

International Court of Justice rules Israel must stop genocide in Gaza

Pakistan welcomes ICJ decision; ICJ delivers verdict with 15-2 majority; Ugandan, Israeli judge oppose; Court rules it has jurisdiction to hear cases against Israel under genocide convention; Tel Aviv ordered to ensure humanitarian aid to Gaza people; wants Hamas to release hostages



'Victory for rule of law', terms SA

DNA

decisive victory for the international rule of an assistance to address the adverse conditions law and a significant milestone in the search of life faced by Palestinians," the court said. It for justice for the Palestinian people. In a ordered the regime to report back in one month landmark ruling, the International Court of on the measures it has been asked to carry out. indicated provisional measures on that basis. noting that it has jurisdiction to rule in the case.

DNA / FOREIGN DESK

ordered the Israeli regime to take all measures within its power to prevent genocide in Gaza, but stopped short of ordering a ceasefire. The order by the International Court of Justice was part of its interim ruling on the emergency measures requested by South Africa in its genocide case against comed the historic judicial decision of the In-Israel over its war on the Gaza Strip. The court demanded Israel try to contain death and damage in the Gaza Strip and warned it to "take all measures in its power to prevent" acts that could fall under the UN Genocide Convention set up in 1948.

ANOTHER NEWS ON BACK PAGE

The court also ordered Israel to take measures to prevent and punish direct incitement of genocide in the Gaza Strip. Israel must take "immediate and effective measures to enable the provision of JOHANSBERG: January 26, 2024 marks a urgently needed basic services and humanitari-Justice (ICJ) has determined that Israel's ac- Palestinians appear to be a protected group untions in Gaza are plausibly genocidal and has der the genocide convention, the court said, sized the Israel's failure to provide any con-

State of Palestine THE HAGUE: The United Nations' top court has ordered the Israeli regime to take all measures welcomes ICJ ruling

CENTRELINE REPORT

RAMALLAH: The State of Palestine has welternational Court of Justice (ICJ) to impose provisional measures in the case brought by South Africa against the Israel regarding the latter's breach of the Genocide Convention. The ICJ acknowledged the responsibility of Israel, the occupying power, to prevent any acts of genocide in Gaza and to take measures to improve the humanitarian situation, demanding Israel to report to the court within a month on what it is doing to uphold the order. The State of Palestine hailed the ICJ's landmark ruling, describing it as a reminder to the world that no state is above international law. It said the decision puts an end to a culture of impunity for the State of Israel, reflecting decades of occupation, ethnic cleansing, persecution, and racial vincing evidence to the court that it did not

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ISLAMABAD: The ongoing ambassador of Tajikistan to Pakistan, Ismatullo Nasredin, pays a farewell call on The President Dr. Arif Alvi at Aiwan-e-Sadr. – DNA

Tajik envoy's farewell call President calls for greater cooperation among OIC states

Speaking to the Ambassador, the President said that Pakistan attached great significance to its relations with Tajikistan as it was Pakistan's closest Central Asian neighbour

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has urged the need for increasing cooperation among Islamic countries to overcome the issue of Islamophobia in the world. He also called for greater cooperation among the OIC member states in the areas of science and technology to meet modern-day

challenges. The President expressed these

Tajik envoy meets FM Jilani

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador Ismatullo Nasredin of Tajikistan paid a farewell call on Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas

Briefs

Pak, Iran envoys return to embassies Iranian FM to visit Islamabad on Jan 29

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Office (FO) Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch on Friday said the envoys of Pakistan and Iran had arrived at their respective embassies in Islamabad and Tehran "as per understanding between the two countries". The Iranian foreign minister is due to visit Islamabad on January 29. The development comes days after tensions escalated between the neighbours following an Iranian air strike in Pakistan, leading Islamabad to strike terrorist hideouts in the neighbouring country's Sistan-Baluchestan province.

PTI's Abro withdraws in Bilawal's favour Party serves show Cause notice to Senator ABro

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: In another setback for the Imran Khan-led PTI, its candidate from NA-194 (Larkana 1) Saifullah Abro Friday announced his decision to "withdraw" in PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari's favour ahead of the upcoming February 8 polls. The PTI has issued a show cause notice to Senator Abro. Taking to social media platform X, Abro confirmed the development saying that he has decided to withdraw from the said constituency after meeting the PPP chairman on Thursday.

Holiday Notice

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

Nawaz promises to address inflation as Bilawal promises unity

Continued on Page 06

Nawaz said that with the support of the people, his party would bring Pakistan back to a prosperous state, with employment in every household



STAFF REPORT

BUREWALA: In the run-up to next general ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for elections, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Information, Broadcasting and Parsupremo Nawaz Sharif on Friday stated his liamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi party will address the prevailing issues of called on Caretaker Minister of Inteinflation and unemployment upon assum- rior Dr. Gohar Ejaz here on Thursday. ing power in the Feb 8 elections. The for- Both the ministers reviewed arrangemer three-time premier, while addressing ments being made for holding the gena huge gathering in Burewala, promised to eral election on February 8. During the reduce inflation, make electricity cheap- meeting, they also discussed measures er and gas available in every household, to strengthen security for holding next as well as lower prices of bread and sugar. elections in a peaceful environment.

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Govt taking

measures to

Continued on Page 06

PM requests China to roll over \$2bn loan Deposit time for

loan will end on March 23, 2024

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: After requesting the United Arab Émirates (UAE) to roll over \$2 billion in loans for Pakistan, Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar has also written a similar letter to his Chinese counterpart Li Qiang. In his letter to China's premier, the prime minister has requested that Beijing roll over Pakistan's \$2 billion loan for a year. The Chinese government, according to the sources, is expected to roll over the aforementioned loan amount for a year soon. The deposit time for the loan is slated to complete on March 23, 2024.

Continued on Page 06

Elahi, Sanam among PTI candidates allowed by SC to contest Feb 8 polls

Elahi nomination papers were rejected from National Assembly constituency NA-64 (Gujrat-III) and Punjab Assembly's constituency PP-34 (Gujrat-VIII)

Besides Elahi, the Supreme Court

on Friday approved appeals of PTI

candidates Umer Aslam, Major (retd)

Tahir Sadiq, Sanam Javaid Khan, and

Shukat Basra against returning officer

decisions to reject their nomination

papers from different constituencies.

Elahi has been allowed to contest

the general election from the PP-32

constituency of Gujarat district. The



MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreeke-Insaf (PTI) secured major relief from the top court on Friday as five of its candidates including incarcerated party president Parvez Elahi, were granted permission to contest the upcoming February 8 elections.



Elahi nomination papers were rejected from National Assembly constituency NA-64 (Gujrat-III) and Punjab Assembly's constituency PP-34 (Gujrat-VIII). A three-member bench of the Supreme Court comprising Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail and Justice Athar Minallah heard Elahi's plea.

Continued on Page 06

views while talking to the outgoing Ambassador of Tajikistan to Pakistan, Mr Ismatullo Nasredin, who paid a farewell call on him at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. Speaking to the Ambassador, the President said that Pakistan attached great significance to its relations with Tajikistan as it was Pakistan's closest Central Asian neighbour. He highlighted that there was great potential to increase bilateral trade and economic cooperation that needed to be fully exploited. He called for exploring new avenues of economic cooperation for the mutual benefit of the two brotherly countries. The President expressed satisfaction over the steadily expanding bilateral relations between PaJilani. The Foreign Minister appreciated the contribution of Ambassador Nasredin in promoting bilateral relations between Pakistan and Tajikistan and wished him success on his new assignment as First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Tajikistan.

kistan and Tajikistan in all areas of mutual interest, especially in trade, energy and defence. Taking about the situation in Gaza, the President said that Pakistan deeply shared the pain of the people in Gaza where Israeli forces had been committing genocide and gross human rights violations.

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Solani meets Gohar Ijaz to discuss security MEHTAB PIRZADA



46 children died from pneumonia in KPK

02

PESHAWAR : With the increase in the severity of the cold, the infection is becoming viral, and so far. 46 children have died of pneumonia in three major hospitals in the city. Hospital officials told mediamen here on Friday that pneumonia was affecting children with low immunity, and a total of 46 children died of pneumonia in three hospitals in the city, including 20 patients each in Lady Reading and Khyber Teaching Hospitals and six in Hayatabad Medical Complex. The hospital's officials said that more than 700 children affected by pneumonia are being brought to OPD on a daily basis, and more than capacity children are being treated at Lady Reading Hospital. "Most of the affected children belong to adjoining areas," the officials confirmed. -APP

DG BISP visits Mohmand, Haleemzai, **Baizai** offices

PESHAWAR : Director General (DG) Benazir Income Support Program (BISP), Zehra Aslam, visited the tehsil offices of BISP in Up per Mohmand, Haleemzai, and Baizai on Friday. She discusses the existing situation of the registration process and proposes suggestions to improve it further. Officials of the National Socio-Economic Registry (NSER) were also present on the occasion. During the visit, DG BISP was also briefed about efforts being made to engage area elders and local government representatives to get support. She also visited DRC in Ghalanai, reviewed the registration process, and listened to the problems and concerns of staff. Speaking on the occasion, she said that BISP is endeavoring to support the needy and poor by providing them financial assistance. She directed staff to be polite with people and said the facilitation of poor people is the prime responsibility of BISP. She also stressed transparen-



ISLAMABAD: Stephanie Urchick, the Rotary International President talking to media to unfurl flagship programs of Rotary International being executed in Pakistan. -Photo Mudassar Raja

RCCI President meets Pak HC at Pak-UK business conference

president Saqib Rafiq had a meeting with High Commissioner for Pakistan to the United Kingdom who called on during his visit to the High Commission in London

DNA

RAWALPINDI : The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) president Saqib Rafiq had a meeting with H.E. Dr. Mohammad Faisal, High Commissioner for Pakistan to the United Kingdom who called on during his visit to the High Commission in London on the sidelines of 6th Pak-UK business opportunities Conference held at a local hotel in Leeds, West Yorkshire, England.

During the meeting RCCI President Saqib Rafiq briefed HC Dr. Faisal on RCCI current and upcoming events and also shared a brief summary of 6th Pak-UK business opportunities Conference aiming to promote trade relations, networking and B2B meetings. He also informed about business facilitation centers in Punjab and particularly in Rawalpindi and termed it a key

initiative towards ease of doing business. Matters related to the

bilateral trade, facilitation under SIFC for Pakistani exporters and trade and investment opportunities came under discussion. Meanwhile , Industrialization is vital for economic stability The country's economy can be put on the path of stability by promoting industrialization in the country. There is no doubt that the industry plays a major role in the success of any country's economy. Faisal Shahzad, Acting President Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry

(RCCI) said in a statement that there is no doubt that industry plays a major role in the success of any country's economy, however, the SME sector being an important component of any industry, helped the industry to grow manifold. He said that Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play an important role especially in developing countries. SMEs are a major part of business worldwide. They are a major source of job creation and a major contributor to global economic growth. SMEs

account for about forty percent of GDP, he added. Faisal Shahzad said that lack of access to finances is a major obstacle for SME development. Small and Medium Enterprise Development Authority (SMEDA) estimates that there are more than 5 million SMEs in Pakistan. He added that SMEs contribute 40 percent to Pakistan's GDP and 25 percent to total exports. After the agricultural sector, the SME sector provides the most employment to the working population in the country, he further added.

Ashrafi led Salat al Istisqa to seek relief from diseases

Islamabad **POST**

Saturday, January 27 , 2024

ISLAMABAD : Prime Minister's Special Representative on Religious Affairs and Pakistani Diaspora in Middle East and Muslim Countries, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, on Friday led a special prayer for rain (Salat al Istisqa). Ashrafi, who is also the chairman of Pakistan Ulema Council, said Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar's special directives and appeal resulted in the observance of the rain prayer across the country. He emphasized that the prayer was offered nationwide to seek relief from the ongoing drought and diseases. He led the congregation at Jamia Masjid Bahria Town, where he made special supplication for rainfall and an end to the drought affecting the country. "Let us pray earnestly today, seeking forgiveness for our sins and mercy from our Lord," stated Ashrafi, urging the community to beseech Allah Almighty for rainfall and forgiveness of their transgressions.-APP

Rs 5bln provincial budget needed for 4-month

PESHAWAR : A request has been made to the Finance Division, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), for the release of Rs 5 billion for the provincial budget for four months for 36 government sector departments, with Rs 900 million recommended for the health department and Rs 600 million for the construction of roads.

According to a letter addressed to the Finance Division, Government of KP, a detailed budget is needed for 36 government sector departments, including Rs 500 million for multi-sectoral development, Rs 500 million for the water sector, and Rs 350 million for the Department of Primary, Secondary, and Higher Secondary Education. Likerise. Rs 250 been released for drinking water and sewage drainage projects, while it has been requested to release Rs 250 million immediately for energy and power. Similarly, it is recommended to release Rs 350 million for the Higher Education Department. Rs 200 million for Livestock and Dairy Development and Urban Development, Rs 50 million for sports, Rs 100 million for agriculture, tourism, forests, and local governments.-APP

Punjab govt and PWCTA sign MoU for manpower to Canada

ABID RAZA LAHORE : The Punjab government has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Pakistan Western Canada Trade Association (PWC-TA) to send manpower to Canada. The MOU was signed by Provincial Minister SM Tanvir and Ms Bushra Rahman at the Canadian Consulate in Vancouver, Canada. Consul General Janbaz Khan also

attended the ceremony. attended the ceremony. In his message, Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi congratulated the Naqvi congratulated the Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi congratulated the Naqvi congratulated the Minister Punjab Mohsin Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi congratulated the Minister Punjab Mohsin Minister Punja Provincial Minister SM Tanvir stated that the MOU aims to promote economic ties between Punjab, and British Columbia & Alberta provinces. Provincial Minister Amir Mir noted that the bilateral trade, investment and tourism will also be promoted with the signing of the agreement. It may be noted that a 3-member

tional tourism for mutual delegation from the Pun-

CS Balochistan visits election control room

in disbursement and said that BISP has been launched to reduce poverty, address social inequality, and bring positive change in the lives of poor and deserving segments of society.-DNA

Governor urges doctors to work with dedication

PESHAWAR : Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali Friday reiterated his commitment to address the problems of young doctors urging them to serve the ailing community with utmost dedication and professionalism. He was talking to a 15-member delegation of the Young Doctors Association that called on him at Governor House. The delegation included Dr. Faisal Barakzai, Dr. Adnan, Dr.Karamat and Dr. Mudassar Khan. The delegation apprised the governor about their issues including depriving them of training and inadequate facilities of induction in Post Graduate Medical Institute. The governor listened to their concerns patiently and assured them of cooperation and assistance. -APP

ministerial delegation and termed it as the beginning of a new era for economic development. The request for sending labor to the Canadian provinces of British Columbia and Alberta was made by the Pakistan Western Canada Trade Association, and an agreement was reached for cooperation in promoting religious and educa-

journalist Parvez Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi has condoled the death of senior journalist Parvez Shoukat and extended sympathies to the bereaved family. He has prayed that may Allah Almighty rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the heirs to bear the loss with equanimity.

QUETTA : Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khar on Friday visited the Election Control Room established in the provincial IT Department to inspect the preparedness plan for the upcoming general polls 2024. Provincial Election Commissioner Muhammad Fareed Afridi, Additional Chief Secretary Home Zahid Saleem, Secretary Local Government Noor Ahmad Perkani, Secretary Finance Babar Khan, and Secretary S&GAD Syed Faisal Ahmed accompanied the chief secretary. Shakeel Qadir Khan, on the occasion, said conducting free, fair, and transparent elections is the main responsibility of the caretaker provincial government for which it is fully prepared. He directed that "it must be ensured that data regarding the initiation and completion of voting at the polling station must be displayed on the screens of the control room. Besides, he added the location of highly sensitive, sensitive, and normal polling stations of all divisions should also be given on the control room screen. -APP

ANYONE WHO'S SOMEONE ... reads Centreline



www.dnanews.com.pk, www.centreline.com.pk

Art reminds us of beauty in a world data

KARACHI : The Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (retd) Magbool Bagar believed that in an era that is often dictated by numbers and data, the arts serve as a reminder of the beauty, emotions, and stories that make us human. This, he said on Friday while speaking at Arts Council Academic Convocation-2024 organised by the Arts Council of Pakistan (ACP), Karachi. The proarts." gram was attended by Minister of Information & President Mohammad Ahmed Shah, diplomats from different countries, faculty, alum-

ni, students and parents. The CM said that this convocation was meant to celebrate the achievements of the talented graduates from the ACP Academies, who would be receiving their diplomas in music, theatre, dance, fine arts and textile. He said, "This is a special day, not just for the graduates, but for the entire community that supports and values the The disciplines are the heartbeat of our cultural identity-expressions of the soul, reflections of our rich heritage, and gateways to creativity, the CM said

both men and women, with a University Airport Campus

and added that in a world often dominated by numbers and data, the arts reminded us of the beauty, the emotions, and the stories that make us human. Baqar told the graduates that their journey has been more than acquiring a diploma; it has been a voyage of self-discovery, a pursuit of passion, and a commitment to excellence. "You have polished your craft, pouring your heart and soul into your work, and today, we celebrate the fruits of your dedication," he said. The Arts Council of Pakistan

has been a steadfast ally in nurturing and promoting these disciplines, the CM said and added that through tireless efforts, the Council has played a pivotal role in the cultural development of our nation, serving as a catalyst for change and artistic expression and providing a platform for artists to flourish. "It is heartening to see that this institution has actively been working to ensure that the future of arts and culture in the country is safeguarded by future generations of artists," he said. -DNA

the youth and commended

the role of Iqra Universi-

WCCI Malir, IU foster youth entrepreneurship

The MoU was signed by KWCCI Malir Founder President Nazli Abid Nisar and Director Igra University Airport Campus Athar Igbal. Afzala Shaheen, SVP KWCCI Malir, VP Yasmin Arif and Dr. Touba were also present on this occasion

focus on computer and oth-

NAZIR SIYAL

KARCHI: Karachi Women Chamber of Commerce & Industry Malir (KWCCI) and Igra University Airport Campus have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at providing technical training to the youth, guidance in employment seeking, and fostering entrepreneurship among student's post-education. The MoU was signed by KWCCI Malir Founder President Nazli Abid Nisar and Director Iqra University Airport Campus Athar Iqbal. Afzala Shaheen, SVP KWCCI Malir, VP Yasmin Arif and Dr. Touba were also present on this occasion. In conjunction with Igra University Airport Campus, the "Creative Cultural Fair 2024" was organized under the auspices

of KWCCI Malir, witnessing substantial student participation. Saqib Fayyaz Magoon, Acting President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI), along with Vice Presidents Amanullah Paracha and Asif Sakhi, Former VP Khurram Ejaz, Chairman of Pakistan Indonesia Business Council Abid Nisar, and Shakila Niaz from First Women Bank attended the event. Chief Guest Saqib Fayyaz Magoon visited various stalls, distributing prizes to the winning students of diverse competitions. Nazli Abid Nisar, former VP FPC-CI and Founder President of KWCCI Malir, expressed her appreciation for the students' enthusiasm, emphasizing the youth's pivotal role in shaping Pakistan. She announced plans for establishing a training center soon, catering to



students to visit the feder-

er technical fields. She extended gratitude to Director Athar Iqbal and First Women Bank for their collaborative efforts in organizing the Fair 2024. Saqib Favvaz Magoon. Acting President FPCCI, hailed students as the future of Pakistan and invited Igra

ation. He offered FPCCI's ty in contributing to the support in organizing events country's economy. He emphasized the significance of and urged stallholders to prioritize branding for global product branding. Shakila Niaz of First Women Bank encourrecognition. Chairman Paaged women entrepreneurs kistan Indonesia Business Council (PIBC) Abid Nisar to approach the bank for loans on favorable terms to expand stressed the importance of providing opportunities to their businesses.



National Days and Armed **Forces Days**

JANUARY Jan 01 / CUBA

Revolution Day

Jan 01 / Palestine Palestine Revolution Day

Jan 01 / Sudan National Day

Jan 04 / Myanmar Independence Day

Jan 06 / Iraq Armed Forces Day

Jan 12 / Tanzania Armed Forces Day

Jan 14 / Uzbekistan Armed Forces Day

Jan 15 / Nigeria Armed Forces Day

Jan 20 / Mali Armed Forces Day

Jan 20 / Laos Armed Forces Day

Jan 25 / Thailand Armed Forces Day

Jan 26 / Australia National Day

Jan 26 / India Republic Day



Serena Hotel....111 133 133 Marriott......051-28261210334-5421812 Monal..



Serena Hotels join hands with Mashal for a noble cause

Serena Hotels sponsored Mashal's Fund-Raising Event Serena Hotels, under the Cultural Diplomacy initiative collaborated with Bestway Cement Ltd, to host a fundraising event titled 'Muddat hue ha yaar ko mehman kiye hue'



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Serena Hotels sponsored Mashal's Fund-Raising Event Serena Hotels, under the Cultural Diplomacy initiative collaborated with Bestway Cement Ltd, to host a fundraising event titled 'Muddat hue ha yaar ko mehman kiye hue' for the Mashal Association at



Serena Hotel in Islamabad on Thursday 25th January 2024. Mashal Association is a social welfare organization which has been working for educating and empowering girls and women from under privileged families since 1988. It was founded by (late) Begum Shahida Azim and has gone from strength to strength with time,

is the outer edge of Islamabad. The audience experienced the true essence of the Urdu language as Adeel Hashmi who is a famous, talented and a prominent name of Pakistani Showbiz industry narrated selected pieces from Urdu literature, and he was accompanied by Ustad Raees Khan on his magical violin. The event witnessed a significant presence of dignitaries, official representatives from the corporate sector, members of the business community, and media personnels. Serena Hotels takes great pride in the privilege of organizing and hosting events that play a significant role in encouraging the cultural and traditional essence of Pakistan. These events serve as platforms where diverse facets of the country's rich heritage are celebrated, embraced, and shared with a wider audience.

with a higher secondary school for girls

with 300 students, a medical Center and

a vocational training center. Its Welfare

Complex caters to the needs of about 9

surrounding villages/ communities that

live in and around Margalla Town which

934 candidates to contest for 13 NA seats in Rawalpindi Division

ISLAMABAD: In the uppolitical parties, including coming general election independents, are conscheduled for February 8, a testing for the 13 seats total of 934 candidates are in the National Assembly. contesting for 13 National Meanwhile, for the 26 con-Assembly and 26 Punjab stituencies of the Punjab Assembly seats of Rawal-Assembly, 650 candidates pindi Division. According are competing to represent to the Election Commission these constituents in the of Pakistan (ECP) approxiassembly. The Attock dismately 729,617 voters will trict, with 1349,040 voters, use their right to franchise will elect representatives in electing 93 representfor 2 seats in the National atives for both national Assembly and 5 seats in and provincial assemblies. the Punjab Assembly. For Several prominent political NA-49 Attock-I, 14 candifigures, including Speaker dates are contesting, and National Assembly Raja 20 candidates are competing for NA-50 Attock-II. Pervez Ashraf, former Interior Minister Chaudhry Similarly, there are 16 can-Nisar Ali Khan, former didates for PP1 Attock, 17 for PP2 Attock-II, 15 for Prime Minister Raja Per-PP3 Attock-III, 17 for PP4 vaiz Ashraf, Sheikh Aftab Ahmed, Ghulam Sarwar Attock IV, and 14 for PP5

NA-51 Murree, 27 candidates are in contention, and there are 32 candidates for PP6 Murree and 23 for PP7 Kahuta. Rawalpindi district, with 3,378,500 voters, will elect representatives for 6 seats in the National Assembly and 12 seats in the Punjab Assembly. In Chakwal district, 771,916 voters will elect representatives for one seat in the National Assembly and 2 seats in the Provincial Assembly. For NA-58 Chakwal, 21 candidates are contesting, along with 21 for PP20 Chakwal and 11 for PP21 Chakwal. Talagang district, with 429.923 voters, will elect representatives for one seat in the National Assembly and 2 seats in the Provin-

didates are in the running, and 13 candidates are contesting for NA-61 Jhelum II, while there are 30 candidates for PP24 Jhelum, 24 for PP25 Jhelum, and 21 for PP26 Jhelum. Several candidates from different constituencies of the National Assembly have served multiple terms. For instance, Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan is running as an independent candidate from NA-53 and NA-54. Additionally, members like Former federal minister Sheikh Aftab from Attock and Major (retd) Tahir Iqbal from Chakwal have been members of the National Assembly more than once. Other notable candidates who have been members of the National

Pakistan elevated to **CITES** category-I

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan, as a committed signatory to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), proudly announced its significant elevation to CITES Category I, a testament to the nation's unwavering dedication to wildlife conservation. CITES, an intergovernmental treaty under the United Nations, serves to prevent the unsustainable exploitation of wild fauna and flora in international trade, a news release on Friday said. In line with this commitment, Pakistan has diligently regulated the imports and exports of wild fauna and flora through collaborative efforts led by the Ministry of Climate Change & Environmental Coordination, in conjunction with the Wildlife Departments of Provinces, and Pakistan Customs. A pivotal aspect of Pakistan's conservation efforts is the exclusive legislation in place for the meticulous implementation of CITES, the Pakistan Trade Control of Wild Fauna and Flora Act, 2012. This legislation underscores Pakistan's commitment to sustainable and responsible trade practices, ensuring the well-being of endangered species. CITES classifies its parties into three categories (Category I, Category II, and Category III) based on the consistency of their national legislation for implementing the Convention. Following an exhaustive review pro-

ICCI for enhancing education budget

ANF recovers huge quantity of weapons

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) in an operation managed to recover huge quantity of weapons and other items, an ANF spokesman said here on Friday. He informed that a large number of weapons were recovered during a targeted operation conducted against drug trafficking. The operation was conducted in Padizar area of Gwadar's coastal belt. The ANF team during the operation spotted a point near the shore where some persons were unloading goods. Despite quick action of the team, the accused managed to escape while taking advantage of the darkness. On inspection of the shipment, the team found that the goods contained modern weapons including 259, 9-mm Glock pistols. The operation is a reflection of the ANF's determination to tackle threats to national security, apart from counter-narcotics, he added.-APP

NDMA organizes two-day workshop

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has conducted a two-day workshop on "Resilient Urban Planning in Climate Extremes" at Karachi NDMA's National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM), in collaboration with the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Sindh and UN-HABITAT. The two-day workshop on comprehensive "Resilient Urban Planning in Climate Extremes" was held from January 23-24, a news release said. The event witnessed active participation from a diverse range of stakeholders, bringing together key players in disaster management and urban planning. Chief Coordinator NIDM, Tanveer Piracha inaugurated the workshop and briefed about proactive disaster management in Pakistan. The workshop served as a collaborative platform, engaging participants from federal and provincial government departments -APP

Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

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



Enquiry

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Hospitals

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MH561116	L	
Cantt Hospital9270907-11	L	
DHQ5556311-4	L	
RGH9290301-7	L	
Holy Family9290322-7	l	
PIMS9261170-79	l	
Polyclinic9218300-09	l	
Shifa International 4603666		



Departments

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

Water Tank Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Sheikh Rasheed Khan. Attock-V. In the Murree Ahmed, and Haneef Abbasi, are among the seasoned politicians vying for seats in the assemblies. Accord-

ing to available data, 284 candidates from various

district, 295,163 voters will elect representatives for one constituency in the National Assembly and two constituencies in the Provincial Assembly. For

cial Assembly. Jhelum district, with 1,056,480 voters, will elect representatives for 2 seats in the National Assembly and 3 seats in the Punjab Assembly. For NA-60 Jhelum, 18 can-

Assembly more than once include Ayaz Amir from NA-58 Chakwal, Chaudhry Farrukh Altaf from NA-61 Jhelum, Malik Sohail from NA-50 Attock, and Iman Tahir.-APP

cess, Pakistan's legislation earned well-deserved recognition, ascending from Category II to the esteemed Category I. This proclamation, declared during the 77th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee held on 8th November, 2023, is a resounding affirmation that Pakistan's legislative measures meet the highest standards for the implementation of CITES.-APP

Wafaqi Mohtasib terms inquiry report unsatisfactory vision of these services

directly to the Passport

DNA

ISLAMABAD:

Mohtasib Ejaz

Office but unfortunately, they are not getting what Wafaqi Ahmed they have expected in Qureshi has expressed his return, he observed and dissatisfaction over the added, the exhaustion of inquiry report submitted lamination paper, ink etc were petty issues and the by the Passport Office in Passport Office should compliance of his earlier have foreseen its precise directions in response to requirements much earlia large number of complaints regarding inordier to cater to the needs of nate delay in the issuance growing number of passof passports, said in a port seekers. press release issued here

It may be recalled that on Friday. Terming the taking suo motto notice report as unsatisfactory of very large number of and lacking in substance, complaints against delay he directed the senior ofin issuance of passports, ficials concerned of the an Inspection Team of the Wafaqi Mohtasib Secre-Passport Office to address the issue expeditiously. tariat had visited the Pass-The people pay for proport Office, Islamabad on

CDA launches its

new website

ISLAMABAD:): Capital Development Authority (CDA) has launched its new website

here on Friday. In this regard, a ceremony was held at the CDA headquarters which was attended by the Chairman CDA, Members of the CDA Board, representatives of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industries and officers of concerned formations.

On this occasion, Chairman CDA said that the use of technology in the authority will improve service delivery. He said that the launch of new and updated website is an important step towards digitalisation. He further said that Land and Estate records are also being digitalized. CDA is introducing secure paper for issuing allotment

and transfer letters to reduce the risk of forgery and tampering of records, he said. Chairman CDA further added that this will help reduce complaints of corruption,

fraudulent transactions and eradication of complaints like alteration in records. A tree management system has also been introduced as part of the technology based initiatives being taken in the authority. This system will be based on state-of-the-

art Digital Trees Inventory software.Similarly, for the first time all tree and plants

data will also be digitized with the help of field force and satellite imagery. Under which barren land can be identified along with trees and plants data so that the

land of Islamabad can be kept free from illegal constructions and encroachment and

plantation can be done there as per need. The launch of the new website will further boost the confidence of overseas Pakistani's as a new online property verification system has also been introduced to facilitate citizens in property transactions from

the comfort of their own homes and they will be able to verify the property through

the CDA website. Moreover, in the new website, all CDA services will be provided online so that citizens do not have to visit CDA offices. Similarly, tendering process has also been made online. E-tendering will not only improve rate and efficiency but

also bring innovation and transparency with online system. Apart from this, due to the new website, citizens will be able to pay their water bills or other arrears including property tax at home. Similarly, in view of the convenience of the citizens, the data of the arrears of the last twenty years has also been updated in this website. On the new website, all the rules and regulations of CDA will be available to every citizen in just

single click. Similarly, various CDA forms and documents will now be available online. Similarly, after the launch of the new website, the booking of various places in Islamabad

has been made online, which includes the booking of events, photo shoots and Simly

Dam rest house. Moreover, the feedback option of the citizen facilities has also been

kept in order to improve the performance of the institution.-DNA

the directions of the Wafaqi Mohtasib to ascertain the causes of the delay and breakdown of efficient delivery of services in the Passport Office. Headed by the Senior Advisor, the Team discussed in detail the entire process of issuing passports with the officials besides interviewing a large number of people, who had come to collect their passports in the Passport Offices located in the Federal Capital. The people informed the Inspection Team that they had been visiting the Passport Office for the last couple of months and many of them had complained that

their visas expired during

the process.

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that the youth are the future of Pakistan. Still, less than 2% of the GDP is allocated for education, due to which millions of children are deprived of education. He stressed that the government should substantially increase the budget for education so that the educated youth can play an active role in the economic development of Pakistan and promote knowledge economy. He said that mosques should be used to educate the out-of-school children. He said that around 26 million children are out of school in Pakistan and the government should use all resources to bring them to school. He said that the business community is ready to cooperate with the government to improve the poor condition of schools. He said this while address-

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to observe the International Day of Education at Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Prof. Dr. Muhammad Saleem Mazhar, Director General, National Language Promotion Department and former Vice Chancellor of Punjab University said that Pakistan cannot progress without educating its children. He said that Pakistani universities do not have the budget and they are doing a jehad to educate the ing a ceremony organized students. He stressed that

education in Urdu should also be focused, which is our mother tongue. He said that to develop a tolerant nation, we should promote arts, poetry, literature, music, and painting as well.

Imtiaz Haider, Director General, Hamdard University said that by providing better education to children, prejudice, hatred, inequality, and other negative elements can be eradicated from society. He stressed for close academia-industry linkages to improve the economy.

Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Vice President ICCI, said that Pakistan needs to improve the literacy rate. He urged that the budget for education should be increased to at least 10% of the GDP. He said that the private sector should cooperate with the government in promoting education. Zafar Bakhtawari, Former President ICCI and Secretary General UBG Pakistan stressed for paying special attention to the education and better training of children.



TWIN CITIES

Islamabad **POST** Saturday, January 27, 2024

Briefs

Pakistan ignoring benefits of youth bulge

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Brig. (retd) Aslam Khan, Chairman of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) said on Friday that Pakistan is blessed with a sizeable youth population which can be of great economic benefit. However. he said, such a youth population is a great window of opportunity that is not being taken advantage of otherwise Pakistan's economic situation would have been different. Aslam Khan said in a statement today that it is imperative to take prompt action to take advantage of this prospect since its loss could have far-reaching consequences.He said that 240 million people are living in Pakistan, and the country's population is expanding steadily at a pace of 2 per cent. In contrast, the population growth in the South Asian region is 1.2 per cent. Based on estimates, 38% of Pakistan's population is under 15 years old, while 4% is 65 years of age or more. This results in a youth bulge since 58 per cent of those in the working age group are between the ages of 15 and 64.Despite this gift, the population is not benefiting us, which is why the unemployment rate is very high which is resulting in social problems, he observed.

Easypaisa Empowers Women with First-**Ever Audio** Nikahnama in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Easypaisa has just created ripples across the financial services industry. In a historic move that shatters taboos and empowers women, Pakistan's leading digital financial services platform has unveiled the "easypai-

Climate of peace is way forward: Jalil Abbas Jilani

The Foreign Minister also emphasized exploration of potential avenues of cooperation on climate change. The three-day event was inaugurated by Dr Arif Alvi, President Islamic Republic of Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: While Climate crisis is the reality of our times, peaceful coexistence is the only way forward for enhanced regional cooperation, said Ambassador Jalil Abbas Jilani, Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs. He was addressing the concluding ceremony of Regional Dialogue 2024 titled Climate Crisis: Shaping South Asia's Resilience organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS). He said that peaceful existence could be achieved if bold and courageous decisions were made by statesmen. The Foreign Minister also emphasized exploration of potential avenues of cooperation on climate change. The three-day event was inaugurated by Dr Arif Alvi, President Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The conference had six main themes encompassing South Asia's Climate Vulnerability, The Commitment on Regional NDCs, Climate- Conflict Nexus, Adapting to Climate Calamity, Climate Financing and South Asia's Climate Future. The conference brings together academics, practitioners, and policy makers from within Pakistan and across the region to discuss the aforementioned subject areas. Mr Ahmed Kamal, Chairman, Federal Flood Commission while addressing the participants of the Conference commented that South Asia continues to remain under the influence of a high degree of vulnerability and exposure to climate hazards, in particular, to floods, cyclones and droughts. The high degree of both vulnerability and exposure could be attributed to the region's high population growth rate and narrow levels of adaptive



capacity. He added that Integrated Drought Management should include promotion of drought tolerant crops, extended research on weather patterns, impact of climate change, regular drought monitoring on regional level, emphasis on ground water recharge, and the implementation of Adaptation Plan. Mr Abdul Basit, Head of South Asia Desk at the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism (ICPVTR), Singapore was of the opinion that climate change was a development issue and that 'securutizing' it could prove to be disastrous. He said that there was a dire need for security policymakers and practitioners to acknowledge the fact that there was an unmistakable connection between the two necessitating the need to map the impact of climate change on terrorism and vice ver-

sa. Dr Mazhar Hayat, Deputy Secretary Ministry of Climate Change stressed the need to set sectoral-based baselines and promote mitigation and then adaptation. Other sessions for the day included speakers from Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, India, the US and Singapore who discussed the various aspects of climate change in South Asia.

COMSTECH organizes OIC SESAME users meeting

Choudhary said that by DNA using this huge infrastructure, researchers can per-ISLAMABAD: COMSTECH form experiments not only inaugurated OIC SESAME in a much better, precise Users 2-day Meeting on Friday. Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal and efficient manner but they can conduct scientific Choudhary, Coordinator General COMSTECH welstudies which are not possible without such facility. He comed the participants of said that OIC-COMSTECH the meeting. Prof. Choudis pleased to work with harv said that the SESA-SESAME and its users to ME (Synchrotron Light for facilitate its use in the least Experimental Science in developed member states. Middle East) is the most Prof. Choudhary mentioned important and most expenthat we are discussing the sive scientific facility availpossibility of holding three able in the entire devel-SESAME users meetings oping region. He said that in Nigeria for Anglophone Africa, Senegal for Francophone Africa, and Kazakhstan for Central Asia. Prof. Choudhary mentioned that the COMSTECH offered 25 travel grants annually to SESAME users from LDC OIC countries. The Ambassador of Jordan, H. E. Dr. Maen Khreasat was the Chief Guest of the inau-

Climate change is a major

threat to the world

gural session. He said that our collective focus is on the future on advancing our understanding of the scientific and technical marvels within the domain of synchrotron beamlines and their diverse applications. He said that SESAME stands as a beacon for collaboration, bringing together minds from across the OIC member states to push the boundaries of knowledge and innovation. Dr. Khreasat said that Jordan, as the host country for SESAME, has played a pivotal role in fostering an environment that encour-

ple of diplomacy through

science. This collaboration is a testament to the belief that by working together, we can overcome obstacles and build a brighter future for all. He said that the collaboration between COMS-TECH and SESAME holds immense promise for the Middle East. Dr. Khreasat said that as we celebrate the achievements of SESA-ME, it is crucial to highlight the bilateral relations between Jordan and Pakistan. The ties between the two nations are deeply rooted in history, culture, and shared values. He said Jordan and Pakistan can explore opportunities for joint research initiatives, academic exchanges, and technology transfer. He said, let us continue to build bridges, both scientific and diplomatic, and work towards a future where the pursuit of knowledge knows no borders. 2 dead, one injured in busmotorbike collision in Rawalpindi ISLAMABAD: At least two people died on the spot and another one suffered critical injuries when a bike they were traveling on was hit by a speeding Rawalpindi-bound bus on Friday morning. Rescue sources informed that the bus was en route when it hit a motorcycle while taking a sharp turn near the IGP road. As a result, two people lost their lives, a private news channel reported. The bodies and injured were shifted to a nearby hospital. The police reached the spot and started a search for the bus driver, who fled the scene quickly after the accident. Police officials said they had seized the bus .--APP

Solangi, Shahera grieved over demise of senior journalist Pervaiz Shaukat

" She prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear this loss with fortitude

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi expressed deep grief and sorrow over the death of PFUJ (Workers) President and senior journalist Pervaiz Shaukat on Friday. In a condolence message, the minister for information expressed his heartfelt condolences and sympathy to the family of the deceased. He said that he was deeply saddened to hear the news of Pervaiz Shaukat's death, who was a strong voice for journalists. Murtaza Solangi said, "He will always be remembered for his services to the field of journalism and the welfare of journalists." He prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the soul of the deceased in peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear this loss with fortitude. Meanwhile,):The Federal Secretary of Information and Broadcasting, Shahera Shahid, expressed grief and sorrow over the death of senior journalist Pervaiz Shaukat on Friday. The federal secretary of information expressed heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family over his demise. Shahera Shahid said, "It is sad to hear that Pervaiz Shaukat's is no more. Indeed, he was a talented and hardworking journalist. She said the deceased dedicated his entire life to the profession of journalism and the rights of the journalist community. Shaheera Shahid said, "His valuable services in the field of journalism will always be remembered." She prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear this loss with fortitude.-APP

Several injured in **Metro bus**coaster collision in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: Several people were critically injured after a horrifying crash between a Metro bus and a passenger coaster near Bhara Kahu, here Friday morning. As per details, rescue sources 1122 said that a metro bus collided with a coaster near Bhara Kahu, and as a result Several people received serious injuries, a private news channel reported. The coaster was carrying employees when it met with the accident, the sources added.-APP

Fake cigarette manufacturing factory in Rawalpindi

ISLAMABAD: The recent discovery of a fake cigarette manufacturing factory in the Jhangi Syedan area of Rawalpindi has raised significant concerns regarding the illicit activities of the tobacco industry. The Societv for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) addressed the broader implications of this disturbing revelation. Malik Imran Ahmed, Country head of Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids (CTFK), stated that the existence of such clandestine operations underscored the insidious tactics employed by the tobacco industry to evade regulations and profit at the expense of public health and economic stability. The production and distribution of counterfeit cigarettes represented a tactic by the tobacco industry to confuse the government and compel them to lower taxation on tobacco products. Whether taxation was lowered or not, the industry benefited, leaving the people of Pakistan at a loss, said in a Press Release issued here on Friday. Malik Imran emphasized the detrimental impact of counterfeit tobacco products on public health and the economy. He stressed the urgent need for heightened

sa Audio Nikahnama", a groundbreaking initiative that provides women unprecedented access to their crucial matrimonial rights. This first-of-its-kind innovation in Pakistan leverages the power of technology to overcome literacy barriers and ensure education of the most important contract of life's most significant moments. According to the Pakistan Commission on the Status of Women, twothirds of Pakistani women cannot comprehend their Nikahnama due to literacy limitations, and the remaining 1/3 do not get timely access to the document. easypaisa Audio Nikahnama tackles this head-on by offering a free, simple, and accessible solution. Women can access this audio tool through a free helpline by giving a missed call on the dedicated number (0341-1171222) or download the easypaisa App and listen to the Nikahnama in 7 different languages. In addition to this, there is a sign language option available in the app to ensure accessibility by all. This empowers women, regardless of their socio-economic class or digital divide to access this information, to understand their rights and obligations within the marriage contract.-APP

GB governor calls on president

ISLAMABAD: Governor of Gilgit-Baltistan Syed Mehdi Shah on Friday called on President Dr Arif Alvi and discussed the overall situation in the region including wheat subsidy and other issues. In the meeting, they also deliberated over the matters related to Baltistan University and Skardu, a President House statement said. The president told the governor that he had taken up the matter of wheat subsidy with the caretaker prime minister and finance minister and expressed the hope that the problems would be resolved soon. The elected members of the GB Council had also called on the president on Thursday to discuss the wheat subsidy and other matters. -APP

SESAME is an elaborate, expensive and impactful facility in the OIC region. He expressed thanks to the government of Iordan hosting this facility. He said that SESAME has the potential to transform the entire scientific landscape of the Middle East and OIC region for good. Prof.

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Busi-

ness Group Pakistan, President Pakistan

Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and

All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former

provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain

said on Friday that the planet faces a severe

threat from climate change. He said that

Inflation and conflicts keep many nations

too busy to address this issue, while West-

ages scientific inquiry and cross-cultural collaboration. He said that Jordan has committed itself to providing the necessary resources and support to ensure the success of SESAME. Dr. Khreasat said that the partnership between COM-STECH and SESAME serves as a shining exam-

and crop patterns, pollution is increasing,

and the shortage of natural resources is

increasing. However, many policymakers

are still not bothered to think about this im-

portant subject. Mian Zahid Hussain added

that a report by the World Economic Forum

states that climate change could result in a

loss of \$ 12.5 trillion by 2050 and result in

150 million deaths. The report states that

floods could result in 85 million deaths,

droughts could claim 3.2 million lives, and

heat waves could cost the global economy \$

ern nations responsible for the problem act 7 trillion. He added that Pakistan has lost carelessly. Mian Zahid Hussain said that \$ 30 billion as a result of floods in 2022, the effects of climate change are pushing which were the result of climate change; the world into poverty, while pandemics more than 300 million people have been and diseases have also increased. Speakdisplaced, and 1839 killed. The internaing to the business community, the veteran tional community still needs to fulfill its business leader said that the global temperpromises to provide the necessary supature is constantly rising and serious efport to Pakistan after the floods. Accordforts are needed to solve the problem. The ing to global organizations, more losses world is witnessing more floods, storms, are likely, as many developing nations in famine, hunger, fires, and other problems, Asia and Africa need to prepare to tackle and according to the World Bank, climate the problem or lack resources. Poor nachange can displace 216 million people by tions need hundreds of billions of dollars 2050. The business leader said that clito finance projects that will reduce damage mate change is affecting the land system caused by climate change.



ISLAMABAD: Governor Gilgit-Baltistan, Syed Mehdi Shah, called on President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. -DNA

measures to thwart the tobacco industry's deceptive practices and protect the well-being of communities across Pakistan. Dr. Khalil Ahmad Dogar, Program Manager at SPARC, condemned the tobacco industry for its relentless pursuit of profits at the expense of public health. He added that the discovery of the fake cigarette manufacturing facility served as a stark reminder of the urgent need for comprehensive regulatory measures and enforcement mechanisms to curb illicit activities within the tobacco industry. –APP

vigilance and enforcement



The view on a UK citizen army

EW will dispute that the international situation has darkened and is darkening. Neither Russia's invasion of Ukraine nor the renewed Middle East conflict will and soon or conclusivel. East conflict will end soon or conclusively. Across the Atlantic, a second Trump presidency is moving closer. As an era of peace ebbs, and with a widening prospect of an era of war, how should nations, including Britain, respond? By being ready to mobilise against Russia, says the head of Britain's army, Gen Sir Patrick Sanders. In a speech on Tuesday, Gen Sanders said that armed citizens still win modern wars, just as in the last century. Britain therefore needed to "train and equip" a new "citizen army" that would be ready to fight a land war against Russia. The current professional army, set to fall to 72,500 by 2025, is too small for that. Even a force of 120,000 would not be capable of fighting an allout war. In the general's view, it was not just desirable but essential for Britain to follow Sweden's example and take "preparatory steps to place our societies on a war footing". This is dramatic language, as it is intended to be. Gen Sanders knows that this is an election year. He wants the political parties to hear him. He has complained about army cuts in the past. Now, six months before he is due to step down, he has done so again, more strikingly. His sense of urgency, although not all his proposals, also reflect real debate in military and defence circles, and not just in the UK. Britain's armed forces minister, James Heappey, has spoken of the need to prepare a combined force of 500,000 troops and civilians.

This is all very well, but it faces two large and connected problems in the real world. A citizen army of any size could mean a conscript army. Britain's military has only relied on conscription for about 25 years out of its more than 300-year history, and then only in times of highest national need. Is this such a moment? Many will be unpersuaded, to put it mildly. Postwar conscription was very unpopular and was ended in 1960. It would be at least as unpopular today, and political parties will be cautious in an election year. Rishi Sunak's office was quick to reject such a move this week. The separate but connected hurdle is competition for public spending. The army is less than half the size it was in 2000. Yet the spending tap cannot easily be turned on to reverse that decline. The economy today is stagnant, taxes high, and the public realm has been massively damaged by austerity. The case for tens of thousands of extra soldiers and trained civilians, and the kit to make them a credible threat, has to compete for resources with hospitals, care services, local government, schools and the green agenda, to name but a few. As the Institute for Fiscal Studies warned this week, current economic conditions mean that "all manner of policy problems will be more difficult to tackle and all manner of trade-offs will be more acute". None of this is an outright argument against some of what Gen Sanders is calling for. The international dangers are indeed mounting. Russia is a genuine threat, particularly to Poland and the Baltic and Nordic states. Deployable military numbers really matter. But rebuilding the public realm and fighting climate change are urgent too. The army chief is right to want more effective resources for the defence of European democracies. But he must take his place in the queue.

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Philippines: no lightning conductor for US

HE eighth meeting of the China-Philippines Bilateral Consultation Mechanism on the South China Sea, held last week in Shanghai, marks the latest efforts by Beijing and Manila to better manage and control their maritime disputes. It also sends an unmistakable message to the outside world that the two are seeking to resolve their disputes through bilateral channels. Since last year, the Philippines has repeatedly stoked tensions in the South China with its exacerbating of frictions, as a result of its provocative moves in relation to Ren'ai Reef and Huangyan Island in particular. These moves have worsened bilateral ties and offset regional efforts to build peace and stability in the waters. Hence, agreements reached in the meeting on improving the sea-related communication mechanism and handling maritime emergencies, especially the situation on Ren'ai Reef, are helpful for ratcheting down tensions and paving the way for resolving the disputes through negotiations. During the consultation, the two countries also reiterated that the South China Sea disputes do not define the entirety of their relationship and emphasized the importance of communication and dialogue in maintaining maritime peace and stability. This indicates the two sides are trying to stabilize bilateral ties by focusing on the larger picture. Before the maritime disputes resurfaced again, China and the Philippines enjoyed several years of growing and robust cooperation, in which large amounts of Chinese investments poured into the Philippines, and bilateral trade prospered. Not to mention that the warmth in bilateral ties also helped stabilize the situation in the South China Sea.

Hence, it is good to see both Beijing and Manila seem to be keen on resuming bilateral consultation and keeping the channels of communication open. This positive development can help ensure responsible conflict management and control. In this regard, Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr's latest remarks that his country's commitment to the one-China policy has not changed and will not change were also helpful to cultivate a good atmosphere for the continuous easing of tensions. Such a trend of conciliation is not only crucial to prevent China-Philippines ties from plummeting further but also contributes to building peace and stability in the South China Sea. But for the trend to be maintained, the Philippines needs to guard against Washington hijacking its policy toward China. It is known to all that the United States has been using the Philippines as a chess piece, or even a bridgehead, in its containment policy against China. In fact, the US instigation has largely contributed to last year's maritime flare-ups. Manila should have been reminded by developments elsewhere in the world over the past 23 months that it is a habitual practice of the US to push others to the forefront of its storm making, so they can act as lightning rods. Manila should continue to work with Beijing to resolve their maritime disputes through bilateral consultations.

Rogue India and benevolent China

Qamar Bashir



China's global investment strategy, particularly under its BRI, encompasses a vast and diverse range of development projects across various regions. Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIO J&K) into a large prison. It persecutes religious, linguistic and ethnic minorities with impunity. It intimidates neighboring countries, foments border disputes with almost all neighbors. It is suppressing genuine and bonafide separatist movements by use of brute force and has resorted to a global killing spree with total impunity. India's actions in IIOJ&K particularly following the revocation of the region's special status, have drawn international scrutiny and criticism. Human rights organizations including Human Rights Watch (HRW) and Amnesty International (AI) have documented a range of serious rights violations in the region. These include arbitrary detentions, a communications blackout, and severe restrictions on freedom of movement and peaceful assembly, alongside the suspension of internet and telecommunication services.

The reports from AI and HRW also highlight a crackdown on media and civil society, with cases of relentless interrogation of journalists, lawyers, and human rights defenders, as well as arbitrary travel bans and detentions. The rampant and arbitrary use of laws like the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), Public Safety Act (PSA), and Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) has led to pre-trial detentions and arrests without judicial review, coupled with unlawful killings lacking accountability. These developments have damaged India's reputation as a state committed to ethical practices and human rights, drawing to historical instances of oppreto significant international outcry. The story does not end here, HRW and other international HR organizations have recorded mistreatment of religious minorities under the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)'s government. They have documented horrendous Incidents of communal violence, such as the outbreak in Nuh district in Haryana, where state retaliation against Muslim residents, including illegal property demolitions and detentions, lynching, raping and mob killing. In Manipur, inter-community violence led to deaths, displacement, and destruction of property. There are countless incidents of violence and discrimination against religious minorities, including Muslims and Christians, with some states implementing "anti-conversion" laws and others engaging in actions like property demolitions without legal authorization. The Universal Periodic Review process by the United Nations Human Rights Council has raised serious concerns over regression in human rights under the Modi government, with increased attacks and discrimination against religious minorities and marginalized communities like Dalits and Adivasis. The state sponsored majoritarianism in India has created wide spread discontentment amongst the populace belonging to minority groups which has given rise to over twenty five separatists and insurgency movements including the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA), National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN), Bru National Liberation Front (BNLF), Mizo National Front (MNF), Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), Hizbul Mujahideen, Khalistan Liberation Force (KLF), Babbar Khalsa International (BKI), Kamtapur Liberation Organization (KLO), Bodoland People's Front (BPF) and Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF). Belligerent and hegemonic India does not enjoy good relations with any country of the region. It has border disputes with China along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), which resulted in increased tensions and military buildups from both sides. The India-Nepal dispute, reignited by India's road construction in a region has become politically charged, fueling nationalist sentiments in Nepal. During Doklam Standoff (2017) Bhutan and India armies came face to face when India started building hydro electric projects to divert water which was a lifeline for Bhutan. India was ward off only when China sided Bhutan. Maldives has been wary of India involvement in its internal affairs specially India's effort to change the Islamic character of Maldives has resulted in downgrading the relations. Earlier, Indian hegemonic designs were confined to the region, but now emboldened by its economic upsurge and becoming darling of the USA as a counterbalancing force to China, it has enlarged its criminal ambit globally. Several countries are raising allegations about its involvement in extraterritorial activities. Canada has accused India of being involved in the killing of Sikh leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar. This was followed by the United States implicating India in the assassination of another Sikh leader, a development significant enough to influence President Joe Biden's decision to cancel a planned visit to India as the chief guest for the Republic Day celebrations. In the aftermath, India invited French President Emmanuel Macron to fill this role, a decision that was soon overshadowed by controversy when India revoked the visa of a long-serving French rnalist. Adding to these diplomation has recently accused India of being behind the killing of Pakistani citizens on the basis of tangible evidence of India's involvement. These incidents point to a growing concern about India's foreign policy and its actions on the international stage, reflecting a shift from regional to broader global implications. China, as a global power, presents a contrasting approach in its regional and international relations compared to India. With its status as a nuclear power, the world's second-largest economy, significant military capabilities, achievements in space exploration, and industrial prowess, China has adopted a strategy of collaboration and support with its neighbors. The country is heavily investing in infrastructure projects across the region, including the construction of roads, highways, ports, bridges, and airports followed by deeper cooperation in space exploration, research and development, education and health, mining and agriculture and industrialization. This investment is part of a broader strategy to enhance regional connectivity and economic development. Furthermore, China has shown a willingness to provide financial support to neighboring countries in times of need, often extending generous loans and financial aid. These efforts have fostered strong relationships with most of its neighbors. China's approach reflects its ambition to position itself as a benevolent and cooperative regional leader, contrasting with perceptions of India's criminal, unethical, hegemonic and belligerent state sponsored policies. China's global investment strategy, particularly under its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), encompasses a vast and diverse range of development projects across various regions. In Pakistan, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) represents a significant commitment with an investment of \$65 billion. The strategic partnership with Iran, valued at approximately \$400 billion over 25 years, spans numerous sectors,

reflecting China's deep economic involvement in the Middle East. In Afghanistan, China focuses on infrastructure and mining with an initial investment of \$7 billion. The relationship with the Maldives has been strengthened in 2024 with an investment portfolio of \$ 1,57 Billion. China's investment in Sri Lanka, including the Hambantota Port development, amounts to \$4.5 billion. In Africa, Chinese investments range from \$126 billion to \$273 billion, emphasizing its substantial economic presence on the continent. The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region sees China's involvement reach \$6.7 billion in investments with a significant trade volume. In Central Asia, Chinese investments lie between \$35 billion and \$60 billion, highlighting strategic interests in this region. Europe experienced a massive range of investments from \$1 trillion to \$3 trillion, covering various economic activities, while Latin America saw investments between \$150 billion and \$250 billion, indicating China's expanding global influence and diverse economic partnerships. These extensive investments reflect China's ambition to enhance global connectivity, create win-win situations, increase the capacity, capability and resource base of its partner and bring about prosperity across the board without bringing regime changes and meddling into the internal affairs of its partners, without having any desired to use its investment to force the partners to take decisions which serve its vested interests. China's approach to its territorial and internal issues, particularly with Taiwan, Macau, ibet, and Hong Kong, reflects a strategy contra with more aggressive methods of India and even USA and the West. Emphasizing diplomacy and engagement, China has consistently advocated for peaceful resolution and dialogue. In its handling of these regions, China has shown restraint and a willingness to let time progress, allowing for the possibility of reconciliation and mutual understanding. This approach s guided by the belief that over time, differing perspectives might converge towards goal of unity and shared prosperity. Furthermore, China's policy towards its minority regions involves a focus on development and integration. Efforts are directed toward channeling resources, skills, industry, education, and technology into these areas aimed at addressing grievances by fostering socio-economic growth and assimilation into the broader Chinese society. This strategy is seen as a way to mitigate discontent and create a more harmonious and unified national fabric. For India to emerge as a progressive and peaceful nation, it must focus on embracing and integrating its diverse ethnic, religious, communal, racial, and linguistic minorities into the national mainstream. Addressing the concerns and aspirations of separatist groups through democratic means and respecting human rights is essential. India could benefit from emulating China's strategy of fostering partnerships for progress, especially in addressing conflicts in IIOJ&K and separatist movements. Prioritizing the rights of religious, ethnic, and linguistic minorities, and resolving conflicts through democratic means aligned with the United Nations charter, would not only avoid inhumane force but also reinforce India's image as a harmonious and inclusive society. This approach is pivotal for long-term peace and development.

In Pakistan, the CPEC represents a significant commitment with an investment of \$65 billion

NHE inauguration of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya on দ January 22, 2024, is a highly abhorrent and agonizing event, particularly for the Muslim community in India and globally. The event was a symbol of the neglect of secular principles in the Indian Constitution and a disregard for the religious and communal sentiments of Muslims. The demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992 and the subsequent legal and political developments leading up to the temple's inauguration are a painful and humiliating chapter in the Muslim history. The Ram Temple, for many, will remain a symbol of ongoing agony and a deep sense of injustice, reflecting broader tensions and challenges in the multicultural and multi-religious fabric of Indian society. Pakistan has raised concerns in international forums such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the United Nations about the agonizing crime of building the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, describing the event as a symbol of growing majoritarianism in India. It highlighted the event as an affront to the Muslim community and expressed apprehensions about the safety of mosques, churches and worship places of other religious minorities in India. It called upon international organizations to ensure the protection of Islamic heritage sites and uphold the rights of minorities in India.

But the list of Indian state sponsored crimes are countless not only within India, in the region and globally. It has reduced Press Secretary to the President (Rtd) Former Press Minister at Embassy of Pakistan to France Former MD, SRBC

Gaza war's spillover effects on American academic freedom

Dr. Abdel Aziz Aluwaisheg

The US group Inside Higher Ed reviewed more than a dozen cases in which faculty speech had been censored, investigated or punished by universities or professional associations. Most cases involved those

expressing statements favorable to Palestinians, usually voiced outside the classroom, at protests or on social media. The war is testing how tolerant universities really are of free speech when they are under pressure from politicians, lobbyists or donors who are favorable to Israel. Academic Freedom Alliance observed...

SRAEL'S war on Gaza has had a devastating effect on free speech around the world, but especially in the US. Academic freedom is imperiled at college campuses across the country because of restrictions on views opposed to the war. This has had a chilling effect on the public debate about the war, with many expressing fears of a new form of McCarthyism on campus, fueled by traditional and social media and by politicians in the heightened climate of US elections. At the US Congress grilling of prominent university administrators, the harsh rhetoric used by some members of Congress reinforced those fears of a new McCarthy-like witch hunt. They were fiercely scolded for not doing enough to curb anti-Israel criticism. Following their public humiliation, the presidents of Harvard and Pennsylvania universities were subsequently forced to resign. Censure of those deviating from the official Israeli line has been common, including through firings, teaching bans, public rebuke and smear campaigns. There has been widespread intimidation and censorship of critics, accusing them of antisemitism and subjecting them to disciplinary measures and even arrests. In some cases, new legal measures have been adopted to further suppress the voicing of anti-Israel views, conflating legitimate criticism of Israeli policies with antisemitism and even terrorism. There have been multiple examples of faculty members being swiftly investigated and sometimes punished for their statements on the crisis - often after they blew up on social media or in the conventional media or after the intervention of an important donor or politician. The war is testing how tolerant universities really are of free speech when they are under pressure

The US group Inside Higher Ed reviewed more than a dozen cases in which faculty speech had been censored, investigated or punished by universities or professional associations. Most cases involved those expressing statements favorable to Palestinians, usually voiced outside the classroom, at protests or on social media. The war is testing how tolerant universities really are of free speech when they are under pressure from politicians, lobbyists or donors who are favorable to Israel. The Academic Freedom Alliance observed: "A lot of universities are on a bit of a hair trigger when it comes to faculty speech on this par-

ticular issue at the moment." They rush to action because they "know they're being watched by pressure groups and, in some cases, receiving pressure from donors and politicians." Under pressure to restrict anti-Israel views, the US Education Department is now expected to come out with regulations to make clear when a university must intervene, along the lines of former President Donald Trump's 2019 executive order, which threatened to pull federal funding from colleges that ignore antisemitism on campus. Fueling the campaign against Israel's critics are well-established pro-Israel outlets, newly setup groups and ad hoc websites, which frequently name individuals and organizations that promote what they see as views critical of Israel. They keep databases of professors, writers and others accused of unfavorable views of its war on Gaza or of expressing favorable views of Palestinians. They hunt down critics, branding them as antisemites or "haters" of Israel and encourage harassment and bullying of those they name. At times, politicians take part in the harassment.

Faculty First Responders, a group funded by the American Association of University Professors, monitors websites that write about higher education and offers aid to faculty members who come under attack. Since October, it has documented "a sharp increase in attacks on faculty who express solidarity with Palestine, who express criticisms of the state of Israel." Irene Mulvey, president of the American Association of University Professors, said: "For sure, there's no question in my mind that the violations of academic freedom have increased. Incidents are happening at an alarming rate and faculty are holding the line and trying to get their administrations to hold the line for academic freedom in polarizing times." The association recently released a warning on the pitfalls of "overly broad definitions of antisemitism," reiterating its long-standing position on the subject. It stated that it "rejects the characterization of pro-Palestinian speech or critiques of the Israeli state as invariably antisemitic ... These efforts to control what is thought, said, taught and researched are antithetical to the educational mission of a university and the democratic values upon which it rests.'

US politicians bear much of the responsibility, as they ex-

press blind support for Israel's actions in Gaza Actions by anti-Palestinian campaigners in the US echo what extremists are doing in Israel itself. Neve Gordon, an Israeli legal scholar and professor of human rights and humanitarian law living in the UK, said recently that he is worried there has been a major clampdown on academic freedom in the US, Europe and Israel. His research looks at the laws of war, with a special focus on Israel-Palestine, and on definitions of antisemitism. He has been following the impact of the Gaza war on free speech at universities. He reported more than 100 cases in Israel of students and staff who have been suspended or dismissed, as well as at least 10 cases of students being arrested for their criticism of Israel's attack on Gaza. Adam Shinar, a professor of law at the Harry Radzyner Law School at Reichman University, recently wrote that free speech restrictions in Israel, both formal and informal, have increased significantly since the war started. The government has succeeded in creating a chilling effect, with the mere voicing of criticism – especially when coupled with empathy toward Palestinians being conflated with treason and triggering harsh responses, from police questioning to hate speech and attacks on social media. In the West Bank and in Gaza itself, Israel's measures to silence criticism are extreme. The New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists reported this week that at least 83 journalists and media workers have been killed since Oct. 7, while Palestinian sources put the number at more than 100. The committee said that it is "particularly concerned about an apparent pattern of targeting of journalists and their families by the Israeli military." It called for Israel to end the long-standing pattern of impunity in cases of journalists killed by its security forces. Pro-Israel groups and lobbyists in the US are trying to whitewash what the occupation is doing by limiting debate on American campuses. The rising influence of social media has aided this process. However, US politicians bear much of the responsibility, as they express blind support for Israel's actions in Gaza, thus encouraging extremist groups to wage witch hunts against academics who may hold different views.

WORLD / SPORTS

Islamabad **POST** Saturday, January 27, 2024

Briefs **Israel** must stop...

FROM PAGE 01 LAHORE: In another setback for the Imran Khan-led Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), its candidate from NA-194 (Larkana 1) Saifullah Abro Friday announced his decision to "withdraw" in Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari's favour ahead of the upcoming February 8 polls. The PTI has issued a show cause notice to Senator Abro. Taking to social media platform X, Abro confirmed the development saying that he has decided to withdraw from the said constituency after meeting the PPP chairman on Thursday. The said constituency is arguably a stronghold of the PPP, as Bilawal bagged a win in the 2018 elections as well, and Abro's withdrawal is likely to further strengthen Bilawal's position there. Meanwhile, reacting to Abro's withdrawal, the PTI has issued a show-cause notice to the senator seeking a written reply from him within three days for violating the party's policy and showing "grave indiscipline".

'Victory for rule of law'...

FROM PAGE 01

For the implementation of the international rule of law, the decision is a momentous one. South Africa thanks the Court for its swift ruling. The United Nations Security Council will now be formally notified of the Court's order pursuant to Article 41(2) of the Court's Statute. The veto power wielded by individual states can not be permitted to thwart international justice, not least in light of the ever-worsening situation in Gaza brought about by Israel's acts and omissions in violation of the Genocide Convention. Third States are now on notice of the existence of a serious risk of genocide against the Palestinian people in Gaza. They must, therefore, also act independently and immediately to prevent genocide

Sinner dumps Djokovic out of Australian Open

Medvedev stuns Zverev in five-setter to book final with Sinner

OUR CORRESPONDENTS

MELBOURNE: Jannik Sinner dumped Novak Djokovic out of Australian Open on Friday to qualify for the final of the first slam of the year. Djokovic's bid for a record 25th Grand Slam singles title was ended by a 6-1 6-2 6-7(6) 6-3 loss against Sinner. The Serbian was looking to bag the record for most Grand Slam singles titles outright after sharing it with Australian Margaret Court since winning his 24th major at the U.S. Open last September.

According to Opta, Sinner has become the first Italian male player since the ATP Rankings were published in 1973 to defeat the world number one in a Grand Slam Men's Singles event (they were 0-23 prior to this match). At 22 years and 163 days, Sinner is also the youngest men's singles finalist at the Australian Open since Djokovic in 2008. Sinner is the first Italian player in tennis history to reach the singles final at the Australian Open. Sinner domination can be judged



Jurgen Klopp to leave Liverpool at end of season LONDON: Liverpool man-

ager Jurgen Klopp anlove nounced in a shock decision on Friday that he will leave the club at the end of the season because he was "running out of energy". Klopp, who has returned Liverpool to one of European football's powerhouses since taking over at Anfield in 2015, said the decision to leave was one "I have to take". The German led Liverpool to their first league title for 30 years in 2020 no and to Champions League

glory in 2019. Liverpool are five points clear at the top of the Premier League and the 56-year-old will be hoping to go out on a high by winning the title again. "I can understand that it's a shock for a lot of people in this moment, when you hear it for the first time," Klopp said in an interview on Liverpool's website. "I love absolutely everything about this club, I love ing 1011t



ly, I knew it already for longer that I will have to announce it at one point, but I am absolutely fine now. "I know that I cannot do the job again and again and again and again." Klopp said he had taken the decision in November when discussions with the club about potential signings for next season began. After years of battling with Manchester City at the top of the Premier League and

onto the rails. It was all I was thinking about.

"When I realised pretty early that happened, it's a really good team with massive potential and a super age group, super characters and all that, then I could start thinking about myself again and that was the outcome. It is not what I want to (do), it is just what I think is 100 per cent right." Klopp's backroom staff will also leave at the end of the But Klopp said season with assistant Pep Lijnders keen to pursue his own managerial career.

The US-based Fenway Sports Group (FSG), who own Liverpool, paid tribute to Klopp and said work will begin immediately on looking for his successor.

"I would like to state our profound appreciation for Jurgen," said FSG president Mike Gordon. "It goes without saying that we will be hugely saddened to lose not just a manager of such calibre, but a person and

from the fact that this was this first completed match at a Grand Slam in Djokovic's career where he did not forge a single break point chance (0 in 19 receiving games). Djokovic lost his first match at the Australian Open since the fourth round in 2018, when he lost to Hyeon Chung, 2195 days ago. He won 33 consecutive matches in this span equalling the longest winning streak at the AO in the Open Era. Fourth seed Sinner, who beat Djokovic twice in three matches at the end of last season, took advantage of 36-year-old opponent's shaky serve and error-prone backhand to convincingly win the opening two sets.

Sinner was in control of the third set as well but Djokovic raised his game to stay firm until the tiebreak. However, the Italian fluffed a match point, while also losing the set, to give his opponent a lifeline. But Sinner didn't let that affect his game and broke for a 3-1 lead in the fourth set and ran away with the match. Sinner will face either third seed Daniil Medvedev or sixth seed Alexander Zverev in Sunday's title match.

Rahul, Jadeja keep

India in dominant

position against Eng

Srikar Bharat joined Jadeja before

the tea, with India leading by 42

runs. The pair extended the home

side's lead with their 68-run

stand for the sixth wicket

HYDERABAD: KL Rahul and Ravindra Jadeja helped India

dominate the second day's play during the first Test against

England at Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium on Friday. In-

dia were 421/7 at stumps on the second day, leading by 175

runs, with Ravindra Jadeja (81) and Axar Patel (35) on the

crease. The hosts lost Yashasvi Jaiswal earlier in the day as he

got caught and bowled by Joe Root after playing a quick knock

of 80 runs from 74 balls, laced with ten boundaries and three

sixes. England's debutant Tom Hartley claimed his first Test

wicket when Shubman Gill (23) holed one to the mid-wicket.

Rahul was then joined by Shreyas Iyer (35) in the middle and

the pair knitted a 64-run stand for the fourth wicket before

Jadeja joined settled Rahul and they put together a promis-

ing 65-run partnership to push India's total ahead of Eng-

land's 246. Hartley broke the partnership as Rehan Ahmed

caught Rahul at deep mid-wicket after the batter had scored

Srikar Bharat joined Jadeja before the tea, with India lead-

ing by 42 runs. The pair extended the home side's lead with

their 68-run stand for the sixth wicket. Bharat, who was the

main contributor of the partnership fell prey to Root after

scoring 41 runs from 81 balls, laced with three boundaries.

Ravichandran Ashwin was then run out, bringing Axar Pa-

86 runs with the help of eight boundaries and two sixes.

Rehan Ahmed sent Iyer back soon after the lunch.

President calls for greater...

FROM PAGE 01 He regretted that the international community had failed to stop the Israeli atrocities, despite the painful imagery coming out of Gaza. The President congratulated the outgoing Ambassador on the successful completion of his tenure in Islamabad and appreciated his efforts for the promotion of friendly relations between Pakistan and Tajikistan.

PM requests China to roll over \$2bn...

FROM PAGE 01

The sources added that the officials from Pakistan's finance ministry and authorities in China are in contact about the matter. PM Kakar, in his letter to the Chinese premier, thanked his government for financial support, the finance ministry sources said. The sources, citing the letter, stated: "China gave a loan to the government of Pakistan in a difficult economic situation." A total of \$4 billion worth of funds in loans, as per the sources, has been kept as a safe depos-it, which has reduced Pakistan's external payments burden. Last year in May, Beijing came to Pakistan's rescue during its struggle to secure the critical pending loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), as the Chinese government rolled over more than \$2 billion in debt. The friendly neighbour had committed to help Islamabad meet two crucial debt repayments in June worth \$2.3 billion by providing fresh funds immediately after Pakistan was to make the payments.

Nawaz promises to address...

FROM PAGE 01

He criticised the high prices of essential items, mentioning the cost of fertilisers, tractors and the construction of motorways during his time and the significant



it was vital for him to not leave on that sour note as a rejuvenated squad is in contention for four trophies in what remains of his reign. Liverpool reached the League Cup final on Wednesday and will face Chelsea in the final next month. The Reds play Norwich in the FA Cup fourth round on Sunday and are into the last 16 of the Europa League. Reflecting on the impact he has had at Liverpool, Klopp said: "For

by Israel and to ensure that they are not themselves in violation of the Genocide Convention, including by aiding or assisting in the commission of genocide.

State of Palestine...

FROM PAGE 01

violate the Genocide Convention. Instead, it said Israel had presented misleading and discredited narratives. It hailed the judges of the ICJ who objectively evaluated the facts before them, aligning with the evidence presented by South Africa and reflecting the gravity of the situation on the ground in Palestine. "The State of Israel now stands accused of destroying an entire population, facing charges of genocide." Building on this historic decision, the State of Palestine called on the international community to pressure the Israel to cease its ongoing aggression against the Gaza Strip, halt the genocide, end all destructive operations, and cease forced displacement.

Elahi, Sanam among PTI...

FROM PAGE 01

Advocate Faisal Siddiqui represented Elahi in the case. Presenting his arguments, Elahi's counsel highlighted anomalies in the objections raised by the rival candidates and ECP. "We don't want a delay in elections," Siddiqui told the bench. He implored the court to grant permission to his client to contest the upcoming elections in Gujarat. Justice Minallah observed that voters should not be deprived of their right to vote. He said a returning officer is supposed to facilitate and not obstruct the election process. "It is strange that all this is happening to only one political party," Justice Minallah remarked. Justice Shah said elections call for the inclusion of people and not exclusion. "Article 17 says that no one can be barred from contesting an election without valid reasons," he said. The SC judge said the Constitution enfranchisement allows and not disenfranchising the voters via elections

he city,

I love everything about the Champions League, Livour supporters, I love erpool struggled to match

super-important that I can help to bring this team back

tude and affection.

Peshawar Zalmi raises concerns over PSL 9 schedule

KARACHI: Peshawar Zalmi team has raised questions about the Pakistan Super League edition 9 schedule, expressing disappointment with the administration for only scheduling four matches in Rawalpindi and one match in Karachi. The franchise sources say that fundamentally, events should have been held in Peshawar, and they have strong reservations about the schedule and venues. Zalmi was not included in the decision-making process nor was their confidence sought before releasing the schedule. The administration is disappointed with only four matches scheduled in Rawalpindi and just one in Karachi. Sources further stated that even before the schedule was released, Peshawar Zalmi had requested three matches to be played near Peshawar due to support in Rawalpindi and Karachi, with supporters filling stadiums in these cities.

After the schedule was released, a request was made to reduce the schedule of four matches in Lahore to four matches in Rawalpindi and three in Karachi. The administration also informed the PCB headquarters about the reservations, but no attention was paid to the matter. Not only Zalmi's fans are disappointed with the current schedule but also team's commercial and marketing department are facing difficulties and reservations. Franchise sources added that while Peshawar Zalmi has been at the forefront of promoting and popularizing the PSL, PCB should also consider the concerns of all franchises. They demand more matches to be played in Rawalpindi and Karachi. Peshawar Zalmi will participate in PSL 9, but the protest will continue. - Agencies

Master Oil Inter Club Cricket Tournament begins

KARACHI: Landhi Gymkhana off to a flying start when they beat Sir Syed Cricket Club by 6 Wickets in the opening match of Master Oil Inter Club Cricket Tournament on Thursday at Aga Khan Gymkhana Ground. Earlier Tabish Jawed Senior Vice President Regional Cricket Association Karachi inaugurated the Tournament in simple but impressing Ceremony after hitting the Ball. Speaking on the occasion he announced full Cooperate to RCAK and Sponsor the Tournament for Promotion of Club Cricket in Karachi. The Tournament is being organized by Regional Cricket Association Karachi after a gap of 6 years. In Which 214 affiliated Clubs of Seven Zones Karachi Participating in the Tournament. - Agencies

tel out in the middle with 358 runs on the board. Patel and enormous respect, grati-

Jadeja put together an unbeaten 63-run stand for the eighth wicket to end the day with a lead of 175 runs.

fortunately, Barishal ended up

ets. Prior to the revelation

Malik had planned to go

reasons, and Barishal

nounced his absence

matches. However,

cate that the owner

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on social media that

suspicions. However.

claims and information

while talking to Cricket

Malik was willing to come

terminated

Sikander,

been

manager,

Malik dismisses matchfixing rumors in BPL

in the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) as a member of Fortune Barishal, has had his contract terminated amid suspicions of involvement in match-fixing. Reports from the Bangladesh media suggest that suspicions of match-fixing arose when Malik bowled three no-balls in a single over during the match against Khulna Tigers in the BPL. Mawhere he conceded 18 runs, with

lik's bowled one over in the match, two boundaries and a six. Unlosing the match by 8 wickof these suspicions, to Dubai for personal had officially anfrom the remaining recent reports indiof Barishal has determinate his conit was circulating Malik's contract has due to match-fixing Barishal team's media has dismissed the from the Bengali media Pakistan. His stance is that

his proposal was not accepted, back and play on February 6, but leading to the termination of the contract through mutual agreement. On the other hand, speaking to Cricket Pakistan, Malik refuted media reports, stating that he was in Dubai due to pre-arranged personal commitments and wanted to return and play, but the league administration did not agree. The rest of the details are all nonsense.Malik also took over his social media platform X and cleared the situation. - Agencies

increase in their prices today. Nawaz expressed empathy for the youth, stating that he loved them and was saddened that they were unemployed. He attributed this unemployment to the former PTI government. and said if Nawaz Sharif's government had continued, no youth would have been unemployed today. Nawaz said that with the support of the people, his party would bring Pakistan back to a prosperous state, with employment in every household. He said they would construct motorways, highspeed railways and possibly an airport in the region. Earlier, upon his arrival at the venue of the power show, Nawaz Sharif was accorded a rousing welcome by a jubilant crowd of PML-N leaders, workers and supporters. Meanwhile, Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari ignited a fervent crowd in Multan on Wednesday, promising to break the cycle of "hatred politics" and usher in a new era of prosperity if elected in the upcoming February 8 elections.

Govt taking measures to ensure...

FROM PAGE 01

The caretaker information minister congratulated Dr. Gohar Ejaz, on assuming charge of the caretaker minister for the interior. On the occasion, Information Minister Murtaza Solangi said that caretaker government was taking all possible steps to hold the upcoming elections in a transparent manner. He highlighted the strong cooperation between the federal and provincial governments regarding security arrangements. The caretaker information minister said that the media had a crucial role to ensure free and fair elections. He said that the media should strictly adhere to the code of conduct issued for coverage of the general elections. There was a need to prevent any kind of propaganda during the elections, Solangi said. Expressing views on security issues, the caretaker interior minister said that all political parties should support the government in maintaining law and order situation during elections.

Khawar urges players: prioritize Pak over leagues PCB Chairman Shah Khawar addressed the reports of players focusing more on franchise leagues than national duty

SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: The interim chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Shah Khawar has stated that playing for Pakistan should be the first priority for players on Friday. While addressing the media during a press conference, Shah Khawar addressed the reports of players focusing more on franchise leagues than national duty.

"I have come to know that the focus of the players during the New Zealand tour was on leagues more than the ongoing series," said Shah Khawar. "On the issue of granting NOCs to players to participate in franchise leagues, the PCB has the policy of giving centrally contracted players permission to attain NOC for a maximum of two leagues apart from HBL PSL over

the course of a year." "Their first priority has to be to play for Pakistan and all centrally contracted players must adhere to this," he stated. The interim chairman also shed light on his meeting with Pakistan's team director Mohammad Hafeez in the presence of chief selector Wahab Riaz and Chief Operating Officer (COO) Salman Naseer. "We had a general discus-

sion regarding the team's

performances in Australia

and New Zealand," said

Shah Khawar. "He will

furnish a formal report

assessing the team's per-

formances and reasons

for defeats in the Test and T20I series." "He was giv-

For the unversed, Shah Khawar, Advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan and the Election Commissioner of Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) assumed the powers of Chairman of PCB on Wednesday.

According to the notificaen a one-month contract, which has expired. Now tion dated 23 January 2024 his case is in the hands of from the Inter-Provincial the Patron-in-Chief and the Coordination (IPC) Minisapproval [for extension try and by virtue of Article of contract] will be given 7(2) of the PCB Constitufrom there," he concluded. tion the Election Commis-

sioner is vested with the powers of Chairman PCB. Shah Khawar's appointment as the interim chairman came after PCB Management Committee chairman Zaka Ashraf stepped down from his post on January 19. Earlier on , Hafeez blames players for Australia and New Zealand losses Hafeez met with Acting PCB Chairman Shah Khawar while PCB's COO Salman

Naseem was also present. The 43-year-old expressed that the players lacked focus on the game, as their primary attention was on participating in the ongoing franchise T20 leagues. Earlier, it was reported that Hafeez's role as director will conclude after disappointing performances in Australia and New Zealand. Pakistan lost 3-0 Down Under while the Blackcaps thumped the

Men in Green 4-1. Hafeez, nicknamed "Professor", had a contract with the side till December 15. PCB is likely to ask him not

to continue any further. Remember, Shah Khawar, Advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan and the Election Commissioner of PCB, assumed the powers of Chairman PCB on January 23. According to the notification from the Inter-Provincial Coordina-

tion (IPC) Ministry and by virtue of Article 7(2) of the PCB Constitution, the Election Commissioner is vested with the powers of Chairman PCB. Shah Khawar is the fifth person to lead PCB in the last 14 months. Before him, Ramiz Raja, Najam Sethi, Ahmed Shehzad Farooq Rana and Zaka Ashraf have also been in charge of the board's affairs. "I would like to thank the Patron of the PCB, Mr Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar, for reposing trust in me. My primary responsibility will be to hold the election of Chairman PCB in a free and transparent manner at the earliest," Khawar said. Earlier, caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar, the patron of the PCB, had officially nomi-

nated Mohsin Naqvi as the

new representative of the

Board of Governors (BoG).

BUSINESS / WORLD

Briefs

Zelenskyy cheers Ukraine's EU accession talks preparations

KYIV : Ukrainian Presi dent Volodymyr Zelenskyy on welcomed the start of preparations for his country's talks on joining the European Union. "I welcome today's start of substantial preparations for Ukraine's EU accession talks. The screening process, which lays the groundwork for the negotiations, has officially begun in Brussels," Zelenskyy said on X. He said the commencement of the screening process is the outcome of agreements reached with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen on the sidelines of the recent World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. "The thorough work of assessing the conformity of Ukrainian legislation with EU norms, the formation of Ukraine's delegation and our negotiating position are all ahead of us," Zelenskyy said. He added that he expects the full engagement of his government as well as the first intergovernmental conference to be held this spring. Earlier, a Ukrainian delegation led by Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration Olha Stefanishyna took part in an inaugural meeting in Brussels to launch the screening process. The European Council paved the way for the expansion of the 27-member bloc in December, announcing the commencement of accession negotiations with Ukraine

Kosovo, Albania shorten flight times with air corridors

and Moldova.-Agencies

BELGRADE : Kosovo and Albania opened new air corridors Thursday which shorten flight times with

Gaza needs urgent cease fire, Turkiye tells Britain

Turkish top diplomat emphasized the need for a two-state solution to the Palestine conflict in a key meeting with Cameron in Istanbul, UK foreign secretary's fourth stop in a Middle East tour seeking humanitarian pause to the war on Gaza

News Desk

ANKARA : Gaza needs an urgent cease-fire, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan told British counterpart David Cameron during a meeting in Istanbul, a Turkish diplomatic source said Friday. The pair held a meeting for some 90 minutes, followed by inter-delegation talks and discussed the war in Gaza, as well as bilateral ties, current global issues and Turkiye's ratification of Sweden's NATO membership bid, the source said. Fidan told Cameron that a full and immediate ceasefire and a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is needed in Gaza for lasting peace, the source added.

significance of Black Sea security and reaffirmed their commitment to bolstering Turkish-UK ties, notably in trade, economy and defense. Istanbul is Cameron's fourth stop on a regional tour of Israel, occupied Palestinian territories and Qatar to hold talks with leaders on an urgent humanitarian pause and secure a deal to release the Israeli hostages held in Gaza. He held crucial talks on Wednesday with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in west Jerusalem. According to a U.K. government statement, Cameron "explained that he wants to see an immediate humanitarian pause to get hostages out and aid in, leading to a sustainable cease-fire without

The pair also emphasized the a return to hostilities." Cameron met with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas late Wednesday to discuss the developments in the West Bank and Gaza. Israel has launched a deadly offensive on the Gaza Strip since an Oct. 7 Hamas attack, killing at least 25,700 Palestinians and injuring 63,740 others. Nearly 1,200 Israelis are believed to have been killed in the Hamas attack. The Israeli war has left 85% of Gaza's population internally displaced amid acute shortages of food, clean water and medicine, while more than half of the enclave's infrastructure has been damaged or destroyed, according to the U.N. Since earlier this month, tensions have surged in the Middle East after the U.S. and the U.K. stepped

up joint airstrikes on Yemen in response to the Houthis' ongoing attacks on international shipping lanes in the Red Sea. Türkiye too has naval troops in the Gulf of Aden, Somali territorial waters and the Arabian Sea adjacent to the Gulf where it assists international efforts by the U.N., NATO, EU and International Maritime Organization (IMO) against maritime piracy. Ankara has since condemned the U.S. and British airstrikes on Houthi rebels, calling it "disproportionate" and accusing Washington and London of trying to turn the Red Sea into a "bloodbath." Türkiye has been a staunch defender of the Palestinian cause and continues diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict, including an offer of a guarantorship model

and vocally backing South Africa's genocide case against Israel at the International Court of Justice (ICJ). Although the two sides took mutual steps for a thaw right before Oct. 7, Ankara's stand with Palestine led to a deterioration of ties with Israel. Relations with Western allies who hold a definite pro-Israel stance, too, went into a downward spiral again, especially after President Recep Tayyip Erdo an declared Israel "a terrorist state" for its indiscriminate bombing and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu the "Butcher of Gaza." He has also described Hamas as a "liberation organization" much to the chagrin of the United States and the European Union, who classify it as a terrorist organization.

CIA chief heading to Europe for Gaza negotiations

Islamabad **POST**

Saturday, January 27, 2024

WASHINGTON: The director of the CIA will meet in Europe with his Israeli and Egyptian counterparts plus the Qatari prime minister, aiming to negotiate a truce and hostage release in the Israeli-Hamas war. US media reported Thursday. William Burns will make the trip in the next few days, according to The Washington Post and Axios, which did not give a location for the talks. Both the US intelligence agency and White House declined to confirm the travel. However White House National Security spokesman John Kirby recalled that Burns had already been involved in negotiations over a prior hostage agreement at the end of November and indicated that he was participating in efforts for another one. –APP

Japan says New Year quake damage could cost \$17 billion

TOKYO: The cost of the damage wreaked by a huge New Year's Day earthquake that killed at least 236 people in central Japan could reach \$17.6 billion, a government official said Friday. The magnitude-7.5 earthquake and its aftershocks devastated parts of Ishikawa prefecture on the Sea of Japan coast, toppling buildings, ripping up roads and sparking a major fire. Damage in Ishikawa and two neighbouring regions is likely to cost between 1.1 trillion yen (\$7.4 billion) and 2.6 trillion yen (\$17.6 billion), according to a government estimate. A cabinet office official confirmed the figures, which were calculated using data from past major earthquakes and reported to a government economic meeting on Thursday. But even the ton estimate is much less than the 16.9 trillion yen damage caused by the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in northeastern Iapan. That disaster left around 18,500 people dead or missing and triggered a meltdown at the Fukushima atomic plant, the world's worst nuclear accident since Chernobyl. Authorities on Thursday revealed detailed reconstruction plans for Ishikawa, where snow and badly damaged roads have complicated relief efforts in the quake's aftermath. They include improvements to shelters for evacuees along with subsidies for rebuilding factories and ports as well as attracting tourists to the area. Japan sits on the Pacific "Ring of Fire", an arc of intense seismic activity that stretches through Southeast Asia and across the Pacific basin.Japan PM Kishida pledges all-out support for quake victims.-Agencies

Astana guarantors urge political solution for Syria, reject terror

WEB DESK

MOSCOW : The Astana guarantors, Türkiye, Russia and Iran, on Thursday reiterated their call for a political solution in wartorn Syria, and called on the Syrian Constitutional Committee to step up its work and rejected the projections of terrorist groups in the country. Türkiye was represented by Deputy Foreign Minister Ahmet Y ld z, while Russia was represented by its Special Envoy to Syria Alexander Lavrentiev, Iran by Ali Asghar Khaji, a senior adviser to the Iranian foreign minister on special political affairs, the Svrian opposition by Ahmet Toma and the regime by deputy foreign minister Bassam Sabbagh. Speaking to journalists following the meeting in the Kazakh capital Astana. Y ld z said: "As the Turkish side, we suggested that the work of the

Constitutional Committee ten amid the crises in Palbe initiated and accelerated estine and Ukraine and that because the solution will aid should continue and be ultimately come through a increased "in parallel with political process." Noting the deterioration of the ecothat the guarantor counnomic situation in Syria." In tries of the Astana format this regard, Yildiz said they talks are on the same page underlined that the Assad on this issue, Yildiz said the regime should not discrimbasic setting for this should inate and impose unacceptable conditions on the be a human rights-based constitution that "reflects delivery of humanitarian an acceptable, modern and aid. Playvolume00:00/00:fair representation so that 00dailysabah_politicsTruvidfullScreen "Ultimately, the crisis in Syria does not repeat itself again." "The the U.N.'s role in solving the Syrian problem will conwork of this committee will begin when the location is agreed upon," he said. tinue. In general, support from the international com-Yildiz said the 21st meeting munity will be required," he in this format expressed said. "Türkiye has incurred concern about the possible a lot of costs due to the Syrian crisis. This includes repercussions of the ongomigrants and refugees, but ing clashes in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, adding there are operations bethey are all in agreement in yond that. There are terrorcriticizing Israel and that it ist acts. All of this is a cost. should not spread the con-I hope that with the politiflict to Syria and Lebanon. cal solution in Syria, Syria He went on to say that the will become a good neighmeeting emphasized that bor of Türkiye," he said. Syria should not be forgot-In a written statement,

the sides expressed their determination to continue working against terrorism and stand against separatist agendas aimed at undermining the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria and threatening the national security of the neighboring countries.

They condemned activities of terrorist groups and their affiliates operating under different names in various parts of Syria, including attacks targeting civilian facilities that cause civilian casualties and highlighted the need to fully implement all arrangements related to the north of Syria.

Referring to the PKK's Syrian wing, the YPG, the guarantors rejected "illegitimate self-rule initiatives under the pretext of combating terrorism." belong to Syria.

Pakistan, St. Kitts & Nevis establish diplomatic ties

The Ambassador said that the formal establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and St. Kitts & Nevis would lead to

cooperation in different fields ISLAMABAD : Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the UN Munir Akram and his counterpart Dr. Mutryce Williams signed a joint communiqué at a ceremony in New York to formally establish the diplomatic relations between the two countries. Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Munir Akram said that the formal establishment of the diplomatic relations between the two countries would open up avenues for cooperation in several fields such as finance, trade, investment, information technology. He said it would provide an opportunity to the representatives of both countries at different tiers to have close and meaningful interaction, aimed at benefiting from each other's experiences. He said he looked forward to a renewed partnership with the Permanent Mission of St. Kitts & Nevis on the areas of common interest at the bilateral and multilateral forums. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Mutryce Willians said both the countries might be located at the far ends of the world, they have had mutual respect and good will for each other. The Ambassador said that the formal establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and St. Kitts & Nevis would lead to cooperation in different fields, especially trade, tourism and education.-DNA



European countries by up to 12 minutes. Kosovo's Air Navigation Services Agency held the official opening ceremony of the air corridors with Albania. Kosovo Prime Minister Albin Kurti said the development is a step towards progress, efficiency and responsibility for the environment. Kurti added that the new air corridors will provide opportunities for more affordable ticket prices and new destinations for citizens. NATO said the development was a result of efforts carried out within the NATO-led process aimed at normalizing civil aviation traffic in the Western Balkans. According to the statement, the new corridors will positively affect civil aviation and provide significant benefits such as shorter flight times, lower fuel consumption and less pollution. Since the end of the war in Kosovo in 1999, flights have been made only in the air corridor between Kosovo and North Macedonia. NATO's Peacekeeping Force in Kosovo (KFOR) has been responsible for the security of Kosovo's airspace since 1999, in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and existing laws in Kosovo.-APP

deploying troops to Burkina Faso

Russia begins

MOSCOW : A contingent of blurred number on its tail. The aircraft pictured on the Russian military personnel has flown into Burkina Fasunbaked tarmac was an so's capital, Ouagadougou, in what appeared to be the first significant deployment of Russian troops to the West African country, two foreign security sources said. The foreign sources in Ouagadougou did not have further details on the apparent deployment. The African Corps channel on the Telegram messaging app, which claims affiliation with Russia's Defence Ministry, said a group of 100 servicemen had flown to Burkina Faso to "ensure the safety of the country's leader Ibrahim Traore and the Burkinabe people." A further 200 would be deployed in the near future, it said on Wednesday. Defence Russian

The Ministry did not reply to request for comment. Photos posted to Telegram by African Initiative, a pro-Kremlin Russian news agency that covers African affairs, showed men in army fatigues unloading equipment from a plane with a Russian flag and a

Il-76, long the workhorse of the Russian military. African Initiative said the photos showed the arrival in Ouagadougou of the 100 Russian servicemen, who it said would also train their Burkinabe counterparts and help patrol dangerous areas. The junta-led country's relations with Moscow have been in the spotlight since it booted out French troops in early 2023, fuelling speculation it would deepen security ties with Russia like neighbouring Mali, where Russian Wagner mercenaries operate. Burkina Faso-Russia relations The deployment will add to Western concerns about Russia's widening influence in Africa's Sahel region, where a series of coups has swept Moscow-friendly juntas to power in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso, reshaping a long-running regional conflict with insurgents linked to Daesh and Al Qaeda.

Further cooperation could

Shaharyar Zafar,

be on the horizon. –**APP**

Mr.

Georgia ink cultural cooperation program

Turkiye,

ANKARA : The program was signed on Friday by Türkiye's Culture and Tourism Minister Mehmet Ersoy and Georgia's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Culture, Sport and Youth Thea Tsulukiani at the Ataturk Cultural Center in Istanbul. Speaking at the signing ceremony, Mehmet Ersoy said he and his Georgian counterpart had a productive meeting where they discussed the relations between Ankara and Tbilisi. Emphasising the significance of the cultural and historical heritage shared by the two countries, Ersoy said: "We possess a common cultural and historical heritage with Georgia. Preserving, sustaining, and passing on these shared values to future generations is our mutual priority and goal." With the cultural cooperation program signed between the two countries for the years 2024-2028, a working group will be formed, and an action plan will be prepared for the preservation and restoration of the Ottoman.-APP



BRUSSELS : Ambassador of Pakistan to EU Amna Baloch met with Permanent Representative of Portugal to the European Union Pedro Lourtie to discussed matters of mutual interest.-DNA

King Charles in hospital for prostate treatment

LONDON : King Charles has been admitted for treatment on his enlarged prostate at the same hospital where the Princess of Wales is being cared for after abdominal surgery. Charles, 75, was seen entering the private London Clinic in central London on Friday morning with the queen at his side. He took time to visit his daughter-inlaw Kate, who is on the 11th day of her hospital stay after undergoing a successful major operation last week. A palace spokesperson said: "The king was this morning admitted to a London hospital for scheduled treatment. "His majesty would like to thank all those who have sent their good wishes over the past week and is delighted to learn that his diagnosis is having a positive impact on public health awareness."DNA

Bank of Khyber expands its footprint in the capital

As the bank continues to expand, it remains resolute in delivering state-of-the-art financial solutions while actively contributing to the advancement and prosperity of individuals, businesses Head Marketing Division,

DNA

Head Digital, Media, Analytics Deptt, Mr. Khalid Masood, Head Institution-ISLAMABAD: Bank of Khyber, is proud to announce the inauguration of its al Liability Deptt, Mr. Mupremier Islamic banking hammad Zahid Khan Area branch at Blue Area Is-Manager Islamabad, along lamabad. With this latest with other senior execuaddition, the bank has tives, also attended the expanded its presence in the Capital Territory, branch inauguration. The newly inaugurated branch now boasting a total of 15 brings the Bank of Khyber's branches. This expansion comprehensive range of fiaims to offer customers nancial solutions closer to in the region enhanced the business community, residents & organizations accessibility to a wide range of Islamic banking in the area. The opening of products & services. Mr. this branch is a testament Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan to the Bank's commitment CEO Centaurus/President in enhancing accessibility Islamabad Developers Asto shariah compliant banksociation and Mr. Irfan ing in the capital. Custom-Saleem Awan, Managing ers visiting the branch can Director (A)/ CFO BoK, avail of a wide array of servicinaugurated the branch, es, including personal bank-Mr. Ali Khan Arbab, Group ing, business banking, trade Head Islamic banking (A), finance, and digital banking Ms. Fauziah Mahmood. solutions.

The Bank's well-trained managing their finances and professional staff will be readily available to assist customers in

effectively and efficiently. As the bank continues to expand, it remains resothe-art financial solutions while actively contributing to the advancement

lute in delivering state-of- and prosperity of individuals, businesses, and communities across the country.



Mudassar Raja

Protests erupt in Paris over immigration law

PARIS : Hundreds of opponents of France's new immigration law gathered Thursday near the Louvre Museum in Paris, demanding that it be repealed. Protesters, including migrants, argued that the law is racist and anti-foreigner. Police took security measures in the area. Amid the fervor of dissent, political factions also weighed in on the contentious issue. The France Unbowed party (LFI) expressed satisfaction over the Constitutional Council's decision to strike down significant provisions of the law. However, they called for its complete annulment, denouncing it as a "disgrace' to the principles of the rule of law. Jordan Bardella, president of the far-right National Rally party (RN), accused the Constitutional Council of colluding with President Emmanuel Macron to dilute key regulations within the law.

Bardella labeled the law as "stillborn" and demanded a national referendum to address the escalating concerns surrounding migration. In response to the mounting pressure and discord. Macron issued a directive to Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin, urging the swift implementation of the immigration law.-APP



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Briefs PTI says its websites **'blocked'** in **Pakistan**

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: The PTI on Friday alleged that its websites were "blocked" in Pakistan and demanded an answer from the federal authorities. The PTI, deprived of its iconic 'bat' symbol for the upcoming polls, has fielded its leaders as independent candidates with different electoral symbols. To combat confusion among voters and to ease access to election-related information, the party launched an online portal on its website insaf.pk, as well as a "backup site", pticandidates.com. It also introduced a feature whereby voters can message on Imran Khan's official Facebook account to get information about PTI-backed candidates. The party's official X account tagged the official handles of the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), interim information minister MurtazaSolangi and interim IT minister Umar Saif.

"Can you explain why PTI's websites are blocked in Pakistan?" the party asked in the post. "People are still getting symbol information from Imran Khan's Facebook page so the question is what purpose is this block serving?" it asked.

Khattak pledges agricultural reforms in KP

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR:Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Parliamentarians Chairman Pervez Khattak on Friday vowed to bring agricultural and industrial reforms to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). Expressing his thoughts in



ISLAMABAD: Charge d Affaires of India Geetika Srivastava along with Ambassadors and High Commissioners of the SAARC countries cutting the cake to celebrate the Republic Day of India. A large number of guests hailing from various walks of life attended the reception. - DNA

Gaza genocide continues amid global call for ceasefire

The death toll as a result of the Israeli ongoing aggression on Gaza since October 7 has risen to 26,083 martyrs while the wounded number surged to 64,487

News Desk

GAZA: The Israeli occupation forces continue to commit the crime of genocide in the Gaza Strip for the 112th consecutive day Friday. They have carried out dozens of airstrikes, artillery bombardments, and fired rockets, committing brutal massacres against civilians and carrying out horrific crimes in invasion areas. This is happening in the midst of a catastrophic humanitarian situation resulting from the siege and the displacement of over 90% of the population. The Ministry of Health in Gaza announced that Israeli occupation forces committed 19 new massacres against families in the Gaza Strip, claiming the lives of 183 civilians and wounding 377 others in the past 24 hours. The Ministry said in a brief statement on

Friday, which marks the 112th day of the Israeli aggression, that a big number of other victims are still under the rubble and on the roads, as Israeli troops are preventing ambulance and civil defense crews from reaching them. The death toll as a result of the Israeli ongoing aggression on Gaza since October 7 has risen to 26,083 martyrs while the wounded number surged to 64,487. Local media reported that the Israeli aircraft and artillery continued their intense airstrikes and shelling on various parts of the Gaza Strip over the past 24 hours, with a focus on Khan Yunis. They targeted houses, displaced people's gatherings, and streets, resulting in hundreds of martyrs and casualties.

The Israeli warplanes also carried out an airstrike around the Safatawi intersection in northern Gaza. The occupation forces demolished houses and structures in western Khan Yunis. The Israeli occupation forces occupied residential buildings surrounding the Al-Amal neighborhood in western Khan Yunis and opened fire on any moving object, while continuing to besiege the Al-Amal Hospital affiliated with the Palestinian Red Crescent Society. Fierce clashes broke out in the western area of Khan Yunis camp. The occupation forces besieged the Al-Amal School, which accommodates displaced people in western Khan Yunis. The journalist Iyad Ahmed Al-Rawagh, a correspondent and presenter on Sawt Al-Aqsa Radio, and members of his family were martyred as a result of targeting his house in the Al-Hassaina area of the Nusairat refugee camp last night.

Meanwhile, massive demonstrations were held in the cities of Saada, al-Marazem, and the Razih and Ghamr Districts west of northern Yemen, under the slogan: "Yemen and Palestine are in one trench," in support of Palestinian people and condemnation of American-British aggressions against Yemen. The statement of the demonstrations confirmed "the unity of the path and destiny for the Yemeni and Palestinian peoples." The statement said, "We will continue at all levels to support Gaza and the Palestinian people until victory, and we denounce the positions of those who are silent." The statement also lauded "the operations of the Yemeni armed forces and those of Resistance movements in Palestine, Lebanon and Iraq." It also stressed that "the American and British strikes on Yemen are a violation of Yemeni sovereignty, whose aggression will not go unpunished," urging the people to continue " the economic boycott campaign of American and Israeli goods and the companies that support them.

France set to tighten immigration law

AGENCIES

PARIS: The French government says it will push through a controversial immigration law "in the coming hours", despite many of the measures being struck out as invalid. Most of the 35 measures rejected by France's nine-member Constitutional Council were added to the bill because of right-wing and far-right pressure.

But the new law still represents a hardening of the immigration rules. Foreigners legally in France could now be deported with criminal convictions. Even those who came to France before they were 13 or those who have lived in France for more than 20 years could be expelled if they are given substantial jail terms and deemed to be a "grave threat to public order". Interior Minister Gérald-Darmanin said the Constitutional Council had validated all the government's measures and it was now time to put the law into practice.

Pak HC meets Maldivian defence minister

ISLAMABAD: High Commissioner of Pakistan in Maldives Vice Admiral (R) Muhammad Fayyaz Gilani on Friday met with Defence Minister of Maldives Mohamed GhassanMaumoon and held "productive" discussions on matters of mutual interest. "High Commissioner held productive discussions with Mohamed GhassanMaumoon and team. Looking forward to working closely for further enhancing the cooperation and strengthening the bilateral ties," the

high commission said on its

X account. – DNA organisation of polls made, the country is set to stage the national-level elections next month. The top electoral body has issued a notification for empowering the election officials, stating that the ROs and DROs will the step has been taken under Section 193 of the Elections Act, 2017. The notification stated the ROs and DROs have been authorised to exercise the powers of the magistrate of the first class under the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898, with immediate effect until the consolidation and announcement of official results of the general elections. "The aforesaid officers shall exercise the powers of Magistrate First Class in respect of the offences defined in Section 169 and Section 171 punishable under Section 174 of Elections Act. 2017 (Act No. XXXIII of 2017).

Nowshera, the former KF chief minister asserted, "Our manifesto is the solution to all the problems that the masses are facing. We are ready to end the inflation, unemployment, and unrest in the province."

"We will also create employment opportunities for youth in the province,' he said. Emphasising the need to focus on health and education, Khattak said, "Providing health and education facilities is part of our party's manifesto." PTI Parliamentarians Chairman Pervez Khattak asserted on Thursday that the PTI founder-led government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) was formed because of him. Addressing the public gathering in Nowshera, the former KP chief minister said, "But when I parted ways with the PTI and its founder, neither the PTI founder nor the government remained active. I will only be relaxed by ending completely the entity of the PTI and its founder from KP."

Nawaz can solve myriad problems: Maryam

DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Chief Organiser Maryam Nawaz said on Friday that former prime minister Nawaz Shari can solve the myriad problems. Addressing the public gathering in Burewala, Maryam said, "There is a responsibility to slash the prices of roti, sugar, flour, vegetables, and meat. It is part of our manifesto to upgrade hospitals, providing free medicines."

At the outset of her speech, Maryam said, "You know that I have arrived in Burewala for the first time. I would like to express my gratitude for the way you people have welcomed me. Vote for the PML-N so that the party can serve you all." She took a swipe at the opponents, saying, "Many people came and befooled people by taking the name of South Punjab.

The PML-N has served South Punjab in a real context. Other political parties had kept South Punjab to stage their politics.'

Zulfi calls out 'Western hypocrisy' **ECP grants ROS**, on 'HRs abuses' in Pakistan US wanted to put visa sanctions on Bangladesh but decided

to term Pakistan's situation as "internal affair", he laments

DNA

LONDON: As Pakistan gears up for February 8 polls, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Zulfi Bukhari called out "Western hypocrisy" for its silence on "human rights abuses" in the country. Speaking at Oxford University Majlis, a forum for intellectual exchange at the prestigious varsity in London, Bukhari decried the double standards of human rights organisations and Western powers for failing to raise voices against human rights violations in the country as opposed to the developments in other nations. Acknowledging that the media has given coverage to PTI founder Imran Khan-related developments, Bukhari lamented that human rights organisations such as Amnesty International, have "written very few" about human rights abuses in Pakistan. Recalling Amnesty's coverage of recently concluded general elections in Bangladesh, the PTI leader said that the human rights watchdog raised its voice on the absence of a transparent democracy and crackdown against opposition parties. 'They [US] wanted to put visa sanctions on Bangladesh as the country wasn't fitting the exact outfit what a democratic country should be [...] but Pakistan is termed as an internal affair. "This hypocrisy that's being used between Pakistan and other countries [...] is most worrying," the former minister said while responding to a question seeking his message for the Western governments. However, the body failed to do the same over the situation in Pakistan, he maintained while referring to the countrywide crackdown against PTI workers and leaders following the May 9 riots triggered last year as a result of Khan's arrest in a graft case.

AHEAD OF POLLS US concerned over reports about lack of free expression

DNA

WASHINGTON: The United States State Department has expressed concern over reports citing the lack of press freedom and free expression in Pakistan with the general elections in the country just days away. The country's eligible population will vote to select the next government during the upcoming polls, slated to be conducted on February 8, a moment when the role of the press and media is critical to educate and inform citizens. Addressing a press briefing in Washington on Thursday, State Department Principal Deputy Spokesperson Vedant Patel said: "We also have not been ambiguous about how we feel very strongly that a free and independent media are vital institutions that undergird healthy democracies by ensuring that elector can make informed decision and hold govt to account." Patel added that the US believes journalists play a critical role in covering fair and transparent elections.

Trump opens up lead over Biden in rematch many Americans don't want

Poll shows Trump leading Biden 40% to 34% with rest unsure



WEB DESK

WASHINGTON:Donald Trump leads Democratic President Joe Biden by six percentage points in a Reuters/Ipsos poll that showed Americans are unhappy about an election rematch that came into sharper focus this week. The nationwide poll of 1,250 US adults showed Trump leading Biden 40% to 34% with the rest unsure or planning to vote for someone else or no one. The poll had a margin of error of three percentage points. That represented a gain for Trump after a Reuters/Ip-



maining primary challenger, Nikki Haley in New Hampshire on Tuesday, some 67% of respondents polled Monday through Wednesday said they were "tired of seeing the same candidates in presidential elections and want someone new." Still, just 18% vote for Biden or Trump, she said, "I'll probably go for a third party." said they would not vote if Biden and Trump were their choice. "I hate to

the lesser of two evils," said Kimberly Sofge, a 56-year-old project manager in Washington, D.C., this week. "I honestly feel that we can do better." The two candidates themselves seem ready for a rematch following Trump's back-to-back wins in Iowa and New Hampshire, with the White House regarding Trump as a beatable challenger, and Trump fuming because Haley did not immediately drop out of the Republican race. Trump's six-point lead held even when respondents were given the option of voting for third-party candidates, including anti-vaccine activist Robert F. Kennedy Jr., with Trump drawing 36% support, Biden 30% and Kennedy 8%. Slightly more than half of respondents said they were dissatisfied with the US two-party system, with just one in four satisfied by it. Whitney Tallarico, 33, a consultant interviewed in Washington, is among those considering an alternative. "The independents don't really have a voice. Polarizing characters usually take the front seat, and it's a little sad for our country," Tallarico said

DROs powers of magistrate

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: As preparations for the February 8 polls enter the final stages, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Friday granted the returning officers (ROs) and district returning officers (DROs) deputed across the country the powers of the magistrate for the conduct of polls. With almost all arrangements for security and



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