation for Wednesday's decisive encounter with the French champions. "That a Bundesliga game can be so tight is no surprise. On Wednesday, it'll be like that from the beginning." Bayern have won seven from seven in the Champions League this season. Earlier on Saturday, a flat Union Berlin missed a chance to keep in touch with Bayern and Dortmund, playing out a scoreless draw at home against Cologne. Union Fischer singled out goalkeeper Frederik Ronnow for particular praise, telling Sky: "Cologne were a bit more dangerous... we can thank our goalkeeper for keeping us in the game." The result, Union's third 0-0 draw in their past five matches, sees Berliners fall five points behind Bayern, sitting in third place.

BUSINESS / WORLD

Briefs

07

Indonesia's inflation to stay above 5% in first half of 2023

JAKARTA: Indonesia's inflation will remain above 5% in the first half of 2023 and below 4% in the second half, mainly due to high food prices, central bank governor Perry Warjiyo said on Sunday, warning that the fight to control inflation must continue.

"The game is not over, let us together anticipate inflation mainly food inflation," Perry said at an event on Makassar, in South Sulawesi, where he urged local authorities to work with the central government to reduce inflationary pressures. "We must control inflabecause it relates tion people's prosperity to and welfare," he said. "Let's strengthen synergy amongst stakeholders to control inflation."ECB facing high core inflation in the near term. Lagarde says Consumer Indonesia's Price Index rose 5.47% on a yearly basis in February, largely due to rising prices for fuel, rice, cigarettes and air travel, though core inflation unexpectedly slowed to 3.09%. –DNA

Need urged for promoting AI to achieve growth

ISLAMABAD: The Coordinator to Federal Tax Ombudsman and Chairman Kyrgyzstan Trade House Meher Kashif Younis Sunday underlining the vital importance said artificial intelligence is now need of the hour which has the potential to add up to 16% or about \$13 trillion to the global economy by the year 2030 and additionally it could boost the global gross domestic product (GDP) by up to 26%.

Speaking at a seminar on The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Economy" held under the aegis of Gold Ring Economic Forum, a strategic think tank, he said.

Artificial intelligence (AI)



ISLAMABAD: Visitors' takes a keen interest in calligraphy art during a "Her Hunar" exhibition at Pak China Friendship Center.-DNA

Time now to do justice for least developed countries

"You risk being left behind in the digital revolution without the support or technology you need for social and economic development or job-creation," he said, calling for an end to the conditions that have left vulnerable countries facing a "perfect storm

UNITED NATIONS: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Saturday urged the international community - particularly wealthy nations - to step up and help the more than 1.1 billion people in the least developed countries break out of "vicious cycles" and lift themselves out of poverty. "Countries with the least need support the most. And you need it now. You represent one in coronavirus pandemic. eight people on earth. But Over the next five days in your countries are trapped In Doha, government leadin vicious cycles that make ers and other stakeholders development difficult, if not are set to assess the imimpossible " plementation of the Istan-Guterres told

of State and Government In his welcoming remarks from some of the world's to the LDC Summit, the UN chief stressed that the poorest and most vulnerable countries is taking place cost of living was becoming just ahead of the opening of increasingly difficult due to the Fifth UN Conference the war in Ukraine, resulton the Least Developed ing in higher energy and Countries known as LDC5 food prices. This, combined which will run in the Qatari with the effects of conflict, capital from 5 to 9 March. drought, hunger and ex-The LDC Summit is normaltreme poverty, creates an ly held every 10 years but environment that fuels povhas twice been postponed erty and injustice. "For your countries, prosince 2021 because of the

gress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - starting with the eradication of extreme poverty and ending hunger – is about more than lines on a chart

Indeed, fossil fuel giants are raking in huge profits, while millions in your countries cannot put food on the table. "You risk being left behind in the digital revolution without the support or technology you need for social and economic development or job-creation," he said, calling for an end to the conditions that have left vulnerable countries facing a "perfect storm."

"Ending this (perfect) storm for perpetuating poverty and injustice...requires massive, sustained investment," he explained, and stressed that the global financial system had been designed by wealthy countries, "largely to their benefit". In the absence of effective debt relief. LDCs are forced to devote an increasing share of government

revenues to debt servicing. And countries that graduate to middle-income status will lose LDC-specific benefits, which "will become a punishment, not a reward," Mr. Guterres warned.

Mr. Guterres went on to say: "We cannot allow countries to fall back down the development ladder after working so hard to climb it. Amid these injustices, the United Nations is working with you to develop smooth transition strategies, based on tailored support for the graduation process."

[A country can graduate from the LDC cz gory hy

at two consecutive triennial meetings of the UN Committee for Development Policy (CDP). Find out more here.]

To achieve this, the Doha Programme of Action (DPoA) – the landmark roadmap adopted in March 2022 aimed at, among others, creating new commitments and broad partnerships towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the LDCs - includes an online university, a food stockholding system, and an international investment support centre. In

addition the so-called

sure by 1.3 percent in the

case of Pakistan, he added.

He said that the US dollar

continued to rise against

the rupee, reaching a re-

cord high. The government

needs to devise a strategy

on war-footing to increase

foreign investment in Pa-

kistan so as to stop the

upward trajectory of the

dollar, he added.

since October 1996.

Netanyahu tries to calm outcry over minister's remarks

Islamabad POST

Monday, March 6, 2023

WEB DESK

OCCUPIED WEST BANK: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu sought on Sunday to soften international outcry over a call by a far-right member of his cabinet for a flashpoint Palestinian village to be "erased", saying those remarks had been "inappropriate".

But Netanyahu also pushed back against censure of Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, accusing foreign powers of playing down Palestinian violence like the Feb. 26 killing of two Israeli brothers in Huwara village that sparked a settler rampage there.

Smotrich said last week that while he opposed vigilantism, he believed "that Huwara needs to be erased" by Israel. The U.S. State Department called the comments "irresponsible," "repugnant" and "disgusting" and said Netanyahu should reject and disavow them.

The U.N. human rights chief said Smotrich had made "an unfathomable statement of incitement to violence". With Israeli media speculating that Smotrich, who is due to visit Washington next week, would be snubbed by the U.S. administration and complicate its ties to the Netanyahu government, he offered a retraction on Saturday but no apology. "Being upset, I misspoke," Smotrich told Channel 12 TV. The Palestinians have urged the U.S. administration not to receive Smotrich. Netanyahu has said that he - and not coalition partners like Smotrich - calls the shots on Israeli diplomacy. "It is important for all of us to work to tone down the rhetoric, lower the temperature,' Netanyahu tweeted on Sunday, thanking Smotrich "for making clear that his choice of words ... was inappropriate". "I am still waiting to hear a condemnation from the Palestinian Authority for the murder of the Yaniv brothers," Netanyahu added. "And Israel is waiting for the international community to insist that the PA

plays an increasingly important role in our lives and economy and is already having an impact on our world in many different ways.

He said worldwide compe tition to reap its benefits is fierce, and global leaders like the US and Asia have emerged on the scene. He said AI is seen by many as an engine of productivity and economic growth. It can increase the efficiency with which things are done and vastly improve the decision-making process by analysing large amounts of data. He said It can also spawn the creation of new products and services, markets and industries, thereby boosting consumer demand and generating new reve-nue streams.-APP

Historic agreement reached after decade of talks

NEW YORK: Nations have reached a historic agreement to protect the world's oceans following 10 years of negotiations. The High Seas Treaty aims to place 30% of the seas into protected areas by 2030, to safeguard and recuperate marine nature. The agreement was reached on Saturday evening, after 38 hours of talks, at UN headquarters in New York. The negotiations had been held up for years over disagreements on funding and fishing rights. The last international agreement on ocean protection was signed 40 years ago in 1982 - the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. That agreement established an area called the high seas - international waters where all countries have a right to fish, ship and do research - but only 1.2% of these waters are protected. Marine life living outside of these protected areas has been at risk from climate change, overfishing and shipping traffic.

In the latest assessment of global marine species, nearly 10% were found to be at risk of extinction, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). These new protected areas, established in the treaty, will put limits on how much fishing can take place.-APP

the Summit of Least Developed Countries (LDCs), in Doha, Qatar, according to a UN Press release issued at UN Headquarters in New York.

Today's Summit of Heads

bul Programme of Action, adopted at a precursor UN conference held in Türkiye in 2011, and mobilize additional international support and action for the world's 46 least developed countries.

leading to 2030," the Secretary-General said. "It's a matter of life and death and it is unacceptable if you are held back by processes and decisions that are made far beyond your borders.³

Stimulus package, launched meeting two of three critein February, also proposes ria (income, human assets to increase financing for and economic and environmental vulnerability), or by sustainable development, address the high cost of debt. having a per capita income of more than twice the inand scale up emergency financing. - APP come graduation threshold,

only has it not done so, it continues to turn a blind eye to the PA's rampant incitement.'

On Thursday, State Department spokesperson Ned Price tweeted: "Just as we condemn Palestinian incitement to violence we condemn Finance Minister Smotrich's provocative remarks that also amount to incitement of violence. It is imperative that Palestinians and Israelis work together to restore calm.'

condemn that attack. Not

Britain to stop those arriving illegally from staying

News Desk

LONDON: Anyone arriving Exports went down quanillegally in Britain will be titatively while the situprevented from staying, ation of new investment Prime Minister Rishi Suremained very bleak during nak said in an interview the year, they observed addpublished on Sunday, ahead ing that the Monetary Poliof new legislation which is cy Committee of the State expected to be set out next Bank of Pakistan has raised week. Under pressure from the key interest rate by 300 his own lawmakers to find basis points, taking it to a solution to the flow of 20% - the highest level migrants arriving in Britain across the channel from Europe, Sunak has made stopping small boats one of his five key priorities.

"Make no mistake, if you come here illegally, you will not be able to stay," Sunak told the Mail on Sunday newspaper.

Under current practice, asylum seekers who reach Britain are often able to remain in the country to have their case heard.

A new law to tackle the issue is due to be set out on Tuesday, the newspaper reported, after more than 45,000 people made the perilous crossing last year. Asylum applications to the United Kingdom are below the European Union average, official data shows.

Last year, former Prime Minister Boris Johnson agreed a deal to send tens of thousands of migrants, many having made the journey from Afghanistan, Syria or other countries suffering war, more than 4,000 miles away (6,400 kms) to Rwanda. The policy has faced a legal battle after the first planned deportation flight was blocked by a last-minute injunction granted by the European Court of Human Rights.

Estonia votes in election test for pro-Kyiv govt

TALLINN: Estonians headed to the polls on Sunday in an election pitting one of Europe's most staunchly pro-Kyiv governments against a far-right party seeking to capitalise on anger at rising living costs and which would stop admitting new Ukrainian refugees. If, as opinion polls predict, Prime Minister Kaja Kallas' liberal Reform party wins the national election and successfully crafts a coalition it would cement the Baltic nation's pro-European direction. Estonia would also stay on course to adopt more green energy and continue to accept refugees from Ukraine. The polls close at 8 p.m. (1800 GMT), with most electoral districts expected to report their tallies by midnight. Reform won an election in 2019 but was then kept from power as three smaller parties formed a government. It collapsed in 2021, allowing Kallas to create a coalition and take charge. The far-right EKRE party may end up in second place, according to opinion polls, as their promises to slash energy bills by opposing the transition to green energy are proving popular in some parts of the country, as is the pledge to not accept new Ukrainian refugees. Kallas and EKRE leader Martin Helme both told Reuters this week they hope to lead the next coalition government.-Agencies

PIAF for clear roadmap for economic revival

DNA

KARACHI: While demanding a clear roadmap for the revival of economy, the Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF) on Sunday termed the present financial crisis as a nerve-shattering for trade and industry.

There was a consensus among the participants of a meeting presided over by the PIAF chairman Faheem ur Rehman Saigol and attended by other office-bearers that there was a lack of coherence in the government policies and things on economic front went shaky instead of moving

Faheem ur Rehman Saigol said that volatile exchange rate, unprecedented hike in markup rate, repeated increases in electricity rates, gas shortage, price spiral, mismanagement and bad governance have now become the hallmarks of the government. He said that massive fall of rupee value continued to damage the economy, as the rupee witnessed a huge depreciation; one of the highest devaluations of local currency in Pakistan's history. PIAF Chairman observed that besides increasing exports and controlling imports the government will have to take administrative measures, as a large demand of

for the last several months.

cash dollars are seen in the market.

He argued that this devaluation of the currency was dictated by the IMF through prior actions and it has nothing to do with macroeconomic fundamentals. He said that there was a complete breakdown of economic policymaking, as the country's fiscal policy had become subservient to monetary and exchange rate policies.

He said that the monetary tightening and exchange rate depreciation resulted in higher inflation, public debt and debt servicing. The empirical evidence showed that the one percent monetary tightening hiked the inflationary pres-

Pak animated film showreel fascinates Chinese audience

DNA

that he was "tremendously grateful for the response it BEIJING: The showreel of [the showreel] has gotten. Pakistan's upcoming hand-It would be amazing to drawn animated film The share the film with the incredible audience and ani-

Glassworker has cast a spell on Chinese audience as it has garnered more than 558,000 views, with over 5,000 comments and reviews on BiliBili, a popular YouTube-like video sharing platform in China with over 70 million active daily users. "I can't believe this comes from Pakistan. This is the real art. Really looking forward to the entire film," reads one comment on BiliBili. "Amazingly high-quality film! If this proves a success, it will revolutionise Pakistan's cultural industry," another user posted. In an exclusive interview with China Economic Net (CEN), Usman Riaz, director of the animated film and founder

mation supporters in Chi-Animation Studios, said na." Inspired by his trip to Italy when he was 16 years old, where he had the opportunity to see the glass blowing being done in Venice, the Pakistani director

decided to make an animated film out of it once the opportunity arose. However, it wasn't until 2015 that Usman started working on the film, and the film-making process has been arduous.



Protests break out in Iran over schoolgirl illnesses

WEB DESK

DUBAI: Worried parents protested in Iran's capital Tehran and other cities on Saturday over a wave of suspected poison attacks that have affected schoolgirls in dozens of schools, according to Iranian news agencies and social media videos. The so-far unexplained illnesses have affected hundreds of schoolgirls in recent months. Iranian officials believe the girls may have been poisoned and have blamed Tehran's enemies. The country's health minister has said the girls have suffered "mild poison" attacks and some politicians have suggested the girls could have been targeted by hardline Islamist groups opposed to girls' education. Iran's interior minister said on Saturday investigators had found "suspicious samples" that were being studied. "In field studies, suspicious samples have been found, which are being investigated... to identify the causes of the students' illness, and the results will be published as soon as possible," the minister, Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli, said in a statement carried by the official news agency IRNA. Sickness affected more than 30 schools in at least 10 of Iran's 31 provinces on Saturday. Videos posted on social media showed parents gathered at schools to take their children home and some students being taken to hospitals by ambulance or buses. A gathering of parents outside an Education Ministry building in western Tehran on Saturday to protest over the illnesses turned into an anti-government demonstration, according to a video verified by Reuters.







Briefs **K-P** governor commits to respecting **SC poll order**

DNA PESHAWAR: Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) Governor Haji Ghulam Ali has said that he has not seen the letter sent by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), but will definitely give a date for the provincial assembly's polls.

Speaking to a local news outlet, the governor said that he always respected the courts, but the letter had been sent to his principal secretary, which would be opened on Monday.

The governor, while referring to the Supreme Court order, said the orders would be followed. "We will definitely announce a date for the elections as we have always respected courts and will do so in the future as well." Speaking to another news outlet, the governor expressed his disapproval to the president's announcement of holding polls in Punjab on April 30. He said that he was hoping for a unanimous date for the elections in both the provinces - Punjab and K-P.

Joe Biden to tighten rules on US investment in China

DNA

WILMINGTON: The Biden administration is close to tightening rules on some overseas investments by U.S. companies in an effort to limit China's ability to acquire technologies that could improve its military prowess, according to a U.S. official familiar with the deliberations.

The soon-to-be-issued executive order from President Ice Biden will limit Amer

China looks at reforms to deepen Xi Jinping control

China will pursue a reduced economic growth target of about 5% this year, while defence spending is to rise by more than 7%

News Desk

BEIJING: Xi Jinping is set to deepen his control of China's government and economy, as lawmakers meet in Beijing to pass far-reaching reforms. The National People's Congress (NPC), a rubber-stamp parliament, will confirm Mr Xi's third term as president, and the appointments of his top team. They will also name a new premier, the second-in-command after Mr Xi, as the incumbent Li Keqiang departs.

The Two Sessions, as the meetings are known, are an annual affair. But this year's sessions are particularly significant as delegates are expected to reshape several key Communist Party and state institutions. They will also tighten control over bodies overseeing the finance sector and scientific and technology work, while "strengthening

party-building work" in private businesses, according to state media.

The moves will likely further blur the lines between the Chinese Communist Party and the government, and consolidate the party's control of the private sector.

This comes amid an ongoing corruption crackdown which has seen a string of high-profile businessmen disappear in recent years. The latest person to go missing was one of China's top dealmakers in the tech sector. This week's NPC meeting will also formalise Mr Xi's leadership of the country, as he will be elected president of China and head of the armed forces.

He secured his position in the echelons of Chinese power in October last year, when the Communist Party re-elected him as their leader for a third term. It was a break from decades-long tradition,

as no other party leader besides Commu-

nist China's first leader, Mao Zedong, will have served for this long. In the 2018 NPC meeting, lawmakers had approved the removal of term limits on the presidency, effectively allowing Mr Xi to remain leader for life. Mr Xi's appointment comes as he faces domestic pressure to turn around an economy battered by his zero-Covid strategv and crackdowns in various business sectors. At the start of the meeting, it was announced that China will pursue a reduced economic growth target of about 5% this year, while defence spending is to rise by more than 7%.

Abroad, Mr Xi is navigating worsening ties with the US over the Ukraine war and the recent spy balloon saga, even as he warms his embrace of Russian leader Vladimir Putin. The NPC will also unveil the new Premier, China's equivalent of a prime minister who traditionally oversees the economy and administrative aspects of governance. Li Qiang, one of Mr Xi's most trusted colleagues, is expected to assume the role. As the Shanghai party secretary, he oversaw a prolonged and painful Covid lockdown that angered locals and made international headlines. Outgoing premier Li Keqiang, who was ousted in the leadership reshuffle at October's party congress, will deliver his last work report speech.

The political appointments for the rest of the Politburo Standing Committee, the equivalent of Mr Xi's cabinet, will also be announced. Many will be watching to see who fills several key positions, such as the commerce minister, head of the national development and reform commission, propaganda chief, and head of state security. Observers say the team was picked more for their loyalty to Mr Xi and the party, rather than for their expertise.

South Korea, Japan near landmark deal

DNA

SEOUL: South Korea and Japan may be near resolving a dispute over colonial-era forced labour that has overshadowed political and trade relations between the two neighbours, with media reports saying Seoul could announce plans on Monday. The South Korean government plans to announce on Monday morning its solution to the historical and legal dispute over compensating people forced to work under Japan's 1910-1945 occupation of Korea, Japan's Kyodo news reported, citing unnamed diplomatic sources. The labour dispute and one over women forced Japanese military into brothels have bedevilled ties between the two pivotal

U.S. allies for years. South Korea's foreign ministry, asked about the reported agreement, said negotiations were ongoing. 'The government is continuing to consult in various ways between diplomatic authorities at all levels in order to come up with a reasonable solution that meets the common interests of Korea and Japan as soon as possible," it said in a statement. Japan's Cabinet Office and Foreign Ministry did not immediately respond to phone and email requests for comment.

Qatar's emir slams delay in aid to Syria

DOHA: Qatar's emir said on Sunday he was puzzled by the delay in delivering aid to victims of last month's earthquake in Syria, adding that it was wrong to abuse humanitarian aid for political purposes, in an apparent swipe at the Syrian government. Qatar was among several regional states that backed rebels in Syria's civil war and has previously spoken out against efforts by some countries to normalise ties with Damascus. Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, speaking at the opening of the U.N. Least Developed Countries conference in Doha, stressed the need to help Syrians "without hesitation" and support Turkey's efforts to recover from the devastating earthquake. The death toll in Turkey has risen to above 45,000, bringing the total toll including Syria to about 51,000. In Syria, the northwest region controlled by rebels at war with President Bashar al-Assad was the worst hit. – Agencies



art during an exhibition titled "Her Hunar" at Pak China Friendship Center. - DNA

Foreign Minister to preside over

Iran makes sweeping pledge of coop to IAEA

VIENNA: Iran has given sweeping assurances to the U.N. nuclear watchdog that it will finally assist a long-stalled investigation into uranium particles found at undeclared sites and even re-install removed monitoring equipment, the watchdog said on Saturday. The International Atomic Energy Agency and Iran issued a joint statement on IAEA chief Rafael Grossi's return from a trip to Tehran just two days before a quarterly meeting of the agency's 35-nation Board of Governors. The statement went into little detail but the possibility of a marked improvement in relations between the two is likely to stave off a Western push for another resolution ordering Iran to cooperate, diplomats said. Iran has, however, made similar promises before that have yielded little or nothing. "Iran expressed its readiness to ... provide further information and access to address the outstanding safeguards issues," the joint statement said. A confidential IAEA report to member states seen by Reuters said Grossi "looks forward to ... prompt and full implementation of the Joint Statement". Iran is supposed to provide access to information, locations and people, Grossi told a news conference at Vienna airport soon after landing, suggesting a vast improvement after years of Iranian stonewalling. Iran would also allow the re-installation of extra monitoring equipment that had been put in place under the 2015 nuclear deal, but then removed last year as the deal unravelled in the wake of the U.S. withdrawal from the deal in 2018 under then-President Donald Trump. - Agencies

Maiden Russian crude oil

conference on 'Women in Islam

can investment in advanced technologies that have national security applications - such as next-generation military capabilities that could help China improve the speed and accuracy of military decision making, according to the official, who was not authorized to comment and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The expected action is the latest effort by the White House to target China's military and technology sectors at a time of increasingly fraught relations between the world's two biggest economies. In October, the Biden administration imposed export controls to limit China's ability to access advanced chips, which it says can be used to make weapons, commit human rights abuses and improve the speed and accuracy of its military logistics.

Fire destroys refugee camp in Bangladesh

WEB DESK

DHAKA: A big fire at a camp for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh destroyed homes and sent thick black clouds of smoke through the area on Sunday before being brought under control. The blaze erupted at Camp 11 in Cox's Bazar, a southeastern border district where more than a million Rohingya refugees live. Most of the refugees fled a military-led crackdown in Myanmar in 2017, and the fire left some of them homeless again.

"We currently don't have an estimate for damages but there are no reports of casualties," Rafiqul Islam, additional police superintendent at Cox's Bazar told Reuters. He added that the blaze was under control and senior officials from the fire, police and refugee relief departments were at the site. Faruque Ahmed, a local police official, said the cause of the fire was not clear. Neither police official gave an estimate for the number of homes destroyed. "I couldn't save Everything anything. burnt to ashes. Many are without homes. I don't know what will happen to us," said 40-year-old refugee Selim Ullah, a father of six children.

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari will preside over a conference on 'Women in Islam' in New York on Wednesday next. The conference is being hosted by Pakistan in its capacity as the chair of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers on the sidelines of the 67th Session of the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women. The objective of the conference is to bridge the gap between perception and reality on the rights of women in Islam and celebrate the experiences and successes of iconic Muslim women. It is also aimed at establishing an annual policy dialogue to address challenges and explore opportunities to advance the role of

The opening address of the Foreign Minister will be followed by the Greek train crash:

women in OIC countries.

PM Mitsotakis seeks forgiveness

WEB DESK

ATHENS: Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis has asked for forgiveness from the families of the 57 victims of this week's train crash. In a Facebook message, Mr Mitsotakis said that "in the Greece of 2023... two trains heading in different directions cannot run on the same line and no-one notice". Protests have continued for days. Clashes with police were reported on Sunday as thousands joined a demonstration in the capital Athens. Police estimated 12,000 people attended the protest. Some demonstrators set fire to rubbish bins and threw petrol bombs. Police responded firing tear gas and stun grenades, clearing the central Syntagma Square of the protesters within a few minutes. The protesters also reportedly released hundreds of black balloons into the sky in memory of the dead, with some holding signs reading "Down with killer governments".



speeches of UN General Assembly President, Csaba Korosi; OIC Secretary General, Hissein Braham Taha; Executive Director of UN-Women, Sima Bahous and other dignitaries and representatives of OIC Member States. The Foreign Minister is also expected to participate in a high-level UN Security Council debate on 'Women, Peace and Securi-

ty', sponsored by Mozambique in its capacity as the Council's President for this month. Later, in pursuit of the General Assembly landmark resolution designating 15 March as the International Day to Combat Islamophobia, the General Assembly president and the foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari will be co-convening a special high-level event to commemorate the day on Friday. - DNA

Syria mission worth the risk, top US general says

DAMASCUS: The nearly eight-year-old U.S. deployment to Syria to combat Islamic State is still worth the risk, the top U.S. military officer said on Saturday, after a rare, unannounced visit to a dusty base in the country's northeast to meet U.S. troops. Army General Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, flew to Syria to assess efforts to prevent a resurgence of the militant group and review safeguards for American forces against attacks, including from drones flown by Iran-backed militia. While Islamic State is a shadow of the group that ruled over a third of Syria and Iraq in a Caliphate declared in 2014, hundreds of fighters are still camped in desolate areas where neither the U.S.-led coalition nor the Syrian army, with support from Russia and Iranian-backed militias, exert full control. Thousands of other Islamic State fighters are in detention facilities guarded by Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces, America's key ally in the country. American officials say that Islamic State could still regenerate into a major threat. - DNA

shipment due next month

ISLAMABAD: The first oil cargo from Russia is expected to arrive in Pakistan by the end of April after the latter agreed to the former's demand to import a single cargo first as a test case to bridge "trust deficit". Moscow has already offered to export 100,000 barrels of crude oil per day to Islamabad. Following Saudi Arabia that also exports around 100,000 barrels of oil per day, Russia will emerge as the second largest crude oil supplier to Pakistan if the both the countries sign a deal. Sources told The Express Tribune that Russia had raised doubt "over the seriousness of Pakistan to mature the oil deal". Therefore, in a recent meeting held between the two countries, Moscow had asked Islamabad to import "one oil cargo" as a test case. The sources said that Russia had heavy crude oil but Pakistan lacked the technology to refine such oil, therefore, it agreed to export blended oil to the country. - Agencies



Donald Trump pitches a sequel, but shies away from attacking rivals

"We are going to finish what we started," he said. "We"re going to complete the mission. We"re going to see this battle through to ultimate victory"

OXON HILL: Former President Donald Trump cast himself as the only Republican candidate who can build on his White House legacy but shied away from directly critiquing his potential rivals, including Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis. Trump, giving the headlining address at the annual Conservative Political Action Conference, told a cheering crowd that he was engaged in his "final battle" as he tries to return to the White House.

"We are going to finish what we started," he said. "We're going to complete the mission. We're going to see this battle through to ultimate victory.

Though DeSantis, seen as Trump's biggest potential rival, is frequently a subject of name-calling and other attacks in Trump's social media posts and in interviews, he wasn't mentioned directly in Trump's address before conservative activists, who earlier in the day applauded when an old video clip of the Florida governor was shown in a montage. While CPAC was once a must-stop for candidates mulling Republican presidential runs, DeSantis and other major likely contenders skipped this year's gathering amid scandal and as the group has increasingly become aligned with Trump. The former president's enduring popularity with this segment of voters was on display throughout the conference this week. Some attendees wore Trump-themed outfits, with "MAGA" hats and sequined jackets.

Members of his family and his presidential administration were swarmed like celebrities in the hallways and dominated the list of speakers. The handful of other potential and declared candidates not named Trump who spoke received only tepid applause. And the annual CPAC straw poll, an unscientific survey of attendees, found Trump the top choice to be the party's nominee, with 62% support, trailed by DeSantis at 20% and businessman Perry Johnson, who announced his long shot bid at the conference, with 5%. Nearly all - 95% of respondents - said they approved of Trump's performance as president. - Agencies

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