

Saturday, April 08, 2023

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

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WHO chief urges China to cooperate in Covid-19 probe

Detailed News On Page-08

Turkiye calls for end to Ukraine war

Detailed News On Page-07



Aleem Dar gets guard of honour

Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

PM launches mental health app

DNA



ment's "first dedicated mental health app and helpline". The development comes as the world celebrates World Health Day. This year, the World Health Organisation (WHO) is celebrating its 75th anniversary. "On this World Health Day, I am pleased to announce the launch of government's first dedicated mental health app #Humraaz & helpline. Citizens' well-being and especially mental health is paramount for our society's improvement," the premier said on Twitter.

Another case against Imran Khan

STAFF REPORT



Another case registered Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan in

Islamabad on Friday. The case against Imran Khan has been filed in the Ramna police station on the government's complaint on the allegations of inciting rebellion and tarnishing reputation of officers. The FIR stated that Imran Khan had hurled accusations against the officers of the state institutions and tried to defame them by taking the names of some of them.

Constitution ensures resolution of all challenges

APP



Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf has said that the 1973 Consti-

tution is a democratic and consensus-based document which provides solutions to all challenges being faced by the country. He said that golden jubilee celebration of the Constitution would commence on April 10, said a news release issued here Friday. He expressed these views while addressing the delegation of Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors (CPNE), All Pakistan Newspaper Society (APNS) and Pakistan Broadcasters Associa-



tion (PBA).

Sehr: 04:20 am Iftar: 06:37 pm Fiqa-e-Jafria Sehr: 04:10 am Iftar: 06:37 pm

Holiday Notice

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

Punjab polls verdict

Govt says CJP 'partial', wants his resignation

Illegal use of powers cannot be accepted, says information minister

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Friday demanded that Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP)

Umar Ata Bandial must step down as his po-Punjab polls case. "Justice Athar Minullah addressing a press conference in Islamabad.

and why a decision was made," she said. The information minister said that the in the anteroom of the apex court, the four judges on the bench had urged to matter was referred back to the top make a full court bench, adding that the judge. In response, the CJP reconstipolitical parties too were in favour of con- tuted the bench comprising himself, stituting a full bench so the people could Justice Shah, Justice Akhtar, Justice accept the decision. "Political parties do Mandokhail, and Justice Mazhar. not shy away from elections, but this is On March 1, the SC, in a 3-2 verdict, no longer just an election issue. It has be- directed the Election Commission come a matter of 'bench fixing'," she added. of Pakistan (ECP) to consult with

Continued on Page 06

Justice Minallah endorses judges Mandokhail, Shah

A sister publication of CENTRELINE & DNA News Agency

STAFF REPORT

sition has become controversial, especially ISLAMABAD: In yet another twist to after Justice Athar Minallah's note in the holding provincial elections in the country, Justice Athar Minallah of the has made a major decision. Following this Supreme Court (SC) on Friday released decision, the majority of judges have reached his detailed note on the suo motu noa conclusion. The decision made by Justice tice proceedings on the delay in holding Minullah raises questions about the judicial polls in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punprocess," Marriyum Aurangzeb said while jab, saying that the case was dismissed 4-3. Signed by nine judges, the Feb 27 She said that CJP's suo motu notice has order of the bench stated that keeping already been dismissed with 4-3 vote. How- in view the Feb 23 order, the additioever, she added that a three-member bench nal notes attached by four judges, the was formed on petition that was already "dis- CJP's direction to add questions raised missed". "When there was no petition, ques- by Justice Shah, Justice Afridi, Justice tions arise as to why the bench was formed Mandokhail and Justice Minallah, as well as discussions/deliberations made

Continued on Page 06

PTI reiterates call for talks on polls

Justice Minallah recognizes polls within 90 days, claims Fawad

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Senior Vice President Fawad Chaudhry said that the "ideal" situation to deal with the crisis surrounding Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa elections is for the ruling parties, establishment, and the PTI to hold a meeting together.

"The parties will have to sit together and bring a constitutional amendment with consensus to conduct elections at one time, said Fawad when asked if the PTI would agree to hold polls on another date rather than May 14. A day earlier, the former ruling party once again extended a dialogue offer to the coalition government to finalise a date for the 'national elections' after the National Assembly passed a resolution rejecting the three-member Supreme Court bench's "minority" verdict on the Punjab elections and made it binding on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his cabinet not to implement the decision.

"The government rejected the Supreme Court's verdict, is not following the constitution and holding elections, this attitude by the government is not how a country is



run," said the former minister. Fawad said that the PTI dissolved the provincial assemblies so that the incumbent government would conduct national elections, but it turned out that the ruling coalition does not even follow the Constitution or the law. "We thought that the government would not break the Constitution, we did not think that this would happen. They resorted to brutality, put 10-year-olds in prison and inflicted torture. This reversal

in a year is unimaginable," he said. **Terrorists in Pakistan using Afghanistan's US weapons**

The US left behind weapons and equipment including firearms, communications gear, and even armored vehicles

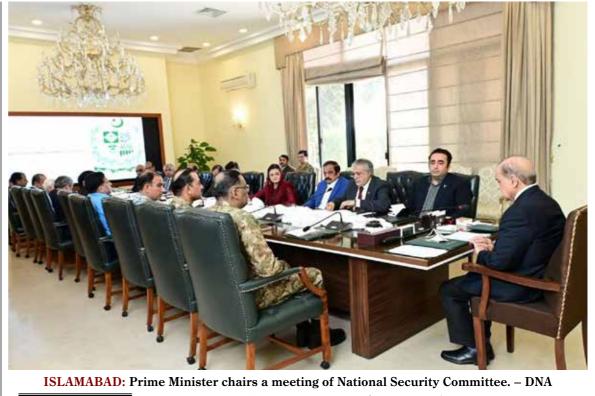
ISLAMABAD: After the United States pulled out its troops from Afghanistan, it left behind military equipment and weapons worth \$7 billion which later boosted the military capabilities of the banned Tahreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Baloch separatist groups

According to a report by Radio Free Europe, the US left behind weapons and equipment including firearms, communications gear, and even armored vehicles which gave the militants a "vast war chest." Pakistan always desired not to indulge into blame game with Afghanistan and had repeatedly urged the IAG to establish its writ in the country. The RFERL report rejected Kabul's claims that TTP was not using Afghan soil against Pakistan as the presence

of TTP, ISKP and other terrorist groups in Afghanistan was an undeniable reality. The report said that using the US weapons and equipment, both the TTP and Baloch separatist groups, were waging insurgencies against the government in Pakistan, which has witnessed a surge in violence over the past two years. "These weapons have added to the lethality of such groups," said Asfandyar Mir, a senior analyst at the United States Institute of Peace. Experts say armed groups have obtained advanced US weapons and equipment like M16 machine guns and M4 assault rifles, night-vision goggles, and

military communication gear. Abdul Sayed, a Sweden-based researcher who tracks the TTP, said the group's access to sophisticated combat weapons has had a "terrifying" impact, in Pakistan. According to the Pakistan Institute of Peace Studies (PIPS), a think tank in Islamabad, the number of terrorist attacks in the country increased by 27 percent last year, as compared to 2021. At least 419 people were

Continued on Page 06



CJP commits **'violations of** law': Maryam

Says CJP's tilt towards PTI is glaring



DNA

LAHORE: The Chief Organizer of the ruling Ianta-The Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Maryam Nawaz Sharif Friday urged Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial to "RE-SIGN" as his tilt toward her rival party, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf of Imran Khan is glaring.

She made two tweets on Friday soon after ending the National Security Meeting in Islamabad. In her first tweet, Maryam said, "CIP Umar Ata Bandiyal has committed flagrant violations of law & constitution to favour Imran Khan/Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf". This blatant abuse of authority has led to an unprecedented revolt-like situation in the SC of Pak. Judges of impeccable repute have raised serious questions on CJP's

conduct & bias.' Adding in the first tweet, she said in her second message, "No CJ has ever been accused of such misconduct. His tilt towards PTI is glaring. CJP Bandiyal must RESIGN." "This blatant abuse of authority has led to an unprecedented revolt-like situation in the SC of Pakistan," she added. She said "Judges of impecca-

ble repute have raised serious questions on CJP's conduct and bias." On April 4, the top court voided the order of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) regarding delay in elections in Punjab, ordering polls on May 14.

New resolve, vigour

NSC announces to start comprehensive anti-terror operation

A high-level committee has also been formed in this regard

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The National Security Committee (NSC) Friday decided to kick start an all-out comprehensive operation against militant outfits to root out th rorism from the country. The development came after a two-hour-long NSC meeting comprising the country's top security body comprising civil and military leadership with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in the chair, a statement from the PM's Office said. Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Shamshad Mirza, federal ministers for defence, finance and information, and senior military leadership were in attendance. The gathering was held in continuation with the NSC meeting after the terrorist attack on January 2, 2023, in Peshawar Police Lines, which claimed the lives of more than 80 people, mainly law enforcers. "The meeting agreed to launch an

Continued on Page 06

High value target arrested in Balochistan

CENTRELINE REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan army said Friday that in a high profile and a successful Intelligence Operation, Lead Intelligence Agency successfully apprehended a High Value Target (HVT) Gulzar Imam alias Shambay. An Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) statement said that Gulzar Imam has been a hardcore militant as well as founder and leader of the banned outfit Baloch National Army (BNA) which came into being after amalgamation of Baloch Republican Army (BRA) and United Baloch Army (UBA).

Continued on Page 06

Dar pulls out of WB-IMF spring meetings

Cites deepening political uncertainty, developing judicial crisis

COMMERCE DESK

ISLAMABAD: In a major development, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar has cancelled his visit to the United States where he was scheduled to meet the International Monetary Fund management for the removal of bottlenecks in the way of the staff-level agreement regarding the revival of the stalled bailout package. Highly placed sources told media that

Dar would not attend the spring meetings of the World Bank-IMF that were taking

place from April 10 to 16 in Washington. Dar, who is also leader of the house in Senate, was planning to land in Washington on Sunday. "I am not going due to the domestic state of affairs," the finance minister confirmed on Thursday.

The deepening political uncertainty and developing judicial crisis were said to be the reasons behind the cancellation of the trip to Washington. Dar had a plan to address the financial and political worlds' concerns regarding the continuity of the government, future economic plans and bridging the once again trust deficit with the multilateral lenders. The sources said that Minister for

Continued on Page 06

APRIL 2023

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Saturday, April 08, 2023

DC reviews arrangements for polio drive

KHYBER: Deputy Commissioner Abdul Nasir Khan on Friday chaired a meeting of all stakeholders at his office and reviewed arrangements and plan for the polio vaccination drive in the district. On the occasion, he was briefed about a comprehensive vaccination plan, security arrangements, challenges and other problems related to the vaccination drive. The DC directed all the stakeholders to focus on refusal cases by involving local elders, Ulemas and political leaders to convince parents for the vaccination of their children. He asked the police department to provide foolproof security to polio teams to avert any untoward incident, while the health department was asked to visit each and every house during the campaign and administer polio drops to every child under the age of five.

The DC said it was high time to make the district polio-free and protect the coming generation from disabilities, permanent adding the government was very serious to eliminate the crippling disease from the country.-APP

Senator Zehri suggests grand dialogue

QUETTA: Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri said that as far as new elections are concerned in the country, for the sake of the integrity and the interest of the country, all the stakeholders should hold a grand dialogue.

In a statement issued here on Friday, she said that the country's stability was lying in the supremacy of the Constitution, Pakistan cannot afford any political chaos and unrest.

She said that the national and provincial assemblies' elections should be held at the same time. The government and the Opposition should sit together and make better decisions for the country, she said.

Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri said that the solution to the current problems was only in dialogue. All problems can be resolved by sitting on the negotiation table. The elected members of the government and the Opposition should sit at a table and solve the country's problems through dialogue, she added.

She further said that the elections of national and provincial assemblies should be held at the same time, as the country's economic situation cannot afford repeated elections. –APP

Court sends Gandapur to jail

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: A local court on Friday sent Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Ali Amin Gandapur to Central Jail on six-day judicial remand, ensuring his presence in separate cases filed by Islamabad and Punjab police.

The former federal minister and PTI central leader was produced before the judicial magistrate after he was arrested in Dera on Thursday. However, accepting his plea, the judicial magistrate Mazhar Ali rejected the two cases registered by Dera police against him.

He also rejected the plea of Islamabad and Punjab police seeking physical custody of the PTI leader in separate cases registered against him. The judicial magistrate directed the representatives of both Islamabad and Punjab police to fulfill and complete the required documentation for further hearing proceedings. Strict security measures were made at the court premises where Ali Amin's brother, former provincial minister Faisal Amin, Tehsil Mavor Umar Amin and a large number of PTI workers were present.-APP



ISLAMABAD: Volunteers of Jamia Masjid Rahmat-ul-Lil Aalameen are placing the grocery and clothes for Eid outside Mosque at Sector F-8 to load in trucks to supply in Sindh for the affected of Flood. -Online

Turkiye indebted to Pakistan for support, says Emir Ozbay

LAHORE: In order to celebrate presidential awards 2023 conferred to senior writers Altaf Hassan Qureshi and Mujeeb ur Rehman Shami, an Iftar-dinner reception was held amid gathering of senior diplomats from China, Turkey, Iran, academicians and media practitioners.

Institute of International Relations and Media Research (IIRMR) chairman and Foreign Affairs Expert Muhammad Mehdi hosted the reception at his residence. On the occasion, Turkey Consul General Lahore Emir Ozbay said that Turkey always speaks high state of Pakistan and people of Pakistan due to their warm feelings and affection for Turkey. He heaped praise for Pakistan's overwhelming response and support in helping Turkey to deal with Earthquake catastrophe from rescue to rehabilitation work. Regionally and globally, he said, both brethren countries have full potential to grow and

of law and democracy.

Chinese Consulate Lahore Political head Mr Du said that such gatherings deepen the cause of people to people contact between China and Pakistan. Given the vision of President XI Jinping, China gives an immense

importance to brethren and strategic relationship with Pakistan. Over last many decades, internationally multiple challenges impacted geo-political, geo-strategic and geo-economic landscapes, but Pak-China relations never unhurt, he added. In the backdrop of China's financial

assistance and loan rollover, He vowed that China will never Pakistan in lurch and will continue to support in all terms through thick and thin.

Khana-e-Farhang Iran Lahore Director General Jafar Ronas said that despite many headwinds, Pakistan and Iran as robust Islam-

ic and neighboring counties can double down efforts to increase their mutual trade volume. He said as Pakistan stands with Iran, government of Iran also reciprocates. Illustrating both countries' strong ties, he underlined the need to keep enhancing mutual cultural activities between Iran and Pakistan. Provision of 100 MW electricity to Gwadar by Iran is manifestation of healthy gesture, he added.

Muhammad Mehdi said that Pakistan always treasures relationships with China, Iran, Turkey and other friendly countries on the globe. Under the robust journey of joint development and prosperity, he said in categoric term that our bond will put far-reaching results on the changing dynamics of international politics and economy. He gave a big shoutout to Saudi-Iran Foreign Ministers' meeting in Beijing saying game-changing development will unleash positive results in the region as well as in the world.

Ji holds protest against Israeli aggression

PESHAWAR: Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan here on Friday organized a protest demonstration against the desecration of the First Qibla of Al-Aqsa Mosque and Israeli aggression on the Palestinians. Led by Deputy Secretary General of Jamaat-e-Islami Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Maulana Hidayatullah, Naib Amir Jamaat-e-Islami District Peshawar Hamdullah Jan Badhani and others, the protesters carried banners and flags and chanted slogans in favor of Palestinian Muslims and against Israeli atrocities. Addressing on the occasion, Maulana Hidayatullah criticized the international powers and the United Nations for keeping a double standard and remaining silent on the issues of Muslims. He urged the Muslim rulers to follow the path of Jihad and support the oppressed Palestinian people. The protest was also participated by a large number of women who were injured in recent Israeli attacks on Palestine. The Jamaat-e-Islami vowed to continue its support for the Palestinians and also expressed solidarity with the people of Kashmir.-APP

APHC condemns raids by Indian troops

ISLAMABAD: All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) has strongly condemned the raids by Indian forces and intelligence agencies on the residences of Hurriyat leaders, activists, journalists and human rights activists in the occupied territory Illegally detained General Secretary of APHC Molvi Bashir Ahmad Irfani in a statement issued in Srinagar deplored that Indian forces and secret agencies were raiding the houses of the Hurriyat leaders and activists even during Ramadan which was highly condemnable. He expressed deep concern over the worst violations of human rights by India, including the forced eviction of Kashmiris from their homes and lands and the sale of their lands to nonstate residents. .-APP

Reimagine and restructure to retain valuable talent

in collaboration with Nutshell Group, held a webinar on 'Career Development: Creating a Path for Employee Growth and Retention,' recently. Leading corporate executives and HR experts examined the impact of technological advancements and organizational changes on workplace relationships. The discussion revolved around the ideal culture of a workplace that is continuously evolving, making it critical for organizations to redesign and rethink their work structures to retain their best talent. In his opening remarks, Mujeeb Zahur, Managing Director, S&P Global, said; "We at S&P Global spend

our energies on developing

clear goals, embracing con-

tinuous learning, network-

ing strategically, seeking

ISLAMABAD: S&P Global,

developing leadership skills across the team."

Mujeeb further stated that S&P Global has won many awards including Best Place to Work in 2019, Gold Award Top IT Exporter 2016-2018, Platinum Award BPO Services 2019, and Silver Award in Top IT Exporter 2019. These awards have helped in the evolution of the company as a peo-

Mujeeb added; "S&P Global is also taking part in Corporate Responsibility, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Initiatives, that include training of the female workforce. Under the Million Women Mentorship (MWM) program in collaboration with U.S.-Pakistan Women's Council, we have trained over 15,400 women for various STEM-related



20,000 women and we hope to achieve it soon." Talking of technologies, Mujeeb mentioned S&P Global's platform 'Edge' as a new venue for our team members. Edge offers enterprise learning to the team, offering courses ranging from personal and professional skills to industry hot topics and people leader de-

velopment programs. The webinar opened many perspectives of looking at the increasing need for retention and growth and how closely it is linked to leadership dynamics. Saquib Ahmad, Managing Director Pakistan, Iraq, and Afghanistan, SAP, emphasized the role of leadership, saying; "The overall phenomenon around workplaces has changed, and the employees know exactly.

short-term training; student

cultivation programs, post-

doctoral fellowships; estab-

lishment of joint research

NA to commemorate golden iubilee of Constitution

ISLAMABAD: The Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervaiz Ashraf has said that a comprehensive one-month-long celebration will be organized in connection with the Golden Jubilee of the 1973 Constitution. In his remarks in the House, he said these celebrations will begin on April 10, 2023 (Monday) at 10:00 a.m. at the Parliament House in Islamabad. He said that a committee comprising Senators and Members National Assembly (MNAs) under the chairmanship of Senator Mian Raza Rabbani has prepared an elaborate program following which one-month celebrations are being organized throughout the country in this connection. These celebrations, he said, will formally start on April 10, 2023 (Monday) at Parliament House. The Speaker said a national constitutional convention is being organized in the House. Different segments of society including constitutional heads of the provinces, vice chancellors of universities, women, social and political workers and students have been invited to attend the convention.-APP



PAKISTAN RAILWAYS TENDER NOTICE

ومنسخيفن كرائم الوركرونالين اوبيزايناكي

Sealed bids are invited by the Divisional Superintendent Pakistan Railways Rawalpindi on item rates basis from the approved contractors of Pakistan Railways or any other Government Department, who are registered with Pakistan Engineering Council with relevant code of specialization and are also on Active Taxpayers list of FBR for the following work:-

S	.#	Name of Works	Completion Period	Approximate Cost	Earnest Money
1		Supplying, stacking & loading into Railway wagons 1,000,000 Cft 2" size mechanically crushed stone ballast at Taxila Railway Station.		Rs.42.640 million	2% of the offered bids

Bidding documents will be available for sale @ Rs.2500/- each in Works Accounts Branch of the Divisional Superintendent Office Pakistan Railways Rawalpindi from the date of publication of this notice during Monday to Thursday and Saturday from 08.00 to 15.00 hours and Friday from 08.00 to 13.00 hours upto 29.04.2023. The bids will received upto 12.00 hours on 29.04.2023 and opened on the same date at 12.30 hours in the presence of the bidders or their representatives who may like to be present

The Railway administration may reject all bids at any time prior to the acceptance of a bid. The Railway administration shall upon request communicate to any contractor who submitted a bid, the ground for its rejection of all bids.

Note:- This tender notice is also available on PPRA web sites (www.ppra.org.pk).

No.71-W/45/TXL/2022

Dated /04/2023

رلج ساائن كام ف دلج س كراتك سامتياط سياركري

(Mohammad Sohail Javed) Divisional Engineer-I for, Divisional Superintendent Pakistan Railways Rawalpindi

PID (I) No. 6190/22

GIKI, Chinese varsity sign MoU to develop partnership

PESHAWAR: Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering Sciences and Technology and Northwestern Polytechnical University (NPU), a leading Chinese research varsity signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Friday to develop partnerships in various mutually agreed fields of science and technology. The

Health Organization at the

MoU was inked by Prof Dr Fazal Ahmad Khalid, Rector GIK Institute and Dr Li Ziwei, Vice Dean (Deputy Director) of the Office of International Cooperation, NPU. The agreement came into force soon after the signatures and will remain in effect for a period of five years. The MoU is aimed to set out the general terms

of cooperation between the two universities to promote science and technology and to foster collaboration in relevant fields of education, research and technology on the basis of reciprocity and mutual benefit. With the purpose of capacity building in advanced technology acquisition, both universities have agreed to cooperate through laboratories; joint workshops, symposia and lectures of matters of mutual interest; strengthening institutional collaboration: faculty and students exchange and any other areas of collaboration may be added from time to time with mutual consensus. Under the working mechanism, they agreed that research institutions affiliated with the two parties are encouraged to formulate.-APP

Provision of quality

PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to caretaker chief minister for Sports and youth affairs Dr Riaz Anwar on Friday said that provision of quality healthcare facilities to people foremost priority of the government and said more than 2600 health centres have been established for the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

He said this while addressing an event as chief guest organized in connection with the 75th annual World Health Day in collaboration with the World

School of Health Sciences, Peshawar here on Friday. The theme of this year's World Health Day is 'Health for All' means that health facilities should be provided at their doorstep for all individuals and families of the world without any discrimination so that a healthy society can be formed. SACM Prof. Dr. Riaz Anwar and World Health Organization Sub-Office KP Head Dr Babar Alam were among the special guests of the

Professor Dr Riaz Anwar gave a detailed discussion on the importance of paramedics and nursing education. He said that access to health facilities is the basic right of every member of society. Whether one lives in urban area or in rural area, more than 2600 health centres have been established to provide the best health facilities to the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Dr. Babar Alam also appreciated the models of health facilities created by the students. He further

gan on World Health Day is 'Health for all'. The WHO is actively involved in the provision of health facilities and rehabilitation in all flood-affected areas. On this occasion. the students of the college had also prepared various models in which the theme of World Health Day was highlighted. The guests appreciated the efforts of the students and they also distributed shields, cash prizes to the first, second and third position holders. The Managing Director

said that this year the slo-

and Principal of the college also presented souvenirs (shields) of the college to the guests. Nursing Principal Samira Jabeen thanked all the participants and organizers. At the end of the event, an awareness walk was also organized by the

guests and students. The purpose of which was to create awareness among public regarding the World Health Day. On this occasion, students also raised slogans of 'Health for All'.

National Days and Armed **Forces Days**

APRIL

April 04/Senegal **National Day** April 07/W. H. O. World Health Day April 12/Somalia **Armed Forces Day** April 15/DPR Korea

The Day of the Sun April 16/Denmark **National Day** April 17/Iran

Army Day April 17/Syria **Independence Day**

April 18/Zimbabwe **Independence Day** April 24/Holy See Anniversary of His Papacy of his Pontificate

April 25/DPR Korea Armed Forces Day April 26/Tanzania **National Day**

April 27/Sierra Leone **Independence Day** April 27/South Africa Freedom Day

April 30/Sweden Birthday of His Majesty April 30/Netherlands Birthday of Queen



Hotels & Restaurants

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



Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency Rescue (Police).....15

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



EdhiAmbulance	115
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CAA	.9281092
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Hospitals

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



Departments

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

Islamabad Metropolitan

metropotitari		
Corporation	9209224	
Potohar Town	9209224	
D 1/T	F770040	

Rawal Town......5773343

Water Tank Islamabad.....0321-5744480

SFD contributes \$240m support to Pak Mohmand Dam Project

Additionally, the SFD has played an active role in supporting and developing renewable energy sector projects, which amounted to 35 projects in 23 developing countries

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Saudi Arabia on Friday reached an agreement under which the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) would provide \$240 million to advance the multipurpose Mohmand Dam project.

The dam would significantly contribute in the country's energy security, increase sustainable water supply for agriculture and human consumption as well as improve resilience against floods. The agreement was signed by the Chief Executive Officer of SFD Sultan Abdulrahman Al-Marshad and the Federal Secretary Ministry of Economic Affairs Dr Kazim Niaz, whereas Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan Nawaf bin Said Al-Malki was also presented on the occasion, said a press release.

This loan represents a strong partnership between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan in promoting sustainable development and achieving Sustainable Developments Goals. The Mohmand Dam project will enhance water and food security besides improving the standard of living of the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province as about 80 percent of the population resides in rural areas. The project, which will also help in boosting



socioeconomic development by creating employment opportunities and reducing poverty levels in these areas, is aligned with SDG-2 (Food Security), SDG-6 (Clean Water), and SDG-7 (Clean Energy) and embodies SDG-17 (Partnerships for the Goals). The project, which is co-financed by the Saudi Fund for Development, OPEC, Islamic Development Bank, and the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, is expected to have a significant impact on Pakistan's energy and water sectors.By using renewable energy sources, the project will generate about 800 MW of electricity, contributing to Pakistan's energy security. In addition, the storage of 1.6 million acre-feet of water will support sustainable agricultural practices, enable irrigation of 6,773 hectares of new land, and increase the total cropping area from 1,517 hectares to 9,227 hectares in the province. During the agreement signing ceremony, the CEO of SFD emphasized the strong developmental ties between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan and highlighted the significance of joint cooperation between development funds, as evidenced by this

project. He further emphasized that this initiative is an extension of SFD's continued support for development projects and programs in Pakistan since its inception. To date, the SFD has financed around 41 development projects and programs in Pakistan, amounting to approximately \$1.4 billion, In addition, SFD has financed between 2019 and 2023, oil derivatives worth more than USD 5.4 billion, to support Pakistan's economy, this comes as a continuation of the support provided by the Government of Saudi Arabia to the brotherly country Pakistan to build a suspressed his sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for its unwavering support towards the development sectors in Pakistan through the SFD. He recognized the significant

Speaking on the occasion, Secretary EAD Dr Kazim Niaz ex-

tainable economy.

contribution made by the Kingdom towards financing the vital project and emphasized its importance in bringing about positive developmental impacts on Pakistan and its people. He said that the use of renewable energy would enable sustainable energy as well as water sources, which would enhance water and food security. Dr. Niaz praised the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's development efforts through SFD since 1976, which have led to remarkable social growth and sustainable economic prosperity. The SFD has also supported 76 development projects and programs in the energy sector in African and Asian countries since 1975, including 33 projects and programs in African countries, 42 projects and programs in Asian countries and one project in Latin America. Additionally, the SFD has played an active role in supporting and developing renewable energy sector projects, which amounted to 35 projects in 23 developing countries.

Four reports of standing committees presented

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly (NA) on Friday witnessed the introduction of four periodical reports of various standing committees. The periodical reports included Standing Committee on Commerce, Standing Committee on States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON), Standing Committee on Aviation and Standing Committee on Railways. All these reports were presented in the House as required by rule 234-A of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the NA, 2007.-APP

Senate offers Fateha for martyred personnel

ISLAMABAD: The Senate of Pakistan on Friday offered Fateha for martyred personnel of security forces who lost their lives in various operations and terrorist incidents. Senator Mushtaq Ahmed led the Fateha on the request of Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani. –**APP**

Two gangs busted; five arrested

RAWALPINDI: In an operation against criminal elements, Rawalpindi Police have busted two gangs and arrested their five members. According to a police spokesman, Race Course police while busting 'Najmi' gang arrested three dacoits including ringleader. Police also recovered Rs 100,000 cash, a motorcycle, weapons and other items from their possession. The arrested accused namely Najam alias Najmi, ringleader, Haider and Faisal are criminal record holder and wanted in different robbery and dacoity cases. He informed that the police team constituted under the supervision of SHO Race Course Police Station on the directives of SP Potohar Muhammad Waqas Khan conducted a raid and managed to net the gang members including the ringleader. In another raid, Dhamial police rounded up two thieves namely Imran and Maqbool, members of a gang and recovered Rs 35,000 cash, two mobile phones, weapons and other items from their possession. –APP

PM launches

mental health

App Humraaz,

helpline

ISLAMABAD: Prime Min-

ister Shehbaz Sharif on

Friday launched a mobile

application and helpline to

address the issues related

The App titled "Humraaz"

and toll-free helpline 1166

would provide free mental

health assistance to the peo-

ple. "On this World Health

Day today, I am pleased

to announce the launch of

Government's first dedi-

cated mental health App

#Humraaz & helpline," he

The prime minister said citizens' well-being and es-

pecially mental health was paramount for the society's improvement. "We need to

remove taboo around men-

tal health," he added.

to mental health.

said in a tweet.

ISLAMABAD: Saudi Ambin Idris Bakr and Counselow up the professional exlor Khalid Al-Hamwi were amination project centers also present on this ocand Pakistan. and ensure that they were casion. The meeting was playing the required role. meant to increase coordina-He also emphasized the tion on the labor side, raise need to open a new examthe level of labor candidates ination center and said the

Saudi envoy directs to

properly scrutinize workforce

bassador Nawaf bin Said Al-Malki on Friday directed to properly scrutinize the workforce to be hired for Kingdom so that they could perform well as per their job descriptions.

He said this in a meeting with Professional Examination Programme Project Manager Johar Afzal. Saudi Labor Attaché Majid Bakr

ISLAMABAD :Benazir In-

come Support Program

stipends, from January to

March, among the 9 million

deserving families across

the country who are regis-

tered under Benazir Kaf-

According to a press re-

lease on Friday, so far 7.5

have received their cash

assistance through desig-

nated banks or their point

Besides disbursement of

Benazir Kafaalat quarterly

tranche, quarterly install-

ment of Benazir Taleemi

Wazaif is also being paid to deserving families. Chil-

dren of the registered bene-

ficiaries who are enrolled in

schools with an attendance

rate of over 70% are entitled

More over the distribution

of Rupees 2000 per family

as Atta subsidy, announced

for the 'Teleemi Wazaif'.

of sale (POS) agents.

aalat.

disbursing quarterly

and besides verifying the skills of nominated labor, address their challenges faced by them. The Saudi envoy directed them to fol-

Enhanced Rs.8500

disbursed under BISP

by the Government of

Sindh, is also going on. Out

of the total 64 lac deserv-

ing families registered with

Benazir Income Support

Program, 26 lac, 80 thou-

sand beneficiaries have

been paid the atta subsidy

amount in Sindh Province.

Under the Wheat Seed

Subsidy Programme of the

Sindh government, Rs. 3.15

billion have been disbursed,

among 1 lac and 33 thou-

sand flood affectees farm-

ers, through Benazir In-

come Support Programme.

The crackdown operations

against alleged bank agents

who are involved in deduc-

tions from beneficiaries'

cash is also carried out with

Multiple FIRs, are been

registered and arrests have

been made after receiving

complaints of illegal deduc-

tions during payment of

money to Benazir Income

Support Programme.

full force.

for work in the Kingdom, center should be exemplary and professional one.

recommended that there should be a common logo for the centers that would reflect the breadth

Moreover, monitoring

teams under the leader-

ship of the senior officials

of Benazir Income Support

Program have paid surprise

visits in Punjab, Sindh, Ba-

lochistan and other areas.

These surprise visits were

made at payment centers

and agents involved in il-

legal deductions were also

Federal Minister and Chair-

Support Program, Ms.

Shazia Marri have directed

the relevant authorities to

take strict action against

the agents who are found

involved in illegal deduc-

tions.The beneficiaries

of Benazir Income Sup-

port Program are urged

to lodge complaints in

the nearest Tehsil office

of Benazir Income Sup-

port Program or contact

helpline number 0800-

26477 in case of any com-

plaint.—APP

Benazir Income

blacklisted.

person

and strength of the relationship between Saudi Arabia

The Saudi Labor Attaché thanked the Ambassador for his support, interest and follow-up. He also extended gratitude to the leaders of the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development for their cooperation and support to the ministry's programmes.—APP

Three more COVID-19 cases arrive in RWP

RAWALPINDI: Three more people were diagnosed with fatal Coronavirus during the last 24 hours, raising the district's confirmed cases to 47,853. As per the latest data released by the District Health Authority here Friday, the infected cases included 44,180 from Rawalpindi and 3,673 from other districts. Among the new cases, two patients had arrived from the Potohar town and one from Kahutta area. Presently, two patients were admitted to the Holy Family Hospital and one to the Attock hospital. The report added that one patient was in critical condition and two stable, adding 11 patients having positive symptoms were quarantined at home. The report further said that 7,006,011 people, including 44,790 health workers, had jabbed themselves against the lethal Coronavirus (COV-ID-19) across the district since the vaccination administering drive launched on March 10, 2021.-APP

bootleggers and other lawbreakers, he added.-APP

10 drug

peddlers netted

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi police in an action

against suspected drug peddlers, bootleggers and illegal

weapon holders on Friday arrested 10, besides recover-

ing over four kg charras, 10 liters liquor, four 30-bore

pistols, a Kalashnikov and ammunition from them. A

police spokesperson said that Waris Khan police held

Arif for having 1,250 grams of charras while Taxila po-

lice rounded up Alam Zaib with 1,250 grams of charras,

Mubarik Zaib for having 1,620 grams of charras and Per-

vaiz for carrying 10 liters of liquor. Whereas, Chontra

He informed that Sadiqabad, Race Course, Taxila and

Chontra police, in their operations against illegal weap-

on holders, managed to net Mubeen, Anjum, Haider,

Bashir, and Rafiq and recovered four 30-bore pistols, a

Kalashnikov and ammunition. Rawalpindi district police

also held 52 professional beggars from different roads.

Separate cases have been registered against all accused

while further investigations were underway. City Police

Officer, Rawalpindi had directed the police officers to

accelerate ongoing operations against drug peddlers,

police arrested Behroze with 160 grams of charras.

say such words about the father of the nation.-APP

Speaker sends IK popularity issue to body

ISLAMABAD: Speaker, National Assembly Raja Pervez Asharf on Friday sent an issue declaring Imran Khan more popular than Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah to the Committee of Rules of Procedure and Privileges. On a point of order, Member National Assembly (MNA) Sheikh Rohale Asghar said that a media person in a vlog mentioned Orya Maqbool Jan's comparison of the great leader and founder of the nation Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah with Imran Khan which was unjustified and deplorable. "Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Iinnah is the undisputed personality of the nation. No one can be matched with Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah who despite illness and various challenges had made an independent homeland for the Muslims of the subcontinent," he added. He said, "It is a wake up for all, the person who remembered the Quaid like this must be dealt with iron hands". The MNA said, "How Orya Maqbool Jan can dare to make a comparison of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah with a person who is trying to destroy Pakistan?" He suggested that the privilege committee should call him (Orya Maqbool Jan) and give him an exemplary punishment so no one can in future dare

AIOU to develop a framework for education of Afghan children

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), Ja-



pan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees, KPK agreed in a meeting that AIOU should develop a framework for the education and training of children of Afghan refugees. The meeting was held in the office of the Commissioner for Afghan Refugees (Khyber Pakhtunkh-

wa), Muhammad Abbas Khan. Director of Academic Planning and International Collaboration, AIOU, Dr. Zahid Majeed with AIOU delegation, representatives of JICA, foreigners, and different delegates also participated in the meeting. Dr. Zahid Majeed apprised the forum of the scope of various programs being offered at AIOU and the facilities that it may extend for the provision of quality education to Afghan refugee children through its distance learning programs. He also highlighted the importance of ICT, blended, and online learning. Commissioner for Afghan refugees appreciated the educational services and nationwide network of AIOU and requested arrangements for the education and training of the children of Afghan refugees, which the university accepted and assured to formulate the framework. Before the meeting, the Delegation of AIOU, JICA and Representatives of the Commissionerate visited various refugee-run schools and interacted with the children to identify the educational requirements of the students.

Marri condemns anti-Muslim violence in India

and fair elections on a level playing field across the country

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety PA&AS, and Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme Shazia Marri while addressing the National Assembly of Pakistan condemned recent atrocities committed by Israeli forces at one of the holiest places of Islam. She also spoke out against the rising tide of anti-Islam and anti-Muslim violence in India and urged parliamentarians to convey their sentiments to Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Modi, to protect the Muslim community there, said a press release. Marri also stressed the need for stabil-

ity in all sectors, including the social, economic, and political spheres of the country. She expressed her concerns over the frequent derailment of democracy in Pakistan which has been endorsed by the judiciary. She urged all pillars of the state including the judiciary to work to bring about harmony and avoid further divisions among themselves. This could lead to irreversible consequences, she added. She highlighted the leading role of the Pakistan People's Party in spear-



constitution of 1973 and for the promotion and protection of democracy in Pakistan. She reiterated that the parliament is the supreme body representing the aspirations of the people of Pakistan and underscored that the supremacy of the parliament should be respected by all institutions including the higher courts.

She noted that disrespect for the trichotomy of power and privileges leads to disharmony and a state of anarchy

in the country. She urged every institution to play a positive role in order to bring Pakistan out of the current chaos Shazia Marri also declared that they are ready for transparent, free, and fair elections on a level playing field across the country. She, however, stressed that no candidate should be the favorite of the state institutions which are meant to provide justice and a level playing field to all political parties. There should be no threats to the lives of any Pakistani including the candidates for polls during the election campaign, she added. She said that Imran Khan's politics was nurtured in the drawing rooms and historic pre and post-poll rigging was committed to bringing this person to power. She urged that Imran Khan should not be given such extraordinary favor in the coming election as he has been receiving previously. While pointing out the divide among the judges of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, she observed that it was not a good omen for the country and the people of Pakistan. She said that court verdicts should be based on the democratic principle of a majority vote of the honorable judges of the court.-DNA

CEO RWMC directs to lift garbage daily

RAWALPINDI: Chief Executive Officer(CEO)of the Rawalpindi Waste Management Company(RWMC) Rana Sajid Safdar on Friday directed the department officials to ensure cleanliness during the holy month of Ramazan. Chairing a meeting to review the cleanliness arrangements during Ramazan, he directed the officials to keep the cleanliness of Masajid's, surrounding areas' mainly during Taravih timings. The CEO directed the officials to lift the collected garbage daily from the city areas and shift to the landfill site. He said that no negligence would be tolerated in this regard and strict action would be taken. –APP

Shazia Marri also declared that they are ready for transparent, free,

Briefs

UNESCO awards funding to Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: UNESCO's International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD) has awarded USD 83,496 to Beaconhouse National University to undertake a project titled "Improving Data Collection among National and Provincial Statistical Agencies to Strengthen Policymaking for the Cultural and Creative Industries". The IFCD is a multi-donor fund established under Article 18 of the 2005

Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural

Expressions. Its purpose is to promote sustainable development and creative economic growth in developing countries that are Parties to the 2005 Convention. Since 2010, the IFCD has provided more than USD 10 million in funding for 140 projects in developing countries. This is the first time Pakistan has been awarded funding under the IFCD. Pakistan ratified the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions in March 2022. The Convention supports the growth and development of cultural and creative industries, and provides a new framework for informed, transparent, and participatory systems of governance for culture. The project will be implemented by Beaconhouse National University, with technical guidance from the UNESCO Islamabad Field Office.

SECP registers 2,596 companies in March 2023

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) registered 2,595 new companies in March 2023. This shows an increase of 10% as compared to corresponding period of last year.

The total number istered companies now stands at 190,161. Total capitalization (paid-up-capital) with regard to newly incorporated companies for the current month stood at Rs. 1.8 billion.

About 58 percent companies were registered as private limited companies, while 39 percent were registered as single member companies. About 03 percent were registered as public unlisted companies, not for profit associations and limited liability partner ships (LLP). Almost 99.69 percent companies were registered online. 159 foreign users were registered from overseas.-DNA

Weekly inflation surges by 0.92pc in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Consumer prices witnessed an increase in the outgoing week on the back of wheat flour, gas, diesel, eggs, onion, rice, cigarettes and bananas, taking the weekly inflation to 44.49% on an annual basis, the official data showed on Friday.

The short-term inflation, measured by Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), for the current week ended on April 6, 2023 recorded an increase of 0.92%, said Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) in its re-

A major increase was observed in the prices of food items, including chicken (15.87%), sugar (13.48%), potatoes (5.11%), bananas (4.95%), wheat flour (3.10%), gur (2.12%), eggs (1.26%), milk fresh (1.24%) and nonfood item, long cloth (1.95%). On the other hand, decrease was observed in the prices of tomatoes (14.96%), onions (12.66%), LPG (3.73%), pulse gram (1.20%), vegetable ghee 2.5 Kg (0.71%), garlic (0.16%) and mustard oil (0.03%). During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 27 (52.94%) items increased, 07 (13.73%) items decreased and 17 (33.33%) items remained stable. The year-on-year trend depicted an increase of 44.49%.

The increase was nessed in prices of cigarettes (165.88%), wheat flour (131.72%), gas charges for Q1 (108.38%), diesel (102.84%), eggs (98.34%), tea Lipton-DNA



ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi chairing the 4th meeting of the Senate of the Health Services Academy (HSA), at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad. – DNA

Human capital is vital to harness tech-driven economy

The speakers emphasized the need for Pakistan to diversify its economy by focusing on non-traditional sectors such as technology and self-sustainable models in light of the country's economic crisis

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A webinar on " Harnessing the Power of Technology for Economic Development in Pakistan: Opportunities and Challenges" was organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) Islamabad. The keynote address was delivered by Ammad Farooq (Head, Cybersecurity Program IRS), Dr. Ali Raza (Chairman of the department of Mechatronics and Control Engineering, Human Centered Robotics Lab- UET, Lahore), and Ms. Kashoon Leeza (Policy Advocacy Lead P@SHA). Members of the think tanks, ambassadors from foreign offices, research scholars, and corporate

those present. The speakers emphasized the

fy its economy by focusing on non-traditional sectors such as technology and self-sustainable models in light of the country's economic crisis. They pointed out that the technology industry was the fastest-growing sector and, therefore, Pakistan should have invested in it to create jobs and boost the economy. The speakers also highlighted the importance of investing in human capital by improving education and training programs to develop a skilled workforce capable of contributing to the country's economic growth in these new sectors. They noted that this required a shift in focus from traditional industries to new, innovative sectors to move Pakistan towards a more sustainable

ry remarks highlighted the criti- promote a "Kar guzro mind-set," cal role of technology in econom- and embrace diversity to work

ic development. He stated that Pakistan has immense potential for economic growth, which can be realized by harnessing the power of technology. He also emphasized the availability of a good workforce of freelancers and highlighted the need to invest in the tech sector to enable Pakistan's tech-driven economy.

Dr. Ali Raza emphasized several crucial points regarding the similarities and differences between Pakistan and Israel's tech economies. He pointed out that in the past, Israel spent a remarkable \$28,000 USD per capita on startups, while Pakistan only spent \$1 USD per capita. Additionally, Israel boasted of 6,000 startups, while Pakistan only had 800. Dr. Raza Ammad Farooq in his introducto- to invest more in human capital,

unitedly to boost technology. He also emphasized the importance of the slogan "Main Pakistan nahi chorunga" to stop brain drain.

Kashoon Leeza highlighted several critical points regarding Pakistan's economy in the past. Unfortunately, Pakistan was at risk of default due to its flawed economic model. Leeza emphasized that India had more techbased policies than Pakistan and the policymakers' ban on imports was ultimately found to be useless. However, technology could bring in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and promote a self-sustainable model. Pakistan's tech industry had a trade surplus of 77%, and the country still lacked a Data Privacy law lieved that to capitalize on Pakistan's tech industry, a regulatowith ease of doing business. She also highlighted the importance of the government working with tech enthusiasts and focusing on product-based tech sectors rather than just service-based tech sectors. Boot camps and training sessions were the way forward to improve the skills of the workforce.

Ambassador Nadeem concluded the session on the note that Pakistan needed advanced technology to make progress. He stressed the need for an updated education system that focuses on skill-based and analytical learning. He also identified the importance of a stable governance system to utilize the country's youth and provide them with a comfortable working environment. innovative mindset and a better governance system to achieve ry mindset was necessary, along progress in Pakistan.

President for greater focus on preventive healthcare

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has called for a greater focus on promoting preventive healthcare in the country which is not only cost-effective but would help reduce the disease burden. He said that most of the diseases could be prevented by taking precautionary measures and Pakistan, being a developing country, could hardly afford to fully meet the healthcare needs of its over 220 million population through curative treatments due to limited resources.

The President gave these remarks while chairing the 4th meeting of the Senate of the Health Services Academy (HSA), at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. The meeting was attended by the members of the Senate of HSA. During the meeting, the President said that Pakistan needed to make goal-oriented and time-bound plans to improve its public health sector, adding that preventive healthcare should be the priority of the country's health policy. He highlighted that some countries had tremendously improved their health sectors by focusing on preventive health and investing in the intel-lectual development of their human resources. The meeting was also briefed about the impacts of global warming and climate change which would likely increase the burden of diseases due to rising temperatures. The meeting stressed the need for exploring

It was also emphasised to develop a resource mobilization strategy to meet the future financial needs of HSA as well as the healthcare programmes in the country. The meeting also underscored the importance of devising a National Plan for Public dress the challenges being faced by the country's

funding options from in-

ternational donors for re-

search and development

in the public health sec-

ICCI calls for Pak-Ethiopia PTA to boost bilateral trade Jemal Beker Abdula termed the visit of Pakistani

business delegation to Ethiopia as Hijra Trade, which was very successful

DNA

ISLAMABAD:

has strong economic ties with Turkiye & UAE and Ethiopia wants similar relations with Pakistan. China and India have good presence in Ethiopia and Pakistan should increase its presence in the Ethiopian market to explore the untapped land of Africa. Many Pakistani products including textiles, pharmaceuticals, cement have great potential in Ethiopia and the business community of Pakistan capitalize on this potential for exports. This was said by H.E. Jemal Beker Abdula, Ambassador of Ethiopia while addressing the business community during his visit to Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI).

Jemal Beker Abdula termed the visit of Pakistani business delegation to Ethiopia as Hijra Trade, which was very successful. He said that after the visit of the Pakistani delegation to Ethiopia, he received calls from many African countries

including Somalia, Djibouti, and Kenya who showed interest in promoting trade Ethiopia ties with Pakistan. He said that Africa is endowed with great natural resources and close cooperation of Pakistan with Ethiopia would help it get better penetration in the African region for trade and exports. He said that a high-level delegation of Ethiopia is likely to visit Pakistan in near future that would further strengthen trade ties between the two countries. Speaking at the occasion,

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that Pakistan and Ethiopia should sign a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) that would remove trade barriers and boost bilateral trade between Pakistan and Ethiopia. He said that the Ambassador should take up the PTA matter with Pakistan authorities and assured that ICCI would extend all possible cooperation in such efforts. He thanked the Ambassador and the Ethiopian authorities for giving warm reception and great hospitality to the ICCI delegation during its very successful visit to Addis Ababa from March 5-11, 2023.

Faad Waheed, Senior Vice President ICCI said that Africa is very important for Pakistan and the Pakistani private sector would like to develop strong business linkages with Ethiopian counterparts to get better access to the African market for business and investment.

Engr. Muhammad Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Vice President ICCI said that Pakistan has good potential to promote business relations with Ethiopia and hoped that the visit of the Ethiopian delegation to Pakistan would further expand trade relations between the two countries

Khalid Iqbal Malik Group Leader, Zafar Bakhtawari, Sheikh Ejaz, Humayun Kabir, Muhammad Shabbir, Akhtar Hussain and others also spoke at the occasion and gave useful proposals for improving Pak-Ethiopia

'Indus Water Treaty cannot be modified unilaterally by **India**'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Senate was informed on Friday that Pakistan Information Commission (PIC) established under Right of Access to Information Act, 2017, is conducting regular hearings and emphasizing on quick disposal of appeals.

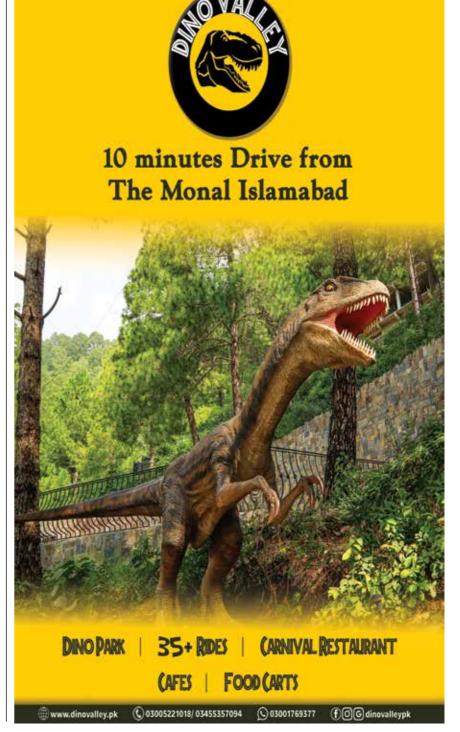
Minister of State for Law Shahadat Awan told the House during Question Hour that the commission had disposed of 1300 appeals out of 2900 appeals it received. He pointed out that the Chief Information Commissioner and the Information Commissioner were appointed by the federal government in January this year. On the request of the Sen tors, the Chair referred the matter regarding the functionality of Pakistan Information Commission to the Standing Committee concerned for further deliberation. Minister of State for Interior Abdul Rehman Khan Kanju told the House that the ratio of crimes had considerably decreased in the federal capital after the establishment of Eagle Squad which consisted of 260 motorcycles including 1114 police officers.

The Senate today passed a number of bills. These included: The National University of Pakistan Bill, 2023; the Publication of the Holy Quran (Eliminating of Printing and Recording Errors) Amendment Bill, 2022; the Federal Employees Benevolent Fund and Group Insurance Amendment Bill, 2022 and The Pir Roshaan Institute of Progressive Sciences and Technologies, Miranshah, Bill, 2023. Minister for Climate Change Sherry Rehman has said that Indus Water Treaty cannot be modified unilaterally by India. Responding to a Calling Attention Notice in the Senate, moved by Leader of Opposition Shahzad Waseem and others, she stressed that the treaty cannot be changed until both the parties, Pakistan

and India, agree to it.

'FO committed to improve performance of its diplomatic missions'

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly was informed on Friday that the Foreign Office was committed to improving performance of its diplomatic missions especially in the domain of extending consular services to Pakistani Diaspora. Responding to a question during the Question Hour in the House, Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs Syed Hussain Tariq said the missions extend assistance to prisoners in accordance with local laws of the host countries. He said our embassies sent consequent teams to different cities of the host country to provide consular services like attestation of documents and registration of work certificates. Besides, heads of Pakistan Missions abroad hold open and E-kachehris on a regular basis with the resident Pakistani community to solve their problems. The Parliamentary Secretary said the financial and legal assistance is provided to destitute Pakistanis who are either stranded or unable to travel on their own expenses.—DNA



Zoo closure violation of Basic rights: Baloch

Prime Minister and the Home Minister should restore the zoo immediately. Khalid Chaudhry

ISLAMABAD: Ajmal Baloch President Pakistan Anjman Tajran & Traders Action Committee Islamabad and Secretary and Convenor Traders Committee ICCI Khalid Chaudhry have said that the zoo was established in the federal capital in the seventies and through out Pakistan. There are twenty-eight such zoos. But it was closed in the name of animal rights. The elephant was exported to Cambodia where it died due to climate change and the government lost millions of rupees. Lions were killed by fire on the way while shifting to Lahore, while 550 animals were stolen. If there can be zoos in other cities, why not in Islamabad? Apart from entertainment, zoos are also educational institutions for children and children also get information about animals. Apart from this, the zoo covering twen ty-five acres of land was closed and dozens of employees were also unemployed. The then Chief Justice Athar Minullah had issued orders for the modern construction of the zoo, but due to unknown reasons, the construction has not been started and an NGO is trying to get possession of the land. The closure of zoos from Islamabad was a violation of basic human rights. Prime Minister Mian Shahbaz Sharif, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah and Chairman CDA Capt Retd Nurul Amin Mengal should be immediately reinstated or emergency basis.-DNA

China outcompetes US in peace race

he foreign ministers of Iran and Saudi Arabia met in China on Thursday, the first formal meeting between the two countries'

top diplomats in more than seven years.

The meeting was aimed at activating the terms of a deal reached between the two countries last month to resume their diplomatic ties. The two sides agreed to proceed with the necessary measures to open their respective embassies in Teheran and Riyadh, and to enhance their coordination to facilitate exchanges.

It is further confirmation that Teheran and Riyadh have agreed to end their diplomatic rift and re-establish ties, a reconciliation that was facilitated by the mediation of China. The meeting of Saudi Arabia's Minister

of Foreign Affairs Prince Faisal bin Farhan and his Iranian counterpart Hossein Amirabdollahian in Beijing is not only a testament to the two countries' resolve to mend their relations that have been strained by years of tension and conflict, but also the key role China is playing in promoting peace and development in the Middle East.
With Saudi Arabia and Iran reaching an accord, it has raised hopes that it will mark the start of a domino effect in the region, with other

countries choosing to put aside their differences in favor of peace, stability and development. The Middle East was subject to colonialism and, divided by the imperialist powers, it has long been convulsed by conflicts, with countries played against each other to serve the ambitions and interests of the colonial powers in their competition for influence. After the Suez Crisis in 1956, the United States was for decades the main external factor in regional affairs, flexing both its diplomatic and military muscles in pursuit of its own agenda.

That has been the primary reason why the Middle East has been wracked by turmoil in recent decades. What the Middle East has needed is a round table, what the US has provided are the seeds of discord and weapons. The US Department of State even reported that US arms exports to the Middle East had risen by 49 percent to \$205.6 billion in fiscal year 2022.

The US always views China as a competitor, but the two are actually participants in different races. While the US is in self-started arms races with any nation it dislikes, China is in a race to bring peace and prosperity to every corner of the world.

Believing that the future of the Middle East should always be in the hands of the countries in the region, China has said that it looks forward to seeing closer communication between Saudi Arabia and Iran and stands ready to continue playing a positive and constructive role in facilitating dialogue between them and among other parties in the region which are at odds with one another. History will prove peace prevails over war.

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Child poverty

inisters rarely talk about the growing number of children living in poverty in Britain. That is because it is a symptom of political failure. Progress made on tackling child poverty during the first decade of this century is being reversed. In 2021, an additional and the state of the state 350,000 children were living in relative poverty, defined as households that have 50% less than the average income. By 2027, child poverty is expected to be the highest since 1998. This should sound alarm bells in government.Recent research from the Child Poverty Action Group confirms the scale of destruction caused by Conservative policies. George Osborne led the charge with his two-child limit on benefits, which came into effect in 2017. This introduced a cap which meant that anyone with a larger family would go without child tax credit or universal credit for a ers". "Quite simply, we have been encouraging working-age people to have children and not work," David Cameron said in 2012.

On all counts, it has failed. The cap had minimal effect on the number of children born (a good thing, given Britain's dwindling fertility rate and the murky ethics of punishing the poor for having children). It has pushed larger families, more than half of whom are in work, into deeper poverty, affecting 1.5 million children. Mr Osborne's policy was premiud. ised on the notion that people who use benefits are a static group who respond to narrow financial incentives. Yet having a child is not a cost-benefit calculation, and the number of people who claim benefits is not fixed. Parents who were previously secure may need to apply for benefits after a redundancy, as happened during the pandemic. Moreover, so long as wages remain low, working additional hours won't plug the hole that this cap has blown in family budgets.

There is no reason to retain the cruel two-child policy. A related problem is the absence of any national strategy for tackling child poverty. The 2016 Welfare Reform Act, another brainchild of Mr Osborne's, repealed the earlier Child Poverty Act, including its goal of ending child poverty in the UK by 2020. As a result, the issue has drifted further from the minds of ministers, while euphemistic subcategories have taken the place of coherent definitions. New Labour lifted about 800,000 children out of relative poverty, an admirable achievement that is now being eroded. The gains made on child poverty during the early 2000s were fragile because they relied on large increases in cash transfers that were swept away after the Conservatives took power. A more generous benefits system is urgently needed, but any future Labour government should also look to insulate it from political caprice. That would mean raising wages in lowpaid sectors, building an affordable childcare system so that parents can access employment, and providing a sustainable solution to escalating housing costs that are pushing renters into poverty. Poor children live in poor families - fixing this must take priority.

Israel's violence is open terrorism - stop calling it 'clashes

Belén Fernández

Nor would one describe the United States's lethal 2015 bombing of a hospital in Kunduz, Afghanistan as a "clash" between a medical facility and an AC-130 gunship. But while clearly unethical, the Western media's obsequiousness vis-vis the Israeli narrative is nothing new. Much of this has to do with the fervent backing of the US, in particular, for the Israeli point of view, which casts victimisers as victims and slaughter as selfdefence. Perhaps the very founding of the state of Israel in 1948 - which saw thousands

ern corporate media has decided it all comes down to "clashes". The latest round of so-called "clashes" - sparked when Israeli police decided to mark the Muslim holy month of Ramadan by repeatedly attacking Palestinian worshippers at Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Mosque - has produced predictably disproportionate casualties.

Hundreds of Palestinians have been arrested and wounded as Israeli forces have once again flaunted their handiness with rubber bullets, batons, stun grenades and tear gas. In return, the police have suffered minimal injuries, while also undertaking to accompany illegal Israeli settlers into the mosque compound.

And apparently not satisfied with simply unleashing violence in Jerusalem, Israel has also launched a barrage of air strikes on the Gaza Strip and southern Lebanon following reported rocket fire. As with all previous instances of Israeli-Palestinian "clashes", the media's choice to deploy such terminology serves to obscure the Israeli monopoly on violence and the fact that Israel kills, maims and mutilates at an astronomically higher rate than its supposed counterpart in "clashing". It also obscures the reality that Palestinian violence is in response to a now nearly-75-year-old Israeli policy defined by the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians, the occupation of Palestinian land and the periodic perpetration of massacres - pardon, "clashes".

Take your pick of contemporary, Israeli military assaults and you'll find manoeuvres like Operation Protective Edge, the euphemism for the 2014 slaughter of 2,251 people in the Gaza Strip, including 551 children. Over a period of 22 days starting in December 2008, Operation Cast

border protests, the Israeli military killed hundreds of Palestinians and wounded thousands. And in May 2021, an 11-day Israeli rampage titled Operation Guardian of the Walls killed more than 260 Palestinians, approximately one-fourth of whom were children. As it so happens, this last operation was set off by – what else? – "clashes" at Al-Aqsa Mosque. This bit of trivia has prompted certain news outlets to fret about what the current "spiralling bloodshed" between Israelis and Palestinians may portend - another media catchphrase that ultimately whitewashes Israel's predominant role in the shedding of blood. It is difficult, of course, to find any linguistic or moral equivalent to the media obsession with reporting Israeli savagery as "clashes". One would not perceive an elk as "clashing" with a hunter's rifle, just as one would not perceive a "clash" between a human neck and a guillotine.

Nor would one describe the United States's lethal 2015 bombing of a hospital in Kunduz, Afghanistan as a "clash" between a medical facility and an AC-130 gunship. But while clearly unethical, the Western media's obsequiousness vis--vis the Israeli narrative is nothing new. Much of this has to do with the fervent backing of the US, in particular, for the Israeli point of view, which casts victimisers as victims and slaughter as self-defence. Perhaps the very founding of the state of Israel in 1948 - which saw thousands of Palestinians massacred and more than 500 Palestinian villages destroyed - was in the end nothing more than one big "clash". To be sure, Israel's long-term propaganda campaign to conflate Palestinians with terrorism continues to pay considerable media dividends. This is the case even

ere we go again. The state of Israel is committing unchecked barbarism against Palestinians and the West-against Palestinians against Palestinians and the West-against Palestinians against Palestinian same level of humanity as Israelis. In February of this year, for example, The New Yorker magazine's Lawrence Wright tweeted a video of Israeli soldiers shoving and kicking Palestinian peace activist Issa Amro while Wright was interviewing him in the occupied West Bank city of Hebron. The New Yorker writer's takeaway: "I can't stop thinking how dehumanising the occupation is on the young soldiers charged with enforcing it". In other words: Israeli soldiers are victims of moral degradation and dehumanisation while Palestinians don't really ever get to be humans

> Now, as Israeli security forces proceed to dehumanise and be dehumanised in Jerusalem and Gaza, the whole jargon about "clashes" only validates the idea that Israel is fundamentally justified in its violence, which is cast as merely part of a fair, tit-for-tat competition between two equitable sides. In August 2022, a three-day assault by the Israeli army on Gaza killed at least 44 Palestinians, including 16 children - the bloodiest episode since Operation Guardian of the Walls in May 2021. Exactly zero Israelis were killed as a result of the August affair and yet, the Western media were still standing dutifully by with breathless reports of "clashes". As I noted in an article

in the first place.

talk of "clashes".

for Al Jazeera at the time, the online version of the Cambridge Dictionary defines terrorism as "(threats of) violent action for political purposes". And the more often we remind ourselves that Israel is literally terrorising Palestinians, the sooner, perhaps, we can put a stop to all this

China is happy to let the United States shoulder securi-

ty responsibility in the Gulf as long as its military pro-

Courtesy: Al Jazeera

The fallacy of a US withdrawal from the Middle East

James M. Dorsey

There is no coherent Indo-Pacific strategy that does not include the region's Western approach: the Arabian Sea with Oman, Yemen, Somalia, India, and Pakistan as littoral states. In other words, a continued US commitment to security in the Middle East or West Asia, however reconfigured, has to be part and parcel of any Indo-Pacific strategy. Mini-lateral alliances like I2U2 that brings together the United States, India, the United Arab Emirates. and Israel with a focus on economics and nonconventional security such as food production testify to the importance of the Gulf and the Arabian Sea.

Moreover, the recent

merica is in decline. Eclipsed by China's rise, it is shifting attention from the Middle East to the Indo-Pacific. That is one refrain in the analysis of three seemingly paradigm-challenging developments in the past month: a Chinese-mediated restoration of diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran, the kingdom's association with the China-led, security-focused Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, and a possible Russian-facilitated revival of diplomatic ties between Saudi Arabia and Syria. The geopolitical importance of these developments is too early to tell. While significant in and of themselves, they raise as many questions as they provide answers. Their ultimate impact remains uncertain. At the same time, these developments, although seemingly sidelining the United States, have not changed facts on the ground. Furthermore, they do not suggest tectonic plate shifting. Geography is one immutable fact. There is no coherent Indo-Pacific strategy that does not include the region's Western approach: the Arabian Sea with Oman, Yemen, Somalia, India, and Pakistan as littoral states. In other words, a continued US commitment to security in the Middle East or West Asia, however reconfigured, has to be part and parcel of any Indo-Pacific strategy. Mini-lateral alliances like I2U2 that brings together the United States, India, the United Arab Emirates, and Israel with a focus on economics and non-conventional security such as food production testify to the importance of the Gulf and the Arabian Sea. Moreover, the recent China and Russia-related developments did not happen in a vacuum. They reflect a global rebalancing of power rather than the eclipse of one power by another. Initially, the rebalancing towards a multipolar world involves the United States and China. However, it is only a matter of time before India emerges as the world's third-largest economy and claims its seat at the top table. In that multipolar environment, middle powers like Saudi Arabia determined not to be caught in a renewed Cold War in which they are forced to align themselves with any one side of the divide, are accruing increased agency and leverage as they play all sides against the middle.Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman appeared to be flexing his enhanced muscles when he reportedly told associates late last year that he was no longer interested in pleasing the US saying he wants something in return for anything he gives Washington. Meanwhile, depending on the outcome of the Ukraine war, Gulf states may find that Russia is, at this point, a middle rather than a global power even if that is not how it seeks to project itself.

A frigate armed with hypersonic cruise missile, the Admiral Gorshkov, this week became the first Russian warship to dock in Saudi Arabia in Russia's latest projection of itself as a global power. The vessel arrived after participating in exercises off the coast of South Africa and together with China and Iran in the Arabian Sea.

Even so, while Saudi Arabia and Iran may have had good reason to opt for China as the sponsor of their improved relations, it is not clear why the kingdom would need Moscow to restore its relations with Syria

If Saudi Arabia and Syria reestablish relations and involve Russia, it would likely be a gesture at a time when the country is sanctioned by the United States, Europe, and some of their Asian allies rather than because Moscow had a substantial contribution to make. Earning Russian and Chinese brownie points makes complete sense. Rattled by a decade of statements by US officials and actions that cast doubt on America's continued commitment to Gulf security, Middle Eastern states seek to hedge their bets. They do so as much based on perceptions as on facts. The role of perceptions is magnified by the US's failure to clearly define its commitment to Gulf security and communicate that effectively. The US's failure to do so looms large as facts on the ground don't bear out perceptions. In a just published study, Christopher K. Colley, a security expert at the United Arab Emirates National Defence College, concluded that "America's forward military presence (in the Middle East) is not declining, nor even remaining stable, but in fact has increased over the past decade." Based on data from the International Institute for Strategic Studies, Mr. Colley noted that from 2008 to 2022, the US military increased its presence in Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, and Djibouti. Nor has there been any significant shift in weapon sourcing by Middle Eastern states, according to Mr. Colley. Taking fighter jets as a measure, he calculated that upwards of 56 per cent of fighters in the air forces of Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait, and Oman are US-made with France making up much of the remainder. "The percentage of Russian and Chinese warplanes in those countries is zero," Mr. Colley said. "With the United States supplying an estimated 75 percent of Saudi weapons systems, which require spare parts, repairs, and upgrades, the structural links between Washington and Riyadh are not only robust but create powerful economic, political, and security lobbies with vested interests in solving disagreements," Mr. Colley added. Mr. Colley concluded his study before the United States decided in late March to deploy ageing A-10 attack planes to the Middle East to replace more advanced combat aircraft that will be shifted to the Pacific and Europe. It's not clear what impact the replace-

ment may have on Gulf and Chinese security consider-

jection is reliable and credible. Many Chinese analysts assume that the United States will maintain its commitment for the foreseeable future. The question is whether the replacement of warplanes reduces the commitment's credibility. For the moment, the replacement is unlikely to alter Chinese calculations. Nevertheless, with the rapid modernization of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and its navy, China has increasingly acquired the

capability to deploy forces to the Middle East to secure its interests. Still, Mr. Colley suggested that "we are a long way away from the time when the Chinese military could directly take part in combat operations, such as missile defense, to protect one of its 'comprehensive strategic partners' from an attack." Even so, China's deployment considerations are as much political as they are military. With good relations on all sides of the region's divides, China fears that an enhanced security posture could force it to disrupt its carefully constructed balance if it is forced to take military action against any one party in case of a serious threat. It's a very different picture when it comes to Russia. Even without the growing cost of the Ukraine war and US and European sanctions, Russia's economy, far smaller than that of either the United States or China, would struggle to shoulder the brunt of regional security in the Middle East. In addition, the size of Russia's navy limits the country's ability to create a security umbrella far from its shores. Nor does it have the kind of air force that could provide cover on the open seas. For now, this means that there is no real alternative to the US security umbrella in the Gulf. But that doesn't stop Gulf states from diversifying their military suppliers. In the last year, for example, the UAE signed agreements to purchase substantial weapons systems from France, South Korea, China, Indonesia, Turkey, and Israel. Except for China, its more recent suppliers are all US allies or partners. At the same time, the sustainability of the American umbrella is less a question of US decline and more one of how the United States will define its interests and role in the world - rather than by its diminishing need for Middle Eastern oil and gas "A (US) pullout from the Middle East would essentially mean that Washington has abandoned its role' as a superpower and systemic leader. So, "a central question for the next 10 to 20 years is how much the United States will bene-

fit from its security umbrella in the region relative to the gains

of other states-primarily but not exclusively China," Mr.

Terrorists

in Pakistan using...

From Page 01

killed, while 734 were injured in 262 terrorist

attacks last year. The Tal-

iban spokesperson however rejected claims that it has supplied TTP fight-

ers with US weapons and equipment. "If some weap-

ons are being smuggled,

they are far fewer and not

of much concern," the

report quoted Zabihullah

Mujahid, a Taliban spokes-

NSC

announces

to start...

From Page 01

all-out comprehensive oper-

ation – with renewed vigour

and determination - with

the [help] of the entire na-

tion and the government,

which will rid the country of

the menace of terrorism,'

the statement mentioned.

This all-around and compre-

hensive operation to elimi-

nate the scourge of terror-

ism in all its forms from

man said. - Agencies

Briefs

Govt says CJP 'partial', wants his resignation

From Page 01 the need for "judicial facilitation" was and questioned why the judges distanced themselves from the issue. According to the minister, the decision is unprecedented in the history of the judiciary and the Constitution. She questioned why Justice Ijazul Ahsan was chosen for the three-member bench who, according to her, was a "controversial" judge.

"If a constitutional crisis arises from the Supreme Court itself then it raises the question who will trust its decisions," she questioned. The federal minister stated that despite all the factors involved, a decision is made and imposed on the government to follow it.

Marriyum said that political parties were present in court but their voices were not heard, adding that the lawyers from all political parties were present, yet none of them were given a chance to speak. "But Asad Umar was invited [to the court] and was asked to provide details about the economy." The minister raised the question of whether the reason for this was because former prime minister Imran Khan and PTI were seeking elections.

Justice Minallah endorses...

From Page 01 President Arif Alvi for polls in Punjab and Governor Ghulam Ali for elections in KP. The majority judgement, given by CJP Bandial, Justice Akhtar, and Justice Mazhar, however, allowed the ECP to propose a poll date that deviates from the 90-day deadline by the "barest minimum", in case of any practical difficulty.

Justice Mandokhail and Justice Shah - who were among the four judges who had written additional notes in the Feb 23 order - dissented with the ruling. In a joint dissent note, the two top court judges said that the suo motu proceedings initiated by the CJP were "wholly unjustified", besides being initiated with "undue haste".

In his 25 page-long note, Justice Minallah mentioned the various case proceedings that took place on the matter since the assemblies were dissolved in January. He has also mentioned the Lahore High Court's Feb 10 verdict where it ordered the ECP to immediately announce the date for elections in Punjab. Justice Minallah observed that petitions were filed seeking contempt of court proceedings to reinforce the LHC's order but that the Supreme Court had "no reason to doubt the ability and competence" of the former.

He said that the written or der of the hearing held on Feb 23 included a separate note from Justice Yahya Afridi, who had dismissed the petitions on the ground of maintainability. "The reasoning recorded in the short order was persuasive and I had no hesitation in concurring with the decision regarding dismissal of the petitions. I had reiterated my decision by recording my note in the

order dated 24.02.2023.

"I have had the privilege of reading the detailed reasoning recorded by my learned brothers, Syed Mansoor Ali Shah and Jamal Khan Mandokhail, JJs and I agree with their opinion, particularly regarding the final outcome of the petitions and the suo motu assumption of jurisdiction by a majority of 4 to 3 because this was the understanding in the meeting held in the anteroom on 27.02.2023. It is noted that I had not recused nor had any reason to dissociate myself," he said.

Regarding Article 184(3) of the Constitution (matters of public importance), the judge said that invocation of jurisdiction under the article and the exercise of discretion relating to the constitution of benches and fixation of cases were crucial in the context of preserving public trust and confidence. "The process of constitution of benches and allocation of cases must be transparent, fair and impartial. The court must always show extreme restraint in matters which involve the political stakeholders.

Aleem Dar receives guard of honour in final Test

Dar also shed light on his journey as an umpire which included being voted for the ICC Umpire of the Year for three consecutive years between 2009 and 2011

SPORT DESK

DHAKA: Renowned Pakistani umpire Aleem Dar received a guard of honour after officiating in his last Test match as an ICC Elite Panel umpire during the fixture between Bangladesh and Ireland in Mirpur on Friday. Bangladesh won the match on the final day by seven wickets after successfully chasing down a target of 138 runs. Dar's exit from the elite panel after 19 years was confirmed by the ICC on March 16 in a press release.

"Dar has had a long and celebrated career as an interna-tional umpire. He made his international debut in 2000 and quickly rose through the ranks, with his sound decisions in matches earning him acclaim from the players and fans," the ICC said.

"Dar was appointed to the ICC International Panel of Umpires in 2002 and officiated at the 2003 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup in South Africa. Dar continued his rise as he was appointed as a member of



Dar officiated a total of 438 international matches over the course of his illustrious career.

"It has been a long journey, honour of umpiring the world over and what I have achieved is something I did not even dream of when I started in the profession," Dar said.
"Though I am still keen to

continue as an international umpire, I felt it was now the right time, after 19 years on the road to step away from the Elite panel and provide an opportunity to someone from the International Panel. My message to umpires the world over is to work hard, maintain discipline and never stop learning," he added.

Klopp calls for Liv-

erpool reaction

against Arsenal

LIVERPOOL: Jurgen Klopp says his struggling Liverpool

team must show "reaction after reaction" when they face

Premier League leaders Arsenal at Anfield on Sunday.

The Reds are 10 points behind fourth-placed Manchester

United and face an uphill task to qualify for next season's

Champions League. Liverpool have taken just one point

from their past three games - all away - but have won

nine of their 13 league matches at Anfield this season.

'We are at home and still have to show reaction after re-

action after reaction -- we have to -- and improvement,"

Klopp said on Friday. "That's what we will absolutely try

on Sunday." A much-changed Liverpool side drew 0-0 at

Chelsea in midweek after defeats at Bournemouth and

Manchester City. "We have to change, we have to find

a basis we can build on," said Klopp, whose side ham-

mered Manchester United 7-0 in their last home game in

early March "First step; intensity, desire, passion, Good

at Chelsea, really, that was good. The rest, not so much.

But it's fine -- let's go from there." Klopp, who admitted

his team were low on confidence, said the Anfield factor

Lauding Dar's contributions, ICC CEO Geoff Allardice said: "Aleem's contribution to international cricket and to the ICC has been truly remarkable. Consistently elite performances over such a long period saw him enjoy enormous respect across all involved in international cricket. I wish Aleem all the best for the future and I am sure his involvement in the game will continue for many years to come." Dar also shed light on his journey as an umpire which included being voted for the ICC Umpire of the Year for three consecutive years between 2009 and 2011 but I have enjoyed every bit of it. I have had the pleasure and

> Pakistan will also include efforts at the political, diplomatic, security, economic, and social levels. A high-level committee has also been formed in this regard and will make recommendations regarding the implementation and limitations within two weeks, the

> > statement said. The meeting, according to the statement, emphasised comprehensive national security - in which the relief of the people was central. 'The forum was informed that the government was taking steps in this regard." The meeting acknowledged the sacrifices and efforts of the security forces for providing peace to the nation. The forum reiterated its commitment to continue its activities till terrorism is rooted out.

High value target

From Page 01

Gulzar Imam was also instrumental in the formation of Baloch Raji Aajoi Sangar (BRAS) and remained its Operational Head. His visits to Afghanistan and India are also on record; his linkages with Hostile Intelligence Agencies (HIAs) are being investigated. Reportedly, HIAs also tried to exploit him to work against the state of Pakistan & its national interests. He was apprehended after an innovatively conceived, carefully planned and meticulously executed operation, spanned over months over various geo-

The arrest of Gulzar Imam Shambay is a serious blow to BNA as well as other militant groups, which have been attempting to destabilize the hard-earned peace in Balochistan, Apprehension of a militant leader of this stature demonstrates the capability and resolve of LEAs to uproot the menace of terrorism as well as speaks volumes about the successes garnered through supreme sacrifices of unsung heroes.

arrested...

BNA had been responsible for dozens of violent terrorist attacks in Pakistan including attacks on Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) Installations in Panjgur and Noshki. Gulzar Imam also remained as deputy to Brahamdagh Bugti in Baloch Republican Army (BRA) till 2018, the ISPR said.

graphical locations.

we practised a lot," she said. "We just repeated it yesterthe series will be announced soon," she concluded. plause to remember Brazil Bronze.-Agencies Arsenal brace for Liverpool test as relegation battle heats up

Nottingham Forest owner Evangelos Marinakis said Steve Cooper would remain in charge of the struggling club but warned results must "improve immediately"

LONDON: Arsenal face a test of their Premier League title credentials against Liverpool this weekend as the scramble to avoid relegation intensifies.

Manchester United and Newcastle will seek to consolidate their positions in the top four, while Frank Lampard takes charge for Chelsea's visit to Wolves after returning to Stamford Bridge as caretaker manager.

AFP Sport looks at some of the key talking points ahead

of the action. Arsenal travel to Anfield on Sunday seeking an eighth consecutive Premier League win as they close in on a first English top-flight title for 19 years. On paper, a match against faltering Liverpool does not look the toughest of tasks but Jurgen Klopp's team are a tougher proposition at home than away, winning nine of their 13 league matches at Anfield this season. Klopp saw positives in the goalless draw against Chelsea in midweek after three consecutive defeats in all competitions, praising his men for their attitude.

"Now let's carry on," he said. "Anfield is waiting for us and we want to deliver. We have another 10 games to play and

the next one is Arsenal." The Gunners, who have not won at Anfield in the league since 2012, face a daunting set of fixtures in April, with matches against Manchester City and Chelsea to come later in the month.

But if they beat Liverpool, even defending champions City, eight points behind Arsenal with a game in hand, might begin to lose belief they can catch their title rivals. Marcus Rashford was

ner in Manchester United's victory against Brentford on Wednesday, but Erik ten Hag is painfully aware that his side are over-reliant on the England forward. United's 1-0 win at Old Traf-

to do and we did good." The

Dutch coach - yet to taste

defeat as England boss - said

she felt "privileged" to reach

"I'm very happy working

here," she said. "Such

an incredible group. The

team is so committed, they

want to learn every day.'

England secured their place

in the showpiece match by

beating Germany 2-1 in the

Euro 2022 final last year

while Brazil beat Colombia

1-0 to win their eighth Copa

The crowd of more than

83,000 and the players

took part in a minute's ap-

America Femenina title.

30 games unbeaten.

once again the match-winford, which lifted them back

into the top four, was their first in the Premier League

cember, before kick-off.

England started strongly,

playing with swagger and

assurance and limiting the

visitors, without injured

record scorer Marta, to

Lucy Bronze stung the

hands of goalkeeper Leti-

cia from distance and at the

other end Jess Carter made

a crucial block to deny the

lively Geyse. England got

the reward they deserved

in the 23rd minute when

Manchester United for-

ward Toone finished a

flowing move down the

right, connecting sweet-

ly with a cross from

occasional breaks.

since mid-February. Ten Hag finally ran out of patience with the blunt Wout Weghorst but despite their dominance, United were unable to add a second goal to

Rashford's first-half strike. The Red Devils have not won a league match without Rashford being on the scoresheet since before the World Cup. Ten Hag, whose side host Sean Dyche's Everton on Saturday, admits it is "the truth" that United are too reliant on Rashford, who has 28 goals in all competitions this season. But finding a solution is not easy. Weghorst has scored just twice since he joined on loan in January and Anthony Martial is finding his feet again after an injury-ravaged season. The pressure at the bottom of the Premier League is growing by the week, with clubs taking drastic measures in the fight for survival.—Agencies

Dar pulls out of

WB-IMF...

From Page 01 Economic Affairs Sardar Ayaz Sadiq would also not go to the United States due to the prevailing uncertain political conditions. The economic affairs minister always represented Pakistan at the World Bank. Ayaz was considered very close to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and also handled the political affairs of the allied parties.

The finance minister's decision to pull out might also lead to cancellation of meetings with his Saudi Arabia counterpart, and the UK state minister for development. Finance Secretary Hamed Yaqoob Sheikh and Economic Affairs Secretary Kazim Niaz would represent the government at the WB-IMF spring meetings. A secretary was considered equal to a deputy minister and they might still be able to meet some of the high-ranking foreign officials.

the Elite Panel of ICC Umpires in 2004. He was the first Pakistani to be appointed to the Elite Panel," it added. Pakistan vs NZ: PCB

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Friday announced national men's team management for the upcoming T20I and ODI series against New Zealand. Rehan-ul-Haq, the general manager of two-time Pakistan Super League (PSL) champions Islamabad United, has been appointed team manager.

New Zealand's former Test cricketer Grant Bradburn will be the head coach with Abdul Rehman as his assistant. Andrew Puttick will come as batting coach followed by Umar Gul's extension as bowling coach.

Reportedly, the team management has been appointed in the loop with a potential team director in the future, Mickey Arthur. The former head coach of the

national team is likely to be confirmed to take up the post after the home New Zealand tour.

Bradburn and Puttick have been appointed for the New Zealand series and will arrive in Lahore on 11 April. The PCB will confirm the Pakistan team management for post-New Zealand series following the completion of the relevant recruitment processes, which are presently ongo-

Pakistani Squads

Afghan wheelchair-

bound cricket team

to visit Pakistan

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Wheelchair Cricket Coun-

cil (PWCC) on Friday announced that Afghani-

stan's wheelchair-bound cricket team will visit

Pakistan on next month to play three T20Is and

Rookhsana Rajpoot, President of Pakistan Wheelchair

Cricket Council said that it will be a momentous event

as it will be for the first time in the history that an inter-

national wheelchair cricket team will travel to Pakistan

for a series. She said it would also be for the first time

in the history of wheelchair cricket that an international

one-day match would be played between the two teams.

"A new history will be made in the series. The event will

be an important milestone as it will help promote wheel-

chair cricket in the region," she added. Rookhsana said

preparations for hosting the series had started, adding

that separate Pakistan teams would be formed for the

ODI and T20 matches. "The final dates and venues for

two ODIs against Pakistan.

T20I: Babar Azam (captain), Shadab Khan (vice-captain), Faheem Ashraf, Fakhar Zaman, Haris Rauf, Iftikhar Ahmed, Ihsanullah, Imad Wasim, Mohammad Haris, Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Rizwan, Naseem Shah, Saim Ayub, Shaheen

and Zaman Khan ODI: Babar Azam (captain),

Shadab Khan (vice-captain), Abdullah Shafique, Fakhar Zaman, Haris Rauf, Haris Sohail, Ihsanullah, Imam-ul-Haq, Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Rizwan, Mohammad Wasim Jnr, Naseem Shah, Salman Ali Agha, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Shan Masood and Usama Mir. Reserves: Abbas Afridi, Abrar Ahmed and Tayyab Tahir

Player Support Personnel Rehan Ul Haq (manager), Grant Bradburn (head coach), Abdul Rehman (assistant to head coach), Andrew Puttick (batting coach), Umar Gul (bowling coach), Cliffe Deacon (physiotherapist), Drikus Saaimon (strength and conditioning

announce team management Ahsan Iftikhar Nagi (media and digital manager), Major (retd) Azhar Arif (security manager), Ammar Ahsan (videographer), Dr Najeeb Soomro (team doctor) and Malang Ali (masseur).

Series schedule (T20Is to start at 9pm; ODIs to begin at 3.30pm): 14 Apr – 1st T20I, Lahore 15 Apr – 2nd T20I, Lahore

17 Apr – 3rd T20I, Lahore 20 Apr - 4th T20I, Rawal-

24 Apr - 5th T20I, Rawalpindi 27 Apr - 1st ODI, Rawal-

29 Apr - 2nd ODI, Rawal-

the 93rd minute. With no

extra time, the game went

straight to penalties. Geor-

gia Stanway, Rachel Daly

and Alex Greenwood scored

from the spot to put England

Kerolin kept the contest

alive but Kelly - who scored

the winning goal in the Euro-

pean Championship final at

Wembley last year - slotted

home coolly to seal the win.

Wiegman said her team, pre-

paring for the World Cup in

Australia and New Zealand,

which starts in July, had not

had much chance to practise

penalties. "We practised yes-

terday and before the Euros

3-1 ahead.

3 May – 3rd ODI, Karachi

could be crucial. "It's no secret that the combination of 5 May - 4th ODI, Karachi our people and the ground and then the boys is a pretty 7 May - 5th ODI, Karachi. good combination.-APP

England beat Brazil to win Women's Finalissima

LONDON: England beat Brazil 4-2 in a dramatic penalty shootout to win the first-ever Women's Finalissima at Wembley on Thursday, with Euro 2022 hero Chloe Kelly scoring the decisive spot-kick after a 1-1 draw. Sarina Wiegman's European champions were on course for a narrow win after taking the lead in a first half they dominated through a wellworked team goal finished off by Ella Toone. But Copa America Femenina winners Brazil were transformed after the break and threatened to spoil the party when Andressa Alves fired home from close range in



Oil prices

decline with recession

fears triggered

ANKARA: Oil prices decreased on Friday after weak economic data in the

US sparked recession fears.

International benchmark

Brent crude traded at

\$84.61 per barrel at 10.08

a.m. local time (0708

GMT), a 0.45% drop from

the closing price of \$84.99

a barrel in the previous

At the same time, Ameri-

can benchmark West Texas

Intermediate (WTI) trad-

ed at \$80.22 per barrel, a

0.48% fall after the previous

session closed at \$80.61 a

Disappointing private jobs

figures in the US hinted at

a possible recession that

would lower oil demand in

trading session.

barrel.

Briefs

Erdoğan, Raisi discuss

ANKARA: President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his Iranian counterpart Ebrahim Raisi held a phone call on Friday focusing on bilateral relations, regional matters, as well as Israel's attacks on the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the Presidency's Directorate of Communications said.

"The Islamic world should be united against Israel's attacks in Palestine," Erdo an reportedly told Raisi as Israeli airstrikes on the besieged Gaza Strip continued for the second day this week. The Israeli army launched air attacks on Gaza and southern Lebanon early Friday. The escalation follows Israeli forces' storming of the Al-Qibli Prayer Hall in the Al-Aqsa Mosque complex in occupied East Jerusalem and forcibly removing Palestinian worshippers for two nights in a row, a move that drew a strong backlash worldwide. Emphasizing the need for "reasonable thinking" in order to prevent a new cycle of violence in Palestine, Erdo an said it would be "beneficial" for all sides to adopt common sense. –**DNA**

French FM meets Iranian counterpart

PARIS: France's foreign minister has held a rare face-to-face meeting with her Iranian counterpart in China, urging Tehran to release French nationals "arbitrarily detained" in Iran, the foreign ministry said Friday.

Catherine Colonna, travelling with President Emmanuel Macron on his state visit to China, met Hossein Amir-Abdollahian in Beijing. Amir-Abdollohian was leading the Iranian delegation in separate reconciliation talks in Beijing between Iran and its once arch regional foe Saudi Arabia, China mediated the reconciliation last month in a sign of Beijing's growing clout in the Middle East. Colonna "renewed her urgent demand for the immediate release of the six French citizens who Iran is arbitrarily detaining," the French statement said.

The six are among an estimated two dozen foreigners who activists and Western governments say are being held by Iran as hostages in a bid to extract concessions. Iran's foreign ministry confirmed the meeting took place, adding that "some consular issues were also raised during the meeting". It did not specify further.

Contacts between Iran and European powers - including over the Iranian nuclear programme - have been drastically scaled down over Tehran's deadly crackdown on the protest movement that erupted in September. "The talks also focused on the situation in Iran, region al issues and the Iranian nuclear programme. The minister expressed France's concern about the attitude of the Iranian authorities on all these subjects," the statement said.-APP

France hit by gasoline shortages

PARIS: Strikes at French oil refineries have triggered fuel shortages at petrol stations across the country as protests continue against the government's plan to raise the retirement age, Le Figaro reported on Friday. In recent days, industrial action by refinery workers has intensified, leading to supply disruptions as members of French unions stopped refineries and depots from delivering fuel, the outlet said. According to the latest data compiled by the news outlet, the Valde-Marne department in Ile-de-France is the worst affected with nearly half (49.4%) of its petrol stations facing partial or complete fuel supply disruption. The second-worst-affected area was the Paris region, where 38.8% of petrol stations were experiencing shortages of at least one type of fuel as of April 6. Drivers reported problems at 39.7% of pumps in Hauts-de-Seine, while 24.2% of pumps in Indre-et-Loire were also affected, reporting little or no supply. According to Le Figaro's calculations, a total of 6.3% of filling stations across the country are now facing fuel shortages.-Agencies

10 years of BRI transformed Pakistan's economic landscape

"In Gwadar, 46 enterprises have been registered in the Free Zone while 3 companies have started production", he said

DNA

BEIJING: "We are very hopeful that this year is going to bring the momentum back to pre-Covid level as more delegations from Pakistan are coming to China for face-to-face meetings following China's relaxation on Covid-related restrictions", Pakistani Ambassador to China Moin ul Haque told China Economic Net (CEN) in an interview.

"This year is very special as it marks the 10th anniversary of the Belt and Road Initiative. Pakistan is one of the pioneers of BRI. In the past decade, CPEC has

transformed our economic landscape", he added. According to research by KTrade, a securities broker and think tank in Pakistan, CPEC energy projects have become growth drivers for Pakistan. After the addition of 9,740MW in capacity by CPEC, the access of the Pakistani population to electricity rose by 3.8 ppts in just 4 years to 75.4% in 2020, whereas in the 18 years from 1998 to 2016, the percentage of the population in Pakistan with access to electricity increased by only 1.1 ppts from 70.5% to 71.6%. Pakistan's generation capacity

increased at a 14-yr CAGR



of 2.7% pre-CPEC and 9-yr CAGR of 7.0% post-CPEC. In terms of transport infrastructure, CPEC has contributed 809km out of the 2,790km operational motorways in Pakistan, and further 813km is under con-

struction, linking different parts of the country to the main ports and enhancing its cross border connectivity. In the future, 68% of Pakistan's motorways will come from CPEC.

According to Pakistan's

Commercial Counsellor to with China on beef export, China Mr. Ghulam Qadir, looking ahead, trade, investment, and industrial cooperation hold the key for Pakistan and China.

"In Gwadar, 46 enterprises have been registered in the Free Zone while 3 companies have started production", he said.

He told CEN that the Ministry of Commerce in Pakistan and China have agreed to launch a joint study to enhance bilateral trade, economic, and investment cooperation.

Following the eligibility of Pakistani cherries to be exported to China, Pakistan is finalizing the protocol which is a huge market worth over \$10 billion.

"Other than agriculture, we also hope to add value to the base metals that are being produced in Pakistan. For example, we are exporting copper to China, but we want to export copper products, such as copper cathodes, wires, bars, rods, etc.", he added.

"We aim to enable Pakistan to become a hub of Chinese manufacturing. There's a huge gap in productivity be-tween Pakistan and China, especially in agriculture and food processing. With Chinese technology, we can fill that gap", he further added.

the world's largest oil-consuming country.
The American private sector added 145,000 jobs in March, coming in much lower than expectations of an increase of 200,000.

Economic activity in the US services sector expanded in March for a third consecutive month, but the rate of growth slowed. The non-manufacturing pur-chasing managers' index (PMI) came in at 51.2%, 3.9 percentage points lower than February's reading of

Meanwhile, a drop in US crude stocks prevented further price falls.

US commercial crude oil inventories decreased by 3.7 million barrels to 470 million barrels during the week ending March 31, according to data released by the Energy Information Administration (EIA) late Wednesday.—Aencies

Lebanon to file complaint at **UNSC** against over Israel

BEIRUT: Lebanon intends to lodge an official complaint with the UN Security Council over the deliberate Israeli "aggression" that took place early Friday, according to a Foreign Ministry statement.

The ministry said Israel had violated Lebanon's sovereignty by bombing areas in southern Lebanon.

"Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Abdallah Bou Habib instructed the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations in New York to submit an official complaint to the UN Security Council regarding the impact of the Israeli bombing and deliberate aggression at dawn today [Friday] in areas in southern Lebanon," said a ministry statement.

It called the Israeli aggression "a flagrant violation of Lebanon's sovereignty and a flagrant violation of UN Security Council Resolution 1701 ... (that) threatens the stability that the Lebanese south used to enjoy."

UN Security Council Resolution 1701 calls for a full cessation of hostilities and Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon.-Agen-

Dozens killed in Nigeria clashes

NIGER: Gunmen have attacked a rural village in northern central Nigeria, killing dozens of people, local government officials said on Friday.

The attack happened on Wednesday in Umogidi community in Benue State, where tit-for-tat clashes are common between nomadic herders and settled farmers competing for land and resources. "The 46 casualties were from the bodies of victims found and retrieved. Many people are still missing, so the number of those killed may be higher," Paul Hemba, security advisor to Benue State governor, told AFP. He blamed herdsmen who he said had been attacking local communities over the last month.

"Soldiers have been dispatched to the area, so the situation is a bit calm now.' The motive for the attack was not clear but Benue has been one of the hardest hit by clashes between farmers and herders who they accuse of destroying farmland with their cattle grazing. A representative of the national herders' association

was not immediately available for comment. Bala Ejeh, Otukpo local chairman,

government said the gunmen attacked on Wednesday afternoon when people were mourning three others killed a day earlier.-APP

Nord Stream sabotage

Yacht had traces of explosives: Report

New Desk

NEW YORK: German investigators have discovered traces of explosives on the Andromeda vacht linked to the Nord Stream sabotage that occurred last September, the New York Times has reported.

The information came from three unnamed German officials, the US outlet said in an article on Friday.

The same sources claimed that two out of the six crew members on the "pleasure" boat had used fake Bulgarian passports during the alleged operation against the gas pipelines.

In early March the Times had reported, citing US officials, that a "pro-Ukrainian group" might've been behind the attack that dis-

and 2 pipelines, which were built to deliver Russian gas to Europe via Germany. The paper's anonymous sources stressed that "no American or British nationals were involved" in the sabotage of the key energy infrastructure.

The vessel, which had allegedly been rented by the perpetrators to carry out the attack, was soon identified as the yacht Andromeda. The boat is now sitting in dry dock overlooking the Baltic Sea in north-eastern Germany, with "its innards pulled out by investigators," the NYT said.

Kremlin press-secretary Dmitry Peskov suggested earlier that the articles about Andromeda's involvement were distributed by the Western media in from the report by veteran American investigative journalist Seymour Hersh, which came shortly before the Western media reports and blamed Washington for the sabotage. According to an informed source who talked with Hersh, explosives were planted on the pipelines in the Baltic Sea back in June 2022 by US Navy divers during a NATO exercise, and detonated remotely two months later on the order of American leader Joe Biden. The White House has rejected as "utterly false and complete fiction" the findings of the Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist In its report on Friday, the NYT also quoted Johannes Riber, a naval officer and analyst at Den-

mark's Institute for Strat-

egv and War Studies, who also questioned claims of a 50-foot (15-meter) yacht being capable of carrying out an attack of such scale. likening them to a "James Bond" theory.

Andromeda could've well been a decoy or part of a broader mission, Riber suggested. But planting powerful explosives at the pipelines would've likely required an undersea drone or a mini-submarine, and a professional ship to transport it, he pointed out. However, the article also

contained comments by an unnamed pipeline expert and a professional diver, who both claimed that small bombs could've been enough to cripple the infrastructure if they were placed near a seam of the

against Israel TEHRAN: Iran has condemned latest atrocities commit-

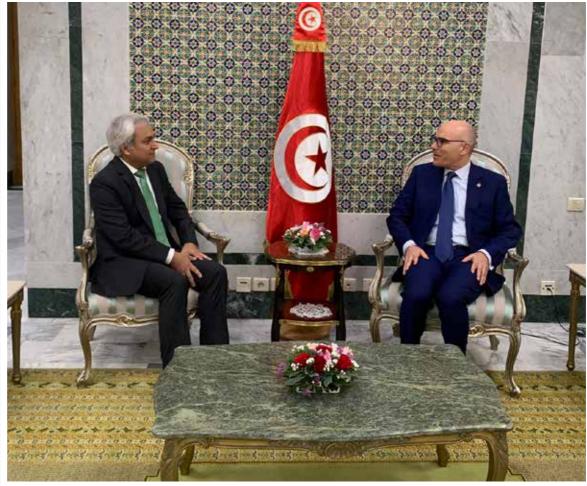
ted by the Israeli regime against civilians in southern Lebanon and the besieged Gaza Strip, urging the international community and responsible global bodies to take "effective and deterrent" action. In a statement on Friday, Foreign Ministry Spokesman Nasser Kan'ani said the latest acts of Israeli aggression was in continuation of the desecration of al-Aqsa Mosque in the occupied city of al-Quds and the regime's savage attacks on Palestinian worshippers inside the mosque's compound. The Thursday attacks violated Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity and blatantly breached the principles of international law and human rights of the oppressed Palestinian people, he said. Israeli warplanes hit targets inside Gaza following the firing of retaliatory rockets from the direction of the coastal strip over the regime's attacks on Palestinian worshippers inside al-Aqsa. The aircraft targeted the Hay al-Zeitoun area in southern Gaza City with three missiles. They also struck various other areas across the occupied enclave. Lebanese local sources said Israel targeted the Qlaileh area located between the plain of Ras el-Ain and the Rashidieh refugee camp south of the city of Tyre. The sources confirmed three Israeli missiles landed south of Tyre, two of them in agricultural areas and another in the Qlaileh Plain. Amid a rise in its retaliatory action against the Israeli aggression on al-Aqsa and Gaza, the Palestinian resistance fighters on Friday launched a new batch of missiles towards Israeli settlements.-DNA

Iran urges

global action

Saudi Arabia ranks 2nd in AI awareness

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia ranked second globally for societal awareness of artificial intelligence, according to the 2023 Artificial Intelligence Index Report by Stanford University. The report is a comprehensive resource for policymakers, researchers, and industry professionals to understand better the current situation regarding artificial intelligence and possible future trends. The report indicated that the Kingdom ranked second in the world, after China, regarding feeling positive about AI products and services during the current and future phases. The survey included several criteria, notably the societal knowledge of the benefits and value of artificial intelligence products and services. Saudi Arabia came in second place in the world, ahead of South Korea and Brazil, when talking about whether AI products and services will make the lives of the participants in the survey easier. The Kingdom was also ahead of India, France, and Russia when participants were asked about their knowledge of the benefits and value of artificial intelligence products and services. The Saudi leadership's interest in AI is prominent, as Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman indicated in his speech during the G20 Summit 2019 in Osaka. "We live in a time of scientific innovations. unprecedented technologies, and unlimited growth prospects. If used optimally, new technologies such as artificial intelligence and the Internet of Things can avoid many harms and bring the world many huge benefits," said the Crown Prince. The government established the Saudi Data and Artificial Intelligence Authority (SDAIA) in 2019 to officially manage the sector in the Kingdom. The Authority is the national reference in everything related to organization, development, and dealing with AI, driving the national agenda for Data and AI to elevate the Kingdom as a global leader in the elite league of data-driven economies. With this support, the Kingdom ranked first in the Arab world in 2020 and 22nd globally in the Global Index of Artificial Intelligence, compared to 29th in 2019.-Agencies



TUNIS: Pakistan ambassador to Tunisia, Tahir Andrabi meets Foreign Minister of Tunisia, Nabil Ammar and conveyed letter & greetings of FM Bilawal Bhutto. Both sides discussed multifaceted Pak-Tunisia relations & charted avenues to further strengthen longstanding fraternal ties. — DNA

Türkiye calls for end to Russia-Ukraine conflict

Turkish backing has been vital to sustaining moderate Syrian opposition in their last significant territorial foothold in the northwest after Assad defeated opponents across the rest of the country, aided by Russia and Iran

FOREIGN DESK

MOSCOW: Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov joined his Turkish counterpart Mevlüt Çavuşo lu on the second day of his visit to Türkiye for a news conference at the Presidential Complex. The Russia-Ukraine conflict dominated their agenda.

"We discussed regional issues and the Ukraine issue dominated our talks. We expressed our desire for an end to the conflict as soon as possible through negotiations and reiterated our support to achieve this," Çavuşo lu said.

"The war, which has been going on for more than a year, continues to harm the entire world. We once again emphasized our expectation that the war will end through negotiations on the basis of international law. We are trying to solve the problem by negotiating with both parties," Çavuşo lu stressed. Türkiye, internationally praised for its mediator role between Ukraine and Russia, has repeatedly urged Kyiv and Moscow to end the war, which has stretched to over a year.

through negotiations. Meanwhile, Lavrov said they wanted any Ukraine peace talks to focus on creating a "new world order." "Any negotiation needs to be based on considering Russian interests, Russian concerns," Lavrov said. "It should be about the principles on which the new world order will be based." He added Russia rejects a "unipolar world order led by 'one hegemon." Russia has long said it was leading a struggle against the

international stage and argues the Ukraine offensive is part of that fight. The Kremlin this week said it had no choice but to continue its more than yearlong offensive in Ukraine, seeing no diplomatic

Çavuşo lu also expressed Türkiye's heartfelt gratitude to Russia for its quick relief efforts following the Feb. 6 earthquakes, which claimed thousands of lives in Türkiye's southeast. Lavrov is the highTürkiye since the earthquakes hit. "I thank Sergey and the Russian Federation for hosting the quadrilateral meeting. We are aware that this is an issue that cannot be solved through just one meeting. We are realistic but we need to continue the dialogue. We will remain engaged with Russia for close consultation for the normalization process with Syria."

On the Syria-Türkiye talks, Lavrov said both sides had their own right-

est-ranking Russian official to visit United States' dominance over the ful interests and as mediators. Rus-

sia looked at the process that way. He said preparations were underway for a ministerial-level quadrilat eral meeting for the normalization of Turkish-Syrian ties and they have been discussing a date. Deputy foreign ministers of Türkiye, Iran, Syria and Russia met in Moscow earlier this week for normalization talks between the two neighbors. Iran and Russia are major backers of Syria's Assad regime since the beginning of the civil war in 2011. The meeting was a prelude to a higher-level meeting between foreign ministers of the countries. Russia's long-standing effort to open a channel of dialogue between Türkiye and the Bashar Assad regime paid off last year, as the defense ministers and intelligence chiefs of Türkiye, Russia and the Assad regime met in Moscow on Dec. 28.

In November, President Recep Tayyip Erdo an said a meeting with Syrian regime leader Bashar Assad was a possibility after having severed diplomatic ties with Damascus throughout the 11-year conflict. Any normalization between Ankara and Damascus would reshape the decadelong Syrian war.



Islamahar POST



Punjab polls:

PTI to finalise candidates

DNA LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI) has decided

to finalise the candidates

for the Punjab general elections. According to media, the PTI chief chaired a

meeting in this regard at

his Zaman Park residence

to discuss election prepa-

rations after the Supreme

Court (SC) announced ver-

dict dismissing October 8

polls date as earlier declared

by the Election Commission

"You all have to be pre-

pared, I'll start distributing

tickets from tomorrow,

PTI chief Imran khan told

his party workers after If-

tar. The meeting paid trib-

ute to the lawyers for "de-

fending the constitution",

reiterating that the recent

chaotic situation was a plot

against the judiciary, and

that the move to delay the

elections would be strong-

ly resisted. It was decided

with consensus that inter-

views of candidates will be

conducted from Thursday

and their names will be fi-

Weekly

inflation up

by 0.92%

DNA

ISLAMABAD: After a tem-

nalized within a week.

of Pakistan (ECP).

SATURDAY, APRIL 08, 2023 | WWW.ISLAMABADPOST.COM.PK

Briefs

China must cooperate to know Covid origins, says **WHO chief**

DNA

GENEVA: The World Health Organisation chief pressed China on Thursday to share its information about the origins of Covid-19, saying that until that happened all hypotheses remained on the table, more than three years after the virus first emerged. "Without full access to the information that China has, you cannot say this or that," said Director-General TedrosAdhanom Ghebreyesus in response to a question about the origin of the virus. "All hypotheses are on the table. That's WHO's position and that's why we have been asking China to be cooperative on this."

"If they would do that then we will know what happened or how it started. he said. The virus was first identified in the Chinese city of Wuhan in December 2019, with many suspecting it spread in a live animal market before fanning out around the world and killing nearly 7 million people.

Data from the early days of the Covid pandemic was briefly uploaded by Chinese scientists to an international database last month. It included genetic sequences found in more than 1,000 environmental and animal samples taken in January 2020 at the Huanan seafood market in Wuhan, location of the first known Covid outbreak.

Thousands of Burmese flee to Thailand after fighting

DNA

BANGKOK: Some 10,000 Burmese people have fled to Thailand to escape fierce fighting between the military and units of a powerful ethnic armed group since Wednesday, Thai authorities said. They are fleeing from ShweKokko town. controlled by a pro-military militia and home to Chi-

nese-owned casinos. This is one of the largest cross-border movements of people since a military coup two years ago. The military has not released a statement yet about the fighting. It is the latest in a civil war that has been raging since the coup in February 2021. Two years on, military government has failed to impose its authority on large areas of the country. It is battling established ethnic armed groups in border areas that have been at war with the military for decades, and recently-formed anti-coup militias that call themselves People's Defence Forces (PDFs) in much of the rest of the country. Many thousands of people have been killed and some 1.4 million have been displaced since the coup. Nearly one third of the country's population is in need of aid, according to the United Nations.

2 dead after ice storm hits Canada

TORONTO: Two people died and more than a million were without power on Thursday after an ice storm hit Canada's two most-populated provinces ahead of a holiday weekend, bringing freezing rain and strong winds that toppled trees and weighed down power lines. Just under a million people did not have power in Quebec and about 110,000 in Ontario as of 4pm according to Poweroutage.com.

Outages combined for both provinces had crossed at least 1.3 million earlier in the day. The two provinces account for more than half of Canada's total population of about 39 million. Electricity providers in both provinces were working to restore power, but repairs were expected to continue for days, meaning many Canadians could spend Easter weekend in the dark. One man was killed in Quebec when a tree fell on him, Premier Francois Legault said at a briefing, cautioning people to watch out for live wires and weak ened trees. - Agencies

Israeli jets strike Gaza as Al-Aqsa violence escalates

Israeli authorities said two people were killed during a shooting attack in the occupied West Bank on Friday

News Desk

GAZA CITY: Israeli warplanes bombed several military sites belonging to Hamas and Islamic Jihad in different areas in the Gaza Strip, from midnight until the early hours of Friday morning. The Israeli bombardment also targeted agricultural and open areas, in addition to watchtowers on the eastern border. Israel has claimed that the bombing was in response to missiles fired from the Gaza Strip toward Israeli towns in recent days. During the bombardment, Palestinian factions fired shells toward Israeli towns, most of which were intercepted by the air defense system Iron Dome. The Israeli media, quoting security sourc-

es, said that about 44 rockets were fired from Gaza during the night. The Israeli bombardment of Palestinian

sites did not cause any injuries, according

resulted in material damage to homes and properties, as well as the Al-Durra Children's Hospital, east of Gaza City.

In a press statement, the ministry said that the bombing "caused a state of confusion and fear among the medical staff, pediatric patients, and their companions." Israeli army spokesman Daniel Hagari said that Israeli planes dropped 50 tons of bombs in their bombing of the Gaza Strip during the night. AbeerIshteiwi, 50, told Arab News: "We lived through a night of terror and fear. The sound of bombing and warplanes was frightening. When the place near Al-Durra Hospital was bombed, I felt that the house moved from its place." She added: "Thank God we did not suffer

any damage, but my little boy was close to me all the time. I felt him trembling with the sounds of planes in the sky, and when the bombing happened, he started

to the Palestinian Ministry of Health, but screaming and crying, and he barely went back to sleep in the morning."

The Islamic Jihad has threatened to fire rockets into Israeli cities as long as Israel attacks the Gaza Strip. Dawood Shehab, an official of the Islamic Jihad, said: "Every bombing will be met with rockets, and every aggression will be responded to in kind. Attacking Al-Aqsa or harming worshipers...will be met with a response. These are rules of engagement that have become part of the Palestinians' fighting doctrine." Hamas is holding Israel responsible for an escalation of tensions due to attacks on Palestinian worshippers at Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. "We hold the Zionist occupation fully responsible for the dangerous escalation and blatant aggression against the Gaza Strip and our proud Palestinian people, and for what will happen in the region," it said in a statement.

"This brutal aggression against Gaza and

the continued violations of the occupation against Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa will not achieve security for the occupation, nor will it grant it victory or a right in our land and Jerusalem." Recent days have witnessed significant tension in light of the events at Al-Aqsa Mosque, with footage from the scene showing Israeli police attacking worshipers inside the mosque. Shells were fired from the Gaza Strip in response that night. Ayman Al-Rafati, a political analyst close to Hamas, told Arab News that Hamas and other Palestinian factions

are ready and anticipating all scenarios. "The resistance is ready for this scenario on all fronts, and its continued wrong assessment of events will lead to a larger and unexpected reaction," he said.

"The occupation government must realize that whenever there is a violation of the Al-Aqsa Mosque, there will be unexpected and sudden reactions."

Agency (FIA) on Friday issued summon to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) central leader Asad Umar in the prohibited funding case. According to the order, Asad Umar is directed to appear before the FIA Lahore on April 14. PTI Lahore President Sheikh Imtiaz has received summon at the party office. The sources said PTI spent millions of

rupees on its political campaign in 2013 by receiving funds from prohibited foreign sources and Asad Umar was the manager of this campaign. The sources said Asad Umar was involved in playing a key role in the use of these foreign embezzled funds.

It is noteworthy that PTI has kept the source of receiving these foreign funds secret and has not declared it in any forum. It should be remembered that FIA Lahore has registered FIR No 52/2022 dated October 5, 2022, in the prohibited funding case, in which Hamid Zaman and others have been arrested and investigated.



porary respite, the prices of essential items started increasing again in the week that ended on April 6 - with the inflation rate recording an increase of 44.49% on a yearly basis, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) on Friday reported.

The short-term inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), for the week witnessed a hike of 0.92%. During the week, of the 51 essential items monitored by the SPI based on a survey of 50 markets in 17 cities in the country, the prices of 27 of them increased, seven declined and 17 remained unchanged.

The prices of the 27 essential items increased collectively by 52.94%.

Pak risk of defaulting 'real': US think tank

DNA

WASHINGTON: A Washington-based think tank. the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), has warned that there is "a real danger that Pakistan could default on debt", which might further intensify political turmoil amid already surging terrorism.

The author of the analysis published on Thursday warned that amid skyrocketing inflation, political conflicts, and rising terrorism, the country is facing the risk of a default due to its massive external debt obligations.

The cash-strapped nation is reeling with the repercussions of a deepening political crisis - which initially began in April last year when former prime minister Imran Khan was ousted through a vote of no-confidence motion - and the derailment of the \$6.5 billion International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme.

Hafiz Naeem fires a broadside at K-Electric

DNA

KARACHI: Jamaat-e-Islami's (JI) Karachi chief Hafiz Naeemur Rehman, while terming K-Electric a "mafia", claimed on Friday that there existed white-collar criminals in the administration. Speaking about the difficulties faced by people in general, Mr Rehman said, "It is difficult for them to manage the expenses of their homes. " He praised the Al-Khidmat Foundation, saying, "The duty which the Sindh government should fulfil is being done by the Al-Khidmat Foundation.

"Many of the Bachat Bazaars that were constructed by the Sindh government are closed. The Bachat Bazaars are being installed by using the money generated from the taxes we paid," he lamented. He scolded K-Electric for charging four types of taxes.



around Taiwan for 2nd day

China also blacklisted the Hudson Institute and Ronald Reagan Library, saying the two US institutions had provided platforms and facilities for "Taiwan independence" activities by Tsai

DNA

BEIJING: China has deployed warships and aircraft near Taiwan for a second day and imposed sanctions amid anger in Beijing over this week's meeting between the selfruled island's President Tsai Ing-wen and US House Speaker Kevin McCarthy.

Three Chinese warships sailed in waters surrounding the island, which China claims as its own, while a fighter jet and an anti-submarine helicopter also crossed the island's air defence identification zone, Taiwan's Ministry of National Defence said on Friday. On Wednesday, China's Shandong aircraft carrier was spotted sailing through Taiwan's southeastern waters on its way to

the western Pacific, hours before Tsai met McCarthy in Los Angeles.

Beijing sent out repeated warnings before the meeting took place, and issued a rebuke on Thursday after the event had concluded. "China will take firm and forceful measures to firmly safeguard national sovereignty and territorial integrity," Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said.

Last August, China deployed warships, missiles and fighter jets into the waters and skies around Taiwan in its largest show of force in years after McCarthy's predecessor Nancy Pelosi visited the island. McCarthy, who is the third most senior politician in the US, had also planned to go to Taiwan but eventually decided to meet Tsai in California. Its response to the Tsai-McCarthy meeting has been more restrained so far,

but Taiwan remains on alert. On Friday, Beijing announced a tightening of sanctions on Taiwan's de facto ambassador to the US, Hsiao Bi-khim, as well as her family and any companies with which she has connections. Hsiao was previously sanctioned after Pelosi's visit.

China also blacklisted the Hudson Institute and Ronald Reagan Library, saying the two US institutions had provided platforms and facilities for "Taiwan independence" activities by Tsai. Tsai, who was first elected president in 2016, argues Taiwan's future can only be decided by its people.

BJP's Maharashtra see spike in anti-Muslim rallies

MONITORING DESK

MUMBAI: On March 30, nearly 5,000 people poured into the streets of north Mumbai to participate in a procession celebrating the Hindu festival of Ram Navami, which marks the birth of the god. Ram.

For about three hours, the procession passed through Muslim neighbourhoods, blaring incendiary songs of Hindu supremacy, waving saffron flags and provocatively chanting "Jai Shri Ram" (Hail Lord Ram, the Hindu right wing's war cry).

Young and old danced to the high-decibel speakers mounted on a truck, playing "Bharat ka bachchabachcha, Jai Shri Ram bolega" (Every child in India will be compelled to say Hail Lord Ram).

An elderly Muslim security guard, watching the procession pass through Malad, said he had not seen such a display of supremacy in years. He was among the many Muslims Al Jazeera spoke to who did not want to reveal their identities for fear of a backlash. "You don't have to belittle or disrespect other religions while celebrating your festival," he said. "It is particularly humiliating to witness it during the month of Ramadan. The music gets louder and people get aggressive, especially while passing by a mosque or through a Muslim area. It is provocative."

And that is exactly what happened a couple of hours later. The procession slowed down and the volume of the speakers was increased as it reached a mosque where Muslims were offering their evening prayers. The situation got tense when some Muslims complained about their prayers being disrupted. A row broke out between the two communities and stones were pelted. The police say they arrested nearly two dozen people for allegedly throwing stones. The official version of the incident says a Muslim man threw a stone at the participants in the Ram Navami rally after his request to lower the volume was rejected. But the residents of Malad say they were at the receiving end of aggression by the Hindu marchers.

The procession was organised by two far-right Hindu groups - Bajrang Dal and Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP). But the nature of the procession was in the same vein as several rallies held in the past six months across the state of Maharashtra, home to nearly 13 million Muslims or 11.5 percent of its population.

Observers say the Ram Navami procession in state capital Mumbai was part of a concerted attempt to ignite religious tensions in the western Indian state that had remained relatively peaceful at a time when attacks on Muslims in other parts of India were rising. - DNA

White House blames Afghan pull-out on Trump

Kirby said that Mr Biden had "acted on the best military judgment and the best assessments from the intelligence community" but "some of those assessments turned out to be wrong"

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WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden's administration has blamed its chaotic with drawal from Afghanistan on his predecessor, Donald Trump, in a new report. A 12page summary of the report says Mr Biden was "severely constrained" by Mr Trump's decisions, including a 2020 deal with the Taliban to end the war. But the report also acknowledges that the government should have begun the evacuation of civilians earlier. Mr Trump responded that the White House was playing a "disinformation game". The deadly pull-out in August 2021 ended America's longest war.

Thirteen US soldiers and nearly 200 Afghans were killed as US troops scrambled to evacuate more than 120,000 people in a matter of days. A review of decisions and actions leading up to the withdrawal, conducted by the State Department and the Pentagon, was sent privately to Congress on Thursday. Republicans in the US House of Representatives, who are investigating the pull-out, had been demanding to see

The document remains confidential, but a summary of its conclusions - put together by the White House National Security Council with input from President Biden himself - has been made available to the public. When the Afghan government collapsed, there were desperate scenes at Kabul airport as huge crowds tried to flee the Taliban. On 26 August, an attack at the airport by two suicide bombers killed 170 Afghans and 13 US soldiers. US Marine to Congress in March on Afghan pull-out: "There was an inexcusable lack of accountability" The US carried out a drone strike in Kabul days later, saying it had targeted a suicide bomber, only to admit that the missile had killed 10 civilians, including seven children. British troops were also involved in the withdrawal, which Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said at the time had put the UK "in a very difficult position". On Thursday, President Biden's national

security spokesman, John Kirby, blamed

the chaos on a depleted operation in Af-

- and in some cases deliberate degradation" by the Trump administration.

Mr Kirby said that phrase refers to the agreement the former president had struck with the insurgents a year earlier in Qatar to end the war, as well as the drawdown of US troops during Mr Trump's tenure, the freeing of thousands of Taliban prisoners and the hollowing out of the visa program used to evacuate Afghan allies

"Transitions matter," said Mr Kirby, as he presented a summary of the report. "That's the first lesson learned here. And the incoming administration wasn't afforded much of one." Mr Trump shot back on social media within hours of the report's release, accusing "Morons in the White House" of playing "a new disinformation game - Blame "TRUMP" for their grossly incompetent SURRENDER in Afghanistan". "Biden is responsible, no one else!" he said. Michael McCaul, the top-ranking Republican on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, also slammed the administration for a "brazen whitewashing of their failure in Afghanistan". The report implies that the evacuation of

ghanistan inherited from the Trump ad-Americans and Afghans who had assisted

er. "We now prioritize earlier evacuations when faced with a degrading security situation," it says on page seven. But the report faults the Afghan government and military for these delays, togeth-

with the war effort could have started soon-

er with US military and intelligence community assessments.

Mr Kirby said that Mr Biden had "acted on the best military judgment and the best assessments from the intelligence community" but "some of those assessments turned out to be wrong". He refused to say if the president regretted how the withdrawal was carried out, adding: "For all this talk of chaos, I just didn't see it.'

Following the fall of Kabul, the Biden administration received searing criticism at home and abroad. Many expressed anger over the abandonment of Afghans and of US weaponry. Some lessons had been learned from the end of the war in Afghanistan, especially around the failure to predict the sudden collapse of the Afghan government, Mr Kirby said. He added this had influenced the US policy of supporting Ukraine ahead of Russia's invasion.

ministration. The report refers to "neglect Published by Ansar Mahmood Bhatti, Printed at Rohani Art Press, Islamabad Ph: 051-2266165, Email: newsroomisbpost@gmail.com