

## Easing of tensions **Pak-Iran stress** joint efforts to fight terrorism

Iranian FM says 'terrorists' in Pak-Iran border areas supported by 'third countries'

### ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Iran have stressed joint efforts to fight terrorism. This resolve was made during the meeting between the Foreign Minister of Islamic Republic of Iran, Mr. Hossein Amir-Abdollahian and the Caretaker Prime Minister, Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar. Underscoring the close relations between Pakistan and Iran, the Prime Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to further consolidate bilateral ties. The Prime Minister also emphasized the need to address common challenges through collaborative and cooperative approaches, rooted in the respect for international law and the principles of the UN Charter, in particular, territorial integrity and sovereignty of both Pakistan and Iran.

The Prime Minister conveyed his warm sentiments for President Ebrahim Raisi and extended an invitation to President Raisi to visit Pakistan at his earliest convenience. Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani today met with Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian, in Islamabad. Senior Officials from both sides were present in the meeting. Foreign Minister Abdollahian is on an official visit to Pakistan at the invitation of Foreign Minister Jilani. Underscoring the brotherly relations between Pakistan and Iran, Foreign Minister Jilani reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to deepen and broaden the existing wide-ranging cooperation with Iran. The Foreign Minister underlined the imperative for collective and collaborative approaches to confront terrorism that posed a common challenge to both Pakistan and Iran. He stressed that robust institutional mechanisms between the two countries on security cooperation should

### **COAS** stresses sustained ties with Iran

The two sides observed that terrorism was common threat that needed to be tackled through collaborative efforts, better coordination and intelligence sharing

### STAFF REPORT

Rawalpindi: Foreign Minister of Iran, HE Amir Abdollahian called on General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M) COAS, at GHQ today. Realizing the historical, religious and cultural ties that bind Pakistan and Iran, both sides emphasized on strengthening bilateral ties and fostering greater understanding of each other's concerns. COAS underscored the centrality of respecting the other state's sovereignty and territorial integrity, calling it sacrosanct, inviolable and the most important cardinal of state-to-state re-

**Continued on Page 06** 



ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Minister of Islamic Republic of Iran, Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, calls on Caretaker Prime Minister, Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar. - DNA

### Ministers, officials barred from foreign visits Decision made to ensure smooth election process

FAISAL SHEIKH ISLAMABAD:Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar on Monday withdrew permissions for foreign visits by federal ministers, advisers, and relevant officials until the completion of the election process. In a Cabina

notification

### Slams judges who 'ousted' him Nawaz Sharif vows to bring back prosperity

Maintaining his innocence, Sharif openly criticized his conviction, portraying it as a deliberate punishment

### Abbas Hashmi

LAHORE: In a speech to party workers in to end subsidies

**Bilawal vows** 

be fully leveraged. The two Foreign Ministers agreed to lationship. The two sides observed that terrorism

**Continued on Page 06** 

### Briefs

### Shehbaz vows to develop South Punjab

Says 'khadim' has once again come to you in Rajanpur

### STAFF REPORT

RAJANPUR: PML- N president and former prime minister Shehbaz Sharif said that if his government continued. the destiny of South Punjab would have been different. Shehbaz Sharif said that he had come to serve the people of Rajanpur during the floods. He has never seen such a flood and destruction in his life. Thousands of people were lost in the flood, he said adding he was very happy to visit you today. The PML-N president said that 'khadim' has once again come to you in Rajanpur. The PML-N leader said that Rajanpur District Hospital was equipped with modern facilities, and twenty Danish schools were built, 16 of which are in South Punjab.

### Terrorist killed in encounter

#### DNA

RAWALPINDI: Security forces conducted an intelligence-based operation in North Waziristan District, on reported presence of terrorists. During the conduct of operation, intense fire exchange took place between own troops and terrorists as a result of which Terrorist Naikman Ullah was sent to hell. The killed terrorist remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities including target killing of innocent civilians. Weapons, ammunition and explosives were also recovered from the killed terrorist. Sanitization operation is being conducted to eliminate any other terrorist found in the area. Security forces of Pakistan are determined to wipe out the menace of terrorism from the country.

Army deployment mulled ECP declares 50% PS sensitive or highly sensitive In Punjab, around 6,040 highly sensitive, 12, 580 polling stations are declared sensitive while 6,524 polling stations in Sindh are highly sensitive and 6545 are declared sensitive

#### ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has declared as many as 50 percent of the polling stations across the country for general elections which will be held on February 8 as sensitive or highly sensitive. The ECP had established as around 90,675 polling stations across the country out of which 46,065 polling stations have been declared as 'sensitive' or 'most sensitive' while 27,628 polling stations as sensitive

and 18,437 as most sensitive," sources in the ECP told APP. In Punjab, around 6,040 highly sensitive, 12, 580 polling stations are declared sensitive while 6,524 polling stations in Sindh are highly sensitive and 6545 are declared sensitive.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 4,143 polling stations were declared as highly sensitive and 6,166 polling stations were declared as sensitive. Likewise, in Balochistan, out of 5,028 polling stations, only 961 were declared normal as 1,730 polling stations were highly sensitive, and 2,337 polling stations were declared sensitive.

Division said: "No leave for any foreign visit shall be granted till the completion of the election process and the assumption of office by the new government".

**Continued on Page 06** 

**SBP** maintains interest rate at 22% Pakistan to introduce new currency designs

with advanced security features

#### NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: State Bank of Pakistan's (SBP) Monetary Policy Committee Monday announced maintaining the status quo, leaving the key policy rate unchanged at 22%. The MPC's decision to maintain the key policy rate unchanged - for the fifth time in a row -

**Continued on Page 06** 

### Pakistan to secure €100m from EU to enhance post-flood resilience

EU Ambassador, Dr. Riina Kionka said Pak was not alone in overcoming its challenging phase of economic crisis and flood recovery



ISLAMABAD: Ms. Riina Kionka European Union Ambassador to Pakistan and Dr. Kazim Niaz Secretarty Ministtry of Economic Affairs signed five new additional EUR 100 million grant agreements. - DNA

aims to fortify Pakistan's resilience

### **MAHNOOR ANSAR**

ISLAMABAD: The European Union (EU) would provide an additional €100 million to reinforce Pakistan's resilience in the aftermath of the devastating 2022 floods that severely impacted the nation. According to press statement issued by Economic Affairs Division, EU Ambassador to Pakistan, Ms Riina Kionka and Secre-

tary of the Ministry of Economic Afin the aftermath of the floods, bringfairs, Dr Kazim Niaz signed five new ing the total Team Europe response EU grant agreements in this regard. to the 2022 floods to over EUR 930 "These agreements, under Team Europe's response to the 2022 postmillion. The specific focus areas include revitalising the rural economy in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and restoring flood Resilient Recovery, Rehabilitathe disrupted livestock value chains tion, and Reconstruction Framework, signify a substantial commitment of in flood-affected Balochistan. Notably, nearly EUR 100 million (equivalent to these activities align with the expansive EU Global Gateway initiative, over PKR 30 billion)," the statement added. The new EU support package

**Continued on Page 06** 

NA-130, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) chief Nawaz Sharif thanked them for their support and promised to bring back a time of peace and prosperity he claimed existed during his previous leadership. He pledged to bring back a time of peace and prosperity that, according to him, defined his previous leadership. Maintaining his innocence, Sharif openly criticized his conviction, portraying it as a deliberate punishment. He pointed out the departure of a judge, who was supposed to become the Chief Justice, as ev-

idence of foul play in his cases. Recalling the past, Sharif painted a vivid picture of a time when everyday essentials like petrol,

**Continued on Page 06** 

### given to elite

"powerful lobbies" strongly react to any move for abolishment of 17 ministries

#### KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Terming his party's manifesto remedy for all the crises ahead of the nationwide polls, Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari has blamed 'powerful lobbies and bureaucracy' for the



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## NATIONAL

## Austrian ambassador explores investment in Pakistan

Austrian Ambassador Wicke shared her insights on how Pakistan is perceived globally in terms of investment, emphasizing a focus on regional trade

#### NAZIR SIYAL

02

KARACHI: Austrian Ambassador to Pakistan and Afghanistan Andrea Wicke, joined by Hussain Islam, chairman of the Prime Minister's Task Force in the Strategic Reforms Unit, and Johannes Brunner, commercial counsellor of the Austrian Embassy Commercial Section, visited the Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI) to engage with the Chamber's leadership and gain insights into Pakistan's economic landscape. During the meeting, OICCI CE/Secretary General M Abdul Aleem provided

a comprehensive briefing to the Austrian delegation on Pakistan's business prospects, with a focus on attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), ideally reaching three percent of its GDP. Notably, the total capital investment by OICCI members from FY 2013 to FY 2022 amounted to \$22.0 billion, while Pakistan's net FDI stands at \$19.9 billion. In the past year (Jan-Dec), Pakistan attracted \$1,771 million in FDI, marking a 25% increase from 2022. Austrian Ambassador Wicke shared her insights on how Pakistan is perceived globally in terms of investment, emphasizing a focus on regional trade, particularly the potential

within South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). She stressed the importance of building a positive perception of Pakistan through engagement with foreign media to showcase the country's overall beauty. Both Andrea Wicke and Johannes Brunner expressed optimism, highlighting that OICCI's engagement with potential Austrian foreign investment companies would play a crucial role in providing a neutral perspective on Pakistan's onground economic situation. The visit underscores the growing interest of foreign entities in exploring and contributing to Pakistan's economic development

Skin disfiguring neglected disease surging in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Fronti res (MSF) is concerned by an increase in the number of cutaneous leishmaniasis (CL) cases registered at its facilities across Pakistan. Balochistan and Kyber Pakhtunkhwa are the worst affected provinces, but this treatable neglected tropical disease, that is endemic in Pakistan, is also found in Sindh, Kashmir, and central and southern areas of Punjab. "The number of patients visiting MSF clinics across

ANF

DNA

Pakistan has steadily increased over the years," said Suzette Kämink, MSF cutaneous leishmaniasis expert. "However, the increase in incidence in 2022 to 2023 has been exceptional with twice as many patients registered in our Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) facilities: while a 95.0% increase was recorded in Bannu and a 75.5% rise in Peshawar. A similar trend is seen in Balochistan, for example in Kuchlak, one of three CL clinics that MSF is supporting, we registered

69.9% more cases than the previous year, as well as CL being reported in areas where the disease was not normally present," she add-The skin disease is ed. caused by a parasite, transmitted by the bite of phlebotomine sandfly. Although it is not life-threatening it causes ulcers on the face and open areas of the body, which can evolve into severe scarring and disfigurement, often leading to social stigmatization, discrimination, and emotional distress. Major

factors in the spread of the disease are poor living conditions; poor hygiene and housing, no proper waste management, and a general lack of awareness about the disease, combined with population movement, and changes in the climate. "The increase in cases highlights the lack of knowledge about the disease and its prevention such as proper environmental waste disposal, reducing potential sandfly breeding and resting places, and the correct use of long-lasting impregnated nets (LLINs)," said Suzette Kämink. "Early diagnosis and access to effective treatment is another way to control this neglected disease. CL is curable with the mainstay treatment of pentavalent antimonial drugs: meglumine antimoniate or sodium stibogluconate. Treatment is painful.-DNA



ISLAMABAD : PM's Aide on aviation Farhat Khan meeting with Ambassador of Iraq to Pakistan at his office.-DNA

### Mosques vital for education, disease prevention

education to out-of-school children along with imparting religious ethos for bring about socio-economic development of the country. He said the mosques had a central place in Muslim society and could be utilized to educate people about important social issues. these views while chair-

avenue to bring these children back to education. The President said that mosques could be used as centres of education by incorporating the Government's Accelerated Learning Programme, "Pakistan should have mosques at the centre of society, simultaneously imparting worldly and religious education to fight the challenges of society," he added. The Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Inter-Faith Harmony apprised the meeting that Mosques could be used at the optimum level by enhancing the role of "Pesh Imam" who would ultimately supervise educational activities.

Islamabad **POST** 

Tuesday, January 30, 2024

#### awareness about health DNA issues. The meeting was attended by the Caretak-KARACHI : President Dr er Federal Minister for Arif Alvi on Monday said Religious Affairs and Inter-faith Harmony, Dr the mosques might play a Aneeq Ahmed, and relivital role in the provision of gious scholars from var-

ious schools of thought. Addressing the meeting, the President said that educating 26 mi llion outof-school children was an uphill task in the wake of inadequate educational

### Stakeholders praise 'Buildback-better 'commitment

Addressing the activity,

other private organizations.

as I witnessed today in IOM

ranks and files towards

nurturing community resil-

this regard would magnetise

others to deliver concerted

outcomes." Speaking at the

workshop, Director General

PDMA Balochistan, Jahan-

zaib Khan Ghorezai, said,

ISLAMABAD : The Community Resilience Activity-North (CRA-North), in collaboration with the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) of Sindh and Balochistan, organized a successful threeday Community Resilience (Flood Recovery) Workshop at Pearl Continental Hotel Karachi from January 24-26, 2024. The workshop aimed to enhance coordination and cooperation between CRA-North and government stakeholders, with the shared objective of supporting flood-affected communities to 'Build-Back-Better.' the hope that contracting During the workshop, stakeholders received updates on the current progress of CRA-North activities under Flood Resilience Programming, fostering a shared understanding of model communities and scaling up flood response initiatives. The workshop's success laid the foundation for future collaboration among stakeholders, ensuring a coordinated and effective approach to flood recovery programming in Sindh, and Balochistan. 13 police stations to be modernized in 30 days: Dr Gohar

Provincial Education Mingoals. By working together ister Balochistan Prof. Dr. on activities related to flood Qadir Bakhsh Baloch also recovery, we are aligning efforts with the communiattended the workshop. ty's needs. The emphasis of he said "I wish to see the CRA-N on capacity developsane standard of zeal and ment, awareness activities, zest among the public and along with practical studies, reflects a comprehensive approach towards enhancing disaster resilience and promoting sustainable commuience against disasters. I am nity development." confident that IOM work in The second of the series of

'Quarterly Community Resilience Strategy Workshop' provided a platform for diverse organizations to align their efforts towards community-supported projects and avoid duplication. The commitment to coordination showcased during the event is a positive sign for the success of future resilience programs. The workshop was attended by the stakeholders from PDMA Sindh & Balochistan, Education Department Balochistan, Irrigation Department Balochistan, University of Sindh & Balochistan, BUITEMS, Administration District from Sindh & Balochistan, Urban Planning & Development Department Balochistan.-APP

### **KP** Governor commander inaugurates Governor's visits RCCI Secretariat website RAWALPINDI : Re-

gional Directorate Commander of Anti-Narcotics Force Brigadier Hasan Ab-

DNA Ghani; and officers of the would also be available on Governor's Secretariat and IT Board were also present on the occasion. With the launch of the website http://governorkp.gov. pk, the people will have easy access to the Governor's Office and the day-to-day affairs of the Governor's Secretariat. All affairs of the Governor's Secretariat will now be available online. Through the website, the employees of the universities could file applications against the admin-

and Agricultural Universi- istrative decisions of their rety Peshawar; Director of spective universities, and any IMSciences, Dr. Usman order on their online appeal

many as 58 delegates, hailing from 50 international reputed firms participated in the event. Chairman WAPDA Engr Lt Gen (R) Sajjad Ghani, Pakistan's Charge d' Affairs in Thailand Yasir Hussain, World Bank's representatives, WAPDA high-ups and the

project's Consultants also

WAPDA

organises

Road

Show in Bangkok

LAHORE : Water and Pow-

er Development Authority

(WAPDA)on Monday organ-

ized a day-long Road Show in Bangkok for the 300

MW-Floating Solar Project

- the first of its kind in Pa-

kistan. According to a WAP-

DA spokesman here, the

Road Show aimed at forging

an enhanced competition

amongst the prospective

bidders for the project. As

attended the event. Thanking the delegates for their active participation, the Chairman said that WAPDA floating solar project has excellent business opportunities for contracting firms through a transparent international competitive bidding. WAPDA has a strong asset base worth billion of dollars and decades-long professional expertise for implementing mega projects in water and power sectors. We are keen to work with the renowned firms to execute the maiden floating solar project in Pakistan to make it yet another success story in the country, he said. The Chairman expressed

#### infrastructure. Building new schools would require tremendous resources as The President expressed well as time, he added. He ing a meeting about the said that utilizing almost vital role of Masaajid and 2.5 lacs mosques across the country could be a Madaris in promoting education and creating unique and cost-effective

bas visited Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and participated in the businessmen's meeting, Acting President Muhammad Hamza Saroosh along with Group Leader Sohail Altaf welcomed the ANF Commander in the Chamber. On this occasion, Vice President Faisal Shahzad, President former Kashif Shabbir, EC members Muhammad Ikram, Deputy Director Aamir Khurshid, Project Officer and honorable members of RCCI were also present. Acting President Muhammad Hamza Sarosh informed about the current activities and upcoming programs of Rawalpindi Chamber. They discussed the exemption of chemicals used for pharmaceutical QC testing with the permission of ANF for checking consignments for export and special facilities at the airport for passengers. Expressing concern over the trends, he said that as a society we cannot turn a blind eye to this problem. He requested to take effective action on this matter. Brigadier Hasan Abbas appreciated the initiatives of RCCI and assured full cooperation and cooperation with RCCI.

PESHAWAR : Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Haji Ghulam Ali formally inaugurated the website of the Governor's Secretariat here Monday. The website was inaugu-

rated during a ceremony held here in the Governor's House. Besides, Caretaker KP Minister for Education, Dr. Qasim Jan; Secretary IT Board, Mohammad Ali Shah: Vice Chancellors of the University of Peshawar, Khyber Medical University,

it. Addressing the inaugural ceremony, Haji Ghulam Ali said, "Today is the era of information technology, so the public should also be provided information on the basis of the requirements of the modern era." "The website is created for the access of the people to the affairs of the Governor's Secretariat and is the beginning of a journey towards the modern era," he said.

firms from across the world, would bid for the project in a large number, as the project site is highly secured and easily accessible. Later, WAPDA Member Finance. Member Power, GM (Coordination and Monitoring) and the Consultants briefed the participants about WAPDA, its revenue streams, collaboration with international financial institutes and development portfolio as well as financial, technical.-APP

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Interior Minister Dr. Gohar Ijaz on Monday said that the beautification of 13 police stations of the federal capital would be completed in 30 days. Speaking at the foundation stone ceremony of Golra police station, the caretaker minister said that government is focusing on modernizing police stations besides improving law and order situation in the federal capital.

Islamabad hospitals would also be made exemplary, he said adding that people of the federal capital would be provided all necessary facilities. IG Islamabad Police Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, DIG, SSPs and other top police officers, representatives of the trade association and local dignitaries were also present on this occasion. Caretaker Federal Interior Minister Dr. Gohar Ejaz said that caretaker Prime Minister has entrusted him with the Ministry of Interior, therefore, on the first day, he met with the IG Police and Commissioner Islamabad and asked them about the problems. On the occasion, IG Islamabad said that out of 26 police stations in the federal capital, the condition of 13 police stations is vulnerable. The interior secretary and other authorities were instructed to immediately decorate these police stations of Islamabad, after which, the work of beautification and decoration was started in 13 police stations situated in the federal capital.

"the commitment displayed by CRA-North through these strategic planning workshops are commendable. It not only addresses immediate recovery needs but also focuses on long-term solutions. This initiative of CRA-North will undoubtedly contribute to the overall disaster resilience and prosperity of the province." Deputy Chief of Party CRA-North, IOM. Jannat Durrani, while addressing the occasion, said, "the partnership between IOM and PDMA Balochistan is an embodiment of shared

> ISLAMABAD ELECTRIC SUPPLY COMPANY (IESCO) IESCO TENDER NOTICE

IESCO seeks to invite sealed tenders from the firms / manufacturers who are pre-qualified / registered with the Chief Engineer (Purchase & Disposal) / Standard & Specification, NTDC Lahore or with WAPDA/PPMC/any DISCO for the year 2023-24 for supply of following material on free delivery basis to IESCO Regional Stores Rawalpindi / Islamabad / Rajjar & Wah:

Tender No.	Item Description	Unit	Quantity
233	LT SID Cable 4/C,120mm2 (37/.083)	Km	40
235	HT Tape	No.	5,000
236	Transformer Oil (Class-I)	Ltr	120,000

Date of opening :- Tender will be received on 15.02.2024 up to 10:30 am and will be opened at 11:00 am on the same date.

The tenders will be opened in the presence of participants or their authorized representatives (bearing authority letters) who attend O/O Chief Engineer (Material Management) IESCO Head Office G-7/4 Street No. 40, Islamabad.

#### Terms & Conditions

Tenders will be opened on "Single Stage One Envelope basis".

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5. Tender documents including terms and conditions can be obtained from the office of Material Management IESCO Islamabad against nonrefundable amount of Rs.3000/- on any working day during office hours till a day earlier from the date of opening of tenders.

6. In case of holiday announced by the Govt. of Pakistan, strike in IESCO or any other reasons whatsoever due to which this office remains closed on the above scheduled tender opening date, the tender will be opened on next working day at same time and place/venue.

7. Written application on company's letter head duly stamped along with copies of registration with sales tax department (STRN), NTN # etc should be produced at the time of issuance of tender documents.

The bid should be for full quantity of tender and bid for less quantity of tender will not be accepted.

9. No tender will be issued on the opening date of tenders. 10. IESCO reserves the rights to cancel/reject the conditional bid.

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ISLAMABAD: Dr. Pema Gyamtsho, Director General International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) called on the Caretaker Federal Minister for National Food

Security & Research Dr. Kausar Abdullah Malik.-DNA

### PHS call for ban on e-cigarettes, vapes in KP

DC to enforce a complete ban on the sale of e-cigarettes and vapes to individuals below 21 years old in KP

#### SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR : Public Health Stakeholders of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Monday called for unanimous and aggressive efforts to permanently ban the use and sale of e-cigarettes and vapes in the province for the best interest of public health and sustainable tobacco control. Blue Veins, a civil society organization, conducted a public health stakeholder consultation to deliberate on the interim ban by the KP government on vapes and e-cigarettes. The consultation aimed to discuss future strategies and the way forward following the KP government's decision, as outlined in a notification issued by the Home and Tribal Affairs Department. The notification mandates all Deputy

Commissioners to enforce a complete ban on the sale of e-cigarettes and vapes to individuals below 21 years old in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and prohibits their sale and storage within a 50-meter radius of educational institutions for 60 days. The consultation, chaired by Haroon Saleem, Assistant Commissioner Headquarters Peshawar, had active participation from officials of the health department, tobacco control cell, government functionaries, health experts, CSOs, media, and other stakeholders. The participants unanimously endorsed the need for comprehensive provincial-level legislation to ban the sale and storage of electronic cigarettes and vapes in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The participants lauded the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government's proactive approach in imposing an

interim ban on vapes and e-cigarettes. They commended the government's swift and decisive action, emphasizing its commitment to public health and the well-being of its citizens, especially the youth. Assistant Commissioner Haroon Saleem expressed his views, stating, "The district administration and the provincial government are strongly committed to safeguarding our citizens from the harmful effects of tobacco and nicotine. We will take every necessary action to enforce this ban and protect public health." Despite being promoted as a safer alternative to traditional cigarettes and a tool for cessation, it was emphasized that there is no scientific evidence to support these claims. E-cigarettes and vapes contain nicotine, which is highly addictive, challenging the harm reduction narrative used by the tobacco industry. Sana Ahmad, Program Coordinator at Blue Veins, emphasized the importance of comprehensive legislation. "It's crucial to have legislation that encompasses the inputs of all stakeholders. This will ensure that the laws we implement are effective, inclusive, and geared towards the well-being of our community."

Mian Ateeq, a public health expert representing the Prevention Alliance for Sustainable Tobacco and Nicotine Control, added, "The ban on e-cigarettes and vapes is a significant step towards public health safety. It's important to continue this momentum and create a robust legislative framework that addresses all aspects of tobacco and nicotine control."







### 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



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## Wafaqi Mohtasib assures to address business men issues

Raja Muhammad Imtiaz, Maqsood Tabish, Malik Nadeem Akhtar, and others were included in the delegation

### MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi, Wafaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman) said that the business community plays an important role in economic development and assured of his cooperation in addressing their grievances. He said this while talking to a delegation of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) that visited his office led by Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President.

Ajaz Ahmed Qureshi has said that a separate portal for ICCI will be created to solve the grievances of the business community, and if the complaints are not resolved within thirty days, they will be automatically transferred to the Wafaqi Ombudsman for redress. He said that ICCI should form a committee to liaise with his organization for redress of complaints. He further said that about 200 institutions and departments of the federal government come under their jurisdiction and his organization dealt with 194,000 complaints last year. More than 85% of the decisions were implemented. Every complaint in the Federal Ombudsman is decided within sixty days due to



which there are no pending complaints. He said that 22 regional offices and complaint centers are already available for immediate redressal. Soon regional offices in Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir will be opened. These far-flung offices would benefit the common people a lot. Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan

Zafar Bakhtawari, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce said that ICCI has more than 8000

members who play an important role in the development of the economy by promoting industrial and commercial activities. He said that ICCI members have to face issues with FBR and other institutions and stressed that a focal person of the Federal Ombudsman should be appointed for ICCI to help solve the issues of the business community. He said that if the problems of the business community are solved soon,

the economy will develop better Azharul Islam Zafar, Vice President ICCI lauded the efforts of the Federal Ombudsman to resolve the complaints of the people quickly against the mismanagement of the public institutions under the federal government and assured the full cooperation of the Chamber in this regard.

Zafar Bakhtawari, former President and Secretary General UBG Pakistan said that the efforts be-

ing made by the Federal Ombudsman to resolve the complaints of the people need to be better highlighted in the public so that the maximum people can benefit from its services. He said that the ICCI is ready to organize awareness programs about its services in collaboration with the Federal Ombudsman. Raja Muhammad Imtiaz, Maqsood Tabish, Malik Nadeem Akhtar, and others were included in the delegation.

**FIA busts** fake veterinary medicine racket

ISLAMABAD: Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) conducted on Monday sealed a factory allegedly involved in the production of counterfeit veterinary medicine in Lahore.

The operation was conducted in the Iqbal Town area, leading to confiscated evidence including crucial records and bogus documents, according to an FIA spokesperson. He said the agency acted swiftly on information provided by a key suspect apprehended earlier associated with the factory leading them to the main office in Iqbal Town, a private news channel reported.-APP

### 'A new IMF agreement required to save country'

ISLAMABAD: Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Dr Shahid Rasheed Butt, said on Monday that getting the final instalment from the IMF will be the new government's first test.

He said the new government would have to work hard to meet the IMF's strict criteria, as all political parties offer great relief to the masses. Shahid Rasheed Butt said in a statement issued here today that the new government will need a new three-year IMF agreement to run the country, which will be an uphill task. The IMF programme is very important for a country's survival because it prevents politicians from irresponsible spending that damages the economy. Shahid Rasheed Butt said that the last tranche of the existing standby agreement with the IMF would be possible after raising electricity and gas prices. It will be mandatory as the circular debt is constantly increasing despite the record increase in the price of these items. If the IMF offered any relaxation during the final review. it would demand an upward revision of electricity and gas prices before the next agreement. The political parties promise up to 300 units of free electricity for the masses, which is impossible due to a lack of resources and the lender's supervision. - APP

### Education institutions play vital role against drug addiction

ISLAMABAD: Consultant, He said that it is not just self-interest habit but mo-Anti Drugs & Narcotics Campaign Syed Zulfiqar tivation by their near one Hussain Monday expressed and friends' company which his serious fear over the was the most important factor, which led to the drug rising number of drug addiction among students and use. He said addiction to called for taking up necesnarcotics must be eradicated sary steps for prevention of from its roots to safeguard the youth and prosperity drug use as it has emerged as a serious threat in the of the country, adding, that present digital lives of sodrug use can be reduced ciety. Talking to the PTV through public awareness

decade, particularly affecting children under age 14, adding, that the impact of the increasing drug abuse will be seen in both urban and rural areas of the country due to the busy schedules of parents and excessive use of digital gadgets. He said the adverse effects of drug abuse are immense and it not only harms the brain but other organs of the body which

he mentioned. He said that the government is collaborating with non-government including organizations, educational institutes, to raise awareness among people, especially youngsters, about the harmful effects of drugs on society. Replying to a question, he explained that there is a problem in the family's communication

NCGSA, IST to hold First National **CanSat** Competition

Each team may consist of 2-4 students along with one Team Lead as a faculty

member, the official informed ISLAMABAD: National Center of GIS and Space Applications (NCGSA), Institute of Space Technology (IST) Islamabad, Pakistan is organizing the First National CanSat Competition to design, develop and launch the student satellite (CanSat) model. An official of IST informed that high school, college and university students will participate in the competition that would be held between February-April. The competition is

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

Edhi Ambulance115
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WASA Rawalpindi5555489
CAA9281092



#### Hospitals

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



#### Departments

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

Water Tank Islamabad.....0321-5744480 news channel, he said that earlier the problem used to prevail among males, but now it has spread among females and children in our country in an alarming proportion, adding, that there is a dire need to urgently combat the situation with the coordination efforts

Experts recommended there should be awareness of the dangerous effects of narcotics in the youth of Pakistan. He said that appropriate treatment facilities should also be established for children and female drug users. The problem of drug abuse is likely to explode in the next of academic institutions.

soon loses immunity to fight seminars and campaigns. disease. The individual cannot lead a productive life for himself, his family or society and hence one should guard oneself against drugs, he added. "Education is only best weapon against drugs". he added. "Children need to be taught about the dangers of consuming drugs",

with the children, adding, all busy with other things such as chatting through their mobile phones. We believe that the modern communication systems have created a sort of isolation with the family," he said."There is a need for strong communication between the parents and the children", he advised.-APP

a part of the efforts towards Space Technology Education and Popularization (STEP) through STEM education. The competition will be held in multiple phases (online/onsite), while the final phase will be held at IST, Islamabad by the end of April. The competition has been designed for teams from Abecedarian (Grade 9 - 12 / O / A levels) and Virtuoso (Undergraduate BS) groups. Each team may consist of 2-4 students along with one Team Lead as a faculty member, the official informed. The STEM investment is PKR 5000 per team. The winners will be awarded cash awards of PKR 100,000 and PKR 50,000 for each group (Abecedarian and Virtuoso) along with winning and participation certificates. The interested teams may register online (//bit.ly/NCC2024) through their Team Leads (Focal Person/Faculty Member) by Feb 23, 2024.-APP

despite having a registered

business address for sales

tax. This action is ignoring

the registered business

address. Taking only the

name into consideration,

### Pak-China leather industry partnerships flourish

CDNS attains Rs 1000

country," he said. In view of

the current market trend in

the country, the ambitious

target had been set to fur-

ther improve the savings

culture, he said. The official

said that work was being

done on institutional reforms

in CDNS and new reforms

and innovations were being

introduced."At this time

Automated Teller Machine

### DNA

ganized a delegation of ISLAMABAD: The 9th Chinese companies to par-Pakistan Mega Leather ticipate in this influential Show took place in Lahore exhibition. "The products from January 26th to 28th, primarily produced in Paachieved remarkable suckistan are mainly made cess promoting leather inof real leather, but there dustry partnership, Gwadar is a significant scarcity of Pro reported on Monday. footwear and bag products The event witnessed a sigmade from other materials nificant presence of Chisuch as synthetic leather. nese companies, who not The local population also only attended the exhibiexhibits a strong desire for tion but also forged valuable fashionable footwear and cooperation agreements, bags. Pakistan also have imsolidifying the potential plemented favorable import for collaboration between policies for these products, the Chinese and Pakistani creating a conducive envifootwear industries. Given ronment for collaboration China's position as the top between Chinese exhibitors producer of footwear and and the Pakistani market," leather goods, coupled with said one Chinese exhibitor. Pakistan's ability to supply During the three-day exhihigh-quality leather to mabition, Chinese companies ior brands at competitive experienced a continuous labor costs, the potential influx of interested visitors, for a win-win cooperation rivaling the popularity of between the two countries even the renowned Canis substantial," said Agha ton Fair. Several Chinese Saiddain, former chairman enterprises also signed of Pakistan Tanners As-Memorandums of Undersociation. Understanding standing (MoUs) with local the potential of Pak-China industry partners during leather industry cooperathe expo.

tion, the Guangdong Shoes to find Chinese partners at Materials Association orthis exhibition. China, with its large population and high consumption capacity, plays a significant role as an importer of finished leather from Pakistan. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) provides Pakistan with a strategic advantage, greatly benefiting the leather export industry. Additionally, the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Pakistan and China further amplifies these advantages," expressed a Pakistani participant. In addition to their active participation in the exhibition, the Chinese delegation also conducted insightful field visits to local leather factories, gaining in-depth knowledge about the production conditions, technological capabilities and market prospects of Pakistani manufacturers. This tour has paved the way for an enhanced partnership between the Chinese and Pakistani leather industries, ultimately benefiting consumers in both "We are eager markets.

(ATM) has also been intro-

duced in CDNS which will

provide enough facilities to

the users," he added. Reply-

ing to a question, he said the

CDNS had collected an in-

vestment of Rs 55 billion by January 9, 2023-24, through

Islamic investment bonds.

The official added that the

directorate had set a target

of Rs 75 billion for the new

financial year 2023-24 for Islamic finance bonds. Reply-

ing to a question; he said the

CDNS aimed to introduce

new dimensions in the Is-

lamic finance sector.-APP

Passenger train derails in Attock

ATTOCK: The railway traffic between the Attock-Mianwali section was halted for around three hours as four bogies of a passenger train derailed near Jhamat railway station in the Jand town of Attock in the early hours of Monday, railway authorities confirmed. Controller, rail traffic, Divisional Headquarters Peshawar, when contacted, confirmed that the Attock bound passenger train 201 Up coming from Mari Indus derails near Jhamat railway station in the Jand town of Attock as the wheel of the bogie has developed some problems which resulted in derailment and no loss or injury was reported. Sources said that four bogies of the train left the site and passengers were accommodated in three other bogies which left for Attock. After the incident, railway authorities dispatched a relief train from the Kundian railway station of Mianwali to the site.-APP

### **JANUARY 2024** Pakistan's Premier News &

**Diplomatic Affairs Magazine** 

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electricity bills rejected which is a gross exaggera-DNA tion, the hotel industry is an important source of rev-ISLAMABAD (Staff Reenue for the country, while porter) Senior Vice Presi-50 to 60 million people are dent of All Pakistan Hotels associated with the hotel industry in Pakistan and lakhs Association and Chairman of workers are employed in Central of Employers Federation of Pakistan (EFP) this industry. Therefore, Mian Akram Farid while special attention should be addressing the meeting given to the better developsaid that the government ment of this industry. He is sympathetic to meet the expressed these views during the meeting of Pakistan legitimate demands of the hotel industry. Consider Hotels Association, adding that this industry can develthat due to the absence of a op better and create new national tourism policy and a consistent policy framework employment opportunities, since January, WAPDA has for the hotel industry, no imposed extra tax and furnew major hotel chain has ther tax on electricity bills opened in Pakistan since

1990. did not come He said

that the government can get

a lot of revenue by creating

favorable conditions for this

industry and solving its ma-

jor problems. Mian Akram

Extra tax on the

Farid, Senior Vice Chair man of Pakistan Hotels Association, demanded that the government abolish the import duties and regulatory duties imposed on the import of machinery and other goods for the hotel industry as these duties have increased the cost of doing business and cost of goods. There is a delay in clearance. He said that according to the current market rate, land prices have increased many times while there are many difficulties in promoting this industry due to the presence of various taxes and levies on the hotel industry. Capital investors invest all capital in purchasing land for hotels so that land is provided to this industry at government rates. He further said that in order to reduce the 22% high interest rate.



billion targets in fresh bond ISLAMABAD: The Central year 2021-22. "The CDNS Directorate of National Savhas set a reviewed saving ings (CDNS) has realized a target of Rs 1.4 trillion for target of Rs 1000 billion in the current financial year fresh bonds in the current (2021-22) which will promote savings culture in the

uarv 20th. 2023-24. Monday.The senior official said this was a Rs 200 billion

additional annual target than the target of Rs 1300 billion for the previous financial

fiscal year, from July 1 to Jan-

The CDNS surpassed the annual target and achieved the target of Rs 1.6 trillion in fresh bonds in the current fiscal year, the senior official of CDNS told APP here on

### 04

## **TWIN CITIES**

Islamabad POST Tuesday, January 30, 2024

### Briefs

### First snowfall of winter in Murree

RAWALPINDI: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Mur ree, Agha Zaheer Abbas Shirazi on Monday morn ing visited various areas including Jhika Gali, Kashmir Point, Mall Road, Kuldana and other areas and reviewed the arrangements finalized by the adminis-tration to facilitate the tourists. Later, the DC also visited control room. Agha Zaheer Abbas Shirazi said that after first snowfall of winter in Murree, all the staff concerned and machinery were fully operational. Personnel from various departments were present at all the tourist facilitation centers to guide and assist the tourists, the DC added. He informed that machinery and human resources were being used to remove snow from the roads. The administration had take en solid steps to remove snow from different roads to facilitate the tourists, the DC said. He informed that Murree had received 0.5 inch snow and salt was also being sprinked on the roads. The personnel of all the departments concerned were in the field and traffic was normal on the roads, he added.-APP

### Railways to digitalize its multiple services

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways is taking steps to become an E-office soon to digitalize its service and improve internal efficiencies through electronic administration. The e-office platform aims to cater for the need for effectiveness and transparency in Governmental processes and service delivery mechanisms as well as help government departments to go paperless. The idea is being implemented with the help of the National Information Technology Board (NITB) which will be responsible for providing the relevant training to the staff of Pakistan Railways. E-Office is a digital workplace solution that replaces the existing method of manual handling of files and documents with an efficient electronic system. According to an official source. Pakistan Railways will be on e-office soon which will not only facilitate the users but also make the entire system of the department transparent. Listing other steps taken by the department, the source revealed that Pakistan Railways has developed a software application for journalist concession card management. All the related data for journalist concession cards across the country is managed by the Directorate of Public Relations. The software has been prepared and is linked with the centralized reservation centre as well. About the Networking Monitoring System (NMS), the source said that the software has been deployed on the premises of the Directorate of IT with the help of this system all network deployed all over the railways network is being monitored critically .-- APP

# Int'l workshop on `Ethical to be held from Feb 07-09

### '1100 kg of sick, dead chickens destroyed'

### DNA

According to an official of COMSTECH, the meeting and its workshop will help devise |solutions for the challenges faced in clinical trials by low-middle-income countries

#### FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Two-day International workshop on 'Ethical Research in Clinical Trials' will be held under the auspices of COMS-TECH and UEARS from February 07-09 to address the challenges of research integrity in clinical trials in low-middle-income countries and propose the best suitable guidelines to improve the quality of research in this domain. The workshop, to be held in Cairo, Egypt, is aimed at imparting knowledge and training about research integrity and creating a network of professionals working in the field for continuous learning and exchanges. According to an official of COMSTECH, the meeting and its workshop will help devise solutions for the challenges faced in clinical trials by low-middle-income countries. Students, scientists, researchers,

experts, healthcare managers, government officials, think tanks, health NGO's, and policymakers from the domain of multi-center clinical trials research from across the world and global south countries can register for the workshop for physical or virtual participation. Globally the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge enjoys a place of distinction, and the public expects to reap considerable benefit from the creative and innovative contributions of scientists. As science becomes increasingly tangled with major social, philosophical, economic, and political issues, scientists become more accountable to the larger society of which they are a part. Therefore, it is more important than ever that those individual scientists and their institutions periodically reassess the values, and professional practices that guide their research as well as their ef-

forts to perform their research work with integrity. Behind every medicine and intervention that people have ever taken, are thousands of patients who have volunteered to participate in clinical trials, which have led to many breakthroughs in disease prevention and treatment in the last few decades. Without the willingness of these individuals, many would have suffered. The value of clinical trials depends on the quality of information produced and the relevance of the data to address public health needs. Nevertheless, there are many less-developed countries that do not have well-prepared medical infrastructure and little or no experience in conducting trials. Moreover, there is considerable heterogeneity across countries and even within each country, when it comes to health care systems. This may result in some differences

in many aspects starting from the review process itself to all the other steps of conducting trials such as data monitoring and patient safety. To overcome these challenges, UEARS invited COMSTECH to engage the OIC researchers (as part of the audience) in training and development in the area of research integrity in clinical trials. About the expected outcomes of the workshop, the official informed that a draft of recommendations concerning research integrity in clinical trials will be documented through this event. The other goals include giving certification to participants concerning research integrity training in clinical trials and the distribution of statements to relevant institutions.

On the first day of the workshop, COMSTECH distinguished scholar, Prof. Dr. Khalid Khan will present an introduction to

the workshop while there will be three sessions on the topics including Critical appraisal of clinical trials, Ethical issues in multicenter clinical trials and Design and statistical analysis of clinical trials. On the second day of the workshop, three sessions will be held on the topics including Regulation and oversight of clinical trials, Publication of clinical trials and Presentation of recommendations for feedback and finalization. COMSTECH Distinguished Scholar, University of Granada, Professor Dr. Khalid Saeed Khan; London College, UK and UEARS Distinguished Scholar, Professor Dr. Yacoub Khalaf and UEARS Cofounder, Dr. Mohamed Fawzy are likely to be the speakers of the workshop. The intended participants can get details of the workshop through the web link: https://comstech.org/work-

shop-on-ethical-research/.

RAWALPINDI: Punjab Food Authority (PFA) conducted a major operation in chicken market Bagh Sardara and 1100 kg of sick and dead chickens were destroyed, while suppliers were imposed fine Rs 30,000. On the instructions of DG Punjab Food Authority, action are being taken against those doing illegal business of supplying dead chickens. The food safety teams took action in the chicken market on confidential information. Sick and dead chickens worth 7 lakhs were destroyed. The chickens were recovered from a vehicle that was being supplied for sale in the market. The Food Authority team took immediate action and saved the citizens of Rawalpindi from eating sick and dead chickens.

ANF seizes 592 kg drugs in eight operations; arrests seven accused

### DNA

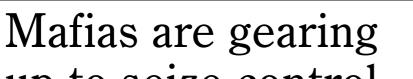
RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting eight operations across the country managed to recover over 592 kg drugs and arrested seven accused, said an ANF headquarters spokesman here on Mon-

day. He informed that 2 kg of Ice was recovered from the possession of a Bahrain-bound passenger going from Sialkot Airport. 64 Icefilled capsules were recovered from the stomach of a Jeddah-bound passenger netted at Lahore Airport. 284 kg hashish was recovered from the possession of an accused rounded up near Gahi Chowk Quetta.

150 kg opium and 150 kg morphine were recovered from an empty house in Kuchlak Pishin while four kg hashish was recovered from an accused arrested near Iqbal Shaheed Toll Plaza, Attock. The spokesman informed that 1 kg hashish was recovered from the possession of an accused nabbed near GT Road, Attock. In the seventh operation, 1 kg of hashish was recovered from an accused near Bano Bypass Kohat. Similarly, in the eighth operation, 500 grams of heroin and 350 grams of Ice were recovered from a woman arrested near the Islamabad Motorway. Cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act have been registered against all the arrested accused while further investigations are under process.



ISLAMABAD: PSP, ICCPO, thanks all officers who have contributed towards constructing this Police Station Federal Minister for Interior Dr Gohar Ejaz offering prayer during the ground breaking ceremony of new building of Police Station Golra.–DNA



SMEDA to organize training

### 'Voter can check polling station by sending SMS to 8300'; ECP

ISLAMABAD: The people of the country have been provided a unique facility to know about their constituency number, polling station and others relevant details by just sending SMS to 8300. According to Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) spokesman, "The commission has started providing comprehensive voting details to facilitate voters to cast their vote in smooth manner." "A voter can acquire his voting information by sending his National Identity Card number (without hyphen) via SMS to 8300," it added. The spokesperson highlighted, "There is a service fee of Rs 2 per SMS for this facility." Urging all voters to promptly acquire voting details for themselves and their family members, he emphasized the importance of avoiding any inconvenience at the polling station.-APP

## Power suspension schedule

ISLAMABAD: According to Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO)'s spokesman, System Maintenance/ Development Work is in process. Therefore power supply of below mentioned feeders/areas will be temporary suspended as per given schedule: On 30th January 2024, From 09:00 AM to 02:00 PM, Islamabad Circle, Banigala, Imran Khan, Jinah Avenue, ADBP, Burma, UC Road, Koror, Chatta Bakhtawar, Ayub Market, G-9/3, G.O.R, I-9/4, I-10/2, G-14/4Residential, Railway Road, Bhara Kahu, Bhara Kahu. II, Company Bagh, Ghadial, MCM, Kotli Sattian, Blawora, Treat Chara Pinstitch II. Pinstitch Colony, Fazahiya L&

ISLAMABAD: Brig. (retd) Aslam Khan, Chairman of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) said on Monday that various business mafias are making preparations to retake control of the country's economic system. He said that mafias are making substantial investments in the political system to obtain favours at the masses' expense. He added that the economy would begin to collapse if these merciless mafias were not stopped from their unholy activities. Aslam Khan said in a statement issued here today that business mafias are investing heavily in politics to reactivate after the elections and loot the people. If this trend is allowed to continue. the economy will start sinking while inflation, which is already at record levels, will break all previous records,

### up to seize control of system again

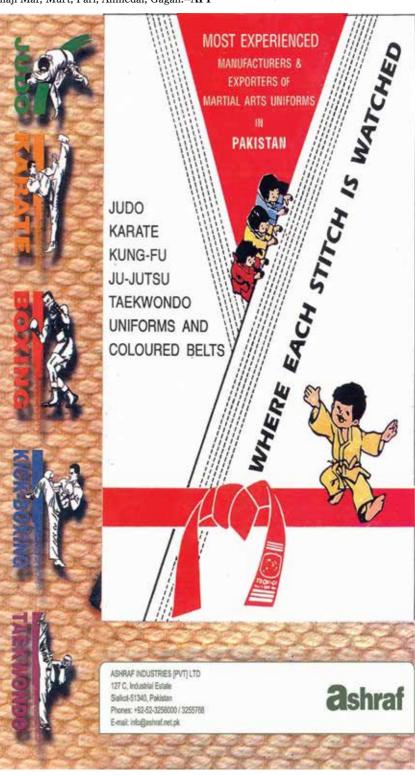
he said He noted that actions against the smuggling of dollars, oil, wheat, sugar, rice and many other commodities and steps against foreigners residing illegally in Pakistan have supported the crumbling economy, and the value of the rupee has improved. These actions scared the mafia, and they stopped their activities. However, now they are getting ready to start their game after the election, and some important politicians and top bureaucracy are being made accomplices. These elements provide financial support to every party so that whatever government comes, they cannot take any action against them. In Pakistan, it is normal for the ruling party to leave before five years, but whatever government comes, they

#### do nothing against these influential mafias. Therefore, the situation forced the army to take bold steps, and the nation has seen the results of their actions. Despite the best efforts of the sugar mills mafia, they were not allowed to smuggle or export sugar, while smuggling dollars, ghee, rice, and many other items was discouraged. He observed that if the army withdraws from these issues after the election, the mafia will restart the process of destroying the country's economy again, which is dangerous for the country's security. Aslam Khan said that as long as the country's businesspeople continue to play a significant part in forming the government, they will continue to focus on their own corporate interests rather than those of the nation and the country. –DNA

### on 'HRM for Women Entrepreneurs' ISLAMABAD: The Small

and Medium Enterprises Authority Development (SMEDA) will organize a one-day workshop on 'Human Resource Management for Women Entrepreneurs' for profitable business growth on January 30. The workshop will be held at the Women Resource Centre and Incubation LG-1 Vogue Tower, Lahore, according to a source in the authority. The training program will provide information about introduction to HRM, HRM planning process, recruitment and selection, team development strategies, and integrating HRM into the overall management system. It also highlights capacity building through training and coaching, performance management, and retention strategies and success planning.-APP

II, Bajaniyal, F-17/1 & 2, Nogzi Feeders, Rawalpindi City Circle, Katarian, Holy Family, Sadiqabad, Khurram Colony, Jinnah Camp, Tariq Shaheed, Sector 4, Tamsamaabad, Liaquat Bagh, Gulshanabad. Jami Masjid, Gwalmandi, Iqbal Road, Misrial Road, Subhanuddin, Askari XI, Ahsanabad, Abu Bakr, Kayani Road, Askari XI, Charing Cross, Kamalabad, Azharabad, Zircon Heights, I-14/3, Mohanpura, Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Bank Road-I, Tipu Road, Jail Park, Jail Park-I, Mohra Nagyal, Gulistan Colony, Major Riaz, Gulshanabad, New 502 Workshop, Murt, UC Lakhan, RA Bazar, Army Flats, Padyal, Japan Road, Chowk Pandori, Hanif Shaheed, Doberan, Panjar, Mandra-II, Pind Jatla, Karnab Kaswal, Nishan Haider, Bhal, Kahota City-II, KRL Colony Feeders, Attock Circle, Taxila, HMC Road, Ghazi Kohli, Wahdat Colony, Kala Khan, Shah Allah Ditta, Sarai Kharboza, New City Block-I&A, Ahmed Nagar, Nar Topa, Musa, Hattian, Qaziabad, P Channel Colony, Teen Mela, Bagh Nelab, Bolinwal, Shamsabad., Malhwali, Soni, Kharpa, Muslim Town, Chhaji Mar, Murt, Pari, Ahmedal, Gagan.-APP



### **GB** grievances and their solution

#### ALTAF KUMAIL



Reince Gilgit Baltistan (GB) broke free from Dogra Raj broke tree from Dogra Raj and British rule, its people joined Pakistan without any conditions. For about 76 years now, GB has been a part of the territory administered by Pakistan. Unfortunately, despite changes in government, the issues faced by GB have continued, and those in charge of the region haven't prioritized solving the problems. In recent years, protests have been increasing in GB, and the current protests have been going on for five weeks. The Awami Action Committee called for these protests, addressing various issues such as rising prices, subsidized wheat, long power outages, the Financial Act of 2023, discontinuation of the Sehat Sahulat Card. conflicts over land and mineral resources, political and constitutional status, and the Schedule IV.

GB's location, geography, and weather conditions make it challenging to produce a large quantity of wheat products. In 1970, Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto provided subsidies for essential items like wheat, sugar, oil, and PIA tickets. This was mainly due to the disputed status and poverty. Over time, all subsidies were removed, except for wheat. This is why there is resistance from the locals regarding the price of wheat and the demand for subsidies. They argue that the same price fixed for wheat should be given to GB because the region is backward and disputed.

The region of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) has a huge potential to generate hydropower, estimated at 60,000 MW. It is considered one of the richest areas in the world for hydro power. However, due to neglect from both the Federal and Local governments, the area experiences frequent power outages and long cuts, causing disruptions and difficulties in the lives of the local people, especially during harsh weather conditions.

Protestors in the region are demanding the suspension of the Financial Act 2023, which focuses on generating revenue and collecting taxes from the locals. According to the locals and the constitutions of Pakistan, GB is a disputed region, and there is no representation in the National Assembly, Senate, NFC awards, and other important national institutions.

As a result, the locals believe that the Federal government has not imposed any taxes on GB. Their loud slogan is "No taxation, No representations." Former Prime Minister Imran Khan introduced the Sehat Sahulat Card scheme across Pakistan to provide health coverage. However, when the PDM government took over, they eliminated the Sehat Sahulat Card. This decision has negatively impacted the people of GB, who already face widespread poverty and poor conditions in the health sector. As a result, low-income families cannot afford expensive health treatments. The locals are concerned about the removal of the Sehat Sahulat Card and are demanding its immediate reinstatement. Land ownership rights have been a sensitive issue for the past six years, creating disputes between locals and the government over land and mineral resources. In 2017, a small area known as Khalsa Sarkar was allocated to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), leading to reservations among locals. Land reform processes initiated by political parties like PMLN and PTI also faced criticism from the locals, who believed that the government violated their Right of Rule (Haqa Haqimiyaat) and Right of Ownership (Haqa Malkiyaat).

Schedule IV is a source of concern for educated youth, social activists, nationalist politicians, civil rights activists, and religious clerics. Introduced in 1997 as an anti-terrorist act, it was intended to combat terrorism. However, in the past year, the government imposed Schedule IV on civil rights activists, religious clerics, nationalist leaders, and youth activists who raised their voices for fundamental rights. This has resulted in frozen bank accounts, restricted movements between cities, prohibited public addresses and rallies, and increased surveillance. Local communities are facing significant challenges, and they harbor strong grievances against state policies. Despite successive federal governments coming to power, the issues of the locals in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) have not been effectively addressed. It is crucial for the state to take concrete steps to resolve legitimate demands, empower the local legislature, and refrain from governing GB solely through Islamabad and bureaucracy. Initiating a dialogue and reconciliation process, listening to the demands of GB, and prioritizing issue resolution are essential steps. Given GB's strategic and economic importance, addressing these concerns is crucial.

-The Writer is Freelance Writer, Research Scholar based in Lahore. He can reached on X (formerly Twitter) : @altafwrites4

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co

### Tel Aviv's UNRWA charges spark hasty reactions

SRAEL'S intention in alleging that 12 staff members of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East were involved in Hamas' Oct 7 attacks is open to question. The head of Israel's Military Intelligence Directorate, Aharon Haliva, met with senior United States officials on Friday, and gave them "specific names and which organizations they are affiliated with, whether Hamas or Palestinian Islamic Jihad or others, and what exactly they did on Oct 7", and showed them that "we had solid intelligence from different sources", Israeli officials familiar with the matter told the media. The US State Department said it had "temporarily paused additional funding' to the agency in the wake of the allegations. And Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Finland, the Netherlands and Japan soon followed suit. This means the UNRWA, which is in charge of providing subsistence for millions of refugees in Gaza, who are already struggling with hunger, will soon be put out of operation if no new sources of funding are forthcoming in a short time. It is no secret that Tel Aviv wants to paralyze the agency, if not totally uproot it from the Palestinian enclave. It has viewed the agency as a protective umbrella for anti-Israel forces in Gaza since its founding in the late 1940s, and its disabling has been a key part of Tel Aviv's long-term plan to "neutralize" the Gaza Strip. Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz suggested on Friday that Israel will seek to stop the UNRWA from operating in postwar Gaza. But despite Israel's allegations, the international community, including the US and its allies, has regarded the UNRWA as an indispensable player in Gaza and beyond over the past more than seven decades, during which it has taken care of about 5.9 million Palestinian refugees that have been displaced from their homes since the war in 1948. The existence of the agency is a testimony to Israel's continuous expansion and the grave impacts it has had on Palestinians. With about 13,000 employees, the UNRWA represents one of the few channels that still enable humanitarian assistance to trickle into the besieged Gaza Strip. Over the past more than three months, about 152 employees of the agency have died in Israel's "self-defense" offensive. That's why not all the US' allies, including Norway and Ireland, are following its lead and they insist they will continue to give funding to the agency. That the agency has sacked the suspected members of staff before the UN launches its investigation into the charges conveys the urgency with which the UNRWA is acting in an effort to persuade all funding parties to continue their support. The move should by no means be taken as evidence that the UNRWA admits Tel Aviv's allegations are true. It is notable that the Israeli allegations against the UNRWA on Friday came almost at the same time the International Court of Justice issued orders that Israel must act immediately to prevent genocide in Gaza. The timing effectively diverted the world's attention from the ICJ's condemnation of Israel's actions in Gaza. Even if Israel's allegations are substantiated, as long as the agency takes all necessary measures to solve the problem and plug its loopholes, Israel has no reason to deny the legitimacy of it.

## Islamabad POST

### Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 05 Issue: 105 Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960 Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad



### Solar protective measures to hurt Sino-EU ties

HE European Union is reportedly planning emergency support measures, including an antidumping probe, for Europe's solar panel manufacturing industry to counter what it considers a flood of cheap Chinese imports. Four European factories have shut down or announced plans to do so in recent weeks mainly due to increasing Chinese competition, prompting calls from the sector to "deal with the Chinese threat". The European Solar Manufacturing Council warned that the bulk of Europe's manufacturers - which were already "on the brink" - could be shut within three months if no emergency actions are taken. It is not uncommon for some European policymakers to blame China for the industrial woes that Europe faces during the energy transition process. Should any safeguard measures be put into place against Chinese solar power companies, it would be the second time that Europe resorted to trade protectionism after the EU initiated an anti-subsidy investigation last October into imports of Chinese electric vehicles. The latest move bodes ill not only for smooth development of Sino-EU economic and trade relations, but also for Europe's ambitious goal of having 45 percent of energy generated by renewables by 2030. History shows that trade barriers would create a "lose-lose situation" and they would leave the realization of the bloc's climate goals in question.

China now holds a pivotal position in the global solar energy supply chain, producing more than 90 percent of the silicon wafers that go into solar panels and more than three-quarters of the world's solar panels, mainly thanks to innovative efforts by Chinese high-tech enterprises and economies of scale. In comparison, Europe produces fewer than 3 percent of the solar panels needed to meet the bloc's 2030 solar power targets. Implementing any trade protectionist measures targeting Chinese producers would surely disrupt the market. "Today the Chinese are not only the most competitive on price, but also on quality", as Henning Rath, chief supply chain officer at German solar installer Enpal, which sources solar panels from China, said. Actually, the EU initiated antidumping measures against Chinese solar cells, wafers and panels in 2013, only to lift them five years later to increase the supply and boost renewable energy installation. China and the EU, as the world's two major markets, should conduct negotiations to try to resolve their solar panel dispute in the spirit of maintaining an open, fair, just and nondiscriminatory business environment in compliance with the World Trade Organization rules. Any move aimed at erecting trade barriers goes against the trend of the times and risks hampering their joint efforts to address climate change, which is at the core of China-EU strategic partnership.

### Political parties' manifestos: A promise needs to be fulfilled

### Waheed Hussain



No doubt PML (N) manifesto is the most attractive and comprehensive in comparison to other political parties. It gives the touch of two professors. Former Federal Minister for Planning and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal and Former Federal Minister and Senator Irfan Saddigi, both worked very hard in compiling the document. Ahsan has been associated with the Planning Commission, knows the economic challenges being faced by the country, while, Irfan Saddiqi a senior columnist, has been very close to the public issues...

**N** the present controversial and cloudy political environment, three main political parties PPP, PML (N) and PTI announced their election manifestos. A manifesto is a sacred document of any political party, informing the public, how it will perform once elected to the government. It's a road map of the party for development and prosperity of the people and country. Practically speaking, it's to allure the voters. It's future promises, rarely fulfilled. The problem with our party parties' manifesto is, that they are too wishful and unrealistic to be achieved in the five-year term of a government. No doubt PML (N) manifesto is the most attractive and comprehensive in comparison to other political parties. It gives the touch of two professors, Former Federal Minister for Planning and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal and Former Federal Minister and Senator Irfan Saddiqi, both worked very hard in compiling the document. Ahsan has been associated with the Planning Commission, knows the economic challenges being faced by the country, while, Irfan Saddigi a senior columnist, has been very close to the public issues, aspirations and demands. The PML (N) manifesto reads: 1. All government offices will be made environment-friendly. 2. Supremacy of the Parliament will be ensured. 3. Article 62 and 63 will be restored to their original form. 4. Introduction of Panchayat system for alternative dispute resolution. 5. Judicial, legal and justice system will be reformed. 6. Timely and efficient judicial system will be implemented. 7. Limit adjudication time to one year, especially for cases affecting life of a common citizen. 8. Minor cases will be decided in two months. 9. NAB will be abolished.10. Strengthen existing anti-corruption institutions and agencies. 11. Comprehensive amendments in Civil Procedure Code, 1908 and Criminal Procedure Code, 1898 to standardise the procedural laws. 12. Effective, fair and timely prosecution. 13. Court proceedings will be telecast live. 14. Commercial courts will be established. 15. Courts of overseas Pakistanis will be made better and stronger. 16. Digital system will be established in judiciary. 17. Inflation will be reduced by 10% by fiscal year 2025. 18. Inflation will be brought down to 4 to 6% in next 4 years. 19. Over 10 million jobs to be offered in 5 years. 20. Maintain a low CAD for next 5 years by keeping it in range of around 1.5 %

of GDP. 21. To achieve exports of goods & services of more than \$58 billion by the end of 2029. Attractive! Will it be achieved?

How the judiciary will be reformed? How NAB will be abolished until entire parliament agrees or at least the government has clear majority in the two houses. The country's the most important issue is price hike of the daily used items. The electricity and gas bills. The exchange rate of the country (rupee against the dollar). The petroleum products' prices which determine rates of all other products used by the public. Until our governments permanently say good bye to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) the prices of different products will remain high creating a persistent mental torture for masses. Is there any solution to mounting debts? Can we run the economy without IMF loans? No answer to these and many other perplex queries? Last but not the least, will the coming elections bring political certainty and stability? When we debate about the manifesto of a party. Does it mean an individual or the entire party? Because we have been listening to former prime minister Nawaz Sharif detaching himself from the decisions and performance of two PML (N) governments. One that of Shahid Khaqan Abbasi and other of his own brother Shahbaz Sharif. When Nawaz Sharif says his government ended in 2017, and country was sent back to the dark ages, he does not own (N) government under Shahid khaqan Abbasi, the man, who was selected by him. Similarly, Nawaz does not own 16 months of Shahbaz Sharif's coalition (PDM) government as well, again his nominee and the real brother. What does it mean? Just to get away with the decisions of two PML (N) governments on serious and sensitive issues including the finance and economy. No doubt, removal of Nawaz in 2017 destabilized the country, however, his party completed the government term from 2013-2018. Similarly, the economic mess created by the successive governments including PTI could not be cleared only in 16 months of Shahbaz's tenure. Here, again, responsibility of all decisions by a government at that time must be shouldered by the Shahbaz's PDM government. So, the point needs to be noted that in such circumstances the manifestos of the parties disappear in the political mess and power game.

Bilawal is very active in Punjab to challenge Nawaz League and at the same time attract the PTI voters. Will PPP fill the vacuum created by the PTI? In middle the election campaign, PPP has also presented 10 points manifestos. They include: A) Double real income for wage earners -8% increase every year. B) Free solar energy of 300 units for the poor; every district to have green energy parks. C) Education for all – rolling out projects for better education. D) Free health for all across Pakistan. E) Three million houses for flood affectees and the poor. F) Ghurbat Mitao: Expand BISP's scope; introduce more welfare schemes. G) Khushhaal Kisaan: BISP-like programme for farmers and 'Hari Card'. H) Enhanced support for labourers through Benazir Mazdoor Card. I) 'Youth Card' for unemployed youth and 'Youth Markaz.' J) 'Bhook Mitao Programme.'

Unfortunately, no industrial plan. No economic road map. The PPP needs to develop an economic

team to address the serious economic and financial challenges being faced by Pakistan. How to resolve problems of national debt, PSE loans, Privatization, Energy sector circular debts, price hike, security and national cohesion? Where is the plan? PTI also presented over 150 pages document for the next month general elections. If we see its previous performance, like other political parties, it had failed to implement its 2018 manifesto during approximately four years tenure in power. It promised to provide 10 million jobs and five million houses. The result was otherwise. The country faced worst inflation and debts. The IMF supervised economic and financial policies disappointed the public. Whatever, the politicians say in the public meetings "Jalsas" are just the election campaign strategy and slogans. All the three main political parties PTI, PML (N) and PPP ruled the country both at the federal as well as provincial levels. Fact of the matter is they could not pull the country out of economic and financial troubles. It is the time that all of them should bring a drastic change in their attitude, thinking, policy making and implementation process. They should learn from the past. Give up personal likes and dislikes, revenge and just focus on the development and progress of the country. The present vibrant media has changed thinking of the people, so, these political parties may not be able to befool the masses any more. The choice is there?

### 'Made in China 2025' : blueprint for future industries

Air Commodore Raza Haider (R)

The MIC 2025, which was initiated in 2015, is planned in three phases. During the first phase (till 2025), indigenisation and upgrade of industries with a focus on smart manufacturing technologies is planned. During the second phase (till 2035), the focus would be on improving global

innovations and ownership of intellectual property. In the third and final phase, China aims to establish itself as a global leader in hightech manufacturing by 2049. This aligns with the broader objective of its Centennial 2049 plan, which aims to create a modern... HE foundation of a nation's progress lies in its robust industrial sector, shaping its economic vitality and strategic influence. China, having a formidable industrial base, has secured a prominent global standing across diverse sectors. Its 'Made in China' (MIC) 2025 project marks a paradigm shift with a primary focus on becoming a global leader in high-tech industries through a dual-pronged approach. First, to indigenise strategic technologies for self-reliance and second, to upgrade China's hightech industrial capabilities through innovations. With government support and synergizing Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) throughout the development and production life cycle - from raw materials to end product - the plan aims to ultimately position China as a 'manufacturing superpower'.

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the development of ten key industries, i.e., Electric Vehicles (EVs), Information Technology (IT), Aerospace Technologies, Ships and Maritime, Advanced Railways, Robotic Machines, Precision Agriculture, Advanced Materials, Power Equipment, and Bio-medicines. China is actively digitalising these industries, aligning them with the requirements of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (IR4), emphasising the incorporation of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Big Data, cloud computing, automation, virtual simulations, robotics, and other nascent technologies into manufacturing supply chains. One notable example in the realm of indigenous development is Electric Vehicles (EVs) technology. China has strategically invested in the Research and Development (R&D) of EV technologies, aiming to establish its dominance in the rapidly growing electric vehicle market and environmental sustainability. Chinese corporations have successfully advanced in the fields of power battery technologies, electric propulsion systems, and charging infrastructure. This concerted effort has not only propelled the domestic electric vehicle industry but, has also positioned China as a global leader in EV manufacturing and technology showcasing the country's commitment to reducing dependence on foreign technologies and fostering self-sufficiency. Another example of innovation in the existing sector is the Aerospace Industry, where cutting-edge initiatives, such as the integration of AI, robots, simulations, and new materials like lightweight composites and alloys, have been launched. These initiatives have led to the development of advanced aircraft and UAVs that are fuel-efficient and technologically advanced. Moreover, new manufacturing techniques like 3D printing is revolutionising processes by enabling the production of intricate components with reduced material waste. The integration of Internet of Things (IoT) technologies enables the real-time monitoring of systems, while the utilisation of big data analytics aids in the optimisation of flight operations and predictive maintenance. China's emphasis on space exploration and satellite technology reinforces its dedication to advancing its aeronautical capabilities

In the context of Pakistan, there is a significant need to advance the industrial sector through the adoption of digitalisation. Through the cultivation of an environment that encourages innovation, allocation of resources towards state-of-the-art technology and the prioritisation of digital infrastructure, Pakistan can unleash its capacity for industrial development. To achieve the goal of digitalisation, two pathways are suggested. First, formulation of a comprehensive national policy framework in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is important. SDG-9 emphasises the promotion of resilient infrastructure and sustainable industrialisation through innovation, science and technology. To effectively realise these aspirations, Pakistan should strategically align its industrial upgradation with the SDGs, encouraging innovation through targeted awareness programmes, policy-level initiatives, and the incorporation of new technologies in design and production processes. Encouraging PPPs and strengthening academia-industry linkages, exemplified by the Triple Helix Model, can further catalyze innovations aligned with the nation's commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Second, Pakistan has a unique opportunity to utilise the platform of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) to bolster its Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) related projects. Collaboration with China under CPEC can facilitate the acquisition of R&D expertise in emerging technologies along with practical integration of these technologies with the local industry for production capacity and capability enhancement. This strategic partnership has the potential to advance not only Pakistan's position in STEM fields but also to contribute significantly to the overall economic and technological progress of the nation. These measures collectively underscore a proactive approach towards achieving inclusive, sustainable, and innovation-driven industrial growth in Pakistan.

 Air Commodore Raza Haider (Retd) is currently serving as Director at the Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies, Islamabad, Pakistan. He can be contacted at: cass.thinkers@casstt.com.

### 06

## WORLD / SPORTS

### **Islamabad POST**

#### Tuesday, January 30, 2024

### **Briefs**

### **Pak-Iran** stress joint efforts...

FROM PAGE 01 immediately appoint liaison officers in Turbat and Zahidan to further strengthen ongoing security and intelligence cooperation. Noting that security and development are intrinsically interlinked, the two Foreign Ministers agreed to expand initiatives for economic and development cooperation including through early operationalization of the joint border markets to uplift the socio-economic status of the people of both countries, especially those residing in the border regions. The two sides also decided to establish a Joint Coordination Mechanism at the level of Foreign Ministers to oversee and steer progress on common agenda for prosperity and development of the two peoples. Regular high-level engagements provide a leadership driven impetus to the bilateral relations between Pakistan and Iran. In this backdrop, the Foreign Minister renewed invitation to honourable President of Iran, Ebrahim Raisi to undertake a visit to Pakistan.

### COAS stresses...

FROM PAGE 01

was common threat that needed to be tackled through collaborative efforts, better coordination and intelligence sharing. COAS emphasized the need for sustained engagement and utilizing available communication channels to address security concerns. Both sides agreed to operationalize the mechanism of deployment of military liaison officers in each other's country at an early date to improve coordination and efficiency of response against common threats. Both sides reaffirmed the resolve to remain closely engaged and not allow any spoilers to drive a wedge between the brotherly nations. Pakistan and Iran are fraternal neighbours and destiny of are intertwined. Both sides reiterated their commitment to peace, stability and prosperity in the border region which was identified as an indispensable requirement for the well-being of people living on both sides.



ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner Jane Mariott hosted tea party for the photo journalists of Islanabad. Mudassar Raja of Daily Islamabad POST / DNA NEWS AGENCY also attended. - DNA

## PFF, Denmark envoy discuss overseas player involvement

PFF is looking forward to strengthening the ties between the two nations on field

### **SPORTS DESK**

ISLAMABAD: Haroon Malik, the chairman of the Pakistan Football Federation's Normalisation Committee, held a meeting with the Denmark Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Jakob Linulf on Monday.

During the meeting, the involvement of overseas players in Pakistan's team and the possibility of future football exchanges were discussed. The PFF is looking forward to strengthening the ties between the two nations on the field.

It must be noted that football enthusiasts in Pakistan may miss the opportunity to witness Pakistan's FIFA World Cup qualifier against Jordan on home turf, as the PFF has confirmed that Islamabad's Jinnah Stadium falls short of FIFA standards.

In a statement released last week, the PFF conveyed that it is actively exploring alternative venues to ensure the game takes





**Joseph joins** Peshawar

place at a neutral location. "In collaboration with the Pakistan Sports Board, the Pakistan Football Federation has been dedicatedly working on preparing Jinnah Stadium for the upcoming March match against Jordan, following the successful," PFF stated. "Regrettably, despite our best efforts, the current standard of Jinnah Stadium does not meet FIFA requirements," it added. The PFF highlighted a significant challenge related to lighting conditions, stating, "as the March game is scheduled to be held under lights and coincides with Ramazan, meeting FIFA's lighting standards with the current setup has posed difficulties". Citing the January 21 deadline for venue submission and a commitment to upholding the game's integrity, the PFF affirmed its decision to explore alternative options. "We will be in contact with the Jordan Football Association to discuss arrangements for a neutral venue for the home leg," the statement added.

### Bilawal vows to end subsidies...

FROM PAGE 01 country's long-standing problems. Bilawal was interacting with students of the Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science and Technology (SZABIST) Islamabad campus on Monday regarding his party's manifesto "Chuno Nai Soch Ko (Choose new thinking)". Promising strict measures to end the control of elites and powerful lobbies, the PPP chairman reiterated his vow to provide relief to the underprivileged segments after abolishing all subsidies to the superior class of society. The election campaigns of all political parties equipped with mollifying manifestos and promises are in full swing across the country ahead of the February 8 vote. PML-N and PPP are eyeing the premier's office and desperately swaying voters to elect them to power. "Inflation, poverty, unemployment and climate change are key issues being faced by the country which needed to be addressed on a priority basis," said the PPP chief, adding that the economic crisis posed a serious risk to Pakistan. He said that he and economic experts prepared the party's manifesto, promising a pro-public economic plan to cope with all crises and immediate relief to the masses.

### Ministers, officials barred..

FROM PAGE 01 I am directed to convey that the prime minister has been pleased to withdraw all permissions for foreign visits, official or private, granted to the federal ministers, advisors and special assistants to the PM, and all federal officers with immediate effect," it stated. "All federal secretaries are requested to ensure compliance of the directions," the notification, issued by the cabinet senior joint secretary, added. The directive comes less than two weeks ahead of the forthcoming general elections. The incumbent interim setup is in its final days elore transitioning autio ity to the incoming government after the Feb 8 polls. Earlier this month, the caretaker federal cabinet had approved the deployment of the Pakistan Army and civil armed forces for the peaceful holding of the elections. PM Kakar had also constituted a seven-member committee for the smooth conduct of the elections as well as overseeing their security arrangements. A day ago, the premier had said the general election on February 8 would bring political stability to the country.

### Pakistan to secure...

FROM PAGE 01 the largest EU investment program designed to propel the global green transition. Moreover. the package extends its impact by fortifying Pakistan's long-term resilience through targeted investments in human rights, gender equality, and civil society. On the occasion, Dr Kazim Niaz thanked the EU for their support and further emphasised that there were unmet needs in the flood affected areas that require assistance of development partners. Speaking on the occasion, European Union Ambassador, Dr. Riina Kionka said Pakistan was not alone in overcoming its challenging phase of economic crisis and flood recovery. "The EU and Team Europe partners are committed to building back better, sustainably improving lives in the most affected communities in KP and Balochistan," she added.

## WC journey ends with loss

ISLAMABAD : Pakistan's hopes to secure a quarterf spot at the FIH Hockey5s World Cup 2024 were shattered as they conceded a 7-8 defeat to Poland in their last pool A match in Muscat, Oman on Monday, Poland scored three consecutive goals in the first quarter with Holosyniuk Jakub, Rutkowski Wojciech and Bembenek Tomasz, netting on goal apiece in the 8th, 9th and 10th minutes respectively to put Pakistan under immense pressure, according to information made available here by Pakistan Hockey Federation. Pakistan bounced back shortly with captain Rana Waheed Ashraf and Ali Ghazanfar scoring two back-to-back goals in the 13th and 14 minutes to help their side go into the break 2-3.

In the second half both the teams scored 5-5 goals. For Poland, Jarzembowski Damian struck twice in the 18th and 21st minutes and Rutkowski, who had scored a goal in the first quarter netted another in the 22nd minute. Two stunning goals were scored by Glowacki Mikolaj and Nowakowski Mateusz in the 28th minute of the match. Liaqat Arshad scored fourth goal of the match for Pakistan in the 20th minute. Rana Waheed exhibited great resilience and fighting spirit as he scored three more goals in the 23rd, 26th and 30th minutes, but his efforts were not enough to get Pakistan over the line as they lost the important pool match to Poland 7-8 after a thrilling contest. Poland became the second side from pool A to advance to the top-eight place playoffs in the competition. The Netherlands was the first team to book their place in the quarterfinals at the back of a strong start in the event. They beat Poland 6-3 in their opening match and followed it up with a 5-3 victory against Pakistan.

Pakistan launched their campaign in the event on a winning note, thrashing Nigeria 11-5 in their inaugural match on Sunday but could not continue the momentum as they fell down 3-5 fighting hard against the Netherlands in their second match of the day. – DNA

partially available, with

pacer Arshad Iqbal named

Lawrence, partially unavail-

Islamabad United, too, re-

served their pick for Tom

Curran, who will not be

part of the side for the HBL

PSL 9. Karachi Kings have

called in Zahid Mehmood

as a partial replacement for

Kieron Pollard while they

able to the franchise.



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Young West Indies pace sensation Shamar Joseph has joined Peshawar Zalmi as the partial replacement of England's Gus Atkinson for the upcoming PSL season nine.The announcement was made by the PSL on their social platforms. Earlier, Zalmi owner Javed Afridi posted a franchise shirt with Joseph's Test wickets (13), from his debut series in Australia, printed on the back of a Zalmi jersey.

The 24-year-old bowled an epic spell to hand his side a win in a Test in Australia since 1997. It was also their first win over Aussies since 2023. Remember, Shamar Joseph wasn't scheduled to be at the Gabba on Sunday morning, but he delivered an exceptional seven-wicket performance, securing a significant victory for West Indies in the second Test against Australia. Despite being in just his second Test and dealing with a toe injury, the 24-year-old defied nearly three decades of history to etch his name into the cricketing record books. The pacer will now be in action for Dubai Capitals in the ongoing UAE's ILT20.

### arrives in Pak after 60 years

Davis Cup: Indian team

ISLAMABAD: The Indian tennis team arrived in Pakistan on Sunday for the first time in 60 years.After months of uncertainty and reluctance, the Indian team touched down in Islamabad to play the important Davis Cup Group I tie against Pakistan at the Sports Complex Grass Court on February 3-4, reported The News on Monday. India have a 7-0 lead in the head-to-head record against Pakistan and only twice - in 1973 and 2019 - have they played at a neutral venue. The last time the Indian team played in Pakistan was in 1964. As per the publication, the All-Indian Tennis Association (AITA) tried using all options to deprive Pakistan of the hosting rights. It had first approached the Davis Cup Committee and then to the Chair of the Independent Tribunal to shift the tie to a neutral venue. However, their efforts went in vain and had only two options before them either to travel to Pakistan to play the tie or face the ire of the International Tennis Federation (ITF) by forfeiting the tie and facing a fine. Fearing the fine and possible relegation, the Indian team finally decided to travel to Pakistan and arrived in the federal capital late Sunday evening. According to The News, this is the first time that Pakistan has defeated India's point of view on an international forum twice in a matter of months. It was the DCC that rejected India's concern, allotting the tie to Pakistan, and then came the turn of the Chair of Independent Tribunal which upheld the DCC/PTF stance, rejecting AITA concerns altogether. The visiting squad includes five players, two physios, a coach, a manager, and a coordinator. Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) Secretary Col (retd) Gul Rehman and other federation officials welcomed the Indian team on their arrival to Pakistan. - Agencies

### Atletico Madrid jump to third spot in La Liga

BARCELONA: Atletico Madrid replaced holders Barcelona at the third position in La Liga standings after registering a 2-0 victory over Valencia at Civitas Metropolitan Stadium on Sunday. Barcelona succumbed to a 5-3 loss at the hands of Villarreal on Saturday at home after having a 3-2 lead in the 80 minutes, leaving them at same number of wins with Atletico Madrid. Atletico entered their home ground on Sunday with three points shy of Barcelona, however, the victory over Valencia placed them in the third position with more wins.

The home team spent the first half looking for the first goal, which they earned at the stroke of half-time as Samuel Lino hit from the centre of the box to the centre after an assist by Antoine Griezmann with a through ball. Memphis Depay doubled their advantage 10 minutes into the second half with a header from very close range to the centre of the goal after finding a cross by Nahuel Molina. Valencia made desperate efforts in the second half to reduce the deficit but failed to get a breakthrough, ending the match goalless. Meanwhile, Girona once again claimed the top spot in the La Liga points table, sliding Real Madrid to second after a 1-0 away victory over Celta Vigo at Estadio de Balaídos. Portu scored the match-winner for the visitors as he found Miguel Gutiérrez's cross in the 20th minute and rocketed it from the centre of the box to the bottom left corner. – Agencies

### SBP maintains interest...

#### FROM PAGE 01

is in line with market expectations as high inflation persists due to the rise in energy prices. In a concerning update, SBP Governor Jameel Ahmad stated during a press conference in Karachi that inflation remains elevated, necessitating an upward revision of the annual target to 23-25%. The decision to keep the rate status quo is the last under the caretaker government before the country's general election next month. It also comes in the midst of Pakistan's \$3 billion SBA with the IMF. The bank's governor said the decision was warranted due to "elevated" inflation, but that the rate in January was expected to ease from the previous month when it was 29.7%. It forecast that inflation would decline at a faster pace from March and full-year average inflation would be 23-25%. "SBP opted for a wait and see approach during this policy (meeting) and refrained from abruptly starting a monetary easing cycle," said Tahir Abbas, head of research at Arif Habib Limited.

### Lost and Found

Plot No. 65 Street No. 7 Road Precinet 32, Bahria Town Karachi whose original allotment letter, No. BKTP-QUS-1159 has been lost somewhere during the journey. If found, please contact Adil Almas Abbasi, son of Muhammad Almas, House No. D-406, Mohalla Satellite Town, Rawalpindi.

### Nawaz Sharif...

#### FROM PAGE 01

flour, and ghee were affordable for the common citizen. He couldn't help but express his dismay at the current economic challenges and emphasized the urgent need to restore the prosperity the nation once enjoyed. PML-N chief saluted the passion and dedication of his supporters and assured them of his unwavering commitment to the cause, despite the challenges. Meanwhile, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Senior Vice President and Chief Organiser Maryam Nawaz Sharif said on Monday people know that Nawaz Sharif would reduce the inflation after coming to power. Addressing a rally in Lahore she said, "This constituency is not new to me as you love Nawaz Sharif. You have supported Nawaz him before and again, he will come to power with your help."

### **PCB reveals supplementary players for HBL PSL 9** Lahore Qalandars reserved their picks for Rashid Khan, fully unavailable and Dan Lawrence, partially unavailable to the franchise

#### **OUR CORRESPONDENTS**

as his replacement, in the LAHORE: The Pakistan silver category. Gus Atkin-Cricket Board (PCB) reson is set to replace Noor vealed the supplementary Ahmed who is not availaand replacement players ble to Peshawar Zalmi due that have been added to to international committhe six HBL Pakistan Suments, meanwhile, they per League (PSL) squads, have reserved their pick for for the ninth edition of the the replacement of partially marque league during the available Naveen ul Haq. Replacement Draft that Lahore Qalandars reserved took place over a confertheir picks for Rashid Khan, ence call on Monday. fully unavailable and Dan

Peshawar Zalmi, announcing their replacements, drafted Waqar Salamkheil in the silver category for Lungi Ngidi, who was not available for the whole season after being picked in the HBL PSL Draft in December. Fast bowler, Khurram Shahzad will be



have reserved their pick for Tim Seifert, who will be available after the conclusion of the New Zealand T20Is. Quetta Gladiator's Bismillah Khan will replace Wanindu Hasaranga after Sri Lanka's Hasaranga will leave the squad during the tournament owing to his international commitments. In the first and second pick of the third supplementary

round, left-arm pacers Luke Wood and Obed McCoy were bagged by Peshawar Zalmi and Islamabad United, respectively. Karachi Kings had the third

pick and they went for English middle-order batter Leus De Plooy meanwhile the fourth pick belonged to Lahore Qalandars who took on board the Sri Lankan wicketkeeper-batter Bhanuka Rajapaksa, who featured for Peshawar Zalmi in the last HBL PSL season.

Multan Sultans had the fifth pick in the third supplementary round and they went for the experienced West Indian wicketkeeper-batter Johnson Charles, who has represented Sultans and Quetta Gladiators in previous HBL PSL seasons. Quetta Gladiators, with the last pick of the round three, drafted English batter Laurie Evans, who previously appeared in his solitary HBL PSL season for Multan Sultans in the 2019 edition. The fourth round of the Supplementary picks saw Sultans bagging the exciting 19-vear-old Muhammad Shahzad, who was part of Pakistan U19 at

the ICC Men's U19 World Cup 2022. Haider Ali was drafted into the Islamabad United squad, with the batter all set to feature in his fifth HBL PSL season with Islamabad being his

> third franchise. Quetta Gladiators reserved their pick in the fourth round. The fourth pick of the round saw Peshawar Zalmi drafting in left-arm spinner, Sufiyan wrist Muqeem, who was part of the same team in the last HBL PSL season.

With the fifth pick in this round, Lahore Qalandars picked up Tayyab Abbas, a product of their player development program. Karachi Kings drafted 21-yearold Mohammad Rohid as part of their squad

### 07

## **BUSINESS / WORLD**

### **Briefs**

### Malaysia charges ex-PM ally\_in corruption probe

KUALA LUMPUR : Malay sia has charged a former minister with failing to declare assets, the latest step in a corruption probe that's targeting several people connected to a former prime minister. Former Finance Minister Daim Zainuddin, 85, who was just discharged from hospital, turned up in court in a wheelchair on Monday. He pleaded not guilty to a charge of failing to declare 71 assets ranging from luxury cars to a raft of companies, properties and land. He faces up to five years in jail and a fine if found guilty. Daim, who left office more than 20 years ago, is a key ally of ex-Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad. Both argue that the probe is politically motivated and that prosecutors have ignored potential corruption among allies of the current government. Daim served as Finance Minister from 1984 to 1989 and again from 1999 to 2001 under Mahathir. Daim pointed to the case of Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, who also faced trial for corruption until prosecutors dropped 47 graft charges against him last year. Last week, Daim's wife also pleaded not guilty to a similar charge. Daim, one of the country's wealthiest tycoons, insists his offshore assets were the result of legitimate business activities and investments.--APP

### Japan says Moon lander 'resumed operations'

TOKYO : Japan's Moon lander has resumed operations, the space agency said on Monday, indicating that power had been restored. After it landed on January 20. JAXA had said that problems with the craft's solar batteries meant they were not generating power.

"Last evening we succeed

## Italy's PM launches Africa summit, pledges partnership

Meloni advocates for equal cooperation and rejects imposing or patronizing attitudes, aiming to redefine Italy's relationship with Africa

#### **News Desk**

ROME : Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni welcomed more than 20 African leaders to Rome on Monday to present her long-awaited plan aimed at re-setting Italy's relations with the continent and curbing immigration. The summit, being held in Italy's ornate Senate, will last all day, with Italian ministers due to outline an array of initiatives, from energy and infrastructure to health and education, that Meloni says will be mutually beneficial. "We believe it is possible to envision and write a new chapter in the history of our relationship, a cooperation among equals, far from any predatory imposition or charitable stance towards Africa," Meloni said in an opening speech. She said the initiative would have an initial endowment of more than 5.5 billion euros (\$5.95 billion), including public guarantees for investment proiects and 3 billion euros from an international climate fund set up in 2021. However, critics say heavily indebted Italy cannot hope to compete with the likes of China, Russia and Gulf states, that are all looking to boost their presence



in Africa, which is home to many of the world's natural resources. While Rome claims ownership of the plan, which it has named after the late Enrico Mattei, who founded state oil company Eni, Meloni said her government would look to help from the private sector and international bodies such as the European Union. Underscoring that point, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, European Council President Charles Michel and the head of the EU Parliament were all at the Rome meeting. Among the African leaders present were the presidents of Tunisia, Senegal, Kenya, the Republic of Congo and Somalia. In all. 45 African states

were represented at various levels. Meloni has made the Mattei plan a central plank of her foreign policy since taking office in late 2022. Energy needs lie at the heart of the initiative, with Rome looking to serve as a gateway into European markets for natural gas from Africa that has become vital after Russia's invasion of Ukraine

made diversification of supplies a priority for the EU. Eni, Italy's largest importer of natural gas, has already countered lower Russian supplies by shipping increased volumes from Africa, where it has had a presence for decades.

The company has said Algeria, Egypt and Libya will be Italy's main gas suppliers for the next few years. But the Italian leader has repeatedly said Europe must forge closer ties across industry and agriculture, looking to strengthen African economies as a way of persuading disaffected young Africans from migrating north. Some 157,600 boat migrants reached Italy last year, the largest number since 2016, undermining Meloni's electoral pledge to halt the flow of unauthorised arrivals. Most had departed from North African countries such as Tunisia and Libya, many fleeing poverty and conflict in sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. "Mass immigration will never be stopped, human traffickers will never be defeated if we do not address the many causes that push a person to leave their home," Meloni told the summit. "This is exactly what we intend to do."

### **BD** reports first death from NiV

**IslamabadPOST** 

Tuesday, January 30, 2024

DHAKA: Bangladesh reported on Monday its first fatality this year from the brain-damaging Nipah virus when a man died after drinking raw date juice. The virus, transmitted to humans through contact with bodily fluids of infected bats, pigs or other people, was first identified in 1999 during an outbreak affecting farmers and others in contact with pigs in Malaysia. Since then it has led to outbreaks in Bangladesh, India and Singapore, killing more than 160 people in Bangladesh. Over 700 people tested for Nipah virus after two deaths in India The nation's first case of 2024 was reported in Manikganj, some 50 km from the capital Dhaka, said Tahmina Shirin, director of the health ministry's Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IED-CR). "The sample was sent for a laboratory test and it turned positive. We came to know that the person drank raw date sap," she told Reuters. The health ministry has warned people against eating fruits partially eaten by birds or bats, and consuming raw date juice. There are no treatments or vaccines for the virus.-APP

### **Pro-Palestine** march held in Manchester

MANCHESTER : A large crowd took to the streets in northwestern England on Sunday to protest against Israel's war in Gaza. Gathering at Platt Fields Park in the city of Manchester, they held a demonstration in a show of solidarity with Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. Carrying Palestinian flags, they chanted pro-Palestinian slogans including "Free Palestine," "Cease-fire now" and "End Apartheid.' They criticized the British government's support for Israel and called on people to join a boycott campaign which is targeting companies supporting Israel's attacks in Gaza. Besides various signs with slogans including "Stop the killing," some protesters were also seen carrying South Africa's flag over the country's decision to file a case against Israel at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague, the Netherlands on Dec. 29 on charges of genocide against Palestinians amid a deadly Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip following an attack by the Palestinian group Hamas on Oct. 7. On Friday, the UN court found South Africa's claim that Israel is committing genocide plausible.

### Spain says it will not stop funding UNRWA

"We call on UNRWA and the United Nations to conduct a comprehensive, swift and complete investigation into the allegations," the ministry said in a statement.

fights in the strip.

The United Nations Pales-

tinian refugee agency (UN-

RWA) said on Monday that

funding were not resumed.

MADRID: Spanish Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Albares announced on Monday that his country will continue to provide funds for the United Nations (UN) Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) despite the allegations some of its workers assisted in Hamas's retaliatory operation against the Israeli occupational forces on October 7, 2023. Speaking before the Con-

gress of Deputies' Foreign Affairs Committee, Albares of what he quoted as 12 people cannot erase the work of 30,000 other staff members. He described the UNRWA as "indispensable" in helping civilians in Gaza amid Israel and Hamas's

Earlier on Monday, Austria announced that it is suspending payments to UNRWA, pending a full investigation into the accusations, the Austrian foreign ministry said.

'We call on UNRWA and the United Nations to conduct a comprehensive, swift and complete investigation into the allegations," the ministry said in a statement.

it would not be able to con-The European Union, one of UNRWA's top donors, tinue operations in Gaza and across the region bedemanded on Mondav an yond the end of February if "urgent" audit of the agency and said it is reviewing A string of countries infunding. The audit must cluding the United States. be led by European Com-Germany and Britain have mission-appointed experts and conducted alongside a paused their funding to the aid agency in the wake of UN investigation into the allegations that 12 UNRWA claims, commission spokesman Eric Mamer told jourstaff were involved in the Oct. 7 attacks by Hamas in nalists. "What is absolutely clear is that these actions

RWA in light of the very serious allegations made on 24 January relating to the involvement of UNR-WA staff in the heinous 7 October attacks."

It said that no additional funding to UNRWA "is foreseen until the end of February." But it added that humanitarian aid to Palestinians in Gaza and in the West Bank "will continue unabated through partner organizations <sup>3</sup> The European Commission

said it "will review the matter in light of the outcome of the investigation announced by the UN and the actions it will take."

A German foreign ministry spokesperson said later in the day, that UNRWA is not the only source of humanitarian aid for Palestinians, after Berlin joined its funding for the agency. "We continue to advocate for more humanitarian aid to be provided," the spokesperson told a government press conference in Berlin. - Agencies

Turkey calls for **UNRWA** funding

to resume ANKARA : Türkiye on Sunday said it was concerned by the decision of some countries to suspend funding for the United Nations agency for Palestinians and urged them

to reconsider their move. In a statement, the Turkish Foreign Ministry said the suspension of funding, following allegations by Israel that a dozen of its 13,000 staff in Gaza were involved in Palestinian militant group Hamas' Oct. 7 attack on Israel, primarily harmed Palestinian civilians. "Working under very difficult conditions, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) meets the vital needs of millions of Palestine refugees. Since Oct. 7. more than 150 UNRWA personnel have been killed by Israel in Gaza," it added. Several key donor countries, including the U.S., U.K., Italy, Australia and Canada, have said they will halt funding to the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees following Israel's allegations that staff members took part in Hamas's Oct. 7 attack. Other nations. such as Ireland and Norway, have welcomed an investigation into the allegations but said they would not cut off aid. The UNRWA has fired a dozen people and promised a thorough investigation into the claims, which were not specified, while Israel has vowed to stop the agency's work in Gaza after the war. The head of UN-

ed in establishing communication with SLIM, and resumed operations," JAXA said on X, formerly Twitter. "We immediately started scientific observations with MBC, and have successfully obtained first light for 10band observation," it said, referring to the lander's multiband spectroscopic camera. The agency posted on X an image shot by the Smart Lander for Investigating Moon (SLIM) of "toy poodle", a rock observed near the lander. The touchdown made Japan only the fifth nation to achieve a soft lunar landing, after the United States, the Soviet Union, China and India. But around three hours after landing, JAXA decided to switch SLIM off with 12 percent power remaining to allow for a possible resumption when the sun's angle changed. The lander achieved its goal of landing within 100 metres of its target, touching down 55 metres away. -Agencies

### Lifeng urges more support for listed firms

BEIJING : Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng on Monday called for greater support for listed companies in an effort to help stabilise capital markets, the Xinhua News Agency reported, amid a protracted stock market rout. Chinese policymakers have taken steps to support the country's stock markets following recent sharp falls. "Listed companies are an important micro foundation for high-quality economic development," He said at a national video conference on promoting the development of listed companies. "Promoting high-quality development of listed companies helps to achieve high-level technological self-reliance, accelerate the construction of a modern industrial system and enhance market confidence." Government departments should step up support for high-quality listed firms to boost confidence and stabilise capital markets, the vice premier said. He also addressed property financing at the conference, noting that localities should seize the opportunity to establish.-DNA

If the sumed, UNRWA will not be able to continue its services and operations across the region, including in Gaza, beyond the end of February," a spokesperson for the agency said.

southern Israel.

urgent. portant and they should be launched without any delay," Mamer said.

A commission statement said the EU executive "will determine upcoming funding decisions for UN-

RWA, Philippe Lazzarini, vowed to hold "accountable, including through criminal prosecution," any employee found to have been involved in "acts of terror." U.N. chief Antonio Guterres has promised an urgent independent review of UNRWA but also pleaded for donor states to "guarantee the continuity" of the agency for the sake of "the desperate populations" it serves .-

### **Protesting French** farmers launch siege of Paris

French farmers' nationwide protests intensified as they began moving on Paris on Monday, threatening to choke off major highways and to blockade the capital as they demand better working conditions. For days, protests have flared in the European Union's largest agriculture producing country, with farmers angered by insufficient income, red tape and environmental policies they say undermine their ability to compete with less stringent neighbors. Farming Minister Marc Fesneau on Monday said, at a European Union leaders' summit in Brussels this week, President Emmanuel Macron would make a push for more pro-farming policies to address grievances shares by many farmers in the bloc. The French government on Friday dropped plans to gradually reduce state subsidies on agricultural diesel and promised a reduction in red tape and an easing of environmental regulations, but farmers' organizations said that was not enough and pledged to step up the pressure. Across France, farmers have used tractors and trucks to block roads and jam traffic. The head of France's biggest farming organization said farmers would block all major highways out of Paris at about 30 kilometers (18 miles) from the center. "What we have understood is that as long as the protest is far from Paris, the message is not getting through," Arnaud Rousseau, head of the FNSEA union, said on RTL radio. Rousseau said farmers would continue their action everywhere in France "with the aim to get emergency measures about the core of our business." In response, the government ordered the deployment of 15,000 police and paramilitary gendarmes.-Agencies



Lahore: British High Commissioner Jane Marriott visited South Punjab, exploring its incredible historical treasures, including Derawar Fort, Uch Sharif, and the Tomb of Rukn-e-Alam. -DNA

### **Ukrainian President Zelenskyy warns of World War III risk** If Ukraine cannot defeat Russia, other European countries, Baltic nations could be Russia's next target, Zelenskyy says in interview

#### FOREIGN DESK

BERLIN: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has called for stronger military support from Western countries, warning that if Ukraine cannot defeat Russia, the conflict would escalate into a third world war. Speaking to German media, Zelenskyy said Chancellor Olaf Scholz has better understood the real nature of the threat following their meeting in Berlin last year, and the Berlin has started to increase its military support. "My impression is that Chancellor Scholz has understood that Putin is not just a name, but a threat, and not just a threat to Ukraine," Zelenskyy said about the Russian president, during his interview with the public broadcaster ARD. "I think Chancellor Scholz senses that if we don't hold out, Russia will

move closer to Germany," he said, adding that European countries and Baltic nations could be Russia's next target after Ukraine. " ... Chancellor Scholz understands that there is such a risk, and that is definitely the third world war. If Russia hits this or that NATO country, it would in any case mean the beginning of the third world war," he said. Zelenskyy renewed his call on Western countries to increase their support for Ukraine, and said he expects Germany to play a leadership role in Europe with regards to military support for his country. Russia started its "special military operation" in Ukraine in February 2022. Ukrainian President Zelenskyy makes public 2-year income Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy declared his income over 2021 and 2022, a period which also coincides with

the start of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. A statement published by the Ukrainian presidency on Sunday said that Zelenskyy and his family's income for 2021 amounted to approximately 10.8 million Ukrainian hryvnia (\$284,660). This income mainly consisted of salaries, bank interest and income from renting out real estate. His income decreased by 11.9 million Ukrainian hryvnia (\$313,653) compared to 2020. For 2022, Zelenskyy and his family's income was 3.6 million Ukrainian hryvnia (\$94,886), which decreased because of "the temporary termination of lease agreements on the territory of Ukraine" due to the start of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The statement went on to say that the cash balance of Zelenskyy's family at the end of 2022 decreased by almost 1.8 million Ukrainian hryvnia (\$47,443).-APP

### Hungarian FM tours Ukraine ahead of EU summit

KYIV : Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Szijjarto arrived in Ukraine for talks with senior officials on Monday, days before a European Union summit that will seek agreement on a financial aid package that has been held up by Budapest. Szijjarto's talks in the western city of Uzhhorod with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba and presidential chief of staff Andriy Yermak follow weeks of Hungarian opposition to the EU providing 50 billion euros (\$54 billion) in aid. Prime Minister Viktor Orban's political director said earlier on Monday that Budapest was open to using the EU budget for a proposed aid package, a shift in Budapest's stance. "A frank and constructive dialogue is expected to improve relations between states," the Ukrainian president's office said on its official channel on the Telegram messaging app alongside a photo of Szijjarto, Kuleba and Yermak. Ukraine has said it hopes the bloc's 27 member states will agree at the summit in Brussels on Thursday to provide the four-year package that Kyiv plans to use to plug its budget deficit this year as it battles Russian forces in its south and east. Kviv has said Monday's talks would try to lay the ground for a meeting between Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban.-Agencies

The court issued an interim order urging Israel to stop obstructing aid deliveries into Gaza and to improve the humanitarian situation.

The crowd later marched towards the Mechanics Institute building, where a panel discussion was held later that was attended by some Palestinians who lost their family members during Israeli attacks in the besieged enclave. Palestinian flags were seen on lampposts on some streets in Manches-ter.-DNA

### United CEO seeks Airbus amid Boeing delays

RIYADH : United Airlines has reportedly engaged in discussions with Airbus regarding the acquisition of additional A321neo aircraft to address a potential gap resulting from the delayed Boeing 737 Max10. A potential deal is seen as a compromise that could potentially resolve the impasse surrounding United Airlines' protracted order for larger A350s, as per sources within the industry. United CEO Scott Kirby flew to Toulouse recently to sound out the planemaker on a potential quid-quo-pro deal after a midair emergency on an Alaska Airlines 737 Max 9 raised new doubts over certification of the already delayed Max 10, the sources said. "United Airlines has been in talks with Airbus about possible alternatives to the Max 10 order. To my knowledge no agreement has been reached," a person familiar with the discussions said. Talks embracing a potential sale of some A321neo jets and the status of United's previously ordered A350s are at an early stage and there is no guarantee of a deal, they said. – Agencies







### **Briefs** Supporters in NA-127 being detained, claims PPP

#### DNA

LAHORE: The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) has written a letter to Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja, claiming that their supporters are being arrested by police in Lahore's NA-127 constituency, where party chief Bilawal Bhutto Zardari is February 8 elections.

PPP Secretary General Taj Haider wrote the letter, wherein he claimed that the arrests of PPP supporters by Punjab Police had created an environment of terror in the constituency.

The letter said the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) workers Shahbaz and Shahzad were arrested for joining the PPP. Former Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PMLN) counsellor KhalidaParveen was also arrested for supporting the PPP. When they contacted the police, they said Parveen was arrested in a case lodged against her four months ago, the letter mentioned. Haider said PPP's Zulfiqar Badar contacted the high officials for the release of the party activists but to no avail. He feared that the fascist measures would multiply if police were not stopped. The PPP leader requested the CEC to order for freedom of his party supporters and take action against those responsible. Bilawal, who has been nominated as his party's candidate for the slot of prime minister, is contesting from NA-127 Lahore, where he would compete with PML-N leader ShaistaPervaiz Malik and

Iran denies involvement in drone attack on US forces

a PTI-backed candidate.

# SC directs FIA to withdraw notices issued to journalists

Abusive language, inciting people to violence are different things, but FIA should not take action on criticism, says CJ Isa

#### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) QaziFaez Isa Monday said the Supreme Court cannot stop any journalist or even the general public from expressing criticism, directing the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to not take legal action against them for critiquing the apex court. The chief justice, addressing the investigation body during the hearing of a suomotu case pertaining to the harassment of journalists, ordered immediate withdrawal of the notices issued to journalists for criticising judges. Directing the FIA director general to hold a meeting with the journalists, the apex court adjourned the hearing regarding the harassment of journalists till Tuesday (tomorrow). The court also directed the federal government to submit a report about the torture of journalists in a fortnight. On the journalist associations request to suspend the FIA notices, CJP Isa said SC would decide about it when the case resumes on January 30.

A three-member bench headed by CJP Isa and comprising Justice Muhammed Ali Mazhar and Justice MussaratHilali conducted the hearing of the case. Attorney General for Pakistan (AGP) Mansoor Usman Awan and Press Association of Supreme Court's officials appeared before the court. The AGP apprised the court about four petitions regarding the case with journalists Abdul Qayyum Siddiqui and AsadToor among the plaintiffs. "Abusive language is a different matter, but the FIA should not take action on criticism. I am strongly against stopping criticism, as freedom of the press is enshrined in the Constitution," the chief justice remarked. CJP Isa said he doesn't mind if someone derides him, but ridiculing the judiciary will result in the country's loss. On January 27, CJP Isa took a suomotu notice against the FIA's list of 47 journalists and YouTubers for allegedly running a smear campaign on social media against Supreme Court judges and the judiciary. According to the FIA, at least 115 inquiries had been registered and 65 notices had been served against the individuals involved in propagating derogatory and false information against the CJP and state institutions on social media. It was further stated that the date of hearing regarding these notices was January 31, 2024.

On January 17, the caretaker government formed a five-member Joint Investigation Team (JIT) to ascertain the facts behind a malicious social media campaign against

### SC dismisses Suri's review pleas

#### ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court has dismissed the review petitions against declaring the ruling of then National Assembly deputy speaker Qasim Suri as unconstitutional on the basis of their being ineffective. A five-judge larger bench headed by Justice Mansoor Ali Shah and comprising Justice Muneeb Akhtar, Justice Aminuddin Khan, and Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhel conducted the hearing on Monday. Former prime minister Imran Khan and President ArifAlvi withdrew their review petitions. Their lawyer said that their petitions have become ineffective. The court disposed of the petitions on the ground of ineffectiveness. However, former National Assembly speaker AsadQaiser's lawyer Naeem Bukhari did not withdraw his petition and argued that he wants the

SC judges after the apex court gave a verdict on the election symbol of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). The JIT constituted under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act 2016 consists of officials from police, FIA and intelligence agencies. The country's press and media associations, in a joint statement, had made it clear that if the FIA continued resorting to such steps, then they would be forced to evolve their next course of strategy collectively with other journalist organisations. Meanwhile, when the joint statement was highlighted by the media, CJP Isa summoned both the presidents of the associations to his chamber, assuring them about taking up an old case on January 29 regarding harassment of journalists and asking them to present their grievances during its hearing. The SC, on Saturday, issued notices to all the parties for January 29 in the case. The chief justice said if a journalist thought that they were doing a favour to the top court through criticism then they were inflicting damage upon the state institution. You must rebuke the apex court but there was some limitation in the Constitution too, he maintained.

Justice MussaratHilali said social media inflicted immense damage upon the institutions. If you considered Article 19,

court decision to be annulled, as the court could not interfere in the affairs of Parliament. Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhel remarked that a misconception has been created that the judiciary could not interfere in the affairs of Parliament, However, the Supreme Court dismissed the review petition of the former speaker of the National Assembly saying that there is no ground for review. It should be noted that on April 7, 2022, the Supreme Court declared unconstitutional the then deputy speaker Qasim Suri's ruling to reject the no-confidence motion brought by then opposition parties against prime minister Imran Khan and the President's decision to dissolve the National Assembly. . Imran Khan and ArifAlvi had filed review petitions against the decision of the larger bench of the Supreme Court on the suomotu notice case, requesting the apex court to review the April 7 decision of the 5-member larger bench.

then you should also consider Article 14. Article 19 allows freedom of speech, while Article 14 says the dignity of a man shall be inviolable. Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar said what was written on the thumbnail was not as such in the video which was strange. He said fair criticism was not an issue but the language used was wrong. The chief justice said if a journalist was arrested just for criticism then it was improper. Journalist Abdul Qayyum Siddiqui said the federal government should be asked on whose directive the joint investigation team was constituted. On August 20, 2021, a two-member bench of the apex court comprising Justice Isa and Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail while hearing a case had taken notice of harassment of journalists. The FIA, on August 6, 2021, had arrested journalists Amir Mir and Imran Shafqat in Lahore for their disrespectful attitude against the Pakistan Army, the judiciary and women. Journalist Abdul Qayyum Siddiqui had brought to the notice of the court an application regarding harassment of journalists on which the court had directed to file a petition in this regard. The CJP said Mr Siddiqui you had said you no longer wanted to pursue case. Siddiqui replied when the matter was put before Justice Ijazul Ahsan's bench then he did not want to run case.

### SC bench hearing military courts case dissolved

#### Mehtab Pirzada

ISLAMABAD: Justice Tariq Masood of the Supreme Court

### Mengal gets SC's nod to contest polls

#### FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Monday allowed Balochistan National Party- Mengal (BNP-M) President Sardar Akhtar Mengal to contest the February 8 general elections from Quetta's constituency of NA- 264. A three-member bench of the apex court headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) QaziFaez Isa threw out a plea filed against the acceptance of Mengal's nomination papers by Yasir Ahmad – one of his contenders in the constituency - and gave a clean chit to the BNP-M chief to contest the upcoming polls. Last month, Mengal's nomination papers were rejected by a Returning Officer (RO) in Khuzdar in connection with his alleged offshore company. The BNP-M leader, however, termed the RO's decision a "wellplanned conspiracy." Meanwhile, the Mengal challenged the RO's decision before the election tribunal.

### Gaza war must end for any hostage release

DOHA: Hamas said on Monday that releasing hostages it is holding would require a guaranteed end to the Israeli offensive in Gaza and withdrawal of all invasion forces, reiterating its position after Israel held a meeting with Qatari and Egyptian mediators.

'The success of the Paris meeting is dependent on the Occupation (Israel) agreeing to end the comprehensive aggression on Gaza Strip,' senior Hamas official Sami Abu Zuhri told Reuters. It was not immediately clear if, with this condition met, Hamas would free all or some of the 132 hostages Israel says remain in Gaza. Hamas had previously said a full release would require that Israel free all of the thousands of Palestinians held on secu-



#### FOREIGN DESK

TEHRAN: Regional resistance groups do not take orders from Iran, nor does the Islamic Republic have a role in their decisions to carry out retaliatory operations in defense of the Palestinian people, says Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kan'ani. "Iran is not involved in the resistance groups' decisions about how to support the Palestinian people or defend themselves and the people of their countries in the face of any aggression and occupation," Kan'ani said in

a statement on Monday. He made the remarks after US President Joe Biden and UK Foreign Secretary David Cameron claimed that"Iranian-backed groups" mainly based in Iraq were accountable for a drone attack on the border of Jordan and Svria on Sunday, which killed at least three American forces and wounded 34 others. Kan'ani cautioned that leveling baseless accusations against Iran is a projection and a conspiracy by those who see their interests in dragging the US feet in a new conflict in the region to cover up their own problems.

The spokesman further said that since the beginning of Israel's onslaught on Gaza in early October. **KARACHI**: President Dr Arif Alvi enquiring after the health of patients during his visit to the Sundas Foundation Karachi Centre, providing blood and hematological services to patients. – DNA

### PTI demands immediate release of Khan, Qureshi

#### KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) demanded that the ongoing proceedings of unconstitutional trial in the false and fabricated cipher case should be annulled instantly and PTI Chairman-for-life Imran Khan and PTI Vice Chairman Shah Mehmood Qureshi should be released forthwith. PTI Spokesperson stressed the need for an immediate halt on the ongoing malicious and nefarious process of targeting former Prime Minister Imran Khan and former foreign minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi through an unfair and unjust trial in the baseless and false cipher case. He said that the cipher was a fabricated and baseless case in every aspect, which was just being used to subject against PTI founding Chairman Imran Khan and Qureshi for political vendetta. PTI Spokesperson stated that it had no more a secret that Imran Khan and Qureshi were being subjected to political revenge in the

cipher case through unfair and unconstitutional trial under Article 10A. He recalled that the court had already declared the trial of the cipher case null and void twice, which was enough to prove that the case and the trial had no legal status. PTI Spokesperson went on to say that the international media had also brought all the facts related to the fake and fabricated cipher case before the world, adding that insisting on this unjust proceedings of the cipher case despite the court verdicts was a clear reflective of the malice intents of the state against Imran Khan and Qureshi. He pointed out that sentencing Imran Khan in another ridiculous case through a biased judicial process by murdering of constitution and justice on the pattern of Toshakhana would be nothing but mere a revenge, which the nation would never accept in any circumstances. Therefore, PTI Spokesperson demanded that the proceedings of unconstitutional trial in the cipher case should be annulled immediately and Imran Khan and Qureshi should be released forthwith.

### Hamas slams Israeli conference as 'fascist' reflection of occupation

Several ministers within Netanyahu's govt were among 15 Knesset members and thousands of people who flocked to a conference in Occupied Jerusalem on Sunday night

#### **News Desk**

GAZA: The Hamas Movement has strongly denounced by the "fascist ruling coalition" in the Israeli occupation state for holding a conference on Sunday calling for annexing the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and supporting settlement expansion. In a statement on Monday, Hamas said that the conference "unveiled the hidden Israeli intents to commit the crime of displacement and ethnic cleansing against the Palestinian people." "Organizing such a conference has reflected this rogue entity's disregard for international laws and resolutions, including the recent ruling that was adopted by the International Court of Justice and called for taking all the measures to stop its genocide in Gaza," Hamas added. The Movement called on the international community and the UN to take a firm stance against this Israeli conference and to condemn its holding.

Several ministers within Israeli premier Benjamin Netanyahu's right-wing government were among 15 Knesset members and thousands of people who flocked to a conference in Occupied Jerusalem on Sunday night calling for Jewish resettlement of Gaza, with far-right security minister Itamar Ben Gvir and finance minister Bezalel Smotrich delivering opening speeches.

The conference, dubbed "settlement brings security," was led in part by the right-wing Nachala organization, a group advocating for the expansion of Jewish settlements, which are considered illegal by international and humanitarian bodies. The event called for the Israeli occupation state to rebuild settlements in both Gaza and northern parts of the West Bank. Meanwhile, Five Palestinian young men were reportedly killed by the Israeli occupation forces (IOF) on Monday morning in different areas of the West Bank. A young man, Obeida Hasan, 18, was killed after a soldier shot him during an angry protest

that started after several military jeeps stormed Silwad town, east Ramallah. Meanwhile, the Palestinian health ministry said the Israeli soldiers killed two young men in Dura town, south of al-Khalil. It said a young man, MuhannadFasfous, 18, succumbed to serious gunshot wounds to the chest. Fasfous was among four wounded Palestinians - one of them was MoatazTbeish, who succumbed to serious gunshot wounds to the head earlier. In Teqoa town, southeast of Bethlehem, the IOF killed 16-year-old Rani al-Sha'er after showering him with bullets during confrontations with local youths in Khirbet al-Deir area. The IOF reportedly prevented an ambulance crew from reaching the teenager and then detained his body. Two young men were also injured by live bullets and many others suffered from their exposure to tear gas during the events in Tegoa town. Earlier at dawn, a young man identified as ThaerHammou was shot dead by IOF gunfire in Yamun town, west of Jenin.

on Monday rescued himself from hearing intra-court appeals against civilians' trial in military court, leading to the dissolution of a six-member larger bench. In December of last year, the larger bench of the apex conditionally suspended its judgment on military courts by a majority of 5-1 with Justice MusarratHilali dissenting. Other members of the bench included Justice Aminuddin Khan, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Syed Hassan Azhar Rizvi, Justice MusarratHilali and Justice Irfan Saadat Khan. During the hearing of the intra-court appeal today before the same bench, petitioner former chief justice Jawad S Khawaja's lawyer Khawaja Ahmad Hasan raised an objection to the bench. The counsel demanded reconstitution of bench and requested to refer the matter to the judges' committee mandated with the fixation of cases before SC benches under the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Act 2023. Justice Masood barred Lahore High Court Bar Association (LHC-BA) counsel Hamid Khan from presenting arguments.

rity grounds in its prisons. A Palestinian official, close to mediation talks, who requested anonymity, said that for Hamas to sign a follow-up deal to the November truce in which it released dozens of hostages, it wants Israel to agree to end the offensive and withdraw from Gaza - though implementation would not necessarily be immediate. The agreement would have to be endorsed by Qatar, Egypt and the United States, the official said. - Agencies

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