

Climate finance system required to tackle crisis

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change Sherry Rehman addresses a press conference at PIS media center. APP/SAK/ABB/SSH

"We need collective action as climate change cannot be tackled alone by one country or region." The minister said Pakistan was at the forefront of the most impacted countries due to climate change. She also added that international organisations and all countries had to find solutions together to combat climate change.



ISLAMABAD: Defence minister of Pakistan, Khawaja Asif along with Turkish ambassador witnessing photo exhibition during "18 March Chankakkale Victory and Martyrs' Day" and "Anniversary of Adoption of the National Anthem and Mehmet Akif Ersoy Memorial Day" ceremony which was organized in cooperation with Turkish embassy and Pak-Turk Maarif Int'l Schools. -DNA

PTI workers wont let govt harm Imran Khan: Majid



MUZAFFARABAD: Minister Finance, Inland Revenue & Cooperative Department of Government of Azad Jammu & Kashmir (GJAK) Abdul Mujib Khan has said that nobody can defeat a leader whose power comes from his people.

Welfare incentives for KP police to boost morale

DNA

PESHAWAR: Being the front-line force in fight against terrorism, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police have rendered great sacrifices for the protection of lives and properties of the people besides thwarting the nefarious designs of the inimical forces.

2,000 to 2021, an estimated 1,505 KP police officials including senior officers were martyred excluding the personnel of Khasadar and Levy Force. Ironically, the number of police officials reportedly martyred from 1971 to 2000 was only 248, which was very low as compared to the last two decades in the province.

Report on Islamic Social Finance launched at IPS

KHAYAM ABRAS

ISLAMABAD: Islamic social protection system fulfills multiple SDGs and serves as an excellent tool for building resilience and equilibrium in social and economic lives.



Almuzzaffar Khan, dean social sciences, Iqbalah International University, Dr. Salman Ahmad Shahid, director, Islamic Economics Project and principal investigator of the study, and Muhammad Mustafa Khan, technical advisor, GIZ. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Qibla Ayaz termed the introduction of Islamic social finance as a major milestone in the way of creating a Zakat-based welfare system for the masses of the country.

City Police foil narcotics smuggling attempt

PESHAWAR: Capital City Police have foiled a narcotics smuggling attempt. Police arrested him while checking near the motorway.

The accused was smuggling narcotics in a commuters' bus and on a top off, police arrested him while checking near the motorway. The arrested accused has confessed to narcotics smuggling during initial investigations. A formal FIA has been registered against the accused and further investigations are in progress.

Govt to remove concerns of AJK regarding census

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to the Prime Minister on Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan Affairs Qamar Zaman Kaira said that the federal government would make every effort to remove the concerns of the government and the people of Azad Kashmir regarding the ongoing census in AJK.

Pak, Australia discuss bilateral relations

ISLAMABAD: The Australian-Pakistan Senior Officials' Talks, held in Islamabad, Pakistan on 16 March 2023, reflected Australia's long-standing engagement with Pakistan, and its critical role in regional security and development.

US Embassy-funded PMIS training concludes

ISLAMABAD: The US Embassy-funded "Prison Management Information System" (PMIS) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has been successfully concluded. The 5-day PMIS training sessions were conducted for 84 prison staff members.

to the PMIS manual and technical modules that included barrack allocations, reallocations, barrack histories, management of the visitors, and check-in and check-out of inmates. Participants were trained in the court production process in which the production process in the jail is managed using the digital module.

certificates and congratulated the prison staff on their successful completion of the PMIS courses. He thanked INL for funding the initiative and praised the management at the Judicial Academy for facilitating the training. He also thanked the participants for their input and suggestions, which will help improve the system.

CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (E&M) Maintenance Division Tender Notice. Includes a table with columns for S. No, Name of work, NLT Cost, Earnest Money, Tender Cost, Date & Time of opening of tenders, and Date & Time of awarding of tenders. Also includes terms and conditions for the tender process.

Islamabad POST

Saturday, March 18, 2023

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 25



China's President Xi Jinping to visit Russia next week

Detailed News On Page-08

Pakistan future bright despite challenges

Detailed News On Page-08



Hamilton queasy about Jeddah GP year later

Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

First cargo of Russian crude oil in April

DNA



LAHORE: State Minister for Petroleum Dr. Musafik Malik has said Pakistan will receive first cargo of crude oil from Russia in April this year. In a television talk show, the state minister said the government had fulfilled '80 per cent to 90 per cent' of negotiations with Russia. He said commercial deal was the final stages, and by the month of March the entire commercial deal would be negotiated. "In April, we will give them the first shipping order. The first cargo of crude oil from Russia will arrive in by the end of April," Malik said the country would receive one-third of its crude oil imports from Russia at a concessional rate "the impact of which will be translated to the people." Regarding the latest price hike, the minister said the government pays dollars for oil, and at the moment the country is short of it.

'Pak can't compromise on nukes'

STAFF REPORT



RAWALPINDI: Awami Muslim League (AML) chief Shahid Afridi on Friday welcomed the statements made by the government that it could not compromise on country's nuclear assets despite hurdles to unlock the IMF programme. A day earlier, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar assured parliament that the government would not make any compromise on the nuclear and missile programme. He also added that the agreement with the IMF would be uploaded on the website of his ministry once it is signed. "Nation can sacrifice itself but cannot compromise on nuclear assets," the former interior minister said on Twitter. He said the government had filed an appeal seeking cancellation of his bail, adding that he was ready to go back to jail if the bail was revoked.

Holiday Notice

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

- Editor

- ### Inside...
- Climate finance system required to tackle crisis - Page 02
 - Alvi asks Mohiaddin to intensify awareness drive - Page 03
 - Pakistan's prosperity only possible through consensus - Page 04
 - Saudi Iranian détente potentially sparks paradigm shifts - Page 05
 - Belarus constitution Day, Pak Resolution Day celebrated - Page 06
 - Tarar urges all leaders to sit together for improving economy - Page 07
 - Kremlin aims to destroy jets given to Ukraine - Page 08

LHC grants Imran bail in nine cases

Five of the cases are registered in Islamabad and four in Lahore

IHC stops police from arresting Khan

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) Friday approved protective bail of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan in eight terrorism cases and one civil case - a total of nine - after he appeared before the court in person. The PTI chief had approached the LHC earlier in the day to seek protective bail in nine cases. Five of those cases are registered in Islamabad and four in Lahore. A two-member bench comprising Justice Tariq Saleem Sheikh and Justice Farooq Haidar conducted the hearing on bail pleas filed against the cases that are lodged under terrorism sections. For the five cases in Islamabad, the court granted bail to the PTI chief till March 24 and for the three cases in Lahore, Khan received bail for 10 days (March 27). Justice Sheikh also heard the bail pleas that Khan filed against the civil cases registered against him, in which he approved the PTI chief's protective bail till March 27. Hundreds of PTI supporters accompanied Khan when he visited the high court, while authorities had also allowed his bullet-proof vehicle to enter the court premises. At Khan's Zaman Park residence, which became a battleground for workers of the party man's thwarted bid to become his post.

Chinese bank deposits \$500m to Pakistan

Finance Minister says Chinese money to help boost reserves

IMF links tranche to Gulf States support

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Friday received \$500 million - the second disbursement of the \$1.3 billion facility - from Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC). Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Ishaq Dar announced the development on his Twitter handle. He wrote "State Bank of Pakistan has received today in its account from Chinese Bank ICBC \$500 million. It will share in the form of reserves of Pakistan. Islamabad (Lahore)". The second critical disbursement from the Chinese bank came after Pakistan completed the necessary documentation. Earlier this month, the Chinese lender had approved a rollover of a \$1.3 billion loan for Pakistan. Following the announcement, Chinese bank deposited \$500 million - first disbursement - on March 4 which helped the foreign exchange reserves surpass the \$4 billion mark.

Japan awards MEXT Research Scholarships to Pak students



ISLAMABAD: The Government of Japan has awarded MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan) Research Scholarships for Masters/Doctorate degrees to eleven (11) Pakistani students for academic year 2023-25 aiming to provide them with an opportunity to pursue higher studies in their respective fields at the prominent universities in Japan.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting with regards to Ramadan Package for Islamabad. - DNA

ICC issues arrest warrant for Putin

The decisions of the international criminal court have no meaning: Russia

NEWS DESK



THE HAGUE: The international criminal court in The Hague has issued arrest warrants for Vladimir Putin and his children's rights commissioner, Maria Alekseyevna Lova-Belova, for the "unlawful deportation" of Ukrainian children. The court's pre-trial judges assessed there were "reasonable grounds to believe that each suspect bears responsibility for the war crime of unlawful deportation of population and that of unlawful transfer of population from occupied areas."

PTI seeks date, venue for talks with the govt

Fawad's proposal came a day after PM Shehbaz urged talks

SHUAAAT HAZMA

ISLAMABAD: The PTI on Friday urged the coalition government to "give a date and venue" for a meeting that would bring together all political parties to the table - a move that is expected to rid the country of the ongoing political and economic crises. In a tweet, PTI leader Fawad Chaudhry said, "Azam Nagoor Tarar is making statements"

Maryam terms PTI as 'terrorist organisation'

Says Imran Khan announced a "revolt against the state institutions"

Punjab, KP Parliamentary Boards constituted

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Senior Vice President Maryam Nawaz said Friday that the government should deal with the Imran Khan-led Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) as a terrorist organisation - and the time had passed to sit and negotiate with the deposed prime minister. In a hard-hitting press conference in Lahore, the PML-N leader lashed out at the former premier for creating a "scene" at his Zaman Park residence, saying Khan announced a "revolt against the state institutions". On Tuesday, PTI workers and police clashed for nearly 24 hours as Zaman Park virtually became a battleground, with the law enforcers trying to get through supporters and arrest Khan, who was voted out as the prime minister in the National Assembly last April. Scores of people - including

Continued on Page 06



10 minutes Drive from The Monal Islamabad

DINO VALLEY

DINO PARK | 35+ RIDES | CARNIVAL RESTAURANT
CAFES | FOOD CARTS

www.dinovalley.pk | 03002279191 | 03463357994 | 03007195977 | @dinovalleygh

Continued on Page 06

Climate finance system required to tackle crisis

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change Sherry Rehman addresses a press conference at PIS media center. APP/SAKARB/SSI
ISLAMABAD, Mar 17 (APP): Federal Minister for Climate Change, Senator Sherry Rehman on Friday said that climate change was rapidly changing its scale and impact with every passing year that demanded a serious reset in the climate finance system to tackle the 21st century crisis of environmental degradation. In her keynote opening remarks at the launch of the World Bank Pakistan Country Climate and Development Report highlighting the country's vulnerabilities due to climate change and opportunities in shifting its development and policy paradigm to address climate mitigation and adaptation for achieving sustainable development, the minister said the effects of climate change have had a severe impact on Pakistan. Senator Rehman said climate change and development were common problems of the world, whereas the environment was changing faster than planned. She said that global emissions continued to rise at a massive rate today, adding,

"We need collective action as climate change cannot be tackled alone by one country or region." The minister said Pakistan was at the forefront of the most impacted countries due to climate change. She also added that international organisations and all countries had to find solutions together to combat climate change. "Climate change is happening faster than we think. Pakistan accounts for less than one per cent of carbon emissions," the minister said. The federal ministry was making climate change policy and giving it to the provinces whereas the provinces should make their own laws in this regard in view of their needs. The government had also launched the National Clean Air Policy, she added. The floods of 2022 created a great human tragedy. The government of Pakistan distributed an amount of Rs70 billion to the flood victims at Rs25,000 per family was given through Benazir Income Support Program, the Minister said. "We saw humanitarian crises during floods and other climate change events in 2022. We have many lessons to learn from last year's environmental disasters," Sherry Rehman said. The role of the Federal Ministry of Climate Change was to deliver national policies, and

legislation should not be confined with policies as the provinces had to make their own laws as per their needs. "Pakistan is facing a financial crisis, the World Bank has an important role to play in dealing with climate change finance. Pakistan needs \$348 billion for climate adaptation and mitigation by 2030. Even if Pakistan goes completely green, our emissions will not affect the global climate," Sherry Rehman said. The minister added that the country was not among the big carbon emissions emitters, yet it did not have the world's attention. The World Bank was created to eradicate poverty and ensure sustainable prosperity, she said, adding, "Today both the goals are challenged by climate change." She added that everyone in the world was scared by the speed of changing climate change. "Genova conference was a great success, but when funding comes, another disaster on the ground could hit. I urge the World Bank and other financial institutions to reconsider the eco-finance system," Sherry Rehman ended. Country Director for Pakistan, World Bank, Najj Benhassine, SAPM Muhammad Jehanzeb Khan, and others also addressed the Report launching ceremony.



ISLAMABAD: Defence minister of Pakistan, Khawaja Asif along with Turkish ambassador witnessing photo exhibition during "18 March Canakkale Victory and Martyrs' Day" and "Anniversary of Adoption of the National Anthem and Mehmet Akif Ersoy Memorial Day" ceremony which was organized in cooperation with Turkish embassy and Pak-Turk Maarif Int'l Schools. -DNA

PTI workers wont let govt harm Imran Khan: Majid



MUZAFFARABAD: Minister Finance, Inland Revenue & Cooperative Department of Government of Azad Jammu & Kashmir (GoAJK) Abdul Mujid Khan has said that nobody can defeat a leader whose power comes from his people. The Minister said that Imran Khan is the most popular and beloved leader of people of Pakistan as well as Azad Kashmir, and he will return soon as the premier of the country. Majid Khan said that the corrupt government has made dozens of bogus cases against Imran Khan but we expect justice from courts. Abdul Mujid Khan lauded the bravery of PTI workers for thwarting police attempts in Lahore. The PTI leader said that the party is strong and united and will thwart any attempt to push it to the wall. Abdul Mujid Khan said that party workers are the true power of PTI which cannot be defeated. He said that the elected government of PTI was removed unconstitutionally. He said that if speaking for rights was rebellion then Imran Khan and PTI had done that. The AJK minister also said that Imran Khan was attacked and received bullets for fighting for freedom from the corrupt mafia. -DNA

Welfare incentives for KP police to boost morale

DNA

PESHAWAR: Being the front-line force in fight against terrorism, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police have rendered great sacrifices for the protection of lives and properties of the people besides thwarting the nefarious designs of the inimical forces. "For years, the KP police, being the front line force, remained the prime target of suicide attacks, ambushes, kidnapping and targeted killings. The recent deadly terrorist attack on Malik Saad Shahood police line at Peshawar on January 30 last was one of such horrific terror assaults made in a bid to shatter the morale of KP police," said Spdt Akhtar Ali Shah, former IGP KP while talking to a state run news agency on Friday. However, he said the KP police stand more determined, focused and in high morale to stand out terrorism and extremism from the province. From

their professional capacity necessary for complete eradication of terrorism. The CTD spokesman told that 11 wanted terrorists belonging to banned Tahrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) were arrested from Peshawar, Mardan, Charsadda and Khyber districts. He said three terrorists wanted by the government in serious cases were also apprehended and shifted for interrogation. To provide relief to the police force, Inspector General Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Akhtar Hayat Khan Gandapur on Friday announced a mega relief and welfare package for the police cops and their families. Under the landmark package, the IGP in a video message said, the monthly income of the widows of all those policemen, who served below ten years service, have been increased from Rs 7,000 to Rs 25,000 while constable's burial charges were enhanced from Rs 30,000 to Rs 50,000. -DNA

Report on Islamic Social Finance launched at IPS

KHAYAM ABBAS

ISLAMABAD: Islamic social protection system fulfills multiple SDGs and serves as an excellent tool for building resilience and equilibrium in social and economic lives. For that, effective reforms at the legislative, constitutional, and operational levels are needed to tap the potential of Islamic finance options. This was stated at an event organized on Friday to launch a landmark report, "Islamic Social Finance for Social Protection in Pakistan", based on research conducted by the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), Islamabad in collaboration with Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. The session, presided by Prof Dr. Qibla Ayaz, chairman, Council of Islamic Ideology (CII), was addressed by the guest of honor by Muhammad Arshad, CEO, Prime Minister's Health Program, Khalid Rahman, chairman, IPS, Dr.



Ahmadzafar Khan, dean social sciences, Ripiah International University, Dr. Salman Ahmad Shahid, director, Islamic Economics Project and principal investigator of the study, and Muhammad Mustafa Khan, technical advisor, GIZ. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Qibla Ayaz termed the transition of the government to the success of the welfare people in government institutions and capacity as the major hurdle in the way of creating a Zakat-based welfare system of Islamic Ideology (CII), was addressed by the guest of honor by Muhammad Arshad, CEO, Prime Minister's Health Program, Khalid Rahman, chairman, IPS, Dr.

City Police foil narcotics smuggling attempt

PESHAWAR: Capital City

PESHAWAR: Capital City Police have foiled a narcotics smuggling attempt to Punjab and arrested an accused after recovery of six kilograms of quality heroin powder from his possession on Friday. According to Station House Officer (SHO) Chamkani, Iftikhar Khan, the accused Ashraf Aroof, a resident of Peshawar and member of an organized narcotics smugglers gang.

The accused was smuggling narcotics in a commuters' bus and on a tip off, police arrested him while checking near the motorway. The arrested accused has confessed to narcotics smuggling during initial investigations. A formal FIA has been registered against the accused and further investigations are in progress. In another incident, Mathan Police have also arrested three alleged narcotics peddlers. The accused identified as Rahim Bakhsid, Shehryar and Akhtar Khan are residents of Peshawar and involved in the heinous crime, ice drug and narcotics peddling. Police have recovered two kilograms of hashish and ice drug worth thousands of rupees. Formal cases have been registered against the accused and initiated investigations against them. -APP

Govt to remove concerns of AJK regarding census

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to the Prime Minister on Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan Affairs Qamar Zaman Kaira said that the federal government would make every effort to remove the concerns of the government and the people of Azad Kashmir regarding the ongoing census in AJK. He was presiding over a meeting of the committee constituted by the Speaker of Azad Kashmir Legislative Assembly, said a press release issued here Friday. The meeting was also attended by Azad Kashmir Law Minister Fabeem Rabbani, Members of Legislative Assembly Ahmad Raza Qadir, Ali Khan, Faisal Rabbore and high officials of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Interior and Bureau of Statistics. The Adviser said that the region of Azad Kashmir is of utmost importance for Pakistan and Prime Minister of Pakistan Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif said that all matters of Azad Kashmir should be resolved on a priority basis. Azad Kashmir Minister Law Fabeem Rabbani and other members of the committee informed the participants of the meeting about their concerns regarding citizenship, language and residence in the ongoing census in Azad Kashmir and said that Azad Kashmir would be affected by the ambiguity and reservations in the ongoing census in Azad Kashmir. -APP

Pak, Australia discuss bilateral relations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Australia-Pakistan Senior Officials' Talks, held in Islamabad, Pakistan on 16 March 2023, reflected Australia's long-standing engagement with Pakistan, and its critical role in regional security and development. Mr Gary Cowan, First Assistant Secretary, North and South Asia Division, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), led the multi-agency Australian delegation. Ambassador Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, Additional Secretary Asia & Pacific, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, led the Pakistan delegation.

Discussions covered international and regional developments including the situation in Afghanistan, terrorism, transnational crime, human rights, development cooperation, and climate change. Australia outlined its approach to the QUAD and AUKUS, including the positive role they can play in regional security and stability, and acknowledged Pakistan's call for more international assistance for the Afghan people. Australia and Pakistan also maintained our ongoing dialogue on economic collaboration at the ninth meeting of the Australia Pakistan Joint

US Embassy-funded PMIS training concludes

ISLAMABAD: The US Embassy-funded "Prison Management Information System" (PMIS) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has been successfully concluded. The 5-day PMIS training sessions were conducted for 84 prison staff members, including seven women participants at the Prison Training Academy in Haripur Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The US Embassy's International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Office (INLEO), with UNODC's technical support, aims to equip 40 prison facilities with computer networking in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Merged districts. The project also includes the provision of IT equipment, the development of PMIS, and training on the operation and management of PMIS for prison staff members. Through the PMIS training, participants were introduced

to the PMIS manual and technical modules that included barrack allocations, reallocations, barrack history, management of the visitors, and check-in and check-out of inmates. Participants were trained in the court production process in the jail is managed using the digital module. Hospital and medical management modules addressed prescriptions in OPD, hospital admissions, and adding, transferring, and dispensing medicine. The training concluded with an overview of how efficiently



certificates and congratulated the prison staff on their successful completion of the PMIS courses. He thanked INLEO for funding the initiative and praised the management at the Judicial Academy for facilitating the training. He concluded with the participants for their input and suggestions, which will help improve the system. The training staff included Saadat Hassan, Inspector General Prisons, Hashmat Ullah, Additional Inspector General Prisons, Najam Abbasi, Superintendent Jail, construction and the security ministerial and technical staff from the prison health department. The trainees expressed their appreciation for the PMIS course training and highlighted the need for future training that provides opportunities to enhance PMIS skills and build further knowledge of prison operations. -DNA

MURREE BREWERY

Open House for Diplomatic Missions

Murree Brewery Company Limited located in Rawalpindi is an icon reflecting the past and the present history of the subcontinent. Murree Brewery Company is pleased to invite friends from diplomatic missions to visit us and share the experience of our efforts towards keeping it afloat for over 160 years of operation. We cordially invite diplomatic missions to visit us on any Saturday from 10 am to 1:30 pm to enjoy our hospitality and our products tasting. However, since, we are located in the Red Zone / Prohibited area and it will be mandatory to obtain No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs well in advance of the intended visit date. We look forward to welcoming you all soon. For further information please contact the following. Maj (r) Sabih Ur Rehman Mobile: 0300 8553342

National Days and Armed Forces Days

MARCH

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



Hotels & Restaurants

Serena Hotel.....111 133 133
 Marriott.....051-2826121
 Monal.....0334-5421812



Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

Rescue (Police).....15
 Bomb Disposal.....15
 Fire Services Rawalpindi/Islamabad.....112 & 16
 Emergency Ambulance.....1122
 & Rescue Services.....4451123
 Motorway Police.....9206944
 Motorway Police-9270601-20
 Women Police Stations Islamabad.....9222594
 Rawalpindi.....9270601-20



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115
 PIA Flight Info.....114
 PIA Cargo.....9280979
 Railway Enquiry.....117
 Railway Exchange 9270831-5
 WASA Rawalpindi.....5554849
 CAA.....9281002



Hospitals

CMH.....5611111
 MHL.....5611116
 Cant Hospital.....9270907-11
 DHQ.....5556311-4
 BSH.....9290301-7
 Holy Family.....9290322-7
 PIMS.....9291170-79
 Polyclinic.....9218306-09
 Sids International 4603066



Departments

CDA.....9221334-43
 CDA.....9208301-04
 Met Office.....9250360-6
 RDA.....5555864
 TMA.....5770886
 Contentment Board 9270153-3



Islamabad Metropolitan

Corporation.....9209224
 Potokar Town.....9209224
 Rawal Town.....5773343



Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Alvi asks Mohtasib to intensify awareness drive

The president appreciated the Mohtasib for its excellent performance in improving service delivery and the rule of law in the country and assured the Federal Ombudsman of his full support in further strengthening the institution and enhancing its stature as a premier institution of administrative accountability

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Friday asked the Wafaqi Mohtasib to intensify its awareness campaign to inform the people about its role in the provision of speedy and cost-effective justice against the maladministration of federal government organizations.

The president, talking to the Wafaqi Mohtasib (WM) of Pakistan, Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi, who called on him and presented the Annual Report-2022 of the institution, emphasized the need for strengthening the capacity of the Federal Ombudsman and enhancing its reach to the farflung areas of the country to address the grievances of the people at their doorsteps.

He said that people suffering from the excesses and injustices at the hands of the government's functionaries needed to be provided immediate relief.

Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi apprised the president about the roles and achievements of the Federal Ombudsman in providing justice to the people against the maladministration of government organizations during the year 2022.

He informed the president that his institution received an unprecedented 164,174 complaints in 2022 as compared to 110,388 in 2021. Wafaqi Mohtasib disposed of 157,770 complaints in 2022 as compared to 106,732 complaints in 2021 which was an increase of 50%.

He said that the phenomenal growth in



the number of complaints and swift disposal of cases showed that the people trusted the institution of Mohtasib that was providing them speedy and cost-effective justice.

The Mohtasib highlighted that one-window facilitation desks had been established at all international airports in Pakistan to address the grievances of Overseas Pakistanis.

He said that 137,647 overseas Pakistanis

had been facilitated by the concerned agencies of the government, including NADRA, Passport Office, OPF etc during 2022.

He said that the Mohtasib had extended its outreach to the farflung districts by establishing its offices in Mirpur Khas, Khuzdar and Swat as well as the former tribal areas of Kurram and South Waziristan to provide speedy relief to the complainants of those areas.

The federal ombudsman updated the president on his special initiatives regarding Informal Resolution of Disputes (IRD) and Khuli Katchehris for ensuring better service delivery to the general public. The complaints were also being heard online when requested by the complainants to provide them justice at their doorstep, he added.

The Wafaqi Mohtasib stated that a 97% increase was recorded in receipt of online complaints. He underlined that the Ombudsman wanted to further enhance its outreach and strengthen its capacity but was facing financial difficulties.

He also apprised the president that under the Integrated Complaint Resolution (ICR) System, the Mohtasib had integrated 183 different agencies of the federal government for facilitating the quick disposal of complaints.

Underlining the need for providing quick and cost-just justice to the common man, President Alvi asked the Mohtasib to increase its outreach using modern ICT tools and create awareness through media about its functions and services.

The president appreciated the Mohtasib for its excellent performance in improving service delivery and the rule of law in the country and assured the Federal Ombudsman of his full support in further strengthening the institution and enhancing its stature as a premier institution of administrative accountability.—APP

Senate reaffirms commitment to uphold constitution, values

ISLAMABAD: The Senate on Friday approved a unanimous resolution reaffirming its commitment to upholding the Constitution and promoting democratic values, federalism, tolerance and constitutionalism in the country, as envisaged by the father of the nation, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

The resolution was moved by Senator Mian Raza Rabbani on the request of Chairman Senate Saifur Saif and Leader of the House Senator Ishtiaq Dar on the 3rd and last day of the special commemorative session of the Senate

held in connection with its Golden Jubilee. The House pledged to continue its efforts in protecting the rights of the provinces and marginalised communities, promoting gender equality, and strengthening the democratic process in Pakistan.

It called for promoting constructive dialogue and debate on issues of national importance and providing policy guidelines to the government for implementation. The resolution called upon civil society, academia, youth, women and the media to provide feedback on the working of the parliament with a

view to making it more effective, transparent, open and a repository of people's trust.

The Upper House expressed optimism and confidence that the celebration and commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Senate would strengthen its commitment and resolve towards fulfilling the ideals of provincial autonomy, federalism and aspirations of the people of Pakistan.

The lawmakers acknowledged the importance of their hard work in strengthening and running the business of the House in an amicable manner.—APP

Weekly inflation up by 0.96 percent

ISLAMABAD: The weekly inflation, measured by Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 0.96 percent for the combined consumption group during the week ended on March 16, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday.

The SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 246.22 points as compared to 243.87 points during the past week, according to PBS data. As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 45.64 percent.

The weekly SPI with the base year 2015=100 is covering 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups. The SPI for the lowest consumption group up to Rs17,732 witnessed a 0.59 percent increase and went up to 250.37 points from last week's 248.90 points.

Meanwhile, the SPI for the consumption group for all expenditure groups, the SPI for the lowest consumption group up to Rs17,732 witnessed an increase of 0.66 percent, 0.78 percent, 0.83 percent, and 1.40 percent respectively.

During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 28 (54.90%) items increased, 11 (21.57%) items decreased and 12 (23.53%) items remained stable.

The items that recorded an increase in their average prices on a week-on-week (WoW) basis included tomatoes (8.06%), tea packet (9.25%), potatoes (4.52%), bananas (4.00%), sugar (2.70%), wheat flour (2.40%), cooking oil 5 litre (1.20%) and vegetable ghee 2.5 kg (1.16%), lawn (5.77%), diesel (4.55%), shirting (2.80%) and petrol (1.84%).

The items which recorded a decrease in their average prices on a week-on-week (WoW) included onions (15.91%), chicken (5.97%), garlic (5.73%), pulse Masoor (2.27%), eggs (2.26%), LPG (1.90%), vegetables (1.84%), gas charges for 43 (108.38%), diesel (102.84%), tea lipton (81.29%), petrol (81.17%), rice irri-679 (78.75%), rice basmati broken (78.10%), bananas (77.44%), eggs (72.19%), pulse moong (69.44%), wheat flour (56.27%) and bread (55.38%). The commodities which recorded a decrease in their average prices on a YoY basis included tomatoes (21.87%) and chillies powdered (7.42%).—APP



RAWALPINDI: Women heading towards their destination holding umbrella during rain in the city.—APP

Pakistan reports first polio case of year 2023

ISLAMABAD: Health officials on Friday confirmed the report of first wild polio case of current year 2023. According to spokesperson, Ministry of National Health Services, a three-year-old boy had been paralysed by the virus in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Meanwhile, National Polio Laboratory at the National Institute of Health (NIH) Islamabad confirmed the detection of Wild Poliovirus Type-1 (WPV1) as well as Vaccine Derived Poliovirus Type 3 (YDPV3) from the environmental samples collected from Dera Ismail Khan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Ghoski district of Sindh respectively. Giving the details of Wild Poliovirus Type-1 (WPV1) detection from the environmental sample collected from Dera Ismail Khan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the official said the environmental (sewage) sample was collected on 21st February 2023 from the Paro environmental sample collection site. This is the first positive environmental (sewage) sample from the endemic zone of South KP this year, and the third positive environmental (sewage) sample from Pakistan at large in 2023.

Federal Cabinet approves Lawyers Protection Bill

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Cabinet on Friday approved the winding down of the SME Bank on the recommendation of the State Bank of Pakistan with the instructions to ensure protection of consumers' deposits.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, chairing the meeting of the Federal Cabinet, instructed that the protection of the customers' deposits should be ensured during the winding down process. It was decided that all of the bank customers would be paid Rs 5.567 billion, in the first phase.

The Cabinet also approved the Lawyers Protection Bill 2023 for its onward tabling before the Parliament, a PM Office press release

said. The Prime Minister said that the lawyers had played a key role in the constitutional evolution of Pakistan. He said approval for the support price of Rs 8500 per 40 kilograms of cotton has also been granted to make the crop profitable for the growers.

On the Finance Ministry's recommendation, the Federal Cabinet granted ex post facto approval to 15 bilateral and two multilateral MoUs of the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan with different countries and international institutions.

The Cabinet approved the constitution of an inquiry committee under the Additional Deputy Commissioner for the extradition of a citizen Muhammad Waseem, son of Muhammad Aslam to Saudi Arabia under the Extradition Act 1972.

Muhammad Waseem Aslam is wanted by the Saudi government in a murder case. An agreement for the extradition of criminals between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia already existed.

The body approved the reconstitution of the Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Parhadak Committee, on the recommendation of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony. The 13-member committee would consist of Sikh community representatives from all the provinces.

The committee would be mandated to take care of the Gurdwaras, facilitate Sikh pilgrims, and run other administrative matters. The Federal Cabinet endorsed the decisions of the Cabinet Committee on Legislative Cases, made in its meeting held on March 13, 2023, including the approval of the Lawyers Protection Bill 2023 which was drafted on the lawyer community's request for their protection.

The meeting also endorsed the decision of the Economic Co-ordinating Committee, made in the meetings on March 14 and 15, 2023 including the setting of Rs 8500 per kg as the support price of cotton.—APP

Delegation from 36th Mid-Career management course visits PTA

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of officers and faculty members from the 36th Mid-Career Management Course organized by National Institute of Management (NIM) Pakistan, visited Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) Headquarters in Islamabad.

The delegation was welcomed by Member Finance PTA, Mr. Muhammad Naveed along with other senior officers of the Authority. During the visit, the delegation was given a comprehensive presentation on the role and functioning of PTA with a particular focus on cyber security initiatives for the telecom sector, measures to resolve consumer issues, Device Identification Registration and Blocking System (DIRBS), an initiative undertaken to ensure that no counterfeit, fake or illegal device is operating on Pakistani telecom networks and introduced to the delegation.

General body meeting of ASA held at AIUO

ISLAMABAD: Vice Chancellor, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIUO), Prof. Dr Nasir Mahmood on Friday urged the authorities to provide a conducive environment for teaching and research.

Addressing the general body meeting of the Academic Staff Association (ASA) of AIUO, the VC said, "It is my desire to provide the best development opportunities of the university and to further improve the university system." He assured of working in close cooperation with the authorities to provide a conducive environment for teaching and research.

Speaking at the occasion, President ASA, Dr Moamirul Hashmi asked VC AIUO for the publication of an advertisement for promotions of faculty members and asked him to review the faculty development programme, faculty work load, research grant, and transport policy. The VC assured to get the approval of the Supreme Body (Executive Council) of the university for the immediate resolution of demands, while he instructed the ASA to review the ongoing projects and come up with a workable solution.—APP

OGRA discuss mechanism of exchange rate adjustment

ISLAMABAD: The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) has convened a meeting on March 21 to brief and align all the stakeholders with the prescribed format of the "Exchange Rate Mechanism" as devised and approved by the federal government.

According to a release issued here on Friday, OGRA invited the Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division), Directorate General (Oil), CEOs and CFOs of Oil Marketing Companies, including OCA and OMAP, to attend the scheduled meeting. Some concerns with regard to the exchange rate mechanism raised have already been responded by OGRA with the clarification that the calculations of exchange rate adjustments are done on the basis of data provided by PSO with the provision of payment documents, which are scrutinized by OGRA under Federal Government policy guidelines, wherein, the exchange rate adjustment impact is covered up to the maximum period of 60 days from the Bill of Lading of PSO and is limited to LC discharge date of PSO.—APP

Briefs

Two vehicles smuggling flour impounded

RAWALPINDI: The Food Department Rawalpindi and district police on Friday caught two vehicles with 1151 flour bags while four accused were sent behind the bars. According to a district administration spokesman, the food Department Rawalpindi and Potohar Division Police conducted raids in the Naseerabad area and rounded up Majid, Azam, Wahid and Ghafur on recovery of 1151 flour bags. He informed that the authorities of the food department along with Potohar Division Police conducted raids in their respective jurisdiction and rounded up the flour smugglers. He said that the accused were trying to illegally ship flour out of the Rawalpindi division. The Food Department Rawalpindi and district police on the directives of the authorities concerned were strictly monitoring all the exit points of Rawalpindi district to foil wheat and flour smuggling bids, he added.—APP

Police arrest six drug peddlers

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi police in an action against suspected drug peddlers and bootleggers here on Friday arrested six besides recovering over 4.8 kg charras and 95 litres liquor from their possession. A police spokesperson said that Rattamraal police held Shahid for having 48 litres liquor, Akhtar Munir was booked for carrying 27 litres liquor while Naseeb Rehman was netted for possessing 20 litres liquor. Naseerabad police in their operation managed to nab Imran for having 2260 grams charras. Separate cases have been registered against all accused while further investigations are underway. City Police Officer, Rawalpindi had directed the police officers to accelerate ongoing operations against drug peddlers, bootleggers and other lawbreakers, he added.—APP

IRSA releases 85,700 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 85,700 cusecs water from various rim stations with an inflow of 66,700 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1427.95 feet and was 29.95 feet higher than its dead level of 1398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam were recorded as 23,600 cusecs while outflow as 36,000 cusecs. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1098.45 feet, which was 48.45 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water were recorded as 22,600 cusecs.—APP

HEC kicks off Women leadership Programme

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) via its Higher Education Development in Pakistan (HEDP) concluded the 5th cohort of the Women Leadership Programme. The training sessions were conducted at the NAIIE regional centre in Karachi from March 13-17. Thirty future female leaders from all public sector universities across the Sindh province attended the training. Women from all disciplines – medical, engineering, humanities, and others participated. Most of these are mid-career professionals working as Heads of Departments, Registrar, and senior faculty members. This programme is a crucial step towards building the capacity of women leaders in the higher education sector of Pakistan. The programme kicked off under the leadership of Vice Chancellor Rawalpindi Women Univer-

Pakistan's prosperity only possible through consensus

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law and Justice, Senator Azam Nasser Tarar on Friday said in order to put the country back on track of prosperity and stability, it was incumbent upon all political parties to unite for a consensus-based roadmap. Addressing the third day of the golden jubilee celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the Senate, he said the occasion was a very prestigious moment but the absence of the opposition members was a painful thing. Tarar said the Senate chairman tried to convince the Opposition members and he also made effort to persuade them in his capacity but it was their own decision to not attend the special session. "It would have given a very strong and vibrant message if the Opposition members had participated in the Special session," he said. He added that the previous two sessions, held under the committee of the whole, gave a great opportunity to listen to people from different walks of life and reunite with veteran politicians and former senators. He congratulated the senate chairman and his team for holding the celebrations in a dignified and prestigious manner. "The institutions in order to maintain their ideology, their existence and self-accountability should celebrate such events and after pondering on their journey should decide their future course of action," the law minister said. He also extended gratitude to the entire Senate staff under the leadership of the Secretary Senate for managing the house proceedings, invites for the guests, and media teams' efforts for its publication. The minister thanked all the guests for presenting their suggestions on the floor of the house including veteran politicians, senators, members of civil society, the business community, lawyers, and bankers. It is time for us, the politicians, to think that the country's economic situation that always remained tumultuous due to unconstitutional intrusions namely The dictatorial regimes that derailed democracy. We will have to realise that losing our role and job we have paved

all its citizens. "As we move forward, we must remain keenly aware of the challenge that lie ahead and prepare and work accordingly," he said. He said the country had faced significant economic, social, and political hurdles that must be overcome "if we were to achieve our goals and fulfill our responsibilities to our great nation." He underlined that there was also a need to realise that the country had the talent, the vision, and the commitment to meet these challenges headon, and to build "a Pakistan that is stronger, more stable and prosperous". "On behalf of the Senate of Pakistan, I extend my warmest thanks to all of our distinguished guests and Members for their presence here today, and for sharing their valuable views with us." He hoped that the collective wisdom of the guest speakers as well as former and present Members would contribute to the advancement of the shared goals and aspirations towards strengthening parliamentary democracy. The chairman also presented a commemorative medalion and



the way for the unconstitutional forces to permeate into the system that should have to be condemned," he added. Earlier, in his opening remarks, Chairman Senate, Muhammad Saifur Rahman said it was his great pleasure to welcome all to the third day of the special commemorative session convened to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the Senate of Pakistan. "Over the past two days, we have had the privilege of reflecting upon the achievements of the Senate over the past fifty years. Today, we renew our resolve for a better future towards building a better, brighter, and more prosperous Pakistan for

to meet these challenges headon, and to build "a Pakistan that is stronger, more stable and prosperous". "On behalf of the Senate of Pakistan, I extend my warmest thanks to all of our distinguished guests and Members for their presence here today, and for sharing their valuable views with us." He hoped that the collective wisdom of the guest speakers as well as former and present Members would contribute to the advancement of the shared goals and aspirations towards strengthening parliamentary democracy. The chairman also presented a commemorative medalion and

mentments to the Senators after their address. Senator Maula Bux Chaudhry said it was imperative to ensure equal rights and implementation of law for all to end injustice and inequalities in the system. Senator Manzoor Ahmed Kakar said there was a need to focus on the future of our nation and country the youth that constitutes 60% of our population. He added that if the youth was left ignored and not given opportunities then the goal to achieve development and prosperity would be elusive. Senator Palwasha Khan urged all political parties to put all differences aside and work for the progress and prosperity of the country. She said that it was unfortunate; Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf had signed an unrealistic agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Senator Muhammad Qasim Khan said that 1973 constitution unanimously passed by all the political parties had united the whole nation under one flag. Senator Sajid Mir said that decisions made by the Parliament must be implemented in the country.

USD 500 million under China's rollover facility ready

ISLAMABAD: USD 500 million under China's rollover facility is ready for State Bank of Pakistan, Gwadar Port reported on Friday. The documentation of the second disbursement of USD 500 million under China's rollover facility has been completed for release to the SBP. The disbursement was part of the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China's (ICBC) approved rollover facility of USD 1.3 billion which was earlier repaid by Pakistan to the bank in recent months. "Out of Chinese ICBC's approved rollover facility of USD 1.3 billion (which was earlier repaid by Pakistan to ICBC in recent months), documentation for second disbursement of USD 500 million has been completed by Finance Ministry for release of funds to the State Bank of Pakistan. The rollover facility was scheduled to be disbursed in three instalments, out of which the first one was disbursed during the first week of March 2023.

ANF recovers 13 kg drugs, arrests eight

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) recovered over 13 kg of drugs, and 350 heroin-filled capsules in six operations and arrested eight drug smugglers including two women, said an ANF headquarters spokesperson here on Friday. He informed that in an operation at Islamabad International Airport, ANF recovered 123 heroin-filled capsules from the possession of two Jeddah-bound passengers including a woman. In another raid at International Mail Office Rawalpindi, the ice drug which was soaked and absorbed into curtains was recovered. The parcel weighing 8.4 kg was booked for London. ANF in an operation near Islamabad Park Road managed to net two accused for possessing 60 kg charras. They were allegedly involved in supplying drugs in posh areas of Islamabad.—APP

Expert stresses awareness to manage 'chronic diseases'

ISLAMABAD: Expert on "World Sleep Day" stressed that poor sleep has been linked to an increased risk of chronic diseases like stress, diabetes, heart disease, and obesity. Talking to a private news channel, Sleep expert Dr. Mehrin Suleman said that poor sleep has been linked to an increased risk of chronic diseases like stress, diabetes, heart disease, and obesity. "Talking to a private news channel, Sleep expert Dr. Mehrin Suleman said that poor sleep has been linked to an increased risk of chronic diseases like stress, diabetes, heart disease, and obesity. "Every person needs to take care of body as a whole, and sleep is a keystone to that whole process," she said, adding, power naps are also short in duration help our body to conserve energy and boost productivity. She added that individuals who are on certain medications or health conditions might require slightly more than the normal sleep duration of sleep. Keeping a question, she explained that Idiopathic hypersomnia (IH) is a sleep disorder in which a patient needs more sleep hours than a normal person. It is estimated that IH may occur in around 20 out of every million people, she added. While commenting on common symptoms of idiopathic hypersomnia she said it is excessive daytime sleepiness, which may be so severe that a person finds it difficult or impossible to make it through the day without falling asleep.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Women posing for a picture on the occasion of the National Day reception of Lithuania.—DNA

Imran Khan has become an icon, says Nusrat

Responsible people should think about the integrity and unity of Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Nusrat Khan has said that today Pakistan is standing at an important crossroads in history. In a statement, Nusrat Khan said that the truth is that on one hand Imran Khan is expressing the sentiments of the people, while on the other hand not only the government but also powerful circles are lining up against PFI. Nusrat Khan said that there is no doubt that today Pakistan is facing the same situation as it was in 1971, the question is whether we have decided to harm the unity of Pakistan to fulfill the wishes of a few people. The PFI leader said that it is necessary that our responsible people should think about the integrity and unity of Pakistan and only Pakistan, otherwise the situation may become uncontrollable. Nusrat Khan said that there is only one solution to the political and economic problems facing the country at the moment and that is general elections.—DNA



Traffic jams playing havoc with Pindites

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi is one of the biggest and busiest cities of the country that has been experiencing an unprecedented rise in the number of vehicles on its roads in recent years and traffic snarls have become a common sight in the city. The factors contributing to the rising vehicles' number in Rawalpindi and the impact it is having on traffic flow in the city is becoming a serious headache for the residents and the civic agencies. One of the primary factors contributing to the rising vehicle population is the increasing urbanization as the city continues to expand - more and more people are moving in, leading to an increase in the number of vehicles on the roads. This trend is not unique to Rawalpindi,

as many cities across the world experience a similar phenomenon as they grow and develop. According to City Traffic Officer (CTO) Tamoor Khan, there was no doubt that population of vehicles was creating traffic snarls on the roads but the City Traffic Police were making all out efforts to maintain the flow of traffic. He pointed out that Marris Chowk and Liaquat Baid were the busiest spots on Murree Road that had been made signal free with the aim to provide relief to the motorists. He said that now the main traffic blockade was at Qasre-Shireen point near Committee Chowk underpass, leading to an increase in the number of vehicles on the roads. This trend is not unique to Rawalpindi,

as many cities across the world experience a similar phenomenon as they grow and develop. According to City Traffic Officer (CTO) Tamoor Khan, there was no doubt that population of vehicles was creating traffic snarls on the roads but the City Traffic Police were making all out efforts to maintain the flow of traffic. He pointed out that Marris Chowk and Liaquat Baid were the busiest spots on Murree Road that had been made signal free with the aim to provide relief to the motorists. He said that now the main traffic blockade was at Qasre-Shireen point near Committee Chowk underpass, leading to an increase in the number of vehicles on the roads. This trend is not unique to Rawalpindi,

as many cities across the world experience a similar phenomenon as they grow and develop. According to City Traffic Officer (CTO) Tamoor Khan, there was no doubt that population of vehicles was creating traffic snarls on the roads but the City Traffic Police were making all out efforts to maintain the flow of traffic. He pointed out that Marris Chowk and Liaquat Baid were the busiest spots on Murree Road that had been made signal free with the aim to provide relief to the motorists. He said that now the main traffic blockade was at Qasre-Shireen point near Committee Chowk underpass, leading to an increase in the number of vehicles on the roads. This trend is not unique to Rawalpindi,

MARCH 2023 Pakistan's Premier News & Diplomatic Affairs Magazine. Find us on: www.centrelife.com.pk www.dnanews.com.pk www.islamabadpost.com.pk @PostIslamabad @Editordnanews. A sister concern of Islamabad POST. 11# Block 18-A, Awan Plaza, G-8 Markez, Islamabad-Pakistan. Ph: 051-2261960, 051-2266165. YEAR IN REVIEW 2022.

Washington and TikTok

The Committee on Foreign Investment, part of the US Treasury Department, has reportedly threatened to ban TikTok in the United States, unless its owner, Beijing-based ByteDance, divests itself of the popular video-sharing app...

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily
Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti
Deputy Editor: Abid Raza
Member APNS / ABC Certified
Vol: 03 Issue: 193
Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com
Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-22661960
Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad



Xi's visit to Russia raises hopes of peace progress

That Chinese President Xi Jinping will pay a state visit to Russia from Monday to Wednesday has prompted many in the Western world, including the media, to speculate over the timing and reason of the visit. In a way, the hullabaloo over Xi's expected meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin shows the great importance the international community attaches to the visit...

Saudi Iranian détente potentially sparks paradigm shifts

Chinese mediation between Saudi Arabia and Iran potentially signals paradigm shifts in Middle Eastern diplomacy and alliances. The mediation suggests a more productive approach than that of the United States by seeking to manage rather than resolve conflicts based on principles enunciated by China in 2021...

The agreement has dampened Israeli and US hopes of a united Saudi-Emirati-Israeli front against Iran that could risk a military confrontation. Moreover, Saudi Arabia will likely have been fortified in its resolve to establish formal relations with the Jewish state only when there is a solution to the Palestinian problem. In a sign of the times, Saudi Arabia this week presented Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen with attending a UN World Tourism Organization conference in the kingdom by refusing to discuss security arrangements for the visit...

UAE, one-time allies who increasingly are becoming economic and political competitors. The cleavage has prompted the UAE to suddenly speed up the gradual normalisation of relations with Qatar, two years after the UAE in 2021 of the Emirati-Saudi diplomatic and economic boycott of the Gulf state because of its alleged ties to Islamists, including the Muslim Brotherhood. Unlike the UAE, however, the UAE has, in contrast to Saudi Arabia, been slow in injecting warmth into the normalisation. That appears to have changed. In the last week, the UAE reportedly withdrew its bid to host the 2026 World Bank and International Monetary Fund meeting and said it would support Qatar as a potential host instead...

Prominent British Muslims, whom conservative members of the Muslim community and other conservative groups accuse of having links to Islamist organisations, including the Brotherhood, earlier this month were invited to a two-day conference in London hosted by Mohammed al-Issa, the secretary general of the Muslim World League. The conservative critics took exception to an allegedly prominent role given at the conference for British and European Muslim leaders to the Muslim Council of Britain, an organisation that has been blacklisted for much of the past 14 years by successive British governments.

How Israel is affected by Saudi-Iranian rapprochement

It has been suggested that the deal with Iran is harmful to possible Saudi normalization with Israel, with the Biden administration culpable of so alienating the Kingdom that it chose the Chinese as mediators. That is partly true, but not wholly. As I said in my last column, China was chosen purely because Beijing has leverage over Iran, and this has nothing to do with the relationship with America. Moreover, the White House has said it was aware of the discussions

and consumption. Netanyahu also raised the issue in an interview with the Saudi media outlet Al Arabiya December last year. The appearance was paraded by some of Netanyahu's enthusiasts as a first (wrongly, since he had also given an interview to Al Arabiya in August). So if there's nothing new here, why am I writing about it? Two reasons: first, because the pact with Iran (assuming the regime in Tehran is serious) has great implications for Hamas, the Islamist group controlling Gaza, from being smuggled into the Strip. A widely respected British academic described the blacklisting as "a political decision from the rightwing" that lacked evidence. He said the allegations of Islamist connections were "off the mark" and that "the current Secretary General is a wholly different generation than that of the Brotherhood. The intellectual further noted that the government had reengaged with the Council for a period before again blackballing the group. The current secretary-general was basically a child when all of this happened but it is still being cobbered over the head with it. It's a double standard, no such rigor of past connections exists among other representative groups," the academic said. Since coming to office, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has converted the Muslim World League into the propagator of his autocratic form of Islam that is socially more liberal, politically repressive, and demands absolute obedience to the ruler. Once a Brotherhood stronghold, the League was a major global funder of erstwhile Saudi religious ultraconservatives for more than 60 years since its founding in 1962. Notwithstanding Mr Bin Salman's positioning, some say to the League's past workings, supporting members of the Brotherhood remain influential and on the organisation's payroll. "The old guard is still very much present," one source said. There is a bit of a schism in Saudi, and some of the younger anti-Brotherhood guard can't believe how the Muslim World League is operating," added another who follows the group closely. Saudi Arabia's late-aligned Al Arabiya television network reported from Cairo days before the London conference that exiled offspring of prominent Egyptian Muslim Brothers were recruiting members of the group in Europe and the United States. An article on the network's website critical of the Brotherhood warned the activists were recruiting among Arabs in the West. It asserted that they also sought to "infiltrate" human rights groups. A third source with close ties to the kingdom argued that "the question is whether the Muslim World League will be instructed to meet with the new Muslim Brotherhood generation in the West. They seem to say one thing to some people and something different to others."

amid the barrage of Saudi-related news since last Friday, a peculiar US media "exclusive" about the Kingdom's "price" for normalizing ties with Israel went unnoticed. Unsurprisingly, this "news" - I use the term loosely - was overshadowed by the groundbreaking Saudi-Iranian pact mediated by China. The so-called "price" isn't news because there's nothing new about it. More precisely described as ideas, they have been discussed since the era of Donald Trump, whose senior adviser and son-in-law Jared Kushner led efforts to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a senior Saudi official confirmed to Arab News that the latest leak of these terms did not come from the Kingdom, which means the source was probably a senior US adviser with ties to Israel or a national security role. I myself heard some of these Saudi "conditions" at a high-level briefing last year, where it was made clear that they could be discussed only AFTER a solution was found for the rights of Palestinians - which has always been the first condition for Saudi Arabia. The context is for the Kingdom to be treated in the same way as some of the countries that have peace treaties with Israel when it comes to rights and privileges. Issues such as the right to peaceful use of uranium, joining NATO in some capacity, and being named as a US strategic ally, could all be discussed after a Palestinian solution is found. Moreover, had editors at the Wall Street Journal and The New York Times - which carried the "news" - done a little research, they would have found that their "scoop" had already appeared in 24 in Israel last December and the Jerusalem Post this January. Understandably, for Israeli media, these stories were timely. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had just won reelection, having campaigned on making Saudi normalization a priority. Of course - as a senior Saudi official told me at the time - that element of Netanyahu's rhetoric was for internal Israeli campaigning

Briefs
LHC grants Imran bail in nine cases

FROM PAGE 01
arrest. Later, the situation was calm as the Islamabad High Court restricted police from arresting him in the Toshkhana case. Khan's counsel told the court that his client does not have the details of all the cases. In response, Justice Sheikh said that the LHC cannot give Khan blanket bail and it will only consider those cases against which the pleas have been filed. Khan intervened and said he was confused as numerous cases have been filed against him. "When I get bail in one case, another is there waiting for me." He added that an "unprecedented" attack was launched on his house. Justice Saleem told Khan that he should have cooperated with the system and asked the PTI chief to review his actions. Khan said that he wanted the case filed in the lower court against him to be shifted to another court as it was a "death trap". He said that he asked authorities for providing him with adequate security.

IHC stops police from...

FROM PAGE 01
that the homeric verification issue had been addressed. About the objections regarding the IHC's decision on the previous petition, he said that the court had referred the matter to the trial court. "We had asked the court to look into the undertaking issue," the chief justice said. He noted that everyone is equal before the law. "You want to appear before the court and give assurance in this regard?" he asked. At this, Khan's counsel requested the bench to suspend the arrest warrant so that the PTI chief could appear before the court. Justice Farooq warned the lawyer that there would be consequences if he doesn't fulfil the promise and contempt proceedings will be initiated.

Japan awards...

FROM PAGE 01
scholars not only to acquire education but also to learn Japanese culture and traditions. "I sincerely congratulate the young Pakistani recipients of Japan's MEKTI Research scholarship which is funded by the Government of Japan. You will embark on an educational and cultural journey to Japan. Be focused, return with strong knowledge and rich experiences, and become bridges of friendship between Japan and Pakistan," said the Charge d'Affaires. The Government of Japan's MEKTI Research Scholarships was launched in 1954. Since the first Pakistani student went to Japan on scholarship in 1963, up till now a large number of students from across Pakistan have benefited from this scholarship and have returned to Pakistan after obtaining their PhD/Master's degrees in Japan.

Maryam terms PTI...

FROM PAGE 01
police personnel and PTI workers - were injured in the process as the law enforcers fired teargas and party supporters resorted to throwing Molotov cocktails. Referring to the clashes outside Khan's residence, the PML-N chief organiser said that scenes at Zaman Park and the Kaucha area are similar - the Kaucha area is infamous for being a haven for notorious criminals, including high-profile kidnappers. Maryam also accused Khan of attacking the state in collaboration with the banned organisations. She further said that he was "launched" into the government at the behest of "external forces". Turning her guns towards the judiciary and the establishment, the scion of the Sharif family's political dynasty said that Justice (ret'd) Asif Saeed Khosa gave shamudo titles to PML-N members Nawaz Sharif, Khosa, the former Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP), had reportedly used terms of "Sicilian Mafia" and "The Godfather" while hearing the Panama Papers case involving the three-time prime minister and others.

Bearus constitution Day, Pak Resolution Day celebrated

They appreciated the efforts made by the Embassy of Pakistan in bringing the two cultures closer and hoped that such events would continue in the future. The Embassy of Pakistan is committed to promoting cultural and economic ties between the two countries and will continue to work towards strengthening the relationship between two countries



MINSK: To celebrate the Constitution Day of Belarus and the Pakistan Resolution Day, the Ambassador of Pakistan hosted an event for media personnel at the Embassy Residence on 16 March 2023. The event was attended by personnel from both radio and TV media, including BelteleRadio, Belarus 1 TV channel, Belarus 2 TV channel, ONT TV channel, BELTA news agency, and others. The purpose of the event was to celebrate the positive trajectory of bilateral relations between Pakistan and Belarus and to strengthen cultural ties between the two countries. During the event, a short documentary on Pakistan was featured, showcasing the rich history, culture, and natural beauty of the country. A quiz was also conducted to test the participants' knowledge of Pakistan, and the winners were awarded prizes. A few guests performed Belarusian and Urdu songs during the event, highlighting the beauty and diversity of the two cultures. Additionally, the guests also indulged in the recreation of Belarusian poetry along with its Urdu translation, providing a better understanding of the similarities and differences between the two languages. The guests were also offered select Pakistani cuisine, which included a variety of traditional dishes. During the event, the media representatives expressed their readiness to play their role in further cementing relations between the two countries. They appreciated the efforts made by the Embassy of Pakistan in bringing the two cultures closer and hoped that such events would continue in the future. The Embassy of Pakistan is committed to promoting cultural and economic ties between the two countries and will continue to work towards strengthening the relationship between two countries.

Indian Wells: Swiatek, Alcaraz reach semi-finals

INDIAN WELLS: World number one and [I want to] keep going." Alcaraz will face Italy's Janik Sinner for a place in the final, after the Italian overtook the defending champion by eight consecutive games en route to a comprehensive victory in California. In the men's event, Carlos Alcaraz beat Felix Auger-Aliassime as he needs to return to the world number one spot. The Spanish top seed, who must win his first Indian Wells title to replace Novak Djokovic at the top of the rankings, won 6-4 6-4. "Today, the goal was to stay there," Alcaraz said. "I knew that I was going to have my chances. Probably I played one of my best matches this season. I'm really happy."

defending champion Taylor Fritz 6-4 4-6 6-4. In the men's doubles, Britain's Neal Skidmore and Dutch partner Wesley Koolhof beat Jamie Murray and Michael Venus 6-3 6-3 to reach the semi-finals. They will meet Edouard Roger-Vasselin and Santiago Gonzalez in the last four after their 2-6 6-2 10-7 victory over Briton Lloyd Glasspool and partner Lloyd Harris. The winner of the French Open and US Opens last year, Swiatek will play Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina on Friday. Kazakhstan's Rybakina, who beat the Czech Republic's Karolina Muchova 7-6 (4) 2-6 6-4 in her quarter-final, knocked Swiatek out of Australian Open in January. Swiatek, who beat Briton Emma Raducanu in the fourth round, is looking to become just the second woman, after Martina Navratilova in 1990 and 1991, to win back-to-back titles at this tournament. -DNA

Hamilton queasy about Jeddah GP a year after attack

JEDDAH: Lewis Hamilton was wary about safety in this treacherous Saudi Arabian Grand Prix in Jeddah a year after a missile attack near the track. Yemeni rebels targeted an oil refinery near the Jeddah Street Circuit last year and the drivers were jolted by reporters on Thursday about their state of nerves. Last year's Grand Prix was punctuated by meetings involving drivers and officials from Formula One and the sport's ruling body, the International Motor Federation (FIA). The drivers said they had been told there was a ceasefire between Saudi Arabia and Yemeni rebels now. Most drivers said Formula One had made progress in improving security but the wider spectre of Saudi Arabia's human rights record remained an issue that was mostly left aside. "I can't speak for the other 19 drivers, but in general I think we are happy and have no concerns with the changes put in place since last time for this year," said George Russell of Mercedes. "There were a lot of lessons to be learned and F1 has really stepped up and it's not just here in Saudi but at all the Grands Prix." Others including Haas's Kevin Magnussen, Red Bull's Sergio Perez, Aston Martin's Lance Stroll and McLaren's Lando Norris expressed total trust in the sport's administration - a feeling not shared by Mercedes' other driver; seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton. When asked about his feelings on returning to race in Saudi Arabia, he said: "Not much really to add - but all the opposite to everything they said," referring to Stroll and Perez who had spoken before him at a news conference. -Agencies

N.Korea threatens to use nuclear weapons

PYONGYANG: North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has again threatened to use nuclear weapons if the US and South Korea continue to show "open hostility" toward Pyongyang, state media said on Friday. "We will continue to make the US and South Korea, which show open hostility towards the DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) and frequently stage large-scale military drills in and around the Korean peninsula, find themselves being reckless," Kim said while witnessing the launch of a Hwasong-17 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) on Thursday, according to the Central Korean News Agency. Kim issued a strong warning to the US and South Korea for their ongoing joint military drills, saying North Korea can respond to nuclear weapons with nukes and instructed his strategic forces to maintain a rapid response posture to deal with any armed conflict or war. "The nuclear strategic forces of the DPRK will make perfect preparations for carrying out their important mission anytime," he added. According to state-run media, North Korea's leader "guided" the launch by the country's ICBM unit of the army. The ICBM Hwasong-17, launched at the Pyongyang International Airport, travelled up to a maximum altitude of 6.045km and flew a distance of 1,000.2 km for 4.151 before accurately landing on the preset area in the open waters off the East Sea of Korea, it said. The missile was launched on Thursday, just hours before South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol left for Tokyo, the first head of state to visit Japan since 2011. Tensions on the Korean Peninsula have risen further since the US and South Korea began their Freedom Shield military exercises on Monday, which will last at least 10 days. -DNA

Jhelum Chamber win match against Jhelum Bar

KAMRAN GUJJAR
JHELUM: Jhelum Chamber of Commerce and Industry won the friendly cricket match between Jhelum Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Jhelum District Bar Association only scored 137 runs. Mossadiq Kayani dismissed 4 players from the Jhelum Chamber of Commerce. Trophy was given to the winner and individual prizes were distributed to the runner-up team and among the players.



Movements in FIH Men's World Rankings

In the FIH Men's World Rankings, all teams that featured among the top-6 at the end of the FIH Men's World Cup 2023 have moved to different spots while still retaining their place inside the top-6

DNA
ISLAMABAD: The return of the FIH Hockey Pro League, after a two-month hiatus, has produced great hockey action and a string of upsets, leading to major shakeups in the world rankings. While there is plenty of movement at the top of the table in the men's rankings, including a new world no.1, the changes in women's rankings are minor, said a press release. In the FIH Men's World Rankings, all teams that featured among the top-6 at the end of the FIH Men's World Cup 2023 have moved to different spots while still retaining their place inside the top-6. Netherlands (2848) climbed up one spot to the top of the men's rankings on account of Germany dropping points to Australia and India in the Rourkela mini-tournament. Belgium (2846) are also beneficiary of Germany's loss climbing up one spot into second place. Germany (2732) managed to get one win out of four in the Rourkela mini-tournament and slip down to third in the world rankings, just ahead of India (2689) who had a stellar home run of 3 wins and one shut-out to climb two spots into fourth. Australia (2570) have made a tough start to their Pro League campaign with 2 wins from their first 8 games which drops them down one spot into fifth. India's charge up the rankings sees England (2536) lose ground as they slide from sixth in the world rankings. Argentina (2269) and Spain (2251) played in the mini-tournament in Hobart alongside Australia with both teams maintaining their rankings in seventh and eighth place respectively. Spain's three wins in the first three matches had seen them briefly climb up to the seventh spot, but a final match loss to Argentina saw the teams switch back. Korea (1942) and New Zealand (1899) round out the top ten, having not played an international match since the end of the World Cup. In the FIH Women's World Rankings, Argentina, Australia, China, Germany, New Zealand, and USA were in action in the Sydney, Wellington and Hobart mini-tournaments, with Argentina, Germany and New Zealand playing 4 matches, whereas Australia, China and USA played their first 8 matches of the 2022/23 Pro League season. Germany are the only team among those involved in the mini-tournaments to change positions on the world rankings table. Netherlands (3199) remain at the top of the table, continuing to maintain their huge lead over Argentina (2640) in second place. Australia (2546) have made a great start to their Pro League campaign with 3 wins, 4 draws (including 2 shut-out wins), and 1 loss in their opening 8 matches and retain the third spot in the world rankings. Just over 100 points separate teams between the fourth and seventh position, with Germany (2269) climbing up one spot into fourth ahead of England (2217) in fifth, Belgium (2175) in sixth and Spain (2157) in seventh. India (2086), New Zealand (1879) and China (1777) close out the top-10 positions with India last featuring in the Nations Cup where they finished as champions, securing a place in the FIH Hockey Pro League for the 2023/24 season. New Zealand have had a slow start to their pro league campaign winning 1 match at their home mini-tournament, with 2 shut-out losses and 1 outright loss. While the results allowed China to close in and reduce the points deficit, New Zealand maintained their ninth spot in world rankings over China.

PSL 8th Edition
FINAL
SUNDAY 07:00 PM
MARCH 19, 2023
Gaddafi Stadium,
Lahore, Pakistan

ICC issues arrest warrant for Putin

FROM PAGE 01
of Ukraine to the Russian Federation, in prejudice of Ukrainian children". The judges considered issuing secret warrants but decided that making them public could "contribute to the prevention of the further commission of crimes". Moscow has said it does not recognise the jurisdiction of the ICC. "The decisions of the international criminal court shall have no meaning for our country, including from a legal point of view," the foreign ministry spokeswoman, Maria Zakharova, said on her Telegram channel. "Russia is not a party to the Rome statute of the international criminal court and bears no obligations under it." Ukraine's presidential chief of staff, Andriy Bohdan, welcomed the news on social media, adding: "It just has begun." Wayne Jordash, a Kyiv-based international human rights lawyer and managing partner of Global Rights Compliance, agreed that the warrants for Putin and Lvova-Belova were likely to be the first of many.

IMF links tranche...

FROM PAGE 01
out Pakistan's struggling economy. An official, who spoke to the publication on the condition of anonymity, said Pakistan has the only option to wait and pray for getting confirmation from bilateral partners from the Gulf region. As per the report, the Fund was forced to put forth this condition on the negotiating table largely because representatives of these countries on the Executive Board had made commitments to the approval of the seventh and eighth reviews for providing financial assistance to Islamabad in different forms. These included additional deposits and investments. However, they failed to materialise their commitments despite several months passing in the current fiscal year. "In such a scenario, the IMF has placed the ball in Pakistan's court for securing 100% confirmation from bilateral partners before moving towards the signing of Staff Level Agreement (SLA)," sources confirmed to The News on Thursday. The Fund has informed Islamabad that its credibility would also be at stake if the staff-level agreement is finished and Pakistan fails to materialise its commitment from the bilateral partners, it might slide the country into the default zone.

PTI seeks date, venue...

FROM PAGE 01
every day to sit together and solve the issues. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has also asked for talks. "Take this action further than statements as well and give a date and venue for the [political] parties to meet. Imran Khan has already favoured dialogues," he added. His threat comes a day after PTI Chairman Imran Khan struck a conciliatory tone, saying he was ready to "talk to anyone" and "reach an agreement" for the sake of the country. "I will not shy away from any sacrifice for the sake of Pakistan's uplift, interest and democracy. In this regard, I am willing to talk to anyone and take every step towards it," the former premier had tweeted. Imran's tweet had come a day after Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had once again extended an olive branch to him on Tuesday, inviting him to a meeting date and venue while speaking outside the Lahore High Court later today. Addressing the premier and Federal Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar, he said: "You are making statements [to] you should move forward with a date and venue you decide and if there is an invitation, Asad Umar is here. You talk, we are ready for that."

Briefs
Spain police arrest 16 in olive heist

MADRID: Thieves operating in Las Vegas, a rural area near Spain's capital Madrid, managed to steal 17.5 tonnes of olives from local farms before being busted, police said. They confirmed 16 arrests.
"The Guardia Civil has arrested and investigated 21 people behind the theft of 17,500 kilograms of olives in the Las Vegas region," police said, indicating 16 had been arrested and five others investigated. In total, they robbed six farms in the Las Vegas area, a rural region that lies southeast of the Spanish capital. The investigation began in January when a farmer complained about the theft of 8,400 kilograms of olives from his land, with police making the link with other similar incidents in the area involving "significant quantities of olives."
In early February, they were alerted to the presence of five people in a vehicle carrying 140 kilograms of olives in broad daylight, but none of them could prove they were legally acquired. Investigators then raided two olive presses in the Toledo and Guadalajara regions that were allegedly receiving the stolen fruit, arresting those in charge. In total, investigators found documentation relating to the exchange of more than 17.5 tonnes of stolen olives and seized several tanks containing more than 6,000 litres of olive oil.—APP

Meloni meets with survivors of boat disaster

ROME: Italy's Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni met Thursday with some survivors and relatives of the victims of a migrant shipwreck off the coast of Calabria in February in which at least 86 people died.
Meloni, who has been harshly criticized for the failure of Italian authorities to intercept the boat and help the migrants safely to shore before the rescue took place on Feb. 26, received the survivors and their relatives at Chigi Palace. According to a statement from the office of the prime minister, Meloni expressed the government's closeness to the survivors and relatives and their commitment to satisfying their requests. She also said Italy is committed to continuing its diplomatic initiatives before the European Union, especially concerning the acceptance of asylum requests and family reunification in Germany and other European countries.—Agencies

Brazil's Lula to visit China late March

BEIJING: Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva will visit China at the end of the month, Beijing's foreign ministry said Friday.
"At the invitation of Chinese President Xi Jinping, President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of the Federative Republic of Brazil will visit China from March 26-31," foreign ministry spokesman Hua Chunying said in a statement. Speaking at a regular briefing following the announcement, another ministry spokesman, Wang Wubin, said the visit would "usher in a new era and a new future for China-Brazil relations at the head-of-state level."
"The talks, he said, would push the China-Brazil comprehensive strategic partnership to a new level, and make new contributions to the promotion of regional and global stability and prosperity." Lula, who led Latin America's largest economy twice between 2003 and 2010, is giving the first signs of wanting to break Brazil's international isolation after four years under far-right predecessor Jair Bolsonaro. The visit will be Lula's first to China since taking office in January. In his inauguration speech in Congress, he announced a new role for Brazil in the world by resuming "South American integration" and the reconstruction of the "high and wide dialogue with the United States, the European Community and China".—APP

Tarar urges politicians to sit together for economy

ISLAMABAD: The economy of Pakistan is facing serious challenges and it is high time that the leaders of all political parties should sit together and discuss ways and means to steer the economy out of crisis situations. This was said by Azam Nazeer Tarar, Federal Minister for Law and Justice while addressing a dinner reception hosted by Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) in honor of Office Bearers of Pakistan Bar Council, Islamabad Bar Council, Islamabad High Court Bar Association and Islamabad District Bar Association. Azam Nazeer Tarar said that the political polarization is not good for the country and stressed that all concerned should reconsider their approach to give a better economic future to the posterity. He said that for how long we will run our economy on foreign loans and urged that we should work hard to make Pakistan a self-reliant country. He said that the legal community in cooperation with the media and the business community have always played a positive role in difficult times and hopes that they must again join hands to put Pakistan on the path of better growth.
Speaking at the occasion, Ahsan Zaifur Bokhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and



Industry said that the burden of cases on courts was increasing and stressed that a mechanism of mediation councils should be promoted to settle out of court trade disputes. He said that the bar council and association should set up their desks in ICCI to facilitate the business community in prompt solution of trade disputes. He stressed that the government should focus on corporate policies to promote business activities, investment and exports. He said that ICCI is ready to work with bar councils and associations to serve the cause of business and

lawyers' communities and resolve their key issues. Haroon Rasheed, Vice Chairman, Pakistan Bar Council said that the business community is the backbone of the economy and close cooperation between business and lawyers' communities would produce beneficial results for the economy. Raja Ahsan Khan Abbasi, Vice Chairman, Islamabad Bar Council said that the current court control act should be made more balanced for landlords and tenants to provide quick justice in rent disputes. He stressed for a char-

ter of economy by all stakeholders to arrest the further downfall of the economy. Nawaz Malik, President, Islamabad High Court Bar Association said that a committee comprising representatives of ICCI and Bar Associations should be constituted to work for solving the issues of business and lawyers' communities. Qaiser Inam Gondal, President, Islamabad District Bar Association said that time and investment was important for the business community and the legal system should ensure prompt solution

of commercial disputes. He said that the government should make specific legislation for an efficient and effective alternate dispute resolution system of commercial disputes that would promote local and foreign investment in the development of the country and they should develop close cooperation to achieve their common goals that would help improve the economy.

Türkiye moves to ratify Finland's NATO bid

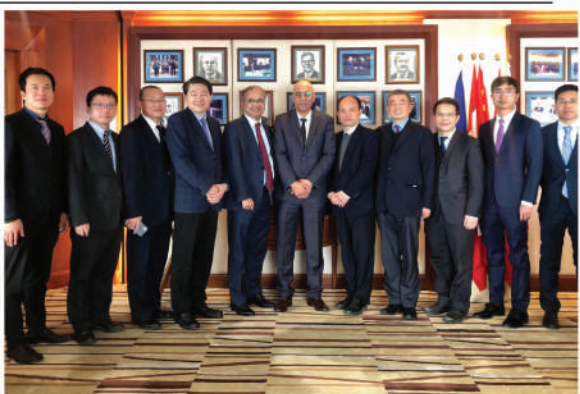
ANKARA: Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced on Friday that his country will kick off the ratification process of Finland's NATO membership. Speaking alongside Finnish President Sauli Niinistö, Erdogan said Finland has taken sincere and concrete steps to meet the security demands that Ankara set out in return for its support for the Nordic country's accession to the alliance.
"We've declared to launch the ratification process of Finland's NATO accession protocol in our parliament, following the sensitivity and progress it has shown in resolving our country's security concerns," said Erdogan. Niinistö, for his part, described the move as a "very important" development for his nation. Erdogan expressed his hope that the Turkish Parliament would ratify the application before the elections.
Finland and Sweden abandoned their historical military nonalignment policies and announced their bids to join the alliance in the face of Russia's invasion of Ukraine last year. Ankara requested that both countries address its security concerns in return for its support for the expansion, which requires the consensus of all 30 mem-

bers. Helsinki and Stockholm pledged to address these concerns under a NATO-brokered deal in June. Ankara argues that while Finland has fulfilled its promises, Sweden has still steps to take. Erdogan said Ankara's talks with Stockholm will continue. "How the process will progress will be directly dependent on the concrete steps that Sweden will take," said Erdogan. Turkey's extradition request for dozens of people stands out as the thorniest issue that is stalling the Swedish bid. Erdogan said Turkey submitted an extradition list for more than 210 people whom Ankara considers "terrorists." "Mr. Prime Minister is a good person but they haven't, couldn't give these people to us," said Erdogan, reiterating that this country wouldn't give the nod to the Swedish bid unless Stockholm takes a concrete step on this issue. The Turkish government also seeks asset freezes and activity restrictions against groups that Ankara considers terrorist organizations. Finland, which shares a more than 1,300-kilometer (800-mile) border with Russia, had previously announced that it would not join NATO without Sweden in solidarity with its western neighbor. Today's announcement marks a position shift for Helsinki. Expressing his hope for Stockholm's

bid, Niinistö said Finland's accession to NATO would "not be complete without Sweden." "We have such common interest having been neighbors and having the Baltic Sea area on our shore. So, I would like to see in Finland that we will meet the alliance of 32 members." The United States and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg have been pressing for a joint accession in a bid to welcome the Nordic countries during the alliance's upcoming summit in Vilnius on July 11-12. Following Turkey's ratification, Hungary will be the sole NATO member dragging its feet on Finland's membership bid. Budapest pledged to ratify the accession of both countries several times in the past week but is still postponing the process.
Finland and Sweden have both been official NATO partners since 1994 and have taken part in NATO missions since the Cold War. Finland has a smaller population than Sweden of 5.5 million, but it has a well-funded defence with a military force of 280,000 and another 870,000 reservists. Sweden has in recent decades spent less on defence, but has aimed to reach NATO's target of 2% of its economic output by 2026, with conscript numbers of 24,000 in 2025 and 50,000 in 2035.

Belarus jails top news site managers for 12 years

MOSCOW: Belarus on Friday handed long jail terms to senior staff at the country's largest independent news site, who were forced to shut their historic demonstrations-against strongman Alexander Lukashenko. The verdicts are the latest in a crackdown targeting journalists, opposition figures and activists who challenged Lukashenko's claim that he won a sixth presidential term in 2020. A court in Minsk sentenced the co-ordinator of the Tut.by portal, Marina Zolotova, 45, and general director Lyudmila Chelkina, 54, to 12 years behind bars. The women faced a raft of charges including tax evasion — which critics say is regularly used as a pretext to silence dissent — and "incitement to hatred". Exiled opposition leader Sviatlana Tikhanovskaya, who Lukashenko critics say won the presidential election, condemned the long jail terms. "The verdict for Marina Zolotova and Lyudmila Chelkina is another betrayal by the regime to kill honest journalism in Belarus," she said. Media watchdog Reporters Without Borders (RSF) called for the women to be released. "RSF is outraged by this iniquitous sentence, which is Lukashenko's revenge against those who inform the population," the Paris-based press campaign group said. The Belarusian Association of Journalists condemned the verdict as "cruel revenge for the truth". The proceedings are linked to massive rallies that broke out against Lukashenko after the August 2020 vote and the brutal crackdown he instigated against perceived critics of his nearly 30-year rule. In 2021, Belarus handed a 20-year prison term to Nobel Prize winner and rights activist Ales Bialiatski, drawing international outrage.—APP



BEIJING: Foreign Secretary Anand Mehdav Khan had an interactive session with representatives of leading Chinese think tanks. The participants offered valuable insights on the enhanced significance of Pak-China friendship in the evolving regional and international scenario.—DNA

British govt offers new pay deal to health workers

One in 10 healthcare workers quit their jobs in the 12 months prior to June last year, according to a study by Nuffield Trust, an independent health think tank in the UK

BIRMINGHAM: Trade unions representing Britain's National Health Service (NHS) workers managed to find common ground with the government Thursday in a major breakthrough aimed at bringing an end to long-running strikes over a pay dispute.
The deal gives a 5% pay rise for NHS staff, including nurses and ambulance workers. The new rates will start from April and a one-off payment of at least £1,655 (£2,804) will also be paid to top up the past year's pay award. The offer covers all NHS staff except doctors, who are on a different contract.
The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) and GMB unions said they

would recommend members accept the offer, but Unite the Union said they would not. However, the union said members ultimately make the final decision and further strikes will still be called while the offer is being considered by the members.
The government and NHS Staff Council, which includes the unions, released a joint statement, which said: "Both sides believe (the offer) represents a fair and reasonable settlement that acknowledges the dedication of NHS staff, while acknowledging the wider economic pressures currently facing the UK."
Tens of thousands of nurses, paramedics and other healthcare staff

went on strike during the Christmas festive season and again in January and February.
An offer of 3.5% from April had been originally suggested by the government, but during the talks, ministers agreed to increase this to 5%. The lowest paid will get even more.
While health workers find a way to solve their issues, the junior doctors in the country are also giving a new offer. Tens of thousands of junior doctors in England launched a three-day strike Monday in a dispute over pay and working conditions.
The British Medical Association (BMA), an association and trade union representing and negotiat-

ing on behalf of all doctors in the UK, has been campaigning for a pay rise for months in the country, which has been severely hit by a cost-of-living crisis.
Prior to the start of the industrial action, the BMA launched an advertising campaign saying junior doctors could earn more from the Russia-Ukraine war. Brexit and a deepening cost-of-living crisis, reports by unions, universities and independent think tanks showed.
"Pret a Manger has announced it will pay up to £14.10 (£17) per hour. A junior doctor makes just £14.09. Thanks to this government, you can make more serving coffee than saving patients. This week, junior doctors will take strike action so they are paid what they are worth,

it said. It said junior doctors in England have suffered a 26.1% real-term cut to their pay since 2008/09 and are campaigning for pay restoration.
One in 10 health care workers quit their jobs in the 12 months prior to June last year, according to a study by Nuffield Trust, an independent health think tank in the UK.—Agencies

No internal disagreement on Iran's FP

TEHRAN: Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian says official visits by top security officials to regional countries are made in the framework of a coordinated foreign policy, ensuring enemies that "there is no discord" in the Iranian diplomatic apparatus.
The foreign minister took to Twitter on Friday to respond to some rumors about recent visits by the secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council to certain regional states. Shakhshani's visit to the United Arab Emirates and Iraq are "within the framework of existing security ties" and "not a new phenomenon," wrote the diplomat.
Noting that a representative from the Foreign Ministry accompanies the advisor in the visits, Amir-Abdollahian said, "Foreign policy is coordinated."
"Everything is within the framework of the system, supervision by the president. Enemies should know there is no discord," Shakhshani has had a busy schedule in recent weeks for his visits to East and West Asia. Last week, he was in Beijing and led negotiations with Saudi Arabia which led to an agreement on the resumption of diplomatic relations between Tehran and Riyadh after seven years.—DNA

Montenegro's elections deepen political divides

PODGORICA: The upcoming presidential elections in Montenegro are set to be a make-or-buy moment for the country's political future. Ljubomir Filipović, an analyst and former deputy mayor of Budva, and Eurocrisis think tank founder, said that these presidential elections should not be taken lightly, despite the limited powers of the president in Montenegro. The country is split between two blocs — one that supports the country's pro-European stance and another that leans toward Russia. This divide has led to frequent protests in the past three years.

However, recent events in Montenegro have made these elections even more crucial. In August 2020, the Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS) was removed from power, and a coalition of nationalist and civic-minded parties formed a government, which has since been restructured twice. Although Montenegro declared its independence from Serbia in 2006, it still struggles to shake off Serbia's attempts to influence its politics, particularly through the Orthodox Church. Milo Đukanović, the incumbent president and DPS leader, played a pivotal role in organising the referendum for independence and has branded himself as the sole defender of Montenegro's sovereignty and pro-Western path.
In the presidential race, one of his opponents is Aleksandra Mandić from the euro-sceptic Democratic Front, a party that openly advocates for closer ties with Russia and Serbia.—APP

UK parliament passes trophy hunting law

LONDON: A planned law to ban the import of hunting trophies to Britain was on Friday passed by the UK parliament, ending criticism from conservationists in South Africa who have accused it of being counter-productive. The legislation, which aims to help protect endangered animals and has the backing of celebrities including model Kate Moss and football presenter Gary Lineker, was voted through by British lawmakers. It will now be scrutinised by the upper house of parliament before it can become law. Trophy hunting — where hunters pay sometimes thousands of dollars for licences to kill usually big game animals like elephants and lions — has long been controversial. Critics say shooting wild animals for fun is cruel, wasteful and pushes endangered species closer to extinction. Hunters often bring home parts of the animals like horns, skulls, skins, tusks or claws. But many countries and government officials across southern Africa are against the ban.—APP

Briefs President seeks support for distressed investor

DNA ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Friday wrote a letter to his Indonesian counterpart Joko Widodo seeking his support to resolve the issues faced by a Pakistani investor Malik Muhammad Asif in his business matters. The president said that both Pakistan and Indonesia were close friends and also bilateral partners...

Kremlin aims to destroy jets given to Ukraine

Slovakia became the second Nato country to pledge Kyiv some MiG-29 aircraft on Friday, a day after Poland

MOSCOW: The Kremlin has threatened to destroy any fighter jets given to Ukraine by its allies, after two countries promised Soviet-era planes. Slovakia became the second Nato country to pledge Kyiv some MiG-29 aircraft on Friday, a day after Poland...

China's Xi to visit Russia next week

BEIJING: China's President Xi Jinping will travel to Moscow next week to hold talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin, officials say. The Kremlin said they would discuss a "comprehensive partnership and strategic co-operation". The visit comes as Beijing, an ally of Russia, has offered proposals to end the war in Ukraine...

Western jets. Western military officers remain sceptical about modern fighters - their focus is on helping Ukraine win the battle on the ground. The front lines are swamped with air defence systems on both sides. The Russian air force is much bigger than Ukraine's and it hasn't been able to gain control of the skies...

Dar sees Pakistan's future bright despite challenges

DNA ISLAMABAD: Leader of the House in the Senate and Finance Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar on Friday said Pakistan may be confronted by different challenges at the moment, but nothing could stop the country from progress and development. Concluding remarks at a special commemorative session summoned to celebrate the golden jubilee of the Senate of Pakistan, he said, "Despite the current challenges, I can see a bright future for Pakistan ahead of us. This is my belief and faith that Allah Almighty will protect Pakistan as it was created in the name of Kalma (La ilaha illa La-hoo Muhammad Rasoolullah (saw))."

ISSI hosts Roundtable with Central Asian Republics Envoys



ISLAMABAD: The China-Pakistan Study Centre (CSPC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) organized a Roundtable with the Heads of Mission of Central Asia and Azerbaijan. H.E. Mr. Atadjan Mamlamov, Ambassador of Turkmenistan and Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, led the CA-Azerbaijan delegation. Other delegation members included: H.E. Mr. Aybek Usmanov, Ambassador of Uzbekistan; H.E. Mr. Yerzhan Kirtanov, Ambassador of Kazakhstan; Mr. Tamerlan Khalilov, Charge d' Affaires of Azerbaijan; Mr. Saidjon Shafiqov, Charge d' Affaires of Tajikistan; and Mr. Melis Miodaliev, Counselor Kyrgyz Republic.

in diverse fields and enhancing mutual engagement at the regional level. During the detailed exchanges in interactive session, valuable suggestions were made by the Heads of Mission to further increase high-level exchanges, strengthen business-to-business links, promote energy and communication projects, build academic and think-tank networks, and hold cultural exchanges on a regular basis. It was also agreed to hold events to develop policy recommendations and suggest ways to enhance mutual awareness of the vast opportunities for increased collaboration between the two sides, on the bilateral plane and regionally. Subsequently, Chairman BOG Ambassador Khalid Mahmood delivered his concluding remarks, which were followed by presentation of ISSI publications to the delegation.

Radioactive water leaked from US nuclear plant

ST. PAUL: Minnesota regulators said Thursday they're monitoring the cleanup of a leak of 400,000 gallons of radioactive water from Xcel Energy's Monticello nuclear power plant, and the company said there's no danger to the public. "Xcel Energy took swift action to contain the leak into the plant site, which poses no health and safety risk to the local community or the environment," the Minneapolis-based utility said in a statement. While Xcel reported the leak of water containing tritium to state and federal authorities in late November, the spill had not been made public before Thursday. State officials said they wanted to get more information before going public with it. "We knew there was a presence of tritium in one monitoring well, however Xcel had not yet identified the source of the leak and its location," Minnesota Pollution Control Agency spokesman Michael Rafferty said. "Now that we have all the information about where the leak occurred, how much was released into groundwater, and that contaminated groundwater had moved beyond the original location, we are sharing this information," he said, adding the water remains contained on Xcel's property and poses no immediate public health risk. - Agencies

New Zealand parliament bans TikTok

AUCKLAND: The popular Chinese video-sharing app TikTok has been banned from all devices that can access New Zealand parliament's network, the legislature's chief executive has announced. New Zealand has become the latest country to follow the US lead and restrict the access of its officials to TikTok over data security concerns. Earlier this week, the UK government forbade British ministers and civil servants from using the app, which is owned by Beijing-based tech conglomerate ByteDance, effective immediately. On Friday, the chief executive of New Zealand's parliamentary service, Rafael Gonzalez-Montoro said that the risks of the country's MPs having TikTok installed on their phones "are not acceptable." "Parliamentary Service has informed members and staff the app TikTok will be removed from all devices with access to the parliamentary network," he said. According to Gonzalez-Montoro, his service made the decision "based on our own experts' analysis and following discussion with our colleagues across the world internationally." - Agencies

Australia plans to buy 220 cruise missiles from US

WASHINGTON: The US State Department has approved the sale of some 220 cruise missiles to Australia in a deal valued at \$895m. The proposed sale includes Tomahawk cruise missiles and technical support. The missiles will be used by the Virginia-class submarines Australia will acquire from the US under the AUKUS defence pact. Australian Defence Minister Richard Marles said the missiles would provide "a really important capability". The deal would enable the country to reach out beyond our shores further and that's ultimately how we are able to keep Australia safe. The bilateral strategic partnership between the two countries. The foreign secretary reached China yesterday amid Pakistan's deepening economic woes which have created an urgent need for economic assistance to avert the financial collapse. According to a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the foreign secretary in his conversation with his Chinese counterpart reiterated the brotherhood between the two countries. "Pakistan and China are iron brothers, trusted friends and enduring partners for peace and development," Majeed was quoted as saying, adding that Qin Gang had reiterated China's strong commitment to "China-Pakistan All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership" and to extend continued across-the-board support to Pakistan. Qin and Majeed reaffirmed the "significance of China-Pakistan strategic ties in the evolving regional and international milieu and noted with satisfaction the steady momentum in the relationship," the statement further added.

Ex Israeli premier urges world to shun Netanyahu

TEL AVIV: Israel's former prime minister on Thursday urged world leaders to shun Israel's current prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, as he presses ahead with a plan to overhaul the country's justice system. The United States and Germany, two of Israel's closest allies, called on Netanyahu to slow down. The rare calls for restraint and international intervention came as thousands of Israelis once again took to the streets to protest Netanyahu's plan. Ehud Olmert, who served as prime minister from 2006-2009, said that global leaders should refuse to meet with Netanyahu. He appealed specifically to British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, who is expected to host Netanyahu in the coming weeks. "I urge the leaders of the friendly countries to the state of Israel to refrain from meeting with the Israeli prime minister," Olmert said. He added that he was aware his call, as a former Israeli prime minister, is "quite extraordinary" but that the situation calls for it. "I think that the present government of Israel is simply anti-Israeli," Olmert said. - Agencies

'Pakistan, China are iron brothers', says Asad Majeed on China visit

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Secretary Dr Asad Majeed Khan called on China's State Councillor and Foreign Minister Qin Gang in Beijing on Friday for strengthening the bilateral strategic partnership between the two countries. The foreign secretary reached China yesterday amid Pakistan's deepening economic woes which have created an urgent need for economic assistance to avert the financial collapse. According to a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the foreign secretary in his conversation with his Chinese counterpart reiterated the brotherhood between the two countries. "Pakistan and China are iron brothers, trusted friends and enduring partners for peace and development," Majeed was quoted as saying, adding that Qin Gang had reiterated China's strong commitment to "China-Pakistan All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership" and to extend continued across-the-board support to Pakistan. Qin and Majeed reaffirmed the "significance of China-Pakistan strategic ties in the evolving regional and international milieu and noted with satisfaction the steady momentum in the relationship," the statement further added.

Peshawar attack; TTP faction involved

PESHAWAR: The Additional Inspector General of Police in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Shaikat Abbas, said on Friday that the Counter Terrorism Department has apprehended a key suspect linked to the Peshawar mosque bombing that killed dozens in January as he attributed the attack to a splinter faction of the proscribed Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). On Jan 30, a powerful explosion ripped through a mosque in Peshawar's Red Zone area where between 300 and 400 people - mostly police officers - had gathered for prayers. The suicide blast blew away the wall of the prayer hall and an inner roof and claimed 84 lives. The outlawed TTP had initially claimed responsibility for the attack. However, it later distanced itself from it but sources earlier indicated that it might have been the handiwork of some local faction of the outlawed group. - Agencies

Advertisement for Ashraf Industries Pvt. Ltd. featuring martial arts uniforms and belts. Text includes: 'MOST EXPERIENCED MANUFACTURERS & EXPORTERS OF MARTIAL ARTS UNIFORMS IN PAKISTAN', 'WHERE EACH STITCH IS WATCHED', 'JUDO KARATE KUNG-FU JU-JITSU TAEKWONDO UNIFORMS AND COLOURED BELTS', and 'Ashraf INDUSTRIES (PVT) LTD 127-C, Huda Road Islamabad, Pakistan. Phone: 4452-32550/32551/32552. E-mail: info@ashraf.com.pk'