

#### DNA

**China visit** 



as April and is seeking a meeting with China's Premier Li Qiang, two people with knowledge of planning for the trip told media. The exact timing of the visit is subject to Li Qiang's availability, one of the sources said. Tesla and China's State Council Information Office did not immediately reply to requests for comment on Friday. China is Tesla's second-largest market after the United States and its Shanghai plant is the electric carmaker's largest production hub.

### Law minister stresses on dialogue



ISLAMABAD: Law Minister Azam Nazeer has Tarar urged country's institutions to utilize collective wisdom to resolve prevailing crisis including economic, political and constitutional. Addressing a news conference along with Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mar rivum Aurangzeb and Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah in Islamabad today, he was of the opinion that a full court bench of the Supreme Court should hear the proceedings of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa elections case. Minister also urged the political leadership of the country to use window of dialogue to overcome political polarization.

## Govt request for full court turned down Apex court summons Finance, Interior secretaries on Monday

#### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The newly constituted three-member bench of the Supreme Court on Friday rejected the government's request to form a full court on the Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa election delay case. A three-member bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial, comprising Justice IjazUl Ahsan and Justice Munib Akhtar, rejected the request put forward by Attorney General for Pakistan Mansoor Usman Awan on behalf of the government.

The initial five-member bench comprising CJP Bandial, Justice Ahsan, Justice Akhtar, Justice Amin-Ud-Din Khan, and Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail was formed to hear the case. It held three hearings on the matter from Monday to Wednesday. The three-member bench was formed after two of the five judges of the original five-member larger bench recused themselves.

Justice Khan was the first member to recuse himself which led to the dissolution of the bench. However, it was CJP Bandial, Justice Ahsan and Justice Akhtar who conducted the proceedings. During the hearing, when the AGP requested the formation of a full court, Justice Bandial remarked that the court had conducted proceedings into the case for three complete days and that the inclusion of new judges to the bench will further waste time. "It will take time for the new

SC circular disregards Justice Isa's judgment

#### STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court in a circular on Friday "disregarded" a judgment authored by Justice Qazi-Faez Isa ordering the postponement of suomotu cases till amendments are made in the Supreme Court Rules 1980 regarding the discretionary powers of the chief justice to form benches. In its circular, the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial noted that the observations made by the majority judgment in paras 11 to 22 and 26 to 28 were beyond the matter fixed before the court and "invokes its suomotu jurisdiction". Interestingly, the Supreme Court issued the circular hours before a four-member bench was to start hearing the Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa election delay case. The circular noted that the "unilateral assumption of judicial power" in such a manner violated the rule laid down by a five-member judgment.

**Continued on Page 06** 



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif visits Free Flour Distribution Points established as part of Prime Minister's Ramzan Relief Package for deserving families. - DNA

### Sohail Ali Khan appointed new Information Secretary



KARACHI: At least 11 people died and sev-eral were injured Friday amid a stampede inside the premises of a factory at the Naurus intersection in Karachi's SITE area,

NAZIR SIYAL

PM for removing hurdles in flour distribution

DNA

#### Sehr, lftar Timing



#### **Holiday Notice**

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

– Editor

### Inside.

Karachi: 11 killed in stampede during ration distribution – Page 02

Commissioner Rawalpindi assures to address issues of business community - Page 03

President directs insurance company to pay widow claim - Page 04

Israelis need to see through the biggest lie of all – Page 05

European union nation killed civilians in Iraq: Report – Page 06

**Belarus** President Lukashenko warns of 'nuclear' war – Page 07

Issuance of visa for Afghans becoming source of income – Page 08 judges to understand the case," he observed, **Continued on Page 06** 

PMLN's threat to SC, CJP Imran urges people to protect democracy Says PMLN seems all-set to launch 1997 like attack on SC **PTI** assures Khayam Abbasi SC to remain ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan

DNA

peaceful

of Law, the Constitution and democracy, as the PMLN seemed all-set to launch 1997 like ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf attack on Supreme Court (SC) and Chief Jus- (PTI) Friday gave a written assurance tice of Pakistan (CJP) because they were pet- to the Supreme Court for remaining rified of elections. In a statement on Friday, peaceful during the general elections PTI Chairman said that as PMLN did in 1997 for the sake of the survival of democby storming apex court to attack the then racy in the country. According to the Chief Justice of Pakistan Sajjad Ali Shah hear- details, PTI has assured the Supreme ing a contempt petition against Nawaz Sharif, Court that it will bring peace and re-PMLN is again threatening SC and CJP today duce the political temperature during because they were petrified of elections. "I the elections. In the written assurance, want people of Pakistan to be ready to come it has been stated that government reout in streets if need be to save Rule of Law, pression against the PTI was continuthe Constitution and democracy," he added. ing, but they are assuring the court for Imran Khan stated: "We will be talking to the sake of the survival of democracy.

**Continued on Page 06** 

fice of the Information Service Group (BPS 21) Sohail Ali Khan presently posted as the Additional Secretary Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Division has been appointed Secretary (Incharge) Information Ministry with immediate effect. The outgoing Information Secretary Ms. Sha-hera Shahid (BPS 22) has been asked to report to

**Continued on Page 06** 

China

rolls over

\$2bn loan

Final decision

within days:

Chinese official

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Finance Min-

ister Ishaq Dar on Friday

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A senior of-

their lives to seek free edibles. The incident occurred while people were gathered at a dyeing factory in the city's industrial area to collect ration – which is part of charity drives that Karachiites hold every Ramadan to help the needy. Those killed in the incident include eight women and three children, rescue sources and police officials told media. Six people also fainted during the stampede, rescue sources told. Meansite when the ration was being distributed.

while, police officials stated that a huge number of people were gathered at the

**Continued on Page 06** 

the latest incident in which people lost

Free ration distribution

11 killed including

women, children

in a stampede

The incident occurred while people

were gathered at a dyeing factory

ISLAMABAD, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday directed the authorities at the flour distribution centres to remove the hurdles faced by citizens in the verification of their Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs). The prime minister stated this during his visit to a flour distribution centre, where the federal government is providing free-of-cost flour bags to needy persons. PM Sharif asked the relevant authorities to chalk out a facilitatory

#### **Continued on Page 06**

Full court SC bench imperative: Marriyum

Says Justice Ijaz-ul-Ahsan should not be part of the bench

#### STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Friday urged the Supreme Court to form a full court bench to hear a case regarding polls in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for averting any constitutional crisis in the country. The proceedings of the case regarding the polls' delay started with a nine-member bench, whose strength had now been relegated to three judges only, the minister said while talking to the media outside the Supreme Court. Marriyum said Justice Ijaz-ul-Ahsan, who had recused himself from hearing the sou moto case regarding the polls delay, should not be part of the bench hearing the contempt case.

ment member parties had already called for the constitution of a full bench for the case as the three-member bench had become "controversial". There was an impression that the three-member bench had lost its credibility, she added.

She said the Pakistan

Move-

Democratic

Referring to the circular issued by the SC registrar, she said it was the "decision of one person". Castigating Pakistan Tehreeke-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan, the minister said a "mentally sick person" wanted to set the whole country on fire by creating

**Continued on Page 06** 

Locking in a rollover had been critical for the country of 220 million, where reserves have dipped to just four weeks' worth of imports and talks over

Continued on Page 06

said China had rolled over a \$2 billion loan that matured last week, providing relief during the country's acute balance of payment crisis.



### **Trump first US President to face criminal charges** Trump is seeking Republican nomination to challenge Democratic President Joe Biden next year. Even before news

of indictment broke, he had been seeking to use legal threats to raise money and rally his most faithful supporters

#### **News Desk**

urged people of Paki-

stan especially lawyers community to be ready

to come out in streets for protection of Rule

NEW YORK: Donald Trump, the ex-president and frontrunner to be Republican nominee in 2024, is set to face a mug shot, finger-printing and court appearance next week after being indicted over a probe into hush money paid to a porn star in a historic U.S. first.

The possible spectacle of Trump's appearance in Manhattan on Tuesday before a judge as the first sitting or former president to face criminal charges could further divide the world's most powerful country. Trump is seeking the Republican nomination to challenge Democratic President Joe Biden next year. Even before news of the indictment broke, he had been seeking to use the legal threats to raise money and rally his most faithful supporters.

The first U.S. president to have tried to overthrow an election defeat, whose false claims of election fraud inspired the deadly U.S. Capitol assault on Jan.

6, 2021, signaled that he will continue to campaign even as he faces charges. Those specific charges have not yet been made public as the indictment remains under seal, but CNN on Thursday

reported Trump faced more than 30 counts related to business fraud. While Trump claimed in a social media

post on March 18 that he would be arrested in days, Trump's first reaction at the news was "shock," said one of his attorneys, Joe Tacopina, in a Friday interview on ABC. "We'll go in there and we'll proceed to see a judge at some point, plead not guilty, start talking about filing motions, which we will do immediately and very aggressively," Tacopina said. Trump, 76, said he was "completely innocent" and accused Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg, the Democrat who led the investigation, of trying to hurt his electoral chances.

"This is Political Persecution and Election Interference at the highest level in history," Trump said in a statement. Trump claims political motivations for all



four criminal investigations he is known to face - including federal probes into his retention of classified documents and attempts to overturn his election defeat, and a separate Georgia probe into his attempt to overturn his loss in that state. He has also accused Bragg, who is Black, of racial bias. Shortly after news of his indictment broke, Trump appealed to supporters to provide money for a legal defense. As news of Trump's indictment flashed across a news ticker on a Times Square skyscraper on Thursday evening, New York City resident Elizabeth Blaise welcomed the news. "It shows that democracy is finally at a place where it is supposed to be," she said. Trump earlier this month called for nationwide protests, recalling his charged rhetoric ahead of the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol by his supporters. Neither the White House nor Biden, a Democrat who is widely expected to seek re-election, commented. Top Senate Democrat Chuck Schumer, called for calm: "I encourage both Mr. Trump's critics and supporters to let the process proceed peacefully and

according to the law." The Manhattan charges will likely be unsealed by a judge in the coming days and Trump will have to travel there to be photographed, fingerprinted and appear in court, which a court official said was expected on Tuesday. Trump lawyer Susan Necheles confirmed the Tuesday

surrender date and said she did not expect charges to be unsealed until that day. The grand jury indictment follows months of hearing evidence about an alleged \$130,000 payment to porn star Stormy Daniels in the waning days of the 2016 campaign.

But any potential trial is still at least more than a year away, legal experts said, meaning it could occur during or after the presidential campaign. Necheles said Trump will "vigorously fight" the charges. Trump received support from a number of potential challengers for the Republican nomination including Florida Governor Ron DeSantis and former Vice President Mike Pence.

"This will only further serve to divide our country," Pence said. DeSantis wrote on Twitter: "The weaponization of the legal system to advance a political agenda turns the rule of law on its head. It is un-American." Among Trump's faithful outside his Mar-a-Lago property,

**Continued on Page 06** 

## NATIONAL

### Islamabad **POST** Saturday, April 01 , 2023

### **91% KP** population benefiting of free flour package

PESHAWAR: Advisor to KP Caretaker CM on Energy & Finance, Hi-mayatullah Khan Friday said that 91% population of the province was taking benefit of the free flour package introduced by the provincial government.

He was jointly presiding over a meeting with the representatives of the flour mills association, concerned administrative secretaries, Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners (DC) with Chief Secretary KP Nadeem Aslam Chaudhery here at Civil Secretariat.

The advisor to KP chief minister assured Pakistan Flour Mills Association (PFMA) of all possible cooperation and taking serious steps to address issues faced by them.

During a briefing regarding the free flour distribution package, the meeting was told that over 1,80,000 deserving families had been provided free flour under the scheme.

On this occasion, Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry said that beside the provision of free flour under the Ramazan Package, the provincial government was also ensuring the availability of the commodity in bazaars of the province. He directed the concerned authorities to

maintain strict surveillance of the availability and price of the flour in markets.-DNA

### PTDC organises 2-week training programme

ISLAMABAD: A twoweek training workshop organized by the Pakistan Development Tourism Corporation (PTDC) to improve the knowledge and skills of tour guides about tourist destinations, tour group management,



I SLAMABAD: Islamabad Marriott Hotel hosted corporate iftar dinner. Seen in the picture are General Manager Islamabad Marriott Hotel David Richard O'hanlon, General Manager Turkish Airlines, Ali Battal, Director Sales Marriott Qazi Fakhar Rehman, Sales Manager Turkish Airlines Umer Khan.-DNA

### 'Govt outsourcing airports to company being run by Indians'

In the next 30 years, the country's airports have a potential of generating more than Rs2700bn and we are outsourcing them for Rs850bn

#### DNA

KARACHI: Aircraft Owners and Operators Association of Pakistan (PAOOA) on Friday opposed the coalition government's "unilateral" decision to outsource country's top airports without following the PPRA rules. The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) had approved the draft Transaction Advisory Agreement reached with the International Finance Corporation for outsourcing of three airports.

The ECC was informed that the outsourcing of three airports has been initiated within the scope of the Public-Private Partnership Act-2017 to engage private

investor through a competitive and transparent process to run the airports, develop appertaining land assets and enhance avenues for commercial activities and to garner full revenue potential.

In a statement today, the association condemned the government's decision to award contracts to IFC and World Bank (WB) regarding the outsourcing of three airports. "All the proceedings of outsourcing of major airports have been kept secret by government, making the whole process doubtful and dubious," the statement read.

The statement said no country outsources its money-making assets like the airports to a third country which cannot run its

own airport, adding that the government has outsourced its major airports to a Singaporean company which is being run by "Indians". Eventually, it will be Indians

managing our major airports, it added. "In the next 30 years, the country's airports have a potential of generating more than Rs2700bn and we are outsourcing them for Rs850bn," the statement said. It further added that PAOOA Pakistan will serve a legal notice to Govt of Pakistan and the IFC, World Bank for malpractice and dodging the Pakistan laws

Abu Dhabi trade delegation visits **FPCCI Capital Office** 

The delegation led by the successful businessman of Abu Dhabi Tariq Al Yousafi

met with the Chairman of Coordination FPCCI Capital Office Mirza Abdul Rehman and the President of Nagar Chamber Haji Qurban Ali at FPCCI Capital Office Islamabad. During the meeting, they discussed the matter that how to enhance cooperation in investment, economic, commercial and tourism, agriculture, energy, real estate, information technology, food processing, tourism areas and developing joint ventures to strengthening collaboration, a press release said Friday. They agreed to intensify consultation and

coordination, geared toward strengthening strategic partnerships to develop tangible and meaningful bilateral Trade cooperation in key areas.

Asad Mahmood

### 8 milkmen arrested for adulteration

PESHAWAR: District administration Peshawar arrested eight milkmen and sealed four shops for milk adulteration on Friday.

On the directives of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Peshawar Shah Fahad, the Additional Assistant Commissioner (AAC) Tania Shaheen along with the Veterinary Supervisor of Livestock Department analyzed the sample of milk from 18 shops on Warsak Road by the modern mobile milk testing laboratory.

The administration sealed four shops and arrested eight milkmen after proving adulteration of water in their product while more than 210 litres of adulterated and substandard milk was discarded.-APP

### Caretaker minister takes notice of jail clash

PESHAWAR: KP Caretaker Minister for Prisons, Shafiullah Khan has taken notice of clashes among prisoners of the Central Jail Peshawar and sought a report from the Inspector General of Prisons

with immediate effect. According to an official handout issued here on Friday, the Caretaker Minister has hinted at stern action against those diluting the environment of prisons and said that similar incidents should not occur again.

He directed the jail administration to perform their responsibilities and duties in a better manner and unveil elements involved in such incidents to take action against them.-APP

### 13 gamblers held during two different raids

WAH CANTT: Police in Taxila and Wah Saddar launched crack down against the gamblers' den and arrested as many as 13 gamblers red handed during the raids.

communication skills, and professional handling of all the aspects of tours, customer service and operational best practices, concluded here on Friday. About 24 trainees from different parts of Pakistan participated in the First National Tour Guide Training Programme, which commenced on March 18 in collaboration with the Department of Tourist Services (DTS), Sustainable Tourism Foundation Pakistan (STFP), College of Tourism and Hotel Management (COTHM), Pakistan Association of Tour Operators (PATO) and Legend Hotels, a news release said. International and national trainers and experts of the tourism industry conducted the training. Certificates were distributed among the trainees at the successful conclusion of the training.-APP

### Minister remarks on **Indus Water** Treaty with India

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Water Resources Syed Khursheed Ahmed Shah told the National Assembly that India has been given an immediate answer on notice sent to Pakistan regarding Indus Water Treaty.

It is pertinent to note that government of India had sent a notice to Pakistan in January this year seeking modification of the Indus Water Treaty. The notice was sent apparently under Article 12 of the Indus Waters Treaty signed by the

two countries in 1960. Responding to the question answer session, Minister for Water Resources said Pakistan has already responded immediately to the matter of notification sent by India to Pakistan regarding changes in Indus Water Treaty.

Syed Khursheed Ahmed urged the government to allocate 15 percent of GDP to cater population resources. In the National Assembly, Federal Minister for Water Resources Khursheed Shah said country's population has increased which needs water.-DNA

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money-making assets like the airports to a third country which cannot run its own airport, adding that the government has outsourced its major airports to a Singaporean company which is being run by "Indians". Eventually, it will be Indians managing our major airports, it added. "In the next 30 years, the country's airports have potential of generating more than Rs2700bn and we are outsourcing them for Rs850bn," the statement said. It further added that PAOOA Pakistan will serve a legal notice to Govt of Pakistan and the IFC, World Bank for malpractice and dodging the Pakistan laws.

#### statement read. The statement said no country outsources its Azhar Mashwani returns home Mashwani said in the

'Govt outsourcing airports to

company being run by Indians'

ISLAMABAD Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) sotweet that with the grace cial media head Azhar of Almighty Allah, he has just returned home safe Mashwani has returned and sound. He paid very home. He informed his social media friends, followthanks to all his well-wishers and party leadership ers and said their prayers, through his tweet about his efforts and support made safe return home. Azhar him indebted to all of them

The PTI Social forever. Media head also said that they prayed for other captive workers of the party to break their fast with families soon. Earlier, the Lahore High Court (LHC) ordered to produce Azhar Mashwani, the focal person on Digital Media to PTI chief Imran Khan, before court. The Lahore High Court had also summoned record of the case registered against him. -DNA

### backlog to be cleared soon

Passport

applications

ISLAMABAD: The passport applications backlog would be completely eliminated in a minimum time as it has been reduced now upto 50 percent. In an announcement here on Friday, the Directorate

General Immigration and Passport said that the extraordinary rush and high volume of passport applications in the previous weeks led to an emergency situation as the number of passport applications exceeded the production capacity. Normally we receive about 400,000 applications for passports in a month, which has increased to about 700,000 monthly in the last three months, it added. At its peak, there was a backlog of around 600,000 passports but the Directorate General of Immigration and Passport has taken steps to reduce this backlog by increasing productivity and working in additional hours. The Directorate has been able to reduce the backlog of 600,000 passports to less than 300,000.–APP

### **Chief NADRA inaugurates** dedicated helpline for transgender

ISLAMABAD: Chairman National Database and Registration Authority (NAD-RA) Tariq Malik has inaugurated a dedicated helpline with transgender attendants while a number of other initiatives have also been launched by the authority to enhance registration and maximize facilitation for the transgender communi-While celebrating the tv. Transgender Day of Visibility (TDOV) as a special day for processing of transgender persons, he said sensitization training for NADRA personnel was also conducted by Regional Head Offices (RHOs) across the country to strengthen their abilities for providing information and support on obtaining identity documents to members of the transgender community. He said the most unique

feature of the dedicated helpline is the deployment of transgender employees of NADRA to answer the (TDOV) is celebrated annually on March 31 to highlight calls, said a news release. "We want to provide a supthe contributions and strugportive and welcoming engles of transgender persons around the world. NADRA vironment for transgender declared March 31 as a spepersons so that they are cial day for registering transable to obtain their identity documents and access gender persons. The RHOs of NADRA enthe services they need to

thrive," he said. gaged with local organiza-Malik said NADRA wanted tions for mobilizing transmembers of the transgender gender persons to register community to know that the themselves at NADRA Registration Centres and at locally authority supports them and deployed Mobile Registrais committed to providing the services they need to astion Vans. A series of Sensimilate into society. "I hope sitization Sessions will be that this dedicated helpline conducted in all the regions will go a long way in ensursuccessively throughout this ing that they can claim their year. In addition to the helprightful place and are able to line, NADRA has launched a number of other initiatives register and derive dividends from government schemes", for the transgender commu-Tariq Malik added. This acnity, including but not limited knowledgement serves to to free of cost first Computerized National Identity Card increase visibility and aware-(CNIC), the provision of jobs ness of the issues faced by the transgender community transgender persons in NADRA, and recognition of and looks to promote their rights internationally. The a "guru" for registration of Transgender Day of Visibility transgender persons.

Chairman NADRA has led a nationwide registration/ awareness campaign since 2021 themed "Trans Rights are Human Rights," while 39 Sensitization/ Training Sessions have already been conducted for NADRA staff. The authority has also nominated Focal Persons for the facilitation of transgender

persons at all its centres across Pakistan. The NADRA is committed to promoting inclusiveness and diversity by making its efforts compliant with SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 10.2 (Empower and Promote the Social, Economic and Political Inclusion of All) and SDG 16.9 (Legal Identity for All). This year's TDOV observance was in continuation of NADRA's efforts for enhancing the registration of transgender persons and creating awareness on the significance of legal identity as a step transgenders' empowerment.-APP

Asad Manmood meets Caretaker CM LAHORE: Federal Minister for Communications Asad Mahmood met with Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Nagyi at his office to discuss road construction and repair proiects across Punjab. Both agreed to complete the projects on time to benefit the people. Additionally, they decided to grant limited powers of a price control magistrate to NHA staff to prevent overcharging of food items on highways and establish measures for axle-load control on highways and motorways. The proposal for a coordinated operation to remove encroachments on both sides of GT Road was also discussed, along with plans to expedite the process of issuing fitness certification for vehicles. The CM expressed his plans to launch a joint project with the federal government to link Bahawalpur with the motorway and accelerate the project relating to Imamia Colony Lahore. The NHA has also been approached for the repair and maintenance of the GT stretch of Lahore-Gujranwala. Additionally, the Punjab government will cooperate with the construction of the Muzaffargarh-Mianwali MM Road and work towards resolving public problems through the construc-

ources said, Taxila Police acting on a tip off, raided a gambling den on Friday and arrested as many as six persons red handed while gambling. Gambling tools and bet money worth Rs 22 thousand, seven mobile phones and one pistol was also recovered during the raid. Moreover, Wah Saddar Police raided at a gambling den and arrested seven persons red handed while gambling. According to the police sources, a police party, acting on a tip off, raided at the den and arrested seven persons red handed while gambling. – APP



- Relocations
- Office Removals
- Gine Art Handling
- Project Management
- Pet Relocation
- Warehousing
- Storage





Ind Fisce Katikashan Mall	Lators	Peshawar	Kabul
	F-L Guibers Cantes	Office No. C-R. 2nd Foor, Zatwer Place	House E-L. Storet # 4
12-1.Block-2, PECHS,	Main Boulevard, Lahors	Last Abod, Ring Road, Peishwar	Charah Ansar Rost, Shahra-Naw,
21) 34580626.34310478	Tel: (+92-42) 35758861, 35761085.	Tel: (+82-91) 2582778	Kabul - Alghanistan.
30747	Fax: (+92-42) 35711420	Fax: (+82-91) 2582888	Ter: +60 798021 775; 83 797586-808; 85 178468 268.
selfrenovers.com	E-nul: latore@heatranoies.con	E-mail peshawar@heelinemovers.com	E-mail: kabui@heelinemovers.com



### National Days and Armed **Forces Days**

### MARCH

March 01 / Bosnia National Day

March 03 / Bulgaria National Day

March 06 / Ghana **Independence** Day

March 12 / Mauritius National Day

March 17 / Ireland St. Patricks Day

March 20 / Tunisia **Independence Day** March 21 / Namibia

National Day March 25 / Greece **National Day** 

March 26 / Bangladesh National Day

March 27 / Myanmar **Armed Forces Day** 



#### Hotels & Restaurants

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



Airlines Turkish Airlines.....8494949



### Emergency

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

## **Commissioner Rawalpindi** assures to address issues of business community

#### DNA

CHAKWAL: Waqar Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Chakwal Chamber of Commerce and Industry leading an 8-member delegation met with Commissioner Rawalpindi Liaquat Ali Chatha and apprised him of the key issues being faced by the business community and citizens of Chakwal. Commissioner Rawalpindi Liaguat Ali Chatha welcomed the delegation and listened to their issues in detail. He assured that he would issue necessary instructions to the district administration of Chakwal to ensure early approval of the commercial maps so that the construction activities in Chakwal district can be resumed soon and the business activities of construction sector can grow better. He further said that he will try to visit Chakwal district and meet with the business community at Chakwal Chamber of Commerce and Industry to look into their issues. He said that as Deputy Commissioner, he had established gymkhana clubs in



Gujrat, Sargodha and Faisalabad and he would try to establish a gymkhana club in Chakwal district for the facilitation of the citizens. He also assured the delegation of his support in resolving their key issues. Speaking on the occasion,

Waqar Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Chakwal Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said that lack of parking in Chakwal city is as major problem, due to which the traffic issues are on the rise in the city. He said that parking of vehicles on the roads in the inner city creates congestion due to which the business community and the customers are facing problems. He said that the construction of a parking plaza in Chakwal would resolve the parking issue in the city forever and the government

will also get millions of rupees in revenue. He also emphasized the need to establish a gymkhana club in Chakwal. Group leader Qazi Muhammad Akbar said that for the past several years, approval of commercial maps in Chakwal district is on hold, due to which all construction activities have come to a standstill. He said that due to this situation, the business activities are suffering badly and

the Chakwal municipality is also losing income of millions of rupees. He stressed for urgent solution of this problem to promote business activities. He said that in 2016, the then government and the prime minister had issued orders for the establishment of an industrial zone at Neela Dullah Interchange, while the Punjab government also showed great interest in this project, but despite the passage of many years, this important project is still on hold. He said that due to CPEC, the importance of this industrial zone has increased and its establishment will increase investment, create jobs and bring prosperity to the region. He said that the land in the industrial zones in Rawalpindi/Islamabad is very expensive, while the industrial zone at the Neela Dulla Interchange will be very affordable for the investors. He stressed that government should cooperate for the materialization of this important

project. Arif Yusuf, Khurram

Kamran, Haji Mohammad Ishaq,

Sheikh Harun, Ahmed Farooqui,

Chaudhry Shahzad Saadat and

others were in the delegation.

Ministers absence irks Sanjrani

ISLAMABAD: Senate Muhammad Chairman Sadiq Sanjrani on Friday called on Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif to ensure the attendance of government ministers in senate proceedings.

Expressing his dissatisfaction over the continuous absence of government ministers from Senate proceedings, he said the lack of participation from key members of the government, had been seen as a major obstacle to the functioning of the country's legislative process.

Earlier, Dr Asif Kimani drew the attention of the Chairman to the empty front row, lamenting that the absence of ministers indicated their lack of interest in Senate proceedings as no one had attended the proceedings and emphasized the need for ministers to be present, but the State Minister for Law and Justice Shahadat Awan stated that the ministers were diligently working in their respective ministries, they do attend Senate proceedings.-APP

### NHMP to ensure safe travels during Ramadan

ISLAMABAD: The National Highways and Motorway Police (NHMP) was taking special measures to ensure safe travels during the Holy month of Ramadan.

In a statement issued here, IG Sultan Ali Khawaja said guidelines have been issued for the people to drive with care during Sehar and Iftar hours. "Never exceed the speed limit and the people who are fasting must get enough sleep before traveling in Ramadan," he said. He said patrolling was being made more efficient for safe and comfortable travel in the motorways. "Initiatives are been taken to hold special briefings on toll plazas in this regard. Always folow traffic laws and use seat

## Teleschool App witnesses over 10,000 downloads

ISLAMABAD: There has been a robust response for Teleschool App initiative of the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training with more than 10,000 downloads in 310 cities across the country since its launch during the last week.

The official sources in the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training told APP that around 5,500 enrollment numbers were recorded on Teleschool App during the last week. They also informed that around 17,000 videos of various class lessons have also been viewed in just a during 2020 in view of the week which was a clear sign coronavirus pandemic with of its success among the an objective to telecast edupoor segment of the socication lessons for students at their doorsteps. ety, especially in far-flung areas of country. The latest

technology like Teleschool we can reach in those arewould be utilized to further as where so far we have no improve the quality of eduinfrastructure as tele-education is the way forward

It may be mentioned that now" the sources said. There are substantive chal-Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had launched the lenges in education sector 'Teleschool Pakistan App, like more than 20 millions Google for Education and out-of-school children and Digital Continuous Profesjust 60 per cent literacy sional Development' initiarate but the education ministry has been taking inititive last week to provide online education to students atives like tele-education.

country. The ministry said PTV had been chosen as the broadcast medium as 95% of the population had access to its services. The content has been sequenced by officials from

the Federal Directorate of Education (FDE). Some digital educational content development platforms provided support on a pro bono basis.

Three nuclear-armed nations facing hunger

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain on Friday said the people of the three nuclear powers are suffering from hunger. The people of North Korea are facing starvation due to international sanctions, and millions of people in India are suffering from the government's incompetence, war frenzy, religious fanaticism, and corruption, he said. Mian Zahid Hussain said that the neighboring country also has a large population that is not easy to feed while the people of nuclear Pakistan are suffering from the violation of the constitution, corruption, higher spending, political instability, and endless elitism. Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that in view of the geographical importance of Pakistan, the attention of ost governments has been focused on obtaining loans Pakistan received a lot of dollars due to the interest of powerful states in past but it was wasted instead of paying off the debt or using it for the country's development, he said. The business leader noted that now in view of Pakistan's strong economic and geographical potential, the world wants nuclear Pakistan to stand on its feet. The world wants Pakistan to widen its tax base, privatize failed government institutions, and give full attention to energy, agriculture, and exports, he added. Mian Zahid Hussain further said that how will a country which is struggling to borrow one billion dollars from the IMF will recover the losses of thirty-one billion dollars caused by the flood.-DNA



#### Enquiry

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



#### Hospitals

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



#### Departments

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



#### Islamabad Metropolitan

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



"Through mobile phones

cation, they added.

from grade-1 to 12. The Mobile phones have also initiative will further revobeen massively contributing in access to education. lutionize the formal educa-The schooling is available tion medium in the country. Meanwhile, idea of launchfor 10 hours each day from ing of the first-ever Tel-8am to 6pm and also focuseSchool programme had ing on students of grades 1 come into practical shape

to 12. According to the Ministry of Education, the content has been aligned with students' learning objectives for major subjects of the curriculum prevalent across the

The channel is also extensively benefiting children living in far-flung areas. However, the aim of the initiative is to provide education to children at their doorsteps. The people have termed

the initiative a great concept. particularly in remote areas of the country where there was no infrastructure for primary education.-APP

belts while traveling," Khawaja said. He said the Motorway Police was trying to make travel safe for public by using its full capabilities. 'SSP and DIG are monitoring special patrolling in their respective areas. Safety of passengers is the first priority," he said.-APP

### 3 nucleararmed nations facing hunger

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain on Friday said the people of the three nuclear powers are suffering from hunger.

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### **IESCO** notifies 2-day power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IES-CO) on Friday notified a 2-day power suspension programme for Saturday and Sunday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to IESCO Spokesman, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period on Saturday from 06:00 AM to 12:00 Noon Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Islamabad Feed Mill, Jhata Hatial, Pind Jatla, Lab.II, Lab. I, Reliance Weaving Mill, Bhal, Jarrar Comp Feeders, From 07:00 AM to 09:00 AM, GSO Circle, 6th Road, T&T, Asghar Mall, B Block, New Milpur, Shakryal, Jamia Masjid Road, C-Block, Ojri Camp Feeders. On Sunday, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended from 08:00 AM to 11:00 AM, G.S. O Circle, Pindi Point, Barian, Public Health, Gharial, PAF, Upper Topa, Lora, Patriata, Company Bagh, Cecil Road, Lora-II, MCM, TDCP, Kohala, Sunny Bank, Kaldana, PC, Dhirakkot, Chamankot, Ringla, Dana Express, Dhalla, Suhawah/Manhasa, Nimble, Birut (Kazimi), Dhirakkot-II, DESTO, PAECE, Shahdara feeders and suburbs.-APP



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Health Services Abdul Qadir Patel cutting ribbon to inaugurate Regional blood center Islamabad with a High level deleligation of UAE in Federal Capital. – APP

### MNAs criticise health ministry for poor patient care

ISLAMABAD: The members of the National Assembly on Friday criticised the Ministry of National Health, Services, Regulation and Coordination for poor patient care, and inefficient medical facilities at the Polyclinic Hospital of the federal capital. During the question hour session of the 51st session of the National Assembly, MNA Aliya Kamran of Muttahida Majalis-e-Amal Pakistan (MMAP) raised her objections on the reply submitted to her queries related to healthcare facilities at the Polyclinic Hospital. Kamran said, "The facts presented in the answer to my questions painted a rosy picture that is contrary to the ground realities. Doctors are not available on their seats and improper testing facilities are adding more to the agony of the ailing masses." She pointed out that there was no Grade-20 officer of the Health Ministry present during the proceedings and sought a reply from the parliamentary secretary. MNA, Muhammad Jamal-ud-Din of MMAP, in his supplementary question, said he had visited the Polyclinic hospital where there was a huge rush of patients and poor cleanliness arrangements, especially in the paediatrics ward. Parliamentary Secretary for National Health, Services, Regulations and Coordination, Dr Shazia Sobia Aslam Soomro responded that during the Covid-19 pandemic, there was a huge influx of patients at the Polyclinic hospital and a lack of doctors and medicines. She added that the Ministry had made efforts to cover up many of the deficiencies and was trying to improve service delivery in the hospital.-DNA

### APHC deeply concerned over unlawful detentions

ISLAMABAD:In Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, APHC leadership has expressed deep concern over the continued unlawful detention of thousands of Kashmiris who have been languishing in jails for expressing their dissent to India's illegal occupation. The APHC leadership in a statement in Srinagar said that the Modi regime is deliberately prolonging the detention of Kashmiri prisoners for their political beliefs. The leadership said that as part of its coercive policies, the Hindutva government of India has arrested thousands of civilians in the occupied territory since its illegal and unilateral actions of 5 August 2019 and thereafter.

Among those who are languishing in jails in India and IIOJK include APHC Chairman Massrat Aalam Butt, Shabbir Ahmed Shah, Muhammad Yasin Malik, Nayeem Ahmed Khan, Aasiya Andrabi, Fehmeeda Sofi, Naheeda Nasreen, Advocate Shahid-ul-Islam, Ayaz Akbar, Peer Saifullah, Merajudin Kalwal, Farooq Ahmed Dar, Mol-

vi Bashir Ahmed, Mushtaq-ul-Islam, Bilal Siddiqi, human rights defender Khuram Parvaiz, Muhammad Ahsan Untoo, Muhammad Qasim Fakhtoo, Muhammad Shafi Khan, Ameer Hamza and Muhammad Yousuf Mir. Demonstrating the worst form of political vendetta, the APHC leaders Ghulam Muhammad Khan Sopori and Muhammad Saleem Zargar maintained, India is denying space to Hurriyat leaders by repeatedly arresting them on fake charges.

They lamented that the Kashmiri prisoners are confined to cells and denied adequate food and proper medical treatment in Indian jails and as a result, the families of these detainees are worried about their well-being. The height of oppression, the leaders said, is that the family members of most of the inmates are even denied meetings with them.

The APHC leaders said the fascist Modi regime is turning a blind eye to the pathetic condition of the Kashmiri detainees and dilly-dallying their

release on one pretext or another despite court orders.

The leaders criticised draconian laws like Public Safety Act (PSA) and Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) which are being used against the Hurriyat leaders and ordinary Kashmiris to force them into submission.

They noted India is flouting Geneva Convention on prisoners' rights by not only prolonging unlawful detentions but also making more and more arrests and carrying out extrajudicial killings of innocent civilians in IIOJK to pressurize them and break their re-

solve for freedom. However, they added, these repressive tactics will not deter the people of the occupied territory from pursuing their struggle for the right to self-determination. They urged the international community and global human rights organizations to take note of unlawful detentions in IIOJK and raise their voice for the release of illegally detained Kashmiris.-APP

dollars due to the interest of he said. The business lead-Pakistan's strong economic Pakistan to widen its and give full attention to energy, agriculture, and

## **TWIN CITIES**

Islamabad **POST** 

Saturday, April 01 , 2023

### Briefs

### Legislation on card to for social media platforms registration

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Law and Justice Shahadat Awan on Friday informed the Senate that the incumbent government was working on legislation to force the social media platforms to register themselves in Pakistan.

Replying to various supplementary questions during Question Hour, the minister said the Prime Minister constituted a National Social Working Committee in August last year to suggest proper legislation in this regard.

He said Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) has processed 59253 URLs related to Sectarian/ Hate Speech complaints on social media so far. Out of the total complaints 47,674 URLs have been blocked over hate speech till February.

He said the PTA had also blocked the Wikipedia site on the directives of the High Court for 48 hours. The minister said under section 37 (1) of the PECA Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act 2016 ("PECA"), the Authority has been empowered to remove or block or issue directions for removal or blocking of access to information through any information system if it considers it necessary in the interest of the glory of Islam or the integrity, security or defence of Pakistan or any part thereof, public order, decency or morality, or about contempt of court or commission of or incitement to an offence under PECA. Under section 37 (2) of PECA, the federal Government has approved the Removal and Blocking of Unlawful Online Content (Procedure, Oversight and Safeguard), Rules, 2021 ("Rules"), he added.–APP

> No major uptick in Covid-19 disease



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov, Prof. Dr Nasir Mahmood Vice Chancellor AIOU and Chairman Mass Comm Dept Prof. Saqib Riaz attending one day seminar on the founding role of Heydar Aliyev in development of Azerbaijan-Pakistan relations.-DNA

## President directs insurance company to pay widow claim

The President further directed the company to pay the insurance claim to the complainant within 30 days of the receipt of the President's order

#### DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has directed an insurance company to pay the death insurance claim to the widow of a deceased policyholder who was denied payment on the ground that her husband did not wilfully disclose his true health condition to the company at the time of obtaining the policy.

The President gave this decision

filed by Mst Shehnaz Akhtar (the complainant) against the order of the Federal Insurance Ombudsman (FIO) whereby the case had been closed and disposed on the ground that the widow had already been refunded the premiums amounting to Rs 150,000 deducted from her late husband's account and since the matter had been settled on compassionate grounds, thus, the company was not liable to pay the death insurance claim. Feeling aggrieved by

while accepting a representation

the decision of FIO, the complainant filed a representation with the President, which he accepted.

In his decision, the President observed that the company repudiated the claim based on the death certificate alleging that it reflected that the deceased had been suffering from Diabetes Mellitus and Chronic Liver Disease since a year before death but no such period had been specified in the certificate. He further noted that the insurance company was relying on an admission chart issued

by a hospital in Lahore which pertained to the year 2017 whereas the policy had been issued in the year 2015, thus, it did not pertain to the insurance period. He also referred to a decision of the Lahore High Court in the year 2009, wherein it had been held that the majority of people having ailments such as hypertension, diabetes and mellitus lived either for decades or longer than people not having such diseases by remaining more careful in their lifetime, and the concealment of such diseases could not be termed as done fraudulently.

The President held that the insurance company was not justified in repudiating the insurance claim on such flimsy grounds. He said that maladministration on the part of the insurance company had been established, therefore, the orders of the FIO were being set aside. The President further directed the company to pay the insurance claim to the complainant within 30 days of the receipt of the President's order.

### **Five more** tests positive in **RWP**

RAWALPINDI: Five more people were diagnosed with fatal Coronavirus during the last 24 hours, raising the district's confirmed cases to 47,840.

As per the latest data released by the District Health Authority here Friday, the infected cases included 44,175 from Rawalpindi and 3,665 from other districts.

Among the new cases, two of each cases had arrived from Potohar town and Cantonment Rawalpindi area while one case reported from Taxila. "Presently, 28 confirmed patients are quarantined at homes while no one at any district health facility", the report added. The report further said that 7,006,011 people, including 44,790 health workers, had jabbed themselves against the lethal Coronavirus (COVID-19) across the district since the vaccination administering drive launched on March 10, 2021. In addition. District Health Authority updated that during the last 24 hours,330 samples were collected, of which 325 were declared negative, while the positivity rate was recorded at 1.52 per cent.–APP

### FPSC recommended 2161, 2293 candidates

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Law and Justice Shahadat Awan on Friday apprised the Senate that Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) recommended 2161 candidates for appointments against advertised vacancies in 2021 which included 221 officers from Balochistan as per the provincial quota.

In response to a question during the Question Hour, the minister said that FPSC recommended 2293 candidates against advertised vacancies in 2022 which included 133 officers from Balochistan. As many as 30 seats could not be filled, he added.-APP

Daily 25

**NUTECH** dominates national idea bank competition

ISLAMABAD: Parliamenta rv Secretary for Health. Dr Shazia Sobia Aslam Soomro on Friday informed the House that there was no major uptick in Coronavirus disease spread after the new variant's arrival.

Speaking during the question hour of the 51st Session of the National Assembly, the parliamentary secretary apprised the House and the mover of the question in particular on the government measures and the prevailing situation of the contagious disease in the country.

Soomro in response to the query of MNA Asiva Azeem of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), pertaining to the new variant prevalence and new vaccines introduced by Moderna and Pfizer to counter the latest deadly virus variants, said that the pandemic situation was much controlled as compared to the previous waves as no major deaths and critical care admissions were recorded so far.

She added that the previous standard operating procedures (SOPs) of mask-wearing, hand washing and others were intact to contain the disease spread. However, the Covid-19 disease spread ratio was 3 percent at the moment that had earlier spiked up to 9 and 12 percent, she said

Soomro informed the house that almost 90 percent of the population was vaccinated with Covid-19 vaccine shots and also administered booster doses that helped manage the situation despite consequent disease waves due to different variants. On the supplementary question of MNA Azeem, she said the gov ernment had already rolled out vaccine doses for mass vaccination and would continue to do so further as per the need. Moreover, the parliamentary secretary said the government had already started to procure newly modified vaccines if deemed necessary amid emerging Covid-19 variants. On a question of MNA Moaulana Abdul Akbar Chitrali of Muttahida Majlis-e- Amal Pakistan on poor treatment of heart patients at the Capital's hospital, she replied to the member that an inquiry was initiated to probe the matter, whereas proper action would be taken and report would be shared with him.-DNA

### DNA

ISLAMABAD: National University of Technology industry experts alike. (NUTECH) emerged as the big winner and the only university in Pakistan

and support innovative at the National Idea Bank (NIB) competition, with ideas and promote entrefour award-winning ideas preneurship culture in that impressed judges and Pakistan. The final national-level award ceremony The NIB is the brainchild was held at The Sir Syed of President of Pakistan University of Engineering Dr. Arif Alvi, to recognize and Technology (SSUET),

Karachi, with Dr. Arif Alvi gracing the occasion as the chief guest.

NUTECH won the NIB National Level Competition in Manufacturing Sector securing both Winner and Runner-Up positions. Similarly, in Automotive Sector, NUTECH innovators and young entrepreneurs had the honour to secure both 1st and 2nd Runner-Up positions. Rector Lt Gen Moazzam Ejaz congratulated all participants in the competition and highly appreciated the award winners who brought further laurels to University's

efforts to become best

education institute for the

country.

ISLAMABAD: The capital Development Authority (CDA) is all set to auction commercial plots in various developed sectors of the federal capital, beginning on May 3, aiming to generate more revenue for the city and attract investors to participate in the auction. Talking to APP, an official in the authority urged interested investors to participate in the auction, which will take place at the Jinnah Convention Centre in Islamabad. The development is expected to have a significant impact on the commercial estate market in the capital city. He said the auction in various sectors of the Islamabad capital territory would continue till May 5, adding that the authority has already publicized the auction schedule of various plots in different newspapers. The official said that the real estate experts have announced it as a must-avail investment opportunity for investors nationwide and overseas. The participants investing in the public sale can possess commercial plots with 'legal protection.' The details about the commercial plots located in the developed sectors of the federal capital included various centres, agro farms, petrol pumps, E-11 northern strip, Class-III shopping centre, Park Enclave commercial and Blue Area E-11/F-11, Canopy side, he added.-APP

CDA to auction

commercial plots

### paediatric eye surgeries are performed at Al-Shifa Eye Trust Hospital

RAWALPINDI: The prevalence of glaucoma in children is increasing at a rapid pace in Pakistan which require proper intervention, Al-Shifa Trust eye hospital said Friday.

Glaucoma in children is a vision-threatening condition and is highly prevalent in our population. This may be due to the high incidence of consanguinity or family marriages in Pakistan, it said.

Timely medication and surgical treatment can help control this disease with a good visual outcome and save many children can from lifelong visual disability or blindness, Prof. Dr. Sumaira Altaf, Head of the Paediatric department at Al-Shifa Trust. She said that glaucoma in children has become a growing cause of concern worldwide and in Pakistan as millions are suffering from it. Treatment of glaucoma in children needs specialised medical and surgical care and frequent follow-ups hence parents of children suffering from childhood Glaucoma have to face psychological and financial stress, she added. Dr. Sumaira Altaf said that Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital provides free of cost medical and surgical treatment to 80 percent of patients who are treated by experienced and skilled Paediatric Ophthalmologists.

On average 22 to 25 paediatric eye surgeries are performed daily including various types of surgeries for

The successful treatment of these patients has resulted in a high number of referrals to the trust's hospital from all over the country. A large number of cases of paediatric glaucoma have secondary causes either due to trauma, previous eye surgery, associated eye anomalies or injudicious use of steroids. Dr Sumaira highlighted that the vision of many unfortunate children has been compromised because of the careless use of over-the-counter steroid eye drops. Moreover, harmful medicines are frequently prescribed by salesmen at pharmacies.-DNA

### Imran wants to damage political system: Javed Latif

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Mian Javed Latif on Friday said that the Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI) chief and his party constantly misguiding the public about government strategy as he wants to damage the political system of the country. Talking to a private news channel, he said that Imran Khan was found involved in attacking national institutions to regain power, adding that Pakistan was facing economic turmoil due to his weak policies.

The coalition government had invited Imran Khan many times for talks to discuss the issues but he always refused. Today, we need to work for the unification and well-being of Pakistan, he said.

The coalition government would not allow any person to spread anarchy in the country, he added. In reply to a question, he said Imran Khan should go to court to face money laundering and foreign funding cases

Imran Khan should respect the courts and obey the law of the country, he added. He said that the government would continue its efforts for the welfare of the people.

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The plight of Pakistani expa-

triates in Thailand and Malaysia is a cause

for serious concern. Many of these individ-

uals have been imprisoned for years due

to a lack of diplomatic cooperation, while

others face significant challenges due to

Despite the presence of Pakistani diplo-

matic officials in both countries, little has

been done to address the issues faced by

Pakistani citizens. One major problem is

the misuse of funds intended for the Paki-

stani community. The Community Welfare

Fund received by the Pakistani High Com-

corruption and poor policy.

### Chery promotes winter sports in Pakistan 15th West Asia Base Cup of many participants and

#### DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chinese automobile brand Chery and its local partner Ghandhara Nissan Ltd and Ghulkin Winter Club are actively engaged in promoting winter sports in Pakistan, Gwadar Pro reported on Friday.

Chery's support for sports in Pakistan extends far beyond ice hockey. Syed Fakhar Ali Shah, President of Pakistan Baseball Association, appreciated Chery Pakistan and Ghandhara Nissan for sponsoring the

mission in Kuala Lumpur and the Pakistani

Embassy in Bangkok is being pocketed by

diplomatic officials instead of being spent

on the needs of Pakistani citizens. Addition-

ally, the number of Pakistani diplomats in

these countries is significantly lower than

that of India, which has resulted in a lack of

Despite repeated complaints from Pa-

kistani expatriates, these officials have

failed to take action to address the issues

faced by their fellow citizens. This stands

in stark contrast to the Indian diplomatic

staff in these countries, who are known for

providing comprehensive support to Indian

citizens. One major issue is the difficulty

Pakistani citizens face in obtaining entry to

support for Pakistani expatriates.

Lack of transparency in diplomatic missions

The prisoner exchange agreement between Pakistan, Malaysia and Thailand, which is intended

to facilitate the transfer of prisoners between the countries, has not been implemented

and their future plan to promote sports in Pakistan, stating that developing sports in the country will ultimately benefit Pakistan. Rabia Kuli Khan Khattak, COO of Ghandhara Nissan Ltd, was delighted to see the Chinese element active in the stadium where the Pakistani people were passionate and sweating. She said that "Chery and Ghandhara have carried out

sports marketing in Pakistan and achieved remarkable results. The campaigns transmit our brand concepts of green and scientific

Thailand and Malaysia.

technology and advocate for the general public to develop green, healthy and active life habits. In the future, we will continue to support sports activities in Pakistan and strive to realize more children's sports dreams." The fourth season of Pakistan Winter Sports Festival was organized earlier this year Chery and its local partner where 18 men's and 5 women's teams played ice hockey with enthusiasm.

It has become the most influential winter sports event in the country, with skating, ice hockey and other games becoming the favorites

vate-label backing, kids had to use their own earnings to buy ice hockey equipment. "Chery's sponsorship of these young people's dreams provides a broader platform for us and the whole country. Chery's role as a major sponsor of the event has boosted children's enthusiasm and confidence in participating in sports," Qadir Karim said, adding that "Chery's Tiggo 4 and Tiggo 8 that have hit the Pakistani market are both sporty vehicles that can be a symbol of Pak-China friendship in sports.

educated people find difficult to use.

can be restored, and the rights of Pakistani

land and Malaysia.

citizens protected.

spectators. Before the pri-

glaucoma, she informed.

The situation is dire for Pakistani citizens imprisoned in Thailand and Malaysia, who suffer from a lack of access to medication and financial support. The prisoner exchange agreement between Pakistan, Malaysia and Thailand, which is intended to facilitate the transfer of prisoners between the countries, has not been implemented. It is time for the Pakistani government to take action on behalf of its citizens in Thai-It is only through concerted effort and a commitment to transparency and accountability that the honor of Pakistani passports

Unlike Indian citizens, who receive vi-

sa-on-arrival and easy entry, Pakistani citi-

zens are often turned away at the airport

and deported back to their home country.

This has resulted in significant financial

losses for Pakistani citizens, as well as

damage to the reputation of Pakistani

passports. Despite all of these chal-

lenges, the Pakistani High Commis-

sioner in Kuala Lumpur and the Am-

bassador in Bangkok have failed to take

action. They are known for their reluc-

tance to meet with Pakistani citizens

face-to-face, instead opting to listen

to complaints through the e-Kachheri

platform, which many villagers or non

### Blame game gets ready for prime time

B LAMING China and blaming each other for "ceding the future" to China has not only become part and parcel of the political circus in Washington, it has become pretty much the only act on show. Both the Democrats and Republicans accuse each other of being eager to "please" or even of "surrendering" to China, no matter what the issue is. They each claim the other's policies are not tough enough and so are allowing China to win "the competition" between the two countries.

Yet China is just a MacGuffin. It is necessary for them to have something to beat each other with in public that doesn't put the focus on their domestic failings, and their fabricated China threat serves that purpose. What prompted US President Joe Biden to use the super weapon of accusing the Republicans of "surrendering to China" was not anything China has done, but his argument with the Republicans about the US budget. Biden wants the Republicans to put forward their own budget plan first while the latter want to start talks about spending cuts first.

plan first while the latter want to start talks about spending cuts first. Biden mentioned "surrendering" the US' tech advantage to China only because he was in Durham, North Carolina, where local semiconductor manufacturer Wolfspeed has announced a \$5 billion plan to invest in new manufacturing facilities in Chatham County, which Biden is crediting to his CHIPS and Science Act, which provides about \$280 billion in new funding to boost domestic semiconductor research and manufacturing. That the US is not at risk of losing its dominance in the sector was made clear by the 2021 State of the Industry Report issued by the US-based Semiconductor Industry Association, which said: "The U.S. semiconductor industry has nearly half the global market

share and has displayed steady annual growth." With former US president Donald Trump initializing the ban and Biden continuing the ban on exporting chips of 14-nanometer accuracy and above to China, as well as pressuring the Netherlands to restrict advanced lithography machines export to China, the latter's semiconductor industry still has a long way to go to catch up with that of the US. But this is irrelevant in Washington, as the two parties are locked in a tug-of-war for public approval with positioning for the next presidential election already underway.

As shown by the newly established bipartisan committee on competition with China, both parties know that they need China to be a MacGuffin if they are to sell the proposal to US voters that they are acting in their interests. Thus with campaigning for the next presidential election beginning to gain momentum, it can be expected that the demonizing of China will also start building to a crescendo as it is now integral to their cut-and-thrust squabbles.

## **Islamabad POST**

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### Northern Ireland: violence in a political vacuum

YEAR ago, in March 2022, the terror threat level in Northern Ireland was lowered for the first time in more than a decade. This week, however, that window of hope was slammed shut once again, when the Northern Ireland secretary, Chris Heaton-Harris, announced that the threat level was being restored to "severe". This means that a terror attack in the north is now officially deemed to be "highly likely". These are extraordinarily ominous words, not solely because there is less than a month to go before the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday agreement, which brought power-sharing and peace to Northern Ireland.

In his statement on Tuesday about the threat level, Mr Heaton-Harris pointed the finger at an increase in politically motivated violence. He singled out the targeting of police officers, exemplified by the shooting of DCI John Caldwell in Omagh in February, and by a bomb attack on police in Strabane in November, both attributed to the New IRA. Yet the threat to peace does not emanate from dissident republicans alone. There have been pipe bomb and petrol bomb attacks on homes in Ards and North Down this week, all of which are part of a continuing drugs war between rival loyalist UDA gangs.

All these incidents underscore the need to take this week's announcement of highly likely attacks very seriously indeed. For that to be meaningful, however, constitutional political activity in Northern Ireland must assert itself again. Mr Heaton-Harris said this week that "the political future of Northern Ireland rests with the democratic will of the people and not the violent actions of the few". That is of course true. At present, however, it is not a statement of reality but only a statement of aspiration.

All these issues are connected. There is a direct link between the increased threat level, the rise in violence and the absence of politics. This absence, in turn, is umbilically linked to the DUP's foolish refusal (not shared by most of the public) to accept the Northern Ireland protocol and, more recently, the Windsor framework of improvements to the protocol negotiated by the UK government. Behind this lies the DUP's fear that its grip on unionist opinion is under threat from more implacable rivals such as Traditional Unionist Voice, as well as the community's deeper anxiety that unionism's historic hold on Northern Ireland is inexorably weakening.

It is possible that the imminent anniversary will help to reverse this mood of anxiety and uncertainty. Let us hope so. Renewed international acclaim for the 1998 agreement, spearheaded by American clout from President Joe Biden, may coalesce with an emphatic cross-community show of public support for peaceful politics to generate new democratic momentum. The threat level announcement, however, points towards a different and less optimistic reality. Those who have contributed to it, whether by their crimes or simply by their political negligence, bear a heavy responsibility for the tense days that now lie immediately ahead.

### Israelis need to see through the biggest lie of all

#### Marwan Bishara

Netanyahu has proven ready to do anything in his power to hold on to power, including conspiring with the most rogue and dangerous elements of the Israeli polity to undermine the secular liberal Ashkenazidominated establishment that built the foundations T the heart of the ongoing turmoil engulfing Israel is a pathological liar and a pervasive lie. The liar has long been exposed, but the lie he and others have long propagated has only now begun to unravel.

It is no coincidence that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has thus far lied his way through a crisis of his own creation. He is known among his former and present coalition partners to be a liar – a pathological liar, a serial liar, and my favorite, the "liar of all liars". Even Western leaders, like former French President Nicolas Sarkozy and former US President Donald Trump, thought the man was an unbearable liar. It is true that, in some of these instances, it is a case of the pot calling the kettle black, but rarely has there been such a wide consensus about a politician, except perhaps Trump. But then again, Netanyahu is a Trumpian politician, lacking in moral scruples and always advancing his interests at the expense of others.

In 2022, Netanyahu led a populist campaign of lies against Israel's elites, media and judiciary in a successful attempt to regain the premiership he had lost a year earlier. This self-declared liberal then formed a coalition government of tyrannical fascists and fanatics to take on the old liberal "deep state" and transform it into a fundamentalist "Jewish state". He has thus far insisted that there is no personal agenda behind his judiciary agenda, which aims to subjugate the courts to the whims of the ruling majority. But in reality, he made a Faustian deal with Israel's most fanatic parties that allows him to stay out of prison and at the helm of state power, despite his indictment on multiple charges of corruption. In return, he is helping them impose their ultrareligious agenda on state and society and further marginalise Israel's Palestinian minority. Netanyahu has proven ready to do anything in his power to hold on to power, including conspiring with the most rogue and dangerous elements of the Israeli polity to undermine the secular liberal Ashkenazi-dominated establishment that built the foundations of the Israeli state and shaped its development. Himself secular, Ashkenazi, and morally challenged, Netanyahu commands wide support among the ultrareligious, ultranationalist and Sephardic communities, all of whom helped him become the longest-serving prime minister in the history of the Israeli state. Dubbed the "King of Israel" by his base, Netanyahu probably thinks he also can shoot anyone on Dizengoff Street and still not lose a vote. This Trumpian arrogance led

him to force through the Knesset his radical, illiberal and transformative legislative agenda with a very thin majority, ignoring the mounting opposition domestically and internationally, notably from the United States and Europe. That was a mistake; a stupid mistake.

It did not take long for Netanyahu's detractors to conclude that once his judicial "reform" is passed, lifting judiciary oversight and sidelining the Supreme Court, the prime minister and coconspirators will be able to legislate any law regulating any aspect of Israeli life, with no legal means to stop them. In response, hundreds of thousands of secular and liberal Israelis from all walks of life poured onto the streets to protest against his attempts to undo their old liberal Ashkenazi-dominated order and replace it with new autocratic rule. They threatened to paralyse the state, shutting down ports, Tel Aviv airport, and universities, until their demands are met. Under intensified street pressure, Netanyahu finally backed down on Monday and delayed the parliamentary vote over his agenda in the hope of defusing tensions. His promise to when the present commotion will end, but what is clear is that today's schism within Israeli society will continue to deepen unless Israel tackles the biggest lie of all: that of being a Jewish democracy, a liberal occupier and a civilised tormentor of another people, the Palestinians. This lie became pervasive in the early 1990s, when the US-sponsored peace process gave Israel the privilege of becoming a prosperous settler-colonial state over 78 percent of historic Palestine – an industrious, liberal state with secular Tel Aviv at its heart, fully integrated into the West and the Middle East – alongside an independent Palestinian state.

The alternative was to continue to expand its illegal Jewish settlements to become an apartheid state like South Africa, stretching over the entirety of historic Palestine from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea, with two separate political systems, economies and infrastructure, dominated by a more fanatic and illiberal "Jewish state" with the religiously charged, occupied Jerusalem at its heart. Arrogant and greedy, Israel rejected the overly generous Palestinian offer of

of the Israeli state and shaped its development.

Himself secular, Ashkenazi, and morally challenged, Netanyahu commands wide support among the ultrareligious, ultranationalist and Sephardic communities, all of whom helped him become the longestserving prime minister in the history of the Israeli state. Dubbed the "King of Israel" by his base, Netanyahu probably thinks he also can shoot... reach a national or parliamentary consensus has thus far been downplayed by the protestors as no more than a ploy to kick the can down the road. But some among the opposition leaders, like his former coalition partner, Benny Gantz, seem ready to reach a deal, in the name of the national – read Jewish Israeli – interest.

Many of the protesters waving Israeli flags in a show of patriotism and in defence of their freedoms do not seem to realise or admit that as long as their colonial Israel maintains its oppressive Jewish supremacy in Palestine, its entrenched system of apartheid will continue to feed into tyrannical fascism and fanaticism. They do not seem to realise or admit that the new generation of rogue religious extremists, like ministers Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich, are byproducts of Israel's occupation and illegal settlement enterprise, and that judging from their large and growing following among Israeli youth, they are destined to become very powerful and very dangerous, as the violent apartheid regime persists. And while there is no moral equivalence between Israel's drive for domination and the Palestinian struggle for freedom, the past three decades of apartheid have had similar effects on both the occupier and occupied, strengthening the religious and extremist elements in both societies and threatening new cycles of violence that will in turn lead to more fanaticism. It is not yet clear how or

coexistence, believing it could have it both ways – rule over all of Palestine and enjoy peace, prosperity and international legitimacy.

This was propagated from the outset by none other than Netanyahu himself, who took power in 1996 after conjuring incitement against the peace process, which had led to the 1995 assassination of his predecessor, Yitzhak Rabin.

Thanks to its American patron, Israel has, for a long while, had it both ways. Over the past 30 years, Washington has shored up Israel's economy, invested in its high-tech industry, funded its army, and pushed for the normalisation of its relations with much of the world, all the while ignoring the deepening apartheid and mounting violence. But the decades of unconditional American support that have allowed Israel to punch above its weight with chutzpah, and approach the realities of the region with utter disdain, have also enabled the rise of apocalyptic fascism and fanaticism that may well lead to its demise.

So, let me be clear, as the deception unravels and the lie catches up with the liar, Israel must end the charade, break out of its Zionist trap, and stop pretending to be both colonial and liberal, Jewish and democratic, secular and fanatic, oppressive and peaceful, apartheid and humane. It is time for Israel to choose wisely before the fanatics make the choice for it.

- Courtesy: Al Jazeera

### US, China must separate cooperation from rivalry

#### Jean Pisani-Ferry

Unless the US and China can cooperate effectively, despite their deepening rivalry, there will not be much hope of tackling global challenges. The two countries did cooperate in the past. The joint declaration issued by US President Barack Obama and Xi in November 2014 was instrumental in paving the way for the Paris climate agreement the following year. More recently, John Kerry, President Joe Biden's climate envoy, has continued to communicate with his Chinese counterpart

N the same day that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change published its latest report on the urgent need for climate action, Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow. There, the two leaders issued a statement criticizing the West and emphasizing their intention to deepen the Sino-Russian strategic partnership. It was a revealing coincidence, highlighting the extreme tension in today's international relations. On the one hand, preserving global public goods  $- \mbox{ such as the climate and }$ biodiversity, as well as institutions and procedures to prevent future pandemics - requires urgent coordinated action. On the other hand, geopolitical fragmentation and the intensifying Sino-American rivalry are making coordination increasingly difficult. Such tension is not entirely unprecedented. Admittedly, geopolitical rivalry between the US and the Soviet Union did not prevent the two Cold War powers from cooperating to prevent a direct confrontation and curtail nuclear proliferation. But the hierarchy of issues was not the same back then. When the post-Second World War order was conceived, the focus was not on managing the global commons but rather on fostering economic ties through trade and investment in the hope that this would strengthen political alliances. Preventing climate change, preserving biodiversity and avoiding the depletion of high-sea fisheries were not on anyone's radar.

More surprisingly, the global commons remained a low priority even into the early 1990s, after the Soviet Union's collapse created an opportunity to rebuild the world system. Although the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro raised awareness about planetary limits, most of the focus in these years was on integrating the newcomers – China, Russia and Central and Eastern Europe – into the existing web of trade and investment agreements. There were talks about creating a global environmental institution, but these did not go far. The obstacle was not so much the Cold War's legacy, but rather the world's north-south divide. In 1997, the Kyoto Protocol on climate change treated Russia, Poland, Hungary and other ex-communist countries as being on par with advanced economies, but it exempted emerging economies like China and India from meeting similar emissions reduction targets on development grounds.

While balancing cooperation with geopolitical rivalries is not an entirely new challenge, most of the lessons from the past are ambiguous. While the US and the Soviet Union did avoid a nuclear confrontation, they failed to create a World Health Organization that would be strong enough to overcome geopolitical tensions and protect us from emerging pandemic diseases. On the contrary, the WHO became a field for ideological confrontation.

Unless the US and China can cooperate effectively, despite their deepening rivalry, there will not be much hope of tackling global challenges. The two countries did cooperate in the past. The joint declaration issued by US President Barack Obama and Xi in November 2014 was instrumental in paving the way for the Paris climate agreement the following year. More recently, John Kerry, President Joe Biden's climate envoy, has continued to communicate with his Chinese counterpart. Moreover, Biden's National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan has stressed that rivalry does not exclude cooperation. As he made clear upon the release of the latest US National Security Strategy, "we've come to a point where we can and simply have to tackle both geopolitical competition and shared transnational challenges on an equal plane. So, we are building a strategy fit for purpose for both competition we cannot ignore and global cooperation without which we cannot suc-

ceed." The implication is that cooperation does not require geopolitical alignment or belief in the virtues of democracy.

These are excellent principles. But will deeds match words? Recent events highlight the difficulty of threading this needle. Consider the dispute over the origins of COVID-19, which remains a bone of contention between China and the West. The US and its allies suspect that China is concealing evidence, whereas Beijing regards the demand for an independent international enquiry as an encroachment on its sovereignty. Vaccines also remain a stumbling block, with China paying a high price for having refused (on sovereignty grounds) to purchase vaccines from Pfizer/BioNTech or Moderna. China has also been muddying the waters by insisting that the US give way on unrelated matters in exchange for cooperation on climate mitigation efforts. Good intentions will never last long in an environment of mistrust. Unfortunately, no word better describes the current state of the US-China relationship. Last month, the appearance of a Chinese balloon over the US led Secretary of State Antony Blinken to cancel a planned visit to Beijing, while Democrats and Republicans in Washington are now trying to outcompete each other for hawkishness. As the recent congressional grilling of TikTok's CEO showed, neither party wants to be seen as going easy on America's top rival. The state of the global commons is too serious a matter to be held hostage to permanent political feuding. China and the US must find ways to separate cooperation from rivalry. Former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin famously claimed that he would fight terror like there were no peace talks and make peace like there was no terror. To save the planet, today's leaders must take his words to heart and make a similar commitment.

- Courtesy: Arab News

## WORLD / SPORTS

### Briefs **Imran urges**

### people to protect...

FROM PAGE 01

all those political parties who are prepared to stand up against this conspiracy. I especially appeal to Lawyers community to again take the lead as they did in 2007 Lawyers Movement to protect Pakistan's Constitution and Rule of Law.

### PTI assures SC to...

FROM PAGE 01

The written assurance further states that if all political parties remain peaceful and there are no corrupt practices during the election campaign and election day, the PTI will also remain peaceful. The party has further said that any kind of weapons and aerial firing should be banned during the election process across the country.

### Sohail Ali Khan...

Form Page 01 the Establishment Division with immediate effect. Sohail Ali Khan has also served as the Director General Radio Pakistan and before that the Principle Information Officer (PIO).

### China rolls over \$2bn...

#### FROM PAGE 01

International Monean tary Fund (IMF) bailout tranche of \$1.1 billion have hit a stalemate. "I am happy to confirm that this had been rolled over on March 23," Dar told parliament, referring to the maturity date. He said all concerned documentation had been completed. Neither the government in Beijing nor the Chinese central bank responded to requests for comment on the rollover. Dar's comments were the first official announcement of the rollover after the loan matured. Dar did not give the new maturity date of other terms of the arrangement. A top finance ministry official told that a formal confirmation of the refinancing would be made after the process was completed.

## **European union nation killed** civilians in Iraq: Report

Prime Minister Mark Rutte referred to CENTCOM at time, stating that they were "arbiter in such cases" and have "all the knowledge and experience" to make assessments authoritatively

### **News Desk**

LONDON: The Dutch government agreed to release previously classified information about its air sorties in Iraq and Syria, after media exposed as false claims that no civilians were killed in a 2016 strike by the European nation on a building in Mosul, Iraq. A US military assessment had iden-

tified the target as a terrorist HQ. The database, released on Thursday, details Dutch F-16 missions between October 2014 and December

2018, which were part of Operation Inherent Resolve, a US-led military campaign against Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIS). It disclosed over 2,200 weapon deployments relating to over 600 airstrikes. The Dutch Ministry of Defence also pledged to conduct its own investigation into suspected killings of civilians by anti-IS coalition forces. The move was in reaction to an

exposé published on the same day by the Dutch public broadcaster NOS, its current affairs program Nieuwsuur, and the newspaper NRC. It provides evidence that at

least seven civilians, including a three-year-old girl, were killed in a Dutch airstrike at a residential building in Mosul on March 22, 2016. The strike hit a residence outside of the campus of Mosul University, where academics and their families were housed.

The raid was previously detailed in a 2017 assessment by the US Central Command (CENTCOM), which was obtained by The New York Times and released in 2021. CENTCOM claimed that the building was used by IS militants as a military headquarters

and that no civilians were allowed into the building.

The Dutch media research, which was carried out with the help of Airwars, a London-based NGO which records claims of civilian harm in airstrikes, found eyewitnesses who contradicted the US account. Residents of the building said militants were present in the neighborhood because they had their wives and children housed in the homes of people who'd fled from Mosul. But they never detected any military activity and believe the US had every opportunity to know this, considering that the coalition forces constantly flew surveillance drones over the area. The Dutch government deflected accusations of underreporting civilian casualties, after national media reported in 2019 that at least 70 non-combatants had been killed in a 2015 air strike on the Iraqi city of Hawija.

Prime Minister Mark Rutte referred to CENTCOM at the time, stating that they were "the arbiter in such cases" and have "all the knowledge and experience" to make assessments authoritatively.

Medvedev and Alcaraz reach Miami semis

> move from 119th to 85th in the ATP rankings, said Medvedev had shown the ruthlessness that exists at the top level of the game. "The mistakes are going to be amplified at this level. Little things, missed opportunities, that maybe in some tournaments I've played in the past or (against) some opponents don't seem like such a big deal," he said.

Medvedev has now won 22 of his past 23 matches, capturing titles in Rotterdam, Doha and Dubai during that run and reaching the final in Indian Wells, where he lost to world number one Carlos Alcaraz. "I have never had such a good start to the season. A lot of matches won, tournaments won. I am really happy," Medvedev said. "I was disappointed at Indian Wells when my streak ended but the only thing you can do is begin a new streak and I am happy I was able to bring my form

into Miami.' Medvedev, in the semi-finals in Miami for the first time. will face fellow-Russian Karen Khachanov for a place in the final after the 14th seed beat Argentina's Francisco Cerundolo 6-3, 6-2. Khachanov needed just 75 minutes to take care of business against Cerundolo despite a determined start from the Argentine. Cerundolo broke the Russian to go 3-2 up but then lost his next two service games and was never able to recover. Khachanov now faces a familar foe in Medvedev. - Agencies

### Saka's talent **fuels Arsenal's** title charge

LONDON:Bukayo Saka will re-focus on Arsenal's Premier League title push on Saturday after enhancing his reputation as one of the world's top young players with a wonder goal in England colours. The forward has played a central role in the Gunners' bid to be crowned champions for the first time since 2004 while also starring for Gareth Southgate's national side. No longer merely a promising prodigy from Arsenal's youth academy, the 21-year-old scored a stunning goal in England's 2-0 win against Ukraine in a Euro 2024 qualifier at Wembley last Sunday.

In a breathtaking blur of grace and guile, Saka turned away from the Ukraine defence before unleashing a glorious shot that arrowed into the top corner from 20 yards. It was Saka's eighth international goal - only Dixie Dean, Jimmy Greaves, Wayne Rooney and Michael Owen have netted more for England at such a young age. For Saka's Arsenal teammate OleksandrZinchenko, at Wembley in his role as Ukraine captain, it was a rare occasion when he was not pleased by the forward's ability to produce a moment of pure artistry. Saka had already set up England's opening goal for Harry Kane with a pin-point cross. "He is an amazing player, we know that," said Zinchenko. "He is on fire at the moment. There are no friends on the pitch and unfortunately he beat me. In these kind of games, big players decide the game." Zinchenko and Saka will be back on the same side when Arsenal host Leeds on Saturday looking to maintain their eight-point lead over second-placed Manchester City as the title race enters the final furlong. If Mikel Arteta's men emerge on top, Saka will have done much of the heavy lifting, with 12 goals and 10 assists in 28 league games so far.

He is the only player this season in double figures for both goals and assists in the Premier League. Saka has started every league game, taking more shots than any of his teammates except Martin Odegaard and amassing the third most tackles by a Gunners player. Asked if Saka is the Premier League's best on current form, Zinchenko said: "I'm not the guy who is going to judge but he is one of them for sure. "I hope he is on this form for the rest of the season because he is such an important player for Arsenal Yet when the crowd rose in unison to acclaim Saka's superb goal against Ukraine, it was tempting to wonder if his mind had drifted back to a painful evening at the same venue less than two years ago. On a febrile Wembley night in July 2021, Saka endured the worst experience of his career when his missed penalty condemned England to a 3-2 shoot-out defeat in the European Championship final against Italy. Saka was devastated, admitting he had "let the England family down", but that did not stop an ugly backlash, including racist abuse, on social media. - Agencies

### **Govt request** for full court turned down

Islamabad **POST** 

Saturday, April 01, 2023

FROM PAGE 01

adding that Article 184(3) of the Supreme Court Rules 1980 was clear on the matter. Justice Akhtar also said that it was everyone's right to request a full court but the government giving the impression that benches were formed on "favouritism" was a serious accusation. "The Supreme Court has said that the CJP is the master of making benches,' he added. 'Monday's sun will bring good news'

As the proceeding commenced today, the chairman of the executive committee of the Pakistan Bar Council (PBC) appeared before the bench. However, the CJP said that the court will hear his arguments later.

"The bar has nothing to do with supporting anyone,' PBC's Hasan Raza Pasha stated. "If not a full court bench, you can call a full court meeting." The CJP responded that he was pondering over it and went on to say that the SC judges shared good relations.

"Two judges recused themselves from the hearing today and yesterday," he said, revealing that polite conversations took place between the judges both before the recusals and afterwards.

'We also talked about some reservations. Some political issues came up which were fuelled by the media and press conferences, but the court showed restraint throughout the matter." Justice Bandial noted that different SC judges were being criticised by different people and added that he was looking into the matter. "Meet me in my chamber on this matter," he told Pasha.

### Trump first US President...

FROM PAGE 01 Jill Cohen, 57, said the indictment would only bolster him. "Do you really think that they're going to take President Trump out of the running for president because of some old horseface story? No! I don't believe that for a second," said Cohen. "What they're doing him right now strengthening his base." Other Republican voters might tire of the drama, though. Some 44% of Republicans said he should drop out of the race if he is indicted, according to a Reuters/Ipsos poll released last week. How much the case affects the election could have profound implications beyond U.S. borders. While president between 2017 and 2021, Trump regularly clashed with allies over trade and defense, and a return to the Oval Office could weaken U.S support for Ukraine. Trump has escaped legal peril numerous times. In the White House, he weathered two attempts by Congress to remove him from office, over the U.S. Capitol assault by supporters and probe into his campaign's contacts with Russia in 2016.



to go 5-2 up and wrapped MIAMI: World number one Carlos Alcaraz and in-form up the win without losing a Russian Daniil Medvedev point in the final game. booked their places in the

He will be up against Italian tenth-seed Jannik Sinner next as he seeks to complete the 'Sunshine Double' following his triumph over Medvedev at Indian Wells. The 26-year-old Eubanks was playing in his first ATP Masters 1000 quarter-final after upsetting Frenchmen Adrian Mannarino and GregoireBarrere and Croatia's 17th-ranked BornaCoric. The 6-foot-7

game after the resumption of play, going long and allowing Medvedev to take a 4-3 lead. The Russian, who after the break noticeably stepped further into the second serve, broke again to take the first set, but Eubanks was not about to roll over against the world number five. In the sixth game of the second set, Medvedev won a great rally at the net to go 4-2 up but Eubanks again showed his character to break back and

broken on his first service

### 11 killed including...

FROM PAGE 01 A lot of people who died, as per rescue sources, fell into a nullah at the factory. Also, eyewitnesses told the media outlet that people were called for Zakat distribution Updating about the number of deceased individuals, Edhi sources said that nine bodies were taken to the Abbasi Shaheed Hospital, while two were taken to the Civil Hospital.

### SC circular disregards...

FROM PAGE 01 "Such power is to be invoked by the Chief Justice on the recommendation of an Honourable Judge or a learned Bench of the Court on the basis of criteria laid down in Article 184(3) of the Constitution. The said majority judgment therefore disregards binding law laid down by a larger bench of the Court," read the circular. "Any observation made in the said judgment. inter alia, for the fixation or otherwise of cases is to be disregarded. Accordingly, a circular be issued by the Registrar stating the foregoing legal position for the information of all concerned," concluded the circular.

### Full court SC bench...

FROM PAGE 01 chaos and anarchy. In the first place, he concocted the story of a cipher while waving a paper in a party rally and then illegally dissolved the National Assembly to prevent his ouster from power in the wake of the no-confidence motion moved by the then-opposition. "This mentally sick person also forced the speaker and deputy speaker of the National Assembly to take unconstitutional actions," she said, adding Imran Khan's false narrative of the "regime change conspiracy" had been fully exposed before the people.

the Spaniard vet again dominating with his big serve and attacking the American from the outset. The powerful Alcaraz set the tone by breaking Fritz's

Miami Open semi-finals with

convincing victories over

American opponents at Hard

Rock Stadium on Thursday.

Alcaraz crushed ninth-seed

Taylor Fritz 6-4, 6-2, while

Medvedev ended qualifier

Christopher Eubanks' im-

pressive run with a 6-3, 7-5

victory in their quarter-final.

Alcaraz needed just 78 min-

utes to dismiss Fritz with

first service game, and he did the same again at the start of the second set, winning the game to love. The 19-year-old broke again

(2.01m), big-serving Eukeep his hopes alive.

banks showed no signs of Eubanks saved two match nerves, holding his first two points as Medvedev looked to break him and avoid a serves, but he was unable to take advantage of five deciding set, but then on breakpoints in a thrilling the third match point he messed up a straightfor-A half hour rain-break disward volley, putting it out rupted Eubanks' momenand ending his resistance. tum, however, and he was The American, who will

### Robinson recalls dismissing Babar Azam twice

fourth game.

LONDON: England pacer, Ollie Robinson, in an interview with Wisden, recalled dismissing Pakistan captain, Babar Azam. in the first innings of the second Test in Multan between Pakistan and England last year. Azam was batting on 75 runs in the first innings when he was clean bowled by Robinson. "It clipped the crack. Beautiful. And, I mean it is probably the first shot he [Babar] has played in the series of any aggression against me. He had been quite defensive against the short stuff. If he had played it defensively, he might have got half an edge on it, but he played that big drive," Robinson said. "I remember it hitting the wickets and the whole ground just went dead silent. I looked up and saw Babar's face. We were both, like, 'How has this just happened?' And I put my tongue out at him. When I saw it after, I was thinking, 'What are you doing? Putting your tongue out at Babar Azam?' We were both in that much disbelief. We didn't' know what to do," he added.

A day later, Pakistan were chasing a 355-run target to level the three-match series. The Pakistan fans were banking on Babar to play a vital role but he could only muster a single run. If I've crunched the numbers correctly, Ollie Robinson v Babar Azam in this Test - 7 balls, 0 runs, stumps hit twice - is the first instance in men's Tests of a bowler bowling out the opposition number 3 in both innings without conceding a run. - DNA

## Hamilton says no hope of challenging Red Bulls

MELBOURNE:Seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton admitted Friday that Mercedes had little hope of keeping pace with the Red Bulls in Australia, and matching his fifth place in Saudi Arabia was a more realistic target.

The Briton came a surprise second in the opening practice at Albert Park behind Red Bull's Max Verstappen, before slumping to 13th in a rain-affected second session. He blamed changes made to the car between the two hourlong runs for the gaping difference. The car "felt a little bit better this morning, we made some changes, they didn't work, so we'll revise those tonight," he said. "Then it rained obviously so it wasn't the best of sessions. You don't really learn a huge amount when it's between (conditions), so just keep the car safe." He learned enough to know that come race-day on Sunday, Mercedes will again be playing catchup to Verstappen and his Red Bull teammate Sergio Perez. On the high-speed, power-friendly Jeddah track a fortnight ago, Mercedes showed signs of life, with Hamilton fifth and his teammate George Russell fourth.



It was a clear improvement from the season-opening race in Bahrain and they bettered the Ferraris, but were still behind Fernando Alonso's Aston Martin and the victorious Red Bull team. Hamilton said another fifth-placed finish would be a good result for him in Australia.

"We won't be competing against the Red Bulls," he said. "It will just be about trying to see if we can get up as high as possible. I think we've got pace to be around fifth, same as the last race." Russell, who was fourth in the second practice, was more optimistic, saving it "wasn't too bad a day". "We've been making good steps with the car on Fridays. We've been changing a few things and getting the car in a nice window as the weekend progresses," he added. "That's quite satisfying from the driver's seat, knowing that the car feels better and as a team we have contributed towards that." - Agencies

### Mendilibar starts Sevilla survival bid with derby clash "We aren't thinking about failing, to start with," added Mendilibar. "It could happen. They've signed us for the long-term, not for one game. "It would be very good for us to win (against Cadiz), above all for the players' confidence" BARCELONA: NewSevilla

coach Jose Luis Mendilibar kicks off his bid to save the club from relegation with a crucial Andalusian derby at Cadiz on Saturday in La Liga. Mendilibar is the third coach Sevilla have had this season, after they sacked JulenLopetegui in October and then dismissed his successor Jorge

Sampaoli last week. The latter coach led Sevilla into the Europa League last eight where they will face Premier League giants Manchester United, but the worrying La Liga situation led to his dismissal, after a 2-0 defeat by Getafe before the international break.

Sevilla are 14th, just two points above the relegation zone, level on 28 points from 26 games with their opponents Cadiz, 15th.

Mendilibar had a successful spell at minnows Eibar in La Liga between 2015 and 2021, although he took them down in his last season at the club. The 62-year-old had a less

enjoyable time at Alaves, where he was sacked in 2022 after four months at the helm with the team bottom of La Liga.

His appointment at Sevilla has drawn criticism from some quarters, including from the club's former sporting director Oscar Ari-

as. "Mendilibar is not the right coach for a squad like Sevilla's," Arias told Radio Marca. "The players don't know how to take on these kind of games, they have a lot of doubts, and it's a delicate situation." The record six-time Europa League winners have not had to worry about the threat of relegation for many years. Sevilla dropped to the second division in 2000 and

returned the following year, remaining in La Liga since then. The last time they finished outside the top seven was in 2013 - when they came ninth - and they have not ended up in the bottom-half since they re-

turned to the top flight. "I am convinced that in Europe Sevilla are respected more than they are in La Liga, for what they have done in the Europa League, with a load of recent triumphs," said Mendilibar. "Of course (we can survive), with the squad we have, the calmness that we have to have to go out there with, how well we will do. "This year is a setback, and there's a disadvantage in

that our rivals are used to being down here. The advantage that Sevilla have, is the quality of the players here." Cadiz have staved off relegation in each of the past three seasons since

they arrived in La Liga in 2020 and may prove tricky for Sevilla to break down. "We aren't thinking about failing, to start with," added Mendilibar. "It could happen. They've signed us for the long-term, not for one game. "It would be verv good for us to win (against Cadiz), above all for the

players' confidence." Elsewhere, La Liga leaders Barcelona visit Elche on Saturday looking to add to their 12-point advantage on second place Real Madrid, before the champions face Real Valladolid on Sunday. Player to watch: AnsuFati The Barcelona forward's father made headlines

earlier in the week when he complained about his son's lack of opportunities this season. AnsuFati should start against bottom-of-the-table Elche and it's a chance for him to get back on track and prove his quality after a difficult campaign to date.

5 - Penalty kings Borja Iglesias (Real Betis) and Karim Benzema (Real Madrid) have each scored five spot kicks this season in La Liga 128 - Spain debutant and Espanyol striker Joselu has won more headers than any other player

134 - Almeria defender Rodrigo Ely leads the league on clearances. - Agencies

### PM for removing hurdles...

#### FROM PAGE 01

mechanism for the person who could only present the photocopy of his CNIC in case the original card was gone missing. The prime minister, in this regard, sought a report to be presented to him by evening suggesting an alternative way. He directed setting up a priority in the distribution of flour bags among aged persons and women.

It was also decided to give away two flour bags instead of one so that the people do not need to visit the distribution centres frequently. Flanked by Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb, the prime minister took a round of the flour distribution centre and interacted with the people waiting to receive the free flour bags. He lauded the commissioner and deputy commissioner of Islamabad for the excellent arrangements made at the flour distribution centre.

He expressed satisfaction with the proper seating arrangement for the people to avoid making them stand in long queues. The prime minister lauded the Commissioner and deputy commissioner of Islamabad and expressed confidence that all related operational issues would be addressed on an urgent basis.

## **BUSINESS / WORLD**

### **Briefs**

### France to send military detachment to Lithuania

PARIS: France will send a military detachment to Lithuania for a new mission in December, French Foreign Minister Catherine

Colonna said Thursday. In an interview with the Lithuanian press during her visit to the country, Colonna hailed the cooperation between Paris and Vilnius. She said she would visit Siauliai Air Base, where French soldiers deployed as part of NATO's air policing mission in the Baltic countries will end their rotational work. Colonna added that a military detachment will be sent to Lithuania in December for a new mission.

"Those patrols contributed to strengthening the protection of the eastern flank of NATO, along with our Polish friends," she said, stressing its importance against the Russian threat. The interview was published on the French Foreign Ministry's website.-Agencies

### Russian FM to chair UNSC meeting

MOSCOW: Moscow said Thursday its foreign minister will chair a UN Security Council meeting in April, when Russia will hold the rotating presidency of the international body.

Russia has repeatedly said it has been confronted at the UN by the "collective West" that has ostracised the country since the beginning of the Ukraine offensive. Ukraine has called for Russia to be removed from the Security Council over the military operation launched in February last year. A "key event of the Russian presidency will be a high-level open debate on the 'effective multilateralism through the defence of the principles of the UN Charter'," foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova told a press briefing. "This meeting will be chaired by Russia's Foreign Minister Serger Lavrov." Zakharova also Zakharova also said Lavrov was planning to lead a debate on the Middle East on April 25 The United States criticised Russia's move and its seat on the Security Council. "A country that flagrantly violates the UN Charter and invades its neighbor has no place on the UN Security Council," White House spokesperson Karine Jean-Pierre said. "Unfortunately Russia is a permanent member of the Security Council and no feasible international legal pathway exists to change that reality," she added, calling the presidency "a largely ceremonial position."-Agencies

### Western military support to Kiev **Belarus President Lukashenko** warns of 'nuclear' war

#### **News Desk**

MINSK: Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko on Friday warned the continued Western support for Ukraine is increasing the likelihood of a nuclear war breaking out in the former Soviet republic as well as igniting the third World War.

The 68-year-old ally of Russian President Vladimir Putin called for an immediate ceasefire in Ukraine, expecting dialogue and diplomacy to replace violence and exchange of fire.

"As a result of the efforts of the United States and its satellites, a full-scale war has been unleashed in (Ukraine) ... a third world

looms on the horizon," he said during a televised address to lawmakers and people.

Lukashenko said there should be no preconditions for a ceasefire and warned Ukraine against launching a counter-offensive, saying it would make negotiations between Moscow and Kyiv impossible. The close Kremlin ally,

Lukashenko also called for a "truce" in Ukraine and for talks "without preconditions" between the warring sides.

"I'll take the risk of suggesting an end of hostilities... a declaration of a truce," he said during a state of the nation address. "All territorial, reconstruction, se-



and should be settled at the negotiation table, without

preconditions.<sup>4</sup> Lukashenko further said that Russia is planning to deploy tactical nuclear weapons on the territory of his country, where there's a

curity and other issues can strong opportunity to safeguard Belarus from western threats. Putin said on Saturday that

Russia would station tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus, its first deployment of nuclear armaments outside its borders since the

collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

"From April 3, we start crew training, and on July 1 we are finishing the construction of a special repository for tactical nuclear weapons on the territory of Belarus," said Putin. Belarus shares its borders with both Russia and Ukraine, and Poland lies towards its west.

To the north of these countries is Finland, which has become the latest addition to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and would be added as a formal member within days, according to NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg.

'I look forward to raising Finland's flag at NATO

HQ in the coming days. Together we are stronger and safer," Stoltenberg

wrote on Twitter. With Finland being added to the list of the NATO club, it will become as the second country with NATO forces sharing its

borders with Russia. Russia launched a military operation in Ukraine in late February, following Kiev's failure to implement the terms of the Minsk agreements and Moscow's recognition of the breakaway regions of Donetsk and Luhansk. At the time, Russian President Vladimir Putin

said one of the goals of what he called a "special military operation" was to "de-Nazify" Ukraine.

### **Vatican** rejects **'Doctrine of Discovery'**

Islamabad **POST** 

Saturday, April 01, 2023

TRENTON: The Vatican rescinded the infamous "Doctrine of Discovery" on Thursday, a long-demanded action by Canada's Indigenous peoples.

The doctrine, known as a papal bull that dates to the 15th century, was used to excuse the oppression of Indigenous people worldwide during European colonization, the Vatican said in a document published in the official Vatican News.

"The document states that the "Doctrine of Discovery" - a theory that served to justify the expropriation by sovereign colonizers of indigenous lands from their rightful owners - "'is not a part of the teaching of the Catholic Church.' the Vatican said. It went on to say the rescinding of the doctrine was spurred in part by Canada's Indigenous peoples' demand during Pope Francis' "penitential journey" to Canada eight months ago during which he apologized for the Catholic Church's role in Indian Residential Schools. Beginning in the mid-1800s, Indigenous children were forced from their homes into the schools where the goal was to crush their culture and replace it with white culture. -Agencies

### Japan announces export controls on chip equipment

TOKYO: Japan on Friday decided to impose export controls on chip manufacturing equipment, under which products sold to China would require ministerial approval "each time."

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida-led government decided to tighten the export controls on at least 23 semiconductor manufacturing items "due to growing concerns over security," Japanese public broadcaster NHK reported.

"Exports to China or other destinations not on the whitelist will need the approval of the trade minister each time," it said. There are around 42 listed countries and territories, including the US, South Korea, and Taiwan, which will not be subject to the new restrictions that are expected to go into effect in July. "This measure is aimed at preventing technology from being diverted to military use," Japanese Trade Minister Nishimura Yasutoshi said. Japan is one of the major producers of chip manufacturing equipment. "We want to fulfill our responsibilities to the international community as a country with advanced technology. And we want to contribute to international peace and security," Yasutoshi added.-DNA

### Pak ambassador Qureshi meets Greek foreign minister



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Ambassador to Greece Muhammad Aamar Aftab Qureshi met with the Foreign Minister of Greece Nikos Dendias. Both sides discussed matters of mutual interest and further expansion in bilateral relations. The Greek foreign Minister Mr. Dendias wished the Pakistani Ambassador a successful tenure in Greece.-DNA

### China stages combat patrols over Taiwan Strait

BEIJING: A number of Chinese aircraft have reportedly conducted combat readiness patrols over the Taiwan Strait in what is seen as a response to Chinese Taipei President Tsai Ing-wen's visit to the United States. Taiwan's defense ministry said in a statement on Friday that nine Chinese aircraft crossed at points in the north, center and south of the Strait's median line, which used to serve as an unofficial buffer between the two sides. Taiwan's armed forces responded using its own aircraft and ships to monitor the situation using the principle of "not escalating conflicts or causing disputes," the ministry said. Accusing China of creating tension in the Taiwan Strait, the self-ruled island's ministry condemned the purported drills as "irrational actions." A senior Taiwan official familiar with security planning told Reuters the Chinese aircraft had only "slightly" encroached across the median line, and that no unusual movements by Chinese ships had been spotted. The Chinese military has not yet commented on or confirmed the reported aerial drills over the Taiwan Strait. Tsai arrived in the United States on Wednesday, stopping off on her way to Central America. She is expected to meet McCarthy in Los Angeles on her way back to Taipei on April 5, with China on Wednesday threatening unspecified retaliation if that meeting goes ahead. On her first US stopover since 2019, Tsai claimed at an event held by the Hudson Institute think tank in New York on Thursday that the blame for rising tensions in and around the Taiwan Strait lies with China. The spokesperson for China's Taiwan Affairs Office, Zhu Fenglian, on Wednesday slammed Tsai's stopovers and said no US officials should meet her. "We firmly oppose this and will take resolute countermeasures," Zhu said at a news conference in Beijing.-DNA

### Russia arrests US journalist

MOSCOW: An American journalist has been detained on suspicion of spying for Washington, Russia said Thursday, drawing immediate outrage from the West with the White House condemning the allegation as "ridiculous". Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich is believed to be the first foreign journalist held for spying in post-Soviet Russia, and his arrest is expected to escalate the Kremlin's confrontation with the West amid Moscow's assault on Ukraine. The Wall Street Journal said it was deeply concerned for Gershkovich's safety and denied the claim from the FSB security service that he was "spying in the interests of the American government". The 31-year-old journalist's detention, on charges that carry a maximum penalty of 20 years behind bars, is also a serious escalation in the Kremlin's sweeping crackdown on the media. US officials said they were in touch with Gershkovich's family and that the State Department had requested consular access.

The White House condemned the arrest and warned Americans not to travel to Russia, and those now inside the country to leave for their own safety. "The targeting of American citizens by the Russian government is unacceptable. We condemn the detention of Mr. Gershkovich in the strongest terms.--Agencies

### Britain agrees to join trans-Pacific trade pact

LONDON: Britain has decided to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), Prime Minister Rishi Sunak announced Friday.

This is its biggest trade deal since Brexit following 21 months of negotiations.

Britain will be the first new member since the creation of the CPTPP in 2018 and the first European country in the bloc. "Joining the CPTPP trade bloc puts the UK at the center of a dynamic and growing group of Pacific economies," said Sunak. "British businesses will now enjoy unparalleled access to markets from Europe to the south Pacific." The trade grouping, a huge trade bloc in the Indo-Pacific which will now have a total GDP of 11 trillion pounds (13.65 trillion U.S. dollars), will include more than 500 million people and account for 15 percent of global GDP once Britain becomes its 12th member, according to Sunak's office. Membership will "support jobs and create opportunities for companies of all sizes and in all parts of the UK," Business and Trade Secretary Kemi Badenoch said. The deal will grant "British businesses improved access to the countries that will be the gateway to the wider Indo-Pacific region which is projected to make up the majority of global growth in

the future," he said. Members of the CPTPP are Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, and Vietnam.-Agencies

### Turkey becomes last NATO nation to ratify Finland bid

ANKARA: Turkey on Thursday became the final NATO nation to ratify Finland's membership of the USled defence alliance in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Lawmakers unanimously backed the Nordic country's accession two weeks after President Recep Tayyip Erdogan publicly blessed the bid.

"I welcome the vote of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey to complete the ratification of Finland's accession," NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg tweeted moments after the vote.

"This will make the whole NATO family stronger and safer." Turkey's approval leaves Finland - which has a 1,300-kilometre (800-mile) border with Russia - with only a few technical steps before it becomes the 31st member of the world's most powerful military bloc.

Officials expect the process to be completed as early as next week.

Finland and its neighbour

Sweden ended decades of military non-alignment and decided to join NATO last May. Their applications were accepted at a June alliance summit that was designed to show the Western world's desire to stand up to Russia in the face of Europe's most grave conflict since World War II. But the bids still needed

to be ratified by all the members' parliaments - a process that stalled with Turkey and Hungary. Erdogan put up stiff resistance to Sweden's candida-

cy because of a series of long-standing disputes. He first signalled his more supportive stance on Finland's membership in January - a position that forced the Nordic neighbours to bow to the diplomatic pressure and break up their bids

so that both applications were not delayed. The Hungarian parliament ratified Finland's NATO membership on Monday. It was expected to approve

Sweden's accession during the current session ending June 15. But a spokesman for Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban on Wednesday called on Sweden to "clear the air" and address "an ample amount of grievances" for the vote to go ahead.

Sweden has upset Orban - one of Europe's closest allies of Russian President Vladimir Putin - by expressing alarm over the rule of law in Hungary.

It has also angered Turkey by refusing to extradite dozens of suspects that Erdogan links to a failed 2016 coup attempt and a decades-long Kurdish fight for an independent state.

Stockholm still hopes to join the alliance in time for a July summit in Vilnius. Most analysts believe that Turkey will only vote on Sweden's candidacy after the country's May general election.NATO was created as a counterweight to the Soviet Union at the onset of

the Cold War era that began immediately after the Allies defeated Nazi Germany. The bloc has gone through waves of expansion that brought it ever closer to

Russia's borders. NATO's reach into east and south European countries that were once under Moscow's effective control infuriated the Kremlin and created growing strains in its relations with Washington. Putin cited the threat of NATO expanding into Ukraine as one of his main reasons for launching the war 13 months ago. But the conflict has had the opposite geopolitical

effect from the one envisioned by Putin. Ukraine is now receiving tanks and other heavy weapons from NATO members that it hopes to use in a new counter-offensive planned for the coming weeks or months. Finland never seriously discussed NATO membership until Putin went to war.-DNA

### Kenyans defy government ban

NAIROBI: Thousands of Kenyans took to the streets of the capital Nairobi in anti-government protests Thursday for the third time in two weeks, despite a government ban on the demonstrations. The protest turned violent, leaving dozens injured. Two journalists were seriously wounded after a tear gas canister was fired at close range into their media vehicle. Public property was also vandalized or destroyed. Led by opposition leader Raila Odinga, the protesters called for President William Ruto to reduce the cost of living, which has skyrocketed in the East African country. "We will not relent until the cost of living and the prices of commodities go down," Odinga told thousands of supporters in Embakasi. Ruto, who arrived back on Thursday from a four-day trip to Germany and Belgium, has maintained that the protests are illegal and called on the police to maintain law and order. On Wednesday, Nairobi Governor Sakaja Johnson banned opposition protests, asking the police to follow orders from Interior Minister Kithure Kindiki. Ruto's United Democratic Alliance (UDA) party offices in Siaya in western Kenya were also razed to the ground Thursday. The bi-weekly protests have left many people injured and led to damage to buildings and vehicles, looting, vandalism and arson of

### Palestinians rally against Israelis' theft of land

"The Israeli regime has been practicing the most heinous types of killing and assassination, Judaizing Palestinian lands and settlements, and settlers' continuous violations of the sanctuaries through storming al-Aqsa Mosque and attacking worshipers in places of worship," the statement read.

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM: Palestinians have held rallies to commemorate the 47th anniversary of Land Day, in honor of the struggle against Israeli settler-apartheid oppression and the call for freedom, justice and equality.

People in the Gaza Strip, West Bank, and East al-Quds took to the streets on Thursday to mark the event that takes place on March 30 every year. In the Gaza Strip, protesters

gathered near the fence that sep-

arates the besieged enclave from

the occupied territories as Israeli

troops fired live bullets and tear

gas canisters. According to local

sources, five Palestinians were

injured, three of them with live

bullets, two with gas bombs, and

hundreds suffered from tear gas

Land Day marks when on March

inhalation.

hundreds. On that day, Palestinians - referred to as "Israeli Arabs" by

Israel - declared themselves an inseparable part of the Palestinian people and their struggle. "The main issue and our struggle

with the Zionist movement was. is, and will remain to be the issue of land, and we are still suffering from racist policies in everything related to land and housing," one of the organizers of the protests was quoted by Palestinian media outlet Arab48 as saying.

"The struggle over the land has not stopped. Indeed, the conflict of the Palestinians with Israel and the Zionist movement throughout history has centered on the land at its core," historian Johnny Mansour commented on the importance of Land Day's legacy, told The Arab News.

30 1967, Palestinians in the Gali-In a conference held during the lee region rose up against Israel's land theft and were confronted by Gaza festival, leader of the Islamic a deadly crackdown by troops who Jihad movement, Khalid al-Batch,

killed six Palestinians and injured said in a speech on behalf of the participating factions, "National unity is a necessity in light of the changes taking place in the Palestinian territories and the world." Al-Batch warned of Israeli attempts to "erase Palestinian cities in the West Bank.'

"The eternal Land Day this year comes at the height of the fierce Zionist attacks against our people through persecution, demolition, displacement and siege. I warn the enemy of the wrath of our revolution and our resistance,' he said. The Islamic Jihad chief pointed out that the Israeli approval of "the formation of a special guard will mainly target the Palestinians, and will lead to more innocent bloodshed."

On Monday, Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced the approval of the formation of a special guard under the supervision of far-right minister Itamar Ben-Gvir. Meanwhile. Palestinian factions abroad said

in a joint statement that Land Day "constitutes a historical shock to the Zionist entity."

"Our Palestinian people proved that, after nearly three decades of occupation and unjust military rule, it is still steadfast and clings to its land, history, and national identity no matter how long it takes, and it is still one people united around its inalienable historical national rights in the land of Palestine," the statement said. They said Land Day this year coincides with the Palestinian people facing the most dangerous stage in the history of their cause, "in light of an Israeli regime that is the most right-wing, racist, extremist and criminal in the history of the occupation."

This current regime, according to the factions, took a series of racist decisions to escalate aggression against the Palestinian people in al-Quds and the West Bank.

"The Israeli regime has been practicing the most heinous types of killing and assassination, Judaizing Palestinian lands and settlements, and settlers' continuous violations of the sanctuaries through storming al-Aqsa Mosque and attacking worshipers in places of worship," the statement read.

Meanwhile, the Land Research Center (LRC) of the Arab Studies Society said that the Israeli regime had seized 2.3 million dunums of Palestinian land in the occoupied West Bank.

In a statement it issued on Thursday, the research center pointed out that Israel used those seized dunums for the building of 572 settlements and outposts, where about 850.000 settlers live now, in violation of international resolutions against settlement construction.

During the Israeli annexation, Israel demolished 12,350 Palestinian homes and uprooted over 2,000,000 perennial olive trees, the source said.-Agencies places of worship.-APP







# **Briefs**Petrol prices to remain stable for next fortnight

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Govern-

ment of Pakistan has decid-

ed to keep unchanged the

price of petrol and diesel

for the next fortnight, Fi-

nance Minister Ishaq Dar

announced Friday. " ... we

got the recommendation

of increasing the price of

petrol and diesel from the

the finance minister - who

took charge in September

last year - said during a

But Fin Min Dar said his

ministry has decided to

keep the price of the two

most used petroleum

products stable after con-

sultations with Prime Min-

Earlier in the day, Atlas

Honda - the biggest play-

er in the two-wheeler seg-

ment in Pakistan - on Fri-

day notified an increase in

the rates of its motorcycle

prices by Rs5,000-15,000.

The company, earlier in

the day, also announced

a 15-day extension of its

production plant. Meanwhile, Japanese bike-mak-

er Yamaha Motor Pakistan

also decided to pass on

the burden of the rising

cost of production to its customers as it notified

new prices of its five mod-

els. It should be noted that

the new prices will come

Imran to

blame for all

crises: Rana

ISLAMABAD: Minister for

Interior Rana Sanaullah on

Friday said it was impera-

tive to oust Imran Khan

from the political arena

as he was solely responsi-

ble for all the crises being

Talking to the media out-

side the Supreme Court,

faced by the country.

into effect from April 1.

ister Shehbaz Sharif.

televised address.

authorities,"

regulatory

## **Issuance of visa for Afghans becoming source of income**

These US led allies are also making attempts to force the Afghans to abandon their motherland as this mountainous region connecting South with Central Asia still maintaining its strategic and economic importance, which would play a key role in next phases of global wars for power, perks and resources

#### SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: Believe it that getting Pakistani visa for the Afghan nationals both in or outside Afghanistan is becoming too hard and expensive whereas continuous silence on the part of Pakistan Foreign Minister Bilalwal Bhutto Zardari and Emirate Islami Afghanistan leadership is generating stock of questions. It seems that under well planned strategies, now the US led allies especially spy agencies of Pakistan are bent upon economic assassination of already war devastated Afghans. These US led allies are also making attempts to force the Afghans to abandon their motherland as this mountainous region connecting South with Central Asia still maintaining its strategic and economic importance, which would play a key role in next phases of global wars for power, perks and resources.

At the moment, issuance of visa's to the Afghan nationals even those who are in possession of US, UK, EU and other foreign countries passports is considered most lucrative source of income not only for Pakistan's diplomatic squads throughout the world but also for some of spy agencies and NADRA, personnel dealing heals and deals regarding war devastated Afghanistan. Couple of days back, a family belonging to eastern Afghanistan reached in Peshawar from Afghanistan. Five members of the family had got Online visa at cost of Eight US dollars each but the score was settled with three others by issuance Pakistan single entrance visa for one month after getting 3600 US dollars (each 1200 US dollars.)

This issue is not confined to a single family or an individual but it is a common feature for almost Afghans who wants to visit either for a single day or trip or for a prolong stay. On Wednesday evening, a female with four children was forced to pay 40,000 Afghanis just for entering Pakistan at Torkham. Ironically, all those Afghans who wants to go back to their motherland from Pakistan are not only bound to surrender Proof Of Registration (POR cards issued to them by NADRA and UNHCR couple of years back) but they are being forced to pay bribe from RS 5000 to RS 10000 at all crossing points especially at Torkham.

Though Pakistan has made hard the policies for issuance of visa's to Afghan nationals soon after starting fencing of Pak Afghan border, also called Durand Line somewhere in end of 2015 last with financial support of US but soon after empowering of Taliban on August 15th 2021 it was further tightened. All those Afghans who intend to visit Pakistan either from Afghanistan or from rest of the world are bound to attach an invitation from a Pakistani national through a Stamp Paper. Each member of the family is bound to attach separate Stamp Paper with visa application. Filling and stamping this stamp paper costing from RS 1000 to RS 1500. But it doesn't mean approval as the approval authorities are certain mysterious high ups in Foreign Office, Intelligence agencies, responsible for Afghanistan and NADRA offices. However, the procedure become a major source for minting money or getting bribes for the personnel of all these departments and institutions.

Unfortunately, in reaction some of the diplomatic personnel of Afghanistan in its missions are also demanding bribes from Pakistani nationals even from students frequently visiting Afghanistan. Apparently, Taliban are portraying themselves "unhappy" from Pakistan but internally all of Emirate Islami leaders including acting Prime Minister and Foreign Ministers are playing silent role over maltreatment of the countrymen for Visa's and visits to Pakistan. The Afghans not only from inside Afghanistan but also throughout the world, through social media are not only denouncing step mother attitude on the part of Pakistan but even they making appeals to higher authorities like Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Chief Of Army Staff Gen. Asim Muneer to take its early notices as Afghans are considering Pakistan as their second motherland. Likewise, these policies and restrictions also affecting relations between thousands of families. In the light of heavy prices of visa's and unprecedented bribe demands of personnel at Torkham, Foreign and NADRA offices at Islamabad, visits or travelling from Afghanistan to Pakistan is on decline from last sev-

eral months. Declining travelling and visits also pose bad impacts on bilateral trade between the two neighbouring countries. Now it is the time for both Islamabad and Kabul to set across a table, for settling all such issues and hardships.

### UN calls for a war on garbage

UNITED NATIONS: The planet is literally drowning in garbage, and it is high time to clean up, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said at an event in the UN General Assembly Hallmarking the first-ever International Day of Zero Waste on Thursday. The high-level meeting was held to raise awareness of the urgent need to transition to a "green" and circular economy that promotes sustainable production and consumption patterns.

The move could save governments billions and create hundreds of thousands of jobs. Humanity currently generates more than two billion tonnes of municipal solid waste annually, which includes plastics, textiles, rotting food, discarded electronics, and debris from mining and construction sites, it was pointed out.

As the Secretary-General bluntly put it, we are basically "treating our planet like a garbage dump", warning that the messy mountain will reach four billion tonnes by 2050. "We are trashing our only home," he said. "We're spewing a torrent of waste and pollution that is affecting our environment, our economies, and our health." – APP

### Visible cracks appear in US, India ties over Ukraine war

ISLAMABAD: Visible cracks have appeared in the "strategic relationship" of the United States and India as the latter had adopted its own course on the issue of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, refusing to condemn Russia's actions in the United Nations, and by continually buying oil from Russia despite sanctions. Since the outbreak of the Ukraine war, there has been a direct clash between Russia and the west and things have gone beyond a certain

## Persecution of minorities

ISLAMABAD: The state-sponsored persecution of minorities and mob violence has put the Narendra Modi's India of today at the risk of tearing itself apart. The hate crimes and violence against minorities including Muslims, Christians, Dalit and others were on constant surge being provoked by ruling BJP leaders, backed the discriminatory legislation and also stamped by the Indian judiciary. Since Modi's reelection in 2019, the government has pushed controversial policies that explicitly ignore Muslims' rights and are intended to disenfranchise millions of Muslims.

Around two hundred million Muslims account for about 15 percent of the population – by far the largest minority group.

The religious persecution has dramatically accelerated under Prime Minister Narendra Modi who rose through the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a paramilitary Hindu organization promoting Hindu supremacy. "But the reality of India includes largely uncontrolled – and often state-encouraged – violence against religious minorities. Muslims, the most populous minority, are frequently targeted. Christians, a much smaller, more vulnerable group, are also brutally mistreated," Doug Bandow, Senior Fellow at US-based Cato Institute wrote in an article.

He said Modi's policies had been much more "dirigiste than predicted." Instead, he has gained political success and strengthened control of Indian politics by inflaming Hindu nationalism. In its latest annual report, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) found a significant deterioration in freedom of religion in India. The report explains: "The Judian guarantee acceleted its

"The Indian government escalated its promotion and enforcement of policies – including those promoting a Hindu-nationalist agenda – that negatively affect Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Dalits, and other religious minorities. The government continued to systemize its ideological vision of a Hindu state at both the national and state levels through ty (BJP)-led government used abusive and discriminatory policies to repress Muslims and other minorities," Meenakshi Ganguly, Human Rights Watch's director for South Asia, explained said in a report.

The government action, including the continued enforcement of anti-conversion laws against non-Hindus, has created a culture of impunity for nationwide campaigns of threats and violence by mobs and vigilante groups, including against Muslims and Christians accused of conversion activities. A third of states now restrict conversions, seeking to prevent people from choosing their own faith. By the end of last year, more than 50 pastors had been imprisoned under anti-conversion laws in the state of Uttar Pradesh alone.

The problem is long-standing: In 2021, there were 75 violent assaults in Chhattisgarh. Violent attacks have been perpeKabul to set across a table, for settling al such issues and hardships. OGRA slashes LPG prices by Rs 48 per kg The price of LPG by Rs 49 to Rs 229 per kilogram for the month of April 2023

ISLAMABAD: The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) slashed the price of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) by Rs 49 to Rs 229 per kilogram for the month of April 2023. According to a notification issued by OGRA on Friday, the above prices will be effective from April 1.

Following this, the price of 11.8 kg domestic LPG cylinder has decreased by Rs 576 for the whole month of April. In the monthly review, OGRA announced to cut Rs 278 to Rs 229 per kg price and the new domestic cylinder of 11.8 kg price has also reduced from Rs 3,278 to Rs 2,702. Maximum LPG consumer price has been decreased by Rs 48,775 per MT from Rs 277,774 to Rs 228,999 per MT. Similarly, the maximum producer price with 18% GST decreased by Rs 576 from Rs 2,790 to Rs 2,214. The notification said LPG prices will be regulated with a maximum price at all levels of the supply chain. – **APP** 

Kana Sanaullan said today Justice Mandokhail had recused himself from the Supreme Court bench hearing the case pertaining to elections in the provinces of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa writing a dissenting note. It was an irony that the nine-member bench had been reduced to just three members now, he added. The interior minister said,' A `Fitna' (Imran Khan) has first created a political and administrative crisis and now judicial issues and that is why it becomes all the more important to oust him from politics." - APP

### PM asks UAE businessmen to invest

#### DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and United Arab Emirates (UAE) on Friday expressed the resolve to strengthen bilateral cooperation in diverse fields. The development came during a meeting of a UAE delegation with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad. The delegation was led by the Chairman of Hayat Bio-Tech and a member of the ruling family of the UAE, Sheikh Ahmed Dalmook al Maktoum.

During the meeting, the prime minister said brotherly relations between Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates are deeply rooted in history. He underlined that Pakistan attached great importance to further expanding brotherly ties with the UAE in diverse fields including trade and investment.

### Soldier martyred in N. Waziristan

RAWALPINDI: A soldier embraced martyrdom during an exchange of fire with terrorists in the Mir Ali area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's North Waziristan district, the army's media wing said on Friday. According to a press release from the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), 29-year-old Sepoy Irsha Ullah was martyred during the battle. "Own troops fought bravely and effectively engaged the terrorists' location," statement said. - APP

the use of both existing and new laws and structural changes hostile to the country's religious minorities."

Last year, the "Indian authorities intensified and broadened their crackdown on activist groups and the media in 2022 ... The Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Partrated across the country under the guise of protecting cows. Vigilante mobs, often organized over social media, have attacked religious minorities—including Muslims, Christians, and Dalits—under suspicion of eating beef, slaughtering cows, or transporting cattle for slaughter. – **APP** 

point where other states have to take sides: whether with the west or Russia. According to an article published in Eurasia Review, however, India which has a strategic partnership with the US did not side with the west despite efforts on the part of the US to persuade India on two things: condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine and stop India purchasing Russian oil.

This article penned by Zafar Iqbal, a senior research fellow at a think tank, looks how on one hand, India has adopted a neutral posture on Ukraine and on the other hand, it has continued buying Russian oil that has frustrated the US that portrays that India is an unreliable partner. When Russia invaded Ukraine, the West under the US imposed stringent sanctions on Russia. However, there was a difficulty that most of the European countries depend on Russian oil and gas. - APP

### 36 bodies found inside well after collapse

NEW DELHI: Thirty-six bodies have been found inside a well at a Hindu temple in central India after dozens of people attending a festival fell into the muddy water when its cover collapsed, officials said Friday. Video of Thursday's collapse at the temple complex in Indore in Madhya Pradesh state showed chaos afterward, with people rushing away. An excavator pulled down a wall of the decades-old temple to help people flee. Nearly 140 rescuers, including army personnel, used ropes and ladders to pull the bodies from the well after pumping out the water. A narrow path and debris in the well made the task difficult.

"We have recovered 36 bodies and everybody is accounted for now," Pawan Kumar Sharma, commissioner of the local municipal corporation, told The Associated Press. The secretary of the temple board was among the dead and the president is recovering from injuries, Sharma said. Police brought a case of culpable homicide not amounting to murder, but no arrests have been made so far, he said. – Agencies

### US says collaboration with Pak to continue

"It (Pakistan) is a sovereign state and it is one that can make decisions for itself, Patel said, adding, "This certainly does not change our willingness to continue to work with Pakistan"

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WASHINGTON: Pakistan's decision not to participate in the second Summit for Democracy, hosted by the United States, does not change Biden administration's willingness to continue to work with Islamabad on a "broad range of issues", a State Department spokesperson has said. At the same time, Spokesperson Vedant Patel said the U.S. was "certainly sorry that Pakistan chose not to participate" in the 3-day event that ended Thursday after discussing topics like strengthening democracy and defending against authoritarianism; addressing and fighting corruption; and promoting respect for human rights.

He was responding to a question from a Pakistani TV channel reporter, who sought his reaction to Pakistan's move to opt out of the summit which was joined in-person and virtually by some 70 leaders from around the world. China and Turkiye were excluded, but Taiwan was invited. "It (Pakistan) is a sovereign state and it is one that can make decisions for itself, Patel said, adding, "This certainly does not change our willingness to continue to work with Pakistan." The U.S. and Pakistan, he said, work together on a broad range of issues, and the Biden administration continues to engage with them on issues surrounding democracy, human rights, including freedom of religion and beliefs, pointing out that there there's an important security partnership as well.

The same reporter asked him about the rising attacks by TTP terrorists in the country, and the spokesperson said he had seen those same reports and offered his condolences to those who were impacted. "I don't have any specifics to offer, but of course there is a deep security partnership with Pakistan, including counterterrorism efforts", he added. When an Indian journalist drew attention to India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar's statement about not engaging with Pakistan on the plea that talks and terrorism do not go together, the spokesperson said he would let New Delhi add any additional commentary to his comments.

### President Aliv okays reference withdrawal against Justice Isa



The president gave the approval on the advice of the prime minister in accordance with Article 48 of the Constitution

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Friday approved the withdrawal of the curative review reference and Civil Miscellaneous Application (CMA) against senior Supreme Court judge Justice Qazi Faez Isa. The president gave the approval on the advice of the prime minister in accordance with Article 48 of the Constitution. Dr Alvi also signed his power of attorney in favour of Advocate Supreme Court Anees Ahmed Shehzad. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Thursday directed the law ministry to withdraw the curative review reference filed against Supreme Court's senior judge Justice Qazi Faez Isa.

According to the statement released PM Office, the prime minister has directed Federal Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar to withdraw the curative review reference against Supreme Court Justice Qazi Faez Isa as it was politically motivated. The premier further said CRR was filed only to defame Justice Qazi Faez Isa and his family members. "This was not a reference rather victimization by revengeful Imran Khan against an impartial person pursuing the course of constitution and the law." "This was a conspiracy to usurp the independence of judiciary and create a division within," the prime minister remarked. The Supreme Court (SC) on June 19, dismissed the presidential reference against Justice Qazi Faez Isa after declaring it 'invalid'. – DNA

### Pakistan will never default, says Ishaq Dar

He said that Pakistan is not like Sri Lanka and it will not default on its obligations. Ishaq Dar said this while speaking at the oath-taking ceremony of the Islamabad Industrial Association (IIA)

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Ishaq Dar on Friday said the situation is improving and Pakistan will have 12 to 13 billion dollars in reserves by June. He said that Pakistan is not like Sri Lanka

and it will not default on its obligations. Ishaq Dar said this while speaking at the oath-taking ceremony of the Islamabad Industrial Association (IIA). Minister for Industries and Production

Makhdoom Syed Murtaza Mehmood, newly elected president IAA Muhammad Ahmed, newly-elected senior vice president IAA Karim Aziz Malik, outgoing president IIA Zikria Akbar Zia, President ICCI Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, and Malik Sohail, Secretary-General US-Pakistan International Chamber of Commerce Malik Sohail and others were also present at the occasion. Ishaq Dar said that we took



ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Ishaq Dar administering oath to new leadership of the Islamabad Industrial Association (IIA). – DNA

over in 2013 when the country was getting bankrupt but the same was ranked 24th economy in three and a half years. All indicators were positive and Pakistan was respected globally.

By then, we had 24 billion dollars in foreign exchange reserves, interest rates were at six percent and inflation was under control But later, some experiences pushed the country to the 47th slot in the global ranking of economies and now the whole country is reeling under problems due to that experience.

He said that the business community should understand the gravity of the situation and cooperate with the government to resolve issues. We will soon steer the country out of the current mess and put it on the path of progress and prosperity, he added. The Senator said that all the problems of the industrialists of Islamabad would be resolved on preference so that they can play a positive role in national development.