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Indonesia calls for end to weapons sales to Israel

Detailed News On Page-07

Blome: Women empowerment for stability

Detailed News On Page-08



Ronaldo suspended for obscene gesture

Detailed News On Page-06



Rafah crisis intensifies

Biden eyes Gaza ceasefire by next week

Truce deal could include release of several hundred Palestinian detainees held by Israel

NEWS DESK

GAZA CITY: A new ceasefire between Israel and Hamas could start as soon as Monday and last through Ramadan, US President Joe Biden said, in a deal that would also free dozens of hostages held in Gaza. In the protracted bid to broker a truce, mediators from Egypt, Qatar and the United States have been putting proposals to the warring parties, with negotiations still ongoing. They are seeking a six-week halt to the fighting and the release of Israeli hostages held in Gaza since Hamas's October 7 operation against the occupied Israel. The truce deal could include the release of several hundred Palestinian detainees held by Israel, media reports suggest. "My hope is by next Monday we'll have a ceasefire," Biden said in response to a question about when a truce might start, adding: "We're close, we're not done yet".

He later said an agreement "in principle" was in reach for a temporary truce to last through the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, which starts on March 10 or 11, depending on the lunar calendar. "There's been an agreement by the Israelis that they would not engage in activities during Ramadan as well, in order to give us time to get all the hostages out," Biden said. An unidentified Israeli official had earlier told news site Ynet the "direction is positive". Qatar's emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani - whose country hosts Hamas leaders and helped broker a one-week truce in November - is due in Paris Tuesday, according to the French presidency. Sheikh Tamim has met Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh in Doha as part of his bid for an "immediate and permanent ceasefire agreement", the official Qatar News Agency said. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has stressed that any truce would delay, not prevent, a ground invasion of

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Qatar says no breakthrough so far in talks

Israel's genocidal has killed at least 29,782 Palestinians

FOREIGN DESK

DOHA: Qatar said that there is no breakthrough in talks for a ceasefire deal between Hamas and Israel in Gaza. "So far, the negotiations have not yielded any tangible results," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Majed Al Ansari told a press conference in Doha. "We are upbeat and optimistic to have something today or tomorrow," he added. The Qatari spokesperson said his country seeks to reach a ceasefire in Gaza during the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, due to start next week. "The situation on the ground, however, is completely different as there are many obstacles," he added, without providing any further details. Al Ansari said that humanitarian aid flow into Gaza was decreasing, calling for action from the international

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SP martyred, 2 key terrorists killed in Mardan

Elimination of notorious terrorist causing a significant blow to terrorist networks

DNA

PESHAWAR: Superintendent of Police (SP) Ijaz Khan was martyred while three other officials, including a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP), sustained injuries during an encounter with terrorists in Mardan district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Tuesday. The encounter took place in Zara Mata area of Mardan where law enforcement agencies were engaged in a fierce exchange of fire with terrorists, leading to the martyrdom of SP Ijaz Khan. The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) spokesman confirmed the incident, saying that the brave SP fell victim to the terrorists' indiscriminate firing. The terrorists' gunfire inflicted severe wounds on the law enforcement personnel, necessitating immediate medical assistance.

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RIYADH: Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force called on General Fayyadh bin Hamed Al-Ruwaili, Chief of the General Staff, Saudi Armed Forces. During the visit, the Air Chief was awarded King Abdul Aziz Badge of Honor of the Excellent Class by Chief of the General Staff, Saudi Armed Forces. - DNA

Allocation of reserved seats

CEC merges SIC pleas; decision likely today

ECP's five-member bench adjourns hearing on reserved seats matter till today (Wednesday)

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja on Tuesday consolidated all the petitions filed by the Sunni Itihad Council (SIC) regarding the allocation of reserved seats. The electoral watchdog had Monday decided to hold an open hearing on the SIC application seeking allotment of reserved seats after PTI-backed lawmakers joined their ranks. Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan's (MQM-P) Convener Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, advocate Farogh Naseem, and SIC's Barrister Ali Zafar appeared before the five-member bench. During the hearing today, Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Advocate Farooq H Naek and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) leader Azam Nazeer Tarar presented arguments during the hearing today.

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Presidential polls mandatory 30 days after polls: ECP

Top electoral authority says "required electoral college for presidential polls to be completed on 29th"

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: After the conduct of the 2024 nationwide general polls and its preliminary results amid much criticism, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has pulled up its socks to organise presidential elections and

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Briefs

JUI to follow truth instead of ministries

Fazl predicts the govt not to last for long

STAFF REPORT

PESHAWAR: Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam (JUI) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that they have not learnt to surrender and announced to follow the path of truth instead of occupying ministries. The JUI Chief while addressing the participants of the Majlis-e-Shura meeting said that the JUI was defeated. The first constitution, he asserted, was made in 1973 in which there are many services of the elders. Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that since 1973, not a single piece of legislation has been passed in accordance with the Islamic spirit.

PHC bars authorities from arresting Gandapur

Ali Amin Gandapur is nominated to become KP chief minister

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar High Court (PHC) extended bail on Tuesday to Ali Amin Gandapur - who is slated to become Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief minister - until March 19 in cases lodged against him, instructing authorities not to arrest him in any ongoing investigations. Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Justice Waqar Ahmed heard the petitions concerning the cases against Mr Gandapur. During proceedings, the court directed law enforcement agencies not to apprehend Gandapur in connection with any of the cases. The petitioner's counsel highlighted concerns regarding the fear of Gandapur's arrest due to his nomination as Chief Minister.

Unfurls uplift plan

No compromise on transparency, merit: Maryam

She said civil servants were part of her team and those performing their duties would be fully supported

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: There would be no compromise on transparency in financial matters, said Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz on Tuesday as she visited the Civil Secretariat for the first time after assuming the office. Maryam was chairing a meeting where she received briefing from Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman, planning and development chairman as well as finance and health secretaries on the working and plans of different departments. Among other measures, the chief minister reviewed the recommendations and suggestions for the "Provincial Socioeconomic Registry" Programme - a move meant to collect and store the data of deserving people from the poor segments of society. Speaking on the occasion, the chief minister said

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Imran, Bushra indicted in £190m reference

Court says statements of 58 witnesses will be recorded while adjourning hearing till March 6

MEHTAB PIRZADA

RAWALPINDI: An accountability court in Rawalpindi indicted on Tuesday Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi in the £190 million reference. Accountability Court Judge Nasir Javed Rana conducted the hearing at

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Woman wasn't coerced into apologising, says ASP

Lahore cop says harassers in mob have been identified

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Syeda Shehribano Naqvi - who is the sub-divisional police officer at Gulberg Lahore - Monday said the woman harassed by an enraged mob in the city's Ichhra Bazaar was not coerced into apologising for wearing the shirt with Arabic script. The cop added that the woman, who was later seen seated between two bearded clerics in one of the videos, was shifted to a safe location and her consent was taken before meeting those men. "We did not coerce the woman into saying anything whatsoever. The consent was taken, she said what she said on her behalf," ASP Shehribano said when speaking during a private news channel's program. The ASP's remark came in response to a question about why the woman was asked to apologise

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President to face dual constitution violation charges, asserts Bilawal

PML-N's Ishaq Dar also says President Alvi is "once again" trying to violate Constitution

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Amid growing criticism against President Arif Alvi over the summoning of the National Assembly (NA) session, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari Tuesday said he foresees the head of the state facing multiple cases for violating the Constitution. "I think there will be two cases against President Arif Alvi for violating the Constitution [...]. One for dissolving the NA after the vote of no confidence [against ex-prime minister Imran Khan] and another for failure to summon NA session as required by the Constitution," he said while speaking to the media in Islamabad after the hearing of the Zulfikar Ali Bhutto death sentence reference. His remarks come a day after the NA Secretariat summoned the lower house's inaugural session on February 29 after President Alvi rejected a summary to summon the NA session on the 21st day after the general elections, as provisioned by Article 91(2) of the Constitution.

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Imran hails Alvi's decision not to summon NA session

There is no greater theft than stealing the public's mandate

COURT REPORTER

RAWALPINDI: PTI founder Imran Khan hailed on Tuesday President Arif Alvi's decision to not summon the National Assembly session and said that despite winning the elections, the PTI is being denied its due share of reserved seats. In a media talk at Adiala jail, the former prime minister said, "There is no greater theft than stealing the public's mandate, they are the same some who opposed the FATF legislation and demanded the closure of their cases."

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RCCI demands immediate steps for business activities

RAWALPINDI : The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) President Saqib Rafiq has called upon the government to take immediate steps to reduce the cost of doing business. According to a statement issued here, addressing the All Pakistan Chambers Presidents Conference in Rahim Yar Khan Saqib Rafiq said that the economic and industrial activities have shrunk due to an increase in production cost. The RCCI President emphasized that the policy should be made in consultation with the stakeholders, adding at present the Pakistani economy was facing many challenges including the energy crisis. Saqib said that the promotion of renewable energy was the need of hour and without promoting the industry, economic progress was impossible. "Whether it is SMEs or large-scale industry, both sectors are suffering from the high cost of doing business, electricity and gas are many times more expensive", he added. He urged the government to expand the Business Facilitation Centers across the country.—APP

AIOU Rawalpindi shifted to main campus

ISLAMABAD : Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) Regional Director Rawalpindi, Nasreen Akhtar Mirza Tuesday announced that the regional campus has been shifted to the University's Main Campus, Sector H-8, Islamabad. She thanked AIOU Vice Chancellor Professor Dr Nasir Mehmood and Director General Regional Services Dr Malik Tauqeer Ahmed Khan for taking this initiative to lead in providing more facilities for students, teachers and regional staff, said a press release issued here. Nasreen Mirza said the problems of the students related to the regional office as well as the various departments in the main campus will be easily handled and resolved on a priority basis. "Students will be able to get access to other departments including admission, examination and syllabus department," she added.—APP

LDA, MCL remove illegal structures

LAHORE: The Lahore Development Authority (LDA) and Metropolitan Corporation Lahore (MCL) on Tuesday launched a joint crackdown in LDA Avenue One and Jubilee Town, and removed encroachments and evacuate dozens of livestock from residential areas. On directives of Commissioner and Director General LDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa, prompts action was taken in various blocks of the residential societies and demolished number of illegal structures and sheds besides handing over a dozen buffaloes to the corporation during the joint operation. The operation was supervised by Director LDA Ewne One Rehan Athar.

Pak students to visit Japan under JENESYS Program

The Government of Japan invites every year several groups of undergraduate/graduate students from SAARC countries to participate in this short term invitation. The program is expected not only to promote capacity building but also to develop mutual understanding among youths of Japan and that of SAARC countries

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: On the invitation by the Government of Japan, a group of eight Pakistani undergraduate students (four from Islamabad and three from Karachi) will be visiting Japan from March 5 to 12, 2024 under the JENESYS (Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths) program. A total of 49 youths have been invited from the SAARC countries to participate in this program which is being held under the theme of Environment.

JENESYS is a youth exchange program between Japan and the Asia Pacific region launched by the Japanese Government which aims at promoting mutual trust and understanding among the peoples of Japan and the Asia-Pacific region. With focus on the theme of environment, the invitees from the SAARC countries during their stay in Japan will be provided opportunities to learn



ISLAMABAD: Kazumasa Takane, Counsellor / Head of Public Affairs, in a group photo with the students at the orientation ceremony held today at the Embassy of Japan.—DNA

and deepen further their understanding of Japan's economy, society, history, politics, and diplomatic relations, and also experience Japan's diverse culture through lectures and visits. The Embassy of Japan held today a pre-departure orientation ses-

sion for the visiting youth to give them useful information before their departure for Japan. While interacting with the students

on the occasion, Mr. Kazumasa Takane, Counsellor / Head of Public Affairs, advised them to make optimum use of this opportunity and learn as much possible about Japan during this short period as this may become a life changing experience for them. "Since my arrival in Pakistan last year, I have had the opportunity to meet many young people in Pakistan and have found them very energetic, talented and keen to learn about Japan and its culture. He hoped that youth from Pakistan and Japan can play the role of a bridge for further promoting mutual understanding and friendly relations between the two countries. The Government of Japan invites every year several groups of undergraduate/graduate students from SAARC countries to participate in this short term invitation. The program is expected not only to promote capacity building but also to develop mutual understanding among youths of Japan and that of SAARC countries.

DC inspects bidding process of vegetables & fruits

LAHORE: On the special direction of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, Deputy Commissioner Rafia Haider conducted a visit to the fruit and vegetable market in Badami Bagh for ensuring the availability of commodities and food items at regulated prices. She thoroughly inspected various sheds and stalls, assessing the stock of vegetables and fruits, and overseeing the auction process for items such as onions, potatoes, and tomatoes. Additionally, the DC evaluated the presence of employees in the market and inquired about facilities for vendors. The DC directed the Secretary Market Committee to enforce public rates for food items through bidding. Assistant Commissioner Cantt, Nabeel Memon, was directed to maintain regular monitoring, overseeing the bidding process of vegetables and fruits. Stressing the significance of curbing profiteering, the DC reiterated a zero-tolerance policy against it. Stringent supervision was cautioned for both open markets and fruit and vegetable markets in Lahore, with immediate action against any profiteering.—APP

PODA lauds Maryam as chief minister

DNA

ISLAMABAD : Lauding the appointment of Maryam Nawaz Sharif who declared in her first speech that "harassing any woman is Maryam Nawaz's redline", Potohar Organization for Development Advocacy (PODA) a women's rights organization in Pakistan, congratulated the first-ever female Chief Minister of any province in Pakistan. Since 2004, PODA organ-

ization has been striving hard for gender equality, justice, economic empowerment and inclusivity in all spheres in Pakistan focusing on the marginalized segments of the society including farmer women, persons-with-disabilities, youth and minorities. In a press statement, Chief Executive Officer and the founder of PODA, Ms. Sameena Nazir hailed Maryam Nawaz for putting protection and progress of women on the top of her

agenda. Ms. Nazir said that it is indeed a welcoming sign that the newly elected chief minister was aware of the issues confronting women to achieve their economic empowerment as the CM promised to ensure safe and secure environment for women who are out of their homes to perform their work. Ms. Nazir termed the newly appointed chief minister's speech a fundamental step in a right direction to attain gender equality which is essential for the develop-

ment and progress of the country as envisioned by Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah who stressed on the full and equal participation of women in all spheres of life. Welcoming the chief minister's speech who said there should be "no quotas", Ms. Sameena Nazir hoped that she would be able to maintain the principles of inclusivity and diversity in her work to make better policies which will be favorable for the majority of the population in the province.

Alif holdings presents waterfall eastern tower

The project, which marks the 17th venture of Alif Holdings (Pvt.) Limited, comprises three distinct towers - Central Tower, Eastern Tower, and Western Tower - housing over 200 luxury apartments and presidential suites

LAHORE : Alif Holdings Pvt. Ltd, a beacon of excellence and innovation in Pakistan's real estate development landscape, proudly announces the launch of their latest project, Waterfall Eastern Tower in Lahore. This new addition to Lahore's skyline promises to elevate the standards of luxury living while offering unparalleled investment opportunities in the region. The project, which marks the 17th venture of Alif Holdings (Pvt.) Limited, comprises three distinct towers - Central Tower, Eastern Tower, and Western Tower - housing over 200 luxury apartments and presidential suites. Each unit is designed to offer residents the epitome of comfort and convenience, with features such as a Compatible RFID system for entry and exit, Full home automation, CCTV surveillance with armed guards, and High-speed elevators. Alif Holdings Pvt. Ltd prioritizes the security of investments for its customers. With a track

record of delivering successful projects and a commitment to transparency and integrity, investors can trust that their investments in Waterfall Eastern Tower are in safe hands. Rigorous risk management practices ensure that potential risks are identified and mitigated, providing peace of mind to investors. Waterfall Eastern Tower offers investors the opportunity for capital appreciation that outpaces inflation rates. Through meticulous market research and strategic location selection, Alif Holdings Pvt. Ltd ensures that its projects are positioned for sustainable growth. With Lahore's burgeoning real estate market and the project's proximity to key amenities and educational institutions, investors can expect robust capital gains over time. In addition to capital appreciation, investors in Waterfall Eastern Tower can enjoy attractive rental yields that outperform the market average. The project's luxurious apartments and premium amenities appeal to

discerning tenants seeking high-quality accommodation. With professional property management services provided by Alif Holdings Pvt. Ltd, investors can maximize rental income while minimizing vacancies and maintenance hassles. Our aim with Waterfall Eastern Tower is to provide not just luxurious living spaces, but also secure investment opportunities for our valued customers, said Ahmad Saljok, Director Development & Finance of Alif Holdings Pvt. Ltd. We understand the importance of investment security, capital gain that beats inflation, and market-beating rental yield, and our project is tailored to meet these needs. Alif Holdings Pvt. Ltd prides itself on being the company of choice for customers, pioneering positive change in the construction industry. With a reputation for delivering exceptional properties, exquisite hospitality and leisure facilities, the company continues to set new benchmarks for excellence.—APP

CDA initiates green projects for capital enhancement

DNA

ISLAMABAD : On the direction of the Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA), the Environment Wing has taken several measures to eliminate environmental pollution including making the city of Islamabad more beautiful and green work is progressing rapidly on several projects. In this regard, as part of the plantation campaign

in F-9 Park, 15,000 plants have been planted initially by destroying paper mulberry and poisonous weeds, which are compatible with the local environment and have no negative effects on human health. So that every special and general can benefit from these trees and plants, in the same way, the process of destroying such poisonous plants which have negative effects on human health and environment has also been started. Accord-

ing to the details, under the supervision of Member Environment, Capital Development Authority (CDA), NIH doctors along with private NGOs took full part in the tree planting campaign conducted on Tuesday in Islamabad's F-9 Park. It should be noted that under CSR, the private company Mari Petroleum has given 20 thousand saplings to CDA in the plantation campaign and this series of plantation will continue in the coming

days. Furthermore, under the plantation drive, the Environment Wing is continuing to plant plantations on the slopes around various highways, connecting roads, intersections, green belts, roads and drains in the city to reduce environmental pollution. On this occasion, Member Environment highlighted the importance and usefulness of increasing green areas and planting new plants, including eliminating environmental pollution.

IIUI, FOSPAH organize seminar on women's rights

ISLAMABAD: The Office of Students' Advisor of the International Islamic University, Islamabad (IIUI), in collaboration with the Federal Ombudsperson Secretariat for protection against harassment of women at workplace (FOSPAH), arranged an awareness seminar on women's property rights and protection against harassment at workplace on Tuesday. Speaking on the occasion, the Federal Ombudsperson for protection against harassment of women at the workplace, Fauzia Vigar said that these are high

times when contribution of working women must be increased to stabilize the country's economy. She mentioned that a number of the females face problems at workplace that needs to be addressed on immediate basis. Calling upon the educated females, she said, it is their responsibility to explore about their property rights and raise voice on their prerogatives that are legitimate and defined. She observed that to ensure the implementation of laws related to harassment, it is important that affected people should raise

their voices against this nuisance. She advised that the people who are around the victim and have proper information related to harassment matters, should also raise their voices to prevent such incidents. Federal Ombudsperson also discussed the gender based harassment as well as she defined and elaborated the procedures to counter such issues through relevant channels. In the question answer session, she spoke about the privacy of the complainant and role of FOSPAH in establishing a public perception and req-

uisite information about the women's property rights. She also lauded IIUI for appointing first female Rector in its history adding that this was a positive gesture and an omen of positive role of educational institutions in providing equal platform to women to excel in the society. On the occasion, the IIUI Rector, Prof. Dr. Samina Malik thanked Ms. Fauzia Vigar for an insightful and awareness based discussion on the vital issue of women's property rights. She called upon the educational institutions and educated females of the higher education to play role in protecting the rights of women and to help the institutions working for the harassment matters against women.—APP

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Police make headway in Balaj case

Balaj, the son of the late Arif Amir, also known as Tipu Truckanwala, met a fatal end similar to his father, who was murdered in 2010 at the Allama Iqbal airport. Balaj's grandfather had previously succumbed to an old feud

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Lahore Police have arrested Nadeem Wayn, the brother-in-law of Gogi Butt, who was nominated in the murder case of Ameer Balaj Tipu, son of Tipu Truckanwala. According to media reports, Khawaja Nadeem Wayn was detained by the investigation police from Royal Park in Lahore. Earlier, Nadeem Wayn's brother Waseem Wayn was also detained. Balaj, the son of the late Arif Amir, also known as Tipu Truckanwala, met a fatal end similar to his father, who was murdered in 2010 at the Allama Iqbal airport. Balaj's grandfather had previously succumbed to an old feud. The assailant struck during the wedding function, opening fire on Balaj and two other guests, leaving them critically injured. In a swift retaliation, Balaj's



armed associates killed the attacker at the scene. Despite efforts to save him, Balaj succumbed to his wounds after being rushed to Jinnah Hospital. News of Balaj's death triggered a mix of grief and anger among his supporters, who gathered at the hospital to mourn his demise. Distraught women were observed beating their chests and condemning the perpetrators, while others voiced their support for Balaj through chants and slogans. The police promptly cordoned off the area and initiated an investigation into the incident. Their focus includes determining the motive behind the attack and identifying the assailant. As of now, no arrests have been made. Balaj Tipu held a notorious reputation as one of the most influential and feared figures in Lahore's underworld, marking his demise as a significant event in the city's criminal landscape.

National Days and Armed Forces Days

FEBRUARY

Feb 04/Sri Lanka	National Day
Feb 06/N. Zealand	National Day
Feb 06/Uganda	Army Day
Feb 11//Iran	Revolution day
Feb 16/DPR Korea	National Day
Feb 16/Lithuania	National Day
Feb 18/Gambia	National Day
Feb 19/Nepal	Democracy Day
Feb 23/Uzbekistan	National Day
Feb 23/Brunei	National Day
Feb 23/Guyana	National Day
Feb 23/Russia	National Army Day
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Motorway Police.9270601-20
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Rawalpindi.....9270601-20



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PIA Flight Info.....114
PIA Cargo.....9280979
Railway Inquiry.....117
Railway Exchange 9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi.5555489
CAA.....9281092



Hospitals

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MH.....5611116
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DHQ.....5556311-4
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Met Office.....9250360-6
RDA.....5555864
TMA.....5770886
Cantonment Board 9270151-3

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Jordan keen to expand trade relations with Pakistan

Akhtar Hussain, Muhammad Ashfaq Chatha, Maqsood Tabish, Rizwan Chheena, and others were also present at the meeting.

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: H.E. Dr. Maen Khreasat, Ambassador of Jordan visited the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and during an interaction with the business community, said that his country is keen to expand trade relations with Pakistan so that both countries can achieve mutually profitable outcomes. He said that Jordan and Pakistan can cooperate in many areas including tourism, IT, sports, vocational training for youth, agriculture, and others. He said that there is a good potential for cooperation between the women entrepreneurs of both countries to achieve mutual profits. He said that the bilateral trade volume of around US\$ 50 million between Jordan and Pakistan is much less than their actual potential and stressed that Jordan and Pakistan should establish direct air links to promote strong connectivity between their private sectors to explore all untapped areas of bilateral



business and investment cooperation. He said that Pakistani investors can invest in the real estate sector of Jordan. He assured that he would cooperate in developing business linkages between the private sectors of both countries to increase bilateral trade and economic relations between Jordan and Pakistan.

Speaking on the occasion, Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Vice President ICCI said that Pakistan and Jordan enjoy cordial relations that should be transformed into growing trade and economic relations between the two countries to achieve mutual benefits for their economies. He said that Pakistan produces many quality products

including textiles, food products, pharmaceuticals, sports goods, surgical items, and leather goods. Jordan should enhance its imports from Pakistan to meet the needs of its consumers. He said that both countries should focus on the regular exchange of trade delegations and facilitate B2B meetings between their private sectors

to strengthen bilateral business cooperation. He said that the Jordan Embassy should share the list of its major imports with ICCI so that the business community can increase its exports to Jordan. Akhtar Hussain, Muhammad Ashfaq Chatha, Maqsood Tabish, Rizwan Chheena, and others were also present at the meeting.

Heavy snowfall expected from February 29

ISLAMABAD: Torrential rainfall and heavy snowfall is expected in various parts of the country from February 29 to March 02 according to the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD). The PMD has forecast torrential rainfall/heavy snowfall with windstorm/thunderstorms and isolated hailstorm in most parts of the country during the period. The PMD has warned that heavy rainfall may generate flash floods/heavy snowfall may disrupt daily life in vulnerable areas. A strong westerly wave was likely to approach western parts on February 29 and may grip most parts of the country on March 01 and persist till March 02. Under the influence of this weather system, widespread heavy rain with windstorm/thunderstorm (snowfall over the hills) is expected in Balochistan including Nokkundi, Dalbandin, Chagi, Kalat, Khuzdar, Lasbela, Awaran, Turbat, Kech, Gwadar, Jiwani, Pasni, Ormara, Panjgur, Kharan, Noushki, Washuk, Mastung, Sibbi, Naseerabad, Zhob, Sherali, Barkhan, Musakhel, Kohlu, Jhal Magsi, Loralai, Ziarat, Quetta, Chaman, Pishin,

Qila Abdullah and Qila Saifullah from February 29 to March 01. Isolated hailstorm is also likely during the period. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, heavy to extremely heavy widespread rain with windstorm/thunderstorm with heavy snowfall over the hills is expected in Chitral, Dir, Swat, Abbottabad, Mansehra, Haripur, Kohistan, Shangla, Buner, Bajaur, Karak, Khyber, Peshawar, Charsadda, Nowshera, Swabi, Mardan, Kurram, Waziristan, Kohat, Lakki Marwat, Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan from February 29 to March 03. Isolated hailstorm is also likely during the period. In Gilgit-Baltistan/Kashmir, heavy to extremely heavy widespread rain with windstorm/thunderstorm and snowfall is expected in Sukkur, Jacobabad, Kashmore, Larkana, Dadu, Shaheed Benazirabad Karachi, Hyderabad, Thatta, Badin, Khairpur and Mirpurkhas on February 29 and March 01. Isolated hailstorm is also likely during the period. In Sindh, rain-wind/thunderstorm is expected in Sukkur, Jacobabad, Kashmore, Larkana, Dadu, Shaheed Benazirabad Karachi, Hyderabad, Thatta, Badin, Khairpur and Mirpurkhas on February 29 and March 01. Isolated hailstorm is also likely during the period. In Punjab/Islamabad, widespread heavy rain with windstorm/thunderstorm is

expected in Murree, Galliat, Islamabad/Rawalpindi, Attock, Chakwal, Jhelum, Mandi Bahauddin, Gujrat, Gujranwala, Hafizabad, Sialkot, Narowal, Lahore, Kasur, Okara, Faisalabad, Toba Tek Singh, Jhang, Khushab, Sargodha, Mianwali and Bhakkar on March 01 and 02. Heavy snowfall is also expected in Murree, Galliat and surrounding areas during the period. Rain-wind/thunderstorm is expected in Multan, Kot Addu, Layyah, Rajanpur, Dera Ghazi Khan, Rahim Yar Khan, Sadiqabad, Khanpur, Sahiwal, Bahawalpur and Bahawalnagar from February 29 to March 02. Isolated hailstorm is also likely during the period. In Punjab/Islamabad, widespread heavy rain with windstorm/thunderstorm is

expected in Murree, Galliat, Islamabad/Rawalpindi, Attock, Chakwal, Jhelum, Mandi Bahauddin, Gujrat, Gujranwala, Hafizabad, Sialkot, Narowal, Lahore, Kasur, Okara, Faisalabad, Toba Tek Singh, Jhang, Khushab, Sargodha, Mianwali and Bhakkar on March 01 and 02. Heavy rain/snowfall may cause closure of roads in Murree, Galliat, Naran, Kaghan, Dir, Swat, Kohistan, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Shangla, Astore, Hunza, Skardu, Neelum valley, Bagh, Poonch and Haveli on March 01 and 02. Landslides in upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Murree, Galliat, Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan may affect the vulnerable points in the area. Wind-thunderstorm/hailstorm may damage loose structures like electric poles, Vehicles and solar panels etc. Tourists are advised not to travel unnecessarily, while Farmers are advised to remain cautious about their crops. All concerned authorities are advised to remain alert and take necessary measures to avoid any untoward situation during the forecast period.—APP

China's two sessions begin amid various challenges

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Upcoming two sessions, the biggest annual event in China's political calendar to be held from 4th March in the backdrop of regional and international challenges, will offer significant clues about China's second centennial goals, economic outlook, development blueprints and global vision in 2024. Two sessions of the National People's Congress (NPC), the national legislature, and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), the top political advisory body, is occurring at the time when China is marching on the second centenary goal of building a modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced and harmonious by 2049. China has already accomplished its first centenary goal of building xiaokang - a moderately prosperous society in all respects by 2021. According to Gwadar Pro, two sessions will allow the world to fathom how China has drawn up a two-stage development plan for the period from 2020 to the middle of this century. In the first stage from 2020 to 2035, China will build on the foundation created by the moderately prosperous society with a further 15 years of hard work to see that socialist modernization is basically realized, and "In the second stage from 2035 to the middle of the 21st century, China will, building on having basically achieved modernization, work hard for a further 15 years and develop China into a great modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, harmonious and beautiful. Two sessions are descending at a moment when China's 14th Five-Year plan (2021-2025), officially endorsed by the National People's Congress (NPC) on 11 March 2021, entered into its 4th year with landmark achievements. Through the window of NPC and CPPCC meetings, world will be abreast of core connotation of 14th Five-Year plan and its philosophy of "dual-circulation, innovation and green growth." t says policies should help unleash the full potential of the domestic market, facilitating firms to provide higher-quality goods and services to better stimulate domestic demand. And at the same time, Beijing promised greater access to foreign investors and encouraged Chinese companies to trade more with the outside world. Beijing wants this round of opening-up "to be on a greater scale, across more sectors and on a deeper level." With tenacious focus on "Two sessions", international community will be charged up to know about China's manufacturing industry as world's biggest industry in terms of scale for the 14th consecutive year with several sectors such as auto and shipbuilding ranking top in the world.

FEB&GIF clears educational-stipend claims

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi informed the Senate on Tuesday that the claims related to the educational stipends were cleared by the Federal Employees Benevolent and Group Insurance Funds (FEB&GIF) within 45 days. Responding to a question during the question hour in the Senate, he said that on average, 35,000 to 40,000 claims per annum were being received by the FEB&GIF for educational stipends from federal government employees. He said that as of December 2023 and January 2024, around 4,997 claims were pending for the processing. The main reasons for this delay were twofold, he said adding first, the seasonal nature of claims, as the period from August to March was the peak time for receiving educational stipend claims due to examination results being declared from SSC to Masters during this period.—APP

ANF seizes over one ton drugs

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting seven operations across the country managed to recover over one ton drugs and arrested nine accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Tuesday. He informed that 1 kg Ice drug and 766 grams heroin were recovered from the possession of a passenger going to Bahrain at Faisalabad Airport. 969 grams Ice was recovered from a passenger going to Doha at Peshawar Airport. In the third operation, 192 kg hashish was recovered from an accused netted near Burhan Interchange. 4.8 kg hashish was recovered from Warsak Road Peshawar area and an accused was arrested during the operation. 1.5 kg hashish was recovered from two accused arrested from Scheme-3 Rawalpindi. 800 grams hashish was recovered from an accused nabbed near M-1 Toll Plaza Islamabad.—APP

Leopard found dead in Haryala Kashmir

ISLAMABAD: A leopard was reportedly found dead in Haryala area of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, said Wild Life Department on Tuesday. According to the postmortem report the leopard succumbed to hypovolemic shock. The distressed animal attempted to free itself but ended up caught in a tree's branch, suspending itself upside down throughout the night, a private news channel reported. The Wildlife Department received information from concerned villagers about the plight of the leopard.—APP

Progress of TAPI discussed

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Energy, Muhammad Ali, and Ambassador of Turkmeni-

stan, Atadjan Movlamov, on Tuesday discussed the progress of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) project. During the meeting, both sides

expressed satisfaction with the progress of the project, said a news release. The minister said that Pakistan was focusing on piped gas and considers it crucial to meet

the energy needs of the country. The ambassador also expressed resolve to continue the engagement on the project. The meeting discussed avenues of cooperation in the energy sector between both the countries. Additionally, the ambassador extended an invitation for the roadshow that Turkmenistan would be hosting in Paris.

Experts highlight mineral potential of Afghanistan

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Speakers at a roundtable discussion organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) here on Tuesday highlighted the immense mineral extraction potential of Afghanistan. They pointed out that the Taliban's interim government had already signed mineral extraction contracts worth \$6.5 billion. Futurist Mr Umer Sheraz shared that Afghanistan was home to some of the world's largest deposits of copper and lithium but also pointed out that the necessary infrastructure for extraction of those minerals at the sites remained limited. He warned regarding the environmental repercussions that would result from mineral extractions in Afghanistan, a nation that is already facing water scarcity. In addition, he cautioned that the rivalry among key regional powers could spark

another Great Game in Afghanistan. Mr Salman Javed, Director Pak-Afghan Youth Forum, shared that Afghanistan was already extracting oil from various rigs along Amu Darya and was also refining the extracted oil locally. He added, however, that the quantities of the extracted oil and the quality of their refinement left much to be desired. Mr Javed highlighted the potential of the Afghan mining sector in the copper, lithium, and gemstones. He also emphasized that the Taliban interim government intended to overcome the geographical curse by urging investors to assist in capacity building and exporting refined minerals from Afghanistan. Mr Khurram Abbas, Director of the India Study Centre at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad, stated that India was trying to engage with the Taliban to regain some of its lost ground in the city.

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Briefs

RCB
instruct for
maintaining
food quality

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB) has instructed the restaurants to maintain food quality and hygiene. RCB team along with Ad'l Director Military Lands and Cantonments (MLC) Rawalpindi Region made a surprise visit to various food points in different areas of Sadar on the other day and examined production units at hotels, restaurants, and quality of food items. According to the RCB spokesman the team, including Ad'l Chief Executive Officer RCB, Umair Mehboob inspected the sanitation situation, cooking of food items, and cleanliness in the kitchens of the hotels. He said that instructions to improve cleanliness were given to various famous restaurants and food points during the visit. Additional CEO on the occasion issued directives to the Chief Public Health Officer and food inspector for strict monitoring to ensure quality foods and improved cleanliness on all food points. The use of substandard ingredients in food preparation would not be allowed, he said.—APP

SMEDA
to organize
training

ISLAMABAD: The Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) will organize a one-day workshop on "How to Start E-Commerce Business in Pakistan" for profitable business growth on 28 February (tomorrow). The workshop will be held at the Gujrat Chamber of Small Traders and Small Industry (GCSTSI), according to sources in the authority informed on Tuesday. The training program will provide information about e-commerce and how it works, conventional business Vs e-commerce business, introduction and background of digital marketing, digital media platform, and market segmentation and digital penetration. The workshop will also provide information about e-commerce business model insight, tools, research and SEO, integration an e-commerce store configuration, how does Daraz works, and opportunities with local e-commerce platform. The session would be attended by Members GCSTSI, entrepreneur/ small business owners, marketing professionals, freelancer/ independent sellers, and student/ professionals seeking careers opportunities.—APP

Senate
witnesses
presentation
of reports

ISLAMABAD: The Senate witnessed the presentation of 25 Standing Committee reports on Tuesday. The standing committees included the report of the Committee on a Bill further to amend the Constitution [The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2022], the report of the Committee on a Bill further to amend the Constitution [The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2022], the report of the Committee on a point of public importance raised by Senator Sardar Muhammad Shafiq Tareen regarding Circuit Benches of Balochistan High Court, the report of the Committee on a Bill further to amend the Constitution [The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2022], the present report of the Committee on a Bill further to amend the Constitution [The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2023], the report of the Committee on the subject matter of Starred Question No. 96, asked by Senator Gurdeep Singh, the report of the Committee on a Bill further to amend the Cutting of Trees (Prohibition) Act, 1992 [The Cutting of Trees (Prohibition) (Amendment) Bill, 2023], the report of the Committee on a Bill further to amend the Factories Act, 1934 [The Factories (Amendment) Bill, 2023], the report of the Committee on a Bill further to amend the Guardians and Wards Act, 1890.—APP



ISLAMABAD: A visitor takes keen interest in paintings during an exhibition organized by the Jordan embassy at the PNCA. —DNA

Pak culture & heritage attract
visitors at Shenzhen Gala

The Pakistani stall became a focal point, attracting thousands of Chinese locals, foreigners, and children eager to explore and learn about Pakistani culture

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Shenzhen University orchestrated a groundbreaking Spring Festival Lantern Market, marking the beginning of a new tradition that brought together citizens and academia in a delightful celebration. The event captivated attendees with a tapestry of Pakistani food, heritage, and cultures during the culture festival held on Saturday at Shenzhen University in Shenzhen. The event showcased a myriad of rich and colorful activities, drawing in students, faculty, staff, alumni, and thou-

sands of enthusiastic Shenzhen citizens. One of the highlights of this festival was the collaboration between the Pakistan Consulate in Guangzhou, Pakistani Students at Shenzhen University, and the Shenzhen University College of International Exchange. Together, they organized a stall that served as a cultural melting pot, representing Pakistan's diverse heritage alongside other nations. The Pakistani stall became a focal point, attracting thousands of Chinese locals, foreigners, and children eager to explore and learn about Pakistani culture. Visitors reveled in the opportunity to

don traditional handwoven jackets, caps, and shawls, immersing themselves in the vibrant colors and patterns that define Pakistani attire. The allure of intricately designed bangles captivated many, with visitors cherishing them as souvenirs from this unique cultural exchange. Particular attention was directed toward the handcrafted shoes, known as "khussas," which piqued the interest of the local populace. The handmade shoes not only offered a glimpse into Pakistani craftsmanship but also provided a tangible connection to the rich traditions of the South Asian na-

tion. The stall proudly displayed handwoven decorations and wall pieces from Pakistan, showcasing the country's artistic prowess. Visitors, both Chinese and from other nationalities, demonstrated a keen interest in these exquisite pieces, fostering an appreciation for the cultural intricacies of Pakistan. To enhance the educational aspect of the exchange, brochures containing valuable information about Pakistan were distributed, allowing visitors to delve deeper into the history, traditions, and customs of the country. This thoughtful initiative facilitated a deeper

understanding of Pakistan's rich cultural tapestry. Crucial to the success of this event was the unwavering support of the General Consulate of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Their generous assistance in providing the necessary materials and resources ensured the effective presentation of Pakistan's cultural heritage on the global stage. In summary, the all-day-long event proved to be a resounding success, epitomizing the spirit of cultural exchange and mutual understanding, Gwadar Pro reported on Tuesday.

CPEC new phase focuses on
industrial cooperation, agriculture

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and China have decided to start a new phase of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) with a lot of focus on industrial cooperation, agriculture, mining and energy. Last year marked the 10th anniversary of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, which is a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative. "Having drawn from the excellent progress that was made during the first 10 years of this corridor, both China and Pakistan have decided to start the new phase with a lot of focus on industrial cooperation and agriculture, as well as mining and energy, (with) a renewed focus on renewable energy," he told China Daily. Beyond that, in the second phase of CPEC, the two elements of high-quality development and the sustainable nature of the projects will get sharper focus, he said. "Going forward, we are very excited to start the next phase, building on the very good progress that has been made," Hashmi said.

"We have all the ingredients in place", including good-quality infrastructure, he said. "These are areas which we also find alignment with, so both Pakistan and China agreed to pursue the next phase along these lines," Hashmi said. Hailing China's global vision, he said the global visions proposed by China, including the Belt and Road Initiative and the concept of building a community with a shared future for mankind, underscore Beijing's goal of universal prosperity and sharing high-quality development with the rest of the world. They "demonstrate the notion of win-win that President Xi Jinping has emphasized for a long time", he added. Hashmi noted that at the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in October, Xi announced an eight-point agenda in relation to the Belt and Road Initiative and that the global community lauds the program as it advances "innovation in development, livelihoods, open economy, (and) compliance with internationally accepted standards when building new projects". Xi, in his keynote speech, listed eight major

steps that China will take to support the joint pursuit of high-quality Belt and Road cooperation, which include building a multidimensional Belt and Road connectivity network and supporting an open world economy. Hashmi believes the larger spirit in the concept of a community of shared future, especially in the new era, is highly significant. "As far as I can see, I think this is where China has done an excellent job in bringing forth to the developing world, its own experiences, and its own good practices," he said. China has its own experience in the past 30 to 40 years of lifting 800 million people out of poverty, developing first-class infrastructure, and producing some of the best goods with innovation and high quality, the diplomat noted. Hashmi said the Global Development Initiative, or GDI, is "yet another example of presenting a very solid vision of sustainable development for the world". What makes the GDI so special for him is its complete alignment with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

Mushaal urges world
to take notice if rape
by Indian troops

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Human Rights and Women Empowerment Mushaal Hussein Mullick has urged the world community and human rights organizations to take notice of the rising tendency of custodial rape and using rape as a weapon of war by Indian troops in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir. According to Kashmir Media Service, Mushaal, who is also the wife of illegally detained Hurriyat leader Yasin Malik, in a statement said that the brutal Indian forces had been using sexual abuse of women in IIOJK as a weapon of war for over last seven decades but the international community and world powers observed criminal silence in this regard. She pointed out that the dirty and ugly face of India was exposed by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), which revealed that India had recorded 275 cases of custodial rape between 2017 and 2022, adding that these incidents, documented across various states, involve perpetrators from law enforcement, armed forces and other custodial facilities, reflecting a misuse of power under the guise of state protection. The SAPM recalled that incidents such as the gang rape in Kunan Poshpora in 1991, the double murder and rape in Shopian and the gang rape of young Asifa Bano are among the most harrowing examples of the nightmare faced by women in Kashmir. She stated the NCRB showed that even Indian women were not saved from these mentally sick Indian forces, which indicated that they were not human beings rather they were beasts, who did not even know anything about humanity and women's rights.—DNA

President
for early
prevention of
diseases

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Tuesday said that adoption of preventive measures against various diseases was prerequisite to ward off treatment which was expensive in Pakistan and such habits would also help reduce burden on the health system. He expressed these views during a meeting with a delegation of Pakistan National Heart Association (PNAH) that called on him at Aiwan-e-Sadr to present a report on the activities and accomplishments of the organization, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release. The president stressed upon creating awareness among the masses about the significance of preventive measures against non-communicable diseases and heart diseases. He also underscored the need about the role of media, local population, mosques and non government organizations to create such awareness, besides utilization of different latest platforms to spread awareness messages. PNAH President Major General (ret'd) Masud Ur Rehman Kiani briefed the president about the role of the organization and public awareness campaigns including holding of walks, seminars, lectures and training sessions. He said that they were creating awareness among the people about healthy activities and lifestyle. President Alvi appreciated PNAH for its contributions in the health sector.—APP

Excise Deptt
sets up
counter at
Kachnar Park

ISLAMABAD: The Excise department is providing civic facilities to residents of federal capital to get their vehicle registration as well as access of various essential services at Kachnar Park here on Tuesday under ICT doorstep initiative. On the directives of Deputy Commissioner Islamabad, the excise staff would be stationed at the park's parking lot from 3.00 to 5.00 pm, and the citizens hailing from nearby areas of Kachnar Park can get civic facilities through a dedicated van, ICT Spokesman Dr Abdullah Tabassum said. He said that whether you need a fuel permit for domestic or commercial use, or looking to register your motor vehicle seamlessly, the on-ground service will ensure a swift and straightforward process. This initiative aims to streamline processes and provide ease to the public regarding vehicle registration, transfer, and token tax procedures, he added. In addition to the vehicle registration, transfer, and token tax services, the Facilitation Center Doorstep ICT Vehicle will also be offering the following services: Domicile certificate, Birth certificate, Power of attorney, International driving permit, Fuel permit (domestic/commercial), Motor vehicle registration.—APP

The first Algerian literary work in
the Urdu language in Pakistan

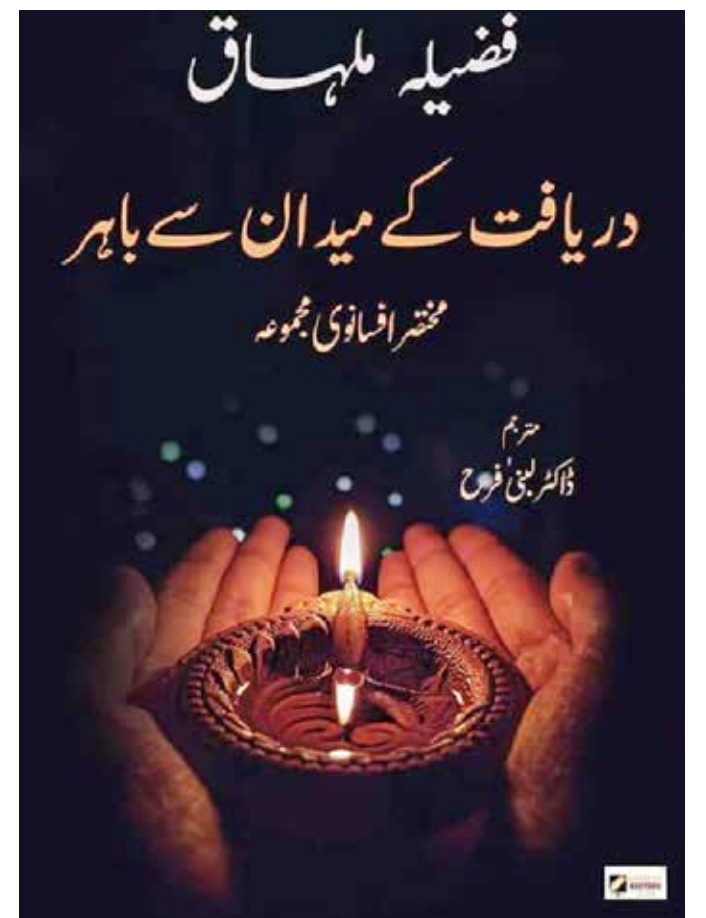
DR. FADILA MELHAG

The first literary work, an Algerian novel published in the Urdu language in Pakistan (When Life Desires You) by the great Algerian writer Dr. Fadila Melhag, is a historical precedent and a pioneering step in establishing a bridge of cultural communication between two great brotherly countries, Algeria in North Africa and Pakistan in South Asia, and the entire Indian subcontinent. The novel was published by the Karachi Editor's Club, in Urdu language, translated by Dr. Lubna Farah, Head of the Transla-

tion Department at the National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad (NUML), and in the English language by Professor Siham Hamouda from the Republic of Tunisia, after it was published in Arabic in Egypt in 2021 and French and Spanish in 2022. The Karachi Editor's Club also issued for the first time in Pakistan two collections of short stories from Algeria in Urdu language by Dr. Fadila Melhag (Outside the Field of Literacy) and (For display..Unpaintable) translated by Dr. Lubna Farah. -Fadila Melhag, a brilliant academic career and abundant diverse literary production: A distinguished literary talent, a brilliant academic researcher, excellent academic career, and a rich and diverse literary and scientific production. Melhag holds many certificates: a certificate from the Higher School of the Judiciary - Algeria, a doctorate in law - specializing in human rights and international humanitarian law, a certificate of professional competence as a lawyer, a diploma in postgraduate studies specializing in diplomacy, a European university certificate from France in the field of cyberspace, international certificates.

In training experts in the fields of international humanitarian law and cybercrime, and certificates in various fields, including foreign languages. Fadila Melhag published several literary works in Algeria, Lebanon, Egypt, and France: three novels, eight books of poetry, three short story collections, and several books on law: "Protecting human rights during armed conflicts - reality and stakes", "Protecting the Algerian banking system from money laundering." "International Negotiation and Crisis Management," "Problems of Criminalization and Punishment in the Statute of the International Criminal Court," "Restrictions on Follow-up and Investigation Before the International Criminal Court," "Obstacles to Implementing the Rules of International Protection of Human Rights." The novel "When Life Desires You", the experience of secret migration from the south to the north: The novel dealt with issues of clandestine immigration, through the experience of a long journey between the south and the north, from a miserable neighborhood in the cities of the southern bank of the Mediter-

anean. Young people migrated across the sea on a simple boat carrying big dreams. They found themselves in a strange world. They arrived in Europe, where they embarked on a journey that reveals the suffering of African and Asian people and the third world in general, due to the complexity of major interests in the West, who run the world from behind the curtain. The novel dealt with the problems of the four corners of the world, and in part it concerned the Indian subcontinent, through the character of the Bengali man (Talukder), who was exposed to plots planned in the Western world, was exploited, and changed the course of his quiet life into a painful and violent context. Suspense, excitement, and strangeness are distinctive features in Fadila Melhag's novel, in which realistic romance is accompanied in an attractive manner. It addresses the topic of clandestine immigration from a perspective that goes beyond the stereotype of a secret boat. It interrogates the intrigues of distant history and the aspirations of the geography of the present. It is a beautiful, exciting novel worthy of discovery, reading and study.



Playing with fire

THIS is just a glimpse of what occupation forces may endure in the long run. In the wake of "Israel's" unwarranted strikes in Southern Lebanon, Hezbollah launched a dozen operations against occupation forces, effectively concretizing the costs of undue Israeli aggression. The configuration of the response has been telling: two Burkan rockets were fired at Israel's "BirketRisha" military site while another identified a critical IOF coordination point as its target. The sheer scale and pace of Hezbollah's retaliation reflects its in-depth knowledge of "Israel's" weakest military and intelligence points, compelling some strategists to warn "Israel" that its escalation with Hezbollah is a one way ticket to Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD). Hezbollah's interests and Lebanon's sovereignty will undoubtedly play a major role in determining any credible balance of power that keeps stability within reach. But sustained Israeli crimes on Lebanon's soil will be met with a zero-compromise attitude, a continuation of years of hard-set resolve against oppression. The occupation will indeed be forced to pay for civilian deaths in full, as warned by the resistance chief well ahead of the devastating operations against "Israel". Given that the occupation army shows no signs of relenting its undue aggression, Hezbollah's responses are likely to be marked by high sophistication and deeper infiltration, including through strategic drones. IOF's lack of preparedness is evident in the criticism from Israeli media, which raised questions about the effectiveness of so-called interception systems that the IOF prematurely prides itself on. Hezbollah is known to pass through all of "Israel's" anti-air and detection mechanisms, putting the gravity of "Israel's" opposition into perspective. "Israel's" brutal airstrike killing six year-old Amal al-Dorr and 40-year-old Khadija Suleiman this week has pushed the murderous regime on the verge of even more formidable retaliation from Lebanon. It is time to end the illusion that "Israel" can bomb, strike and assault innocent civilians upon will, and justify a status-quo of bloodshed without any punishment in sight. "Israel's" greatest weakness in provoking the Lebanese resistance is the knowledge and tactical prowess of the latter, accumulated over decades. For instance, it is a hard fact that Hezbollah is capable of launching thousands of missiles into "Israel", pushing insecure occupation ranks to setup a so-called 'security belt' in the occupied North. But underneath that security façade is tacit recognition that "Israel" simply cannot afford a broader war or confrontation with Hezbollah. A closer look at statistics makes the contrast in military and strategic competence even more humiliating for "Israel". Consider the fact that between October 8 last year and February 15, 2024, Hezbollah conducted 1,038 operations against the Israeli occupation, underlining its ability to maintain unequivocal support and solidarity with the Palestinian resistance. "Israel's" Gaza genocide has shown the world that all meaningful forms of resistance are geared towards targeting Israeli oppression as a whole, and its push for settler-colonial control. Hezbollah's multiple operations on sensitive occupation sites demonstrate added power and motivation to counter Israeli belligerence and aggression against Lebanon's villages. In light of the tactical weaknesses exposed by Hezbollah's retaliatory strikes, a fundamental reality is clear: the more massacres "Israel" attempts, the greater its risk of capitulation at the hands of a battle-hardened and strategically cohesive Lebanese resistance.

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Internet, cybercrime, and politics

THE Internet or the WWW (World Wide Web) became massively widespread around the globe in the late 1980s or more precisely since 1989 – the same year when the Berlin Wall collapsed and, therefore, enabled the Cold War 1.0 to enter the final stage of its end. That is why both of these historical events mark the start of the Turbo-Globalization Era in all spheres from economy to culture, in addition to politics.[1] With the growing importance of the Internet, it is quite understandable that it is becoming an arena of political and ideological rivalry with necessary growing implications concerning national security issues.[2] The spread of mass media via the Internet followed by communications within the framework of cyberspace[3] enables more people, even in remote corners of the globe, to be informed (or misinformed) about world affairs, to form (or accept) opinions about certain events, and to be involved in politics in ways that some 35 years ago have been unimaginable. Today, even poor peasants in many parts of the world have access to the Internet which provides information and gives both government and anti-government groups a new way to struggle for their ideas, ideologies, and programs in order to indoctrinate the public. The Internet has already become the focal instrument of all in facilitating the exchange of different viewpoints, dissemination of information, fake news or propaganda, movement of electronic money, and finally the coordination of activities for the obvious reason that it is inexpensive and easily accessible. Bloggers with their weblogs are influencing the mass of people across the globe by transmitting both information and disinformation and opinion on the Internet.[4] After the end of Cold War 1.0, a new Cold War 2.0 started, in which the Great Powers started to adopt smart weapons to fight conventional wars, weapons that utilize new information and communication technologies like the Internet or cyberspace. A new type of warfare emerged – cyber warfare.[5] In terms of politics, the focal impact of the Internet can be summarized into four basic points: 1. The real technical possibility of the Internet is to increase and improve the transparency of the government by free access to online content, official documents, and all kinds of governmental reports and viewpoints on different issues and problems. 2. The ability of the Internet to increase the politically relevant set of information of both natures: factual and nonfactual. 3. It has the power to organize and speed up the coordination of different interest groups, extremist groups, and the so-called civil society beyond something that was known before as traditional political areas and barriers. 4. The creation of new forms of criminal activities known as cybercrime, cyber-terrorism, or cyber-security problems. In relation to the first point regarding the potential to increase transparency, governments, NGOs, and different institutions in global governance (such as the UN) have created several millions of web pages. These pages serve to provide political information in the form of official reports, viewpoints, comments, contact forms, and strategy rationalizations. Many governments established increasing targets for the maximum proportion of their communication with the citizens via the Internet.

Big challenges ahead for Maryam as CM

Waheed Hussain



Misuse of power and corruption has destroyed the country financially and economically. Will she control the corruption when her opponent PTI constantly accused her family for the same? PTI total politics was on the corruption narrative against the Sharifs and Zardari, but failed to prove anything in the court. People in our country do not see the facts, they do not want to find truth, mostly, in the digital media world, they blindly run after the social media trends and narratives. Its better Maryam instead of being countering the opponent's narratives on the social media, she should focus on the good governance, public welfare and socio-economic...

MARYAM Nawaz a first female, who has been elected as the Chief Minister of country's biggest province, Punjab. She is energetic, enthusiastic, passionate about politics and surely understanding the responsibility of the post. In her recent statements she promised to bring a drastic change in the functioning of different government departments in the province. She has already issued directives to repair and construct streets and roads of various cities in Punjab. Talking to newly elected members of the Punjab Assembly, Maryam stressed to bring a digital revolution providing numerous civic and other facilities to the people at their doorstep. Planning to provide loans to the educated unemployed youth to start their own business and earn respectable livelihood. Making the province an economic hub. She said that her government will remove bureaucratic hurdles and red-tapism. Maryam has plan to establish additional Danish Schools in the province. A project started by her uncle Shahbaz. Reforms in health and education is must for improving the rotten social sector. Her table is filled with the new ideas and plans let us see how she would succeed in her endeavors. It is true that she does not have any past experience of directly dealing with the bureaucracy and civil administration. However, she has been observing and looking at the government functions both at the center and at province when her father and uncle served as chief executives of the country as well as of the province. Since 2013, Maryam Nawaz was indirectly involved in the policy and decision making at Islamabad and Lahore, as her father former prime minister Nawaz Sharif and uncle former PM and CM Punjab Shahbaz Sharif were holding power. One must not forget that she grew up in a family where the power politics was at its best. She was just 10 or 12 years of age when her father joined the Punjab cabinet in 1982. She has been closely observing the ups and downs of her father's political career. Apart from the family political training and envi-

ronment, she learned much during her time in the prison. She along with her father was convicted in the controversial corruption cases, from which both Maryam and Nawaz have been exonerated by the higher judiciary, because, National Accountability Bureau, which has filed the cases in consequence to the Panama papers scandal's decision of the supreme court of Pakistan has failed to provide substantial evidence to the courts. Finally, both father and the daughter got a clean cheat from the judiciary. Was it a political vendetta or victimization? Maryam faced a very tough time during Pakistan Tehreek Insaaf's government. On the one hand she was facing the courts' proceedings, while on the other hand she kept on addressing public meetings and rallies in her father's absence. Her presence in the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) provided a chance to her to interact with the various political personalities across Pakistan. No doubt, Maryam is new to the post of Chief Minister, yet, not new to the politics, bureaucracy, administration and establishment. On the governance side she must improve the "thana culture" as Punjab police has a bad reputation protecting the criminals and powerful in the province. Will she do that? Punjab Bureaucracy is very powerful. It needs tough CM to handle. Will she do that? Misuse of power and corruption has destroyed the country financially and economically. Will she control the corruption when her opponent PTI constantly accused her family for the same? PTI total politics was on the corruption narrative against the Sharifs and Zardari, but failed to prove anything in the court. People in our country do not see the facts, they do not want to find truth, mostly, in the digital media world, they blindly run after the social media trends and narratives. Its better Maryam instead of being countering the opponent's narratives on the social media, she should focus on the good governance, public welfare and socio-economic development of the province.

she must do her best to provide relief to the masses across the political divide, even they voted for other parties. She is not the chief minister of the PML (N) only but of the entire province. Ruling the masses is a commitment and promise both to the public as well as to the Allah Almighty, and rulers are answerable to the people and one day to the Allah too. Along with her other plans of development, Maryam Nawaz should focus on agriculture, industry, IT, health and education. Instead of issuing health cards, the funds should be invested in the existing government hospitals upgrading their emergencies, operation theaters, laboratories and infrastructure. Doctors and senior consultants who are serving in the government sector should ensure their presence in the hospitals for the needy and poor majority. Maryam Nawaz and her family were not treated well by PTI government; however, she should not indulge in the politics of revenge and enmity. She should provide the opposition an opportunity to express themselves in free and fair manner both in and outside the assembly. Filing FIRs or lodging cases against the opposition members only to shup their mouths will spoil her plans. Tolerance will help her to perform will and get ready for the next political and electoral match at the national level. She must demonstrate maturity and wisdom; both are achieved through a process and experience. The good part is that her father will guide her and her uncle will provide her both human and financial resources for the province. Chief Minister-ship is a challenge as well as an opportunity for the lady, it depends on her how she plays her innings. Finally, the honorable CM must tolerate the media criticism on decisions and policies, because in the past most of the politicians started fighting— victimizing the journalists and media organization resulting into their own down fall. In the democratic societies there is always a space for the media and opposition. We need to change the political culture.

Governance quagmire

PAKISTAN, a nation rich in history, culture, and potential, continues to grapple with a myriad of governance challenges that impede its progress and development. These challenges stem from a complex interplay of historical, political, social, and economic factors, creating a tangled web that undermines effective governance and hampers the realization of the country's full potential. Political instability stands as a persistent barrier to effective governance in Pakistan. With a history marked by frequent changes in government, including military coups and civilian unrest, the country struggles to establish continuity and stability in its leadership. This instability breeds uncertainty, impedes long-term planning, and erodes public trust in the government's ability to address pressing issues. Corruption, a pervasive challenge, infects all levels of Pakistani society and government. From petty bribery to high-level embezzlement, corruption undermines the rule of law, distorts public policies, and diverts resources away from essential services and development projects. The prevalence of corruption erodes public trust in institutions, exacerbating governance challenges and perpetuating a cycle of malfeasance. Weak institutions further compound Pakistan's governance woes. The judiciary, bureaucracy, and law enforcement agencies struggle with inefficiency, politicization, and a lack of autonomy. This undermines their ability to deliver impartial justice, enforce laws effectively, and provide essential services to citizens. Without robust institutions to uphold the rule of law and ensure accountability, governance in Pakistan remains

vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. Security concerns, including terrorism and insurgency, pose significant challenges to governance and stability in Pakistan. Persistent threats from extremist groups disrupt daily life, undermine economic activities, and divert resources that could otherwise be allocated to development initiatives. The government's efforts to combat terrorism and maintain security often come at the expense of addressing other pressing governance issues, perpetuating a cycle of instability and underdevelopment. Economic instability compounds Pakistan's governance challenges, exacerbating issues such as high inflation, unemployment, and poverty. Weak fiscal management, a narrow tax base, and a growing debt burden constrain the government's ability to invest in infrastructure, education, and healthcare. The resulting socioeconomic disparities further strain governance systems and deepen public discontent. Social issues, including poverty, illiteracy, and gender inequality, persist due to systemic failures in governance and policy implementation. Despite efforts to improve social services and promote inclusive development, millions of Pakistanis continue to face barriers to accessing education, healthcare, and economic opportunities. These inequalities fuel social unrest and erode public confidence in the government's ability to address the needs of its citizens. Ethnic and regional tensions exacerbate governance challenges in Pakistan, with disparities in development and resource allocation contributing to grievances and mistrust among different

communities. Political patronage and nepotism further exacerbate these divisions, as powerful elites exploit their connections to secure positions of influence and perpetuate inequality. Despite efforts to decentralize power through local government reforms, the implementation has been uneven, limiting the capacity of local authorities to address the needs of their communities effectively. Foreign policy priorities also influence domestic governance dynamics, often diverting attention and resources away from pressing domestic issues. Addressing these above mentioned governance challenges require a multifaceted approach that addresses the root causes of instability, corruption, and inequality. Sustained efforts are needed to strengthen institutions, improve transparency and accountability, and promote the rule of law. Tackling corruption and promoting meritocracy are essential to rebuilding public trust in government institutions. Moreover, addressing socioeconomic disparities, investing in education and healthcare, and promoting inclusive development are crucial for building a more equitable and prosperous society. Decentralization efforts must be reinforced to empower local governments and ensure that decision-making is responsive to the needs of communities across the country. Political will, consensus-building among stakeholders, and long-term planning are essential for achieving sustainable progress in governance reform. Only through concerted efforts to address these governance challenges can Pakistan unlock its full potential and chart a path towards a brighter and more prosperous future for all its citizens.

Zahra Ali



Economic instability compounds Pakistan's governance challenges, exacerbating issues such as high inflation, unemployment, and poverty. Weak fiscal management, a narrow tax base, and a growing debt burden constrain the government's ability to invest in infrastructure, education, and healthcare

Briefs

Biden eyes Gaza...

FROM PAGE 01
Rafah in the far south of the Gaza Strip, which he said was necessary to achieve "total victory" over Hamas. There has been huge international pressure, including from the United States, for Israel to hold off on sending troops into Rafah, where an estimated 1.4 million Palestinian civilians have sought refuge from the fighting. Netanyahu's office said on Monday that the military had shown the war cabinet its plan for evacuating civilians from Rafah, but no details have been released on where those displaced people might go. UN chief Antonio Guterres warned that any assault on Rafah, the entry point to Gaza for desperately needed relief supplies, would "put the final nail in the coffin" of aid operations.

Qatar says no...

FROM PAGE 01
community to allow access to aid supplies into the Palestinian enclave. Meanwhile, Jordan's King Abdullah has said that humanitarian aid to Gaza must be doubled to prevent a deterioration in a hunger crisis affecting over two million people. The monarch was quoted by state media as telling visiting USAID chief Samantha Power that the international community had to put more pressure on Israel to ease restrictions on the flow of food into the territory. Jordan is urging its Western allies to lobby Israel to boost the quantities of aid coming from the kingdom via Kerem Shalom on the border of Egypt, Israel and Gaza, beyond the existing Rafah crossing, officials say.

President to face dual...

FROM PAGE 01
Alvi believed that the NA was incomplete sans the allocation of all the reserved seats to the political parties. While the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has allocated reserved seats to political parties, it has not awarded reserved quota to the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) after the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)-backed independent candidates joined the party. The ECP, however, said that the matter of SIC reserved seats is "pending before the commission" and will be heard by the electoral body tomorrow after today's adjournment.

Imran hails Alvi's...

FROM PAGE 01
When asked about the letter to the IMF, Imran said he could not write anything and dispatch from jail, hence, he had dictated the letter written to the international financial body. "The letter will be sent after today's meeting," said Imran. He elaborated that the purpose of the letter is to inform the IMF that the country can not achieve economic stability with political stability. "The whole nation says the elections were rigged, a party which secured only 20 seats will have their prime minister. The entire nation stood against the mafia on February 8. The chief election commissioner must resign as he did not provide PTI with a level playing field.

No compromise...

FROM PAGE 01
she would neither violate merit nor allow anyone to do so and promised a complete absence of political appointments. Maryam also listed accountability, transparency, quality work and meeting the deadlines as redlines, saying she had great respect for those who deliver. Directing to solve the people's problems on an urgent basis and removing the very factors resulting in their existence, Maryam highlighted the importance of and need for swift structural reforms. Encouraging the bureaucracy to deliver, she said civil servants were part of her team and those performing their duties would be fully supported. Productive suggestions designed to achieve the goal of serving the masses would be welcomed, Maryam added.



ISLAMABAD: Spanish Ambassador to Pakistan Jose Antonio de Ory posing for a group photograph along with artists during different artists painting exhibition title "Chaharbagh" at a local hotel in the Federal Capital. - ONLINE

Mateen wins Nayza National Armwrestling Season 2

Mateen Asif displayed outstanding armwrestling prowess and outsmarted his opponent Haroon Khokar, who finished as runner-up

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: International player Mateen Asif emerged as the title winner in the Nayza National Armwrestling Championship Season 2. In the senior -80kg category, Mateen Asif displayed outstanding armwrestling prowess and outsmarted his opponent Haroon Khokar, who finished as runner-up. Mukram Asif managed to grab the third position in the same category. In the youth division for the -85kg weight class, Abdul Aziz, esteemed president of Major Armwrestling, emerged victorious, with Hamad Butt and Hamza Butt finishing in second and third places, respectively. The heavyweight +85kg category saw Shazil Ali taking the top spot, followed by Has-



san Butt and Muzammil Khawar. Additionally, Shahbaz Baig, Mudassir Jutt, and Haider King claimed the first, second, and third positions in the -75kg category, respectively.

The -60kg category was dominated by Huzaifa Shah, with Sajjad Shah and Mian Ahmed completing the podium. Nauman Malik, the organizer of the tournament, praised the event's ability to attract national and international talent. "The remarkable participation from both national and international competitors has truly enhanced the stature of this championship." He expressed optimism about the future of armwrestling in Pakistan, envisioning the nation's athletes achieving international acclaim. The Nayza National Armwrestling Championship 2024 Season 2 saw a staggering participation of 500 competitors from across Pakistan, competing in six major categories, including many national and international players.

Ronaldo suspended for Saudi league gesture

This isn't the first instance where Ronaldo has found himself embroiled in controversy due to inappropriate behavior

SPORTS DESK

LONDON: In an incident during a Saudi League match between Al Nassr and Al Shabab, Cristiano Ronaldo, the renowned Portuguese footballer, has stirred controversy by making provocative gestures towards the crowd. Ronaldo's actions have led to a two-match suspension imposed by the Saudi Arabia Football Federation. The incident unfolded on Sunday when Ronaldo, amidst a charged atmosphere, contributed significantly to Al Nassr's victory over Al Shabab by securing a crucial goal through a penalty kick. However, the euphoria of the win was overshadowed by the emergence of viral videos showing Ronaldo engaging in heated exchanges with the spectators, accompanied by what sources describe as "obscene gestures." According to reports from Saudi media, Ronaldo's actions were met with swift condemnation from authorities, resulting in a two-match suspension along with an undisclosed fine. Consequently, the prolific footballer will be sidelined for Al Nassr's upcoming league

fixture against Al-Hazm and potentially could miss the crucial AFC Champions League quarter-final encounter. This isn't the first instance where Ronaldo has found himself embroiled in controversy due to inappropriate behavior. Despite the widespread attention garnered by the incident, Ronaldo has chosen to remain tight-lipped, opting not to address the issue directly. However, he did take to social media, cryptically posting "Until the very end! We keep going - no stopping!" on his profile. Ronaldo's tenure with Al Nassr, which commenced in 2022 following a monumental transfer from Manchester United, has been characterized by immense anticipation and scrutiny. The deal, reportedly valued at up to \$200 million annually, solidified Ronaldo's status as one of the highest-paid athletes in the world. As the footballing community awaits further developments, the focus remains on Ronaldo's conduct both on and off the field, with fans and pundits alike questioning the impact of his actions on his illustrious career and the broader dynamics of the sport.

NZ Wagner retires from int'l cricket

WEB DESK

AUCKLAND: New Zealand pacer Neil Wagner was in tears as he brought the curtain down on his 64-Test career. Wagner bowed out as New Zealand's fifth highest Test wicket-taker with 260 scalps. Wagner was named in the squad for the two-Test series against Australia starting in Wellington on Thursday but was told by selectors he would not be included in either the opener or the second match in Christchurch. "It's been an emotional week," the South Africa-born 37-year-old said on Tuesday. "It's not easy to step away from something you've given so much to and got so much out of, but it's now time for others to step up and take this team forward." Leftarmer Wagner, a fiery swing bowler and fan favourite, played a key role in New Zealand's rise to the world number one ranking and inaugural World Test Championship win in 2021.

Medvedev: AO final loss 'easy' to get over

DUBAI: Daniil Medvedev said on Monday it was "easy" getting over his Australian Open final defeat by Jannik Sinner, unlike his reaction to his loss to Rafael Nadal at the same stage two years ago. Medvedev blew a two-set lead in both the 2022 and 2024 Australian Open finals, but while he is "still disappointed" about the result against Nadal, he feels good about his performance against Sinner last month. "To be honest, 'get over' was quite easy. As I said after the match, I felt like it would be easy because I played a great tournament, I played a good final," Medvedev told reporters in Dubai. The Russian world number four will be contesting his first tournament since the Australian Open this week in Dubai, where he is the defending champion. Medvedev skipped his title defence in Doha last week because he was dealing with a number of physical issues - with his foot, adductor, and shoulder - but feels ready to get back on court after spending the last seven days training in Dubai. Medvedev, who opens his campaign against Alexander Shevchenko on Tuesday, has added French former world number six Gilles Simon to his team, to collaborate with his long-time coach Gilles Cervara. "I thought about Gilles Simon for many different reasons. He knows tennis well. You can see it. He was able to beat me and make me feel not good on the court," said Medvedev, who lost three of his four meetings with Simon before the Frenchman retired. "Together the two Gilles could discuss what was he doing to make me in trouble, and what can we do in practice to work on it. So far I really like it. We share a little bit the same mentality. We're easy-going." This time last year, Medvedev was in the process of putting together an impressive 19-match winning streak, which included three consecutive title triumphs in Rotterdam, Doha, and Dubai, and a runner-up showing in Indian Wells. An early exit at the 2023 Australian Open and a one-week dip outside the top 10 provided the fuel for that impressive run 12 months ago and he admits he feels "definitely different" arriving in Dubai this time around. - Agencies

Hafeez slams Imad over subpar performances

Hafeez raised doubts about Imad's impact, as he scored only 1 run and was unsuccessful in taking any wickets in the match. This has led to concerns about Imad's overall contribution to the team's performance.

SPORTS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Former Pakistan captain Mohammad Hafeez is confused regarding the role of all-rounder Imad Wasim after a tightly contested match between Islamabad United and Peshawar Zalmi in the ongoing Pakistan Super League (PSL) season nine. The 35-year-old is playing for Islamabad for the first time after playing for eight seasons at Karachi Kings. During an interview on a local sports channel, Hafeez raised doubts about Imad's impact, as he scored only 1 run and was unsuccessful in taking any wickets in the match. This has led to concerns about Imad's overall contribution to the team's performance. "I don't un-

derstand Imad's impact at all. As a bowler, and as a batter, he is nowhere in the PSL. There are higher expectations from Imad," Hafeez said. On the other hand, Hafeez also emphasised the diminishing impact of Faheem Ashraf in the recent PSL seasons. Similar to Imad, Faheem struggled to leave a mark in the match, managing only one run and failing to take any wickets. "Faheem's impact seems to have decreased over the past few PSL seasons. The total out-of-form performance of Faheem and Imad is dragging Islamabad United down from a bowling point of view," he further added. It must be noted that Babar Azam's 11th T20 century and Arif Yaqoob's fifer helped Peshawar Zalmi



beat Islamabad United by eight runs in the 13th match. After posting a 202-run target, Peshawar restricted Islamabad to 193/9. Despite a promising partnership between Col-in Munro and Azam Khan, leading Islamabad towards victory, Yaqoob's exceptional four-wicket over during the 19th over shifted the momentum in favour of Peshawar. This event

marks a historic moment in the PSL, with Yaqoob becoming the first bowler to claim four wickets in a single over, concluding with figures of 5/27. Islamabad faced early setbacks in their run chase, losing Jordan Cox (13) in the fifth over when only 32 runs were on the scoreboard. The departure of Shadab Khan (6) and Salman Ali Agha (14) in quick

succession added to the pressure, leaving Islamabad at 73/3 in 9.3 overs. Azam Khan's entrance transformed the game, forging a remarkable 108-run partnership with Munro. He scored a stunning 75 off 30 deliveries, including six boundaries and as many sixes. However, his departure in the 18th over triggered a collapse in the lower order. Munro, who contributed 71 runs in 53 balls, fell on the next delivery. Spinner Arif Yaqoob further dented Islamabad's hopes by taking three more wickets in the penultimate over, achieving a five-wicket haul - the first in PSL 9. Despite Naseem Shah's late six in the final over, Islamabad fell short by 19 runs. Apart from

Yaqoob, Salman Irshad, Naveen, Luke Wood, and Saim Ayub each secured one wicket. Opting to bat first, Peshawar's openers Saim Ayub and Babar laid a strong foundation with a 73-run partnership. Ayub's brisk 38 off 21 balls set the tone, but quick dismissals in the middle overs left Peshawar at 80/3 in 8.4 overs. Babar Azam then staged a comeback, orchestrating a ruthless counterattack. His explosive 18th over, featuring four boundaries and a six, turned the tide. Azam's unbeaten 111 off 63 balls, supported by Asif Ali's brisk 17, propelled Peshawar to 202. Shadab led United's bowling with figures of 2/28, while Naseem Shah and Salman Ali Agha claimed one wicket each.

Imran, Bushra indicted...

FROM PAGE 01
Adiala jail today where the PTI founder is currently incarcerated in Toshakhana, cipher and illegal marriage cases. The accountability court judge read the charge sheet in Khan and Bushra's presence in the courtroom. National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Deputy Prosecutor Sardar Muzaffar Abbasi, along with his team, also appeared in the court. The NAB had initiated an investigation against Imran Khan, his wife, and others regarding the alleged acquisition of hundreds of canals of land under the name of Al Qadir University Trust, resulting in a reported loss of 190 million pounds to the exchequer. During the hearing today, the court said that statements of 58 witnesses will be recorded in the case. The judge asked the PTI founder if he was guilty or not while framing charges against him.

CEC merges SIC pleas...

FROM PAGE 01
Moreover, CEC Raja also issued notices to Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, SIC, Mahmood Khan, Maulvi Iqbal Haider and Kunz-us-Saadat. The development came after it emerged that President Alvi had reportedly refused to sign a Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs summary seeking the convening of a National Assembly session. President Alvi maintained that the remaining reserved seats should be allocated before summoning the NA session which was supposed to be held within 21 days of the elections under the Constitution. At the outset of the hearing, Barrister Zafar said that the PTI founder approached the ECP to claim the reserved seats and if the political parties wanted to take the seats then they should openly say so.

Presidential polls...

FROM PAGE 01
the first session of all assemblies under constitutional bindings. The top electoral authority, which is yet to decide on the matter related to the reserved seats belonging to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) backed candidates after the party's merger into the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), started preparations for the presidential polls. "A public notice will be issued alongside the schedule for the presidential polls on March 1st," read a declaration issued on Tuesday which further stated: "Nomination papers for the aforementioned event would be accepted by March 2, 12 noon."

SP martyred, 2 key...

FROM PAGE 01
The injured officials, including DSP Naseem Khan, police officials Mansoor and Saleem were rushed to the hospital in police vans. During the operation police forces retaliated against the terrorists, resulting in the neutralization of two wanted militants. The CTD spokesman disclosed that the operation was intelligence-driven, targeting terrorists in the Katlang area of Mardan. Among the notable successes of the operation was the elimination of the notorious terrorist Mohsin Qadir, causing a significant blow to the terrorist networks operating in the region.

Woman wasn't...

FROM PAGE 01
when she was not at fault in the situation, particularly after it was pointed out by social media users. On February 25, the woman was saved by the law enforcers just a few minutes after being encircled and harassed by an angry crowd that wanted to punish her for allegedly wearing a dress that they thought was blasphemous as it adorned "holy verses" as the print. Upon receiving information about the incident, the Punjab Police - led by ASP Shehrbano, arrived at the scene to take the woman into their custody, saving her from the charged crowd. The cop said she was not on social media and had no idea that the video had gone viral because this was not the first time she was dealing with a case of such a nature.

Briefs

Brazil's Lula
spotlights
global
South in G20
Presidency

BRASILIA : Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva has set his sights on giving the Global South a larger voice in world decision-making, using his country's presidency this year of the G20 group of largest economies. Lula's call for reform of global governance and the updating of the eight-decades-old United Nations system was amplified at last week's meeting of G20 foreign ministers in Rio de Janeiro. The push continues this week as G20 finance ministers meet in Sao Paulo. However, diplomats said it would be an uphill battle to expand the U.N. Security Council, where countries with veto powers may pay lip service to the idea but have long delayed discussions that would dilute their status.

Lula, a leftist and well-established voice for the developing world, has set reducing hunger and poverty and curbing climate change as priorities under Brazil's G20 presidency. He also wants better representation of the Global South in the multilateral system, including financial institutions set up after World War Two: the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. "There are those who question the concept of the Global South, saying that we are too diverse to fit together. But there are many more interests that unite us than differences that separate us," Lula said at a conference in November.—DNA

2 people
shot dead
as Guinea
protest turns
bloody

CONAKRY : Two youths were shot dead Monday in Conakry as Guinea's capital was paralysed on the first day of an open-ended general strike against the military government that seized power in 2021 stands accused of stifling dissent. A confederation of the main unions has urged public and private sectors to strike for the release of a prominent media activist, lower food prices, and an end to media censorship. Schools, shops, markets, and roads were empty early Monday in Conakry and hospitals only offered skeletal services as youths set up barricades on arterial thoroughfares. Sporadic clashes broke out in some outskirts and two young men were shot dead. "They killed our son, they targeted him and shot him in the neck," Adama Keita, a relative of an 18-year-old who was caught up in clashes with security forces, told the AFP news agency. This was confirmed by a witness and a police source, speaking on condition of anonymity. "I saw the motionless body of this teenager, I had tears in my eyes, and I immediately left the scene so as not to be associated with this type of crime," the police source told reporters.—APP

Swift's father
accused of
assaulting
photographer

LONDON : Australian police are investigating an allegation by a paparazzo that he was assaulted by Taylor Swift's father. Ben McDonald, 51, accused Scott Swift, 71, of striking his face on a Sydney wharf. He did not need medical help. The confrontation happened on Tuesday after Mr Swift and the pop megastar disembarked from a yacht. A spokesperson for the singer did not address the assault claim but said two people had behaved aggressively towards them. A video published by Australian media shows the singer, who is concealed beneath an umbrella, walking with her father and security guards along Neutral Bay Wharf about 02:30 local time (15:30 GMT Monday). Cameras flash before two voices - reported to be a photographer and a guard - accuse each other of touching umbrellas. It is unclear whether the footage captures the alleged incident.—Agencies

Alliance has no plans to send troops to Ukraine: Stoltenberg

Stoltenberg said that "NATO allies are providing unprecedented support to Ukraine"

NEWS DESK

BRUSSELS: NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said that the military alliance has no plans to send combat troops into Ukraine amid reports that some Western countries may be considering putting boots on the ground in the war-ravaged country. Stoltenberg said that "NATO allies are providing unprecedented support to Ukraine. We have done that since 2014 and stepped up after the full-scale invasion. But there are no plans for NATO combat troops on the ground in Ukraine." Ahead of a trip to Paris on Monday, where top officials from over 20 countries discussed options to increase help for Ukraine, Slovakia's Prime Minister Robert Fico said that some are weighing whether to strike bilateral deals to send troops to Ukraine to help it fend off the Russian invasion. Fico said that his government is not planning to propose to send Slovak soldiers, but did not provide details about what countries might be considering such deals, or what the troops would do in Ukraine. Parliament speaker Peter Pellegrini also said that Slovakia won't deploy troops there. Czech Prime Minister Petr

Fiala also declined to comment, but he underlined that "the Czech Republic certainly doesn't want to send its soldiers to Ukraine." Prime Minister Donald Tusk also said on Tuesday that "Poland does not plan to send its troops to Ukraine." While ruling out NATO military action, Stoltenberg said "that this is a war of aggression by Russia against Ukraine, blatantly violating international law. According to international law, Ukraine of course has the right to self-defense, and we have the right to support them in upholding that right." NATO as an alliance provides Ukraine only non-lethal aid and support like medical supplies, uniforms and winter equipment, but some members send weapons and ammunition bilaterally or in groups. Any decision for the organization to send troops would require unanimous support from all member countries. The idea of putting boots on the ground has so far been taboo, particularly as NATO seeks to avoid being dragged into a wider war with nuclear-armed Russia. However, Ukraine's backers have gradually provided more hi-tech and long-range weapons since Russia invaded two years ago. French President Emmanuel Macron said Monday that sending

Western troops on the ground in Ukraine should not be "ruled out" in the future, as Russia's full-scale invasion grinds into a third year. "We will do everything needed so Russia cannot win the war," the French leader said after hosting the gathering in Paris. While he underlined that "there's no consensus today" to send a combined force, he also said that "nothing can be ruled out." The conference was held just after France, Germany and the UK each signed 10-year bilateral security agreements with Ukraine in a signal of long-term backing as Kyiv works to shore up Western support. European nations are worried that the US will dial back support, as aid for Kyiv is held up in Congress. They also have concerns that former President Donald Trump might return to the White House and change the course of US policy on the continent. Several European countries, including France, expressed support Monday for an initiative launched by the Czech Republic to buy shells for Ukraine outside the European Union, participants at the meeting said. Macron said that a new coalition will be launched to deliver medium and long-range missiles. France announced last month the delivery of 40 addition-

Russophile movement
counters western isolation

Moscow : Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday said the International Russophile Movement contributes significantly to counter Western efforts to isolate Moscow. "The Russophile movement makes a significant contribution to counteracting the attempts of the collective West to achieve international isolation of Russia, helps to disseminate objective and reliable information about our country abroad, and expose anti-Russian fabrications and propaganda myths," Putin said in an address published by the Kremlin, which was also read by Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov at the initiative's second congress in Moscow. Sharing that the event brought together hundreds of delegates from more than 130 countries, Putin said the variety of participants shows the movement's development and growth. "Your noble activities contribute to the preservation and strengthening of the good traditions of friendship and mutual respect that bind Russians with other nations, the unity of the Russian world, the popularization of the achievements of our national culture and the expansion of our humanitarian presence on the world stage," he added. For his part, Lavrov said attempts by Western countries to ban cooperation with Russia do not stop anyone, and the policy of isolating Moscow has suffered a "complete collapse." "The wider world community is sincerely interested in unbiased, comprehensive, honest assessments of the causes of the current geopolitical tension, and does not accept the streams of disinformation and lies that are churned out by the mass media controlled by the collective West, at least the vast majority of them," he said. He said Russia has many friends everywhere, including in the US and Europe, adding.—Agencies

al long-range scalp cruise missiles. In an interview last week, Stoltenberg did not oppose the idea that Ukraine be allowed to use Western weapons to strike

targets in Russia. Some countries have placed restrictions on the use of materiel they provide, asking that it be used only inside Ukraine.



ISLAMABAD : Ambassador of Turkmenistan Atadjan Movlamov called on Interim Federal Minister for Energy Muhammad Ali.—DNA

Canada drafts law
to remove harmful
online content

OTTAWA: Canada has unveiled draft legislation that would force tech platforms to quickly remove online content deemed harmful, including material that sexualises children and foments hate. The Online Harms Act, introduced by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's Liberal government on Monday, would make tech companies responsible for tackling seven categories of harmful content and increase criminal penalties for spreading hate online. Under the legislation, Canadians would be able to request the removal of content within 24 hours, subject to a review process, and file complaints against people spreading hateful speech at a human rights tribunal. The seven categories of harm defined in the bill are intimate content communicated without consent; content that foments hatred; content that incites violent extremism or terrorism; content that incites violence; content used to bully a child; and content that induces a child to harm themselves. The legislation would establish a new digital safety commission to enforce the standards, which also include requiring platforms to introduce features to protect children such as parental controls and safe search settings. Trudeau said the legislation would hold tech companies accountable for harmful content they host and make online spaces safer. "For too long, web giants have failed to keep kids safe online," he said.—DNA

Plastic pellets blight
Belgian town as EU
weighs action

ECAUSSINNESD'ENGLISHEN : Buried in the soil, dotting riverbanks and bobbing along streams: a small Belgian town has waged a years-long fight against creeping pollution from plastic pellets - which the EU now has in its sights. A spectacular spill of microplastics on Spain's Galician coast cast a spotlight on the problem late last year, after a container filled with "nurdles" fell from a cargo ship and its contents washed ashore. The images of locals sifting through the sand to weed out the tiny polluting pellets felt all too familiar in Ecaussinnes. The small countryside town is home to Belgium's second largest petrochemical complex, and microplastic pollution has been a problem here for decades. "We find them around industrial sites, in the waterways as far as eight kilometres (five miles) downstream," explained Arnaud Guerard, a local government official in charge of environmental matters. "They burrow into riverbanks, and depending on rainfall they end up on agricultural land." About the size of a lentil and made from fossil fuels, nurdles - or pre-production plastic pellets - are a little-known building block used to manufacture nearly all plastic products.—Agencies

Indonesia calls for end to
military supports to Israel

JAKARTA: Indonesia, the current president of the UN Conference on Disarmament, has called for an end to military support and weapons sales to Israel. The Conference on Disarmament, consisting of 65 member states including permanent members of the UN Security Council, was established in 1979 and is the world's only multilateral forum for disarmament negotiations. Indonesia holds the rotating presidency for a four-week term until March 15 and is leading the high-level segment of the conference in Geneva this week. During the ministerial-level meeting, Indonesia's Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi called for a stop to arms shipments to Israel. "At the end of my statement, I conveyed condemnation of Israel's plan to use nuclear weapons to threaten the residents of Gaza. I also urged a stop to weapons shipment to Israel to prevent more fatalities," Marsudi said in a video briefing on Tuesday. She also attended a side event on Palestine during her time in Geneva, where she highlighted Israel's human rights violations in Gaza and the fight against double standards within the international community. "With the current situation in Gaza and Palestine, I asked if we will remain silent. Ideally, the answer should be no... In closing, I conveyed how we need to remain united, we must continue to work together to fight against the injustice that has gone on for so long against the nation of Palestine." Nearly 30,000 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza since October, with about 1.9 million people displaced in the besieged enclave where intense Israeli bombardment from air, land and sea have continued for the last four months. UN experts called on Feb. 23 for an immediate end to arms exports to Israel, saying that "given the facts or past patterns of behavior," any weapons or ammunition transferred there would be used to violate international law. "Such transfers are prohibited even if the exporting State does not intend the arms to be used in violation of the law - or does not know with certainty that they would be used in such a way - as long as there is a clear risk," the UN experts said. "The need for an arms embargo on Israel is heightened by the International Court of Justice's ruling on 26 January 2024 that there is a plausible risk of genocide in Gaza and the continuing serious harm to civilians since then," the experts said. "All States must not be complicit in international crimes through arms transfers. They must do their part to urgently end the unrelenting humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza.—DNA

Jose Luis Piexoto terms his visit to Pakistan as an eye opener

AB KHAN

Salt and Pepper hairdo, pierced ears and eyebrows, leaned body and honey dew tone and tenor may confuse oneself for a heavy rock band star ready to hit the notes. However, the gentleman sitting comfortably on a sofa is in fact, Jose Luis Piexoto, the Portuguese most acclaimed and best-selling novelist, a literature Wizard when introduced. His resume is more than impressive. The list of his accomplishments in fiction, non-fiction, poetry and children's literature far surpasses many of his peers and even contemporaries. Recipient of Jose Saramago Literary award, Libro d'Europa and Oceanos prize, his journey in the world of literature started at a very young age. "I was in my teens when I started writing poetry and that was my very first experience. However, as a teenager one goes through a lot of changes and a lot of discoveries and so it helped me organize myself in certain way because poetry is such a condensed form of literature which helps you to reach new horizons" explains the literati. His first book, Morreste-me (You Died on Me) was published when he was 25 years old. The book is a very detailed account of relationship between the writer and his father. As one flips through the pages of this short

story, one finds itself present at the scene along with the author himself. The description of the hospital room, the bedroom of the house, the fireplace, narration of the buildings in the neighborhood is so intricately sketched that one can see visuals while going through the texts. Although the book is not an exciting read as it narrates the harsh reality of a dying father and the helplessness of a son whose deep love for his father comes to light in every sentence. Jose's second publication was a novel titled Nenhum Olhar (Blank Gaze) which won him the prestigious Jose Saramago award named after the Portuguese noble laureate at the age of 27. Blank Gaze which has been translated in more than 20 languages is all fictional. The character in the story, the Devil, Siamese twins, the giant and the shepherd are all connected with one common thread, the fate. Your travelogues like Inside the secret, Book and The Imperfect Path do not excite readers to visit these countries as a tourist whereas Travelodge's meant to do the very same. Your comment? "To answer your question, out of the three, Livro (Book) is not a Travelodge. It's a novel and it describes experience that I did not live myself. Having said that, it was lived by hundreds and thousands of Portuguese in 60's and 70's and among them my parents included. They were immigrants also, who migrated to the suburbs

of Paris, France and that was the exodus of Portuguese people. One and a half million Portuguese went to France in that period and the journey was painful. There was censorship, dictatorship, war and poverty. It was a very difficult period in Portuguese history. Now on the other two books, Inside the secret on North Korea and The Imperfect Path on Thailand, I have not tried to impose my opinion on the places, but tried to describe my experience as a Portuguese tourist. I feel that sometimes the touristic narrative, gives a portrait of a country that is very shallow and superficial. So, I made an effort to dig deeper and write

on the uncharted territories of these two countries. Jose Luis's novel Galveias is named after his birth place, Galveias, a small village in the Portuguese region of Alentejo. "Yes, I have deliberately named the novel Galveias to give my village a tribute. However, your take on the novel reading from far away will be very different from a reader who is an inhabitant of Galveias and knows the streets, cafe, schools and the roads that I had mentioned in the novel" answer the writer. The two children book A Mae que Chovia (The Mother who Rained) published in 2012 and Todos os Escritores do Mundo Tem a Cabeça Chela de Piolhos

(All the writers of the World have their heads full of Lice) in 2016 were written after birth of his own children. "The idea to write children's book grew after I had my children. I had to tell them stories to make them sleep," informs the father of two boys. He accepts that children literature is very specific. It has different layers and different tones, and sometimes as grownups we forget to see the world from their perspective which is sad, he adds. qWas the success of your first book at the age of 25 the reason for your inspiration to write more and more an expand your horizons trying your luck in other mediums? a-After

my teenage years, I had always been dreaming of writing books. I used to look up to writers and poets at that time and it was my wildest dream to become one of them. It was the Jose Saramago award which encouraged me to write professionally as it brought me to limelight. Secondly when I was a teacher as well, I had always thought to continue writing books while teaching. Professional writing also provides livelihood and it was always very open to ideas not confining to one medium only", he informs. Although the writer confessed that he never tried his vocals for singing or held a paint brush in his hand, but his pursuit for working with musicians, with visual artists, painters kept pulling him towards the performing art and that it provided a great impetus in his writing. Jose Luis Piexoto termed his visit to Pakistan as an eye opener. He attended the Literature Festival in Lahore and spent two days in Islamabad. "My perception of this country was totally opposite before coming here. It is very unfortunate that the west has portrayed Pakistan with a lot of fallacies, misleading narratives. I started to get an insight about Pakistan when I planned to visit Lahore to attend the Literature festival and it started to change right then. The literati promises to write a Travelodge on Pakistan someday but looks forward for a lot of input from his Pakistani fraternity.

Pakistan's
fair election
exemplifies
democratic
tradition

WEB DESK

GENEVA : Pakistan's ongoing peaceful transition of power following the February 8 "fair" election demonstrated the strength of the country's democratic tradition and values, Foreign Secretary Syrus Sajjad Qazi has said. "Tens of millions of Pakistani citizens freely exercised their fundamental right to vote," Qazi told the high-level segment of the United Nations Human Rights Council's 55th session which began in Geneva on Monday. Pakistan, he said, was a staunch supporter in promoting universal respect for human rights, and remains a strong voice for protection, and indivisibility of all human rights. "We have always endeavoured to foster dialogue, mutual understanding, and consensus at the Council," the foreign secretary added. Pakistan, he said, had also contributed to the 47-member Council's work in areas of social and economic rights; religious intolerance; disinformation; rights of children, older persons and persons with disabilities; and the frontier issue of emerging technologies. "Despite many exogenous challenges," the foreign secretary said, "our investment in strengthening social safety nets and improving standards of education and health continue", adding that an independent media and a strong civil society enrich Pakistan's human rights discourse domestically.—APP

Sall proposes
amnesty amid
election
turmoil

DAKAR : The West African nation is facing its worst political crisis in decades after Sall abruptly deferred the February 25 presidential vote just hours before campaigning was due to begin. The Constitutional Council overturned the delay and Sall, whose second term is scheduled to end on April 2, launched two days of talks to set a new poll date. He announced the amnesty bill at the start of what he called a "national dialogue" on Monday, suggesting it could reunite the country. "In a spirit of national reconciliation, I will put before the National Assembly this Wednesday in the council of ministers a bill for a general amnesty for acts relating to political demonstrations that took place between 2021 and 2024," Sall said Monday. "This will make it possible to pacify the political arena," he added. According to some rights groups, over 1,000 people have been arrested since 2021 during the power struggle between opposition leader Ousmane Sonko and the state. Sonko and his party's substitute candidate, Bassirou Diomaye Faye, are both in prison.

Authorities have released hundreds of detainees in the past 10 days.—APP

Briefs

ECP reserves verdict on Nawaz's NA-15 election plea

DNA

MANSEHRA: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) reserved its judgment on Tuesday on PML-N supreme Nawaz Sharif's plea challenging the election victory of PTI's candidate from NA-15 Mansehra. The PML-N leader's counsel Javed Jadoon as well as PTI-backed candidate Shahzada Gustashap Khan's counsel, Babar Awan, completed their arguments on the case today. A two-member bench of the ECP headed by Member Sindh Nisar Durrani conducted the hearing. During the hearing, Nawaz's counsel argued that they received a copy of the returning officer's (RO) response yesterday evening, claiming that they did not receive Form 45s of 123 polling stations. The ECP Sindh member asked Jadoon if there was a stay on the release of final election results. "Yes," the counsel replied. The counsel further stated that, "The ballot boxes were not sealed," adding that this constituency witnessed "greater rigging and vote-tampering than in Daska". The RO was booked in the case but he fell sick and vanished after being shifted to the hospital, he alleged, adding that the counting of votes continued till 4 am the next morning.

Murad Ali Shah takes oath

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister-elect Murad Ali Shah on Tuesday took the oath of office a day after he obtained a majority of votes to win the election of the provincial chief executive. Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori administered the oath to the Shah at a ceremony held at the Governor's House attended by top officials and PPP leaders including party chief Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. Outgoing Chief Minister Justice (ret'd) Maqbool Baloch was also present on the occasion. CM Shah made history after he was re-elected as the provincial chief executive for the third consecutive time with an overwhelming majority.

12 die as bus falls into ravine in Khanpur

HARIPUR: At least 12 people died and another 15 sustained injuries in a traffic accident in the mountainous area of Bagran area of the Haripur tehsil. A passenger bus plunged into a deep ravine while taking a turn, causing fatalities and injuries. According to rescue authorities, the injured include women. The incident took place due to high speed while the bus was navigating a bend. The injured have been transferred to Khanpur THQ Hospital for medical treatment. - DNA

Weimar Triangle countries express solidarity with Ukraine

Ambassador Pisarski says Ukraine cannot be forgotten, nor can the significance of the war be overlooked



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Embassies of countries comprising the Weimar Triangle (Poland, France, Germany) and Ukraine joined hands in organizing a commemorative event dedicated to the Solidarity with the Ukrainian people. The gathering marked the second anniversary of an unprovoked Russian full-scale invasion against Ukraine. The documentary "Culture vs. War" and exhibition "Generations of War," featuring works created by Ukrainian artists, were shown during the event which took place at the Poland's Embassy grounds. Ambassadors of Poland - Maciej Pisarski, Ukraine - Markiian Chuchuk, France - Nicolas Galey, Germany - Alfred Grannas addressed the participants. The ambassadors highlighted the bravery of resistance shown by the Ukrainian people against the Russian invaders throughout the course of the two-year conflict. They also underlined the sacrifices made by Ukraine's

Armed Forces in repelling Russian assault. The speakers also mentioned the devastation of homes, schools, hospitals, and other infrastructure, as well as the suffering of Ukrainians, including children. Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine is an attack against the rules-based international order and its core elements, such as sovereignty and territorial integrity. It constitutes a dangerous precedent that cannot be left unanswered, as Ambassador Grannas stated. Therefore, the world community of responsible and peace-loving nations must vehemently oppose and confront any infringement of international law. As Ambassador Pisarski underlined, Ukraine cannot be forgotten, nor can the significance of the war be overlooked. Russia's strategy is to wear the defenders and those who help them down, to make them tired and to make the world forget so they can achieve their nefarious goals. Therefore, it is imperative to sustain backing for Ukraine's endeavor to



safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity to determine its own course in the future. One of the priorities priority of the Weimar Triangle is to help Ukraine facing the Russian aggression as long as necessary. Supporting Ukraine is an investment in ensuring the security of Ukraine, Europe, and the world. It is a shared responsibility of the entire global community to aid Ukraine in resisting the illegal Russian invasion. There is no "Ukraine fatigue". There are no divisions among all those who, since the beginning of the aggression, have been on Ukraine's side. We remain fully united and committed, and we will remain so - Ambassador Nicolas Galey pointed out. The Ambassador Chuchuk, also referred to the attitude of his compatriots, stressing that despite being vastly outmatched by a nuclear-armed power with significantly larger economic and military resources, Ukraine has held its ground. Furthermore, he also highlighted President Zelenskyy's

Ten-point Peace Formula, a comprehensive plan to end the war including cessation of hostilities, food security, nuclear safety, energy security, justice, human rights, and respect for the UN Charter, which Ambassador Chuchuk emphasized as the sole viable peace offer. The impacts of the war extend well beyond Ukraine's boundaries, with its repercussions being experienced globally, including Pakistan. As Pakistan voice matters, Ambassador Chuchuk called for joining peaceful efforts that aligns with Pakistan's commitment to upholding the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity of the states. He concluded that with steadfast determination and continual international cooperation, peace can be achieved not just in Ukraine but all over the world. Head of missions and diplomats from numerous countries based in Islamabad as well as representatives of Pakistani institutions, local experts, think-tank representatives, human rights activists, and journalists, attended the event.

Pak-Saudi joint military exercise concludes

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: The closing ceremony of "On Job Training of Royal Saudi Land Forces with Pakistan Army" was held at Multan. The training was conducted from Jan 15 to Feb 26 to foster joint employment and benefit from each other's experiences, while further consolidating long-standing fraternal relations between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, said Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) in a statement. The training which encompassed conventional as well as sub-conventional operations, culminated with field manoeuvre and battle inoculation exercise. The Multan corps commander witnessed the exercise as chief guest and expressed satisfaction over mutual understanding and the training standards achieved.

PTI nominates Dogar as NA speaker candidate

ISLAMABAD: PTI on Tuesday nominated Amir Dogar as the party's candidate for the National Assembly speaker. The decision was announced by the PTI Secretary General Omar Ayub Khan while talking to media after meeting the PTI founder in jail. The party also fielded Junaid Akbar as deputy speaker candidate. Ayub said that the PTI and other political parties to hold protest demonstrations on March 2 against the alleged rigging in the general elections 2024. - DNA

Women empowerment crucial for peace, stability: US envoy

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan: The US Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome has said that the United States is committed to support Pakistan's efforts in addressing the human rights issue. In his remarks at the inauguration of the International Conference on Combating Trafficking and Bonded Labor of Women and Girls in Pakistan held in Islamabad on Tuesday, the ambassador said that human trafficking is an appalling and pervasive crime, adding that it deprives millions worldwide of their dignity and freedom. The ambassador said that human trafficking is a global crisis that touches every country including Pakistan and the United States. Ambassador Blome said that an estimated 27.6 million people around the world are victims of human trafficking including millions of women and children. He said that beyond the harm to individual victims, trafficking-in-persons also undermines national security, distorts markets, enriches transnational criminals and terrorists, and is an affront to our universal values. The ambassador further said that the US Embassy's ongoing grant program with the Sustainable Social Development Organization (SSDO) is a testament to the effectiveness of meaningful partnerships between civil society and the public sector, demonstrating how we can expand awareness, leverage expertise, and facilitate creative solutions when we work together. Donald Blome said that the toll of human trafficking is borne disproportionately by its survivors; however, it would be a mistake to dismiss the impact it has on all of society. He said that human trafficking erodes the rule of law, the safety of our communities, the security of our borders, and the strength of our economy. The US envoy said that the severity and pervasiveness of this issue demands our collective action. "Working together - across government, business, and civil society - is essential in our joint effort to create a fairer and more equitable world," he said. - DNA

Senators decry 'ignorance' over Lahore mob incident

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Senators on Tuesday called for strict action against those levelling "false allegations" of blasphemy and decry "ignorance" after a young woman wearing a shirt with Arabic calligraphy was saved from a mob attack in Lahore. On Sunday afternoon, a mob had gathered outside a shop in Lahore's crowded Ichra Bazaar after someone alleged that a woman's shirt had Quranic verses printed on it. The charged zealots insisted on a "blasphemy" charge. A video clip on social media showed the girl hiding in a shop and shivering with fear. Sensing the sensitivity of the issue, some police officials present at the site called in their higher-ups. Subsequently, a police team led by Gulberg Circle Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) SyedaShehBano Naqvi engaged the crowd, took the woman into protective custody and shifted her to the

police station amid heightened security measures. Later in the day, a video showing the woman apologising alongside religious scholars emerged. Today, the upper house of Parliament echoed with criticism of the incident. PPP Senator Rubina Khalid said that it was "utter ignorance" that some people could not differentiate between Quranic verses and Arabic letters. "If the police had not reached on time the inciteful mob would have done something worse," she said. "We need to think about where we are heading. There should be a debate on this," she demanded. The senator also took exception to the woman's "forceful apology". The same day the incident was reported, a video had emerged of the young woman apologising for her outfit. "Why was she made to record a public apology for something she didn't do?" the senator asked. Rubina added that the shirt the woman was wearing belonged to a brand based in Saudi Arabia. "It is fine there, but here women are harassed in the name of religion. "We are all Muslims and are proud of it [...] but there is a huge difference between an ignorant and a Muslim," the senator said. Meanwhile, MQM-P Senator Faisal Subzwari said: "What kind of a Muslim is someone who cannot identify between a Quranic verse and a simple Arabic word? And what kind of a Muslim is someone who, despite knowing how to read Arabic, makes false accusations against someone?"

PTI gives nationwide protest call on March 2

As PTI alleges Feb 8 polls were "not free and fair", leaders say other political parties to also join protests

MEHTAB PIRZADA

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Tuesday gave a call for a country-wide protest on March 2 against the alleged rigging in the general elections 2024, saying that other political parties will also join them. In a press conference after meeting PTI founder Imran Khan, Secretary General Omar Ayub, who is also the party's candidate for the prime minister's slot, lamented "large scale" rigging in the polls. He said PTI would stage countrywide protests against

the "rigging" in polls alongside other political parties. "Our seats were stolen with just a stroke of pen. The people gave the mandate to the former PTI chairman. Nation's mandate and our seats have been attacked," Ayub said. He said that the successful PTI-backed candidate had the Form-45s. Ayub added that party leaders met the PTI founder, who is incarcerated at the prison, and he is "confident" of the party's stance. He said that the party would protest in courts and assemblies. "Ours is the fight of truth," he added. The PTI leader further stated that the party has nominated Amir Dogar and Junaid Khan for the post of National Assembly speaker and deputy speaker. Separately, Speaking to media outside Adiala jail, PTI's central leader Sher Afzal Marwat also said that party founder Imran directed to stage protests across country on Saturday (March 2).

Pak-Ethiopia discuss maritime coop

DNA

ISLAMABAD: H.E. JemalBekerAbdula, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, called on Chief of the Naval Staff H.E. Admiral Naveed Ashraf on Tuesday here at the Naval Headquarters in Islamabad. During the meeting, the two sides

exchanged views on the matters of mutual interests including bilateral cooperation in the area of maritime and regional security. On the occasion, H.E. Ambassador JemalBekerAbdula briefed the Naval Chief on the major role being played by the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in promoting pan-Africanism in the region to foster the spirit of brotherhood, fraternity and collaboration among the people of Africa. The Ambassador

also informed the Naval Chief about the successful conduct of the 37th African Union Summit by the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in Addis Ababa which witnessed the presence of more than 49 heads of the states from African countries and senior officials of international organizations. He highlighted the role of the FDR Ethiopia in ensuring regional security by immensely contributing to the fight against terrorism.

The regional integration initiatives of the FDR Ethiopia including the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, port diversification and energy export to the neighbouring countries also came under discussion during the meeting. On the occasion, the Ambassador said the FDR Ethiopia had recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Somaliland that completely aligned with the international rules. He said Ethiopia had been striving to connect the whole region by sharing its resources with brotherly countries in order to ensure just and equitable development across the region. On the other hand, Chief of the Naval Staff H.E. Admiral Naveed Ashraf acknowledged the role played by Ethiopia in regional integration through multiple initiatives. He congratulated the Government of the FDR Ethiopia on holding the AU summit successfully. The Naval Chief, on the occasion, acknowledged the historical significance of Ethiopia as well as the great importance attached by the Government of Pakistan to its bilateral relations with an heir of the one of the oldest civilizations. He said both the countries were heirs of the centuries' old civilizations and had huge potential for the bilateral cooperation including the area of maritime.



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