

Islamabad POST

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Macron stands firm on pension bill as protests escalate

Detailed News On Page-08

Zelensky visits ruined frontline near Bakhmut

Detailed News On Page-08

World Cup winner Mesut Ozil retires

Detailed News On Page-06



NOW ELECTIONS ON OCT 08 Punjab elections cancelled: ECP

Election Commission cites security reasons for the cancellation of polls

Rana calls for polls at once in country

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Wednesday postponed the Punjab elections, originally scheduled for April 30, till October 08. In the order, a copy of which is available with Dawn.com, the ECP said that in exercise of the powers conferred upon it by Article 218(3) read with Section 58 and Section 8(2) of the Elections Act, 2017, the commission "herby withdraws the election programme [...] and fresh schedule will be issued in due course of time with poll date on October 08". On March 1, the Supreme Court had ruled that the elections to the Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa assemblies should be held within the stipulated period of 90 days. It had, however, allowed the ECP to propose a poll date that deviates from the 90-day deadline by the "barest minimum", in case of any practical difficulty. On Mar 10, the ECP later wrote separate letters to the president and the KP governor. In the letter to President Dr Arif Alvi, the electoral watchdog proposed

ECP rejects PTI's plea in foreign funding case

KHAYAT ABRASI

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Wednesday rejected the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) application demanding the cross-examination of key witnesses and decided to proceed with the show-cause notice in the foreign funding case. A three-member bench, headed by Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja, resumed the hearing today and announced the verdict it reserved on December 20. The ECP passed the judgement on August 2, 2022, documenting financial fraud and over \$7 million of illegal funding, and issued a show cause to the PTI in August 2022 to justify why further legal action should not be taken against it for gross financial irregularities.

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Rana Samuallah said on Wednesday holding the election on April 30 was not in line with the constitutional procedure. Addressing the joint-parliamentary session, he said it did not reflect that the government did not want to hold elections but it wanted free and fair elections at once in the country. "Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial said the apex court would intervene if elections were not held, however, it will not intervene but issue an order, he added. The FMLN had started distributing tickets, he said, following the court's order. The minister went on to say elections had also been postponed in 1988 too due to flooding against

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Briefs

Marriyum castigates Zalmay

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Wednesday strongly condemned Zalmay Khalilzad's tweet in favour of Imran Khan. "The origin of American conspiracy and the imported regime has come to light", she said in a statement. The minister said that the Jewish lobby had come forward to save its stooge and handlers of the criminal involved in foreign funding were coming to light. She said the nexus of foreign funding was expanding since he was exposed who was the foreign agent.

Fawad warns of another Model Town

DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Fawad Chaudhry said on Wednesday the nation would decide that who was delinquent and terrorist. He lambasted Interior Minister saying that the latter's speech was same as the one before Model Town incident in Punjab Assembly on June 17, 2014. He claimed that Rana Samuallah indirectly challenged the Supreme Court (SC) and grow clear message to SC that government would not oblige to court's order of holding election in 90 days.

Sehr Iftar Timing

Sehr: 04:45 am
Iftar: 06:25 pm
Fique Jafria
Sehr: 04:35 am
Iftar: 06:35 pm

Imran Khan claims Police to raid Zaman Park within 48 hours

"They have formed two squads that will mingle with PTI workers and fire at the policemen," Khan says

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan Wednesday claimed that the government devised a plan to conduct an operation inside Zaman Park "either today or tomorrow". "They have formed two squads that will mingle with PTI workers and fire at the policemen," Khan - who was ousted by the no-confidence motion in April last year - told his party workers and supporters via video link from his Lahore home where he has been recuperating since he was injured in an assassination attempt in Wazirabad on November 3, 2022. "Their plan is to kill people as they did in Model Town," he also said. "I want to tell the Punjab Police that five police personnel will be killed by them [the government]," he claimed, adding that his party was not looking for conflict. The cricketer-turned-politician urged the PTI supporters and workers to avoid getting involved in any conflict "despite their [security forces'] repeated attempts to provoke you all". "If they come [to Zaman



Park] my supporters should refrain from showing immediate reactions... let them come to me directly," he said, claiming that the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) government is planning to kill him like Murtaza Bhutto through a police operation. Referring to the events of Saturday - when Khan's house was raided by the police while he was at Islamabad Judicial Complex for his court hearing in the Toshakhana case - Khan said that as he got closer to the federal capital, he thought he would be arrested. "However, our workers were stopped and separated from the rally at various places," he said, elaborating on his previous assertions that a conspiracy was afoot to murder him. "Then as we proceeded to the court, they started pelting us with stones. I stood at the door of the court for more than forty minutes," he said, adding that the stage had been set for his murder by

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RAWALPINDI: President Dr Arif Alvi, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir offering the funeral prayers of Brigadier Mustafa Kamal Barki. - DNA

Month of Ramadan commences

PESHAWAR: The Central Exec-Hilal Committee on Wednesday announced that the Ramadan moon had been sighted as the holy month will begin in Pakistan today (March 23), media reports. The announcement was made after the moon sighting committee met in Peshawar with its head Maulana Abdul Khaliq Azeem in chair while meetings of other zonal and district committees were also arranged simultaneously. Muslims follow a lunar calendar consisting of 12 months in a year of 354 or 355 days, and sighting a crescent moon marks start of Ramadan, ninth month of the Islamic calendar. - DNA

PM vows to root out of terrorism

Says malicious agenda of enemies to fail; inaugurates of two coal-fired power plants

NAZIR SIVALL

THARPARKAR: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Wednesday said no one was above the law and would not be allowed to support terrorists and use them as shields. Condemning yesterday's terrorist incidents targeting military personnel, the premier said that the malicious agenda of Pakistan's enemies would be foiled. The prime minister's comments came during his visit to Tharparkar-Islamkot area for the inauguration event of two coal-fired power plants with a capacity of 1,650 megawatt of electricity generation. PM Shehbaz said the projects - including the 1,320 megawatt Shanghai Electric power plant and 330MW Thal Norn power plant - would turn the desert into an economic hub and annually generate 11.24 billion units of low-cost electricity. Through the direct investment of \$3.53 billion into these projects, which were abandoned during the last four years and are now operational on PM Shehbaz's directives, the production of coal-based electricity in Thar will increase up to 3,500MW. He added that it was a moment of celebration for the entire

Brigadier Mustafa Kamal laid to rest

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Funeral prayers of Brigadier Mustafa Kamal Barki who embraced martyrdom during an encounter with hardcore terrorists in AngorAdda, South Waziristan was performed at Race Course Rawalpindi. Honourable President Islamic Republic of Pakistan Dr Arif Alvi, Honourable Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (JCSC) General Sahir Shamshud Mirza, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir, DG Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) Lieutenant General Nadeem Ahmed Anjum and large number of serving and retired military officers & soldiers, government officials, Parliamentarians and public attended the funeral. The officer was buried at Army Graveyard with full military honours in acknowledgement of his services to the nation.

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Afghan Taliban raid in Kabul kills 3 Daesh members

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: An overnight raid by Taliban forces in Afghanistan's capital killed three members of the extremist Daesh group, a Taliban spokesman said on Wednesday. The regional affiliate of the Daesh group - known as the Islamic State in Khorasan Province - has been the key rival of the Taliban since their takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021. The militant group has increased its attacks, targeting both Taliban patrols and members of Afghanistan's Shiite minority. According to Zabihullah Mujahid, the Taliban government spokesman, the operation on Tuesday

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SC to intervene if there is ill intent in holding polls: CJP

Supreme Court being 'maligned' via audio leaks: CJP Bandial

STAFF REPORT / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial on Wednesday said the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) was a constitutional body and will be "offered protection", but warned that the Supreme Court will intervene if there was any ill intention in holding "transparent elections". He made the observation as a three-judge SC bench resumed hearing the petition against the transfer of Ghulam Mahmood Dogar as the Lahore capital city police officer (CCPO). Earlier this month, the ECP had approached the SC to intervene in the case, stating that without reshuffling of "partisan officers", free and fair elections would not be possible. The ECP application argued that the apex court in the 2012 Workers Party case had mandated ECP to take pre-emptive measures to guard against any corrupt practices, even a possibility so that the elections could be conducted in accordance with the law. During today's proceedings, the apex court disposed of the petition after the petitioner withdrew the plea. The commission's lawyer told the court that the election schedule for Punjab, where the provincial assembly has been dissolved, had been issued.

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LHC orders to make public Toshakhana records

STAFF REPORT

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Wednesday ordered the government to make public the record of Toshakhana gifts received by public office holders from foreign governments and dignitaries between 1990 and 2001 as well. The high court's directives came days after the government, under a previous order of the court, had made public the details of foreign gifts retained by public office holders - presidents, prime ministers, federal cabinet members, politicians, bureaucrats, retired generals, judges and journalists from 2002 to 2022. Justice AsimIftikhar issued the orders today while presiding a hearing on a petition filed by Munsir Ahmad through Advocate Athar Siddique seeking the government to

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**President Alvi
reconstitutes
NEC**

DNA
ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has approved the reconstitution of the National Economic Council, the President House said Wednesday. The reconstitution is being carried out due to the caretaker setup of the provincial governments in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). From Punjab, the caretaker Minister for Energy, Industries, and Investment SM Tavir has been made a member of NEC. The other member is KP's Adviser on Finance and Energy Iftikharullah Khan. The president gave the approval on the advice of the prime minister in accordance with Article 156(1) of the Constitution.

**Govt making
petrol
expensive for
rich, cheaper
for poor**

ISLAMABAD: Minister of Petroleum Dr Masfiah Malik on Wednesday said the government was working on providing relief to the poor, not by imposing a subsidy or new tax, but by making petrol expensive for the rich. Explaining the recently announced petrol relief package to journalists during an informal media talk, he said the International Monetary Fund (IMF) believed subsidies were being given for the relief package for low-income people. However, he added, neither a subsidy nor any new tax was being given or imposed, rather, petrol prices were being increased for rich people to benefit the poor. It should be added that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced a petroleum relief of Rs 50 per litre for low-income consumers on Sunday, who have motorcycles, rickshaws, and other small cars. The minister said petroleum should not be confused with a subsidy. "It's a relief, not a subsidy that would be extended to more than 2.6 million motorcycles and 2.14 million small cars in the country. The minister said that the subsidies owners would get 100 per cent relief. -APP

Founders' Day held at PAF College Sargodha

DNA
ISLAMABAD: The Annual Founders' Day 2023 was held at Pakistan Air Force College, Sargodha. Air Chief Marshal Zahoor Ahmed Baber Siddiqui, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force, was the Chief Guest at the occasion. In his address, the Chief Guest said, "PAF College Sargodha has a proud history and rich legacy, since its establishment in the year 1953. The College has been a nursery of hardcore professionals, infused with high values of integrity, sincerity, serving before self, devotion to duty and has produced the most acclaimed air warriors of PAF". He advised the students to be mindful of the great responsibility that rests on their shoulders and that they must take pride in the magnificent profession they aspire to join. The Air Chief further said that the dynamic and volatile traditional environment of national security demands a well-trained future technical force which can withstand this technoscientific environment and the College has already realigned training spectrum to make it possible. He also congratulated the parents on the success of their wards and commended the faculty members for doing an excellent job. The Chief Guest gave away prizes to the winning houses. The Chief Well Shield for sports was won by Iqbal House. General Service Training Cup for co-curricular activities was won by Alam House, while Chief of the Air Staff Academic Award was won by Mansab House. Iqbal House lifted the coveted Quaid-e-Azam Shield for being overall Champion House of the Year. Earlier, Air Vice Marshal (Retd) Asif Maqsood, Principal PAF College, Sargodha presented annual report of the college. A large number of serving and retired defence personnel, retired teachers, senior bureaucrats and parents of the pre-cadets were present on the occasion.



Officers, personnel are valuable assets of police: IGP

QAZI SHOAIB KHAN
ATTORCK: Inspector General of Police Punjab Dr Usman Anwar while expressing his views at a prize awarding ceremony to the best police officials has directed to remain engaged with the spirit of dutifulness to eradicate crimes from the society besides delivering their services to the citizens in order to strengthen the trust worthy atmosphere between the police and public with their excellent performance. The Director public relations of Punjab Police told to the media here on Wednesday that IGP Punjab in his address has said that the officers and officials who help the oppressed people during duty are the pride and valuable assets of the department and no effort will be spared in honoring them at all levels. IGP Punjab said that officers and personnel who are responsible for the good name of the department are being encouraged at all levels and this policy will be continued. IGP Punjab continues to encourage the officers and personnel for their duty and excellent performance. In this regard, IGP Punjab has awarded 19 officers and personnel with cash prizes and certificates of appreciation worth around 28 lakh rupees. These awards have been given to the officers and personnel who have rendered brave, dutiful and honest service in different districts of the province. SIOs of Rajanpur police namely Idris Ahmad and Inamir Jameel have been encouraged with 15,000 each along with a CCI certificate. Similarly, SIOs of Rahim Yar Khan Police namely Naveed Nawaz and Said Ullah have been awarded 15,000 each along with a CCI certificate. IGP Punjab honored Rahim Yar Khan Police ASI Ejazul Nabi and Constable Mohamand Amir with 125,000 each along with CCI Certificate. Sub-Inspectors Amir Shahzad, Zubair, Head Constable Khuram Shahzad and Constable Muhammad Tahir of Lahore Police were given one lakh reward each with CCI Certificate. Bhakkar Police Constable Akhbar, Zahid Maqsood and Zafar Iqbal were given one lac rupees each along with CCI certificate. Likewise, Mian-

wali Police SHO Muhammad Fayaz was encouraged with 57,500 reward and CCI certificate, similarly Head Constable Anjad Faraz got 12,500, Amcer Abdullah got 115,000 and Azizullah got 287,500 along with CCI certificates. Whereas, ASI Faisal Shahzad and Constable Zahid Nawaz were awarded Rs 115,000 each and CCI certificate. IGP Punjab directed all the awards recipients to ensure that they discharge their duties with more diligence and conscientiousness than before. He said that all the officers and personnel should keep the doors of their offices open for the citizens and spare no effort in solving the problems with good manners, sincerity and duty. DPR Punjab Police added.

ACDC-ISSI host book launch ceremony

ISLAMABAD: The Arms Control and Disarmament Centre (ACDC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies (ISSI) hosted the launch of the book titled 'The Security Imperative: Pakistan's Nuclear Deterrence and Diplomacy' authored by Ambassador Zamir Akram. The keynote address was delivered by General (R) Zubair Mahmood Hayat, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (JCSC). There was a large attendance of academics, former and serving Pakistani diplomats, experts from think tanks and members of the foreign diplomatic corps in Pakistan at the event. In his welcome remarks, DG ISSI Ambassador Saleem Mahmood lauded Ambassador Zamir Akram for his valuable contributions to the field of nuclear diplomacy throughout a diplomatic career spanning over 38 years. While highlighting the importance of the theme, he said that building nuclear deterrence was Pakistan's indispensable response to the existential threat posed by India's nuclearisation. Meanwhile, Pakistan's nuclear diplomacy has remained sharp, tenacious and imaginative; it has illustrated to the world the country's India-specific rationale for the development of nuclear deterrent, reinforced efforts to maintain strategic stability in South Asia, opposed unfair and discriminatory approaches; and continuously countered the smear against Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme. -DNA

3 killed in two separate incidents

ATTORCK: Three people were killed in two separate incidents in Hassanabdd. Two brother-in-laws were killed by firing over a relationship dispute, while in another incident, a young man was killed while standing in the street. SP Investigation, Attock Jinnah Muhammad Jameel reached the spot as soon as the incident was reported. According to details, two brothers belonging to Charasadda living in Hassanabdd Housing Colony were shot dead when they were returning from a family jirga in Jhari Kis area. According to police sources, both brothers Muhammad Anil and Muhammad Ismail, son of Farhaduddin Jhari, returned after the jirga in Kis, when they were fired upon by the motorcycles following them in the housing colony, killing both brothers on the spot. According to the relatives of the brothers, the murder was done by people named Mansoor and Adnan, who were also accompanied by an unknown person. -DNA

Collective efforts needed for building a good society

Mansa Medical Center organized a seminar on social anxiety, Chinese stress

DNA
ISLAMABAD: Dr. Inamir Hasan, MD (MINS) Medical Center presided over a seminar on the topic of anxiety, depression and mental stress prevalent in the society. In which the speakers expressed their thoughts and said that it is not enough for the patient to breathe, but it is necessary for every person to have a clean environment based upon freedom of thoughts and determination. In which they can develop their skills and abilities. When a person is constantly under stress, he suffers from fatal diseases like high blood pressure and heart. Dr. Inamir Hasan exhorted his staff and patients and their families to play their part in making a good society. Only the government or institutions cannot get the society out of these diseases and difficult situation, but for this, every member of the society needs to work hard to prevent these diseases.



CCI confers excellence awards on women

STAFF REPORT
ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (CCI) organized a Women's Excellence Awards ceremony to confer awards to high achievers from various fields of life in order to recognize their contribution to the economic development of the country. Mirza Muhammad Afridi, Deputy Chairman Senate was the Chief Guest while Romina Khurshid Alam, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister, was the Guest of Honor. Speaking at the occasion, Mirza Muhammad Afridi, Deputy Chairman Senate said that women have a key role in the economic development of the country and lauded the CCI for conferring awards on high achiever women to motivate others. He said that women of tribal areas needed skills development so that they could play a more effective role in national development. Ali-san Zafar Bahattawari, President, Islamabad Chamber

of Commerce & Industry said that our women are second to none in terms of talent and ability. He said that many women have excelled in various fields of life and we feel proud over them. He said that Benazir Bhutto had become the first Prime Minister of Pakistan in Muslim World, which was a source of pride for women. He said that Malaba Yousafzai, Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy, Dr. Ayesha Jalal, Prof. Dr. Nazneen and many other women have earned great laurels for Pakistan. He said that the role Fatima Jinnah is a torchbearer for other women. He said that Hazrat Khadija and Hazrat Fatima are role models for Muslim women and by following their footsteps, Pakistan can be made a model society in the world. He said that women should be provided more opportunities to excel in life. He stressed that the government should make more conducive policies for women for their economic and empowerment. He said that ICCI has taken a positive step to recognize those women who have excelled in various fields of life and assured that ICCI would continue to encourage women entrepreneurs so that they could contribute more effectively towards the economic development of the country. Romina Khurshid Alam, SAMP said that women empowerment makes the nation stronger as when women rise, nations rise. She said that Islam has given women more respect, power and rights. She said that women have great talent and they should work with determination and Allah Almighty will help them to rise in life. She lauded ICCI for recognizing the role of women and making its executive member an Honorary President on Women's International Day. Khadija Iqbal Malik, ICCI Group leader said that development countries have achieved fast growth by increasing the role of women in their economies and Pakistan should also increase the share of women in the formal economy to take benefit of their talent for sustainable economic growth. Peadar Whitehead, Senior Vice President said that ICCI is the only Chamber that made a women entrepreneur its Senior Vice President and said that ICCI would continue to promote women entrepreneurs. Zafar Bahattawari, Secretary General URB said that the purpose of organizing the awards ceremony is to promote high achievers as role model women in society.



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National Days and Armed Forces Days

MARCH

- March 01 / Bosnia National Day
- March 03 / Bulgaria National Day
- March 06 / Ghana Independence Day
- March 12 / Mauritius National Day
- March 17 / Ireland St. Patrick's Day
- March 20 / Tunisia Independence Day
- March 21 / Namibia National Day
- March 25 / Greece National Day
- March 26 / Bangladesh National Day
- March 27 / Myanmar Armed Forces Day



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- Turkish Airlines.....8494949



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- Bomb Disposal.....15
- Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....1122 & 16
- Emergency Ambulance.....1122 & Rescue Services.....4451122
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- Motorway Police.....9270601/20
- Women Police Stations Islamabad.....9225594
- Rawalpindi.....9270601/20



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- MH.....5611116
- Cantt Hospital.....9270907-11
- DHQ.....5556311-4
- RIQ.....9290301-7
- Holy Family.....9290322-7
- PIMS.....9261170-79
- Polyclinic.....9218306-09
- Sifa International 4603666



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- Met Office.....9250960-6
- RDA.....5555664
- TMA.....5770886
- Contentment Board 9270151-3



Water Tank

- Corporation.....9209224
- Pakstar Town.....9209224
- Rawal Town.....5773343



- Islamabad.....0321-6744880

Australia supports a run to raise awareness of water challenges

The Australian High Commissioner Neil Hawkins joined the run, as the group passed through Islamabad. "I am thrilled to be part of this epic run today, alongside this amazing group of runners participating in a whopping 500-kilometer run along the historic Grand Trunk Road! As we join in the World Water Run, we raise awareness about the pressing water issues that affect us all - in Australia and Pakistan - and highlight the crucial role that water plays in supporting the Sustainable Development Goals," Mr Hawkins said

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Australian High Commission supported a group of runners participating in a 500-kilometer run along the historic Grand Trunk Road, from Torkham border to Wagha border. The Run is tied to an Australian initiative - the World Water Run #RUN-BLUE event - that is taking place during World Water Week, from 18 to 22 March. Started by an Australian athlete, Mina Guth, the World Water Run aims to raise awareness about the global water challenges, on the steps of the first UN Water Conference in fifty years, on World Water Day. Joining forces with Mina, thousands of people worldwide are taking part in the World Water Run. The Australian High Commissioner Neil Hawkins joined the run, as the group passed through Islamabad. "I am thrilled to be part of this epic run today, alongside this amazing group of runners participating in a whopping 500-kilometer run along the historic Grand Trunk Road! As we join in the World Water Run, we raise awareness about the pressing water issues that affect us all - in Australia and Pakistan - and highlight the crucial role that water plays in supporting the Sustainable Development Goals," Mr Hawkins said. "Australia has been a longstanding partner of Pakistan in helping provide support



for flood relief efforts, and helping farmers with irrigation, and combating salinity. Last week, Australia's First Assistant Secretary Gary Cowan inaugurated a solar water filtration unit in Farnah Town, providing affordable and drinkable water at the community's doorstep. These initiatives demonstrate the importance we place on water in our work with Pakistan," he added. The runners passed through various cities, towns, and villages along the Grand Trunk Road, interacting with locals and sharing the message of water conservation and management. The group was led by Jamal Said, a high-achieving runner from Swabi. Last year, Jamal achieved a remarkable feat when he set a world record in South Asia for 50 hours run without sleep, at Islamabad Marathon. "Our run in Pakistan began at the Torkham border, where we joined together in a ceremonial starting point with runners from Afghanistan. It was a powerful moment of solidarity and a reminder that water challenges affect us all. It ended at the Wagha border, where we participated in a ceremony and waved hands at the runners from India. This symbolic gesture represents our shared commitment to addressing the water challenges that transcend borders and impact us all. One of the reasons we chose the Grand Trunk Road as our pathway - the centuries-old route that connects Pakistan, Afghanistan, and India," Jamal said.

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Umrah pilgrims must book for Umrah via app

Applicants are required to reserve an appointment via the Nusuk or Tawakkalna apps

ISLAMABAD: The Muslim pilgrims who wish to perform the Umrah ritual are now required to reserve an appointment via the Nusuk or Tawakkalna apps, the Saudi interior ministry announced. Saudi Arabia's Director of Public Security Lt. Gen. Muhammad Al-Bassami said that performing Umrah requires booking an appointment on the Nusuk or Tawakkalna applications, what is required is to adhere to the dates of appointment because it is part of the measures to organize the smooth conduct of the pilgrimage," he said while noting that the numbers of appointments are available and are quite sufficient. Al-Bassami said that the entire mataf (the circumambulation of the Kaaba) has been allocated to the pilgrims, and that is in coordination with the General Presidency for the Affairs of the Two Holy Mosques. The Public

Security chief said that the first floor, the third Saudi expansion, and the external courtyards of the Grand Mosque as well as the roof of mataf have been allocated for worshippers. The roof has become ready this year and will be used in accordance with the agreed plan. He stated that the passages for entry and exit from the Grand Mosque have been reorganized in a way ensuring maximum safety. The First Ring Road is expected to be fully used for the first time to implement crowd management mechanisms and the separation of vehicles from pedestrians. Saudi Gazette reported. Al-Bassami announced the readiness of the Umrah security plans for implementation, starting from the first day of Ramadan, with the support and guidance of Minister of Interior Prince Abdulaziz bin Saud bin Naif. He said that the perpetrators of negative phenomena will be dealt

with firmly and the law will be applied to them, especially beggars, saying that the Grand Mosque and its squares were designed only for worship. He urged all pilgrims, citizens, residents, and visitors to wear a mask as it is necessary as an effective preventive measure in the Grand Mosque. For his part, the Acting Director of Call Deletion Maj. Gen. Hanoud Al-Faraj announced the completion of the readiness of security and safety plans to receive pilgrims and visitors to the Grand Mosque in Ramadan. The General Directorate of Civil Defense worked during the months of Rajab and Sha'ban to intensify inspection tours of all residences and facilities used by pilgrims to ensure completion of the necessary permits and other requirements, he said while pointing out that about 5000 inspection tours were carried out during the last two months. -APP

Iranian envoy wishes Pak prosperity

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Seyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini in his message on the occasion of the Pakistan Resolution Day, the Iranian envoy said at the onset of this beautiful and refreshing spring, on behalf of the government and great people of Iran, he would like to avail the opportunity to extend his heartfelt felicitations on the auspicious occasion of Pakistan Day to the government and all the honorable people of Pakistan. Hosseini said, "Today the great nation of Pakistan pays tribute to the Founding Father of their Nation Quaid-e-Azam, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, whose inspiring character and high thought nourished a stream that sought for equity and justice. During the decades, the nation faced predicaments and obstacles, suffered pains and struggled to their best for the development and promotion of their homeland." Finally, some seven decades ago, on March 23, 1940 Pakistan managed to pass the Pakistan Resolution at Iqbal Park to pave the ground for realizing its great dream to form a sovereign state and cherish its independence, he said. The Ambassador said the 23rd March is the Day and

Date where the honorable people of Pakistan celebrate their success triumphantly and renew their commitment for the very principles for which they fought valiantly and sacrificed a lot. During the history, the nation has been determined to safeguard its freedom, independence, integrity, and sovereignty and to triumph over the predicaments heretofore, he added. "The year 2023 is a momentous year of strong diplomatic relations between the two brotherly, friendly and neighbouring countries of Iran and Pakistan. During the decade-long journey of the two countries, they cooperated on many shared priorities of mutual benefits and the whole region, and are still resolutely determined to expand and boost the all-out relations in all areas," he said. -DNA



On the happy occasion of 23rd March, I extend my heartfelt felicitations to all citizens of Pakistan. Pakistan Day is a landmark event in the glorious history of our country. On this very day back in 1940, a historic Resolution was passed, which once and for all defined the goal of achieving a separate homeland for the Muslims of the Subcontinent. With fixity of purpose, the Muslims, under the dynamic leadership of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, relentlessly pursued their irrevocable and unalterable demand for freedom and did not rest content till the realization of their sacred objective. They regarded this stupendous task as struggle of life and death for Muslims. While celebrating this momentous day, we pay rich tributes to our illustrious forefathers for their out-of-the-ordinary sacrifices.

My Dear Countrymen! The rapidly changing global and regional geo-strategic environment, together with resurgence of terrorism, has a profound impact on the region as well as Pakistan. Therefore, we need to be well-prepared for such challenges, which entail unity in our ranks. Let us recommit ourselves to ensure that our nation develops. I urge you to contribute wholeheartedly to the progress of the country by reinvigorating the spirit of resilience, hard work, passion, love for the country and unflinching faith in a brighter tomorrow. We must focus on indigenous skills and knowledge to befittingly respond to the modern-day challenges.

On this day of national pride, I assure you that Pakistan Air Force has a legacy of rising to the occasion and remains fully prepared to defend sovereignty and territorial integrity of Pakistan. Upholding Quaid's Vision of being "Second to None", PAF relentlessly pursues excellence in all domains. On this special day, we show solidarity with our Kashmiri brothers, who have been suffering oppression and rendering supreme sacrifices for over seven decades. We stand by them in their indigenous and just struggle for self-determination.

May Allah grant us strength to defend our motherland in keeping with the expectations of the nation!

Pakistan Air Force Zindabaad!
Pakistan Paindabaad!

Air Chief Marshal
Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, NI(M)
Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force

PAKISTAN AIR FORCE
A SYMBOL OF PRIDE FOR THE NATION

Briefs

Grocery items' sale witnesses peak ahead of Ramadan

ISLAMABAD: As the holy month of Ramadan is approaching fast, the demand for grocery items witnessed high where retailers were seen doing brisk business and offering several promotions on various consumer goods at competitive prices to attract more customers.

"Ramadan is considered one of the best sales seasons in which retailers will maintain more stock and get ready early by launching various special offers and promotions, a retailer said while talking to a private news channel.

Housewives are busy with Ramadan shopping as with the start of the Holy month they cook Shrikh-tari for family members, said a consumer, adding, we are rushing to markets and shopping marts to purchase necessary kitchen items on discount rates. "Ramadan is also an appropriate time for brands and other local companies to take advantage of the shift in consumer behaviours, lifestyle habits, and overall mindsets". The shops selling dates and other kitchen items witness an increasing turnout of customers as the month of Ramadan is fast approaching, said a shopkeeper in a grocery store.—APP

Chairman CDA for survey of buildings after quake

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA), Noorul Amin Mengal has directed the concerned officials to conduct a survey of all the buildings in Islamabad after the earthquake to assess the damages. According to the CDA, the chairman directed the Building Control Agency to identify the earthquake-damaged buildings in the city. All buildings, especially in Sector E-11, should be identified which have been damaged. The chairman directed the officials to start this survey immediately and submit a report within 24 hours.—APP

University of London holds recognized leadership meeting

DNA

ISLAMABAD: University of London hosted its Recognised Centres' Leadership meeting in Serena Hotel Islamabad. All CEOs and Heads of Recognised Centres of University of London in Pakistan attended this leadership meeting. The Pro Vice Chancellor International, University of London, Dr. Mary Stacey, Saad Wasim, Regional Advisor South Asia, Walid Mashtak, CEO Roots International Schools and Colleges & Metropolitan International United College, Alex Boughton, Head of Business Support Services and Holly Peterson, Head of Alumni Development also attended this meeting.

Other Recognised Centres CEOs included Zain Usairi, Sarah Khattak from TILS, Nasir Kasari from Beaconhouse International College, Khawar Perrain from SZARIST, Khadija Mushtak from Roots IVY, Rashid Khatoon from LGS, Dr. Asad from UCL Lahore and many more renowned educational institution heads.

Professor Mary applauded the efforts of all these centres for providing high quality education in Pakistan and their contribution towards Transnational Education in Pakistan. Saad Wasim, Regional Advisor South-Asia talked about the regulatory requirements in Pakistan pertaining to HEC and Pakistan Bar Council to run Foreign TNE Degrees in Pakistan. Alex Boughton and Holly Peterson also gave sessions on the Business Support Services and Alumni Development. The Leadership Meeting was well organised and attended with all the Recognised Centres in Pakistan participating in the event.



ISLAMABAD: Fighter planes flying during rehearsal in connection with Pakistan Day ceremony held on 23rd March at President House. — Online

Parliamentary Secy for unity to foil evil designs

Protection of Pakistan should be our life goal, March 23 is the day of renewal of pledge, today we should make a commitment that we will give any sacrifice for development and defense of our beloved country", he said

ISLAMABAD: Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Muhammad Shahbaz Babar said on Wednesday that unity was the greatest strength of a nation and there was a great need of showing unity to foil enemies' nefarious designs against Pakistan. He was speaking at the opening ceremony of the Digital Photographic Exhibition on the eve of Pakistan Day organized by the Directorate of Electronic Media and Publications (DEMP), an attached department of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, at the Information Services Academy. "Protection of Pakistan should be our life goal, March 23 is the day of renewal of pledge, today we should make a commitment that we will give any sacrifice for development and defense of our beloved country", he said.

Executive Director General of DEMP Tariq Mehmood, Director Film DEMP Asfar Rehman, Deputy Director Exhibition DEMP Farina Mughal, senior officers of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and a large number of students from the twin cities were present. Briefing the chief guest and participants about the exhibition, Executive Director General DEMP Tariq Mehmood said that the directorate has organized a competition of digital pictures and paintings related to



ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Secretary Information and Broadcasting Ch. Muhammad Shahbaz Babar in a group photo with participants during Digital Photographic Exhibition to celebrate Pakistan Day at the ISA. Executive DG ISA Mubashar Tauqeer and DG Saeed Shaikh also present.—APP

the freedom struggle of Pakistan, Kashmiris movement for independence for the students of educational institutions of the twin cities. More than 200 pictures and paintings have been selected and put on display in the exhibition. Shahbaz Babar while addressing the par-

ticipants about the opening of the exhibition said that the day of March 1940 resolution was a milestone in our national history and an important turning point in the freedom struggle. He said on Pakistan Day that everyone should renew the pledge to serve the country with

honesty and sincerity. Chaudhry Muhammad Shahbaz Babar said that the government was striving to transform Pakistan into a Pakistan a peaceful and moderate Islamic welfare state as envisaged by the Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Allama Muhammad Iqbal. He said

it was the responsibility of the people of Pakistan to shun mutual differences and play a positive role for the prosperity of Pakistan. Earlier, Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Muhammad Shahbaz Babar visited the stalls of books set up by

DEMP containing historical documents on the lives of Tehreek-e-Pakistan, the establishment of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam and Allama Iqbal. He also observed the photographs, and paintings on display and also watched a documentary film based on the progress.—Agencies

Pakistan post to hold online open court on March 27

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Post would conduct an online Khuli Katchery (open court) in all postal circles on March 27 to listen and address the complaints of its customers.

According to official sources, the initiative would be taken on the special directives of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and the Ministry of Communications and Postal Services for addressing the complaints of the users and improving the services of the department. During the online interaction, scheduled to be held from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., the Director General of Pakistan Post would listen to the complaints of the postal clients through online zoom meetings. The Director General will issue orders to authorities concerned for resolving the grievances and providing all possible facilities to them. People can join through the meeting ID: 786 148 1947. Passcode: 111 111 117 and Zoom meeting link: <https://bit.ly/PakPostZoomMeeting>.—APP

IRSA releases 72,900 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Wednesday released 72,900 cusecs of water from various rim stations with inflow of 64,500 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1423.94 feet and was 25.94 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 21,500 cusecs while outflow was 28,000 cusecs. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1094.90 feet, which was 44.90 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded at 21,000 cusecs and 23,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kadirbagh, Tansa, Gudda and Sukkur was recorded at 38,900, 34,200, 26,500 and 6,600 cusecs respectively.—APP

NEPRA grants system operator licence to NTDC

ISLAMABAD: The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) has granted the system operator licence to the National Transmission and Dispatch Company Limited (NTDC) under Section 23G of the NEPRA Act.

The system operator will be responsible for carrying out its functions, operations, standards of practice and business conduct in accordance with the Grid Code (approved by the Authority as part of the aforementioned licence application), said a press release issued here Wednesday. Previously, NTDC, acting as the National Grid Company, was mandated to perform the functions of the system operator. However, under the amended NEPRA Act 2018.—APP

Pakistan-India need to adopt self-reflection

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Both New Delhi and Islamabad were at a point in their relations where surviving in isolation was not an option and engagement was essential, however, a thorough inward introspection was direly needed for the two countries to progress beyond their deep-seated animosity, agreed a panel of experts addressing a roundtable discussion titled Track Two Diplomacy: Viability between India and Pakistan. The roundtable discussion was organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS). Dr Arshi Saleem Hashmi, Head of Peace and Conflict Studies (PCS) Department at National Defense University (NDU) Islamabad said that both Pakistan and India required a multi-track diplomacy which prioritized initiation of goodwill on both parts rather than being solely focused on the outcomes of any potential engagement. She said that while previous leaders had tried their utmost to keep the communication networks alive and kicking through track IIs, lately the muting of all such channels was deeply concerning. The growing hypernationalism in addition to the irritants impeding communications were deepening a hate-based political culture across borders, she added. Dr Farhan Hanif Siddiqui, Assistant Professor at Quaid-e-Azam University (QAU) was of the opinion that zero-sum strategizing had to be eliminated if India and Pakistan wished to progress their diplomatic ties in contemporary times. He said that while Kashmir was and will be a cause deeply significant for Pakistan, it was important to realize that India had already domesticated the issue and that this domestication had led every other effort towards engagement futile.

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Canada wrong to see China as adversary

Although Canada already has a strategy in place that aims to expand military, security, trade and diplomatic ties with nations in the Asia-Pacific region to counterbalance China, it is reportedly also seeking to create a cooperation framework with Japan, the Republic of Korea and the United States to that end. The idea was conveyed directly to Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida when he visited Ottawa in January, Kyodo News reported on Monday, quoting diplomatic sources. Regardless of how viable the plan is – Japan has already told the Canadian government that it would take time to realize the concept – that Canada is taking an increasingly confrontational stance against China exposes Ottawa's Cold War mentality.

The upshot of this is Ottawa has an erroneous perception of China and is ready to support Washington's anti-China strategy as part of its efforts to "push back against any unilateral actions that threaten the status quo in the Taiwan Strait, as well as the East China Sea and the South China Sea", as the strategy document released by the Justin Trudeau government in November said. Such a perception is by no means the "clear-eyed assessment of today's China" that Canada claims. China has never been a threat to Canada or international peace, security and development as Ottawa wrongly perceives. In fact, despite the worsening of bilateral relations in recent years, China remains one of the most important trading partners of Canada, with Canadian exports to China in 2021 exceeding those to Japan, the ROK and India combined, and imports from China equaling those from the European Union and overshadowing imports from all other countries in the Asia-Pacific region. It is Ottawa's blind obedience in toeing Washington's anti-China line that is sabotaging the once friendly Sino-Canadian ties. To contain the growing influence of China in the region, the US has already reactivated the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, or Quad, that groups it with Japan, India and Australia; established AUKUS, a new security and defense partnership with Australia and the United Kingdom. That Canada has been left out of both security structures, despite being a member of the Anglo-Saxon club, may explain the eagerness with which it is now trying to ingratiate itself with the US by antagonizing China. Ottawa should work to correct its wrong perception of China before it is too late.



Two thumbs up, Mr. Trump

There was one topic that dominated the lobby of the Riyadh Marriott, where the media center for the Arab-Islamic-American Summit was set up: US President Donald Trump's speech. Journalists from the Middle East, and those flying in from the US, seemed to all have the same question in the back of their mind: How bad would Trump's speech be, considering his controversial pre-election rhetoric? Not only did last night's speech silence most critics – in this region at least – but it made it very clear that Trump will do what he thinks is right, no matter how harshly he is made to look like he is contradicting himself back home. What matters to this part of the world is that we feared a president who would seek to divide us, but got one who last night talked about unity and how standing together will ensure we do not fail. We feared a president we were led to believe hates our values and culture, but we got one who sipped our coffee, joined us in sword dancing and told us last night that the US is not here to impose its way of life, but to offer us a helping hand if we choose to take it.

We thought that when Trump said "America First," he meant we would be neglected and left to our misery. But it is his predecessor Barack Obama who did that when he opted to lecture and profess instead of adhering to his own red line when Syrian President Bashar Assad used chemical weapons against his own people.

What did Trump do? He fired back in less than 48 hours, and attacked a Syrian regime convoy a few days ago to make sure nobody thinks his administration is messing around. Trump is now off to Israel, and while he deserves two thumbs up for his Riyadh speech, all eyes will be on his negotiation skills to see if he can deliver what Obama and his other predecessors failed to achieve: A peace deal between the Israelis and Palestinians.

23 March and our responsibilities

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



In Pakistan, 23rd March is celebrated to pay tribute to the leaders and activists who played a key role in the creation of Pakistan. The day is marked with great enthusiasm, and various events are organized throughout the country. The main event takes place in the capital city of Islamabad, where a grand military parade is held. The parade is attended by the President, Prime Minister, and other top officials of the government, along with foreign dignitaries. The parade features a display of the country's military might

The 23rd of March is a significant day in the history of Pakistan, as it marks the day when the Lahore Resolution was passed in 1940. The Lahore Resolution, also known as the Pakistan Resolution, was a formal political statement that called for the creation of an independent Muslim state in the northwestern regions of South Asia. The Lahore Resolution was proposed by the Muslim League leader Muhammad Ali Jinnah and seconded by Maulana Zafar Ali Khan. The resolution called for the creation of a separate Muslim state, which would be comprised of the Muslim-majority regions of India.

In Pakistan, 23rd March is celebrated to pay tribute to the leaders and activists who played a key role in the creation of Pakistan. The day is marked with great enthusiasm, and various events are organized throughout the country. The main event takes place in the capital city of Islamabad, where a grand military parade is held. The parade is attended by the President, Prime Minister, and other top officials of the government, along with foreign dignitaries. The parade features a display of the country's military might, cultural performances, and floats representing different regions of the country. Apart from the military parade, various other events are also organized across the country, including flag hoisting ceremonies, cultural shows, and fireworks displays. The day is a national holiday, and schools, colleges, and offices remain closed to mark the occasion.

The idea of creating a separate Muslim state in the Indian subcontinent emerged in the early 20th century as a response to the political, social, and economic challenges faced by Muslims living in British India. Muslims were a minority in India and felt that their interests and rights were not being adequately represented by the Indian National Congress, which was dominated by Hindus. The Muslim League, under the leadership of Mo-

hammad Ali Jinnah, became the main proponent of the demand for a separate Muslim state, which they called Pakistan. The idea was to create a homeland where Muslims could live in peace and harmony, free from the domination and oppression of the Hindu majority in India. After years of struggle and negotiations, Pakistan was finally created on August 14th, 1947, when India was partitioned into two independent states, India and Pakistan. The creation of Pakistan was a momentous event in the history of South Asia, and it marked the birth of a new nation based on the principles of democracy, equality, and justice.

The objective of Pakistan's creation was to provide a homeland for the Muslims of South Asia where they could live in peace, freedom, and prosperity. Although Pakistan has made significant progress in various areas since its creation but it is still facing several challenges that prevent it from fully achieving the goal of its creation. One of the major challenges is a political instability. Pakistan has had a turbulent political history, with frequent changes in government, military coups, and political unrest. This has hindered the country's development and undermined its democratic institutions. Another challenge facing Pakistan is economic development. Pakistan has made progress in recent years, but the country still faces significant economic challenges, including high levels of poverty, unemployment, and income inequality. Pakistan is also facing security challenges, including terrorism, sectarianism, and regional conflicts. These challenges have affected the country's social fabric, created an environment of fear and uncertainty, and hindered its progress towards achieving stability and security. Moreover, Pakistan is facing significant social challenges, including a lack of education, healthcare, and social welfare. The country's social indicators, such as literacy rates and infant mortality rates, are below

average for the region. Addressing these challenges requires a concerted effort from the government, civil society, and the people of Pakistan to work together towards building a stable, prosperous, and inclusive society.

To achieve the objectives of the creation of Pakistan, there are several areas where efforts need to be focused. Pakistan needs to strengthen its democratic institutions to ensure that the people's will is reflected in the decision-making process. This requires strengthening the independence of the judiciary, ensuring media freedom, and promoting political pluralism. To achieve the objectives of Pakistan's creation, it is essential to promote sustainable economic growth. This can be achieved through investment in infrastructure, education, healthcare, and agriculture. The government should also take measures to attract foreign investment and promote trade with other countries. Pakistan needs to ensure that its citizens have access to basic social services such as education, healthcare, and social protection. This requires investing in human capital and promoting inclusive policies that benefit all citizens, regardless of their social status. Pakistan needs to address its security challenges, including terrorism, sectarianism, and regional conflicts.

This requires developing a comprehensive strategy that involves both military and non-military measures, such as promoting interfaith dialogue and addressing the root causes of extremism. Pakistan needs to promote regional cooperation to achieve the goal of its creation. This can be achieved by building strong relationships with its neighbors and participating in regional forums to promote peace, stability, and economic integration. Consequently, Pakistan requires a concerted effort from the government, civil society, and the people of Pakistan to work together towards building a stable, prosperous, and inclusive society.

Forging a new partnership: Understanding the importance of Pakistan-Russia relations

Masood Ahmad



One of the key areas of cooperation between Pakistan and Russia is in the field of defense. The two countries have signed multiple agreements on defense cooperation, including the sale of Russian military equipment to Pakistan.

With the split of USSR in 1991, a massive shift emerged in the nature of global politics with new principles becoming dominant factors in determining the strength of bonhomie between different nation-states. Pakistan's relationship with USSR changed from cool to hostile. In its initial years, tremendous difficulties, Pakistan received two invitation letters from the United States of America and Soviet Union but the then Prime Minister of the country preferred to go to U.S. and thus sending an unfriendly gesture to Soviet Union which later resulted in increasing Soviet tilt towards India. This was the time when two countries developed cooperation in various fields with India started actively buying weapons from the USSR and thus becoming a threat to Pakistan. Defense experts still believe that Pakistan had an opportunity to maneuver and numerous policy options on the table that it failed to utilize. Pakistan becoming a member of US-led military alliances in the 1950s further deteriorated the relationship with the USSR and diminished any possibility of the two countries becoming strategic partners in the Central Asian region. However, in the late 1950s and early 1960s the two countries moved closer, concluding several trade agreements that would provide a solid basis for increasing cooperation in the security, industrial and energy sectors, setting the stage for the two countries to become significant players in the region. However, with the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union in the 1970s and the beginning of the Soviet-Western confrontation, there was one of the most unpleasant turns in relations between the former superpower and Pakistan. With the disintegration of USSR in 1991, a new world order emerged with different nation-states accelerating their mission to strengthen their defense systems and improve economic conditions with new national policies. The end of the cold war provided an opportunity for a new beginning in

Islamabad-Moscow relations. Building on Pakistan's experience of international cooperation with other countries after 9/11, the reverberations of which can still be heard throughout the region, Pakistan and Russia should adopt a practical approach in building a healthy and mutually beneficial relations rather than being beholden to the superpowers in pursuit of their national interests. The changing contours of strategic interests at regional and international levels demand a relationship of cooperation and understanding which the two countries have taken up despite their past differences. The forging of closer relations between the two has significant importance for promoting stability and enhancing economic cooperation in the region. In Central and South Asia, Russia tries to balance its relations and establish mutually beneficial cooperation with each country, taking into account their goodwill and independence. Pakistan has fallen on hard times, but is a significant player in geopolitics and a responsible partner. With its advantageous geographical location, developing energy, trade and transport potential, and significant influence in the Islamic world, Pakistan can have a favourable impact on the region and the world at large.

One of the key areas of cooperation between Pakistan and Russia is in the field of defense. The two countries have signed multiple agreements on defense cooperation, including the sale of Russian military equipment to Pakistan. This partnership has helped Pakistan to diversify its sources of military hardware and reduce its reliance on Western countries for defense supplies. The constant threats from archrival India and its increasing military posture across Line of Control (LoC) and inside the disputed territory of Jammu and Kashmir are strong reasons that should force the Pakistani intelligentsia to revisit its policies. A strong military alliance and agreements on defense cooperation between the two countries will inevitably strengthen the defense mechanisms and pave way for

a strong power bloc in the region that could act as a deterrent against Western hegemony. In addition to defense, Pakistan and Russia have also been cooperating on energy projects. Pakistan is a significant energy consumer and has been looking to diversify its sources of energy. Russia, with its vast energy sources, can provide an important source of energy to Pakistan. Although the two countries have signed several agreements on energy cooperation, there is a need to further strengthen these agreements and devise plans for more robust pacts based on mutual trust. Besides having significant implications for regional stability, improved relations between Pakistan, Russia, and Afghanistan has important implications for global politics.

The huge shifts in the international system have provided Islamabad and Moscow with a common reason to reevaluate their relations. Moscow is finding new opportunities in the region as the U.S. has withdrawn from Afghanistan while Pakistan on the other hand is gradually trying to revisit its weary relations with Washington that has, to a great extent, given rise to unprecedented hegemony in the country resulting in an economic meltdown and rising security threats. As our enemies demonstrate an offensive mode of destabilizing Pakistan, the demands on national security continue to grow. Improved relations between the two countries with common interests could enhance stability, enhance economic cooperation and change the balance of power in the region, especially against the US and its Eurasian allies. And we have real opportunities to do so. There are mechanisms of interaction within the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and other international associations, which are gaining new significance in the present reality.

—The author is pursuing his Ph.D in English Literature at International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan.

Briefs
Punjab elections cancelled: ECP

FROM PAGE 01
dates between April 30 and May 7 for the elections.
After the same day was announced that elections in Punjab will be held on April 30. Last week, the ECP was informed that the Pakistan Army will not be on the borders for poll-related duties due to the prevalent security situation within the country and on the borders.

Rana calls for polls at once...

FROM PAGE 01
the government was of the view that the final decision should be taken after thorough deliberation. Mr Khan wants to ensure chaos in the country, he added. Free and fair elections, he said, were necessary to stop the chaos. He said all the state institutions had their own constitutional duties adding that the power invested in them was the parliament's prerogative.

ECP rejects PTI's plea...

FROM PAGE 01
However, instead of responding to the show cause, the PTI had filed a fresh application seeking cross-examination of key witnesses. The electoral body rejected the PTI's request seeking a cross-examination of the scrutiny committee and the bank officers.

SC to intervene if there...

FROM PAGE 01
Holding free and fair elections is the ECP's responsibility, he said, adding that making transfers in a democracy also fell within its purview. The CJP remarked that it had been proven that the interim Punjab government was making transfers with the electoral watchdog's permission. He said that the ECP could also give transfer orders to the interim government.

LHC orders to make...

FROM PAGE 01
make public the complete details of Toshkhana gifts received by political rulers and bureaucrats from foreign dignitaries since the creation of Pakistan. In the previous hearing, a day after the release of Toshkhana records from 2002 onwards, the high court had directed the law officer representing the government to 'submit in chamber' the remaining record before 2002, including the names of those who gave those gifts.

High Commission of Canada hosts Girls in Sports Gala

The Festival was a fun-filled day of inspirational films, engaging discussions, sport activity stations, as well as handicraft and food stalls, which highlighted impacts of CFLI particularly in the areas of women's entrepreneurship, empowerment and socio-economic inclusion

ISLAMABAD: The High Commission of Canada, Islamabad hosted its second annual Girls in Sports Gala and Banff Mountain Film Festival. In partnership with Right to Play, the Festival brought together over 200 girls as well as a diverse audience of notable female athletes, women's rights activists, government officials, diplomats, and local not-for-profit organizations supporting the empowerment of women and girls through sport.



The Festival was a fun-filled day of small-scale, high-impact projects, The Festival also intended to encourage and inspire the next generation of female athletes in Pakistan. It was an opportunity to provide awards to two notable girls sports teams, the Islamabad Girls Basketball team and the Central Girls Ice Hockey team, both of which won their respective national championships.

as male allies supporting the inclusion of girls in sports. The panelists included Anna Beg, Assistant Superintendent (Islamabad Police); Karishma Ali, renowned football player and social entrepreneur; Sana Mahmood, former captain of Pakistan's football and basketball teams and a Right to Play Ambassador; Ishrat Fatima, Civil Society Manager with the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme; Asif Murad, founder and CEO of the Booni Environmental Academy; and Ehtesham Karim, founder of Fight Fortress. The panelists shared their inspiring stories and experiences while also highlighting the barriers that are still left to overcome to support girls' full participation in sport.

Former German World Cup winner Mesut Ozil retires

The 34-year-old helped Germany to glory in Brazil in 2014

ISSTANBUL: World Cup winner Mesut Ozil announced his retirement from football on Wednesday after an illustrious international career with Germany and club spells with Real Madrid and Arsenal. The midfielder helped Germany to glory in Brazil in 2014 but bitterly quit the international scene after the Germans crashed out of the 2018 tournament in Russia.

knocked out of the 2018 World Cup at the group stage, a wounded Ozil accused the German public of 'racist' attacks. His club career blossomed when his deft passing and vision helped secure his move from the Bundesliga to Jose Mourinho's Real Madrid side in 2010. He soon led La Liga in assists while helping the Spanish club to their 32nd league title in 2012. His big-money move to Arsenal in 2013 helped the London club end their FA Cup drought the following year.



particular controversy during that summer's World Cup. Erdogan was then unleashing a sweeping political crackdown that followed a failed coup attempt against his government. Ozil's picture with the Turkish leader was widely interpreted as his political endorsement of Erdogan in the 2018 election campaign. But it was Ozil's decision to be pictured with Erdogan on the eve of Turkey's 2018 presidential election that caused

Usyk set to walk away from Fury fight talks

Joshua was given the chance to immediately regain titles in Saudi Arabia and Usyk would want the same opportunity if he was beaten

LONDON: Unified champion Oleksandr Usyk is set to walk away from talks with Tyson Fury over an undisputed heavyweight fight. The bout was pencilled in for 29/30 April at Wembley Stadium and Usyk had agreed to a 70/30 split in Fury's favour. But the terms for an immediate rematch have proved a sticking point during negotiations.

Mbappe replaces Lloris as captain of France

PARIS: Paris St-Germain forward Kylian Mbappe has been named as the new captain of the France national team. He succeeds Tottenham goalkeeper Hugo Lloris, who retired from international football in January. Mbappe, 24, has 66 caps for France since making his senior debut in 2017. 'Kylian meets all the requirements to have this responsibility,' France manager Didier Deschamps told French TV channel TF1 in an interview to be aired on Sunday. 'On the field as in the life of the group, by being a unifying element.'

Japan's Kishida pledges aid for Ukraine-backing Poland

WARSAW: Japan's prime minister pledged Wednesday to provide Poland with development support to help the European country assist neighboring Ukraine as it defends itself from Russia's invasion. Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki hosted Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida in Warsaw a day after Kishida made a surprise visit to Kyiv and met with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. 'Being in mind the increasing burden on Poland due to the prolonged invasion of Ukraine,' Kishida said Japan would offer Poland assistance to support its role and is looking to 'vigorously build up' projects. Japan usually provides the type of promised aid to developing countries, which Poland is no longer, but the Japanese government is making a special exception, he said. Kishida said it was crucial for like-minded countries such as Japan and Poland, to remain united in their support for Ukraine and in furthering sanctions against Russia. During a joint news conference with Kishida, Morawiecki said that at the time when a 'new geopolitical order' was emerging, both countries understand the 'threat to world peace and international order coming from Russia's imperialism.' Poland has supplied military, humanitarian and political support to Ukraine during the war that started 15 months ago. Kishida, who is preparing to chair a Group of Seven summit

in May, said that during his country's G-7 presidency, Japan 'will work together with Poland to demonstrate leadership so that the international community can unite and firmly support Ukraine.' Following talks with Morawiecki that went beyond their planned 30 minutes, Kishida said that Japan was interested in building closer ties with regional allies in central and eastern Europe, such as the nine NATO eastern flank members, the Visegrad Group that includes Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, and countries participating in the Three Seas economic initiative. The Japanese government also wants to expand economic cooperation with Poland 'in new fields such as high-temperature gas-cooled reactors, clean coal technology, and hydrogen,' Kishida said. More than 350 Japanese companies already operate in Poland, mainly in the manufacturing industry. Kishida later met with Polish President Andrzej Duda. Kishida visited Ukraine on Tuesday while Chinese Premier Xi Jinping held talks in Moscow with Russian President Vladimir Putin, the two visits showing how various countries are lining up behind Moscow or Kyiv. Morawiecki said the Chinese leader's visit to Moscow raised 'anxiety' and that diplomatic efforts were underway to 'persuade China not to back Russia in its aggressive international policy.' - AFP

Euro 2024: Everything you need to know

Infographic for Euro 2024 featuring a circular logo with national flags and text detailing the tournament's format, including the 24 teams, the host nation Germany, and the dates from June to July 2024.

PM vows to root out of terrorism

FROM PAGE 01
country that the perpetrator was getting a source of basic facilities for life and also dismissed the criticism by a section of people who stand against their goal, terming it a blessing with immense potential for power resources that needed to be untapped. PM Shehbaz expressed confidence that the journey of progress would spread across the country and would strengthen the national economy. The premier said that the power turbines would be installed at the projects to generate electricity by April 30, which would be supplied to the rest of the country through transmission lines. He expressed gratitude to the government of Punjab for extending support to Pakistan in carrying out development projects under the CPEC. He vowed that the coalition government would put in all efforts to materialize the CPEC projects, with the agriculture sector as its main phase and announced a hospital and a school to provide them with medical facilities at their doorsteps. Also present at the occasion, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said the project could be materialised as the federal government and the Sindh government worked in harmony to facilitate the masses.

Brigadier Mustafa Kamal...

FROM PAGE 01
Throughout his military career, Brigadier Mustafa Kamal was actively involved in counter terrorism operations and successfully dismantled numerous terrorist networks in KPK and Balochistan. He was monumental in neutralizing the terrorist networks involved in APS attack 2014. The nation recognizes his meritorious services in life and supreme sacrifice offered for Pakistan. Armed Forces of Pakistan and Intelligence Agencies stand resilient against terrorism and reaffirm the resolve to eradicate this menace of terrorism at all costs.

Police to raid Zaman Park ...

FROM PAGE 01
isolating him from his supporters. Alleging that there were unidentified people in uniform of the counterterrorism department (CTD), Khan said 'their plan was to kill me, the same way Martaz Shabaz was killed.' He further said that yet another conspiracy was in the making. 'They will infiltrate our people and attack the police, creating a situation muchlike the Model Town incident.' He advised his supporters to refrain from violence, 'as many have lost so much they are provoked'. The former prime minister, who had been ousted from the government in April 2022, said he had his supporters were treated with 'cruelty' to break their resolve. Accusing the government of the economic crisis facing the country and calling him 'thieves' and 'traitors', Khan advised his supporters to stay firm against his opponents. 'Even if I leave, you have to stand in front of them without any fear,' he said.

Afghan Taliban raid in...

FROM PAGE 01
targeted an Afghan hideout in Kabul and killed three prominent members of the militant group who were plotting attacks during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, which starts at sundown on Wednesday. The [Dahsh] members used the hideout to carry out attacks in the city and planned to target religious places and civilians during the upcoming month of Ramadan,' Mujahid said. The Taliban have taken across Afghanistan in mid-August 2021, seizing power as US and NATO forces were withdrawing from Afghanistan after 20 years of war. The international community has not recognized the Taliban government, wary of the harsh measures they have imposed since their takeover - including restricting rights and freedoms, especially for women and minorities.

True nature of DPRK IT hackers

• We are deeply concerned about malicious DPRK cyber activity and would like to provide your government with information on this threat so that you are able to better protect yourself against potential attacks. We look forward to working together on this important issue.

• The DPRK poses a significant and growing cyber threat to the global financial sector, remains a cyber espionage threat, and retains the ability to conduct destructive cyber operations – all of which threaten the cybersecurity, economic security, and national security of your country, our country, and the broader international community. No country is immune from DPRK cyber threats that target infrastructure globally.

• In fact, Pyongyang targets countries that have not yet built robust cyber defenses – in connection with numerous DPRK cyber-enabled heists on cryptocurrency exchanges, financial institutions, and blockchain technology companies around the world.

• We expect the DPRK to continue its extensive use of cyber operations to raise funds and to gather intelligence or carry out disruptive, destructive, or otherwise destabilizing cyber activity. The DPRK's techniques and tools may achieve a range of offensive effects with little or no warning, including distributed denial of service attacks, data deletion, social engineering, and deployment of ransomware.

• UN Security Council 1718 (DPRK) Sanctions Committee's Panel of Experts (POE) reported investigations into numerous reported instances of DPRK actors attacking financial institutions and cryptocurrency exchanges, including dozens of cases in Southeast Asia, Africa, and South America.

• Countries targeted by the DPRK include those which have maintained decades of friendly ties with the DPRK. Unfortunately, even these relationships did not deter DPRK cyber actors from attempting to steal hundreds of millions of U.S. dollars from their traditional friends and partners.

• The Panel reported extensive use on the DPRK's attempted violations of multiple UN Security Council resolutions – including resolutions 1718, 2094, and 2270 – through illicit cyber activities to illegally force the transfer of funds from financial institutions and cryptocurrency exchanges. The Panel also highlighted the DPRK's increasingly sophisticated tools and tactics. We caution you against underestimating the sophistication of Pyongyang's cyber army.

• These activities can generate significant funds for UN-designated DPRK entities, including those directly involved in the DPRK's UN-prohibited WMD and ballistic missile programs. The DPRK continues to use these stolen funds to further develop its prohibited programs.

• According to the Panel, the DPRK attempted to steal, through cyber means, as much as \$2 billion between 2015 and 2019, and to steal hundreds of millions of dollars since. Over the past several years, the Panel has reported on an increasing number of attacks against cryptocurrency exchanges and virtual asset service providers over traditional

What happens if I hire North Korean IT workers?



Undermines companies' reputation



Could entail possible legal consequences



Could violate relevant UN Security Council resolutions

Extra caution required!

For further information,

enter "ADVISORY ON THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY WORKERS" into any search engine.



All about North Korean IT workers

“These activities can generate significant funds for UN-designated DPRK entities, including those directly involved in the DPRK's UN-prohibited WMD and ballistic missile programs. The DPRK continues to use these stolen funds to further develop its prohibited programs”

infrastructure, and government agencies for Pyongyang's illicit cyber activities.

• The POE has also reported that the DPRK conducts cyber operations against defense industries around the world in an attempt to illicitly access sensitive military technologies in violation of UN resolutions as well as to exfiltrate proprietary information that could be sold for financial gain.

• This includes other countries' space research organizations, nuclear power plants, atomic energy research institutes, aerospace industries, and military targets.

• The POE noted that recently claimed DPRK advances in hypersonic ballistic missile capabilities may have been achieved through DPRK cyber actors stealing the technical information needed to develop new missile systems.

• We have also seen cases of the DPRK conducting cyber-enabled intrusions to steal intellectual property from pharmaceutical, chemical, energy, and information technology companies, as well as targeting the healthcare and public health sector with ransomware.

• Moreover, DPRK cyber actors have deployed spearphishing campaigns

against dozens of foreign government officials, including their UN representatives.

• In large part, the DPRK engages in illicit cyber activity because it is low cost, there are a wide range of targets available, it is easy for Pyongyang to deny its involvement in an operation, and there is low risk of reprisal.

• This illicit activity is ongoing – the DPRK continues to develop advanced tradecraft, deploy new malware, and engage in increasingly sophisticated social engineering campaigns to steal funds and engage in ransomware campaigns.

• We must all work together to regularly ensure our cyber defenses, detection, and response options are up-to-date and effective as possible. When we all harden our defenses and share information, we not only protect ourselves but also deny the DPRK the illicit funds it uses to develop its UN-prohibited weapons programs.

• It is vital for governments, network defenders, and the public to stay vigilant and to work together to mitigate the cyber threat posed by the DPRK. Given the DPRK's targeting of the private sector for many of its illicit cyber activities, the private sector has a vital role to play in ensuring that we are all better protected against this threat.

• We urge all countries to engage with their private sectors, especially financial, cryptocurrency, blockchain companies, and relevant industry associations to ensure industry is aware of the severity of the DPRK cyber threat and to take steps to better defend against Pyongyang's malicious cyber activities.

• We also encourage countries to review the relevant POE recommendations to Member States and ensure your government has appropriate regulations and policies in place to counter this threat. We would like to provide you with a copy of some of these recommendations.

• The U.S. government also releases technical advisories and information on DPRK cyber threats to help other governments, industry, and the public better protect themselves. This information is released via a website, <https://www.cisa.gov/uscert/northkorea>. We encourage relevant officials in your government to sign up to receive an alert whenever we post new information on this site.

• In addition, your government and private sector may find an April 2020 U.S. Government DPRK Threat Advisory helpful.

• The U.S. Department of the Treasury has also issued Sanctions Compliance Guidance for the Virtual Currency Industry which highlights important characteristics of anti-money laundering (AML), counter terrorism finance (CTF) and sanctions compliance program for the digital assets industry which may be helpful as you engage with your private sector about the North Korean threat.

• We may be able to offer your government and private sector stakeholders assistance in hardening your defenses against DPRK cyber threats. If you are interested in such assistance, please let us know.

IMF funding to restore Sri Lanka's Intl recognition

COLOMBO: Sri Lankan President Rajapaksa on Wednesday said the IMF Extended Fund Facility (EFF) will restore Sri Lanka's international recognition, ensure the country is not bankrupt and help banks regain international trust. He said that the receipt of the IMF Facility is a step towards building a better future for the youth and uplifting the country. The credit facility amounts to approximately \$3 billion U.S. dollars over four years, with the first tranche of \$333 million dollars to be received, he said. Additionally, the country is expecting about 7 billion dollars more in rapid credit support from other parties. Wickremesinghe told the lawmakers. The IMF EFF will create opportunities for low-interest credit, restore foreign investors' confidence, and lay the foundation for a strong new economy, he said. "We are now starting a new journey. We must introduce many economic reforms throughout the process," he said. Some of these reforms have already been proposed and implemented through the interim budget of 2022 and the budget for 2023, the president said. He added that the government aims to reduce the primary deficit to 2.3 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) by 2025 and increase revenue to 14 percent of the GDP by 2026. Wickremesinghe noted the standard corporate income tax rate has been raised to 30 percent, and sectoral tax holidays have been eliminated. —Agencies

North Korea fires multiple cruise missiles off its east coast

SEOUL: North Korea fired multiple cruise missiles off its east coast on Wednesday, South Korea's military said, the latest in a series of weapons tests as South Korea and the US forces conduct joint military exercises. The missiles were fired at around 10:15 a.m. (0115 GMT) from the North's South Hamgyong province, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said. It was not immediately clear how many projectiles were fired and exactly which type they were. The military was on high alert and South Korea and US intelligence authorities were analyzing details of the missiles, the JCS said. "We will successfully wrap up our Freedom Shield exercise as planned under firm combined defense posture," the military said in a statement. The drills are set to conclude 11 days after North Korea fired a short-range ballistic missile toward the sea off its east coast. The North has long bristled at exercises conducted by South Korea and US forces, saying they are preparation for an invasion of the North. South Korea and the United States deny that, saying instead, they have to prepare to defend against

Macron breaks silence in bid to defuse crisis

PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron is to make Wednesday his first public comments on the crisis sparked by his government forcing through a pensions overhaul, which has sparked violent protests and questions over his ability to bring about further change. Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne, acting on the president's instructions, last Thursday invoked an article in the constitution that adopted the contentious reform without a parliamentary vote. The government Monday narrowly survived a no-confidence motion but the uproar has descended into the highest domestic crisis of the second term for Macron, first elected in 2017 with pledges to radically reform France. Another day of national strikes and protests against the pension changes, in particular pushing back the minimum retirement age to 64 from 62, is planned for Thursday and garbage continues to pile up in the streets of Paris due to stoppages by refuse collectors. The tensions have also raised questions over the ability of France to host King Charles III of the UK when he arrives Sunday for the first foreign state visit of his reign. There were new clashes between protesters and security forces in central Paris late on Tuesday, in a repeat of scenes over the last days that have seen hundreds arrested and accusations of heavy-handed tactics by security forces. —Agencies

Pakistan-China's friendship shines at space exhibit

BEIJING: Pakistan-China's Friendship Shined at 30 Years of China's Manned Spaceflight Achievement Exhibition held in the West Hall of the National Museum of China, according to China Economic Net (CEN). It was the "Dreaming of the Universe and Asking the Sky: 30 Years of China's Manned Spaceflight Achievement." The exhibition features an impressive collection of items that highlight China's success in space exploration. Of particular interest is the commemorative flag on display, which celebrates the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Pakistan. This flag was carried into space by the Shenzhou-12 spacecraft on June 17, 2021, and spent three months orbiting the earth before returning to the earth. The collaboration began with Chinese assistance in the launch of Pakistan's first satellite, Badr-1. In 2019, Pakistan and China signed several space exploration agreements at the second BRI Forum, including one paving the way for Pakistan's first astronaut to go to space. These agreements also established a framework for joint ventures in space and the development of Sino-Pakistan space communities. Pakistan's space program over the years. "A Pakistani vlogger, Mahabz Abbasi, who was shooting a vlog at the exhibition, said several space exploration agreements at the second BRI Forum, including one paving the way for Pakistan's first astronaut to go to space. These agreements also established a framework for joint ventures in space and the development of Sino-Pakistan space communities. It is a fitting tribute to the significant contributions that China has made to

Texas legislature adopts two resolutions recognizing 'Pakistan Day'

WASHINGTON: The Texas House of Representatives has adopted two landmark resolutions recognizing 23rd March 2023 as 'Pakistan Day' and 29th March 2023 as 'Pakistan Day of Action at the State Capital', according to a press release issued by the Pakistan Consulate in Houston. The resolutions were submitted by two Pakistani-American politicians—Representative Suleman Lalani and Representative Salman Bhojani—who won the support of their fellow representatives in the Texas Assembly. Texas is the second largest state of the U.S., both in area as well as population. Introduced by Representative Suleman Lalani, Resolution 581 was adopted by the House on 20 March 2023 stated that Pakistan Day "provides the opportunity to recognize Lalani to congratulate him, according to the press release. He said the two lawmakers had made Pakistan proud and done a great service to strengthen Pak-US relations. The two resolutions, he said, would provide momentum to the efforts to promote people to people ties between Texas and Pakistan.—APP

Humanity has 'broken the water cycle': UN chief

NEW YORK: The future of humanity's "lifeline" – water – is under threat across the planet, the UN secretary-general warned Wednesday at the opening of the first major UN meeting on water resources in nearly a century. "We've broken the water cycle, destroyed ecosystems and contaminated groundwater," Antonio Guterres said at the three-day summit in New York, which gathers some 6,500 participants, including a dozen heads of state and government. "We are draining humanity's lifeblood through vampiric overconsumption and unsustainable use, and evaporating it through global heating," Guterres told the conference. A report by UN-Water and UNESCO released Tuesday warned of too little or too much water in some places and contaminated water in others – conditions that it said highlight the imminent risk of a global water crisis. "If nothing is done, it will be a business-as-usual scenario – it will keep on being business as usual, and 50 percent of the population of the world that does not have access to sanitation and roughly 2025 percent of the world will have access to safe water supply," report lead author Richard Connor told AFP. With the global population increasing every day, "in absolute numbers, there'll be more and more people that don't have access to these services," he said.—APP

Briefs

Over 100 FIRs registered against Imran, PTI

LAHORE: A record of the first information reports (FIR) registered before the Lahore High Court (LHC) on Wednesday revealed that Punjab Police, Islamabad police and the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) registered 120 FIRs against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chief Imran Khan and other party leaders...

Elahi sees gov't talks with IMF of 'no importance'

LAHORE: Former Punjab Chief Minister Chaudhry Fazal Elahi said on Wednesday that the government's negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) were of no importance...

Macron stands firm on pension bill as protests escalate

PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron stood firm on Wednesday when his cabinet would press on with plans to raise the pension age, rejecting calls for a U-turn in response to growing public anger...

INDEPENDENCE DAY OF MAURITIUS



ISLAMABAD: High Commissioner of Mauritius Rashidally Soobadar along with his colleague from the diplomatic corps cutting cake to celebrate the 55th Anniversary of the Republic of Mauritius.

Russia pounds Ukraine with drones, missiles after Xi visit

"Right now, residential areas where ordinary people and children live are being fired at," Zelensky wrote. "This must not become 'just another day' in Ukraine or anywhere else in world. World needs greater unity and determination to defeat Russian terror faster and protect lives"

ISLAMABAD: Russia blasted an apartment block in Ukraine with missiles on Wednesday after launching a swarm of drones at cities overnight, a deadly display of force following a solidarity visit by China's leader Xi Jinping...

Envoy lauds environmental protection efforts

ISLAMABAD: German ambassador to Pakistan Alfred Grams called on Minister for Economic Affairs Sartar Azam Sadiq here on Wednesday and discussed matters of mutual interest...

Sri Lanka leader warns hard times to follow IMF bailout

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's president warned Wednesday of more economic pain to come for the crisis-hit nation, with strict austerity measures needed to restore its ruined finances after an IMF bailout deal...

10 dead, 62 injured in KP after earthquake

ISLAMABAD: At least 10 people were dead and 62 injured in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a government official said, after a magnitude 6.5 earthquake with its epicentre in Afghanistan struck late on Tuesday...

President approves remission for prisoners

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday approved a remission for prisoners on the occasion of Pakistan Day annually observed on March 23...

Global water crisis could 'spiral out of control'

NEW YORK: The world is facing a looming global water crisis that threatens to "spiral out of control" as increased demand for water and the intensifying impacts of the climate crisis...

Advertisement for DINO VALLEY featuring a dinosaur illustration and text: '10 minutes Drive from The Monal Islamabad', 'DINOPARK | 35+ RIDES | CARNIVAL RESTAURANT | CAFES | FOOD COURTS'.