



Islamabad POST

Wednesday, March 22, 2023

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 25

Skipper Babar Azam to be conferred with Sitara-e-Imtiaz

Detailed News On Page-06

Amb. Blome sees increased US investment

Detailed News On Page-08



FM Bilawal felicitates Iran, Saudi Arabia

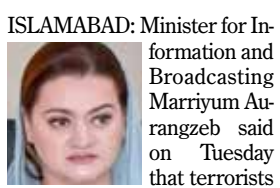
Detailed News On Page-08



Briefs

Mariyum lashes out at Imran

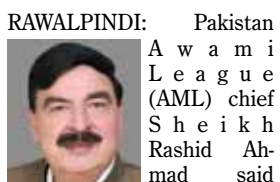
DNA



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb said on Tuesday that terrorists in the guise of party workers came to attack the court and the time was not far off when they would be appearing in courts with veiled faces. Taking to Twitter, the minister asked whether Imran Khan's spouse had got scared when goons of his PTI were assaulting the police and throwing petrol bombs, besides a mob attack on the Judicial Complex (Islamabad). She said whether Imran Khan had any "remorse or shame" for the installation of a camera in NAB cell of Maryam Nawaz and then watching her on his mobile phone.

Govt to evade polls at every cost

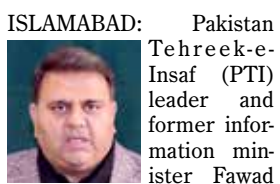
SAIFULLAH



RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Awami League (AML) chief Sheikh Rashid Ahmad said on Tuesday that late night arrests of PTI workers by police without warrants and inflicting torture on them was condemnable. Using his Twitter handle, the AML chief and former interior minister said police arrested 70-80 PTI workers after 12 at midnight. "I strongly condemn torture on PTI's political workers," he said. Sh Rashid said it was cruelty, barbarity and extremism. They have decided to evade elections at every cost.

Fawad warns against ban on Khan

STAFF REPORT



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader and former information minister Fawad Chaudhry has warned that if party chief Imran Khan was banned, there would be a reaction no one had ever imagined. Taking to twitter, former minister Fawad said that more than 500 PTI workers have been detained in the last two days. Raids are being conducted to arrest Tehreek-e-Insaf workers, he continued.

Forces kill 3 terrorists in D.I. Khan

During the intense exchange of fire, Three soldiers fought bravely but were martyred

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Three soldiers of the Pakistan Army embraced martyrdom when terrorists opened fire on a police check post in the general area Khutti in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa's Dera Ismail Khan district, the military said in a statement on Tuesday. According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the security forces immediately cordoned off the area and blocked all possible escape routes. It said that the fleeing terrorists were intercepted in the Saggua area of the district. After an intense exchange of fire, three terrorists were killed, and weapons and ammunition were recovered from them. During the intense exchange of fire, 42-year-old Havaladar Muhammad Azhar Iqbal from Lodhran, 34-year-old Naik Muhammad Asad from Khanewal and 22-year-old Sepoy Muhammad Essa from South Waziristan fought bravely but were martyred.

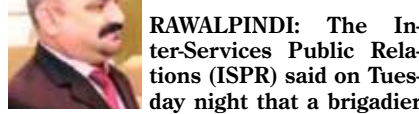
Continued on Page 06



RAWALPINDI: Three soldiers of Pakistan Army who embraced martyrdom during an encounter with the terrorists. - DNA

ISI Brigadier martyred

DNA



RAWALPINDI: The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Tuesday night that a brigadier from the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) was martyred during an encounter with "hardcore terrorists" in South Waziristan's Angoor Adda. In the statement, the ISPR said that intense fire was exchanged between the two sides. It said Brigadier Mustafa Kamal Barki was martyred "while leading the encounter from the front" while seven members were injured, including two who were critically wounded. The military's media affairs wing said Brigadier Barki and his team "put up a valiant resistance against the terrorists during the encounter and the officer sacrificed his life for peace of the motherland". "Defence forces of Pakistan and intelligence agencies pledge to reaffirm and demonstrate firm resolve to eliminate the menace of terrorism from every inch of country," the ISPR said. Meanwhile, Three soldiers of Pakistan Army embraced martyrdom when terrorists opened fire on a police check post in the general area Khutti in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa's Dera Ismail Khan district, military said in a statement on Tuesday.

PTI briefs envoys on political situation

"We exchanged views on the regional and overall political situation of the country during the meeting," Qureshi

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Vice Chairman Shah Mehmood Qureshi and Secretary General Asad Umar on Tuesday told envoys in Islamabad that the party is seeking free and fair elections to end political instability in the country. The PTI leaders held a "breakfast meeting" with the diplomatic corps in Islamabad organised by Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan Neil Hawkins. The ambassadors of European and Muslim countries were also present during the meeting. "We exchanged views on the regional and overall political situation of the country during the meeting," Qureshi said. Both leaders informed the envoys about the PTI's demand for transparent elections as per schedule and bringing the atmosphere of ongoing political instability in the country to an end. "We are deeply grateful to the Australian High Com-



missioner Neil Hawkins for organising this breakfast meeting," Qureshi added. The PTI - led by Chairman Imran Khan - has been campaigning for general elections in Pakistan for months since its

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif inaugurates Teleschool Pakistan mobile phone application. - DNA

Massive earthquake hits many cities

Intensity was recorded at 7.7 on the Richter scale

ISLAMABAD: A powerful earthquake jolted Islamabad, Peshawar, Lahore, Quetta and several other cities in Pakistan at around 9:45pm on Tuesday night. Tremors were also felt in Charsadda, Peshawar, Batagram, Swabi, Swat, and other cities of northern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Several cities of Punjab, including Lahore, also felt tremors. The intensity of the earthquake was recorded at 7.7 on the Richter scale. In Islamabad, offices and other buildings were evacuated. People rushed out of shopping malls in the federal capital, Twitter said as he posted a video of people standing outside a building. - DNA

LHC grants Imran bail in two cases

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Tuesday approved Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan's protective bail in terrorism and corruption cases filed against him. The former prime minister reached the high court in a "decoy vehicle" to seek protective bail. Khan had filed two petitions, through his lawyer Salman Safdar, seeking bail in the terror cases filed against him. Justice Shehbaz Rizvi and Justice Farooq Haider took up the pleas. During the last hearing, the court had directed Khan to ensure his appearance at 2:15pm

Continued on Page 06

PM announces 100,000 laptops for students in 2023

The PM urged Rana Tanveer to chalk out a mechanism in consultations with the provincial govts to improve the quality of teachers' training

SHUJAAT HAMZA / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday announced to give one hundred thousand laptops to students during the ongoing year (2023). The premier addressed the launching ceremony of Tele school Pakistan application where he said that it was a good day regarding education. He stressed the use of modern technology for promotion of education and also announced laptop scheme for brilliant students. The prime minister observed that teachers' training in the country was not up to the mark which was unfortunate and cited his experience in Punjab province. He said that he had directed for steps to improve the quality of about 40 training centers in the province during his tenure as the chief minister. The prime minister urged the Minister for Federal Education Rana Tanveer Hussain to chalk out a mechanism in consultations with the provincial

Continued on Page 06

Ramazan Relief Package worth Rs 5 billion

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The government today announced a Ramazan Relief Package worth five billion rupees to provide maximum relief to the poor segment of society during the holy month of Ramazan across the country. Addressing a news conference in Islamabad on Tuesday, Minister for Industries and Production Syed Murtaza Mahmud said first priority of the federal government is to save the people from inflation. He said the package has come into force from today and would continue till the last day of the holy month. He said Federal Government, is

Continued on Page 06

Est. 1860
MURREE BREWERY
ISO 9001, 14001, HACCP & OHSAS Certified Company

MURREE SPARKLETTS
Bottled Drinking Water

WATER
the most Precious Currency of all!

Also Available in Glass bottle

murreebrewerycompany www.murreebrewery.com

Inside...

- President urges varsities to produce skilled IT graduates - Page 02
- Acting British HC hosts Chevening scholars - Page 03
- Gwadar Port's "King Grass" works as booster for livestock - Page 04
- China's Saudi Iranian mediation spotlights flawed regional security policies - Page 05
- Maldives beat Pakistan in int'l friendly football match - Page 06
- Japan, China push opposing visions in top-level visits - Page 07
- Over 10m flood affectees lacking access to safe water - Page 08

Putin, Xi discuss Chinese peace proposal for Ukraine

NEWS DESK

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese leader Xi Jinping discussed Beijing's proposal for a ceasefire in Ukraine in talks in Moscow, while displaying a warm friendship forged on a mutual rivalry with the West. Xi's visit is a

boost to Moscow as it struggles to make ground in its year-long war on Ukraine. It was criticised by Washington as providing "diplomatic cover" for Putin and for the war that has killed tens of thousands of people. While China has sought to cast itself as a potential peace-maker in the conflict, the visit underlined an ever-closer relationship between Moscow and

Beijing. The two men spoke for more than four hours on Monday and enjoyed a state dinner at the Kremlin, warmly praising each other as a "dear friend", Russian media reported.

By contrast, Xi may only speak to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy by telephone, if at all. In a surprise visit pointedly coinciding with Xi's Moscow talks, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida arrived in Kyiv on Tuesday to deliver a message of solidarity and support for Ukraine. In other developments, Ukraine said an explosion in Dzhankoi in the Russian-occupied Crimean peninsula destroyed Russian cruise missiles intended for use by Russia's Black Sea fleet. On the battlefields in eastern Ukraine, Russia kept up air raids as well as missile and rocket strikes over a wide area, the Ukrainian military said. Ukraine said Russia's main aim was to reach the borders of Donetsk and Luhansk regions in the Donbas,



Continued on Page 06

KMC honored with ISO certificate

PESHAWAR: The renowned and historic Khyber Medical College (KMC) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has been honored with ISO certificate here on Tuesday. The decision of awarding certificate was taken after the visit of the ISO auditor team to KMC. On this occasion, the Dean of Khyber Medical College Prof. Dr. Mahmood Aurangzeb and the Director of Quality Assurance of Khyber Teaching Hospital accompanied the ISO team. They conducted an inspection and briefing regarding the standards, procedures and SOPs of various departments of the college. Dean Professor Dr. Mahmood Aurangzeb said that KMC has history in the country and produced talented doctors who are a source of pride for us. The achievement of such goal is a proud moment for all the KMC family. This achievement reflects the dedication and hard work of the faculty and staff of Khyber Medical College. This will not only enhance the reputation of the college but also increase confidence in the quality of education offered in the college, he said. —APP

Extension of stray dogs neutralization approved

PESHAWAR: After obtaining satisfactory results from neutralization of stray dogs in provincial metropolises to contain deadly rabies disease, the Livestock and Dairy Development Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has decided the extension of the initiative to all the divisional headquarters of the province. The Livestock department had a launch of a project in January 2020 offering financial incentive for lockdown affected public of Peshawar of getting cash reward of Rs. 2000 over catching a stray dog. The reward was announced to involve and engage those who lost their livelihood due to corona virus lockdown in an activity aimed at ensuring better public health and safety. Dr. Syed Masoom Ali Shah, Project Director. Later in the same year, another initiative of mobile operation theater started in Peshawar. —W

Court Notice

IN THE COURT OF SIDRA BANO CH SAHIBA CIVIL JUDGE RAWALPINDI
Application Guardian Under Section U/S 25 of Guardian And Wards Act Amir Shehzad Versus Mst. Shagufta Jabeen Notice Mst. Shagufta Jabeen D/o Muhammad Hanif Resident Hayat Bakhs Colony, Near Masjid Riaz ul Jannah Qasim Abad, Peshawar Road, Rawalpindi The service through ordinary means is difficult, so you are informed to attend the court personally, through counsel or attorney on 05-04-2023 at 9 am avoid exparte proceeding.



ISLAMABAD-Mar21: A large number People standing in a queue to collect to free wheat flour bags from Ramadan Package outside a utility store, in Federal Capital, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that around 15.8 million households of Punjab would be distributed free wheat flour during the holy month of Ramazan. —Online

President urges varsities to produce skilled IT graduates

The President highlighted that 52% of cyber security experts in the world had no degrees and they equipped themselves with skills through online education. He said that Pakistan had introduced an online programme, digiskills, for youth's skill development in the field of IT, which was a great success as over 2.5 million people had benefitted from this programme so far.

NAZIR SIYAL

Karachi: President Dr Arif Alvi has urged the universities to further improve the standard of education and training to produce high-quality and skilled graduates, especially in the field of IT. He added that Information Technology and Emerging Technologies had great scope and potential, and universities needed to produce more graduates in these fields by utilizing online and hybrid modes of learning. The President expressed these views while chairing the 1st meeting of the Senate

of Pakistan Air Force Air War College Institute (AWCI), Karachi, today. The meeting was attended by members of the AWCI Senate. Addressing the meeting, the President urged the need to make faster decisions to keep pace with the latest trends and developments in the world. He said that Pakistan must invest in the intellectual development of its human resources which was vital for its socio-economic development. He said that Pakistan must bring 22 million out-of-school children to schools, besides improving the enrolment rate in higher educational institutions. He said that in Pakistan,

only 9% of the students went to universities after F.Sc whereas, in India and Bangladesh the enrolment rate was between 20-25%. The President said that Pakistan only produced 35,000 graduates in IT and related fields every year which was not adequate to meet the needs of the market. He added that Pakistan must improve the number of graduates in IT and related disciplines to keep pace with the rest of the world. He also urged the universities to utilize their physical infrastructure efficiently and introduce multiple shifts in universities, besides increasing the quantum of online

education to increase the number of students in universities. The President highlighted that 52% of cyber security experts in the world had no degrees and they equipped themselves with skills through online education. He said that Pakistan had introduced an online programme, digiskills, for youth's skill development in the field of IT, which was a great success as over 2.5 million people had benefitted from this programme so far. During the meeting, it was agreed that avenues for online education would be explored with time as the traditional

brick-and-mortar system could not produce the required number of graduates. HEC's representative informed the meeting that in Karachi, almost 70,000 students passed the F.Sc examination while only 8000 students were able to secure admission to Higher Education Institutions due to the shortage of seats and limited physical resources. During the meeting, the Annual Report of the AWCI was also presented, and different aspects related to the performance of AWCI, infrastructure development and future plans were also shared.

400,000 people to be screened in health week



DNA

LAHORE: The Minister Primary and Secondary Healthcare, Dr Jamal Nasir, has said that the medical screening of 400,000 people visiting the hospitals will be completed during the health week, as around 52,000 prisoners of 43 jails

of the province have already been screened. The Minister PSHD expressed these views while talking to the media at Govt Sarnabad Hospital today after inaugurating the health week. The Minister also visited Mian Mir and THQ Ghaziabad hospitals and reviewed the activities going on in the medical

screening camps. He said that there are no shortage of resources but will to do is needed to perform better. Dr Jamal Nasir said that around 300,000 people have been screened in the 26 DHQ, 125 THQ hospitals, 108 RHC and 36 BHUs on the CM's directions. He maintained that the health week will be

observed on a quarterly basis. The minister said that citizen may register his complaint against the hospital on 1033 Helpline who will be intimated immediately after redressal of the complaint. Dr Jamal Nasir expressed his satisfaction over the arrangements of medical screening camps in the hospitals.

ETO announces incentives for taxpayers

QAZI SHOIB

ATTOCK: The Department of Excise and Taxation has announced various incentives for taxpayers and warned that commercial properties will be sealed under Section 16 of the Property Tax Act, 1958 for non-payment of tax. ETO Attock Zafar Ishaq on Tuesday expressed his views that attractive measures have been introduced by the Punjab government for taxpayers. Now taxpayers can deposit property tax and token tax at home with a 5% discount through E-pay. For the convenience of taxpayers, a tax calculator is also available on the website of the department, with the help of which the taxpayer can find out his property tax himself. ETO Attock Zafar Ishaq said that the property tax challan and Form I-PT can also be checked by the taxpayer by visiting the department's website. In this way, the NOC of the property can be obtained by the owner him-

self, and all the rules and VSOPs of the department are also posted in the office for the public. Thanks to these measures, people will be able to get more convenience in submitting government taxes. The Excise and Taxation Officer appealed to the people to be responsible by filing their taxes on time otherwise commercial properties will be sealed under Section 16 of the Property Tax Act, 1958 and the tax will be levied. The property will be kept under seal till the recovery and the owner and tenants will be responsible for the trouble in this regard. The Excise and Taxation Officer also appealed to the public to submit their own file for registration and transfer their motorcycle and vehicles and not to pay any money to any agent or tout. If any official of the office obstructs their legitimate work, they can also initiate an ETO attack on their request and strict action will be taken as per law and they will be prosecuted.

CM visits Data Darbar Complex

LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi visited the Data Darbar Complex and ordered reopening of the car parking facility for visitors, which had been kept closed since 2010 due to security reasons. To ensure a smooth reopening, a committee was constituted to develop standard operating procedures for resuming the parking operation after a gap of 13 years. He also inspected the almonry and said that the preparation and distribution of food should be done according to international standards. The CM expressed his commitment to renovate the original hujra and verandah of Hazrat Data Ganj Baksh shrine. A committee had been set up to provide final recommendations in this regard. Additionally, he lauded the agreement with the Madina Foundation, which would expand the corridors around the shrine. —APP

تعلیم گھر - ہر گاہ و ہر گھر

افتتاح

آج پورے پاکستان

محمد شہباز شریف

سب بچوں کا ایک سکول

ٹیلی سکول پاکستان

موبائل ایپ

قومی نصاب سے ہم آہنگ ڈیجیٹل تعلیم کا آغاز

6 لائیو چینلز پر تمام مضامین کے ویڈیو لیکچرز

ڈاؤن لوڈ کریں - اکاؤنٹ بنائیں اور پڑھائی شروع کریں

Available on the Google Play | Download on the App Store

وزارت وفاقی تعلیم و پیشہ ورانہ تربیت حکومت پاکستان

www.mofept.gov.pk/ | @GovtofPakistan

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. Patrick's 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
- Monal.....0334-5421812



Airlines

- Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

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



Enquiry

- Edhi Ambulance.....115
- PIA Flight Info.....114
- PIA Cargo.....9280979
- Railway Inquiry.....117
- Railway Exchange.....9270831-5
- WASA Rawalpindi.....5555489
- CAA.....9281092



Hospitals

- CMH.....5611111
- MH.....5611116
- Cantt Hospital.....9270907-11
- DHQ.....5556311-4
- RGH.....9290301-7
- Holy Family.....9290322-7
- PIMS.....9261170-79
- Polyclinic.....9218300-09
- Shifa International 4603666



Departments

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



Islamabad Metropolitan

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



Water Tank

Acting British HC hosts Chevening scholars

Says the UK is proud to support wider education efforts in Pakistan, including on girls' education and through the British Council

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The British High Commission organised a reception on Tuesday, 21 March for returning Chevening scholars who were awarded the scholarships for the year 2021/22.

Through a rigorous recruitment process, 42 Pakistanis were selected for the Chevening scholarship last year. Half of those selected consisted of female scholars who went to study master's programme at the UK Universities. Acting British High Commissioner, Jo Moir, congratulated the returning Pakistani scholars and welcomed them into the Chevening alumni family, which is an influential network of over 2000 alumni across Pakistan. The event was attended by officials of the Brit-



ish High Commission, returning scholars, and Chevening alumni. Chevening scholars returned at a time when the UK is focusing on supporting education in

Pakistan which is also a Commonwealth priority. In the last 10 years, the UK has spent over £900m on education development in Pakistan - directly al-

lowing 5.8m children to gain a decent education including 2.1m girls. Last week the British High Commission marked Commonwealth

Day with a range of activities. Many of the UK's current development initiatives in Pakistan, including education, were committed to at Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings. British Acting High Commissioner Jo Moir said: "Congratulations Cheveners for completing a master's degree from the world-renowned universities of the UK. Education is central to development and to the improvement of the lives of young people including women and girls. "The UK is proud to support wider education efforts in Pakistan, including on girls' education and through the British Council. "The UK will keep engaging with the young people of Pakistan from the platform of the Commonwealth to ensure global stability and growth".

Political stability, youth empowerment essential

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Professor Ahsan Iqbal here on Tuesday reiterated that political stability was a must for taking the country towards progress, prosperity, and a bright future. "If we want to lead the country towards progress, then we need to ensure political stability and continuation of policies," the minister said while addressing the launching ceremony of PM's Youth Development Initiatives under the vision of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. Ahsan Iqbal said that youth form two-thirds of the country's population hence there was a dire need to provide them with opportunities for education, skill development, and employment for a brighter future.



He said being the minister for planning it was his responsibility to lead them to a better future so that they could play a due role in the economic development of the country. Terming the youth as the future of Pakistan, the planning minister urged the young generation not to pay heed to anybody's propaganda, adding that they should take steps to keep in view their goals and objectives. He said Pakistan

was recognized in the world by its youth who have been studying in top educational institutions across the world. The minister underlined the need for providing sports facilities to young people saying as many as 250 mini-sports complexes would be established in the country to help them harness their talent.

He said under the US-Pakistan Knowledge Corridor Project thousands of Pakistani students would go to top institutions in America for Ph.D. on scholarships. The minister also announced the establishment of 21 sub-campuses of top universities in different districts of the country. Meanwhile, the minister reminded that Pakistan was facing the scourge of terrorism in 2013 and no

foreign investor was ready to invest. However, when the PML government took over, it worked on three Es (Energy, Economy, Education) and rid the country of power shortage and consequently the country was able to stand on its own feet.

He said his government had added 11-megawatt of electricity to the national grid system in 2018 and also rid the country of the menace of terrorism. In addition, it also introduced many successful projects under China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The situation, he added, was so encouraging that even United Kingdom and the United States were seeking investment opportunities for their companies in CPEC. —APP

US Mobilizes Diaspora and Private Sector

ISLAMABAD: March 21, 2023: United States Ambassador Donald Blome highlighted the valuable contributions of the U.S.-Pakistani diaspora and the private sector at a U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) conference aimed at building back better for flood-affected communities in Pakistan. The U.S. government has pledged more than \$200 million to date to support flood relief and recovery efforts, disaster resilience, and food security, while the U.S.-Pakistani diaspora has contributed about \$42 million. During the conference, Ambassador Blome emphasized the longstanding U.S.-Pakistan partnership to advance Pakistan's economic growth and social and humanitarian causes. He highlighted the need for strengthening climate resilience through the U.S.-Pakistan "Green Alliance" framework and expressed the United States' commitment to helping the U.S.-Pakistani diaspora and Pakistan-based private companies find opportunities to strengthen climate resilience, pursue energy transformation, and foster economic growth and development outcomes. The conference continued the momentum built at the December 20, 2022, and January 25 conferences in Islamabad where USAID signed a combined six memoranda of understanding (MOUs) mobilizing \$75 million. The discussions held in those conferences led to mobilizing additional contributions and investments to help populations and areas affected by floods. —DNA

'Techlift Boot camp launched to train IT graduates'

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister of Information Technology and Telecommunication Syed Amin Ul Haque has said that the ministry had launched the Techlift Boot camp to impart world-class training to around 4,000 IT graduates. Addressing the graduation ceremony of Boot Camp, he said that the training of the IT graduates was being offered by the Pakistan Software Export Board, Pakistan Software House Association and 21 leading tech companies. Syed Amin Ul Haque said that Pakistan's population boasted an enormous potential for young people, with more than two-thirds of the population under 30 years of age. "This demographic presents a unique opportunity for growth and development if we can harness their talents and channel them in the right direction." In pursuit of our objective to increase IT exports, he said the ministry had collaborated with both public and private sector stakeholders to set a goal of 100 per cent growth in the coming years. "Achieving this target requires skilled youth trained in the latest technology trends to meet the demands of the market," he added. He said the industry-driven boot camp programme, funded by the government, was specifically designed to provide the latest technology training to the youth, making them competitive in the job market with an impressive 80 per cent employability rate. —APP

HEC announces Microsoft Imagine Cup winners

ISLAMABAD :- Microsoft and Pakistan's Higher Education Commission announced winners and runner ups of the jointly organized Imagine Cup 2023. The announcements were made during the closing ceremony held in HEC head office. The event was attended by several Vice Chancellors, and Pakistan's educational leaders as well as Director General Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO), Dr. Salim M. Almalik, Chairman Higher Education Commission, Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, and Microsoft Country Manager Jibran Jamshad. Chief Guest at the event was Dr. Salim M. Almalik. Speaking at the event, he noted, "Such partnerships with companies like Microsoft empower the students to use their creativity in addressing real societal problems using modern technology". Microsoft announced winners in all four categories of Imagine Cup competition i.e., Earth, Lifestyle, Health, and Education. Winners at the event included team "Smart Fruity Bytes" in Earth category from Muhammad Nawaz Sharif University of Agriculture, Multan (MNSUAM), team "Journovolt" in Lifestyle category from Usman Institute of Technology Karachi, team "Human Life Saviour's" in Lifestyle category from FAST NUCES Lahore Campus and team "AR Learn" in Education category from University of Engineering & Technology (UET) Peshawar. Additionally, 9 more university teams from North, Center, South, and Baluchistan regions were declared Imagine cup regional winners and runners-ups. —APP

S&P Global launches Campus Recruitment Drive in twin cities

ISLAMABAD: S&P Global is successfully running its Campus Recruitment Drive in the twin cities with an aim to equip students with the necessary skills to become successful in the corporate sector. S&P Global is committed to fostering strong relationships with educational institutions to empower students and equip them with cutting-edge knowledge to prepare them for practical life. In line with this commitment, the company is expanding its reach beyond the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad to participate in job fairs in other cities including Lahore. S&P Global has participated in a number of career fairs including the National University of Science and Technology (NUST) Islamabad, COMSATS University (COMSATS) Islamabad, The Millen-

nium Universal College (TMUC) Islamabad, University of Management Sciences (LUMS) Lahore and ACCA. Launched in February 2023, the recruitment drive will also feature a virtual career fair where students can interact with recruiters and learn more about the company's culture, values and career opportunities, said a news release. The career fair will enable students to get guidance on industry and networking with professionals. The campaign will include team building activities and group discussions to assess the candidate's skills. These activities will help students understand the importance of skills such as communication, leadership, problem solving and will educate them about the important things in the recruitment process. In addition, the company is collaborating with educational

partners to conduct leadership, career talk series and mock interview sessions. These initiatives provide students with the opportunity to learn from and benefit from the experiences of S&P Global's corporate leadership. Moreover, these activities aim to enhance the students' skills and equip them with the necessary tools to succeed in the corporate sector. S&P Global understands the importance of bridging the gap between academia and industry. On-campus recruitment initiatives provide the best opportunities to identify talented candidates and provide them with the best job opportunity. This initiative of modern technology, expert consultation and industry-academia partnership will not only benefit the students but also help in the promotion and development of the local workforce. —APP

Two bids to smuggle 1350 flour bags foiled

RAWALPINDI: The Food Department Rawalpindi and district police here on Tuesday foiled two bids to smuggle 1350 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 two drivers namely Saleh ur Rehman and Syed Ghulam with 1350 bags. He informed that the accused were trying to smuggle wheat flour bags out of the Rawalpindi division. —APP

FPO for promoting good governance

ISLAMABAD: The 27th meeting of the Forum of Pakistan Ombudsmen (FPO) have decided to establish a dedicated FPO secretariat to plan, implement and coordinate its activities as well as to act as a platform for promoting cause of ombudsmanship and good governance in the country. According to a release received here, the meeting was held in the Wafaqi Mohtasib Secretariat, Islamabad on Tuesday under the chair of Federal Tax Ombudsman/President FPO Dr Asif Mahmood Jah. The FPO meeting coincided with the 40th anniversary celebrations of the establishment of the institution of Federal Ombudsman in Pakistan. The forum appreciated that the ombudsmanship has come of age in the country and the institution is working as an effective mechanism for providing speedy and inexpensive justice to the general public against maladministration by the government agencies. The meeting took important decisions with a view to strengthening mutual cooperation in promoting core values of administrative propriety, rule of law, good governance and inviolability of human dignity.

3 bike lifters arrested

RAWALPINDI: Police have arrested three bike lifters and recovered six stolen motorcycles, weapons and other items from their possession. According to a police spokesman, a team under the supervision of SHO, Saddar Baroni Police Station managed to net three bike lifters namely Umair, ringleader, Hassan and Waqas and recovered six stolen motorcycles, weapons and other items from their possession. A case has been registered against the accused while further investigation is underway. Superintendent of Police, Saddar, Muhammad Nabeel Khokhar said the accomplices and facilitators of the accused would also be sent behind the bars. —APP

MARCH 2023

Pakistan's Premier News & Diplomatic Affairs Magazine

Find us on:
www.centrelines.com.pk
www.dnanews.com.pl
www.islamabadpost.com.pk

@PostIslamabad / @Editordnanews

A sister concern of

Islamabad POST

11# Block 18-A, Awan Plaza,
 G-8 Markez, Islamabad-Pakistan
 Ph: 051-2261960, 051-2266165



Briefs

8,778 fine tickets issued for not fastening seat belt

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Police (Traffic Wing) issued 8,778 fine tickets to road users for not fastening seat belts and 7,668 for using mobile phones during the ongoing month. Following the directions of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Dr Akbar Nasir Khan, a special campaign is underway to check violations. Various squads headed by Chief Traffic Officer Islamabad Dr Syed Mustafa Tanveer are performing duties at main roads and boulevards of the city and taking stern action against the violators. According to a police spokesman, a campaign is underway to ensure a disciplined traffic system in the city. He said that personnel of Islamabad capital police have been directed to ensure the implementation of traffic rules and regulations irrespective of status and rank and demonstrate patience and politeness while issuing traffic violation tickets to the road users. He said that police were ensuring strict legal action against other traffic rules violators as well. The force issues traffic violation tickets, not as a punitive measure but the purpose is to ensure a safe road environment in the capital and secure the lives of the people.—APP

Soyabean, palm oil imports grow

ISLAMABAD, Mar 21 (APP): The imports of edible oil including soyabean and palm oil into the country during the first eight months of the current financial year increased by 148.67 percent and 9.87 percent respectively as compared to the imports of the corresponding period of last year. During the period from July-February 2022-23, the imports of soyabean oil into the country recorded about 148.67 percent positive growth as over 140,120 metric tonnes of the above-mentioned commodity costing \$203.578 million was imported for fulfilling the local requirements as opposed to the imports of 62,750 metric tonnes valuing \$81.866 million of the same period last year. Meanwhile, over 2.151 million metric tonnes of palm oil worth \$2.681 billion were also imported during the period under review as against the imports of about 2.037 million metric tonnes valuing \$2.440 billion in the same period last year. According to the data by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, food group imports into the country during the first eight months of the current financial year grew by 3.98 percent as food commodities costing \$6.687 billion were imported as compared to the imports of \$6.431 billion of the same period last year.—APP

Allottees asked to pay outstanding installments

ISLAMABAD, Mar 21 (APP): The Federal Government Housing Authority (FGEHA) has asked the allottees of the Lifestyle Residency Project, Sector G-13 Islamabad to pay their outstanding installments before March 31. "All those members of Lifestyle Residency Project who have not been able to make payment of quarterly installments in time, are informed that EHFPRO Board of Directors has recently approved the last and final amnesty of 70 per cent waiver in surcharge," an official in the authority told APP. He said that it may be noted that as per policy, a surcharge is levied in all cases of delayed payment. The official said that members are requested to avail this last and final opportunity of making payments with minimal penalty. If outstanding dues are not cleared before March 31, a surcharge would be imposed. About the current development of the project, he said the grey structure of apartments in seven towers on a 10-acre plot had been completed.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Renowned business figure and former President ICCI Zafar Bakhtawari giving awards to outstanding women during awards distribution ceremony at the ICCI.—DNA

Gwadar Port's "King Grass" works as booster for livestock

Pakistan Farmer Association President Mian Mansha Syed said Chinese President Xi's vision of "magic grass" has been inspiring global poverty relief

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Among 10 years' success stories of BRI that relates to poverty alleviation, de-desertification and livestock economy, "King Grass" pioneered by Chinese Technology is emerging as super food for animals with impactful features of cash crop and land fertility in Gwadar as well as Pakistan. According to a report published by Gwadar Pro, after successful growth of King Grass in the length and breadth of Free Zone area of Gwadar Port, local enterprises are motivated to seek assistance of Chinese JUNCAO technology to grow King Grass to boost their business profitability. As per pilot project, King Grass also known as magic grass, was grown and used to raise livestock in cattle farm established in Gwadar Port more than two years ago. "Throughout the time span, 80

percent proceed had been utilized as a food for all breeds of goats. Not only animals turned fattened but also stayed fit without suffering from any lethal disease," Free Zone official told Gwadar Pro. Goats, he said, love to eat King Grass with zeal due to its lush green color, palatability, fragrance, inbuilt properties and quality. "Giant King Grass provides many of the nutrition requirements for cattle. It has fiber, protein and good energy content. Giant King Grass can replace expensive feeds in the ration and therefore reduce feeding costs while maintaining good nutrition," he mentioned. Pakistan Farmer Association President Mian Mansha Syed said Chinese President Xi's vision of "magic grass" has been inspiring global poverty relief. "It is a particular breed of grass discovered by Chinese scientists which is an economic and environment-friendly

substitute for timber. So far, more than 500 counties across China have participated in planting Juncao, King grass. The grass significantly lowered farming costs, and reduced annual tree clearing by 20 million cubic meters in the country," he added. Gwadar area, by virtue of its arid climate, land degradation, saline or alkali soil and various other ecological challenges, was a litmus test for King grass. "Gwadar Port Operator "COPHC" initiated a King Grass project with assistance of Chinese Embassy and experts from Chinese Universities. In early stage during 2020, King Grass was planted on 5 acres land in Gwadar Port. "Results, eventually proved that it is survivable and commercially feasible. Its yield is 120,000 per acre," according to official documents available to Gwadar Pro. In order to let King Grass proliferate in other part of Balochistan

and Sindh, COPHC official said, seeds were donated to farmers and companies in Dasht area near Milini dam as well as Karachi. The activity generated tremendous outcome and farmer companies are in a mood to grow it further to be beneficiary of advantages of King Grass, he added. Pak-Green NGO director Muhammad Fakhar said that Gwadar port's King Grass is strong footprint of Chinese' public good initiatives that aim to empower people to stamp out poverty, to earn better and boost afforestation. In China, he said, King Grass has made milestone achievements in uprooting poverty. "Thousands of people grew King Grass and used its stock for raising their animals in their cattle farms. Owing to King Grass's low-cost growth and more than 20 years' survivability, Chinese farmers' income multiplied with minimum hassles as compared to other crops," he ad-

ded. Grass Technology has been expanded in 106 countries. It was listed as priority cooperation projects between China and developing countries by UNDP. A meeting on Juncao technology held at the UN headquarters in 2019, then UN General Assembly President Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garces said that the herbaceous plant contributes to poverty eradication, clean energy, gender equality and biodiversity preservation. The Juncao technology is emblematic of the China's Belt and Road Initiative," Espinosa said. "It supports the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." In the mid-1980s, when Xi Jinping started working in Fujian as a local government official, he spent considerable energy for rural development and poverty alleviation in the province. There he supported the King Grass invention that is making rock and roll globally now.

PTI's best candidates in NA 164, PP 245 & 246 Large number of people consider them rightful for PTI tickets

MUMTAZ AHMED BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: PTI's best candidates in NA 164, PP 245 & 246 Waraich, Abbasi and Bajwa. Large number of people consider them rightful for PTI tickets. Their strong roots are in the Public. They have full support of the people in their constituencies. Naeemuddin Waraich, Mohammad Nawaz Abbasi and Khalil Ahmad Bajwa are prominent among the political personalities of Bahawalpur district. Large number of people consider them rightful for PTI tickets. Naeemuddin Waraich, Mohammad Nawaz Abbasi and Khalil Ahmad Bajwa always followed the party discipline and whether Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf is in power or in opposition, these three obey the orders of party leadership. Their vote bank is not only intact, but the number of voters is in-

creasing day by day, the results of the previous elections testify to this. The reasons for the increase in the number of voters along with the retention of the vote bank are that these politicians do not make false promises to the people, do not file false FIRs against anyone and serve the people without any greed. Naeemuddin Waraich conducts marriages of orphans and destitute girls and pays all the expenses from his own pocket. Their doors are always open to help poor people. Naeemuddin Waraich helps the needy without discrimination. Politically savvy PTI loyalists believe that if the party makes a mistake in ticket distribution, PP 245 & 246 is certain to lose. Large number of voters say that while giving tickets to candidates of the provincial assembly, the opinion of candidate of the national assembly should be given importance.

IHC declares Khan's arrest warrants as ineffective

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday declared the petition seeking cancellation of Imran Khan's arrest warrants as ineffective and also sought report from IGP Islamabad regarding the missing file pertaining the attendance of PTI's chairman. Chief Justice Aamer Farooq heard the case filed by former prime minister Imran Khan seeking cancellation of his non-bailable arrest warrants. Khwaja Haris and Barrister Gohar Ali appeared before the court on behalf of PTI's chairman. The chief justice noted that the trial court had already cancelled the non-bailable arrest warrants of PTI's chairman and after this his case in IHC had become ineffective. The court also asked the IGP to submit report within ten days regarding the missing of attendance file from judicial complex and adjourned the case.—APP

Experts stress a review of Afghanistan policy

ISLAMABAD: Experts urged the Government of Pakistan to review its Afghanistan policy in light of the recent developments in Afghanistan. They were speaking at a roundtable discussion jointly organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) and the Area Study Centre, University of Peshawar. The participants of the roundtable were of the view that the rapid pace of developments in Afghanistan culminating in the rise of the Taliban to power in Afghanistan had necessitated a shift in Pakistan's policy towards Afghanistan. They cautioned against using the issuance of visas or the border trade with Afghanistan as a method of coercion against the Afghan government. The participants expressed their concern about the lack of goodwill among the people of Afghanistan towards Pakistan despite Pakistan's hosting of millions of Afghan refugees over the years and assisting Afghanistan in other ways. They were of the view that some of Pakistan's policies aimed at having a friendly government across its western border had impacted the lives of ordinary Afghans. This, they maintained, had negatively impacted the public goodwill that could be generated through Pakistan's generous support to Afghanistan in a variety of ways including the hosting of Afghan refugees. The experts underscored the independent character of the people of Afghanistan and urged the government of Pakistan to treat the people and the government of Afghanistan as sovereign equals. They also encouraged the Government of Pakistan to take strong action against militant groups operating inside Pakistan and cooperate with the Afghan government to make sure that Afghan soil was not used for terrorist activities either within Afghanistan.—DNA

NDMA dispatches 25th cargo to Turkiye

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Tuesday dispatched the 25th cargo carrying another tranche of 1,350 (Type-II) fire resistant winterised family tents to quake-hit Turkiye. The tranche was part of Pakistan's Assistance to Turkiye through Special Air Cargo Dispatch, the NDMA shared in its official Twitter handle. The NDMA said the tranche was sent as per the directions of the prime minister. The tranche of 1,350 (Type-II) fire resistant winterised family tents (100 tonnes load) was dispatched from Lahore.—APP

IRSA's Technical Body to meet in last week of March

ISLAMABAD: The Technical Committee of the Indus River System Authority (IRSA) will meet in the last week of March to determine water availability for the coming Kharif season, starting from April 1. The meeting will be presided over by the IRSA Director Operation while the directors of the irrigation department of Punjab and Sindh, superintendent engineers, chief hydrologist and other senior officials will be in attendance. The technical committee will recommend the anticipated water availability in the country. The recommendations will be forwarded to the Advisory Committee of the Authority for making the final decisions about the water availability for the Kharif season. Official sources told APP here on Tuesday that the IRSA's Advisory Committee would meet in the first week of April to give final approval. The sources said that currently, water inflow in the rivers had improved owing to the rainy spell.—APP

Sherry condemns Imran Khan's allegations

ISLAMABAD, Mar 21 (APP): Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator, Sherry Rehman on Tuesday strictly condemned the allegations levelled by former prime minister and the PTI chairman Imran Khan of his murder plot against the government. In a series of tweets, the Minister said Imran Khan was using different tactics to avoid court appearances and charges. Senator Sherry Rehman queried, "Are their lives at risk only in the court premises? Is there no danger to his life in rallies and meetings?" She added that Imran Khan sought immunity from the court and accountability by using the excuse of security concerns. "Imran Khan will have to provide proof of murder charges against the government," she added.—APP

Export of sports goods increases

ISLAMABAD: The export of sports goods from the country witnessed an increase of 18.28 percent during the eight months of the current financial year (2022-23) as compared to the export of corresponding months of last year. The country exported sports goods worth US\$ 270.158 million during July-February (2022-23) as opposed to the export of US\$ 228.400 million during July-February (2021-22), showing growth of 18.28 percent, according to the data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). Among the sports products, the exports of footballs rose by 35.70 percent, surging from US\$ 114.521 million last year to US\$ 155.400 million during the current year. The gloves exports, however, dropped by 6.28 percent by going down from US\$ 50.615 million last year to US\$ 47.435 million during the current year, the PBS data revealed. Likewise, the exports of all other sports goods increased by 6.42 percent to US\$ 67.322 million last year. Meanwhile, on a year-on-year basis, the sports goods export witnessed a decrease of 20.19 percent in February 2023 as opposed to the export of the same month of last year.—APP

Pak-US relations: The way forward

Moderated by Ambassador Jalil Abbas Jilani, Advisor to CASS on Foreign Affairs, the talk was followed by a candid Question/Answer session between the Ambassador and participants who included serving and retired military officers, academia and diplomats

DNA

ISLAMABAD: "Our strong, enduring partnership will continue to improve the lives of Pakistanis and Americans and have a positive global impact. The U.S.-Pakistan Green Alliance Framework is a prime example." These were the views shared by United States Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome, at the CASS Ambassador Lecture on 'Pak-US Relations: The Way Forward' organised by the Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies, here in the capital. Ambassador Blome, a seasoned diplomat, who earlier served in Tunisia, discussed the 75 years of bilateral relations between the two countries, especially decades of development assistance which had supported the construction of schools, hospitals and built highways throughout the country, as well as education through its scholarship programmes. He appreciated the important role being played by Pakistani Diaspora in business and government who had



built a network of personal and professional connections that had established a strong foundation for the US-Pak relationship. Ambassador Blome also highlighted the long history of humanitarian work from the earthquake of 2005 and floods of 2010 and 2011 to the recent devastating super floods in the country to ensure Pakistanis in need received life-saving assistance. Moderated by Ambassador Jalil Abbas Jilani, Advisor to CASS on Foreign Affairs, the talk was followed by a candid Question/Answer session between the Ambassador and participants who included serving and retired military officers, academia and diplomats. Delivering his Concluding Remarks, President CASS Air Marshal Farhat Hussain Khan (Retd) thanked the guest speaker and was hopeful that the strong foundations of Pak-US relationship would further strengthen their bilateral ties, especially inclusive economic growth, and regional peace & prosperity.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti
Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 03 Issue: 196

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad

IPCC warning: last chance to save the planet

The world is only a few tenths of a degree away from the globally accepted goal of limiting warming to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels. On current trends, we will shoot past the target within a decade. That's the warning from the world's leading scientists on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). In their last report while it is still feasible to stay within 1.5C, they warn that what governments do in the next few years to limit greenhouse gas emissions will determine whether temperatures keep rising dangerously or fall back to safe levels. Billions of poor people who bear the least responsibility for the climate emergency are already being hit hard. Extreme weather events such as the flash floods in Turkey or Cyclone Freddy over southern Africa, which took hundreds of lives, are becoming more common occurrences. It is unequivocal, say the scientists, that human activity has warmed the atmosphere, ocean and land. It is also human activity that can bring temperatures down. Cutting carbon pollution and fossil fuel use by nearly two-thirds by 2035 would give humanity a decent shot at the target. The UN secretary-general, António Guterres, spelled out what this means: an end to new fossil fuel exploration and rich countries exiting coal, oil and gas by 2040. Global emissions of carbon dioxide hit a record high last year despite green tech growth. It's the required decline in CO2 that gives climate scientists nightmares. The 2015 Paris agreement suggested the answer lay in negative emissions – where new technology would reduce the amount of carbon already in the atmosphere and buy society time. There are two ways to remove carbon dioxide. One is with land-management methods such as reforestation. The other is capturing and storing carbon underground or in the oceans. The IPCC thinks there is enough potential CO2 storage to limit global warming to 1.5C from now to 2100. However, such novel methods currently account for just 0.1% of all negative emission use. That might explain why many climate scientists have dismissed the idea as "magical thinking". The rich world has the money and the technological prowess to stop the planet from burning up. Yet climate financing has fallen far short of tackling the climate emergency. The IPCC estimates that investment in climate mitigation and adaptation is three to six times lower than where it needs to be to reach the goal of limiting temperature rises to 1.5C. One reason is that the world is relying on finance houses to stump up the cash. We cannot leave it to the private sector to solve global heating. Some suggest the world should face up to the fact the 1.5C target will be missed. But changing it to a higher number would allow climate sceptics to argue that "wolf" had been cried. Peter Thorne, a researcher at Maynooth University in Ireland, and one of the IPCC report's authors, warned that governments, communities and individuals "have made climate change somebody else's problem". Yet the deleterious effects are affecting everyone. Technology that works can solve a problem if it gets deployed. This depends on getting the right policies in place and crucially securing the funding to make it happen. None of this will materialise if politicians – and the public – see the climate emergency as somebody else's problem.



Chance to condemn US war machine

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Iraq war. A report published by a Geneva-based NGO this month provides ample and detailed evidence of the devastating consequences of the war and subsequent occupation of the country, which was characterized by the dismantling of Iraqi society and the sufferings of the Iraqi people. The crimes and atrocities detailed in the report have prompted renewed calls from the international community for the United States and the United Kingdom to be held accountable for their invasion of Iraq and its aftermath. The Geneva International Centre for Justice report, titled "Accountability and Justice for Iraq: The 20th Commemoration of the 2003 Invasion", points out that under the US-led occupation of Iraq and the sanctions imposed in 1990, the Iraqi people have suffered from torture, arbitrary executions, enforced disappearances and an overall decline in their ability to practice their fundamental rights. On March 20, 2003, the US bypassed the United Nations and invaded Iraq with the assistance of the UK on the basis of a test tube of washing powder, which the George W. Bush administration claimed was evidence the Iraqi regime was in possession of weapons of mass destruction. In every conference, news release and statement the US made prior to the invasion, it made out that it was going to Iraq to liberate it from the authoritarian rule of Saddam Hussein, using this as the pretext for a war of aggression waged "for political and demonstrative effect". The invasion not only destroyed Iraq's state apparatus, it also provided space and conditions for terrorism to expand. After the US' withdrawal in 2011, extremist groups, such as the Islamic State, took advantage of the security vacuum. According to Statista, a statistical database, from 2003 to 2021, about 209,000 Iraqi civilians died in the war and the subsequent conflicts in the country, and about 9.2 million Iraqis became refugees or were forced to leave their homeland. The invasion of Iraq caused catastrophic damage to the systems that provide food, drinking water and healthcare in the country, and to this day civilians are dying in significant numbers due to the damage caused to such systems. And Iraq, of course, is not the only country that has suffered from US aggression. Two years prior to the Iraq war, the US invaded Afghanistan in order to topple the Taliban. This was the start of what was to become its longest war. As well as Afghanistan and Iraq, it has also been deeply involved in the civil wars in Libya and Syria, which have created humanitarian disasters in those countries. The anniversary of the Iraq war should be an occasion for the world to condemn the interventionist policy of the US and the human rights violations it has committed in the name of freedom and democracy. Until the US reins in its war machine, the world will continue to live in the shadow and consequences of its belief that its might always makes it right.

China's Saudi Iranian mediation spotlights flawed regional security policies

James M. Dorsey

The Council controls southern Yemen's strategic ports and waterways, the UNESCO-protected Socotra archipelago, and the volcanic Mayun Island in the Bab el-Mandeb Strait. The UAE is operating Socotra as if it were Emirati rather than Yemeni territory with infrastructure projects that link it to the Gulf state and Emirati immigration and social service policies. The UAE strategy resembles Iran's support for Arab non-state actors. That may be one reason why the UAE was stepping ahead of Saudi Arabia and other

A Chinese-mediated Saudi-Iranian reconciliation potentially casts a spotlight on fundamentally flawed security policies of regional powers, including not only the kingdom and Iran but also the United Arab Emirates. While much of the discussion in recent years has focused on Iran's strategy of creating a defense line far beyond its borders by nurturing and/or supporting aligned militias in various Arab countries, Saudi Arabia, and, even more so, the UAE, have adopted similar approaches. To be sure, Iran has itself to blame for being the focal point of the debate. Its nurturing and/or support of militias-cum-political organizations such as Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Popular Mobilization Units in Iraq, Houthi rebels in Yemen, and in Syria, the regime of President Bashar al-Assad, has been one driver of US and Arab efforts to contain the Islamic republic. Even so, the Saudi-Iranian agreement could bring into sharp relief the challenges posed by what scholar Andreas Krieg has termed 'surrogate warfare' not only to the short-term resolution of conflicts like the Yemen war but also the long-term rejiggering of the Gulf's overall security architecture. Support for militias "empowers complex networks of surrogates...that...become increasingly actors in their own right who disrupt post-conflict resolution and state building... Security assistance to non-state actors...does not contribute to building institutions in recipient states but exacerbates conflict polarization and division," Mr. Krieg said in a just-published study of UAE policy in Yemen and Libya. It's an approach that reduces conflicts to a zero-sum game and exploits weak institutions and governance rather than seeking to empower the state by building strong foundations and transparent and accountable authorities. It also allows supporters of non-state actors to evade responsibility under the guise of plausible deniability. Shielded by public relations and public diplomacy mastery, the UAE has long been able to keep out of the public eye the downside of its regional security strategy that shapes its defense, foreign, and soft power policies, including its militant opposition to political Islam and the quest to be the dominant power in defining what constitutes moderate Islam. Much like what happened in Libya where the UAE, together with Russia, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and others, support renegade Libyan Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar against the country's internationally recognised gov-

ernment in debilitating civil strife, Emirati support for secessionist groups in Yemen could complicate if not thwart efforts to end its war. In a sign of what could happen in Yemen, Mr. Haftar's Libyan National Army has refused to relinquish control of oil-rich swaths of eastern and southern Libya. Mr. Haftar has threatened to renew fighting if the country's political stalemate persists. Policymakers and analysts see an end to the Saudi-military intervention in Yemen as the litmus test of the recently Chinese-mediated agreement between the kingdom and Iran. The UAE withdrew the bulk of its troops from Yemen in 2019 but continues to support the Southern Transitional Council (STC) that demands independence for South Yemen in what would be a return to two separate Yemeni states as they existed before unification in 1990. In a first response, the Council welcomed the China-mediated agreement "as an embodiment of our keenness to strengthen relations between the peoples and countries of our region." The Council controls southern Yemen's strategic ports and waterways, the UNESCO-protected Socotra archipelago, and the volcanic Mayun Island in the Bab el-Mandeb Strait. The UAE is operating Socotra as if it were Emirati rather than Yemeni territory with infrastructure projects that link it to the Gulf state and Emirati immigration and social service policies. The UAE strategy resembles Iran's support for Arab non-state actors. That may be one reason why the UAE was stepping ahead of Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states such as Bahrain in rebuilding relations with Iran. This included returning its ambassador to Tehran in 2022. The UAE downgraded its diplomatic representation in Iran in 2016, but, unlike Saudi Arabia, did not break off relations in the wake of the ransacking of Saudi diplomatic outposts in the Iranian capital and the shrine city of Mashhad. The missions were attacked by crowds protesting the kingdom's execution of a prominent Saudi Shiite cleric, Nimr al-Nimr. Moreover, the UAE sent Emirati coast guard commanders in 2019 to Tehran for discussions with their Iranian counterparts on maritime cooperation in the Strait of Hormuz. To be sure, mounting uncertainty about the reliability of US pledges to guarantee Gulf security was the most immediate driver of Emirati outreach to Iran. Uncertainty is also what governs the UAE's

engagement in surrogate warfare in a bid to project power and influence. In that sense, the drivers of surrogate warfare are equally valid for Iran, which sees itself as encircled by hostile US-backed powers with varying degrees of security ties to Israel, and Saudi Arabia which views Iranian-supported non-state actors and Iran's weapons programs as existential threats. With Yemen as a litmus test, the Chinese-mediated Saudi-Iranian rapprochement offers an opportunity to reduce regional tensions more structurally by positioning surrogate warfare as a threat to long-term stability and security rather than a partisan issue that puts Iran but not others in the hot seat. "One of the most concerning drawbacks of security assistance being provided to non-state actors that do not cooperate but compete with government authority is that it creates new fault lines in already polarized conflicts," Mr. Krieg said. He went on to say, regarding Libya and Yemen, that "rather than offering avenues for the integration of conflicting parties into an inclusive national framework that could assist with reconciliation," support for non-state militias adds "additional layers of conflict to already conflict-torn countries." That is as true for Iranian and Emirati surrogate warfare and degrees of Saudi support for non-state actors as it is for direct Saudi military intervention in Yemen or Iranian involvement in Syria. To be sure, dialling down the tension between Saudi Arabia and Iran is in the interest of all parties. So are inclusive security approaches that consider the concerns of all and strengthen institutions and governance rather than mitigate against reconciliation and reconstruction. The ultimate valuation of the Chinese mediation will depend on the degree to which it contributes to sustainable conflict management, if not conflict resolution. What is certain is that in the words of analyst Raffaelo Pantucci "people will look at China's proposals and its attempts at mediation as evidence of Beijing offering something new which, while not perfect, is at least not simply stoking the flames of conflict." Potentially, that is what offers an opening for a re-think of security strategies and the development of approaches that that could help create a more sustainable security environment.

Israeli escalation feared as holy festivals approach

Chris Doyle

All the ingredients are present for a bloody few weeks. Israeli forces and settlers have killed at least 84 Palestinians in 2023 and are on course to break last year's record for the West Bank. Two years ago, in May 2021, Israeli plans to forcibly dispossess Palestinian families in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah led to a major flare-up, resulting in 11 days of arguably Israel's most devastating bombardment of Gaza. Hamas had refused to be quiet and launched rocket

Tensions in Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Territories hardly need escalating. Yet, for months, observers have feared the impending conjunction of Ramadan, Easter and Passover that starts this week. These are occasions for spiritual reflection for millions, but all too sadly also an occasion for some for more intense oppression, conquest and domination. Key players met in Sharm El-Sheikh on Sunday, in theory to calm matters. This included the US, Israel, the Palestinian Authority, Jordan and Egypt. Israel apparently committed to not discuss any new settlement units for four months and to stop the authorization of settlement posts for six months. However, the wording is so vague as to render it meaningless. Optimism is not high, but one thing is clear: The threat of violence has been well signposted. Everyone is watching. All the ingredients are present for a bloody few weeks. Israeli forces and settlers have killed at least 84 Palestinians in 2023 and are on course to break last year's record for the West Bank. Two years ago, in May 2021, Israeli plans to forcibly dispossess Palestinian families in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah led to a major flare-up, resulting in 11 days of arguably Israel's most devastating bombardment of Gaza. Hamas had refused to be quiet and launched rocket attacks across the border into Israel. Sheikh Jarrah remains a tinderbox. You can see the tented office of Israel's anti-Arab National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir provocatively located right in the heart of the Palestinian area. Ben-Gvir is the settler champion who makes no secret of his desire to get the Palestinians out of Sheikh Jarrah and elsewhere in Jerusalem. Other areas of East Jerusalem are also tense, not least Silwan, an area under the Old City that is under continuous threat of demolition. Much of the focus will be on Al-Aqsa. Palestinian Muslims and others are on high alert to any inkling that Israeli extremists will attempt to alter the status quo any further. By convention, Israel forbids Jewish visits to Al-Haram Al-Sharif for the last 10 days of Ramadan. This year, however, this coincides with Passover, so what will happen? Hundreds of thousands of Pal-

estinian Muslims will be attempting to pray at Al-Aqsa. How the Israeli security forces manage this will be essential to keeping order. Which Palestinians will be allowed into Jerusalem from the West Bank and even Gaza? Will the police try to keep things cool or inflame tensions? All too often in recent years, Israeli forces have used incredible levels of force on the holy site, including tear gas. Aside from Al-Haram Al-Sharif, other points of tension could also propel the situation into a bloodbath. Israeli forces continue their provocative and deadly raids into Nablus and Jenin. The massive Israeli protests also play into this. On Saturday, for the 11th weekend in a row, the numbers in Tel Aviv were huge, reportedly more than 120,000. The issue of oppression of Palestinians figures for only a small percentage. But it is the threat to the stability of the coalition and Israel's international reputation and economic well-being that could add fuel to the flames. A Palestinian gunman has already attacked one protest. The extremist members of the governing coalition will not worry one jot and will push forward with crushing what they perceive to be a left-wing judiciary blocking their dreams of a theocratic, Jewish-only Israel of their dreams. President Isaac Herzog has dramatically warned of an Israeli civil war. Quite what that might look like nobody knows, but it is a racing certainty that Palestinians inside Israel and in the Occupied Territories will bear the brunt of this. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu may – although this is far from certain – wish to calm things down. Keeping out of jail and his personal political survival are his priorities, in that order. Beyond that, he has his own reasons for wanting to regain control of the dramas ahead. Whereas the hardcore settler movement is prepared to go on the attack, Netanyahu has always prided himself on maintaining security for Israelis, and a major conflagration in the West Bank hardly fulfills that. The Israeli army, police and security services would appear to want the same, triggering fallout with Ben-Gvir. The big question therefore will be can Netanyahu control Ben-Gvir? He has a mixed record so far. The Israeli PM enjoys strutting on the global stage. But he has not yet received the tradition-

al invitation to the White House. The cozy fireside chat usually afforded to Israeli leaders has not materialized under President Joe Biden. This is the penalty for having ignored US protestations over settlements and other Israeli actions viewed as unnecessarily escalatory. It also reflects concerns about the Israeli protests and the undermining of the judiciary. Netanyahu will want to reverse this, not least to ensure that he can steer America's position on Iran. Gaza could also be a safety valve. This is the 2014 model of events. That summer, tensions in Jerusalem were white hot. The war on Gaza shifted the field of conflict to the blockaded enclave, where Israel launched a crushing bombardment on the 2 million Palestinian inhabitants. Could this happen again in 2023? It cannot be ruled out. Hamas has threatened action should the status quo at Al-Aqsa be violated. Another factor that makes 2023 more dangerous even than 2021 is that the PA is weaker than ever. The Palestinian leadership did promise at last month's Aqaba summit to calm things during Ramadan, but can it? It has little to no sway over events in Jerusalem, let alone in the rest of the West Bank. The Palestinian youth in Jerusalem do not take orders from anyone. President Mahmoud Abbas cannot bring the sort of energetic, dynamic Palestinian leadership those under occupation require. The story of at least the last 12 months revolves around the dramatic decline in the PA's ability to control and influence the Palestinian population, not least in Nablus and Jenin. This could spread. For the settlers busily engaged in their war on Palestinians, escalation brings huge gains. Provoking the Palestinians can be done in any number of ways – raids into cities, assassinations, home demolitions, etc. If a Palestinian or a Palestinian group carries out an attack, they use that as cover to launch a major attack, approve new settlement plans and demolish more homes. Palestinians simply cannot repel the settler assault on Palestinian areas. The fear is that the next month will see the next bloody chapter in this illegal colonial enterprise.

Courtesy: Arab News

Briefs

Forces kill 3 terrorists in D.I. Khan

FROM PAGE 01
The ISPR further said that the area is being sanitised to eliminate any remaining terrorists. "The Pakistan Army remains determined to eradicate terrorism, and the sacrifices of our brave soldiers strengthen our resolve," the statement further said. 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.

Putin, Xi discuss Chinese...

FROM PAGE 01
large areas of which are already under Russian control. Russian forces had again made attacks on the city of Bakhmut - site of the longest and bloodiest battle of the war - and other targets but had been repelled, it said. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Putin and Xi had on Monday talked about a Chinese proposal calling for a de-escalation and eventual ceasefire in Ukraine. "There was a very thorough exchange of views, a serious conversation," he said. He declined to give further details but said there would be a joint statement after the two leaders meet for a second day of talks. The Chinese document sets out some general principles in a 12-point plan but contains no details on how to end the war, now in its 13th month.

PM Shehbaz announces 100,000...

FROM PAGE 01
governments to improve the quality of teachers' training. Referring to the significance of the latest technology in modern education, he underlined that if they wanted to equip the young generations with the latest education, they would have to give them laptops and other related gadgets, so that the future builders of the nation could get themselves acquainted with the new modes of education. He said that about 100,000 laptops would be distributed among the high achievers across the country. The prime minister opined that the vocational training programme should be taken forward in collaboration with the provincial governments and the private sector. Instead of making investments on the brick and mortar, they should invest over the young students by imparting them technical and skill training, he added. The prime minister emphasized that the students should be directly trained by involving the private sector. "The best institutions in the private sector should be hired in a transparent manner and investment be made on each student by imparting them proper training." The prime minister said that they would also establish a network of Danish schools in the far-flung areas of Balochistan for which huge investments would be made. He expressed the confidence that the quality education to the students in remote area of the province would help bring them at par with the rest of the students of the other parts of the country. He also urged that the educational requirements of the orphan children should be taken care of. He said that imparting the latest education to the young generations should be the goal of life for them. Appreciating the efforts of the federal minister, ministry and other partners, the prime minister said it was a good day for the education sector of the country as the latest technology would be utilized to further improve the quality of education. Speaking on the occasion, Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Rana Tanveer Hussain said that quality of education was linked with teachers' training which was being focused.

Maldives beat Pakistan in int'l friendly football match



MALE: Maldivian Minister of Sports, Ahmed Mahloof and High Commissioner of Pakistan to Maldives Vice Admiral (R) Muhammad Fayyaz Gilani, attends the FIFA International friendly match between Maldives vs Pakistan. - DNA

DNA

MALE: Maldives defeated Pakistan 1-0 in a friendly match at the Laamu Gan Zone Stadium on Tuesday. Ibrahim Aisam scored from a corner in the 20th minute of the match to give the home side a 1-0 lead. Pakistan created some chances in the second half but were unable to equalise and eventually lost the match. Maldivian Minister of Youth Affairs, Ahmed Mahloof and High Com-

missioner of Pakistan to Maldives H.E. Vice Admiral (R) Muhammad Fayyaz Gilani, attends the FIFA International friendly match between Maldives vs Pakistan. Pakistan team is in rebuilding phase following years of infighting among various groups which kept the sport stalled and FIFA suspending the Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) twice since 2017. This was only the second game which Pakistan played during the last three and a half years. Pakistan returned to international

circuit towards the end of the last year when they played a friendly against Nepal. It must be noted that Pakistan are to feature in the SAFF Cup and World Cup Qualifiers this year. SAFF Cup, as reported by media citing a tweet of India's football governing body (AIF), will be hosted by India in June. Previously, it was planned to be conducted by Dhaka. The World Cup Qualifiers will be held at the end of this year. Pakistan's football authorities also want to utilise the FIFA window



in June for managing some matches with strong nations in order to give enough exposure to the elite squad. It is highly expected that the team which will play in June's FIFA window will also be used in the SAFF Cup which is expected to be held from June 20 to July 3. The two countries have faced off against one another ten times so far, with the Maldives winning four and Pakistan winning three, while the other three ended in draws. FIFA twice suspended Pakistan during this turbulent time,

which started after Pakistan's international commitment in the spring of 2015. The Pakistani team is currently in the rebuilding phase following years of infighting among numerous parties that held the sport in a standstill. In order to get the youthful pool, whose average age is 22, ready for this year's SAFF Cup and World Cup Qualifiers, the authorities are exposing them to various situations. India formally declared on Sunday that it will host the SAFF Cup beginning on June 21.

Ramazan Relief Package...

FROM PAGE 01
already providing five basic food items to the public at subsidized rates through the Utility Stores. The Minister said in order to facilitate the public the Prime Minister has extended the scope of the relief package by increasing the number of subsidized items to 19. The items to be provided at subsidized rates include flour, ghee, sugar, cooking oil, tea, dates, besan, dal mash, dal mong, milk, drinks, and spices. The targeted subsidy will be only for the people registered under the Benazir Income Support Program while the people of the entire country will benefit from the general subsidy.

LHC grants Imran bail in two cases

FROM PAGE 01
today (Tuesday) if he wanted the court to hear his plea for protective bail in the cases. The court had also directed Khan's lawyer to verify his client's signature. Khan, 70, is facing several legal cases, including one that prompted a failed attempt to arrest him after a court issued warrants for his arrest for not appearing before it. During today's hearing, the court awarded Khan a protective bail till March 27 (Monday). Islamabad's Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) and the Police Station Gora Sharif had filed cases against Khan and several other PTI leaders following clashes between the PTI workers and the police outside the Federal Judicial Complex after Khan reached there to attend the hearing of the Toshakhana case last week. According to the police, the protesters resorted to arson and vandalism and attacked the law-enforcement officials who were performing their duty to maintain law and order in the capital. The FIR stated that the workers destroyed a police checkpoint and broke the main gate of the judicial complex. As many as 18 people were arrested for arson, pelting stones, and vandalising the judicial complex's building, said the FIR. "About two police vehicles and seven motorcycles were burned, and the official vehicle of the station house officer (SHO) was damaged," it added. Khan had also filed a plea seeking protective bail in two cases filed by NAB against him.

Nadal out of top 10 for first time since 2005

WEB DESK

LONDON: Former world number one and 22-time Grand Slam winner Rafael Nadal has dropped out of the world's top 10 men's tennis rankings for the first time in almost 18 years. Nadal has been in the top 10 ever since April 2005, but on Monday he fell to 13th in the rankings after injury forced him to miss Indian Wells. Unable to defend the 600 points from Indian Wells resulted in Nadal dropping four places to 13th in the rankings, ending his record 912-week stay inside the top 10, which began when current number one Carlos Alcaraz was not even two years old. The 36-year-old's run came to an end on the same day that teenage compatriot Alcaraz reclaimed his number one spot from Novak Djokovic after beating Daniil Medvedev in Sunday's Indian Wells final. Nadal is yet to recover from the hip injury that has hampered him since his Australian Open exit to Mackenzie McDonald in January. Though the 22-time grand slam winner could return to the top 10 once he is back in action, it will not be in the next month as he has also withdrawn from the Miami Masters. The latest ATP rankings saw Djokovic drop to second place, while Medvedev moved from sixth to fifth, Felix Au-



ger-Aliassime leapt from 10th to sixth, Hubert Hurkacz nudged into the top 10 as he moved up two places to ninth, while Taylor Fritz dropped from fifth to 10th. World number four Casper Ruud, who lost to Nadal in the Roland Garros final last year, said he would not be shocked to see the 36-year-old lift the French Open trophy once again. "It wouldn't surprise me because he'll probably use these weeks and these months, as he's preparing for exactly Roland Garros," Ruud told Eurosport as part of the Ruud Talk series. "It doesn't matter if he loses in Monte

Carlo or Rome or Madrid. The only thing that's probably on his mind these days is just to be fit, be healthy and be ready for Roland Garros." Last year, tennis lost two of its greats when Serena Williams and Roger Federer bowed out of the sport but Nadal and rival Djokovic are still soldiering on. Djokovic, who turns 36 in May, has shown few signs of slowing down and drew level with Nadal on 22 Grand Slams by winning the Australian Open. "For the whole tennis world, it would be nice to see one last showdown at Roland Garros," former US Open champion Dominic Thiem said, adding that Djokovic would be the favourite to win the remaining Grand Slams this year. "The only tournament is Roland Garros: if Rafa is fit there, it's exactly the opposite. He's the man to beat when he won the tournament 14 times, it's crazy."

RANKINGS

- 1 Carlos Alcaraz (ESP)
- 2 Novak Djokovic (SRB)
- 3 Stefanos Tsitsipas (GRC)
- 4 Casper Ruud (NOR)
- 5 Daniil Medvedev (RUS)
- 6 Felix Auger-Aliassime (CAN)
- 7 Andrey Rublev (RUS)
- 8 Holger Rune (DNK)
- 9 Hubert Hurkacz (POL)
- 10 Taylor Fritz (USA)

Rashid to lead Afghanistan against Pakistan

LAHORE: Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) has named their squad for three-match T20I series against Pakistan. Bowling all-rounder Rashid Khan will lead the squad against an inexperienced Pakistani side which will be led by Shadab Khan. ACB CEO Naseeb Khan said: "Our team has been working hard in training camp and selectors have selected the best available players for the series. I am confident that our team will perform at their best and make our nation proud. We wish our team the best of luck for the series and hope to see them emerge victorious." "In addition, we look forward to an exciting competition between two great teams. Both nations have passionate fans who support their teams with enthusiasm and pride. As neighbors, we have a special bond and we hope to showcase not only our cricketing skills but also the spirit of friendship and sportsmanship. We wish both teams the best of luck and hope that cricket fans around the world will enjoy the games."

Afghanistan Squad

Rashid Khan (c), Rahmanullah Gurbaz (WK), Ibrahim Zadran, Usman Ghani, Sediqullah Atal, Najibullah Zadran, Afsar Zazai, Karim Janat, Mohammad Nabi, Azmatullah Omarzai, Gulbadin Naib, Sharafuddin Ashraf, Noor Ahmad, Muejib Ur Rehman, Fareed Ahmad, Fazal Haq Farooqi and Naveen U1 Haq.

Pakistan Squad

Shadab Khan (c), Abdullah Shafique, Azam Khan, Faheem Ashraf, Iftikhar Ahmed, Ihsanullah, Imad Wasim, Mohammad Harris, Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Wasim Jr, Naseem Shah, Saim Ayub, Shan Masood, Tayyab Tahir, Zaman Khan

Reserved players: Abrar Ahmed, Haseebullah, Usama Mir

SCHEDULED

Mar 24 - First T20I - Sharjah

Mar 26 - Second T20I - Sharjah

Mar 27 - Third T20I - Sharjah

- DNA

Crystal Palace name Hodgson as manager

LONDON: Crystal Palace have reappointed former England boss Roy Hodgson as their manager until the end of the season, with a mission to save the Premier League club from relegation. The 75-year-old, who replaces the sacked Patrick Vieira, said the "sole objective" was to ensure survival in the English top flight. Hodgson, who was in charge at Selhurst Park between 2017 and 2021, takes over with Palace lying 12th in the Premier League, three points above the relegation zone after a 12-match winless run. "It is a privilege to be asked to return to the club, which has always meant so much to me, and to be given the important task of turning the team's fortunes around," Hodgson said in a club statement. "Our sole objective now is to start winning matches, and to get the points necessary to ensure our Premier League status. Palace chairman Steve Parish welcomed the former Liverpool and Inter Milan manager back to the London club, saying Hodgson's experience would be crucial in the battle to avoid the drop. Former Arsenal and France midfielder Vieira was sacked on Friday. - Agencies

Pakistan captain Babar to be conferred with Sitara-e-Imtiaz

LAHORE: Pakistan's all-format captain Babar Azam will be conferred with the country's third-highest civilian award, Sitara-e-Imtiaz, on March 23. With the conferment of the award, Babar would become the youngest person to be awarded Sitara-e-Imtiaz at the age of 28 for his outstanding achievements in the field of sports. Previously, former captain Sarfaraz Ahmed held the record as the youngest person to be awarded the prestigious award. Sarfaraz, who led Pakistan to the Champions Trophy title in 2017, was conferred with the award by then Sindh Governor Mohammad Zubair at the Governor House in Karachi in 2018. Last year on August 14, the government announced that it will be conferring Babar with the country's third-highest civilian honour. The star batter will be taking a break from cricket to attend the ceremony, as he will not be participating in the series against Afghanistan, which is scheduled to start on March 24.



Apart from Babar and Sarfaraz other cricketers that have received the award include Misbah-ul-Haq, Younis Khan, and Shahid Afridi for their outstanding contributions. While Mohammad Younis received the award in 2011, Saeed Ajmal in 2015, Inzamam-ul-Haq in 2005 and Javed Miandad in 1992. Earlier this year, Azam had bagged the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for the ICC Men's Cricketer of 2022. Azam was also named captain of the ICC ODI Team of the Year. Meanwhile, he also clinched the award for ICC ODI Player of the Year. The winners of ICC Awards are identified from the results of the ICC Voting Academy, comprising a wider selection of global cricket journalists and broadcasters, with cricket fans also contributing to the vote via the ICC's digital channels. The Performance Period for the awards was January 1 - December 31, 2022. - DNA

Minister for expanding Pak-Maldives educational co-op

Rana Tanveer assured Dr. Ibrahim Hassan that students from Maldives will be given more seats in medical and art colleges in Pakistan

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training, Rana Tanveer Hussain Tuesday called for expanding cooperation between Pakistan and Maldives in the field of technical and vocational training. During a meeting held with the Higher Education Minister of Republic of Maldives, Dr. Ibrahim Hassan today, Rana Tanveer said that both countries can increase student exchange programs. Emphasizing the importance of the relationship between Pakistan and Maldives, the minister highlighted the brotherly relations between the two countries and praised the hospitality shown to Pakistanis by the people of Maldives. He said that Pakistan and Maldives have been enjoying cordial relations which are based on common faith, culture, historic links, mutual trust, and commonality of interest. The minister said that an MoU on Education and Professional Training to oversee, pursue and coordinate the entire collaboration between two countries should be formulated

and stressed the importance of practical implementation of MoUs as soon as possible. Rana Tanveer was briefed that The Maldives National University has been connected with the leading Universities in Pakistan in-

cluding LUMS, NUST, PMAS Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi and others. Last week, MNU 04 faculty members completed their two weeks training in the agricultural field at Agriculture University

Rawalpindi. He said that there is a great potential for cooperation between the two countries and we believe that with engagements the opportunities would be capitalized for the benefit of the two countries. Higher Education Minister of the Republic of Maldives, Dr. Ibrahim Hassan apprised Rana Tanveer that Maldives has 98 percent literacy rate which is amongst the highest in the world. He said that Maldivian Students (approx. 30) are also pursuing their higher education especially MBBS in Pakistani Medical Universities Colleges. Yearly 6-8 MBBS/ Bds Seats are offered to Maldivian students under Pakistan Technical Assistance Program (PTAP). Rana Tanveer assured Dr. Ibrahim Hassan that students from Maldives will be given more seats in medical and art colleges in Pakistan. The federal minister said that Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with Maldives both in a bilateral context and within the framework of the SAARC, OIC, UN and Commonwealth. "Our cooperative relations are demonstrative of the fact that two countries are natural allies and there are opportunities to further expand mutual ties", he said.



PTI briefs envoys on political situation

FROM PAGE 01
government's ouster through a vote of no-confidence in April last year. To press for their demand for snap polls, the party dissolved the Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa assemblies - the provinces where it was in power. On the other hand, the former premier has also been embroiled in various legal challenges. The matter of his appearances in court has since caused immense chaos with his party workers taking to the streets, confronting security personnel that led to violent clashes in Lahore and Islamabad.

Briefs

Türkiye reveals cost of earthquake damage

ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has estimated that devastating earthquakes which struck the region in February inflicted around \$104 billion in damage in his country alone. He appealed for assistance from abroad while saying that no country is capable of handling such a disaster on its own. Addressing an international gathering of aid donors for both Türkiye and Syria, which was also severely affected by the disaster, Erdogan gave some idea of the massive damage inflicted by the February 6 quakes, saying his country would aim to rebuild some 319,000 homes just over the next year. "More than 51,000 people became victims of the earthquakes, more than 105,000 were injured. According to preliminary data, the damage from them exceeded \$104 billion," the president told the Brussels-based conference on Monday. "It is not possible for a single nation to tackle a crisis of this scale on its own. We will never forget the solidarity that all our friends... have shown in these difficult days."—Agencies

West must brace for protracted Ukraine conflict

BERLIN: The West should prepare for a protracted conflict in Ukraine, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz has warned. He predicted that even after the fighting has stopped, the consequences of the confrontation will persist. Appearing at a meeting organized by the Rheinische Post newspaper in Düsseldorf on Monday, Scholz asserted that "we must prepare ourselves that it can last a long time," adding that "even when the war is over, not everything will be normal overnight." "We should realize that this dreadful war of aggression and its consequences will keep us busy for a long time, and that we will have to deal with the clearing of the rubble for a long time," Scholz stated.

Despite his prediction, Scholz argued that Berlin should not be deterred from working to bring an end to hostilities as soon as possible, and claimed that the withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukraine was the key prerequisite for a "just peace." In an apparent attempt to allay public concerns over his handling of the crisis, Scholz insisted that his government was "not acting recklessly." The Rheinische Post interpreted the remark as an indication from the chancellor that he was against weapons deliveries to Ukraine becoming "too extensive."—Agencies

530 killed in Haiti gang violence this year

GENEVA: More than 530 people have been killed this year in gang violence in Haiti, the United Nations said Tuesday, with many killed by snipers shooting victims at random. The UN human rights office said it was concerned that extreme violence was spiralling out of control in Haiti. "Clashes between gangs are becoming more violent and more frequent, as they try to expand their territorial control throughout the capital and other regions by targeting people living in areas controlled by rivals," spokeswoman Marta Hurtado said. This year, up to March 15, "531 people were killed, 300 injured and 277 kidnapped in gang-related incidents that took place mainly in the capital, Port-au-Prince," she told reporters in Geneva. In the first two weeks of March alone, gang clashes left at least 208 dead, 164 injured and 101 kidnapped, she said. "Most of the victims were killed or injured by snipers who were reportedly randomly shooting at people in their homes or on the streets," Hurtado said. Students and teachers have been hit by stray bullets, and kidnappings of parents and pupils in the vicinity of schools has surged, forcing many to close.—DNA

Japan, China push opposing visions in top-level visits

Kishida's decision to visit Kyiv just as Xi was in Moscow was clearly no coincidence, and likely meant to lessen any impact the Chinese leader had hoped to make, said Heigo Sato, a Takushoku University professor and expert on defense and security issues

BANGKOK: Asia's stake in Europe's war was made crystal clear Tuesday when the leaders of the region's two richest countries sat in the capitals of Russia and Ukraine in strong shows of support for the opposing sides. With the world's eyes on Chinese President Xi Jinping's first talks in Moscow since the invasion of Ukraine, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida paid a surprise visit to Kyiv on the other side of the front lines. The visits came as tension has been growing between the two regional rivals and top economic powers. China is seeking to expand its influence, and Japan has responded by increasing its defense spending and deepening ties with the United States and its allies. While Xi's trip is meant to send a message to the West that its efforts to isolate Moscow over the invasion of Ukraine have fallen short, the contemporaneous visit to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy by Kishida, whose country holds the Group of Seven presidency of leading industrial nations, strongly underlines the global nature of the opposition to the war. "It's a very pointed statement," said Euan Graham, a Singapore-based expert with the International



stitute for Strategic Studies. "It shows that there is more Asian skin in the game than many people may have thought. ... As Xi is holding hands with Putin, Kishida is clutching the hand of the president — it's a very powerful contrast and one that demonstrates that Ukraine isn't just a European or Atlantic concern." Kishida's decision to visit Kyiv just as Xi was in Moscow was clearly no coincidence, and likely meant to lessen any impact the Chinese



leader had hoped to make, said Heigo Sato, a Takushoku University professor and expert on defense and security issues. "The most important thing is to continue support for Ukraine, and it was necessary to demonstrate G-7 solidarity, with Europe, Japan and the United States working together to provide support," he said. Kishida has been among the most outspoken leaders in Asia against the invasion of Ukraine, and Japan has put in place strict

sanctions against Russia and provided Ukraine with non-lethal military aid, humanitarian supplies and financial support. Because of constitutional constraints proscribing Japan from providing Ukraine lethal weapons, Sato said Kishida's trip was "a minimum requirement" for the chair of the G-7. In a speech in January at Johns Hopkins University, Kishida stressed that he saw the conflict as having direct implications on the world order, and

pledged to use the G-7 presidency to do what he could to strengthen the response of "like-minded countries." "Russia's aggression against Ukraine has marked the complete end of the post-Cold War world," he said. "It has come to light that globalization and interdependence alone cannot serve as a guarantor for peace and development across the globe." Later, in what seemed to be a reference to Beijing's designs toward Taiwan, a self-ruled island that China claims as its territory, Kishida said that "China has some visions and claims on the international order that diverge from ours and that we can never accept." Kishida's visit to Moscow came just hours after he met with Narendra Modi in New Delhi, where he invited the Indian prime minister to attend the G-7 summit in May. Kishida also announced actions for a new Indo-Pacific initiative meant to counter China's growing influence. Rahm Emanuel, the U.S. ambassador to Japan, said in a Twitter post that for countries in the region, the visits highlight "two very different European-Pacific partnerships." "Prime Minister Kishida stands with freedom and Xi stands with a war criminal," he wrote.—Agencies

#StopRansomware: Ransomware attacks on critical infrastructure fund DPRK malicious cyber activities

DNA

NEW YORK: This Cyber security Advisory (CSA) is part of an ongoing #StopRansomware effort to publish advisories for network defenders that detail various ransomware variants and various ransomware threat actors. These #StopRansomware advisories detail historically and recently observed tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) and indicators of compromise (IOCs) to help organizations protect against

ransomware. Visit stopransomware.gov to see all #StopRansomware advisories and to learn about other ransomware threats and no-cost resources. The United States National Security Agency (NSA), the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the U.S. Cyber Security and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Republic of Korea (ROK) National Intelligence Service (NIS), and the ROK Defense Security Agency (DSA) (hereafter referred to as

the "authoring agencies") are issuing this joint Cyber security Advisory (CSA) to highlight ongoing ransomware activity against Healthcare and Public Health Sector organizations and other critical infrastructure sector entities. This CSA provides an overview of Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) state-sponsored ransom are and updates the July 6, 2022, joint CSA North Korean State-Sponsored Cyber Actors Use Maui Ransom are to Target the Healthcare and Public Health Sector.

This advisory highlights TTPs and IOCs DPRK cyber actors used to gain access to and conduct ransom are attacks against Healthcare and Public Health (HPH) Sector organizations and other critical infrastructure sector entities, as well as DPRK cyber actors' use of crypto currency to demand ransoms. The authoring agencies assess that an unspecified amount of revenue from these crypto currency operations supports DPRK national-level priorities and objectives, including cyber operations targeting the United

States and South Korea governments—specific targets include Department of Defense Information Networks and Defense Industrial Base member networks. The IOCs in this product should be useful to sectors previously targeted by DPRK cyber operations (e.g., U.S. government, Department of Defense, and Defense Industrial Base). The authoring agencies highly discourage paying ransoms as doing so does not guarantee files and records will be recovered and may pose sanctions risks.

Japan will be back on trade 'white list'

SEOUL: South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol said on Tuesday he would order officials to begin procedures that would return Japan to its "white list" of countries with fast-track trade status after a summit with Prime Minister Fumio Kishida last week. Yoon announced the decision at a cabinet meeting, saying South Korea and Japan should make efforts to remove obstacles that hinder developing bilateral ties. "I will pre-emptively order our trade minister today to begin necessary legal procedures to have Japan back on our white list," Yoon said during the meeting, which was televised live. "I'm sure Japan will respond if South Korea first starts removing the obstacles." South Korea and Japan removed each other from their respective lists in 2019 amid a decades-old row over a 2018 South Korean court order for Japanese companies to compensate forced laborers during Japan's 1910-45 occupation of the Korean peninsula. Tokyo criticized the ruling, saying the issue was resolved under a 1965 treaty that normalized relations, and the strained ties fanned concerns over U.S.-led efforts to bolster cooperation to counter North Korea's nuclear and missile threats. Yoon, who took office in May, has vowed to mend the bilateral ties and visited Tokyo last week as the first South Korean leader to do so in 12 years. Yoon is pushing to resolve the wartime labor feud through a plan unveiled this month under which a public foundation, funded by South Korean companies, would pay compensation. The plan was welcomed in Tokyo but faced a backlash from some victims and South Korean opposition lawmakers, who accused Yoon of capitulating to Tokyo and inviting Japanese troops back to the Korean peninsula. Yoon said that some people would seek political gain by fueling "hostile nationalism."—Agencies

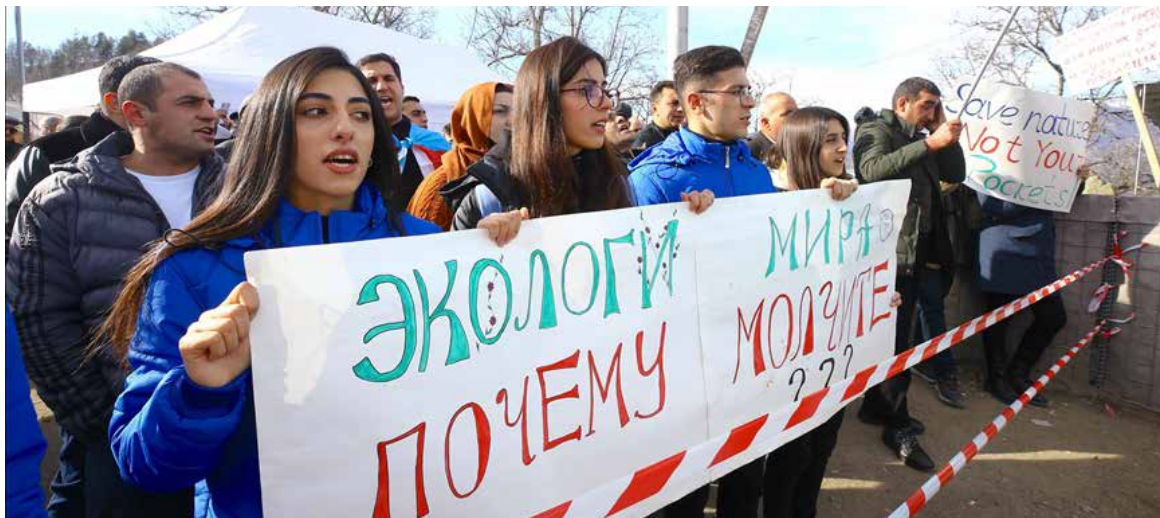
Protests by Azerbaijani activists on Lachin road reach 100 days

NEWS DESK

BAKU: Azerbaijani environmental activists on Tuesday have been protesting on the road connecting the cities of Lachin and Khankendi in the Karabakh region for the past 100 days. Activists began their protest against Armenia's exploitation of natural resources in the Karabakh region on Dec. 12, 2022, and started their 100th day of protests by singing the Azerbaijani

national anthem and patriotic songs, later chanting slogans. On Dec. 11, Azerbaijan sent a diplomatic note to Russia concerning the "illegal exploitation" of natural resources in the liberated Karabakh region, as its officials were prevented from entering the area a day before. The statement by the Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry said illegal exploitation and looting of natural resources were observed, especially in the Kyzylbulag gold and Demirli cop-

per-molybdenum mines. It added that negotiations were held between the two sides and an agreement was reached on Dec. 10, but still officials from Baku were prevented from visiting the area. Since then, Armenia has claimed that the Lachin road is being obstructed by the Azerbaijani environmentalists, a claim that Baku has denied by noting that vehicles belonging to the Red Cross and the Russian peacekeeping contingent stationed in



Tunisia rejects EU warnings of collapse

"We cannot turn a blind eye to what's happened," Borrell said. In its statement, the Tunisian foreign ministry praised the "constructive support of several partners" including Italy, and said it was open to "a responsible, respectful and equal partnership with all its partners"

FOREIGN DESK

TUNIS: Tunisia on Tuesday dismissed as "overblown" concerns of a looming economic or social collapse after the EU's top diplomat warned of a "very, very dangerous" situation in the North African country. European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell had warned Monday that if crisis-torn Tunisia "collapses economically or socially then we will be in a situation where new flows of migrants will come to Europe." Tunisia's foreign ministry rejected his comments as "overblown,

both in view of the well-established resilience of the Tunisian people throughout its history, and in view of the threat of migration to Europe from the south." An EU delegation was set to visit Tunisia on Tuesday to examine "the political and socio-economic situation" and discuss cooperation over irregular migration, according to an EU statement. In the statement, it blamed the country's leadership in the years following the 2011 pro-democracy revolution for the country's woes. Tunisia has suffered over a decade of economic and political crisis, culminating in a July 2021 pow-

er grab by President Kais Saied, whose rivals have accused him of mounting a coup. Saied has since overturned the country's post-revolution constitution and granted himself almost limitless powers, as well as launching a crackdown against the opposition. Tunisians have continued to struggle with joblessness and surging inflation, exacerbated by the fallout from Russia's invasion of Ukraine, pushing many to try to leave the country. Tunisia is in prolonged talks with the International Monetary Fund for a \$2-billion bailout package to help the heavily indebted treasury balance its books. Southern European

leaders, particularly Italy's far-right government, are concerned at inflows of irregular migrants from and via Tunisia, which lies just 130 kilometers (80 miles) from the Italian island of Lampedusa. Tunisians make up a large proportion of those attempting the dangerous journey, but many other Africans escaping violence and poverty from south of the Sahara also try to reach Europe via Tunisia. Saied in February made an incendiary speech blaming "hordes of illegal migrants from sub-Saharan Africa" for a crime wave and saying a "criminal plot" was underway to change the nation's demographic make-up. The

World Bank effectively suspended new lending to Tunisia after Saied's remarks, a move that put pressure on the IMF not to approve a bailout. Beyond the economic situation, the EU has been upset by Saied's increasing authoritarianism and a crackdown on opponents that has seen more than 20 political figures arrested in recent weeks. "We cannot turn a blind eye to what's happened," Borrell said. In its statement, the Tunisian foreign ministry praised the "constructive support of several partners" including Italy, and said it was open to "a responsible, respectful and equal partnership with all its partners."

Finland continues to buy Russian gas

FOREIGN DESK

HLSINKI: Finnish state-run energy provider Gasum intends to continue buying gas from Russia, Yle news outlet reported on Monday, citing a statement from the company. Gasum has a long-term gas supply contract with Russia, which was signed before Ukraine-related EU sanctions and Russian counter-sanctions were introduced last year, according to the statement. "This will be valid "for several more years," the company said, noting that it is obliged to pay under the contract and doesn't intend to breach this agreement. "The contract is a so-called take-or-pay contract, which is common in gas supply contracts. It means that Gasum is obliged to pay for a certain amount of liquefied natural gas (LNG) every year, whether we get it from Russia or not," the company explained to Yle in an email. Gasum noted that it has no legal grounds to terminate the contract or take it to arbitration. In response to EU sanctions last year, Moscow demanded that buyers in countries that supported them must pay for Russian gas supplies in rubles instead of dollars or euro.

Thousands demand resignation of South Africa president's

JOHANNESBURG: Thousands of opposition supporters in South Africa marched through the streets on Monday demanding the resignation of President Cyril Ramaphosa. Julius Malema, leader of the left-wing Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) party, which called the protest, said they were tired of rolling power cuts, corruption, increasing poverty, and high unemployment. "Our message is clear: Ramaphosa must go," he told supporters gathered at Church Square in Pretoria. Malema, whose party is the third-largest in parliament, had called for a national shutdown in the hopes that it would bring the entire country to a standstill, though some businesses and taxi operators did not heed the call.—APP

Biden to release Covid intelligence

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden has signed a bill that directs the federal government to declassify material related to the genesis of the Covid-19 pandemic, with the White House suggesting "potential links" between the virus and a high-security research lab in China. Biden put his name to the legislation on Monday night, after it breezed through both chambers of Congress without opposition earlier this month. The law requires the Office of the Director of National Intelligence to release information on the origins of the health crisis, and states that a declassified report must be forwarded to lawmakers within 90 days.

1st Ramadan in KSA on Thursday

RIYADH: The crescent moon was not sighted on Tuesday evening in Saudi Arabia and Thursday, March 23, will be the start of the holy month of Ramadan, the Kingdom's Supreme Court has said. The court called on all Muslims in the Kingdom to look for the Ramadan crescent on Tuesday evening that corresponds to Shaban 29, 1444. The Ministry of Justice announced it has launched an electronic system for crescent sighting "with the aim of automating and governing the moon sighting process, and unifying work procedures between the courts of first instance and the Supreme Court." The service aims to unify the data source of the observatory through a robust electronic system that provides speed and integration with the relevant authorities, raising the quality of the observatory operations, and speeding up the issuance of the Supreme Court's decision regarding new moon sightings.—APP

Briefs

Amb. Blome sees US investment reaching new heights

DNA

ISLAMABAD: United States Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome said the US is the largest export market for Pakistan, and investment from the US into the country is increasing annually. Speaking at US-Pakistan Innovation Expo in Islamabad, the US envoy told the participants that the top priority of the US government is to boost inclusive economic growth and strengthen the trading and investment ties between the two countries. Mr Blome maintained that there is still room to grow, adding Pakistan is a country with mammoth potential, but it needs to equip with innovation and advanced technology to harness its potential. Meanwhile, Senior Adviser for the Asia Foundation Pakistan Haris Qayyum expressed appreciation for ongoing collaboration with both countries and said the Asia foundation is steadfast to bolster Pakistan's tech ecosystem with US support as their goal is to support the country's sustainable development and inclusive growth.

Religious leader shot dead in Karachi

DNA

KARACHI: Some unknown assailants shot dead a prominent cleric in Karachi on Tuesday. According to police, Maulana Sufi Abdul Qayyum Naqshbandi was going home after saying Fajr prayers in a mosque when he was waylaid by some assailants riding on a motorcycle in Gulistan-e-Jauhar, Block 9, Magsi Chowk. The assailants shot him in the head, killing him on the spot. The cleric was killed outside his home. The dead body of the Maulana was sent to Jinnah Hospital, Karachi for autopsy. Maulana Sufi was the principal of Madrasa Noorani Islamic Centre. He was also the chairman of Pakistan Ulema Association. Police have started investigation of the incident. According to initial investigation, the murder was result of personal enmity.

Over 10m flood affectees lacking access to safe water

Unicef Representative in Pakistan Abdullah Fadil said safe drinking water was a "basic human right" and not a privilege, adding that millions of children in country were daily "fighting a losing battle against preventable waterborne diseases and consequential malnutrition"

NEWS DESK

NEW YORK: The United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) warned on Tuesday that over 10 million flood affectees, including children, still lacked access to safe drinking water after last year's catastrophic floods. The disastrous floods of 2022 were the tenth most expensive climate disaster to have buffeted a nation over the last decade, according to risk modelling firm RMS. The floods inflicted an estimated loss of \$3 billion on the country, caused over 1,700 deaths and displaced eight million people. In a press release, Unicef said that deprived of safe drinking water, families in flood-affected areas were left with no choice but to drink and use "potentially disease-ridden water". "Even before the floods, despite the country's drinking wa-

ter supply system covering 92 per cent of the population, only 36pc of the water was considered safe for consumption. "The floods damaged most of the water systems in affected areas, compelling more than 5.4m people, including 2.5m children, to solely rely on contaminated water from ponds and wells," the UN agency said. Unicef Representative in Pakistan Abdullah Fadil said safe drinking water was a "basic human right" and not a privilege, adding that millions of children in the country were daily "fighting a losing battle against preventable waterborne diseases and the consequential malnutrition". "We need the continued support of our donors to provide safe water, build toilets and deliver vital sanitation services to these children and families who need them the most," the press release quoted him as saying. Unicef warned that the prolonged lack

of safe drinking water and toilets, along with the continued proximity of vulnerable families to bodies of stagnant water, was contributing to widespread outbreaks of waterborne diseases such as cholera, diarrhoea, dengue and malaria. "At the same time, open defecation has increased by more than 14pc in the flood-affected regions. To make matters worse, the lack of proper toilets is disproportionately affecting children, adolescent girls and women who are at added risk of shame and harm when defecating outdoors." Unicef outlined unsafe water and poor sanitation as the key reasons for malnutrition in the country, adding that it was linked with "half of all child deaths" in Pakistan. "In flood-affected areas, more than 1.5m boys and girls are already severely malnourished and the numbers will only rise in the absence of safe water and proper sani-

tion," the agency warned. It noted that six months after the floods, over 9.6m children still require access to "essential social services". "Unicef's current appeal of \$173.5m to provide life-saving support to women and children affected by the floods remains less than 50pc funded," the organisation pointed out. "It is imperative that the voices and the needs of children in Pakistan are prioritised at all costs and that children are placed at the heart of all post-flood recovery and resilience plans," the press release quoted Fadil as saying. Unicef called on the government, donors and its partners to allocate resources to restore access to safe drinking water and toilets and invest in climate-resilient safe drinking water supply facilities and the use of renewable technologies such as solar pumping systems.

NA joint session to 'take important decisions'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A day after a six-hour-long meeting of the heads of the component parties of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) - a 13-party ruling alliance - National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, while exercising his powers under Joint Sitting Rules 1973, has made a change in the schedule of the joint session of parliament. As per the new schedule, the joint sitting of parliament will convene on Wednesday (tomorrow) instead of 10th of next month to "take important decisions" to enforce state's authority, media reported, in the midst of prolonged anti-government defiance by PTI Chairman Imran Khan.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman REIT and former President Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry Zahid Latif Khan presenting a souvenir to General Manager Turkish Airlines Ali Battal during his visit to Islamabad Stock Exchange. Sales Manager Umer Khan is also present on occasion. - DNA

London police institutionally racist and sexist, review finds

WEB DESK

LONDON: London's Metropolitan Police is institutionally racist, misogynistic and homophobic and unable to police itself, an independent review said on Tuesday, heaping pressure on the Met's new chief to reform Britain's biggest police force. The review was

commissioned by the then-head of the Met, Cressida Dick, in 2021 after a serving officer, Wayne Couzens, was sentenced to life in prison for the rape and murder of a young woman, Sarah Everard, in a case that shocked the country and put a spotlight on the force's broader work culture. But since then, another officer, David Carrick, was also jailed for life for dozens of rapes and sexual assaults stretching back two decades, and several other Met scandals have emerged. "This report is rigorous, stark and unsparing. Its findings are tough and for many will be difficult to take. But it should leave no one in any doubt about the scale of the challenge," Louise Casey, who led the review, said in its foreword. Casey, a member of parliament's upper house, found severe failings across the Met that required "radical" reform. Asked if there could be more officers like Couzens and Carrick - who at one point served in the same armed unit protecting MPs and foreign diplomats - Casey said: "I cannot sufficiently assure you that that is not the case."

President Alvi, PM felicitate APNS body

Nazafreen (Dawn), Sarmad Ali (Jang Group) elected President, Secy General

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Tuesday felicitated the newly elected members of All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS), an organization of major Pakistani newspapers and publishers. The president congratulated Nazafreen Sehgal Lakhani and Sarmad Ali as the unanimously elected president and secretary general, Imtenan Shahid as senior vice president, Muhammad Aslam Qazi as vice president, S.M. Munirjilani as joint secretary, and Shahab Zuberi as finance secretary of the APNS. President Alvi expressed hope that the newly elected APNS body would take steps for the promotion of mass media in the country. He urged the media to work towards ensuring peace and tolerance besides promoting ethical and democratic values. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also greeted the newly elected office bearers of All Pakistan Newspaper Hundred City (APNS). The Prime Minister congratulated Ms. Naz Afrin Sehgal Lakhani on being elected as the unopposed President of APNS and Sarmad Ali as the Secretary General. The Prime Minister congratulated Imtan Shahid and Mohammad Aslam Qazi as Vice Presidents, SM Munirjilani as Joint Secretary, Shahab Zuberi as Finance Secretary. APNS has played an important role in promoting journalism in the country. Meanwhile, National Assembly

Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf on Tuesday emphasized the crucial role of media in combating the spread of false information, urging them to take responsibility for preventing dissemination of fake news to avoid harmful effects on society. He congratulated the newly elected officials of All Pakistan Newspapers Society [APNS] and called for unbiased dissemination of information and urged media organizations to foster inclusion and tolerance. The Speaker also highlighted the media's role in addressing economic and social problems facing the country, combating moral decline, intolerance, and societal uncertainty. Following dailies and magazines were elected unopposed to the Executive Committee of the APNS for the next tenure: Daily Aghaz, Daily Business Recorder, Daily Deyanat, Daily Dawn, Daily Jang, Daily Jiddat (Khi), Daily Mashriq (Quetta), Daily Mashriq (Peshawar), Daily Wahdat, Daily Kawish (Hyd), Daily Kaleem (Sukkur), Daily Aftab (Multan), Daily Paigham, Daily Business Report, Daily City 42, Daily Pakistan Observer, Daily Halchal (Hyd) and Daily Sayadat, Monthly Dastak, Nawa-i-Waqt, Monthly Naey Ufaq, Monthly Naya Rukh, Monthly CENTRELINE, Fortnightly Ibrat Magazine and Weekly Nikhar were elected on periodical seats.

US ex-envoy calls on finance minister



ISLAMABAD: The US Ex-Ambassador Ms. Robin L. Raphael Tuesday called on Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq. The minister welcomed Ms. Robin L. Raphael and shared his views on improving deep-rooted and strong bilateral relations with the United States on economic and trade fronts. The Finance Minister shared economic policies and priorities of the government to address the challenging economic and social development of the population. The two exchanged views on matters of mutual interest in the backdrop of Pak-US relations and further deepening the existing bilateral relations between the two countries. Ms. Robin L. Raphael underscored that both countries enjoy good relations and expressed confidence in the policies and programs of the government for economic sustainability and growth. - Agencies

Bilawal felicitates KSA, Iran on normalization

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari held a telephonic conversation with His Highness Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). The Foreign Minister congratulated the Saudi Foreign Minister on recent normalization of relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran announced through "Trilateral Joint Statement" and appreciated the leadership of the Kingdom of KSA for this positive development. The Foreign Minister added that this agreement will pave the way for initiation of meaningful dialogue for peace. Reaffirming the fraternal relations between Pakistan and KSA, the two Foreign Ministers reiterated their mutual commitment to further expand and diversify the bilateral strategic partnership. Separately, Foreign Minister also held a telephone conversation with Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Extending warm felicitations on the signing of the Joint Trilateral Statement by Iran, KSA and China, on 10 March 2023 in Beijing, the Foreign Minister termed the resumption of diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran as a testament to the wisdom and farsightedness of the leadership of the two countries. - DNA

NOW IN PAKISTAN

Invisible Braces
Dental Implants

Dr. Abrar & Associates
DENTAL SURGEONS

House # 6-A, Ismail Zabeeh Road, (Service Road Parallel to Faisal Avenue) F-8/3, Islamabad.
e-mail: abrar_associates@yahoo.com | www.drabrarassociates.com
Ph: +92 51 228 7691 / +92 51 228 7692 | Fax: +92 51 228 7693

فرنیئر فاؤنڈیشن

بلڈ ٹرانسفیوژن اینڈ ہیماٹولوجیکل سروسز

اپنی زکوٰۃ، صدقات و عطیات

فرنیئر فاؤنڈیشن کے ساتھ رجسٹرڈ ہزاروں
تھیلیپیما، ہیپوفیلیا اور بلڈ کینسر کے مریض
بچے آپ کی امداد کے منتظر ہیں

آپ اپنی زکوٰۃ و عطیات
بذریعہ چیک یا براہ راست
بنام فرنیئر فاؤنڈیشن ویلفیئر سروسز آن لائن جمع کروا سکتے ہیں

اکاؤنٹ نمبر 00277-010100-3379-0 مین برانچ پشاور صدر
فون: 0300-9598289 | 091-5703463

پتہ: 46-ڈی اولڈ جسروڈ روڈ یونیورسٹی ٹاؤن پشاور۔