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Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

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China's Xi Jinping secures third term as President

**Detailed News On Page-01** 

Turkiye's Recep Erdogan fighting for political life

**Detailed News On Page-06** 



**PPP** to contest elections on its own symbol

**Detailed News On Page-02** 



### Briefs

#### **Justice Muneeb to** attend CJs moot in India

DNA

ISLAMABAD: "In line with Pakistan's commitment to SCO, Honorable Jus-

tice Muneeb of the Supreme Court of Pakistan will participate in the meeting of Chief Justices of SCO member states being held in India. Justice Muneeb Akhtar will attend the meeting online". It may be mentioned here that the Indian authorities had extended an invitation to the Chief Justice of Pakistan to take part in the Chief Justices conference being hosted by India. According to Foreign Office spokesperson MumtazZehra Baloch, Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial will not participate in the CJs Meeting of SCO member countries starting from March10-12 in India. She said Pakistan is an active member country of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and regularly participates in its activities. Pakistan has always been involved in the or-

#### US supports Pak-India dialogue

ganization's affairs.

DNA



India to resolve outstanding disputes. During a media briefing at the White House, the spokesperson Ned Price said we support constructive dialogue and we support diplomacy between the two countries. He further said that we are willing to support that process in any way that they deem appropriate, but ultimately these are decisions that Pakistan and India themselves are going to have to make. In reply to a question, Ned Price said the United States is prepared to, as a partner to both countries, support that process in any way that we responsibly can.

#### **Holiday Notice**

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

#### Inside..

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Why is FIR an effective political weapon?

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# Iran, Saudi Arabia to restore ties

Respective diplomatic missions to be reopened after talks in China

News Desk

TEHRAN: and Saudi Arabia agreed to restore ties and to reopen respective diplomatic missions after talks in China, media

in both countries reported Friday, seven years after relations were severed. Riyadh cut ties with Tehran after Iranian protesters attacked Saudi diplomatic missions Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Is-

Saudi execution of cleric Nimr al-Nimr. "Following talks, the Islamic Republic of IRNA said, citing a joint statement.

Continued on Page 06

Pakistan welcomes the development

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

Ansar Bhatti

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Friday warmly welcomed the normalization of diplomatic relations between the in the Islamic republic in 2016 following the lamic Republic of Iran facilitated by the People's Republic of China. "Pakistan firmly believes that this im-Iran and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have portant diplomatic breakthrough will agreed to resume diplomatic relations and contribute to peace and stability in the reopen embassies and missions within two region and beyond", a statement from months," the official Iranian news agency foreign office read. "We commend the role played by China's visionary lead-The official Saudi Press Agency also pub- ership in coordinating this historic lished the statement. Ali Shamkhani, the agreement which reflects the power secretary of Iran's Supreme National Se- of constructive engagement and meancurity Council, had travelled to Beijing on ingful dialogue. We laud sagacious Monday for "intensive negotiations with leadership of the Kingdom of Saudi his Saudi counterpart in China in order to Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran finally resolve the problems between Teh- for this very positive development", it ran and Riyadh", IRNA said. Iran and Saudi further added. With a history of con-Arabia support rival sides in several conflict sistently supporting and coordinating

### Maryam blames Khan, ex-judges for crisis

Alleges that they colluded to oust Nawaz Sharif

Nawaz (PML-N) senior vice president Maryam Nawaz has blamed former premier Imran Khan and ex-judges for the economic crisis in the country, media reported on Friday. Maryam Nawaz lambasted former judges and Imran Khan once again during FAISALABAD: Interior Minister and his address to the PML-N workers' conven- Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz tion in Faisalabad. She alleged that they colluded to oust former prime minister Nawaz threatened to arrest Pakistan Tehreek-Sharif from PM's Office and that the nation e-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan once will not forgive them. She said that justice again, media reported on Friday. Rana should be served equally to all people. She Sanaullah said that elections do not further criticised that a 'characterless, in- mean avoiding accountability for Toseligible and wristwatch thief' was imposed hakhana thefts and other wrongdoings on the Pakistani nation and how can a in the country. He said that Imran Khan 'jackal' be a leader of the nation. Maryam will face accountability for everything claimed that Nawaz Sharif is important for he did wrong to this country and later making Pakistan a prosperous and devel- he will be arrested too. The interior oped state. She said that Punjab people minister threatened that the PTI chief should be aware of their enemy and throw will be arrested once he gets tired of out Imran Khan as he does not work for running. He once again announced

Imran Khan will FAISALABAD: Pakistan Muslim League surely be arrested, says Sanaullah

DNA

(PML-N) leader Rana Sanaullah has

Continued on Page 06 Continued on Page 06

the people nor allow anyone else to do it. that PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif

#### **FM** calls for unity to fight Islamophobia DNA UNITED NATIONS: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhu-

tto Zardari Friday opened a special high-level meeting to commemorate International Day to Combat Islamophobia, with a fervent call to everyone - from any religion or creed - to stand together in the fight against hatred, bigotry and intolerance.

"The observance of this Day serves to reinforce our shared commitment to raise awareness about the insidious phenomenon of Islamophobia, advance mutual respect and understanding, and dezelon concrete measures to eradicate this contemporary plague," he told delegates in the UN General Assembly Hall, while highlighting that Islam is a religion of moderation, tolerance and pluralism. The meeting is co-convened by the Office of the Continued on Page 06

#### 5 terrorists killed in Waziristan **IBO**

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: At least five terrorists have been killed as security forces carried out intelligence-based operations (IBOs) in North and South Waziristan districts, the military said in a statement on Friday. "Weapons, ammunition and a large quantity of equipment were also recovered from the killed terrorists,' the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said. The ISPR further said that the army was determined to

Continued on Page 06

# PTI rivals want to win elections by spreading fear

Imran vows to move against Punjab administration over Lahore incident

ABID RAZA

BEIJING: Officials of Saudi Arabia and Iran sign the normalization agreement brokered by China.

Top Chinese diplomat Wang Yi is also seen on the occasion. - DNA

LAHORE: Former premier and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan said on Friday that the rivals want to win the elections by spreading fear. While addressing PTI workers and supporters, Imran Khan said that the time has arrived to stand against the rulers. "Everyone should get ready to take part in jihad for real independence." "We are facing restrictions on the election campaign despite the announcement of the election schedule. 80 cases were registered against me. They are trying to spread fear to win the elections." He said that the nation knew about Arshad Sharif's innocence who was backing what is right. "They do such terrible things to a journalist whose conscience cannot be bought.' Khan said that a specially-abled child,

BHC suspends Khan's arrest warrants

**DNA** 

QUETTA: Balochistan High Court (BHC) on Friday suspended the non-bailable arrest warrants issued by a judicial magistrate in Quetta for the former prime minister and PTI Chairman Imran Khan for a period of two weeks. Justice Zaheeruddin Kakar of the BHC, while suspending the warrants, issued notices to parties to the case.

**Continued on Page 06** 

Continued on Page 06

### ECP warned of Terrorism in KP

Returning officers appointed in Puniab

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Friday was informed that security threats persist in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) due to the banned outfit Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan's (TTP) presence in the province, media reported citing sources. Meanwhile, The Election Commission of Pakistan on Friday appointed district returning, returning and assistant returning officers for the election in Punjab. As per the notification released

deputy commissioners have been granted the status of district returning officers. The polls would be held on April 30. According to the TV report, a meeting was held at the ECP headquarters in Islamabad chaired by Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja in which the poll organising authority was given a briefing by the chiefs of security agencies regarding the latest law and order situation in KP and Punjab. The meeting was summoned by the Election Commission regarding the preparation for polls in the two provinces in line with the order of the Supreme Court.

Continued on Page 06

### Xi clinches third term as China's president

Prime Minister Shehbaz felicitates President Xi Jinping on his re-election

**News Desk** BEIJING: Xi Jinping secured a precedent-breaking third

term as president of China on Friday during a parliamentary session in which he tightened his control of the world's second-largest economy as it emerges from a COVID slump and diplomatic challenges mount. Nearly 3,000 members of China's rubber-stamp parliament, the National People's Congress (NPC), voted unanimously in the Great Hall of the People for the 69-year-old Xi in an election in which there was no other candidate. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday felicitated China's President Xi Jinping on being elected for the position for a third term. "The confidence of the Chinese people and parliament in President Xi Jinping is a recognition of his extraordinary leadership skills," the Prime Minister said in a message of greetings on behalf of the government and people of Pakistan. Shehbaz Sharif said, "President Xi Jinping has become a symbol of China's development and people's prosperity. Under his leadership, China has become the world's top economic power and this journey continues." Domestically, China faces a challenging recovery from

three years of Xi's zero-COVID policy, fragile confidence among consumers and businesses and weak demand for China's exports. The economy grew just 3% last year, among its worst performances in decades. During the parliament session the government set a modest growth target for this year of just around 5%. "In his third term,

Continued on Page 06

### **MARCH 2023**

Pakistan's Premier News & Diplomatic Affairs Magazine

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#### **Kohat Police** conduct operation

PESHAWAR: Ten (10) suspects including two drug peddlers have been taken arrested during a joint search and strike operation of local police and elite force in the surrounding localities of the Kohat University of Science & Technology (KUST) and District Jail Kohat, said a press release issued on Friday.

The operation carried out under the supervision of DSP (Saddar), Saif-ur-Rehman was also included women police, personnel of the civil sensitive agencies, and a heavy contingent of operational police and Elite Force. During the operation, police personnel also checked the documents of tenants and took six Afghan nationals living without registration. Two pistols, dozens of cartridges and two kilograms of heroin powder were also recovered from the arrested suspects.

For complete scrutiny, the arrested persons were shifted to Police Station Jarma and formal FIRs were registered against all those from whom arms, ammunition or narcotics were recovered.—APP

#### Lawari snow festival in Upper Dir from March 12: DC

PESHAWAR: The district administration and district sports office would jointly organised Lawari Snow Festival in district Dir Upper on March 12 (Sunday). Deputy Commissioner Tariq Khan would inaugurate the festival. The event would include firework, music, cultural show, food competition and sports event including tug of war, volleyball, rugby and other local games. The students of schools, colleges and local teams would participate in different sports activities while renowned local singers would perform at the music show. The purpose of the event is to attract tourists to the areas besides providing entertainment and business opportunities to the local communities, said the DC. Earlier, the District Sports Officer Siddiq Ullah met with the Deputy Commissioner at his office and briefed him about the event. He also pre sented a T-shirt with the logo of the event to the DC.-APP

#### Jashan-e-Baharan activities to begin

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory Administration is all set to celebrate 'Jashan-e-Baharan' (spring festival) on Saturday which will feature colorful events including Run and walk marathon, color-run flowers and classic car shows, and other cultural

The vibrant festivities would be organized by Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration and Capital Development Authority (CDA) which would continue till March 12 (Sunday). The two-day activities would also include Mazahiva Mushaira, Cycling race, and a rally to celebrate spring festival in different venues of the capital, ICT spokesperson told APP. He said that, 10 kilometers long 'Run and Walk' marathon would be organized on Saturday (March 11) including short color-run activity. He stated that the marathon would start from Chand Tara chowk.-APP

#### Nine drug peddlers netted

RAWALPINDI :The Rawalpindi police in an action against suspected drug peddlers, bootleggers and illegal weapon holders here on Friday arrested nine besides recovering over 825 grams of charras, 21 bottles of liquor, 20 cans of beer, four 30-bore pistols, a Kalashnikov and ammunition from their possession.

A police spokesperson said that Naseerabad police held Shakeel for having 300 grams of charras and Saddar Police rounded up one Faisal for carrying 525 grams of charras.

Waris Khan police held Danish with 17 bottles of liquor and 20 cans of beer while Taxila police netted Asif for possessing four liquor bottles. Taxila, Wah Cantt, Saddar Wah, Jatli and Kahuta police rounded up Umar Sajjad, Zubair, Alam Zaib. Owais and Attin ur Rehman and recovered four 30-bore pistols, a Kalashnikov.-APP

# Bangladeshi Envoy asks KCCI to send business delegation

Bangladeshi Deputy HC further stated that Bangladesh and Pakistan have been enjoying excellent economic relations

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Deputy High Commissioner of Bangladesh S. M. Mahbubul Alam, while stressing the need to enhance trade and investment cooperation, asked the Karachi Chamber to send a business delegation to Bangladesh to explore trade and investment opportunities in the 35th largest economy of the world which offers all the required facilities and infrastructure along with special incentives to foreign investors. Exchanging views at a meeting

during his visit to the Karachi Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI), Bangladeshi envoy informed that 100 Special Economic Zones (SEZs) were being established all over Bangladesh with the aim of promoting investment and accelerating economic growth through increased and diversified industrialization, employment, production and exports. "We have a lot of potential to work together so we must make collective efforts for the economic prosperity of the two brotherly countries", he added. President KCCI Mohammed Tariq Yousuf, Senior Vice President Touseef Ahmed, Chairman Diplomatic Missions & Embassies Liaison

DNA

MULTAN: Pakistan Peo-

ples Party (PPP) senior

leader Yousuf Raza Gilani

said on Friday his party will

contest elections with its

own symbol. Speaking to media, Mr Gilani said, "De-

spite being the part of the

Pakistan Democratic Move-

ment (PDM), the PPP has

its own manifesto, and be-

ing part of the government

alliance does not mean that

we are stepping back from

our own manifesto." Mr

Gilani expressed his views

over the Pakistan Tehreek-

e-Insaf's (PTI) agreement

with the International Mon-

etary Fund (IMF), and said

Imran Khan had violated

the agreement with the

international lender. "The

PPP always takes decisions

considering the national

interest. The agreement

happens with the state,

not with the government.

We will get rid of the dif-



Subcommittee Zia ul Arfeen and KCCI Managing Committee Members were also present on the occasion. Bangladeshi Deputy HC further stated that Bangladesh and Pakistan have been enjoying excellent economic relations which have been expanded with the passage of time but there were challenges which have to be efficiently tackled through collective efforts. "When Bangladesh came to existence, it had zero foreign reserves and most of the food items were being imported but now the country holds impressive foreign reserves of US\$48 billion and it was not importing

Gilani says PPP to

contest elections

on its own symbol

ficult times soon," added

the former prime minister.

On Monday, former presi-

dent and PPP co-chairman

Asif Ali Zardari ruled out

any possibility of contest-

ing next general elections

in alliance with Pakistan

Democratic Movement's

(PDM) ruling coalition. He

also ruled out talks with

PTI Chairman Imran Khan,

saying the former prime

minister is not a politician.

Talking to the media in Ve-

hari, former president said

iust as the whole nation has

to be fixed, the economy

and military mindset have

to be managed similarly the

judiciary has to be handled.

Talking about the judiciary

he said that they are also

He said the country was

not a public limited compa-

ny and could not end with

bankruptcy, adding Japan

went bankrupt 10 times and

then recovered. Speaking

about taking over the gov-

from us.

any food items as all the food stuff for the population was being produced locally within the country and we have become self-sufficient", he said, adding that under vision 2041, Bangladesh intends to become a developed and smart nation. Mahbubul Alam informed that foreign investors from Japan, China, India and South Korea have already established production units in Bangladesh, hence, Pakistani business community must also come forward to benefit from the situation. "Bangladesh is a country which is, particularly, focused on quick troubleshooting of any issue being faced by for-

ernment, Asif Zardari said

that it was not that they did

not had any idea of the sit-

uation was and in fact they

knew about the economic

Earlier, Zardari arrived in

Multan from Islamabad on

a private plane where he

was received by local PPP

leaders at the airport. Later

he left from Multan airport

for Vehari. Yousaf Raza Gil-

lani and Makhdoom Ahmed

Mahmood were also with

Talking to the media, Mr.

Asif Ali Zardari said that

there were many questions

in writing and speaking.

He said that they knew

that there were difficul-

ties but they had to stop

Imran Khan otherwise he

would have sold the coun-

try. Answering a question

regarding Foreign Minister

and PPP Chairman Bilawal

Bhutto Zardari, he said that

Bilawal was young and gets

angry quickly.

breakdown.

Faizan

selected

by PCB

STAFF REPORT

ATTOCK: Attock-based

young cricketer Malik

Faizan Ahmed has been

selected by the Pakistan

Cricket Board on Friday

to play under 16 region-

al squad. Family sources

said that the newly elect

cricketer Malik Faizan

Ahmed belong to tehsil

Pindigheb of district At-

tock was a leg spinner

who was also a brilliant

student of Overseas

College H-8, Islamabad.

He will also take part

in the National Cup Un-

der 16 being organized

from March 12, 2023

at Islamabad, Karachi,

Lahore and Gujranwala

with full swings. The

people from all walks of

life include socio-politi-

cal circles of the district

Attock also expressed

their jubilation over

his selection purely on

merit with the hope to

prove his potential for

the honour and dignity

of the country.

Pakistani

Foundation

eign investors and most of such issues are resolved in just a single sitting which is very encouraging for foreign investors. We always welcome our foreign friends for improvement of economy and creation of maximum number of employment opportunities."

Commenting on concerns expressed over delays in issuance of visas, he said that they try their best to issue visas to the members of business community at the earliest, however, delays faced by any individual were purely due to procedures which have to be adhered. "Anyone desiring to do business with Bangladesh

He said that Bangladesh was particularly focused on improving its literacy rate and it was undoubtedly a major achievement that the enrollment at primary schools now stands at 100 percent. "We provide free books and scholarships to millions of poor people so that everyone has access to education", he informed, adding that in 1971, only six universities existed but now, there were 108 universities and 120 medical colleges in Bangladesh. Earlier, President KCCI Mohammed Tariq Yousuf, while welcoming the Bangladeshi Deputy High Commissioner, stated that in spite of enormous trade potential between the two countries, the trade volume was below its potential as during six months of current fiscal year, Pakistan's exports to Bangladesh were stagnant at around \$480 million as compared to \$483 million last year. negotiations on Pak-Bangladesh Free Trade Agreement (FTA) launched in 2003, have not concluded even after 19 years which require special attention from both sides as this FTA would certainly give boost to the existing trade volume between the two brotherly countries."

# Anti-polio drive in 13 districts from Mar 13

LAHORE: The anti-polio campaign in 13 districts of Punjab would start from March 13 and as many as 11.35 million children up to the age of five years would be immunized.

The campaign will last for seven days in Lahore, Rawalpindi, and Faisalabad and for five days in Bahawalpur, Bhakkar, DG Khan, Layyah, Mianwali, Multan, Rajanpur, Rahim Yar Khan, Sheikhupura and Sialkot.

The Chief Secretary Punjab Zahid Akhter Zaman stated while reviewed the arrangements in a meeting held at Civil Secretariat here on Friday.

Caretaker Minister for Primary Healthcare Dr. Jamal Nasir, all divisional commissioners and deputy commissioners participated in the meeting through video link whereas the Secretary Specialized Healthcare, Secretary Primary Healthcare, officials of the health department and representatives of international organizations working for polio eradication were also present.

The Chief Secretary said it was important to continue the collective efforts against the virus. He added that the deputy commissioners should pay special attention to the quality and coverage of the anti-polio drive.He said that the only solution to prevent poliovirus is the vaccine, therefore parents must cooperate with the teams.The Secretary Primary Healthcare informed the meeting that more than 90,000 polio workers would perform duties during the campaign."Special points were set up for the coverage of the moving population "he concluded.—APP

### DC orders crackdown against hoarders

QAZI SHOAIB KHAN

ATTOCK: Deputy Commissioner Attock Rao Atif Raza on Friday while taking exception on showing least interest and sluggish performance of each price control magistrates has strictly advised to accelerate crackdowns against illegal profiteering, hoarding besides conducting round the clock raids over prevailing inflation in all markets failing which proceedings will be initiated against them under E&D Rules. He was presiding over the monthly review meeting which was also attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Finance, Planning Mr. Waqar Akbar Cheema, Assistant Commissioner Attock, MsShagufta Jabeen, Deputy Director Public Relations, Attock Mr. Shahzad Niaz, DOIPWM Rabia Naseem and price control magistrates. On this occasion, the deputy commissioner Attock Rao Atif Raza also directed putting surveillance over the price hike with the assurance to provide all food items within the purchasing power of the consumers during the holy month of Ramazan. Earlier, DC Attock also took a round of different sections of E-library Attock where he inspected the available facilities of computer based study rooms, conference hall, book reference, computer labs, laptops, tablets. He also directed the management of the E-library to make necessary arrangements for the benefits of the students and public at large besides ensuring availability of internet, soft drinking water, newspapers, lights and maintenance of the library building, DC Attock added.

#### High level delegation meets Iranian Consul General

LAHORE: On the instructions of Chief Minister Punjab, Provincial Minister for Industries, Commerce and Energy SM Tanveer visited the Iranian Consulate along with a high-level delegation.

The delegation included Secretary Industry and Commerce Ehsan Bhatta, Secretary Agriculture, Special Secretary Agriculture, Commissioner Lahore and CEO Punjab Board of Investment & Trade Jalal Hasan. Provincial Minister of Industry, Commerce and Energy SM Tanveer and the delegation met Iranian Consul General Mehran Movahed Far. During the meeting, bilateral trade relations and provision of relief in the holy month of Ramadan was discussed.

**PUBLIC NOTICE** 

Succession Certificate by Ms

of deceased Mr. Muhamma

eceived. Following are declare

2.Asma Awan (Daughter)3.Ami Awan (Son)4.Asim Awan (Son

On the above application the objections of public at large are

undersigned for submission of

objection (if any) within fourtee (14) days after publication of thi

PUBLIC NOTICE

Mohsin Khan with regards to

moveable & immoveable asset

of deceased Ms. Shahnaz Abid

citizen number 4210159144492

has been received. Following

1.Anum Ali (Daughter)2.Mohsii

On the above application th

bjections of public at large are

rvited. Any aggrieved persor

may approach in person the

indersigned for submission of

Khan (Son)

Administration Succession Certificate by Mr

Awan

HYDERABAD: Anti encroachment officials demolishing the illegal construction on Latifabad 10 graveyard, in the City. —Online

## Pollen allergy patients urged to avoid outing

**DNA** 

residents.

Renowned allergy ex-

however, allergic people should wear masks while leaving the house and riding motorbikes and bicycles while unnecessary outings, especially during sunrise and sunsets should be avoided.

larly become severe among elderly people and children, he said, gic patients. More than eight plants are responexplained, adding, these plants include paper mulberry, acacia, eucannabis, dandelion, and alternaria. Another allergy expert Dr Athar Riaz added that the residents, especially those with pollen allergy, have been advised to avoid going to gardens and forests and jogging at tracks which Do not keep flowers and es as well. The major source of pollen allergy per mulberry, he mentioned. "People should close the windows to

cause pollens can stick to them. After reaching home people should change their dress and shower to ensure that pollen is washed away", he added. The cases of pollen allergy increasing in the city and amount of pollen remains high, he said, adding, patients should wear masks while going out. Experts also explained that pollen allergy symptoms included sneezing, runny nose, watering of eyes, coughing, improper breathing, wheezing and eventually Besides, these symptoms

there can be itching on

#### **PUBLIC NOTICE PUBLIC NOTICE**

Certificate by M Certificate by M addam Ali Shah with regards moveable & immoveable nran Adeel Haider with regard moveable & immovea sets of deceased Mr. Shan ets of deceased Mr. Sye lqbal citizen 6110152910283 6110119111739 .Gulshan Bibi (Daughter .Abida Ishaq (Daughter)3.Azra Daughter)2.Iffat Ara Shamin Bibl (Daughter)4.Sumera Daughter)5.Rasheeda Spouse)6.Saddam Ali Spouse)3.Ghazi (Son)4.Usman (Son)5.Imran (Son)

repetions of public at large are nay approach in person the indersigned for submission o bijection (if any) within fourteer 14) days after publication of this

#### **PUBLIC NOTICE**

for issuance

Administration

Certificate by Mr Muhammad Umair Siddique wit to moveable mmoveable assets of decease Mr. Zahid Iqbal Malik citize number 3520212330995 ha Hira Siddique (Daughter Raheela Shahzadi (Spouse Son)5.Salman Siddique (Son On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this

#### PUBLIC NOTICE for issuance Administration

On the above application th s of public at large

nvited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the

objection (if any) within fourtee (14) days after publication of the

rsigned for submission of

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uccession Certificate by Mi aider Zaman Malik with agards to moveable 8 amoveable assets of decease umber 3740582646767 Mahnoor Malik (Daughte
Sumaiya Malik (Daughte 3.Maria Bilal Malik (Daughte 4.Mahrukh (Spouse)5.Haid Zaman Malik (Son)6.Mal Mubashir Zaman (Son) On the above application the objections of public at large an invited. Any aggrieved person the property of the person of the pe undersigned for submission of

### biection (if any) within fourtee

azzaq citize 310109242227

Certificate by Mr. Muhar Zeeshan with regards to moveable number 6110118126919 has been legal beirs, 1.Muhammad Faizan (Son) 2. Hafiz Muha objection (if any) within fourtee

#### (14) days after publication of this ICHARGE SFU, NADRA ISLAMABAD-DSFU

ISLAMABAD: Health experts on Friday advised pollen allergy patients to avoid outdoor activities without wearing face mask and walking around green areas where plants like mulberry trees have growing as spring season increases respiratory problems among capital

pert on pollen Dr Zawar Ali while talking to a private news channel said that pollen allergy in the capital was the most common disorders for residents every year,

The problem is particuadding, sectors o H-8, G-6, I8 and F10 are more common for allersible for the high pollen count in Islamabad, he calyptus, pine, grease,

are in the green areas. trees in rooms and housin Islamabad is the paensure pollen would not enter their houses. After washing, do not spread clothes in the air for a long time beattacks of asthma.

the skin, he added.

#### **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......051-2826121 .....0334-5421812



#### **Airlines**

Turkish Airlines.....8494949



#### **Emergency**

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



Edhi Ambulance115
PIA Flight Info114
PIA Cargo9280979
Railway Inquiry117
Railway Exchange9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi5555489
CAA9281092



#### Hospitals

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



#### **Departments**

CDA	9221334-43
CDA	9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6
RDA	5555864
TMA	5770886
Cantonment Bo	ard 9270151-3



#### **Islamabad** Metropolitan

Corporation	9209224
Potohar Town	9209224
Rawal Town	5773343



#### Islamabad.....0321-5744480

# 7th Edition of women film festival returns to Islamabad

#### The Best Film award went to the film 48 hours by Azadeh Moussavi from Iran

#### **DNA**

ISLAMABAD: The Women International Film Festival (WIFF) kick started on Friday, March 10th 2023. The opening ceremony was hosted by the Alliance Française d'Islamabad, which also included in its program a showcase of five episodes from the animated French series

The public screenings followed on the 11th & 12th of March at the Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA), with the support of the Embassy of France in Pakistan and the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany Islamabad, with FM 89 as our official radio partner. The event was opened by the festival's founder & curator, Madeeha Raza, who spoke about the 7-year journey of this platform successfully showcasing films made by women from across the world. The German Ambassador to Pakistan, Alfred Grannas, highlighted the importance of strong female voices in the film industry.

The two-day event showcased 18 short films received from countries including Argentina, Belgium, Croatia, France, Germany, Iran, Italy, Turkey, UK, and the USA, besides Pakistan. The films received from Pakistan were My Mother's Daughter by Ahmen Khawaja & Mariam Khan, Baira Gharakh by Mehreen Jabbar, and Awaaz by Halimah Tariq. Unfortunately, 'My Mother's Daughter' could not be screened, as the film was censored by the Central Board of Film Censors.

Judged by a jury panel comprising esteemed filmmakers from diverse backgrounds, the Best Film award went to the film 48 hours by Azadeh Moussavi from Iran. The film follows the story of a man who after three years in prison, is given a furlough to go home and given an ultimatum of 48 hours to become a father to his four year old daughter.

The film screenings ended with a panel discussion on "Mobilizing support for filmmakers", with local film producers and directors like Hamza Gurmani, Halimah Tariq, and Marya Javed. The panel discussed how to garner support for emerging local filmmakers, and served a great opportunity for attendees to learn how to overcome funding and other production challenges.

This year the festival is travelling to Karachi, being hosted by the Goethe-Institut on 16 March, and to Lahore, being hosted by Aangun - Center for Learning and Culture on 18 March.

Over the years, WIFF has aimed to fill the gender gap in film, besides widening appreciation for independent cinema by creating a platform for diverse storytellers from all over the world. The overarching aim is to promote female filmmakers by building and uniting the next wave of talent and connecting the film community. It is evident that we need more such opportunities for women so they can take their stories to the

entity for WIFF, is a Pakistan based initiative trying to encourage and facilitate young girls and women to use self-expression, storytelling, and fiction through filmmaking. It is an initiative to celebrate the success stories, struggles, and achievements of inspiring women from all walks of life. We aim to create an army of vocal, confident. fearless, and economically independent female filmmakers who can tell stories about issues that affect them, using film and other interactive media.

# screen and share with the community. Women Through Film, the curating

#### statement issued in Srinagar said that peace cannot be established in South Asia until the Kashmir dispute is resolved in accordance with the United Nations resolutions and aspirations of the Kashmiri people, Kashmir Media Service reported. He said India has been committing the worst kind of human rights violations in IIOJK and the United Nations and other international rights organizations

'No peace

in South

**Asia without** 

**Kashmir** 

solution

ISLAMABAD: All Par-

ties Hurriyat Conference

(APHC) in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kash-

mir has said that the blood

of Kashmiris will not go

waste and they will get free-

dom from the illegal rule of

The APHC spokesman in a

must show seriousness to settle the lingering Kashmir dispute and raise their voices for the rights of the Kashmiris. He added that the only easy solution to the Kashmir dispute was holding an impartial referendum in Jammu and Kashmir as per the United Nations resolutions for which a favorable atmosphere needs to be created. The APHC spokesperson said Kashmiris have been facing Indian atrocities for the past 73 years and if the United Nations still does not settle the dispute, the peace of the world may be in danger.

He appealed to the world body to implement its resolutions on Kashmir so that the Kashmiri people could decide their own political future.—APP

#### Campaign for registration of house servants

ISLAMABAD: The campaign of Islamabad police Knock the Door' is in full swing to register tenants as well as domestic servants and its teams are conducting door-to-door visits to ensure

their registration. As per details, the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Islamabad registered 84 house servants and tenants of 145 houses in jurisdiction of Shalimar Police Station during last 24 hours. Police spokesman told on Friday that the purpose of this campaign was to avoid any untoward incident by maintaining law and order in the federal capital. He said that this exercise would help to keep a vigilant eye on miscreants and suspects.

However, the spokesman appealed the citizens to ask for the identity of a person if someone dressed in plain clothes comes to their house in order to collect the data. Unregistered employees and tenants could be involved in serious incidents like theft and robbery by impersonating as a common citizen. He said that Islamabad Capital Police was trying to provide a safe environment to the citizens of the federal capital by using all its resources.–APP

#### Speakers discuss arms control and disarmament issues great-power competition, military conflicts, existen-**DNA** tial threat posed by Climate Change, and an evidently ISLAMABAD: The Arms weakening commitment to

Control & Disarmament Centre (ACDC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies (ISSI) organised an In-House Session on "Latest Developments on Issues of Arms Control & Disarmament" with Ambassador Khalil Hashmi, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations and other International Organisations in Geneva.

The discussion was chaired Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General, ISSI. The participants included: Ambassador Ali Sarwar Naqvi, Executive Director, Centre for International Strategic Studies (CISS); Ambassador Zamir Akram, Pakistan's former to the UN in Geneva; Ambassador Shah M Jamal; Brigadier Haroon Rashid,

Director General (SEC-

TECH-the OIC Standing

Committee on Scientific

and Technological Coopera-

tion has sought applications

from the citizens of OIC

member states having ex-

traordinary scientific con-

tributions for the awards to

be given in various catego-

According to an official

source, COMSTECH be-

stows biennial awards to

distinguished researchers

of OIC member states for

their important scientific

ISLAMABAD: People's

general mental health and

anxiety symptoms hardly

deteriorated at all during

the pandemic, research

suggests. Most people

are resilient and made the

best of a difficult situation,

it says. The BMJ review

analysed 137 studies, most

from high-income Europe-

an and Asian countries.

Depression became a little

worse overall and among

women, older people, uni-

versity students and those

has been a high level of re-

silience during Covid-19,"

the Canadian researchers,

contributions.



Affairs (MOFA); Professor Chairman Pakistan Atom-Dr. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal, Director, School of Politics and International Relations (SPIR), Quaid-i- Azam University (QAU); Major General (Retd) Ausaf Ali;

achievement awards in ba-

sic sciences are given in the

fields of Biology, Chemis-

try, Physics and Mathemat-

ics. This year's nominations

are sought for awards in the

fields of Physics and Math-

ematics. In this category,

each award consists of a

certificate, a shield of hon-

our, and a cash prize of US\$

The COMSTECH Awards

for Excellence in Science

and Technology are clas-

sified into four categories

among which three catego-

'Mental-health crisis

from Covid pandemic

was minimal'

Other studies have found women felt the impact of the

pandemic more because of the jobs they do and the

role they play in family life. "At a population level, there

has been a high level of resilience during Covid-19,"

the Canadian researchers, from institutions including

McGill, Ottawa and Toronto universities, say

from institutions including

McGill, Ottawa and Toron-

to universities, say. "And

changes in general mental

health, anxiety symptoms,

and depression symptoms

have been minimal to

small." • Huge leap in

children in mental health

online

The raw honesty of blog-

ger Beth Matthews, and

But the pandemic con-

tinues to affect societies

"The pandemic has affect-

ed the lives of many peo-

ple - and some are now ex-

periencing mental-health

difficulties for the first

continue to ensure that

the researchers

should

health treatments •

how she saved lives

around the world.

"Governments

Medical

body

mental

crisis •

backs

time,"

ic Energy Commission Assistant Professor, Quaidi-Azam University (QAU); Ms. Rubina Waseem, Assistant Professor, National

Young Researcher Award

(under 40 years), Best Sci-

entific Book (Authorship) -

published by an internation-

al publisher during the last

two years (2021 and 2022).

and Patent - the patent

must have been registered

during the past five years

Each of the above three

awards carries a certificate,

shield of honour, and a cash

Whereas, under the fourth

category, the Best Research

Paper awards are given for

mental-health supports

are available and respond

The review did not focus

on lower-income coun-

tries, or children, young

people and those with

existing problems, the

groups most likely affect

ed, experts say, and risks

disadvantaged

hiding important effects

groups."There is evi-

dence from other studies

of considerable variation

- with some people's men-

tal health improving and

others' deteriorating," Dr

Gemma Knowles, from

King's College London,

said. "This may mean no

overall increase - but this

shouldn't be interpreted

as suggesting the pan-

demic didn't have major

negative effects among

some groups."—Online

among

to population needs.

(2018-2022).

prize of US\$4000.

**COMSTECH** seeks

applications for Awards 2023

DIV), Ministry of Foreign Dr. Pervez Butt, former Defence University (NDU); Commodore Baber Bilal Haider, Director, National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA); and Major General (Retd) Naseer Ali Khan. Malik Qasim Mustafa, Director ACDC, made

the best paper published

in an impact factor inter-

national journal during the

last two years (2021 and

2022) in the fields of Biol-

ogy, Chemistry, Mathemat-

The best research paper

award in each discipline

carries a certificate, a

shield of honour, and a cash

The deadline for applica-

tion submission is March

31, 2023, while citizens of

all 57 OIC states are eligi-

ble to apply for the COMS-

TECH Awards.-APP

ics, and Physics.

prize of US\$ 2500.

the introductory remarks.

DG Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, in his welcome remarks, highlighted the obtaining global environment marked by revival of traditional geopolitics,

man BoG of ISSI, made concluding remarks. ANF recovers over 14 kg drugs;

multilateralism. He noted

that these dynamics had

profound implications for

international cooperation,

including on issues related

to arms control and disar-

Ambassador Khalil Hashmi

apprised the participants

of recent developments on

the issues of arms control

and disarmament, especial-

ly with reference to the dis-

course in the Conference

on Disarmament (CD).

He shared his assessment

of the state of play on im-

portant agenda-points in

the CD and Pakistan's ap-

Ambassador Hashmi's in-

sightful presentation was

followed by an engaging

interactive session with the

participants. Ambassador

Khalid Mahmood, Chair-

mament.

proach

RAWALPINDI: The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting five operations in different areas of the country managed to recover over 14 kg of drugs and arrested five accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Friday. He informed that ANF in an operation at Islamabad International Airport recovered 38 heroin-filled capsules from the possession of a passenger resident of Upper Dir, going on flight no ER-703. In another operation at Lahore International Airport, ANF recovered 795 intoxicated tablets from the possession of a Dubai-bound passenger going on flight no XY-318. In the third operation, ANF foiled a bid to smuggle drugs from Dera Ismail Khan to Rawalpindi/Islamabad and recovered 2.120 kg charras from the possession of a drug smuggler, a resident of Dera Ismail Khan. In the fourth operation conducted near Orangi Banaras Chowk Karachi, ANF recovered 11.600 kg charras from the possession of a drug trafficker, a resident of Karachi. The spokesman informed that in the fifth operation near Quetta Ganj Chowk, ANF seized one kg of charras from the possession of an accused who is a resident of Quetta. Separate cases have been registered against all the arrested accused while fur-

arrests five

#### **NHA, Distt** admin ensuring compliance on prices

ISLAMABAD: National Highway Authority (NHA) and the district administrations are taking strict measures to keep a check on the prices and quality of food items offered at Motorway Service Areas (MSAs), and have imposed more than Rs 11.2 million in fines over non-compliance, since 2020. Talking to APP here on Fri-

day, an official of the NHA said that the authority had increased the fine limits from Rs 10,000-100,000 to Rs 50,000-250,000 at Service Areas and Rest Areas to curb overpricing.

He said that service providers had been directed to display price lists duly notified by the relevant deputy commissioners at visible points in shops and eateries of Service/Rest Areas and filling stations. "The Punjab Food Authority (PFA) regularly checks the quality of edibles in all MSAs and imposes fines on licenses where the food is found to be sub-standard, " he said. Moreover, the provincial governments had been requested to ensure the issuance of updated price lists on a quarterly basis.-APP

### ther investigations are under process.-APP Weekly inflation

ISLAMABAD: The weekly inflation, measured by Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 1.37 percent for the combined consumption group during the week ended on March 09, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday. The SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 243.87 points as compared to 240.57 points during the past week, according to PBS data. As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 42.27 percent. The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 =100 is covering 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups. The SPI for the lowest consumption group up to Rs 17,732 witnessed a 1.62 percent decrease and went up to 248.90 points from last week's 244.94 points. Meanwhile, the SPI for the consumption group from Rs 17,732-22-888; Rs 22,889-29,517; Rs 29,518-44,175; and above Rs 44,175 witnessed an increase of 1.55 percent, 1.40 percent, 1.29 percent, and 1.71 percent respectively. The items that recorded an increase in their average prices on a week-onweek (wow) basis included tomatoes (12.43%), potatoes (11.37%), onions (9.26%), sugar (5.48%), bananas (5.31%), cooking oil 5 litres (4.27%), wheat flour (4.06%), vegetable ghee 2.5 kg (4.01%), curd (1.89%), milk fresh (1.82%), tea packet (1.79%), rice basmati broken (1.24%), salt powdered

# up by 1.37 percent

(1.21%), lawn printed (2.00%) and shirting (1.45%).

The items which recorded a decrease in their average prices on a week-on-week (WoW) included chicken (6.73%), garlic (2.07%), pulse moong (0.83%), eggs (0.77%), pulse masoor (0.50%), LPG (0.26%), firewood (0.12%) and pulse gram (0.05%). On a Year-on-Year (YoY) basis, the commodities that witnessed an increase in prices included onions (305.23%), cigarettes (165.86%), gas charges for q1 (108.38%), diesel (93.82%), eggs (78.63%), rice irri-6/9 (78.14%), petrol (77.89%), rice basmati broken (77.27%), bananas (74.01%), pulse moong (72.54%), tea packet (66.31%), pulse mash (56.02%), pulse gram (55.97%) and bread (55.36%).—**APP** 

#### NSTP marks Int'l Women's Day

ISLAMABAD: The National Science and Technology Park (NSTP) has celebrated International Women's Day by highlighting the contributions of the Senior Engineer, Mashaal.

Mashaal is currently working as a Senior Engineer at LearnOBots, which is a private educational company based in NSTP, National University of Science and Technology (NUST).

Her role involves researching, planning, designing, teaching STEAM curriculum based on the technology of the future such as Robotics, the Internet of Things (IoT) and Artificial Intelligence.

As a Mechatronics Engineer, she has always been fascinated by technology and its endless possibilities. She took interest in the

STEAM field from a young age and pursued her passion by studying Mechatronics Engineering at Ontario Tech University, Canada. Mashaal is most passionate about encouraging more girls to explore the STEAM realm. There is a significant gender gap in STEM fields.—APP

#### belonging to sexual or gender minorities. Other studies have found women felt the impact of the pandemic more because of the jobs they do and the role they play in family life. "At a population level, there

#### Saturday, March 11, 2023

### **Briefs**

### Five bids to smuggle 598 flour bags foiled

RAWALPINDI: The Food Department Rawalpindi and district police here on Friday foiled five bids to smuggle 598 wheat flour bags. According to a district administration spokesman, the authorities of the food department along with Potohar Division police conducted raids in different areas and rounded up four drivers namely Sher Zaman, Hassan Khan, Adnan, Numan and Jan Muhammad and recovered 598 wheat flour bags.

He informed that the accused were trying to smuggle wheat flour bags out of the Rawalpindi division.

The Food Department Rawalpindi and district police on the directives of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) and City Police Officer, Rawalpindi were monitoring all the exit points of Rawalpindi district 24/7 to foil wheat and flour smuggling bids, he added.

He said, dozens of bids were foiled during the last 10 days and teams recovered thousands of wheat. flour and fine flour (maida) bags from the possession of the arrested accused.-APP

#### E&P companies deposit over Rs3.1bln for welfare schemes

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

The E&P companies, operating in different parts of the country, have collectively discovered 16 oil and gas reservoirs during the last fiscal year in pursuit of making the country self-reliant in the energy sector. Out of these, ten discoveries were made in the oil and gas fields of Sindh, four in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and

#### Culprit involved in girl kidnapping arrested

one each in Balochistan and

Punjab.-APP

ISLAMABAD: of Karachi company police station area caught kidnapper who kidnapped minore girl from G-8 Islamabad and handed over to police.

Further investigation is underway. According to details applicant said in application that he Fareed-Ullah Khan son of Muhammad Raheem is resident of flat no 10 block A-13 sector G-8. On the date of 04 March 2023 around 8pm a man attempting to kidnap his 4 year old niece Rania daughter of Zahid Iqbal. Residents saw him and on the same time he came out. We have caught him and made a telephone call on emergency no 15. Police arrived and we brought him to police station. It is requested to make legal proceedings and punish him. Karachi Company police station entered a case against accused under case no 23/266 under section 511/363.--APP



ISLAMABAD: Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi, Chief of Naval Staff, Pakistan Navy along with Air Vice Marshal Hussain Ahmed Siddiqui President Air War College Institute and faculty members.-DNA

# President for focus of dentists on oral hygiene

The president, who earlier also inaugurated the first oral cancer registry, said after oral hygiene, the focus should on the prevention of oral cancer. He advised against the use and sale of betel and other relevant addictive items leading to oral cancer

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Friday said that as curative dentistry had more financial implications, particularly for a developing country like Pakistan, dentists should think out of the box to promote preventive dentistry through public awareness of oral hygiene. The president, addressing the inaugural ceremony of the International Oral Pathology and Aesthetic Dentistry Conference held here, said preventive healthcare was more important as tertiary care was costlier and unaffordable for Pakistan. Urging the participants comprising oral pathologists, dentists, professors and students, he said that regular brushing of teeth provided almost 99% of prevention from oral diseases. He said Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) also taught the frequent use of Miswak as had been evident from around 20 Ahadith.

The president, also a renowned dentist, shared the success stories of his career in dentistry which marked massive awareness campaigns on oral health as the quantum of preventive healthcare in dent of Pakistan Society of Oral and Maxil-

which created win-win situation for private partners as field of well as the dentistry. ing the Highlightimportance of dentistry, he dentists to establish their collab-

oration with the people to promote oral hygiene and recalled the successful oral hygiene campaign run during the COVID-19 pandemic in collaboration with all the relevant stakeholders. He said the professional dentists needed to reorient their approach

their education was not as required. They should broaden their narrow focus to help people achieve prevention against oral diseases, he added. He said the professionals would have to change their paradigm for the maximum benefit of the people to pay back the huge financing made by the country on their higher education.

The president, who earlier also inaugurated the first oral cancer registry, said after oral hygiene, the focus should on the prevention of oral cancer. He advised against the use and sale of betel and other relevant addictive items leading to oral cancer.

The event marked the start of the 2nd International Conference on Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology. The Conference is a collaborative event that also includes First International Dental Laser Conference.

On the occasion, the president also launched the Pakistan Federation of Laser Dentistry and distributed shields among the organisers and collaborators of the conference. Earlier, in her address, Presilofacial Pathology (PSOMP) Federal Zone Dr Joharia Azhar said Pakistan was among very few countries where there was no oral cancer registry.

She also highlighted the need for body of laser dentistry considering the new trends and innovations in the field.

She said the oral cancer registry would help maintain the data of the disease in the country besides establishing collaboration with the partners to broaden the network President PSOMP Nauman Rauf said the conference would help broaden the network of professionals to help them embrace the vision of innovations in the field. Focal Person for Islamabad Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry Naima Ansari highlighted the role being played by women chamber in the promotion of basic health without any gender biases. She said the chamber also gave a special focus on the importance of reproductive health including family planning through the collaboration of businessmen as well

#### collaboration in PV sector DNA

**Pak-Sino** 

ISLAMABAD: Pak-Sino collaboration in Photovoltaic (PV) sector will jointly combat the energy crisis, according to Gwadar Pro on Friday. "In the past five years, the average concentration of PM2.5 in China's prefecture-level and above cities has dropped by 27.5%, and the number of days with heavy pollution has dropped by more than 50%," and "the installed capacity of renewable energy has increased from 650 million kilowatts to more than 1.2 billion kilowatts,' cited the government work report released by the ongoing Two Sessions.

Beyond doubt, China's energy conservation and carbon reduction have reached a new level. In 2022, the total export value of Chinese PV products (silicon wafers, cells, modules) was approximately USD 51.25 billion, a year-on-year increase of 80.3%. Such dramatic growth means, being a responsible major power, China is promoting green causes around the world as approaching its own carbon neutrality goal.

As Pakistan is one of the most vulnerable countries to the adverse impact of increasingly severe climate change, China's leading solar solutions provider LONGi has long been committed to developing the PV field with local partners to optimizing energy structure in Pakistan. "We signed an MoU with the Government of Pakistan in July 2019 to invest in the construction of a 50 MW solar power plant in the Bahawalpur, Punjab, as our first step," Ali Majid, General Manager, Pakistan, LONGi Solar, told Gwadar pro in an interview.

"As for the current overall production capacity of LONGi's green energy proiects invested in Pakistan. total shipments to Pakistan market would reach about 1GW this year. The experience of developing the market in the past few years tells me that in order to boost PV and new energy field, investment and awareness, none can be dispensed with," Majid added. Pakistan should encourage more investments in renewable energy infra structure to the greatest extent, including government and private investment in large-scale solar farms. as well as smaller rooftop solar installations. "As for awareness, strengthen education around the benefits of green energy, such as public education campaigns and outreach to businesses, communities, and schools," Majid noted. "Beyond that, we can increase investment in research and development of new PV technologies, such as improving the efficiency and performance of solar panels, as well as developing new materials and manufacturing processes.

### Economy being destroyed for political purposes

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) on Friday said the country's economy has been deliberately destroyed to achieve political goals. Strict legal action should be taken against the so-called experts who paralyzed the country's economy in an attempt to artificially control the value of the dollar, it said. Masses should be taken into confidence about the pending IMF deal instead of keeping the nation in the dark, said Dr. Murtaza Mughal, President of PEW. He said that the capital flight has been happening long before the talent flight from the country. Dr. Murtaza Mughal said that almost every notable politician, businessman, and bureaucrat considers it their right to buy lavish properties in other countries and open dollar accounts, which is bleeding the fragile economy white. He said that a former finance minister has revealed that dollars are being smuggled into Afghanistan in large quantities but no one dares to lay hands on these smugglers. Now, apart from Afghanistan, currency smugglers have found the lucrative Iranian market where demand for dollars is high, he added. Pakistan's economy is being destroyed due to the smuggling of dollars, but there is no one to stop these influential smugglers. Dr. Mughal said that earlier most of Iran's dollar needs were met from Iraq, but now the United States and the Central Bank of Iraq have started to stop the trend in which they have been successful up to 80%, which has badly affected the Iranian currency. Urban inflation in Iran has crossed 55 percent and the demand for the dollar has increased greatly which has become an unexpected boon for the smugglers. Currency smugglers having the right connections are busy digging the foundations of the country for profit. If currency smuggling was not stopped and negative policies were not reversed the US dollar will soon reach to the mark of Rs300, the price of petrol and electricity will have to be increased and the interest rates will have to be hiked, he warned.-DNA

# Digital Education' is the key to women's empowerment

Ms. Sameena Imtiaz, a Development Worker and Program Head at CRSS urged women to come out of victimhood and focus more on the redressal measures

**DNA** 

ISLAMABAD: At a discussion organized by the Institute of Regional Studies in collaboration with the Department of Defense and Strategic Studies, QAU on the 'role of women in contemporary times' panelists urged for greater participation of women in the field of digital technology.

In her introductory remarks, Ms. Nabila Jaffer, Research Analyst at IRS, emphasized the need for attitude change towards women in Pakistan which she said was necessary for streamlining women's role in the socio-economic development of the country. Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Nadeem Riyaz, President of IRS said that women remained an un-quantifiable part of the economy and that trend needed to be reversed. He was of the view that women's empowerment through digital education was the need of the day.

Panel moderator, Dr. Shabana Fayyaz, Chairperson at the Department of Defence and Strategic Studies, QAU, said that in connection with Women's Day, today's discussion under the theme 'Digit All' was important to highlight the role of women in the digital era. For that, every country needed to play its role in providing an enabling environment for women in their systems, she added. She urged that the laws passed by the government must be implemented in their true spirit so that the longstanding problems of women especially those living in backward areas can be addressed. She suggested that a collaborative framework needed to be promoted as societies could not progress until people from all walks of life work

Ms. Sameena Imtiaz, a Development Worker and Program Head at CRSS urged women to come out of victimhood and focus more on the redressal measures as there were various hotlines and safety platforms available that women could exploit. She was of the view that education, particularly digital literacy can empower women in a significant way, but for that, we needed to mobilize digital companies for necessary support, she added.

Dr. Salma Malik, Asst. Professor at QAU, said that we needed to learn from the Bangladesh model where women started with participation in small economic activities that eventually resulted in the mushroom growth of small and medium-level women entrepreneurship in Bangladesh. She also underscored the importance of inoculating the true Islamic history for change in the mindset, adding that the history was replete with examples of strong and for-

ward-looking women. Dr. Ayesha Siddiqa, Asst. Professor, QAU said that a liability mindset about women was one of the root causes besides the internalization of certain patriarchal ideologies that hindered women's empowerment in our society. To change the decade-old mindset we needed to educate and raise our children in a way that they could build a better society, she added.

Ms. Roshan Sheikh, Product Designer, and former Afiniti Techwomen Fellow lamented that the negative image of Pakistani women was more highlighted in the international media than the accomplishment part. She stressed that Pakistani women were more capable than women of many other countries, however, quality education was still hindering their greater participation and role in society, she added. The event was well attended by ambassadors, academicians, practitioners, and students.

### NUTECH to play role in the remodeling of disaster management

ISLAMABAD: As part of raising greater user-based, area-specific comprehension of national preparedness and response, amongst all localized communities and responders, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)research branch, National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) has planned a series of interactive workshops and seminars. In this regard, NIDM organized a two-days Workshop on "Local Needs Gap Analysis and Framework of Recommended National Preparedness and Response" at the National University of Technology (NUTECH), Islamabad from 8-9 March 2023. This workshop aimed at strengthening coordination & collaboration across the disaster management cycle with a focus on disaster risk reduction for combating the vulnerabilities of natural hazards. It also discussed the key identified areas pertaining to the implementation of climate resilience and adaptation in Pakistan bylinking up with universities for collaborative R&D to garner global sponsorships for evolving site-specific innovative solutions in all aspects of Disaster Management. This two-day workshop was attended by representatives from academia, local communities, NGOs, local disaster management authority representatives, provincial departments, and NUTECH faculty/students. Addressing the participants at the opening ceremony of the training workshop, Rector NUTECH Lt Gen (Retd) Moazzam Ejaz acknowledged NDMA's role and plan in National Preparedness and Response.—DNA

# Al cancer screening lab put into operation

**DNA** 

ISLAMABAD: China-Pakistan joint AI medical diagnosis lab in Islamabad has been put into oper-China Economic ation. Net (CEN) reported on Friday. The lab, located in the Akbar Niazi Teaching Hospital, will provide free cervical cancer screening to 10,000 Pakistani women in its first phase of operation. "It can also be used in the early diagnosis of other high incidence clinical tumors, such as cancer, gastric breast cancer, oral cancer, etc.," said the project lead from Landing Med, a Chinese medical technology com-



pany that provided three cervical cancer screening devices along with 5,000 sets of supporting consumable items to Pakistan last December for the lab construction. Different from traditional

clinical procedure where patients have to visit the hospital several times for specimen collection, report analysis, and treatment, the AI-powered lab streamlined the operation by processing the specimen, scanning the slides and uploading them to the 5G cloud platform.

Once data upload is com-

plete, a medical team in China can make diagnosis remotely and a report can be generated in about 5 minutes. Up to now, the service has been available to surrounding residents after trial diagnosis for the hospital staff proved efficient and reliable.

Cervical cancer has become the third most common cancer in Pakistan after head and neck and breast cancers, and around 64 percent of Pakistani women who have this cancer lose their lives as they only discover the disease when it becomes almost incurable in the third or the fourth stage of cancer.

#### Intelligent **Transport** System successfully tested ISLAMABAD: In a major

breakthrough in the field of intelligent transport systems. NHMP has tested a successful proof of concept on the M11 North Sialkot motorway in coordination with the Frontier Works Organization (FWO) and the National Highway Authority (NHA). According to the details issued by NHMP, cameras would be installed every 10 to 15 kilometres which will capture violations by vehicles and then the data will be conveyed to different forums for the efficient collection of fine money. The information of violation will travel to the violator himself if he is an M tag holder while in the second tier, the information will go to the next patrol vehicle that can easily stop the violating vehicle and in the third-tier information will go to our control room. The violation data will also be transmitted to a national repositorv. where demerit points will be deducted from the licensing crisis, eventually leading to the license cancellation. Toll plazas would also be equipped with sensitive digital equipment which will receive violation information, and drivers will be required to pay fines and taxes separately. Vehicles that do not adhere to the motorway's rules, will be chased and heavy fines would be imposed on them.-APP

### UN ocean treaty: arriving just in time

n his 1968 essay The Tragedy of the Commons, the ecologist Garrett Hardin argued that resources which do not clearly belong to anyone are likely to be overexploited, since protecting them is in no one person's interest. That tragedy is unfolding on the high seas - the two-thirds of the ocean that lies beyond coastal states' national jurisdiction. This is a commons, where fishing and mining have been opened to all. The result is serious damage to a vital resource that covers almost half the planet's surface. The high seas are not entirely lawless. Beneath the waves lies a rich prize. Many scientists think the high seas harbour novel disease-fighting chemistry that might lead to new drugs. Until this month, there was no mechanism to prevent nations or companies monopolising the world's marine genetic resources. One study in 2018 pointed out that BASF, which calls itself "the largest chemical producer in the world", owned nearly half of the 13,000 patents derived from marine organisms. The good news is that the agreement of a historic UN ocean treaty this month may help to slow the plunder. Crucially the deal keeps alive the 30x30 target - a pledge made by countries at the UN biodiversity conference in December that aims to protect 30% of sea (and land) by 2030. The treaty tries to accommodate both the global north's desire for a legal framework for establishing marine protected areas (MPAs) to protect against the loss of wildlife and the global south's expectation that resources are seen as being common to all

All this arrives not a moment too soon. The oceans are not an inexhaustible resource. Yet humanity treats them as if they are boundless. There are limits to how many animals and plants can be sustainably harvested for food and other products. Nor can humanity carry on dumping sewage and pollutants into the watery depths with little care for what damage is being done. In absorbing the carbon dioxide generated by burning fossil fuels, the oceans become much more acidic, threatening marine life.

What is encouraging is that the delegates from 193 member states put aside their geopolitical differences to work together in the name of protecting the seas. The new treaty is crucial, as the UN secretary general, António Guterres, said, for addressing the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.

There is still some way to go. The new law must be ratified by 60 member states before it can be enforced. The final text contains a tension between the two principles of the "Freedom of the High Seas" and the "Common Heritage of Humankind". One key test will be if traditional powers allow controlled access to marine genetic resources and for profits derived from the high seas to be equally shared among all states. The onus is on developed nations to act responsibly because, as Mr Hardin pointed out, too much "freedom in a commons brings ruin to all".

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### China-US relations

ooking back, it is hard to believe that in the Obama era there were serious discussions about whether a "G2" could emerge - with the US and China coming together, never easily but earnestly, and in good faith, to tackle the world's great problems. The costs of mutual hostility are now greater and clearer than they were back then: the risk of global economic recession, a failure to tackle the climate crisis, and even of military conflict in the future. Yet far from strengthening, bilateral relations have nosedived. The

Beijing, in particular, seems to be giving up on fixing it. In recent months, Beijing had appeared to step back from the abrasive "wolf warrior" diplomacy that helped to set alarm bells ringing not only in the west but more widely. But this week, Xi Jinping made a rare explicit criticism of Washington, remarking that "western coun-

relationship between China and the US is not only at its lowest point

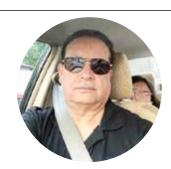
for years, but appears to be trapped in a downward spiral. For now

tries, led by the US, are implementing all-round containment, encirclement and suppression against us".

Xi's message was probably directed in large part at his domestic audience. Nationalism, always useful to the party, has become more so as economic growth has faltered. His remarks also reflect China's conviction that the US is driven as much by jealousy of its economic hegemony as by any principled concerns. But in Washington it was, inevitably, seen as upping the ante. The newly formed House select committee on the strategic competition between the United States and the Chinese Communist party says it wants to raise public concern - surely not lacking in a country where growing hawkishness towards China is evident across the political spectrum. Though Beijing's own actions are largely to blame for that shift, the change has bolstered its aggrieved conviction that it won't gain much from attempting engagement. Rightful concern in the US - on issues ranging from China's increasingly forceful foreign policy to industrial espionage, and from the treatment of Uyghurs to the future of Taiwan - is mixed at times with nationalism and even racism. And while one committee member said it does not want to encourage xenophobia and anti-Asian sentiment, not everyone criticising China is scrupulous in discriminating between government and people or making sure others do so. A bill in the Texas senate would make it illegal for Chinese citizens to buy any property, including homes. The pandemic has already led to growing anti-Asian hate. Shrill, unfocused alarmism also makes it harder to concentrate on the issues that really matter and how to handle them. Under Mr Xi, it is increasingly hard to read China's leadership accurately, and harder still to sway it. The US could at least determine its own priorities and values more clearly.

# FIR an effective political weapon?

**Qamar Bashir** 



Our political history is unfortunately replete with instances of political victimisation by registering false cases of corruption and anti state allegations which remained unproven

in most of the cases. The founder and first President of Bangladesh, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, was the worst example of political victimisation. He was incarcerated because he opposed the military regime. Benazir Bhutto was dismissed twice as Prime Minister on political motives, first by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan in 1990 and later by President Farooq Leghari in 1996

He First Information Report (FIR) is an extremely powerful political weapon and excessive brute force for those in power to use against their opponents to arrest and detain for questioning and investigation, harassing, humiliating, torturing, breaking their will and weakening their commitment, wearing them down, and rerouting their attention from politics to defend themselves before the police and judiciary. The accused are harassed and humiliated, and media sensationalism damages their reputation, social standing, and public support even if they are not arrested. The accused and their family can be emotionally, financially, and psychologically stressed by the investigation and trial process, which can be slowed or sped up.

By filing over 76 FIRs against Imran Khan mostly on identical grounds and in different parts of the country, the elements in power are using FIRs extremely effectively. Hamid Mir, who is a known critic of Imran Khan, stated in one of his recent analysis that all but one or two FIRs of Tusha Khana and illegal funding may have some basis, whereas the rest are baseless and frivolous (Bhondie) and lodged on flimsy grounds to derail his resolve for holding fair and transparent elections and are likely to be quashed by the respective courts.

Our political history is unfortunately replete with instances of political victimisation by registering false cases of coren in most of the cases. The founder and first President of Bangladesh, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, was the worst example of political victimisation. He was incarcerated because he opposed the military regime. Benazir Bhutto was dismissed twice as Prime Minister on political motives, first by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan in 1990 and later by President Farooq Leghari in 1996. She was also the target of multiple assassination attempts, including the 2007 attempt that ultimately proved fatal. Several FIRs were filed against Nawaz Sharif under various sections of the Pakistan Penal Code, such as Section 290 (public nuisance), Section 291 (continuation of nuisance after injunction to cease), and Section 440 (criminal conspiracy) (mischief committed after preparation made for causing death or hurt) and assault and terrorism charges under the Anti-Terrorism Act. He was removed three times as Prime Minister primarily for political reasons. In a politically motivated order, the Supreme Court banned him from political office for life, and a NAB court convicted him of corruption and sentenced him in absentia to 10 years in prison. This appeared to be the end of his long and turbulent political career as a three-time leader, but who knows if he will return with a vengeance to become the Prime Minister for a fourth time. Asif Ali Zardari was imprisoned in the 1990s on politically motivated corruption charges. In 2018, Maryam Nawaz was arrested on corruption charges. Two members of the Pakistani National Assembly, Ali Wazir and Mohsin Dawar, were arrested in 2019 on charges of terrorism and inciting violence and were targeted for opposing government policies. Unfortunately the list goes on and on and needs an entire book to enlist all such cases.

Pakistan however is not alone as a number of other developing nations have also witnessed this malpractice, albeit for legitimate reasons. Several FIRs were filed against Narendra Modi, Rodrigo Duterte, Hosni Mubarak, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, and Park Geun-hye, the former presidents of Brazil and South Korea, respectively a few remain scot free

and some others were convicted and punished. Multiple and out-of-jurisdiction FIRs filing is a serious offence in the majority of countries, including ours and India. It is punishable under Section 182 of the Indian Penal Code for a term of up to six months, a fine, or both. Under Section 182 of the Pakistan Penal Code, filing multiple FIRs or filing a FIR in a jurisdiction where the offence did not occur is punishable by imprisonment for a term of up to six months, a fine, or both.

In the Mst. Sughran Bibi vs. The State case, the Islamabad High Court ruled categorically that only one FIR could be filed for a single offence. The court noted that the alleged incident occurred in Islamabad, and that the filing of FIRs in Lahore and Peshawar violated the Supreme Court's order. The court termed it a "misuse of authority" and noted that the petitioners endured "mental torture, harassment, and fear for their lives and freedom". The court subsequently suspended the FIRs and prohibited the police from arresting the petitioners in the case.

It is alleged that since such FIRs are filed by the front men of the establishment, who, in Pakistan, are untouchable and above the law; thus, such frivolous, baseless, and true then neither our law enforcement system or justice system have the grit, courage or means to resist their dictates. This elephant, if it is in the room, weakens the public policy making and enforcing institutions which are arm twisted to obey the commands but cannot officially hold it responsible for failures of the public policy interventions. Working in the power corridors all my life, I was always amazed to hear the President, Prime Minister, Ministers, and Secretaries say this should be done and this should not be done, even though they had the mandate, power, and means to do so. They always replied, "The Establishment is one who takes the final decision on all matters of public policy and vetoes most of the proposals or kills their projects and initiatives." It may not be true, but it allows everyone to blame the establishment for their actions and inactions. This anomaly may explain our toothless, inefficient, and ineffective civil institutions. The incumbent establishment has pledged to avoid political and civil matters and stick to their constitutional role. This is a game-changing decision, and the establishment should take all possible steps to disengage from civilian affairs in letter and spirit in a verifiable manner as soon as possible. The political leadership and civilian bureaucracy will no longer have a scapegoat for their failures, inactions, and incompetence, and the armed forces will gain credibility.

Idealistically, the party in power and the establishment should dissociate themselves from party politics because, once in power, it represents the entire population of a country and should treat all political parties, including its own, impartially. But it is easier said than done because, on the one hand, distancing the government from party politics enables it to be more focused on the public interest and less beholden to narrow party interests thereby enhancing the government's credibility and public trust, while on the other hand, association with the party can provide a useful structure for organising and coordinating government policies and implementing its agenda.

The government should treat its political opponents with respect, civility, and professionalism, recognising the opposition's right to express their views and engage in legitimate political activities without fear of retaliation, harassment, or persecution, establishing the rule of law, and refraining from using the criminal justice system to target political opponents.

We should have learned by now that in a democratic society, political opposition is a necessary and healthy component of the political process. Opposition parties serve as a necessary check and balance on the government, ensure that diverse viewpoints are represented, and contribute to the formulation of objective public policy. Therefore, the government should engage constructively and inclusively with its political opponents and seek to resolve political differences through peaceful means.

The government should also ensure that all political parties and actors have access to the political process and can compete on an equal playing field. This includes providing equal opportunities for political participation, ensuring freedom of speech and assembly, and promoting electoral transparency and accountability.

should also apply to our legal and justic system, which should dispense justice without fear or favour, political bias or influence, and with complete impartiality strictly in accordance with the law.

Equal responsibility rests with opposition to refrain from using the legal system to advance their political agendas and instead focus on addressing the legitimate grievances

and problems of the people they represent. The government should also understand that political division and polarisation leads to unrest, strife, and commotion, which benefits the opposition more and the government less and creates socio-economic, and security and safety concerns, creates despondency, despair and hopelessness, adversely impact the businesses, trade and investment and discredit the country in the region and

around the world. In conclusion, government should refrain from using brute state power to favour or oppose a political party, uphold justice and fairness, encourage justice and legal system to perform their duties independently, without fear or favour, and create an environment of dialogue, consultation, and negotiation to resolve pressing political, administrative, economic, financial, and security and safety issues. Above all, the Establishment should stick to its decision to stay away from political and civilian affairs, reallocate its resources from these sectors to the country's security and safety in a verifiable manner, and let politicians and civilian bureaucracy take full responsibility for public policy decisions, their implementation, and the consequences of their inefficiency, incompetency, and mistakes

The writer is the Former Press Secretary to the President Former Press Minister at the Embassy of Pakistan to France

### Choice between a Hawk and a Dove

Dr. Muhammad Shahid

The deviation of inflation from the forecasts strikingly illustrates the intersection of multiple factors including politics, economics, and other considerations. Policymakers with eyes on the next election find it difficult to offer political capital, invest the time, and energies to address the abstract possibility of a future crisis. Keeping in perspective the high inflationary pressure, the monetary policy committee emphasized that anchoring inflation expectations

onetary Policy Committee of the State Bank of Pakistan has increased the policy rate by 300 basis points to 20 percent. State Bank, in its earlier monetary policy statements had highlighted nearterm risks to the inflation outlook from external and fiscal adjustments. Most of these risks have materialized and are partially reflected in the inflation outturns for February. The latest monetary policy statement indicates that inflation has surged to 31.5 percent on year on year basis, while core inflation rose to 17.1 percent in urban and 21.5 percent in rural basket in February 2023.

SBP in its monetary policy statement revealed that recent fiscal adjustments and exchange rate depreciation have led to a significant deterioration in the near term inflation outlook and a further upward drift in inflation expectations. SBP is expecting further surge in inflation in the months ahead. The impact of these adjustments would contribute and rise inflation before it begins to fall.

Why there is so much deviation in the inflation forecast? Several recent reports have shown inflation accelerated more than forecasts made in the previous month. The average inflation this year is now expected in the range of 27 and 29 percent against the November 2022 projection of 21 and 23 percent. The deviation of inflation from the forecasts strikingly illustrates the intersection of multiple factors including politics, economics, and other considerations. Policymakers with eyes on the next election find it difficult to offer political capital, invest the time, and energies to address the abstract possibility of a future crisis. Keeping in perspective the high inflationary pressure, the monetary policy committee emphasized that anchoring inflation expectations is critical. We need to increase interest rate because anchoring inflation expectations warrants a strong policy response. But at the same time, we also need to understand the difficult politics of cooperation between fiscal and monetary policy because the lack of cooperation makes everyone worse off. The policy response to internal and external vulnerabilities has continued to be tempered by political realities. Furthermore, policymakers are under intense pressure from their constituents

Every government faces tough decisions to have appropriate policy responses in addressing the complex nature of economic problems including inflation and slow growth. Significant improvement has been observed on the external side in response to the policy decisions. In January 2023, the current account deficit fell to 242 million dollars, the lowest level since March 2021. Cumulatively, the current account deficit remained at 3.8 billion dollar in Jul-Jan FY23 which is 67 percent down compared to the same period last year. However, the uncertain environment at the global level and the declining reserves pose additional risks. We know that despite a substantial reduction in the current account deficit, vulnerabilities continue to persist. The accumulation of domestic and external vulnerabilities, scheduled debt repayments and a decline in financial inflows amid rising global interest rates and domestic uncertainties, continue to exert pressure on foreign exchange reserves and the exchange rate. These vulnerabilities pose a significant threat to improvement in the current account deficit. The monetary policy committee of the SBP is of the view that coordinated and concerted efforts are needed to arrest the decline in foreign exchange reserves. The MPC noted that foreign reserves remain low and concerted efforts are needed to improve the external position. Finalization of talks with IMF will help address near-term external sector challenges. Furthermore, the monetary policy statement indicates that measures for energy conservation are urgently needed. This will allow the government to alleviate pressure on the external account and meet the import requirements of other sectors. The introduction of additional revenue measures in the form of mini budget including an increase in GST and excise duties, reduction in subsidies, adjustments in energy prices, and the austerity driveare expected to help contain the otherwise widening fiscal and primary deficits. These fiscal consolidation measures are critical for economic stability and will complement the ongoing monetary tightening in bringing down inflation over the medium-term. The absence of fiscal consolidation and any significant fiscal slippages will undermine monetary

policy effectiveness in the context of achieving the price stability objective.

How State Bank of Pakistan can get inflation back to target without generating a significant slowdown in the economy? The recent upward push to the policy rate has led to the debate over the effectiveness of monetary policy. People in SBP are becoming more hawkish and are assigning higher weight to inflation, focussed on increased interest rates while killing growth. SBP is of the view that the short-term costs of bringing down inflation are lower than the longterm costs of allowing it to become more entrenched.

The debate between beating inflation and avoiding job losses is crucial for understanding the political economy of monetary policy. SBP declares itself independent of politics, but it's getting harder to stay completely separated from the political influence. The prevailing inflation suggests that interest rates will need to increase further and stay elevated into next year to curb inflation which is showing few signs of abating. But what are then the implications

for growth, employment and poverty. Inflation above 30 percent forced SBP officials to be laser-focused on bringing down inflation in the economy. I agree, somehow, with the argument that it takes a while for monetary tightening to really work and arrest inflation but this jumbo-sized 300 basis point hikes in one go is a source of great concern. The hawkish SBP approach will not allow tighter policy to filter through the economy and bring any balance between aggregate supply and aggregate demand and thus will not lower inflation. Inflation will come down with an ease of the global commodity price and improvement in supply chain. We can only make a request to the member of the monetary policy committee to vote for the smaller raise in policy rate at the time of announcing monetary policy.

-The author has a PhD Degree in Economics from PIDE and has 17 years' experience as a journalist in economic reporting. He also teaches Public Policy, Governance, Poverty and Development, Gender and Political Economy.



### Briefs

#### Iran, Saudi **Arabia to** restore ties

From Page 01 zones across the Middle East, including in Yemen where the Huthi rebels are backed by Tehran, and Rivadh leads a military coalition supporting the government. Iraq, a neighbour to both countries, had hosted several rounds of talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia since April 2021. Those encounters were held at a relatively low level, involving security and intelligence officials. In Friday's statement. Iran and Saudi Arabia said they "thank the Republic of Iraq and the Sultanate of Oman for hosting the talks held between the two sides in 2021 and 2022 as well as the leaders and government of the People's Republic of China for hosting and supporting the talks held in that country.

#### Pakistan welcomes...

From Page 01 efforts for bridging gaps between the two brotherly countries, Pakistan will continue to play aconstructive role in the Middle East and the region, the statement concluded.

#### Xi clinches third term...

From Page 01 Xi will need to focus on economic revival," said Willy Lam, senior fellow at the Jamestown Foundation, a U.S. think tank. "But if he continues with what he has been doing - tighter party and state control over the private sector and confrontation with the West, his prospects for success won't be encouraging." Russian President Vladimir Putin was among the first foreign leaders to congratulate Xi on his third term. The two sealed a "no limits" partnership between China and Russia in February last year, days before Russia launched its invasion of Ukraine. Xi set the stage for another term when he did away with presidential term limits in 2018, and has become China's most powerful leader since Mao Zedong, who founded the People's Republic.

#### Maryam blames...

FORM PAGE 01 The PML-N senior VP alleged that the PTI chief is always ready to address rallies but he is unhealthy to appear before the courts. She expressed sorrow over the death of PTI worker Zille Shah and prayed for the peace of the departed soul. She said that Nawaz Sharif has never used his party workers as his shield but he and his daughter protected all PML-N activists. Maryam Nawaz asked PTI workers to not be part of Imran Khan's failed campaign and refuse to hide his thefts. She said that election will be held but accountability will also be held before it.

#### Imran Khan will surely...

From Page 01 will return to the country and lead his party. He predicted that PML-N will win the elections again. Sanaullah claimed that Nawaz Sharif brought the country out of crisis. Yesterday, the interior minister said they cannot arrest PTI chief Imran Khan if he keeps hiding under his bed. While addressing a press conference, Rana Sanaullah said that Khan has been given enough relief. He said that this day is important for all women. He said that an Aurat March is scheduled in Lahore and another in Islamabad, whereas, Imran Khan has also brought a 'burger

#### march' in Lahore. 5 terrorists killed in...

From Page 01 eliminate the menace of terrorism from every inch of our territory with an unflinching resolve. Pakistan's security forces have conducted numerous operations against terrorism across the country, not only arresting terrorists and their facilitators but also foiling several attacks during the last three months.

# Erdogan: Turkey's mercurial 'chief' in fight of political life

This passion has helped him and his party win more than a dozen local and national elections, giving Erdogan a chance to claim a people's mandate for his foreign military adventures and domestic clampdowns on dissent

image over two tumultuous decades, Recep Tayyip Erdogan enters the fight of his political life in a May election overshadowed by the pain and suffering of Turkey's deadliest earthquake in centuries. A gifted orator and strategic thinker, Erdogan, 69, has overcome jail, protests and even a bloody coup attempt to emerge as Turkey's most important leader in generations, first as prime minister and then as president since 2014.

Supporters revere him for unshackling religious restrictions in the officially secular but mostly Muslim state, overseeing ambitious infrastructure projects and turning Turkey into a geopolitical powerhouse. Detractors accuse him of slipping into authoritarianism reminiscent of the

Ottoman sultans, shacking Turkey's democratic foundations and impoverishing millions through misguided beliefs that contradict conventional economics. Most recently, they accuse him of turning a blind eye to corruption and lax building standards that allowed entire cities to crumble in last month's earthquake, which killed more than 50,000 people and erased entire cities across Turkey's southeast.

Which of these radcontrasting views wins out in the

Amateur Golf C'ship: PGF



waver in the second decade of his rule, Erdogan bet it all on a 2017 referendum on abolishing the office of prime minister and handing added powers to the president. Erdogan eked out a narrow win, enfeebling parliament and enabling him to effectively rule by decree. It also gave him the constitutional loophole needed to run for two more terms in office. But this year's presidential election campaign will be like no other of the Erdogan era, starting after a month of national mourning for the quake on February 6. Public fury at the government's sluggish response to Turkey's biggest disaster of

its modern era made some allies urge Erdogan to postpone the vote. - APP

## Khawaja's 180, Green ton put Australia on

180 and Cameron Green struck a maiden century before Australia were bowled out for 480 by India on day two of the fourth Test on Friday. Khawaja's mammoth knock off 422 balls and his 208-run fifth-wicket partnership with Green put the tourists in the box seat in Ahmedabad. Off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin led the Indian attack, claiming six wickets on a pitch still looking good for batting at the world's biggest cricket stadium. India reached 36 for no loss at stumps, still trailing the tourists by 444 runs. Skipper Rohit Sharma, on 17, and Shubman Gill, on 18, looked positive and attacked the Australian spinners, who bowled five of the 10 overs before close of play. The opening pair smashed four boundaries between them including a big six by Gill off senior Australia spinner Nathan Lyon. Khawaja stood out in his marathon knock which ended on the first ball after tea when Axar Patel trapped the left-hander lbw, a decision that was denied by the on-field umpire but successfully reviewed by India. Todd Murphy (41) and Lyon (34) kept the Indian bowlers frustrated in a 70-run stand for the ninth wicket before Ashwin broke through for his 32nd five-wicket haul in Tests. Ashwin trapped Murphy lbw before dismissing Lyon to wrap up the innings. In what has been a low-scoring series, giant all-rounder Green got his first international hundred with a boundary in the second session and was greeted with a hug from Khawaja. Ashwin snared two wickets in one over after a wicketless first session for the hosts. He broke the Khawaja-Green stand - Australia's highest Test partnership in India since 1979 - after he got Green caught behind for 114 off a delivery sliding down the leg side. Khawaja, who struck his first Indian Test ton on day one and 14th overall, kept up the grind to break the Australian record for longest Test innings in India. The previous record was Graham Yallop's 392-ball knock in Kolkata, also in 1979. Khawaja resumed on his overnight 104 and took charge after Australia elected to bat in



AFZAL JAVED

RAWALPINDI: The contract signing ceremony of the National Amateur Golf Championship was held here at Rawalpindi Golf Club in which Pakistan Golf Federation (PGF) signed a sponsorship contract of the Championship with Future Development Holdings (FDH) Private Limited as

**Families of martyred** 

personnel watch PSL

ISLAMABAD: The children and families of the martyred personnel of Islamabad Capital Police visited Rawalpindi cricket

stadium and watched the Pakistan Super League match. On

the invitation of the owner of the Islamabad United Cricket

Team, children and families of the heroes of Islamabad Cap-

ital Police were taken to Rawalpindi cricket stadium on the

other day in protocol and they watched the Pakistan Super

League match. According to information, on the instructions

of Inspector General of Police Islamabad Dr. Akbar Nasir

Khan, steps are being taken to pay tribute to the families

of the heroes of Islamabad Capital Police and to pay tribute

to their sacrifices. IGP Islamabad and senior police officers

also mingled with the children and watched the match. IGP

Islamabad also reviewed the security arrangements for the

cricket match between Lahore Qalandars and Islamabad

United with CPO Rawalpindi and other senior police officers.

He said that the Islamabad police and the entire nation are

proud of the sacrifices of martyred personnel who sacrificed

their lives for the safety of the citizens. He said Islamabad

police will stand with these families and to remember the

Paris-Nice 6th stage blown

away by 'violent' wind

TOURVES: Paris-Nice organisers were forced to cancel

Friday's sixth stage of the so-called 'race to the sun' due

to "exceptionally violent" gusts of wind. The decision

was taken "to ensure the riders' safety" after trees were blown down in the region. "I weigh 60 kilos, I couldn't

stay on my bike with a wind like this," said last year's

Tour de France winner Jonas Vingegaard. The cancelled

stage was a hilly 197.4km ride from Tourves to La Colle-

sur-Loup. The stage had already been shortened to miss out the first section with a new start at the 117.8km mark

at La Fontaine d'Aragon, before it became evident con-

ditions were too dicey. Pierre-Yves Thouault, one of the

race organisers, told AFP that when the police and some

of his team had checked out part of the route they came

across fallen trees. "Their cars were being hit by tiles. We

have to be sensible. Paris-Nice is like this, with sometimes

complicated weather conditions," he added. – **Agencies** 

sacrifices of martyred personnel forever. - APP

gard Brig (retd) Sajid Akram, Secretary Pakistan Golf Federation welcomed all participants on behalf of the Federation as PGF is the supreme body of Golf in the Country. Speaking to media about the championship, PGF Secretary Brig (R) Sajid Akram said that Pakistan Golf Federation would be holding the National Amateur Golf Championship in

Lahore from April 27 to 30. "It is endeavor of PGF to promote game of Golf in the country in best possible way, every day more and more youngsters are joining in to learn and improve their skills. We have 49 registered golf courses in the country out of which only 24 golf courses are 18/27 holes, he said.'

Brig (retd) Sajid Akram said that we were also ensuring

#### in busy Schedule of Pakistan their bid to square the series 2-2. - Agencies Super League (PSL)." Amazons down Super Women to win second exhibition match

Malik, Group Chief Oper-

ating Officer, FDH, Brig

Nadeem Aslam, Project Di-

rector Smart City Lahore,

Louis Fernandez. Chief

Development Officer, Smart

City Golf Course, Simon,

Golf Superi Capital Smart

City Golf Course In charge

and Malik Kamran PGF. "We

are thankful to the media,

who spared their time even

ISLAMABAD: Danni Wyatt and Bismah Maroof, took Amazons to a 41-run victory over the Super Women in the second Women's League exhibition match at the Pindi Cricket Stadium on Friday. Danni Wyatt and Bismah Maroof provided a 137-run second wicket partnership stand off 79 balls while a four-fer by Anam Amin aided in Amazons' victory over the Super Women. Wyatt, who was also declared player of the match, scored an eye-catching 97 off 45 balls with 17 fours and three sixes, while Bismah struck 11 fours in a 51ball 73 not out to help Amazons collect 204 for three after electing to bat first. Lauren Winfield-Hill fought a lone battle when she struck 11 fours and three sixes in an impressive 42-ball 80 as the Super Women finished at 163 for nine with left-arm spinner Anam registering figures of 4-0-17-4. Friday's result meant the three-match series was now tied at one-all, with the decider to be played on Saturday, which is also being celebrated to promote women's empowerment through education in collaboration with CIRCLE Women. In a match that produced 10 sixes and 49 fours, Amazons were quickly in a bother when Eyman Fatima (2) was back in the hut on the fourth ball. However, Wyatt and Bispark. Wyatt dominated the partnership by stroking eloquent boundaries before Bismah took control of the proceedings following the Englishwoman's departure by cresting some quality shots. Bismah put on 65 runs in 37 balls with Tammy Beaumont (13 off 13) Tess Flintoff (14 off 7) following the departure of Wyatt to steer her side to a position of strength. In turn, Winfield-Hill led Super Women's fightback with a gutsy and aggressive 42ball 80. She added 54 runs for the second wicket with Chamari Athapaththu (17) and 64 runs for the third wicket with Iram Javed (28) but task against an accurate and disciplined Amazons' bowling



RAWALPINDI: Women cricket players in action during a 2nd cricket exhibition match at Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium to mark the International Women's Day. - APP

# **PSL: Fazalhaq, Shadab, Shan, Tim David fined**

The incident happened in the 19th over of Lahore Qalandars' batting, when Farooqi used abusive language after dismissing the batter. Farooqi pleaded guilty to the charge and accepted the sanction proposed by match referee Roshan Mahanama

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad United's Fazalhaq Farooqi has been fined 10 per cent of his match-fee for breaching the PCB Code of Conduct for Players and Players Support Personnel during his side's match against Lahore Qalandars in the 26th fixture of the HBL PSL 8 at the Pindi Cricket Stadium on

Thursday evening. Faroogi was found to have violated Article 2.5 of the PCB Code of Conduct,

which reads as "Using language, actions or gestures which disparage or which could provoke an aggressive reaction from a batter upon his/her dismissal during a match".

The incident happened in the 19th over of Lahore Qalandars' batting, when Farooqi used abusive language after dismissing the batter. Farooqi pleaded guilty to the charge and accepted the sanction proposed by match referee Roshan Mahanama. The charge was levelled by onfield umpires Aleem Dar and Faisal Khan Afridi. Meanwhile, Islamabad United's captain Shadab

Khan and Multan Sultans' Shan Masood and Tim David were fined 10 per cent of their match fees for breaching a Level 1 offence of the HBL PSL Code of Conduct in separate incidents during their side's match in the HBL PSL 8 on Tuesday.

All three players were found to have violated Article 2.8 of the HBL PSL Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which relates to "Showing dissent at an Umpire's decision during a Match".

In Shadab's case, the incident happened in the fourth ball of 20th over of Multan Sultans' batting, when a wide ball was given by the on-field umpire and upon that Shadab came running from the boundary line and

expressed his disappointment at the decision. As regards to Shan, on the penultimate ball of 14th over of Multan Sultans batting, Shan expressed his disappointment after the umpire didn't signal it one for the over for a short pitched ball. Similarly, Tim David on the second ball of the 18th over of Multan Sultans' batting, expressed his displeasure over the leg-umpire's decision not to call a short pitched ball

a wide delivery. Shadab and Shan pleaded guilty to the offences and accepted the sanctions proposed to be imposed Roshan Mahanama and, as such, there was no need for a formal hearing. Meanwhile, David challenged the decision and after the formal hearing, the match referee upheld his decision. The charges were levelled by on-field umpires Faisal Afridi and Rashid Riaz. - APP

# **PSL 8th Edition MARCH 11, 2023** Pindi Club Ground. Rawalpindi

### PTI rivals want to win

elections...

From Page 01 Zille Shah was brutally tortured to death. The former premier slammed the incumbent government, saying that they destroyed the economy, on the other hand, they dissolved corruption cases worth Rs100 billion against them. He added that the nation is getting poor but the rulers are getting richer day by day. Imran Khan said that one path is leading toward slavery and destruction and another path is leading towards real independence. He alleged that Asif Ali Zardari and Nawaz Sharif are looting the country for 30 years and it is the right time to stand against all of them. Yesterday, Khan said,

#### BHC suspends Khan's...

"disqualify me or arrest me,

we have won the match."

From Page 01 The court will resume hearing of the constitutional petition after two weeks. Earlier in the day, PTI filed a petition in the Balochistan High Court challenging the registration of a case pertaining to hate speech against Imran Khan in Quetta. The high court has been prayed to quash the case against the PTI chairman. BHC Justice ZaheeruddinKakar admitted the petition for hearing. The petition was filed by Imran's lawyer Syed Iqbal Shah Advocate.

#### **ECP** warned of Terrorism in KP

From Page 01 'There are many security concerns in the KP as the TTP is highly active in the province at the moment,' the sources quoted the officials as saving. Later, in a brief statement, the ECP said the purpose of the meeting was to ensure the holding of polls in a peaceful manner. The commission is meeting the stakeholders in compliance with the apex court orders to hold polls within 90 days of the assemblies' dissolution. The elections in Punjab are scheduled to be held on April 30 while the date for KP polls is yet to be finalised. Both the houses were dissolved in mid-January on the direction of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan to pressure the government for snap elections.

#### FM calls for unity to fight...

From Page 01 President of the General Assembly and Pakistan in its capacity as the Chair of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Council of Foreign Ministers. Last year, the 193-member Assembly adopted resolution 76/254 designating March 15 as the International Day to Combat Islamophobia. Apart from Casaba Korosi, the Assembly's president, present at the meeting, among others, were UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterresand High Representative of the UN Alliance of Civilizations (UN-AOC), Miguel Moratinos. Secretary-General HisseinBrahimTaham and the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, NazilaGhanea, were due to address by vide-link. In his opening remarks, FM Bilawal said that since 9/11, animosity and institutional suspicion of Muslims and Islam across the world escalated to "epidemic proportions".

# Business / World



**Vladimir Putin** 

congratulates Xi Jinping

Moscow: Russian President

Vladimir Putin on Friday congratulated Xi Jinping on

his third term as China's

leader, hailing the strengthening ties between the two

countries. "Dear friend,

please accept sincere congratulations on the occa-

sion of your reelection,'

Putin said in a statement

"Russia highly values your

personal contribution to-

ward the strengthening of

ties... and strategic cooper-

ation between our nations."

"I am certain that working

released by the Kremlin.

#### **Red Cross** to open headquarters in Doha

DNA

DOHA: Qatar and the International Committee of the Red Cross signed an agreement on Thursday to establish the committee's headquarters in Doha, Qatar News Agency reported. The agreement was signed by Qatar's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad Al-Muraikhi and ICRC President Mirjana

Spoljaric Egger. The ICRC headquarters in Doha will aim to promote collaboration between the two sides in various areas of humanitarian work, strengthen coordination at the international level. and launch initiatives that support achieving their

#### Mexico cartel apologises for kidnapping Americans

#### **DNA**

NEW YORK: Suspected drug cartel members have handed over five purported henchmen as a would-be apology for the abduction of four Americans in the Mexican border city of Matamoros, according to media and a source familiar with the investigation.

The Scorpions faction of the Gulf Cartel on Thursday apologised to the residents of Matamoros, the Mexican woman who died in the cartel shootout, and the four Americans and their families. "We have decided to turn over those who were directly involved and responsible in the events, who at all times acted under their own decision-making and lack of discipline," the letter reads, adding that those individuals had gone against the cartel's rules, which include "respecting the life and wellbeing of the innocent." Two of the Americans and a Mexican woman died after gunmen opened fire on the United States citizens shortly after their arrival in Matamoros on March 3. The four Americans were found on Monday on the edge of the city, by which time two of them were dead. Mexican officials gave the bodies of the two dead men, identified as Shaeed Woodard and Zindell Brown, to US officials in Matamoros on Thursday afternoon, and they were taken across the border into the US, Reuters news agency reported. Woodard's cousin, Latavia

McGee, had surprised him with the fatal road trip as a birthday getaway, according to his father, James Woodard. He said he was speechless upon hearing that the cartel had apologised for the violent abduction that killed his son and was captured in footage that quickly spread online.

**Imprisoned** American in Iran calls on Biden to secure release

#### **DNA**

TEHRN: A United States citizen imprisoned by Iran on spying charges gave a rare interview from Tehran's Evin prison, beseeching President Joe Biden to secure his release and that of two other US nationals. "I implore you, sir, to put the lives and liberty of innocent Americans above all the politics involved and to just do what is necessary to end this nightmare and bring us home," Siamak Namazi told CNN's Christiane Amanpour in a telephone interview on Thursday. A United States citizen imprisoned by Iran on spying charges gave a rare interview from Tehran's Evin prison, beseeching President Joe Biden to secure his release and that of two other US nationals. "I implore you, sir, to put the lives and liberty of innocent Americans above all the politics involved and to just do what is necessary to end this nightmare and bring us home," Siamak Namazi told CNN's Christiane Amanpour in a telephone interview on Thursday.

# Briefs French, British leaders meet in efforts to mend relations

French-British summit, the first since 2018, is set to show a "new chapter" is opening in relations between the two countries, according to Macron's office. Such an event was previously held almost every year

#### **DNA**

PARIS: British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak was meeting Friday in Paris with French President Emmanuel Macron in efforts to mend relations following post-Brexit tensions, as well as improving military and business ties and toughening efforts against Channel migrant crossings. Both leaders shook hands and briefly posed for photographers, smiling, as Sunak arrived at the presidential palace. The French-British summit, the first since 2018, is set to show a "new chapter" is opening in relations between the two countries, according to Macron's office. Such an event was previously held almost every year.

Relations between the UK and France chilled amid post-Brexit wrangling over fishing rights and other issues, and hit rock-bottom under Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who took delight in needling the French. His successor, Liz Truss, ruffled French feathers last year when she said the "jury is out" on whether Macron was a friend or a foe. But Russia's invasion of Ukraine brought



Britain and its European neighbors closer together in support of Kyiv, and the mood improved after pragmatic, technocratic Sunak took office in October after Truss' brief and economically destabilizing term.

III travels to France and then Germany for his first state visits since becoming monarch, in further British efforts to build bridges with European neighbors.

"The summit will be above all an opportunity to reaf-Sunak's visit also comes two firm and deepen the close weeks before King Charles cooperation in terms of military support for Ukraine," according to the statement from Macron's Elysee Palace, as both countries are the only nuclear powers in the region. A delegation of seven senior ministers from each country will take part, including those responsible

and domestic issues. France and the UK plan to strengthen military cooperation, including on supplying weapons to Kyiv and training Ukrainian Marines.

The British government said Sunak and Macron also will discuss "establishing the backbone to a permanent Euthe Indo-Pacific" by coordinating deployment to the region of France's Charles de Gaulle and the UK's Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales aircraft carriers. Last month the UK and the EU announced a breakthrough in talks to resolve the dispute over post-Brexit trading arrangements for Northern Ireland. Britain also has cautiously welcomed Macron's proposal for a European Political Community, a new forum aimed at boosting security and prosperity across the continent. Launched in October, it brings together existing EU members, aspiring partners in the Balkans and Eastern Europe, as well as Britain and Turkiye. Sunak seeks closer cooperation on measures to stop thousands of migrants crossing the Channel from France to England. The UK and France signed an agreement in November to increase police patrols on

beaches in northern France with London agreeing to pay Paris 72.2 million euros in 2022-2023 - and Sunak hopes to cement further co-

together, we will ensure the development of fruitful Russian-Chinese cooperation in all sorts of different areas. We will continue to coordinate joint work on the most important regional and international issues."—APP Riyadh Expo 2030 to bring the world to Riyadh RIYADH: Members of the

Bureau International des Expositions (BIE) Enquiry Mission on Friday met with H.E. Majid Alkassabi, Minister of Commerce, who went over the Riyadh Expo 2030 candidacy file with the members of the delegation. The Bureau International des Expositions (BIE) Enquiry Mission also met with

H.E. Ahmed Al-Khateeb, Minister of Tourism, who laid out the government's blueprint for what he called "the most impactful site and visitor footprint" for Riyadh Expo 2030.

The minister declared: "We are on track towards developing a sustainable tourism sector and realizing promising projects that will make the Kingdom and Riyadh, in particular, one of the most important tourist destinations in the world. Our plans will contribute to achieving our vision to welcome 100 million tourists by 2030.

His Excellency affirmed the Kingdom's determination and the readiness of the capital to accommodate the largest number of visitors to the Riyadh Expo 2030. Since the Kingdom first opened its doors to international visitors, it has seen hospitality industry, making it attractive to the global leisure traveler.

The BIE delegation continued its visit to the headquarters of the DGDA, where they were briefed on its development plans by the CEO, Mr. Jerry Inzerillo. The delegation then took a tour at the Turaif and Bujairi districts. The day ended for the Enquiry Mission members with a dinner with H.E. Faisal Al- Ibrahim, Minister of Economy and Planning, who highlighted Saudi Arabia's efforts to diversify its economy and increase the share and GDP contribution of the non-oil sector. "Riyadh has a great role to play in the Kingdom's economic diversification strategy, as a growing regional hub for larger multinational companies of different strategic sectors,' H.E. Al-Ibrahim commented. Boosting tourism is a key part of the economic diversification strategy. -APP

# Pakistan's remittances fall 9.5% to \$2bn in February

#### **DNA**

KARACHI: Remittances sent home by overseas workers dropped 9.5% to \$2 billion in February 2023, year-on-year, as exchange rate fluctuations, economic uncertainties, and lack of trust in the system continued to encourage the use of illegal channels.

According to data re-

leased by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on Friday, remittances stood at \$2.2 billion in the same year. On the other hand, month-on-month, these inflows increased by 4.9% compared to \$1.9 billion recorded in January 2023. Remittances for the first eight months (July-February) of the fiscal year 2022-23 were recorded at \$17.99 billion, showing a fall of 10.8% compared to \$20.18 billion in the same period of FY2022.

A breakdown shows the highest amount of remittances during February 2023 was mainly sent home from Saudi Arabia (\$454.6 million), followed by the United Arab Emirates (\$324.0 million), the United Kingdom (\$317.0 million) and the United States of America (\$219.4 million). The SBP-held foreign exchange reserves rose above the \$4 billion mark after the cashstrapped nation received month of the previous a \$500 million loan from a Chinese bank.

The central bank, in its weekly bulletin, said that its foreign exchange reserves have increased by \$487 million to \$4,301 million as of the week ended March 3, which will provide an import cover of around a month. The SBP received \$500 million last week from

the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) as part of the institution's \$1.3 billion facility, just days after it had received \$700 million from the China Development Bank.

Remittances have been thinning out steadily and the trend is likely to press ahead of Ramazan, the holy month of fasting, and Eid-ul-Fitr - the most difficult times for inflation-rayaged citizens - when overseas workers remit large amounts to Pakistan to support their loved ones. There has been an im-

provement in dollar supply, but the country needs more liquidity to cope with the demand for imports. Moreover, closing the gap between the open market and the interbank market is imperative to discourage the wholesale use of unofficial channels. Given its bare minimum

serves, Pakistan direly required dollar inflows that have not been very steady. Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said on Thursday Pakistan was "very close" to signing a staff-level agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which would offer a critical lifeline for taming a balance of payment crisis. An agreement would release \$1.1 billion to the cash-strapped South Asian economy.

"We seem to be very close to signing the staff level agreement, hopefully, God willing, in the next few days," Dar said at a seminar in Islamabad. "I and my team are absolutely committed to complete this program to the best of our ability," he said, adding: "We have been in the review and I think it has taken longer than it should have in my opin-

### Workers' remittances down 10.8pc in Jul-Feb FY23

ISLAMABAD: The overseas workers' remittances posted a decline of 10.8 percent during first eight months (Jul-Feb) of fiscal year 2022-23 as the remittances fell from \$20.18 billion in Jul-Feb of FY22 to \$18.00 billion in the period under review. On year-on-year basis, the overseas workers' remittances recorded an inflow of US\$2.0 billion in February 2023, posting a decrease of 9.5 percent as compared with the same month of previous year's inflow of \$2.2 billion. On month-on-month basis, the remittances in February 2023 witnessed an increase of 4.9 percent when compared with the inflow of \$1.9 billion recorded in January 2023. According to a recent data released by State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on Friday, remittances' inflows during February, 2023 were mainly sourced from Saudi Arabia (\$454.6 million), United Arab Emirates (\$269.2 million), United Kingdom (\$324.0 million) and United States of America (\$219.4 million). During the corresponding month, the overseas Pakistanis living in Bahrain sent \$35.6 million, from Kuwait \$63.1 million, from Qatar \$67.8 million whereas \$75.0 million were dispatched from Oman. Similarly the inflows from Germany, France, The Netherlands, Spain, Italy, Greece, Sweden, Denmark, Ireland, and Belgium were recorded at \$47.1 million, \$33.9 million, \$5.2 million, \$37.4 million, \$66.5 million, \$25.3 million, \$5.3 million, \$6.9 million, \$9.7 million and \$8.1 million respectively. Likewise, from Malaysia, Norway, Switzerland, Australia, Canada, and Japan, the workers dispatched \$6.5 million, \$8.7 million, \$3.4 million, \$46.8 million, \$40.4 million, and \$5.9 million respectively. Remittances from South Africa during the month under review stood at \$11.8 million while that from South Korea stood at \$8.6 million. Similarly \$53.9 million were received from other countries.-APP

### Zonergy Corporation takes part in "Solar Pak"

#### **DNA**

LAHORE: - Zonergy Corporation, a leading provider of renewable energy storage solutions, participated in the 12th edition of the SOLAR PAKISTAN Exhibition and 5th edition of the Electricity Pakistan Exhibition at Expo Centre, Lahore from 10th - 12th March 2023, organized by FAKT Exhibitions (Pvt.) Ltd. which has been inaugurated by the honorable Mr. Mirza Muhammad Afridi Deputy Chairman - Senate of Pakistan. Zonergy Corporation showcased its own developed

latest Panda series of Energy Storage systems, ZPM panels of 370 kW and 540/545 kW, Zonergy 5 & 10 kW inverters, and portable devices to cater to customer requirements of the country. On the first day of the exhibition, Zonergy Booth received tremendous responses from visiting customers. Potential clients from different industries, EPC com-

panies, and distributors expressed interest in the company's products, and Panda single-phase series energy products attracted much attention. As a country with a severe energy shortage and the rising cost of Energy, Pakistan boasts a large market for household and outdoor portable energy storage products. Zonergy Corporation will continue to evolve its product line with an extreme focus on customers' needs and provide high-quality smart solutions. Meanwhile, it will further deepen innovation and research, and development, and bolster the green development of South Asia with technological innovation Zonergy Corporation Vice President in Pakistan Mr. Felix Fu appreciated the FAKT Exhibitions Pvt Ltd for organizing Industry oriented Exhibition he further said "Such Industry exhibition is crucial for Pakistan to divert its energy resource from fossil fuel to Clean Energy like Solar.

These events are essential for bridging the gap between the end user and the industry. Pakistan is going through worst Energy crisis of all time and this event will provide an opportunity to give first-hand experience to end users to meet Industry experts and experience the efficacy of solar products. Zonergy is determined to offer viable solutions to bring an end to Energy crisis in the country and always believes in providing smart Energy products to its customers and welcomes client feedback to customize its Energy solutions.

We are willing to extend our cooperation to the Government in working towards sustainable energy solutions by building Clean Energy complete ecosystem. We want to help the Pakistan Government in the extension of the Quaid-e-Azam Solar Power plant to its full 900MW capacity to bring down the Cost of Electricity and put an end to the looming energy crisis". SOLAR PAKISTAN Exhibition is established as the leading renewable energy event of the country with its scale setting records every edition, having more than 120 exhibiting companies from 10 countries of the world including China, Czech Republic. France, Japan, etc. showcasing their latest innovations.



ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry President Dr Arif Alvi addressing the 2nd Annual Conference of Pakistan Society of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology.—DNA

### 8 dead in shooting at Jehovah's Witness hall in Germany

HAMBURG: A shooting at a Jehovah's Witnesses centre in the German city of Hamburg has left eight people dead, including the suspected gunman, police said Friday, as the motive for the attack remained unclear. Several more people were injured in the attack on Thursday evening at the Kingdom Hall building in the port city of Hamburg, where Jehovah's Witnesses members were attending a religious service.

"Eight people were fatally

injured, apparently including the suspected perpetrator," Hamburg police said in a statement, adding that several other people were hurt, "some seriously". Chancellor Olaf Scholz condemned the "brutal act of violence" and said his

thoughts were with the vic-

tims and their loved ones. The Jehovah's Witnesses in Germany association said it was "deeply saddened by the horrific attack on its members". The first emergency calls were made around 2015 GMT after shots rang out at the building in the city's northern district of Gross Borstel. Hamburg police are due to give an update at a press

conference around midday, but earlier said they were still working to find out the motive for the attack. "At the moment there is

no reliable information on the motive of the crime," police said, urging people not to speculate. An alarm for "extreme danger" in the area was sounded using a catastrophe warning app, but Germany's Federal Office for Civil Protection lift-

ed it shortly after 3:00 am local time. The port city's mayor, Peter Tschentscher. expressed shock at the shooting on Twitter. Police have asked witnesses to come forward and upload any pictures or videos they may have to a special website. Interior Minister Nancy Faeser said investigators were "working flat-out to determine the background" to the attack. News weekly Der Spiegel reported that the suspected attacker was a former member of the Jehovah's Witness community who was not a known extremist. The magazine, which did not cite its sources, described him as a man aged 30-40 and said he had been armed with a handgun. The attack took place at the Jehovah's Witnesses Kingdom Hall

building, a non-descript, three-storey building where members had gathered for a religious service. There are about 175,000 people in Germany, including 3,800 in Hamburg, who are Jehovah's Witnesses, a US Christian movement set up in the late 19th century that preaches non-violence and is known for door-todoor evangelism. The first officers at the scene found several lifeless bodies and seriously wounded people, police said.

Hamburger Abendblatt reported that 17 unhurt people, who had been at the event, were being attended to by the fire brigade.

Officers heard a shot in the 'upper part of the building" before finding a body in the area where it rang out, police said. –Agencies

#### At least 36 killed in eastern DR Congo attack

#### **News Desk**

CONGO: At least 36 people were killed during an overnight attack on a village in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

A local official and the head of a civil society group said on Thursday the assailants were believed to be members of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) - a Ugandan armed group based in eastern DRC that has pledged allegiance to ISIL (ISIS) and wages frequent deadly raids on villages. The attack targeted the village of Mukondi, 30km (19 miles) south of the city of Beni in North Kivu province, an area plagued with rebel activity and which has been under military administration since 2021 in an attempt to restore order. Provincial governor Carly Nzanzu Kasivita said on

Twitter at least 36 people had been killed in the attack, which began on Wednesday evening.

The head of a local civil society group, Mumbere Limbadu Arsene, gave a provisional death toll of 44, including women, children and the elderly.



# Islamahar POST



#### SATURDAY, MARCH 11, 2023 | WWW.ISLAMABADPOST.COM.PK

### Briefs

#### **NAB** chairman has no social media account

DNA

ISLAMABAD: National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Chairman Lt Gen (retd) Nazir Ahmed, does not have any social media account, including Twitter and Facebook. The NAB spokesman, in a statement on Friday, advised the general public and media persons to be cautious and not to follow or attribute any fake accounts associated with the chairman.

He also requested the people to immediately report to the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and NAB Headquarters, as well as its regional offices, about the individuals claiming to be acquaintances of the NAB chairman.

#### US dollar crashes against rupee in interbank

**DNA** 

ISLAMABAD: After pummeled by the US dollar for a couple of days, the Pakistani rupee staged a strong showing in the interbank market on Friday apparently on the basis of improved foreign exchange reserves. According to the information collected from forex dealers, the Pakistani rupee soared by Rs2.30 against the US dollar and was currently being traded at Rs280. On Thursday, the rupee remained at the receiving end against the US dollar, depreciating by 1.13%.

As per the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), the rupee settled at 282.30 against the greenback, a decline of Rs3.18 in the interbank market. The SBP-held for eign exchange reserves rose above the \$4 billion mark after the cash-strapped Pakistan received a \$500 million loan installment from a Chinese bank on Thursday.

The SBP said that its foreign exchange reserves have increased by \$487 million to \$4,301 million as of the week ended March 3. which will provide an import cover of around a month. The SBP received \$500 million last week from the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) as part of the institution's \$1.3 billion facility, just days after it had received \$700 million from the China Development Bank.

Pakistan hasn't received funds from any friendly country except for China as the \$350 billion economy struggles to revive the stalled International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme.

#### 12 TTP, Al-Qaeda terrorists arrested in operations

DNA

LAHORE: In a major development, the Counter-Terrorism ment (CTD) teams have nabbed 12 terrorists in intelligence-based operations in three Punjab cities including Lahore.

According to information made available by CTD officials on Friday, the arrested terrorists are belonged to Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan and Al-Qaeda. Material used in making suicide vests and explosives were also seized during these operations, the officials said.

The CTD officials further said that the terrorists were identified during interrogation of 61 suspects. They said the terrorists were plotting to carry out sabotage in sensitive districts. Three of the terrorists were arrested from near a "restricted area" of Lahore. Cases have been lodged against these terrorists and further interrogation was underway, the CTD officials divulged. The CTD officials said 797 coming and search operations were carried out during the on-going week, during which 159 suspects were detained.

# **US House of Representatives** back regime change in Iran

Democratic representatives Deborah Ross and Sheila Jackson Lee delivered an impassioned speech in defense of the rights of Iranian women, noting that the world this week celebrated International Women's Day

News Desk

WASHINGTON: A majority of members of the US House of Representatives have declared their support for a bipartisan resolution calling for a nuclear-free Iran and regime change in the country.

The Organization of Iranian-American Communities, a group opposed to the regime in Tehran, hosted a meeting in the Capitol to announce that 222 members of the 435-member House now back the resolution, which was introduced on Feb. 7. It supports the establishment of a secular Iranian republic and condemns human rights violations by the Iranian government.

Several of the Republican and Democrat co-sponsors of the resolution spoke during the event on Thursday of their support for the Iranian people and their desire for a democratic government to replace the theocratic Iranian regime. House Resolution 100

is titled "Expressing support for the Iranian people's desire for a democratic, secular, and nonnuclear Republic of Iran, and condemning violations of human rights and state-sponsored terrorism by the Iranian Government." It has no legal authority and so is more of a symbolic show support for the Iranian people and opposition to the actions of the regime. It condemns violations of human rights by the regime during the ongoing protests that began in September last year following the death in custody of Mahsa Amini. The 22-year-old Iranian woman suffered a serious head injury after she was arrested by the morality police in Tehran, who accused her of failing to properly follow rules governing head coverings. "(The House stands) with the people of Iran who are legitimately defending their rights for freedom against repression; and condemns the brutal killing of Iranian protesters by the Iranian regime; and recognizes the rights of the Iranian people and their struggle to establish a democratic, secular, and nonnuclear Republic of Iran," the resolution states.

It also calls for administration of President Joe Biden to work with the UN and international human rights organizations in their efforts to hold the regime in Tehran accountable for its human rights violations. Republican representatives Pete Sessions and Randy Weber, both from Texas, reiterated their support for the Iranian people and the calls for regime change and a nuclear-free Iran. Weber said that Iran "cannot have nuclear weapons" and expressed his support for the use of military force to achieve this goal. "The Iranian regime must be taken out. No more evil tyrants, whether it's the shah or the leader," he added, referring to Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and the country's former ruler, Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, who was overthrown by the Iranian Revolution in 1979.

Democratic representatives Deborah Ross and Sheila Jackson Lee delivered an impas-

Iranian women, noting that the world this week celebrated International Women's Day. Ross, from North Carolina, told the Iranian American leaders and activists, and their supporters, who had gathered: "We are with you." Lee, from Texas, praised Iranian opposition leader Maryam Rajavi, president of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, describing her as a "freedom

that as a student of the late American civil rights leader Martin Luther King, she believes in a process of nonviolent, peaceful protest and hopes that change in Iran can be brought about through peaceful means without loss of life. The resolution has yet to face a formal vote in Congress but as it now has an absolute majority of support, it is expected to pass easily.

fighter." She also applauded Iranian-American communities in the US for their efforts to support change in Iran. "Yes to nuclear-free Iran," she said, adding

### **Ethiopian Airlines** announces direct flight to Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: The Ethiopian Airlines will commence direct flight operations between Karachi and Addis Ababa at the start of May. The Ethiopian Airlines will commence flight operations from May 1 from Karachi. The airliner will operate four flights weekly, say sources. "As the only flight connecting Pakistan with Africa, the planned service to Karachi will have significant contribution in strengthening the diplomatic and economic relations between the two regions," says Ethiopian Airlines chief executive Mesfin Tasew. "It will also offer convenient air connectivity to the growing number of Pakistani investors in Africa as well as tourists."The Ethiopian flag carrier previously operated the Addis Ababa-Karachi route between 1966 and 1971, and again between 1993 and 2004. Earlier, Ambassador of Ethiopia Jemal Beker Abdula had informed the Foreign Minister of Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari about the groundwork completed by both governments for the opening of direct flights between Pakistan and Ethiopia. In the meeting, Pakistan and Ethiopia also agreed to enhance collaboration between the two countries to address the challenges related to climate change. - DNA

### China launches twin satellites into space

The satellites were aboard China's home-built Long March-4C rocket, which was marked with a landscape of the Shanghai metropolis

ISTANBUL: China on Friday successfully launched two satellites into space. Tianhui-6 A and Tianhui-6 satellites were blasted off into space early Friday from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in Shanxi province, northern China. The satellites were aboard China's home-built Long March-4C rocket, which was marked with a landscape of the Shanghai metropolis, the Chinese daily Global Times reported. The latest launch also marks the 400th spacecraft developed and successfully delivered to orbit by the China Academy of Space Technology, the report said. It added that the twin satellites have successfully entered their preset orbit. These satellites, the space authority said, will be used for "geographic mapping, land resource surveys and other scientific experiments." It was the 465th mission in the Long March rocket series. - Agencies

#### LHC moved against non appliance of PEMRA orders

LAHORE: Lahore High Court (LHC) has been moved against non implementation of PEMRA orders regarding ban on live broadcasting speeches of former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

The petition has been filed by the petitioner Munir Ahmad through Azhar Siddique advocate in LHC. The petitioner has taken the plea that legally the statements of the person who is declared proclaimed offender by court cannot be broadcast on media. Under PEMRA laws the live broad casting of the speeches of proclaimed offenders is banned.

He took the plea PEMRA has imposed ban on live broad casting of speeches of Nawaz Sharif. On the other hand live cast of speeches of Nawaz Sharif is continuing despite PEMRA orders.

The petitioner requested the court to order for implementation of PEMRA orders about imposition of ban on live broadcast of Nawaz Sharif speeches. -Online

#### Suspension of Sehat card challenged in LHC

LAHORE: Government step for suspension of treatment on Sehat Card in hospitals in Punjab has challenged in Lahore High Court (LHC). The petition in this regard has been filed by citizen Muhammad Ijaz Khan making Punjab government, health secretary and others respondents. The petitioner has taken plea in the petition that Punjab government extended facility of free treatment to poor patients. Sehat cards were issued to the poor patients for free treatment. The petitioner said free treatment was provided to patients in government and private hospitals. But the free treatment on Sehat card was stopped in the hospitals after the PTI government was ousted.

Providing free treatment and education is responsibility of state. The petitioner has requested the court to order Punjab government to provide free treatment on Sehat card.



ISLAMABAD: March 10 - Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chairs a meeting on Civil Aviation Sector issues, at Finance Division. - DNA

### DeSantis, Trump to collide in key state of Iowa

WEB DESK

DAVENPORT: Florida Governor Ron DeSantis will make his tests the waters for a presidential bid, only days before fellow Republican and former President Donald Trump is slated to campaign there. Iowa could be particularly crucial for DeSantis, who is expected to jump into the 2024 White House race later in the spring. The state will hold the first Republican nominating contest early next year, and a win there would show DeSantis is a viable candidate against Trump. The former president is highly popular in the state and holds a large organizational advantage due to his two previous presidential campaigns. DeSantis will appear at events in Des Moines, the state capital, and the river town of Davenport that will be moderated by Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds. The trip is part of a series of events he has staged across the country in recent weeks as he builds his national profile and courts deep-pocketed donors. Craig Robinson, a former political director of the Iowa Republican Party, believes Iowa voters are eager to hear from DeSantis, who polls show to be Trump's biggest rival for the nomination. "There's a lot of anticipation for him," Robinson said. "I think Iowans will give him a fair listen."

### Train crash may thwart Greek PM's re-election

ATHENS: The Greek prime minister's bid for re-election at forthcoming polls may be thwarted by the country's deadliest train crash, which has sparked mass protests and calls for him quit. A nation hearthroken at the loss of 57 lives has exp in anger, with tens of thousands taking to the streets on Wednesday in sometimes violent protests. Four people - three station masters and a rail supervisor - are facing multiple charges over the head-on collision on February 28 and could be jailed for life. But public anger has focused on mismanagement and underfunding of the railway network, which critics say is symptomatic of a broader hollowing out of public services that was triggered by the country's debt crisis. And, observers say, conservative Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis - who had looked on course to comfortably win a second term - may pay a heavy price. The accident "will have an impact on the government, as it has political and ethical responsibility", Stella Ladi, who works at Panteion University in Athens and Queen Mary University of London, told AFP. During Wednesday's protests in Athens, the biggest the capital has witnessed since demonstrations some years ago in the wake of the eurozone crisis, anger among protesters was palpable. "People have been under pressure since the financial crisis," Pinelopi Horianopoulou, a striking civil servant who joined the protests, told AFP. - APP

### Pakistan reiterates concern on India's firing of BrahMos missile

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Friday reiterated its concern on India's irresponsible firing of BrahMos supersonic missile into Pakistani territory last year. The Foreign Office Spokesperson in a statement recalled that a year ago, a supersonic missile BrahMos was fired from Suratgarh India into Pakistani territory on March 9, 2022. It endangered human life and property and posed a grave threat to regional and international peace, security and stability. The Spokesperson said Pakistan demonstrated exemplary restraint

temic maturity and unflinching commitment to peace as a responsible nuclear state.

The irresponsible act by India was in violation of international law, United Nations Charter, Articles on the Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts, civil aviation rules and safety protocols. It exposed many loopholes and technical lapses in the Indian system regarding handling of its strategic weapons, she added. Despite the lapse of one year, the government of India had not acceded to Pakistan's demand of a joint probe in order to accurately establish the facts "India has also not shared findings of its internal inquiry with Pakistan," she said adding its unilateral and hasty closure of the socalled internal inquiry had raised serious questions on the command and control systems in place in India for its strategic weapons.

"Pakistan reiterates its demand for joint probe into this irresponsible incident. We also expect satisfactory response to and clarification of several fundamental questions regarding security protocols and technical safeguards against accidental or unauthorized launch of missiles in a nuclearized environment," the Spokesperson concluded.

# **Kim Jong calls for intensified** drills in case of 'real war'

surrounding this serious incident.

to intensify drills to deter and respond to a "real war" if necessary, state media said on Friday, after the leader oversaw a fire assault drill that it said proved the country's capabilities. North Korea fired a short-range ballistic missile off its west coast on Thursday, South Korea's military said, adding it was analysing possibilities the North may have launched multiple missiles simultaneously from the same area. Photos released by the North's KCNA news agency showed at least six missiles being fired at the same time. KCNA said a unit trained for "strike missions" fired a "powerful volley at the targeted waters" and demonstrated its capability to "counter an actual war." "(Kim) stressed that the fire assault sub-units should be strictly prepared for the greatest perfection in carrying out the two strategic missions, that is, first to deter war and second to take the initiative in war, by steadily intensifying various simulated drills for real war ...," KCNA said.

Kim was accompanied by his young daughter who has appeared recently in a series of major events. South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said South Korea would step up combined military drills with the United States and enhance joint planning and execution of U.S. extended deterrence against the North's nuclear and missile threats. "We will build an overwhelming response capabil-

SEOUL: North Korea's Kim Jong Un ordered the military ity and retaliation posture," Yoon said at a commissioning ceremony for naval academy graduates in the southeastern city of Changwon, adding that the security situation surrounding the Korean peninsula was "more serious than ever." Seoul has been seeking to strengthen extended deterrence, the ability of the U.S. military to deter attacks with its nuclear umbrella, amid growing calls within South Korea for the country to develop its own nuclear capability to counter North Korean threats. The latest missile launches came as the United States and

South Korea were set to kick off large-scale military exercises known as the Freedom Shield drills next week. North Korea has long bristled at the allies' drills as a rehearsal for invasion. North Korean leader Kim's sister, Kim Yo Jong, said earlier this week any move to shoot down one of its test missiles would be considered a declaration of war and blamed the joint military exercises for growing tensions. Yang Uk, a research fellow and defence expert at Seoul's Asan Institute for Policy Studies, said North Korea has been increasingly claiming that its smaller missiles are nuclear-capable, in apparent threats to South Korea. "North Korea doesn't appear to have developed miniaturised nuclear warheads to be loaded on cruise or tactical ballistic missiles yet, but it's clear that's where they are headed to," Yang said. - Agencies

