

Saturday, March 02, 2024

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 30

Alvi for enhanced coop between Pak-Baku audit institutions

A sister publication of **CENTRELINE & DNA News Agency**

Detailed News On Page-08

Galloway wins Rochdale byelection

Detailed News On Page-08

Establishment

has no role

in politics:

Achakzai

Calls upon political

parties to join hands

for parliament

supremacy

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Pashtunkh-

wa Milli Awami Party chief

Mahmood Khan Achakzai

has urged all political stake-

holders to pass a resolution

to ensure supremacy of par-

liament, saying that some

people want to make it 'an-

imals market'. Speaking on

the National Assembly (NA)

floor, Achakzai said that Pa-

kistan was passing through

difficult times, underscor-

ing the importance of en-

suring supremacy of par-

liament. "Today is the first

day of the National Assem-

bly, you all [PPP, PML-N

and PTI] should now pass

four resolutions that parlia-

ment will be the source of

Continued on Page 06

ECP announces

schedule for

Candidates can

submit nomination

papers by March 2

before 12pm



Mbappe set to play final time with PSG

Detailed News On Page-06



Big blow for coalition govt

Fazl says no to PML-N's offer

Both leaders hold hour-long one-on-one meeting at JUI-F chief's residence to discuss political situation

ISLAMABAD: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman on Friday rejected PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif's offers of 'important positions' and announced to sit in opposition "for now", a private news channel reported, citing sources. In a significant move preceding Sunday's premiership elections in the National Assembly, Nawaz Sharif, the Supreme Leader of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), paid a visit to the residence of Maulana Fazlur Rehman, the chief of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F). The meeting underscored a dialogue between the two former coalition partners as they navigate the political landscape. During the meeting today Maulana Fazlur Rahman once again refused to be part of the coalition government. Sources quoting Fazl said he refused to make promises immediately and decided to consult the party members. Sources claimed that the PML-N offered JUI-F important positions in the Centre - which was rejected by Fazlur Rehman. "Who is answerable to the injustice done to us in the recently-held polls," he asked. Rejecting the offer, Fazlur Rehman said that they have decided to sit in opposition for now.

Welcoming Nawaz Sharif along with other prominent members of the PML-N, including Ishaq Dar, Ahsan Iqbal, and Rana Sanaullah, Maulana Fazlur Rehman extended a warm reception. Representing the JUI-F were Ghulam Ali, Abdul Ghafoor Haideri, and Noor Alam Khan. Sources privy to the discussions revealed that Nawaz Sharif and Maulana Fazlur Rehman engaged in a one-on-one meeting lasting for about an hour. The deliberations primarily centred on political matters, concluding with both leaders departing in an amiable mood. Addressing the media post-meeting, Rana Sanaullah, a senior leader of the PML-N, expressed satisfaction with the outcome. "We have endured challenging times together and have consistently sought guidance from Maulana Fazlur Rehman," he stated. "Our association has weathered the storm during the PTI government, with Maulana's support."

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

PTI vows to

hold protest

across country

Again asks ECP

to allocate reserve

seats to PTI

MEHTAB PIRZADA ISLAMABAD:Pakistan

Tehreek-e-Insaf(PTI)

Spokesperson termed the

election of Speaker, Deputy

Speaker and Prime Minister from the fake incomplete National Assembly

without the allocation of the

reserved seats for women

and minorities as unconsti-

tutional. Reacting over the

election of the NA Speaker

and Deputy Speaker sans

allocation of the reserved

seats, PTI Spokesperson

stated that the speaker and

deputy speaker elected

with the help of the man-

date thieves would not have

Khaqan Abbasi

Launches new political party

Public service to top party agenda

ADIL SHAHEEN ISLAMABAD: PML-N leader

and former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, after

parting ways with PML-N, announced to set up a new

political party to promote service

Talking to media, ex-PM re-

quested all political parties to refrain from labeling each

other as corrupt. He lament-

ed that during general elec-

tions not even a single polit-

ical party spoke about public

issues instead they followed

the discourse of pleasing the

Holiday Notice

The offices of daily Islamabad POST shall

Saturday on account

of weekly off therefore

will

newspaper on Sunday.

there

closed

be

Editor

no

non-political elements.

agenda.

any constitutional status.

PML-N's Ayaz Sadiq elected NA speaker

Sadiq gets 199 votes; PPP's Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah gets elected as deputy speaker, bags 197 votes

Ansar M Bhatti / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) Sardar Ayaz Sadiq was elected as the National Assembly speaker on Friday, while Pakistan Peoples Party's (PPP) Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah was elected as the deputy speaker. Sadiq became the 23rd speaker of the parliament's lower house after he bagged 199 votes, defeating Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Sunni Ittehad Council's (SIC) candidate Malik Aamir Dogar, who bagged 91 votes. Outgoing speaker Raja Parvez Ashraf administered the oath to Sadiq, while the newly-elected speaker administered the oath to Shah. After the oath-taking, the new speaker thanked the leaders of all major political parties for reposing trust in his leadership. In his address to the lawmakers, Sadiq assured the opposition members of running the affairs of the house with fairness. "I am thankful to Allah (SWT) for being elected for the third time in this position. I am thankful to PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif for nominating me," he said.

Continued on Page 06

British HC calls on CM

on postings, transfers

British HC praises Maryam Nawaz's



ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has slapped a ban on any kind of postings and transfers in the province. According to a notification issued by Secretary to the CM on Friday, officers and staff performing their duties on all posts cannot be posted or transferred till further orders. If need arises permission sought from

elaborating reasons which necessitate the posting or transfer. The chief minister's order will come into force at once. Maryam Nawaz chaired a special meeting to review recommendations for the creation of Punjab's first authentic database hub and database authority. With the help of authentic and comprehensive data, government will be able to launch better social and economic policies.

Continued on Page 06

Health card facility to resume

ISLAMABAD: Nawaz Sharif, the Leader of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), pays a visit to the residence of Maulana Fazlur Rehman, chief of JUI-F along with other party leaders. – DNA

New KP CM declares jehad against corruption

Newly elected chief minister Ali Amin Gandapur says PTI is not against institutions but everybody has to remain in its domain

SHAMIM SHAHID / DNA

PESHAWAR: ALI AMIN GANDAPUR has been elected as the Chief Minister of KP. He got 90 votes. JUI f did not take part in the election process. Gandapur in his speech called upon the relevant quarters to immediately set his leader Imran Khan free. He said Imran Khan was implicated in false cases. Ali Amin Gandapur declared jehad against corruption. He and all members vowed on oath that nobody from the members of the provincial members would involve in corruption. He also made it clear to government officers that those involved in corruption and bribe shall have to face serious consequences. He said we have to change this system. He said PTI is not against institutions but everybody has to remain in its domain. He thanked the voters who despite all odds voted for PTI.

Continued on Page 06

Bugti nominated 'unopposed' for Balochistan CM

Election for chief minister's post to be held today

BUREAU REPORT

QUETTA: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) candidate Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has been nominated unopposed for the Balochistan CM's post as no other candidate has filed nomination papers till the expiry of the deadline on Friday at 5pm, according to Balochistan Assembly secretary Tahir Shah Kakar. However, the assembly would hold polling for

Continued on Page 06

Maryam slaps total ban

commitment to modernize Punjab

the chief minister through a summary,

FAISAL SEIKH ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Friday issued the notice and schedule for the presidential election slated for March 9. "In pursuance of the provisions contained in paragraphs 1 and 3 of the Second Schedule of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973 read with clauses (3) and (4) of Article 41 of the **Continued on Page 06**

Pak condemns massacre of **Palestinians by Israeli forces**

Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Mao Ning said on Friday that Beijing was shocked by the incident and strongly condemned the killings

KHAYAM ABBASI

lim Conference Jammu and Kashmir Sumji Faction while

Continued on Page 06

Gaza's health system 'on its knees': WHO

News Desk

GENEVA: People in the Gaza Strip are risking their lives to find food, water and other supplies such is the level of hunger and despair amid the unrelenting Israeli assault, the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Friday. "The system in Gaza is on its knees, it's more than on its knees," WHO spokesperson Christian Lindmeier told reporters in Geneva. "All the lifelines in Gaza have more or less been cut." Lindmeier said this had created a "desperate situation," as seen on Thursday, when more than 100 people seeking humanitarian aid in Gaza were killed. Gaza health authorities said Israeli forces shot dead extending the current ban on Jamaat-e-Islami Jammu and the Palestinians as they waited for an aid delivery.

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has strongly condemned massacre by Israeli forces of unarmed Palestinians who were waiting for food delivery in Gaza. In her weekly media briefing in Islamabad, Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said this massacre demonstrates a blatant disregard for international humanitarian law and Israel's deliberate and inhuman policy of mass starvation. She said Pakistan reiterates its call for immediate and urgent ceasefire, lifting of the inhuman siege and unimpeded access of humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza. The Spokesperson said Israel must also face justice for its crime against humanity being perpetrated with impunity against the Palestinian people. On the situation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said Pakistan denounces the decision by Indian authorities to ban the Muslim Conference Jammu and Kashmir Bhat Faction and Mus-



Governor presented Punjab govt audit report

LAHORE: Deputy Auditor General (Central) Tariq Bashir Chatha called on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman and presented the Accounts and Audit Report of the Punjab government for the year 2023-24 during a meeting at the Governor's House here on Friday.

Governor Balighur Rehman said the Auditor General's Department had an important role in improving transparency and governance in the government departments. He said those departments that are not being audited for any reason should be made part of the audit system. The governor said the use of modern technology including management information system is indispensable for increasing the efficiency of the institution. DAG (Central) Tariq Bashir told the governor about the steps taken to improve the institution. –DNA

APNS annual general council meeting on Saturday

DNA

KARACHI; "The Annual General Council of the All Pakistan Newspapers Society will meet on Saturday, March 02, 2024 at 11:00 a.m. at APNS House, Gulistan-e-Jauhar, Karachi", stated a press release of the APNS. The Annual General Council will discuss the conditions prevailing in the newspaper industry and take decisions to address the problems faced by the member publications and will finalize its recommendations on the issues pertaining to the Govt. - Press relations, freedom of press and the future of the industry. The members will consider and adopt the report of the Executive Committee for the year 2023-2024, approve audit report for Annual Accounts for the year 2023 and elect members to the Executive Committee new Executive Committee will elect its office bearers for the new term. The meetings of the General Councils will be attended by full members only. The Secretary General, APNS has requested publishers of full member publications to attend the above Council

Polio eradication campaign launched in Abbottabad district

ABBOTTABAD: The polio eradication campaign is set to take place from March 3 to 7, 2024, in Abbottabad district. The formal inauguration of the campaign was led by Deputy Commissioner Abbottabad, Khalid Iqbal on Friday, who administered polio drops and vitamin drops to children, marking the commencement of the initiative.

Following the official launch, the DC also convened a meeting to discuss staffing, material provision and security arrangements for the campaign.—APP

WAGASHI, Ikebana exhibitions

ITO Takeshi lauds aesthetic exhibits, aims for cultural unity

Mr. ITO Takeshi hoped that through these exhibitions more and more Pakistani people can enjoy the Japanese culture which will lead to strengthen the bond of friendship between Japan and Pakistan

DNA

LAHORE:To experience and learn about the rich cultural diversity and aesthetic beauty of Japan, the Embassy of Japan in Pakistan in collaboration with the Pakistan-Japan Cultural Association (PJCA) Lahore and Lahore Sogetsu Study Group showcased the exhibitions of Wagashi (traditional Japanese sweets) and ikebana flower arrangement, two of Japan's most cherished cultural traditions spanning over centuries of history. Wagashi exhibition titled "Wagashi-Art of the 5 Senses" presented the pleasantly colored dainty pieces of confectionery called the art of the five senses as they are works of art designed to appeal all the senses with their appearance, flavor, aroma, feel and the sounds of their names. While reflecting the various aspects of nature and the changing seasons, Wagashi sweets are exquisitely shaped and crafted earning them the name of edible art which are traditionally served as an accompaniment to the Japanese tea ceremony. Mr. ITO Takeshi, Charge d' Affaires of the Embassy of Japan in Pakistan, inaugurated the two exhibitions which represented the essence of Japanese traditions and culture. Mr. YAMAZAKI Tetsuya, the Chef of the Embassy of Japan, on the occasion skillfully demonstrated the art of preparing a variety of



about the cultural significance of Japanese confectionery that are not only used at different celebrations and rituals in Japan but also represent the changing seasons. His presentation won great applause from the attendees. The ikebana exhibition by the students and teachers of Lahore Sogetsu Study Group, exhibited their spring arrangements titled "Mughal Architecture through the eyes of Sogetsu Ikebana". The floral designs by the teachers and students displayed have

taken their inspiration from the numerous Floral Frescoes of the monuments of the Walled City, namely Lahore Fort, Sheesh Mahal, Badshahi Masjid, Wazir Khan Masjid, Shahi Hammam to name a few. Ms. Neveen Syed, Director Sogetsu Study Group, gave live ikebana demonstration on the occasion which was inspired through her inspirational tour of the various historical monuments in Lahore. Explaining to the viewers, Ms. Neveen said that this kind of an exhibition where his-

tory is linked with flowers, is the first of its kind in Lahore, where floral artists of Ikebana have expressed their feelings through the meditative art of Sogetsu Ikebana, spreading peace and harmony and friendship through flowers. Mr. Ito, while speaking on the occasion, deeply appreciated the aesthetically pleasing exhibitions of wagashi and ikebana arrangements, and hoped that through these exhibitions more and more Pakistani people can enjoy the Japanese culture which

will lead to strengthen the bond of friendship between Japan and Pakistan. He said that It is always a pleasure to visit the beautiful city of Lahore that is culturally so rich and vibrant yet has an aura of historical significance for its people. He commended the hard work of Japanese Ambassador's Chef Mr. Yamazaki Tetsuya, who has especially come from Islamabad to present before Pakistani audience a rare glimpse into Wagashi, the art of 5 senses. Mr. Ito expressed his special appre-

ciation for the Lahore Sogetsu Study Group who have dedicated and supported to organize these exhibitions successfully in Lahore and also for displaying beautiful ikebana floral arrangements during His Majesty the Emperor's birthday celebration in Islamabad last week. He also thanked Mr. Aamir Shirazi, Honorary Consul General of Japan at Lahore and Dr. Ghazal Irfan, President of PJCA Lahore, for their continued support and efforts for holding various cultural events in Lahore.



Pharma industry targets Africa, Central Asia, Afghanistan to increase exports to President ICCI Ahsan hospitals should be exem-trained nurses every year

ADIL SHAHEEN

beautiful and delicious wagashi

sweets, using traditional ingre-

dients and techniques. With his

artistic skills and aesthetic sense,

Mr. Yamazaki elaborately spoke

ISLAMABAD : Caretaker Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination Dr. Nadeem Jan has said that despite the short time, he made strenuous efforts to bring reforms in the health sector, several steps were taken, including the digitization of DRAP, a new policy for the prices of medicines, and the search for new markets to promote exports. He said that Pakistan's pharma sector has the potential to expand the country's exports. The industry should focus on exports to countries in Central Asia, Africa, and Afghanistan. He expressed these views while talking

Zafar Bakhtawari and other members deuring his visit to Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI). The federal minister said that it was his mission to bring reforms in the health sector. He said he worked day and night for the country's pride he took practical steps to increase pharma exports for the betterment of the economy and took the Pharma Park project forward. He said that this project is of key importance to the industry.this project will promote the pharma industry. He said that the business community should play its proper role in the health sector .the services of the business community for the poor and needy people in

hospitals should be exemplary. He said that philanthropists and investors in society should cooperate with the government in providing healthcare facilities to poor patients. On the occasion, ICCI President Ahsan Bakhtawari appreciated the performance of the caretaker government and stressed that the next government should continue these positive policies. He presented several proposals for cooperation between the ICCI and the Ministry of Health. The ICCI president praised the digitalization process of DRAP. He stressed the need for the construction of nursing colleges in big cities, including Islamabad, in collaboration with the ICCI. He said that Japan, Europe, and the US need millions of

trained nurses every year, while Pakistan is not even able to produce nurses to meet its own needs. He said that the government should pay special attention to this sector. special institutes for the training of nurses should be set up in hig cit. ies, including Islamabad, in collaboration with the ICCI. He said that both the big hospitals in Islamabad are facing severe problems. He proposed that the business community should be given representation on the hospitals' boards, transparency should be brought in funding, tendering, and financing. He agreed with the federal minister's proposals for the provision of medicines to patients in government hospitals and the provision of Iftar and Sehri during Ramadan.

LESCO recovers Rs 2.59b from 86,871 defaulters

LAHORE: The Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) has recovered more than Rs 2.59 billion from 86,871 chronic defaulters in its five districts - Lahore, Sheikhupura, Nankana Sahib, Kasur and Okara - during 165 days of its recovery campaign. LESCO spokesman told the media here Friday that during the 165 days, the LESCO, under the supervision of Director (Customer Services) Rai Muhammad Asghar, has recovered outstanding dues of Rs 370.79 million from 12,356 defaulters in Northern Circle; Rs 611.63 million from 11,068 defaulters in Eastern Circle; Rs 342.66 million from 9,810 defaulters in Central Circle; Rs 144.80 million from 5,119 defaulters in South Circle; Rs 210.80 million from 7,639 defaulters in Nankana Circle; Rs 388.93 million from 10,495 defaulters in Sheikhupura Circle; Rs 165.09 million from 13,878 defaulters in Okara Circle and Rs 356.21 million from 16,506 defaulters in Kasur Circle. On the 165th consecutive day of recovery campaign, he mentioned, the LESCO has recovered more than Rs 9.7 million from 379 dead defaulters in its all circles of operation. He elaborated that SE (Superintending Engineer) Nisar Sarwar has recovered outstanding dues of Rs 1.39 million from 65 defaulters in Northern Circle; SE Umar Bilal recovered Rs 1.60 million from 44 defaulters in Eastern Circle; SE Shabbir recovered Rs 0.82 million from 42 defaulters in Central Circle; SE Zafarullah Sanghi collected Rs 0.50 million from 19 defaulters in South Circle; SE Muhammad Hussainr recovered Rs 0.44 million from 39 defaulters in Nankana Circle; SE Najamul Hassan recovered Rs 1.30 million from 18 defaulters in Sheikhupura Circle; SE Jamshed Zaman collected Rs 2.40 million from 59 defaulters in Okara Circle and SE Ahmed Shahzad Chughtai recovered Rs 1.33 million from 93 defaulters in Kasur Circle.—DNA

ASP Sheherbano gets royal invitation to visit KSA

The top Saudi diplomat extended the invitation during a meeting with woman police officer at the Saudi embassy where a special ceremony was arranged in her honour

DNA

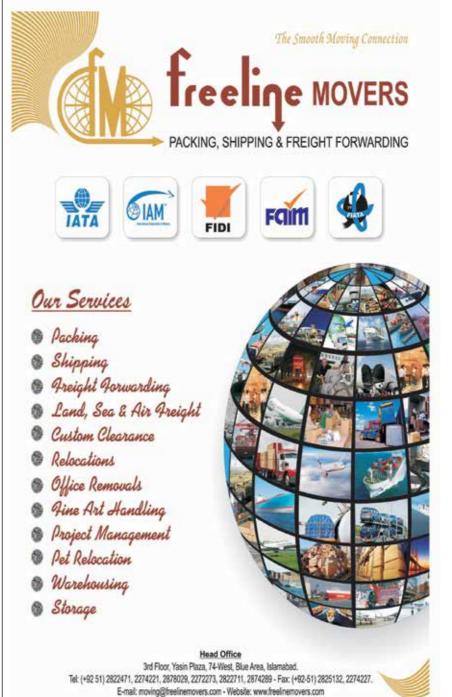
ISLAMABAD: Saudi Arabia Ambassador to Pakistan Nawaf bin Said Al-Malki has invited ASP Syeda Shehrbano Naqvi and her family to a royal visit to the Kingdom in recognition of her heroic act to save a woman from a mob in Lahore. The top Saudi diplomat extended the invitation during a meeting with woman police officer at the Saudi embassy where a special ceremony was arranged in her honour. He also lauded her bravery and assured her that the Saudi government would cover the expenses for her and her family royal journey to Saudi Arabia. He praised ASP Syeda Shehrbano for her dedication to duty and her professionalism in handling the charged mob and saving the woman. Earlier, the daring woman officer called on Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir, at General Headquarters, on Thursday. A statement shared by the Army's media wing said COAS Asim Munir hailed ASP Shehrbano for her selfless devotion to duty and professionalism in diffusing a volatile situation. ASP Bano rescued a woman from a charged mob in the famous market located in the provincial capital in February 26,



2024. The top general acknowledged her role of Pakistani women, saying they have distinguished themselves at home and abroad, by virtue of their talent, tenacity and commitment. Gen Asim highlighted that the women are an invaluable part of Pakistan's society and their respect is enshrined in our religion as well as our social ethos. Army Chief also underscored the importance of social harmony and the need for nationwide consensus on curbing intolerance. He emphasized upon the rule of law and advised against taking the law in one's hands when legal avenues are available for addressing concerns and grievances. Noting that arbitrary actions on the basis of heresy undermine the outlook of the society, COAS underlined Islam's eternal message of kindness and benevolence. Gen Asim appreciated the sacrifices rendered by the law enforcement agencies to ensure the safety and security of the citizens of Pakistan.

ISSI hosts public talk on Science Diplomacy in South Asia

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Strategic Perspectives (CSP) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) hosted a public talk, titled "Pakistan's Opportunity for Science Diplomacy in South Asia" on March 01, 2024. Dr. Saleem H. Ali, Chair, Department of Geography, University of Delaware, USA was the keynote speaker. The talk provided significant insights into the opportunities available for Pakistan to conduct successful and effective Science Diplomacy, including in the South Asian region. Featuring as Discussant, Additional Secretary (PP/ACDIS) Mr. Kamran Akhtar highlighted the progress made by Pakistan within the context of the Ministry of Foreign Affair's; Science Diplomacy initiative. Director CSP, Dr. Neelum Nigar, welcomed the participants to the discussion, underscoring the subject's significance for the region. In his welcome remarks, DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood highlighted the importance of Science Diplomacy (SD) in today's interconnected world and lauded the Foreign Office's SD initiative which served as a key platform for facilitating the inter-face between the national science & technology stakeholders and international partners. He noted that this was helping to foster beneficial collaboration on key areas of focus with the relevant institutions, international organisations, and countries. Pakistan was also leveraging Science Diplomacy to implement SDGs. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood added that science diplomacy in South Asia offers the chance to address common environmental challenges and help enhance technological innovation and economic growth. Collaborative research and development projects can lead to the creation of new technologies, improved infrastructure, and increased scientific capacity in the region. Dr. Saleem H. Ali delivered a compelling presentation in which he outlined the pivotal role of science diplomacy, emphasizing how collaborative scientific efforts can transcends national boundaries to foster peace and sustainable development. He underscored Pakistan's unique position, given its rich scientific heritage and strategic geographical location, suggesting that the country can play a leading role in utilizing science for diplomatic endeavours on a global scale, not just within South Asia.-DNA



National Days and Armed Forces Days

MARCH

March 01/Bosnia **National Day**

March 03/Bulgaria

National Day March 06/ Ghana

Independence Day

March 12 / Mauritius

National Day March 17/Ireland

St. Patricks Day March 20/Tunisia

Independence Day March 21/Namibia

March 25/Greece

National Day

National Day March 26/Bangla-

National Day

March 27/Myanmar **Armed Forces Day**

Hotels & Restaurants



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



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency Rescue (Police).....15

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



Edhi Ambulance	115
PIA Flight Info	114
PIA Cargo	.9280979
Railway Inquiry	117
Railway Exchange9	270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi.	.5555489
CAA	.9281092



Hospitals

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



Denartments

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Contempt of court

Islamabad DC, SSP operations slapped with prison sentences

IHC indicted DC in contempt case pertaining to PTI leaders Shehryar Afridi and Shandana Gulzar detention under MPO

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABASD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday sentenced federal capital's Deputy Commissioner Irfan Nawaz Memon, Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations Jameel Zafar and Station House Officer (SHO) Naseer Manzoor of Kohsar Police Station for contempt of court,. The officials were sentenced for issuing orders for detaining Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders Shehryar Afridi and Shandana Gulzar under the Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) ordinance. The court sentenced Islamabad DC to six months in prison, SSP to four months in prison and SHO for two months. All three of them have also been fined for Rs100,000 each. Meanwhile, the court suspended the sentence for a month and gave time to the DC to file an appeal against the decision. On September 7, 2023, the IHC indicted DC Memon and three police officials including



SSP Zafar in a contempt case pertaining to PTI leaders' detention. On August 16, the IHC suspended the detention orders of the PTI leaders and ordered their immedi-

ate release. Both leaders were held by law enforcement for their alleged involvement in the May 9 riots, which were triggered after the arrest of PTI chief Imran Khan

earlier this year. DC Memon and SSP Zafar pleaded not guilty to the charges and also apologised unconditionally. However, the IHC turned down the plea for unconditional pardon and later ordered the authorities to place DC Memon's name on the no-fly list for skipping proceedings of the case. He was also issued a show-cause notice and was asked to reply for being absent from the proceedings.

Afridi was first arrested from his Islamabad residence under Section 3 of the MPO Ordinance, 1960, on May 16. Despite a release order, he was immediately rearrested under the same section on May 30. The PTI leader was then granted bail by the Lahore High Court's Rawalpindi bench on August 3. But his freedom was short-lived as Rawalpindi police once again took him into custody following his release from Adiala jail. In response to his arrest, the former minister's lawyer had filed a plea in the IHC, requesting his release as well as the revocation of the MPO order.

Senator annoyed over shortage of medicines

ISLAMABAD: Senator Danesh Kumar of Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) on Friday expressed his deep concern over the shortage of medicine at National Institute of Rehabilitation and Medicine (NIRM). At his calling attention notice at the sixth meeting of the 355th Senate Session here, the Senator said it was the matter of poor masses but the bureaucracy in the the Ministry of National Health, Services, Regulations and Coordination turned its deaf ear to the issue that was pending for the past ten days. Senator Kumar said the poor people were unable to buy medicines in the prevailing skyrocketing inflation that had crushed the low-income groups of society. Interim Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Murtaza Solangi said there was no response received from the relevant Ministry whereas he respected the sentiments of the Senator, but the incoming Minister for Health after assuming his charge would be in the better position to furnish a proper answer on the motion. Senator Kamran Murtaza of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Pakistan (JUIP) expressed his displeasure on the response and said the Caretaker Minister for Health could not absolve himself from the matter as he had allowed a massive increase in the prices of the drugs that have gone out of the reach of the poor masses which was not acceptable. The Deputy Chairman Senate deferred the calling attention notice to the next session. -APP

ECP notified individuals members of

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, said on Friday that all the individuals, notified by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) as Members of the National Assembly, are members of the House. In a ruling, the speaker emphasized "The National Assembly followed the notification issued by the ECP. All the members who have been notified by the Election Commission as members of the National Assembly are members of this House." Regarding the issue concerning the reserved seats of the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), he said the matter was with the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) and it should wait for the Commission's decision. In response to the allegations of rigging by Umar Ayub Khan in the general elections, the Speaker said, "The National Assembly is not the right forum to raise this issue," urging him to approach the appropriate forum. "It is not possible for the National Assembly to check Form 45 and Form 47 of each member," he added.-APP

PDMA predicts snowfall, rain in Murree, Galiyat

ISLAMABAD: The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) has predicted heavy snowfall and rain in Muree and Galiyat over the next few days, said its Director General Imran Qureshi on Friday. Talking to a private news channel, Qureshi urged the local administration to ensure safety measures to mitigate any potential risks. DG PDMA further appealed to tourists to cooperate with the administration during this time. Tourists should carefully plan their journeys, taking into account the anticipated heavy snow in Murree and severe weather conditions, said Qureshi.-APP

and former provincial minexchange reserves and would not be able to underister Mian Zahid Hussain, the deficit remained more take major infrastructure said on Friday that as Prime or less within the recomprojects and go for heavy Minister Shahbaz Sharif, he mended limits of the IMF. spending, which will cause frustration among the pubwill have to govern a coun-The new long-term deal with the IMF will include try facing many serious lic and newly elected memproblems.

He said that bringing political and economic stability to a country divided by politics and facing an economic crunch would be a big challenge for him. Mian Zahid Hussain said that Shahbaz Sharif had saved the country from bankruptcy by signing a standby agreement with the IMF, and now he will try hard to get a positive response from the IMF in its last review and

enter a new agreement to

improve things. Talking to

ISLAMABAD: Chairman

of National Business Group

Pakistan, President Paki-

stan Businessmen and In-

tellectuals Forum, and All

Karachi Industrial Alliance,

the business community, the veteran business leader said that the old agreement with the IMF was to save the country from bankruptcy, due to which the foreign addressing the issues that have pushed the country to the brink of bankruptcy. Addressing these problems in the economy will be a challenge for Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif because the country's sluggish economy and weak control of the government are in the interest of many influential groups. These groups have been squeezing the economy and the people for decades, and they will resist every move to streamline things, he added. The business lead-

er said that in the event of another agreement with the IMF, the lender would not allow the deficit to exceed 1.5 percent of GDP, which means the government bers of parliament. Mian Zahid Hussain said that in these circumstances it will be difficult to get help from China and Arab countries. Still, there are bright possibilities of huge investment in the country under SIFC, due to which people will get employment. Investments will make it possible to keep the value of the rupee stable and inflation under control, he said, adding that the business community is hopeful that the incoming government will privatise

As PM, Sharif will find the country facing many threats the sick companies, the problems of electricity and gas will be solved, and the cost of doing business will reduced. Moreover, efforts will be made to increase exports and boost the tax-to-GDP ratio to improve the overall situation. PPP and MQM will fully support the government in these measures, and the business community also hopes that the opposition will not take such irresponsible steps that make life miserable for the common man. Mian Zahid Hussain further said that at present, the people and business community across the country are protesting due to electricity and gas bills and oil prices, and the incoming government can do a lot in this regard by reducing electricity, gas theft, capacity charges, and line losses. -DNA

COMSTECH, Huawei enhance strategic partnership

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General COMSTECH, and Dr. Syed Khurshid Hasnain, Advisor COMS-TECH, met with the Cyber Security and Privacy Protection team of Huawei at the Mobile World Congress held in Barcelona, to chart out the future of the strategic collaboration. The collaboration between COMS-TECH and Huawei aims to elevate the cybersecurity proficiency of OIC nations, focusing on areas like security management, security incident response, vulnerability management, and staying abreast of emerging security technologies and requirements. Prof Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary shared that by virtue of its mission, COMSTECH intends to use the strengths and opportunities of Huawei Technologies, a technological giant, for the benefit of the mem-

scale and scope of the partnership, Prof. Choudhary described the relationship as a very flexible cooperation as the leadership of Huawei Technologies was both forward-looking and willing. He expressed the intention of expanding the cooperation to have Huawei Technologies introduced, implemented and used in areas such as healthcare, education, agriculture and cyber security. COMSTECH and Huawei Technologies Pakistan recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding to bolster national cybersecurity awareness and fortify the capabilities of OIC member states in cybersecurity. Under the existing MoU, Huawei will collaborate with COMSTECH to host cybersecurity training based on its practices and experiences, contributing to enhanced cybersecurity awareness and capacity

Additionally, participation in influential regional cybersecurity events like GISEC and GITEX is on the agenda. Prof Choudhary added that the OIC world is very asymmetrical with many of the member states face a huge capacity deficit in not only technological competencies but also in the understanding of policies, regulations and strategies. To that end, the COMSTECH-Huawei partnership is broadbased, with COMSTECH wanting to leverage the Huawei expertise to develop better understanding of national strategies of member states so they can have their own digital transformation policies and legislations. Dr. Syed Khurshid Hasnain is working closely with the Huawei Pakistan team to develop a matrix of activities including workshops, national and international trainings, and implementation of some of the technol-

SEZs under CPEC to bring PKR **31.492** billion investment

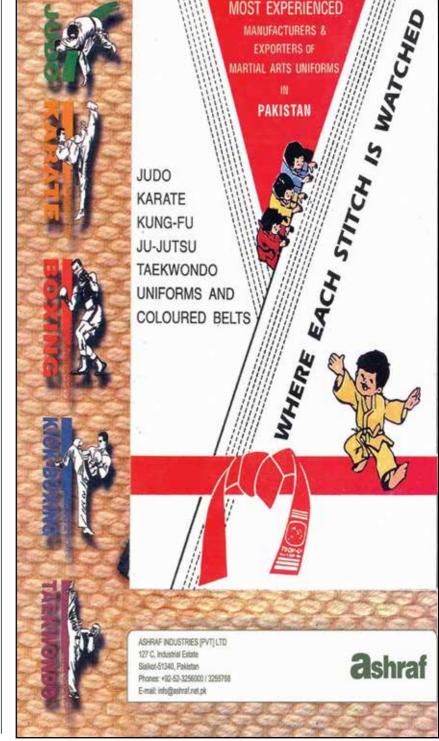
DNA ISLAMABAD: Faisalabad SEZs under CPEC will bring PKR 31.492 billion investment in Punjab, Gwadar Pro reported on Friday. The 24th Special Economic Zone (SEZ) Committee meeting of Allama Iqbal Industrial City (AIIC), the 8th SEZ Committee meeting of Value Addition City (VAC), and the 43rd SEZ Committee meeting of M-3 Industrial City (M3IC) of SEZ, Faisalabad, Punjab, were held. Together, they approved the admission of 44 enterprises in the SEZ regime with a cumulative investment of PKR 31.492 Billion in Punjab. According to the BOI official notification, the investment accounts for PKR 4.310 Billion in Allama Iqbal Industrial City, PKR 359.05 Million in VAC, and PKR 26.823 Billion in ous sectors.

building for selected OIC M3IC, SEZ, Punjab, in variber states. Speaking on the governmental employees.

ISLAMABAD: Federal Secretary (MoFEPT) Waseem Ajmal Chaudhry in a group photograph with participants during the launching ceremony of National Achievement Test 2023 Assessing the Learning Environment organized by Pakistan Institute of Education. -APP

NPO to organize webinar on 'root cause analysis'

ISLAMABAD: The National Productivity Organization (NPO) is going to organize a webinar on "Root Cause Analysis" on March 06 (Wednesday). RCA task is to identify potential causes, determine which cause or causes are root causes and address those root causes to ensure the effect (problem) does not happen again, said NPO document shared here on Friday. The workshop will provide information about the root cause and its analysis, the principle of RCA, three basic causes of non-conformance, ISO requirements about RCA, and why RCA is important.-APP



TWIN CITIES



Briefs

Margalla College hosts competitions

ISLAMABAD: In a lively showcase of talent, Margalla College IMCG F-7/4 Islamabad, on Friday hosted an engaging event of Inter-Collegiate Competitions featuring One-Act Plays and Computer Graphics. The competition drew participation from 10 teams representing various IMCG colleges, making it a vibrant gathering of young minds, a public relations officer said. The esteemed Professor Farhat Mujtaba, a retired former Principal, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest, adding a touch of honor to the event. The atmosphere was charged with excitement as students, faculty, and judges, including the Principal Ms. Ayesha Kiani, came together to witness the impressive displays of creativity. The highlight of the event was the announcement of winners, with IMCG (PG) F-7/4 clinching the first prize. However, in a display of camaraderie, they passed the trophy to IMCG F-7/2, the host college, creating a heartwarming moment of unity among the participat ing institutions. The certificates were distributed to all participants, acknowledging and appreciating their hard work and dedication and encouraging healthy activities. The Principal, Ms. Ayesha Kiani, presented bouquets to the Chief Guest and judges as tokens of gratitude, marking the successful culmination of a refreshing and inspiring event for both minds and souls.-APP

NDMA directed to expedite relief efforts in Gwadar

ISLAMABAD:

Chairman Senate, Mirza Muhammad Afridi on Friday directed the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Balochistan to expedite relief and rehabilitation efforts in the floodhit Gwadar with core focus on extending assistance to the deserving victims. National Party (NP)'s Senator Muhammad Tahir Bizinjo on a public attention notice raised the issue of calamity-hit Gwadar that has been recently ravaged by torrential rains causing flooding in the entire port city. Senator Tahir Bizinjo said that the coastal areas of the country particularly Balochistan have been badly impacted by the recent heavy rains and left Gwadar submerged under rainwater including houses, businesses, public property and infrastructure. He alleged that the relief and rehabilitation efforts were slow and accused the NDMA, PDMA Balochistan and district administration of Gwadar of poor performance and conduct in the disaster-hit area. He also raised his concerns pertaining to looting of relief money, resources and relief items to be sent for the flood victims of Gwadar and alleged that the relief assistance would not reach the genuine victims or impacted population. The Senator mentioned that as per his sources, there was already shortage of food items leading to epidemics break out in the impacted areas. He vehemently demanded the quarters concerned to ensure provision of relief items to the



ISLAMABAD: A girl on the way carrying her younger brother during rain that experienced the Federal Capital. —APP

Pakistan needs to tap into \$4.92 trillion D-8 Market

FPCCI Chief informed that General Assembly meeting of D-8 CCI discussed in detail roadmap and strategy for intra-alliance trade promotion; plan of activities for next three years; arbitration system; D-8 Preferential Trade Agreement (D-8 PTA); visa-related issues; transportation costs; value chain economic fruits; regional connectivity; currency swap agreement; barter trade and D-8 Halal Exposition in Indonesia

DNA

ISLAMABAD. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, has represented Pakistan in the all-influential General Assembly meeting of the D-8 Chambers of Commerce and Industry (D-8 CCI). He apprised that the meeting was also attended by Iran, Turkiye, Egypt, Indonesia, Bangladesh and Nigeria.

Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh expressed his vision that Paki-

stan must tap into the export market of D-8 countries with a combined GDP of \$4.92 billion; and, tapping into these markets has the potential to correct Pakistan's regional trade deficit for a number of reasons: (i) Pakistan has friendly ties with the D-8 members (iii) we have geographical contiguity or landbased access with some member countries (iii) land-based routes can be used for transshipment (iv) shipment to these countries takes lesser time and costs (v)

with intra D-8 trade at merely 5 percent, there are low-hanging fruits to be grabbed in a short-span of time. FPCCI Chief informed that General Assembly meeting of D-8 CCI discussed in detail roadmap and strategy for intra-alliance trade promotion; plan of activities for next three years; arbitration system; D-8 Preferential Trade Agreement (D-8 PTA); visa-related issues; transportation costs; value chain economic fruits; regional connectivity; currency swap

agreement; barter trade and D-8 Halal Exposition in Indonesia. Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh noted that the D-8 bloc represents more than 5 percent of global GDP; which makes the alliance a significant one for the D-8 countries in particular and the entire region in general. He explained that only if we can capture the D-8 market in value-added textiles; IT & ITeS services; sports goods; rice, fruits & vegetables; surgical equipment; pharmaceuticals and construction mate-

rials, Pakistan can enhance its exports by \$5 – 10 billion within 2 – 3 years vis-vis D-8. Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh stressed that D-8 countries have a cumulative population of more than 1.1 billion; and, Preferential Trade Agreement can usher a wave of economic prosperity; investments & JVs; industrial collaborations; tourism & hospitality boost; establishment of cost-controlled trade routes and a collective voice in economic affairs in other international forums.

ICP strengthens security measures

ISLAMABAD: In response to the directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCPO) Dr Akbar Nasir, the security of the federal capital Islamabad has been strengthened in order to deal with any untoward situation and Section 144 has been imposed, prohibiting demonstrations and any gatherings within Islamabad. Moreover, no political activities are allowed in the Federal Capital, and only individuals with invitations were permitted to go towards Parliament House. The invitees were also directed to verify their invitations for the National Assembly session before arrival, as some invitations have been canceled, a public relations officer on Friday said. Additionally, SSP Operations need to be requested for any activity in the High-Security Zone. While strict monitoring of all matters is being carried out from the Safe City. He further said that legal action will be taken against those engaging in any unlawful activities.-APP

ANF recovers 776 kg drugs in six operations

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting six operations across the country managed to recover 776 kg drugs and arrested seven accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Friday. He informed that 994 grams hashish was recovered from the possession of a passenger going to Sharjah at Islamabad Airport. 20.5 kg Xanax tablets, 26 kg Rivotril, 49.8 kg William, 344 kg Tramadol tablets were recovered from Karachi and an accused was arrested. In third operation, 216 kg hashish was recovered from the possession of five accused arrested from Faisalabad Road, Okara. 63 kg hashish was recovered from Zakhakhel Khvber.-APP

Solangi bids adieu to Senate

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Murtaza Solangi on Friday bid farewell to the Upper House of the Parliament after receiving acclaim from the Deputy to Chairman Senate on behalf of the House for his cooperation. During the sixth meeting of the 355th session of the Senate, the Minister requested the Chair to defer the question hour session for the next meeting so that the upcoming Minister should take up the queries of the Senator after the new regime comes into power. Solangi said the Prime Minister's election was going to held on Sunday and the new government would be formed consequently. Therefore, the House must take up its question hour in the next session so that the newly elected regime and minister shall better reply to the queries to the members of the House. Deputy Chairman Senate, Mirza Muhammad Afridi extended his gratitude to the interim Minister for his cooperation and time. "The Minister for Parliamentary Affairs used to give time to the House but

to the Upper House. The House thank you for your efforts," he said. Earlier Senator Bahramand Khan Tangi of Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians on his supplementary query to his question pertaining to audit of Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) raised his concerned over the reply provided by the Minister. Senator Tangi said he had sought the details of audit of WAPDA whereas some 557 observations were raised in the audit report but no details pertaining to the nature of objections made and any action made against it. He regretted at the reply submitted in the house was not satisfactory and he also expressed dissatisfaction over the record. The caretaker minister for Parliamentary Affairs said the Senator's queries demanded details of audit accounts of WAPthe said audit report.

of audit accounts of WAP-DA in the last year and its second part shed light on irregularities surfaced in the said audit report. "A total of 557 audit paras have been made under the report observations, out of which 402 have been discussed in the Departmental Audit Committee (DAC), 175 DAC direc-

with and 39 observations response was awaited, 179 replies to reaudit demands received, three DAC directives compliance was under process, compliance awaited from Water Resources Ministry on 5 observations and one para was settled and some 155 observations were yet to be discussed in the committee," Solangi told the House. Senator Tangi in another query sought details on the disparity in profits and expenditure of the Sui Northern Gas Limited. He said the Sui Northern was earning a profit of Rs 1 million whereas its expenditure was around Rs 13,654 million making a huge disbalance in the earning and the salaries and allowances drawn by its employees. He agreed with the Minister to defer the question hour as the latter furnished the response that no briefing was provided by the relevant ministry in this regard. Senator Saifullah Abro of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf said Caretaker Minister Murtaza Solangi attended every session of the Senate and it was his last day, so no more questions should be asked

'Pakistan's growing startup ecosystem driving innovation'

DNA

impacted population.—APP

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Pakistan in Czech Republic Ayesha Ali has said that Pakistan's growing startup ecosystem was driving innovation and entrepreneurship, particularly in areas of e-commerce, fintech, and health technology. The ambassador, in her address at a webinar on "IT Landscape of Pakistan" said that Pakistan was known for its vibrant IT outsourcing industry, offering cost-effective solutions in software development, digital marketing, and customer support, said a press release received on Friday. The

the Embassy of Pakistan in Prague in collaboration with Czech Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Code District, a Lahore-based private software house, and attended by more than 50 companies, both from Pakistan and Czech Republic. The ambassador said that Pakistan had become a preferred destination for IT outsourcing services. Ambassador Ayesha said that on the other hand, the Czech Republic was renowned for its advanced IT infrastructure, research and development capabilities, and expertise in areas such as cybersecurity, artificial intelligence,

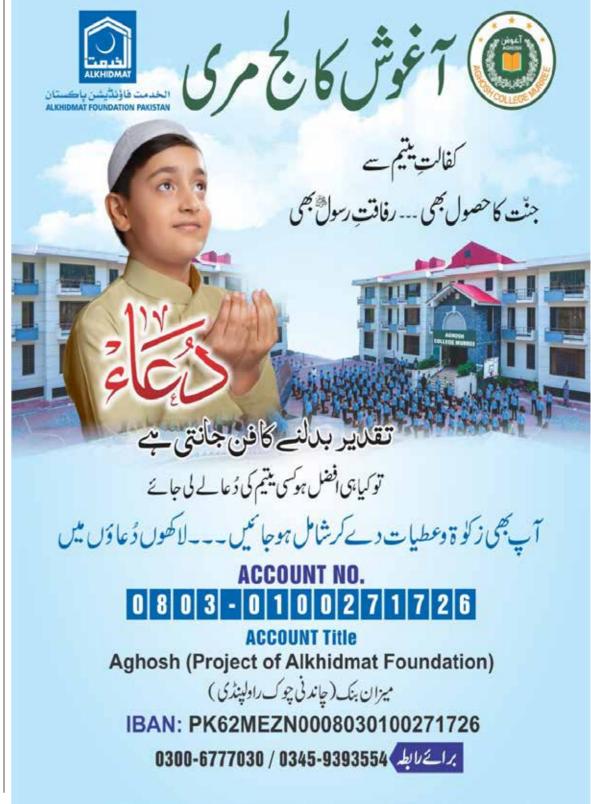
webinar was organised by

and data analytics. By leveraging their respective strengths, Pakistan and the Czech Republic can explore opportunities for collaboration in several key areas, the envoy emphasised.

n behalf of software houses from Pakistan, a presentation highlighting product and service range being offered to outsiders was given by CEO Code District, Ashar Samdani, From the Czech side, presentations were delivered by Miroslav Hazer, Director External Relations, Czech Confederation of Industries, Eva Rybkova, Chairperson of Czech Pakistan Business Council at the Czech Chambers of Commerce and Ahsan Aslam, Czech - Pakistan Chambers of Commerce. The dominant theme of these presentations was to introduce about economic opportunities in the Czech Republic. The overall aim of the webinar was to showcase Pakistan's IT potential to the central and Eastern European markets, in particular Czech Republic, while ensuring significant B2B engagement between interested companies. It also helped in educating Pakistani companies about the scope, potential bottlenecks and local regulations with regard to doing business in the Czech Re-

DG stresses civil-defense awareness

ISLAMABAD: Director General of Civil Defense Niaz Muhammad Khan Friday stressed media for creating more awareness among the people about Civil Defense and to prepare volunteers and students who can help in case of any natural calamities. In an exclusive interview with PTV news channel, on eve of world Defense day highlight the achievements of national disaster-prevention services and to raises awareness about importance of self-defense. Civil defense training is a must for every man and woman, he said, adding, in order to save their own lives and the lives of others. Civil Defense is the best organization for the service of the people, he said, adding, our volunteer training programs are free of cost where interested citizens specially youth can actively participate. He demanded of the provincial and center government for equipping the volunteers with the needed facilities so they could perform their tasks more efficiently. Civil Defense staff and volunteers can took part in firefighting and first aid programs, he mentioned. He said that the training of the Civil Defense was the need of the hour and it should be taken as common responsibility by all the citizens to make the country strong and stable. The day also focuses on making volunteers more active participants in the evacuation, response and rescue efforts resulting from any disaster, he added. —DNA



US election 2024

his past Tuesday, Michiganders unwilling to play a part in Biden's genocidal war on Gaza chose the "uncommitted" option in their ballot boxes. By the time the polls closed, the cross-state movement had overwhelmed its aspirations for 20,000 votes and reached over 101,100 votes. Each one of those votes represented a voter who left their home in the middle of the 10°C Michigan weather, got in their car or public transport, and hauled over to a polling booth in order to send a clear message to the Biden White House. According to Nathaniel Rakich, senior elections analyst at FiveThirtyEight, an "uncommitted" vote means a voter is saying, "I don't want any of those candidates. I want my delegates to the convention to go in uncommitted," which in turn "sends a message to Biden about Gaza...which is the number one issue, the number two issue, and the number three issue" for some Michiganders. Back when Obama was the incumbent in 2012, the uncommitted vote did not surpass 2%, with 20,000 votes. This time around, with 101,000 votes, and a 13.3% share, the consequences for Biden's reelection campaign are foreboding. Arab Americans, Muslim Americans, Americans who are non-interventionist, and all Americans who believe in freedom and justice for the Palestinian people have had to watch in horror for the past 145 days as Biden gave an unblinking green light to Bibi's rabid genocidal war on Gaza. Throughout the onslaught that has seen +30,000 Palestinians butchered, most of whom are women and children and with thousands more still under the rubble, Biden has steadfastly supplied the weapons, ammunition, personnel, diplomatic cover, and media support for the genocide to continue. From that sentiment of sheer anger arises the #Listen-2Michigan movement begging Biden to reconsider his unconditional support of "Israel", as well as the #AbandonBiden movement, which argues that whatever happens from now till November, all Democrats must abandon Biden and vote for any alternative. Over the past two national presidential elections, the outcome has hinged on a few voters and even fewer states. In 2016, Donald Trump carried Michigan with a 0.23% margin, or 10,704 votes. In 2020, Biden successfully flipped the state with a margin of 2.78% and 155,000 votes at a time when Trump was at an all-time low in favorability polls. The Republican Primary concluded on the same day with Trump edging out Biden in sheer number of votes with a margin of 138,000, a number that will be higher once Nikki Haley drops out of the race. Therefore, the number of democrats voting uncommitted, and the number of people who decide to sit out the election altogether currently point to a Biden loss on the 5th of November. As a response to the movement to punish Biden for refusing to rein in Netanyahu's genocidal war on Gaza, some Democratic pundits and political talking heads took to X in hopes of dissuading Michiganders from "handing it to Trump." "I keep starting on drafts that are like 'why you should hope Biden wins if you care about Palestinian human rights' but then I check and everyone actively working to defeat him has actually already conceded that point." However, is that true? Even though Trump was responsible for launching the normalization accords that completely ignored the Palestinians, spearheaded the campaign to defund UNRWA, moved the US Embassy to Jerusalem, and recognized the Golan as Israeli, is he so much better than Biden, that Arab Americans are stupidly condemning themselves by voting uncommitted? The answer is an emphatic no.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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

> Member APNS / ABC Certified Vol: 05 Issue: 131

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960 Off 11: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad



West's imaginary arctic threat

collection of Western media outlets from the US' NBC News to the UK's Daily Mail and Canada's The Globe And Mail have hyped up a report from open-source intelligence firm Strider Technologies earlier this month about growing China-Russia economic cooperation in the Arctic. Energy and logistics investments are misportrayed as being driven by secret military intentions. However, the real secret intentions are those of the Western media, conjuring up perceptions about China's intentions in the Arctic. Before explaining what's driving this latest information warfare narrative, it's important to remind the reader about a few facts. A 2017 law of Russia banned shipping oil, natural gas and coal along the Northern Sea Route (NSR) under a foreign flag, while a 2018 law mandates that these ships will also have to be built in Russia. What this means is that Russian-built and Russian-flagged ships are the only ships allowed to export these resources through that new maritime corridor. A 2022 law stipulates that all foreign vessels must require prior permission, and only one can transit at a time. With these legal facts in mind, the Western media's innuendo that China might soon take de facto control of the Arctic is dispelled. China-EU trade via the NSR would be carried out due to buyers and sellers reaching an earlier agreement per the norms of international commerce so there's nothing for the West to worry about and they actually should be pleased that there won't be restrictions on those vessels. Nevertheless, the Western media doesn't fearmonger about India supposedly plotting to take de facto control of the Arctic, nor does it claim that Russia has become dependent on it like they say about China despite India scaling up its purchase of Russian crude by a whopping 13 times since 2022. Unlike China, however, India hasn't been designated by Western policymakers as a "rival" and that's why they don't concoct conspiracy theories about its intentions with Russia or in its Arctic region. This insight segues into an explanation of why the West is lying about China's intentions in the Arctic. The larger context within which Strider Technologies' report was published and amplified by Western media is that the latest dynamics of the conflict in Ukraine have once again turned against Kiev and its allies. The failure of summer's counteroffensive prompted newly appointed Commander-in-Chief Alexander Syrsky to admit that "We have transitioned from offensive actions to conducting a defensive operation." That organization will therefore soon be just Russia and NATO upon Sweden joining the bloc, and the US will predictably try to further impede its functioning and politicize it as yet another way to contain Russia. The pretext for doing so appears to be the information warfare narrative about China's growing investments in the region, which are twisted to falsely imply aggressive and hegemonic intentions. The reality, however, is that it's these lies about its intentions that are spewed for those exact same reasons. Those who fall for it will be more amenable to American efforts to perpetuate Russia-Europe tensions after the hot phase of the Ukrainian conflict ends on the artificially manufactured pretext that was described above.

Time to end the world's longest occupation

MONDOWELSS. NET

Ramzy Baroud

This mantra was also championed by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu when he cared enough to pay lip service to the "peace process" and other US fantasies. Back then, he spoke about his readiness to hold unconditional negotiations, while arguing constantly that Israel does not have a partner for peace. All of this, of course, was "doublespeak". What Netanyahu and other Israelis were actually saving was that Israel should be freed from any commitment to international law, let alone international pressure

eft to its own devices, Israel would never grant Palestinians their freedom. In the past, though, some people, whether in ignorance or otherwise, claimed that peace in Palestine can only be achieved through "unconditional negotiations". This mantra was also championed by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu when he cared enough to pay lip service to the "peace process" and other US fantasies. Back then, he spoke about his readiness to hold unconditional negotiations, while arguing constantly that Israel does not have a partner for peace. All of this, of course, was "doublespeak". What Netanyahu and other Israelis were actually saying was that Israel should be freed from any commitment to international law, let alone international pressure. Worse, by declaring that Israel has no Palestinian partner for peace, the Israeli government has essentially cancelled the hypothetical and "unconditional negotiations" before they have even taken place. For years - in fact, for decades - Israel has been allowed to perpetuate such nonsense, empowered, of course, by the total and unconditional support of Washington and its other Western allies. In an environment where Israel receives billions of dollars of US-Western aid, and where it has grown to become a thriving technological hub, as well as one of the world's largest weapons exporters, Tel Aviv simply had no reason to end its occupation or dismantle its racist apartheid in Palestine. But things must change now. The genocidal Israeli war in Gaza should completely alter our understanding, not only of the tragic reality in occupied Palestine, but of past misunderstanding as well. It should be made clear that Israel has never had any intention of achieving a just peace, ending its colonization of Palestine - that is, the expansion of illegal settlements - or granting Palestinians an iota of rights. On the contrary, Israel has been planning to carry out genocide against the Palestinians all along. It is a fact that Israel has already carried out many terrible war crimes against Palestinians, starting with the 1947/48 Nakba and in successive wars ever since. Such crimes, large or small, have always been accompanied by ethnic cleansing. Over 800,000 Palestinians were ethnically cleansed, for example, when Israel was

established on the ruins of Palestine 76 years ago. An additional 300,000 were ethnically cleansed during the Naksa, the war and "setback" of 1967. Throughout the years, mainstream Western media outlets did their best to hide Israeli crimes, or minimize their impact; or even blame someone else for them. This process of shielding Israel remains in place to this day, even when tens of thousands of Palestinians have been killed since 7 October and most of the civilian infrastructure in the Gaza Strip, including hospitals, schools, mosques, churches, homes and shelters, has been destroyed by the occupation state. Considering all of this, anyone who still speaks of "unconditional negotiations" – especially those conducted under the auspices of Washington - is, frankly, only doing so to help Israel escape international legal and political accountability. Fortunately, the world is waking up to this fact and, hopefully, this awakening will mature sooner rather than later, as Israeli massacres in Gaza continue to claim hundreds of innocent lives every single day. This collective realization that Israel must be stopped through international measures is also accompanied by an equally critical realization that the US is not an honest broker for peace. Indeed, that it never was. To appreciate the ruinous role of the US in this so-called conflict, just marvel at this fact. While practically every country that participated with a legal opinion and a political position in the International Court of Justice (ICJ) public hearings from 19 to 26 February formulated its position based on international law, the US did not.

"The Court should not find that Israel is legally obligated to immediately and unconditionally withdraw from occupied territory," the acting legal adviser for the US State Department, Richard Visek, said embarrassingly on 21 February. That's right: 76 years after the Nakba and following 57 years of military occupation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the position of the US – even in the ICJ – remains committed to defending the illegality of Israel's conduct throughout Palestine. Compare this US stance with the rounded, courageous and legally grounded position of almost every country in the world, especially the 50-plus countries which asked to speak at the ICJ hearings. Take China, for example. Its words and actions seem far more consistent with international law than many Western nations, especially now, and it went even further: "In pursuit of the right to self-determination, Palestinian people's use of force to resist foreign oppression and complete the establishment of an independent state is [an] inalienable right well founded in international law," Chinese representative Ma Xinmin told the ICJ on 22 February.

Unlike the cliched and non-committal position of the likes of UK Foreign Secretary David Cameron on the need to start "irreversible progress" towards an independent Palestinian state, the Chinese position is arguably the most comprehensive and realistic articulation. Ma linked self-determination to liberation struggle, to sovereignty, to the inalienable rights of people, which are all consistent with international laws and norms. In fact, it is these very principles that have led to the liberation of numerous countries in the Global South.

Given that Israel has no intention of freeing Palestinians from the grip of apartheid and military occupation, the Palestinian people have had no other option but to resist that occupation. According to the Geneva Conventions, resistance is an entirely legitimate response. The question now is whether or not the international community will continue to defy the US position in words only, or if it will formulate a new approach to the Israeli occupation of Palestine, thus bringing it to an end by any means necessary.

In his statement to the ICJ on 19 February, British barrister Philippe Sands, who is a member of Team Palestine, offered a roadmap on how the international community can force Israel to end its occupation: "The right of self-determination requires that UN Member States bring Israel's occupation to an immediate end. No aid. No assistance. No complicity. No contribution to forcible actions. No money. No arms. No trade. No nothing."

Indeed. Now is the time to turn words into actions, especially when thousands of children are being killed for no other reason than that they were born Palestinian. It's time to end the world's longest military

Two years of the Russian operation in Ukraine

Dmitri Kovalevich

The coup touched off a violent and unrelenting ideological and institutional drive to suppress the multinational character of Ukraine, as inherited from the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the decades of progress and development during Soviet Ukraine before and after World War Two. All things 'Russian' were henceforth targets for elimination by an emboldened Ukrainian ultranationalism on the march. Since 2014, television and media outlets in the Russian language have been banned. Political parties that opposed the 2014 coup have been banned. Writers and activists have been driven underground or abroad. Some have been massacred

he end of February 2024 marks the tenth anniversary of the pro-Western coup in Kiev, Ukraine that overthrew the country's elected president and legislature. It is also the second anniversary of Russia's entry into the civil conflict in Ukraine that has raged ever since the 2014 coup. Russia's 'Special Military Operation', as the Russian government and people call it, is a direct consequence of the coup and the deep divisions in Ukrainian society that the coup brought to the fore and deepened. The main trigger of the coup was the violent overthrow of the elected president of Ukraine and, shortly after, its elected legislature. The coup touched off a violent and unrelenting ideological and institutional drive to suppress the multinational character of Ukraine, as inherited from the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the decades of progress and development during Soviet Ukraine before and after World War Two. All things 'Russian' were henceforth targets for elimination by an emboldened Ukrainian ultranationalism on the march. Since 2014, television and media outlets in the Russian language have been banned. Political parties that opposed the 2014 coup have been banned. Writers and activists have been driven underground or abroad. Some have been massacred, as in the city of Odessa on May 4, 2014. Monuments and place names honoring Soviet Ukraine's past have been dismantled, in many cases replaced by monuments honoring the Nazi collaborators of the World War Two era. Glorification of, and monuments to, Ukrainian Nazi collaborators from those years is now common. Ten years ago, days before the actual coup, unknown snipers began shooting both protesters and police officers in the battleground of Kiev's central square, commonly called 'Maidan' Square'. (The name 'Maidan' came to describe the pro-coup movement as a whole.) According to victims' testimonies, some of which were voiced at the flawed and drawn out trials in which few of the trigger-pullers were charged and none convicted, the deadly fire came from the roofs of buildings seized and controlled by the coup's far-right, paramilitary shock troops. The 'Maidan Massacre' on February 20, 2014 was a key moment in justifying the coup before the populations of the Western countries because Western media and governments immediately blamed anti-coup forces (so-called 'pro-Russians') for the deaths that occurred. They waged a frenetic propaganda drive to turn the tide of public opinion and convince it that supporters of the president and legislature being targeted by the coup were responsible for the more than 100 shooting deaths that occurred that day. Radical ultranationalists were the strike force of the new, pro-U.S., and pro-European Union government that came to power. Resistance against them was concentrated in Crimea, in the industrial working-class regions of Donbass in the east of the country, and in the city and surroundings of Odessa in the country's southwest. Resistance to the coup and to the far-right paramilitaries took some months to develop in Donbass because there were no governing

structures there to which the population could turn for protection in the highly centralized, post-1991 Ukraine. In the city of Odessa, resistance to the coup was tragically suppressed in a massacre of protesters in the city center on May 4 that killed more than 40. Crimea resisted and survived the coup thanks to the existence of an autonomous, regional government to which the population could turn for protection. Crimea was the only region of Ukraine to have such an autonomous government. This was and remains a legacy of the self-determination policies of the 1917 Russian Revolution. The 'Autonomous Republic of Crimea' survived the secession of Ukraine from the Soviet Union (USSR) in 1990-91 and became a thorn in the side of the nationalist government in Kiev that oversaw the transition of Ukraine's planned economy under Soviet rule to today's disastrous capitalist economy. Today, Ukraine's economy is utterly subordinate and beholden to the United States, Britain, and the large powers of the European Union. Over the past ten years, millions of former citizens of Ukraine have migrated to Russia from eastern and central Ukraine for safety and for better social and economic opportunities. On the western side of the country, millions have migrated to countries of the European Union, continuing and accelerating the trend of Ukrainians escaping the disaster of the country's post-Soviet, capitalist economy and social system. Some estimates place Ukraine's current population at 28 million, down from some 45 million at the time of its 1991 secession from the USSR. But no one knows for sure because, conveniently for the coup leaders and their Western sponsors, the last census conducted by the Ukraine government was more than 20 years ago, in 2001. In February 2015, a major ceasefire and peace agreement was agreed to by Ukraine, following a major military defeat it suffered in Donbass, in and around the small city of Debaltsevo. The 'Minsk 2' agreement (text here) was a political settlement that would grant autonomy to the two Donbass republics of Donetsk and Lugansk. It could have served as a model for other regions of Ukraine with large populations of Russian language and culture or with smaller populations of national minorities, such as the restive people of Hungarian origin living for centuries in what became western Ukraine in the 20th century.

The autonomy provisions of Minsk 2 resembled the powers exercised by states in the U.S. and provinces in Canada. Co-signing the agreement as guarantors were Russia, France and Germany. It was endorsed by no less than the UN Security Council five days later, on February 17. But the Kiev regime never lived up to Minsk 2. It was encouraged by 'co-guarantors' France and Germany to ignore it. The regime spent the years following 2015 refusing to implement the agreement while militarily reinforcing the Donbass territory it continued to occupy, all in anticipation of relaunching a war against all those Ukrainians resisting the 2014 coup regime and its far-right ideology. As it did this, the regime received more and more financial and weapons

support from the West. Today's destruction of cities such as Mariupol and Bahmut (Artyomovsk to Russians) and of districts on the western edges of Donetsk city, such as Adviivka, are precisely a consequence of double-dealing over Minsk 2, by the Kiev regime and its Western backers.

On the two-year anniversary of Russia's 2022 intervention,

President Vladimir Putin explained how the Russian Federation waited patiently for the implementation of Minsk 2 and felt deeply betrayed by the failure of Kiev and the Western powers to do so. He said, "The Russian Federation did not know that European partners were not going to fulfill the Minsk agreements. We tried hard to implement them. The events of the last decade have shown that in today's world of Western powers feeling omnipotent, signed treaties may be disregarded, in violation of long-established principles of international diplomacy. Russian writer Ivan Lizan argued on Telegram on February 19: "Treaties must be honored, Pacta sunt servanda ('Agreements must be kept'). So sounds like the cornerstone principle of civil and international law. But the period from 2014 to 2022 has shown that treaties are no longer necessarily respected by the Western powers, in the belief that the promised, binding pledge to fulfill them is nothing more than mental inertia amidst a tendency to preserve the existing status quo and refuse to revise them." In the Russian Federation, entire teams of lawyers continue to work diligently to comply de jure with every letter of a treaty signed by the country. But Western ideologues, including the liberal variant, are increasingly manipulating the moral and ethical dimensions of diplomacy in order to revise existing or future agreements in their favor. Indeed, the Ukraine coup ten years ago took place one day after then-President Viktor Yanukovych had signed an agreement to resolve the political crisis in the country that burst into the open in November 2013. At that time, it seemed that Ukraine was in the final stage of an agreement for 'economic association' with the European Union, but Yanukovych and his government wanted time to further consider the negative, long-term consequences for economic relations with the Russian Federation. Additionally, Russia was offering better financial assistance, including improvements to then-existing financial agreements, in order to avoid painful and very disruptive reductions of economic ties between the two countries. A political agreement to resolve the exploding crisis in Ukraine in February 2014 was mediated by the foreign ministers of Germany, France and Poland. It envisioned presidential elections in the fall of 2014, one year before they were constitutionally due. Yanukovych pledged he would not take any forceful action against the pro-Western and pro-coup protesters that were violently disrupting Kiev and cities in western Ukraine. But the coup's rightist paramilitaries simply proceeded to storm and occupy central Kiev and force Yanukovych to flee for his life, all in violation of the agreement reached one day earlier!

-Source: Al Mayadeen English



Fazi says no to PML-N's offer

From Page 01 Sanaullah emphasised the cordiality observed during the meeting, asserting that there was no animosity between the two parties. "Maulana Fazlur Rehman remains our beacon. Our earnest endeavour is to retain his counsel and ensure its efficacy," he affirmed. Dispelling speculation, Sanaullah clarified that Nawaz Sharif's visit was not aimed at garnering votes from Maulana Fazlur Rehman but rather to deliberate on the nation's prevailing political climate. He underscored mutual respect between the leaders, highlighting their willingness to consider each other's perspectives. Sanaullah also lauded Mahmood Khan Achakzai as a revered and patriotic figure, hinting at potential engagement between PML-N and Achakzai.

PML-N's Ayaz...

From Page 01 The NA speaker said: "Aamir Dogar has always called me a big brother and I will show him by becoming a big brother." "My doors are open for every-one." The PML-N leader said he would try to create a consensus in politics with the help of all stakeholders. He urged both sides of the aisle to have differences but in a democratic way. The NA session was convened to elect the speaker and deputy speaker during which opposition lawmakers chanted slogans against alleged rigging in the Feb 8 polls. Before the session started SIC's parliamentary party meeting was held in the house's lobby, where they vowed to continue their protest in the assembly.

Pakistan condemns...

From Page 01 Kashmir for five more years. She said these opa vicious intent by India to suppress freedom of expression in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir in complete disregard of international human rights and humanitarian law. Responding to queries, the spokesperson disclosed that the Prime Minister's Office is actively investigating the letter authored by PTI to the IMF, indicating a commitment to transparency and accountability within the government.

Gaza's health system...

From Page 01 Israel blamed the deaths on crowds that surrounded the aid trucks, saying victims had been trampled or run over. "People are so desperate for food, for fresh water, for any supplies that they risk their lives in getting any food, any supplies to support their children, to support themselves," Lindmeier said. While aid is reaching southern parts of the Gaza Strip, it is too slow to avert a hunger crisis even there. Aid barely makes it to northern areas that are further from the main border crossing and only accessible through more active battle fronts.

New KP CM declares...

From Page 01 He warned against coercive means against the PTI workers. He made it clear that the PTI should not be pushed to wall, otherwise the youth will have no option but to react. He also demanded resignation of the Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja. Talking about May 9 incidents he called upon the concerned authorities to withdraw all fake FIRs against PTI works and leaders within one week. He said if FIRs were not withdrawn then the concerned officers will have to face music. EARLIER, Polling to elect the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) chief minister has started on Friday with independent candidate Ali Amin Gandapur and PML-N candidate Dr Ibadullah vying for the slot.

Briefs Rawalpindi braces for rain as PSL 9 double-header looms

Lahore Qalandars and Peshawar Zalmi have taken preemptive measures by canceling their practice sessions

OUR CORRESPONDENTS

RAWALPINDI: As cricket enthusiasts gear up for an exhilarating double-header in Rawalpindi in the ongoing Pakistan Super League (PSL) 9, the weather forecast has overshadowed the excitement surrounding the upcoming matches. Scheduled to unfold tomorrow at the Pindi Cricket Stadium, the clash between Peshawar Zalmi and Lahore Qalandars, followed by Islamabad United versus Quetta Gladiators, might face disruption due to inclement weather.

Moreover, Lahore Qalandars and Peshawar Zalmi have taken preemptive measures by canceling their practice sessions. According to the latest report from The Weather Channel, Rawalpindi is on high alert as the chances of rain loom large, with a staggering 100% probability during the day and a still significant 70% chance at night. The forecast suggests the possibility of heavy downpours, raising concerns among cricket aficionados and players alike. Seeking insights into the impending weather, officials from the Meteorological Office shared alarming projections. "Chances of rain with thunderstorms are likely for Saturday. In fact, rain is expected



affected day of the upcoming rainy spell."

As anticipation mounts for the matches, concerns are escalating over the feasibility of conducting the games amidst such adverse weather conditions. "Rain could pour in at any time during the next two days. Saturday could be the worst hit day.'

PSL 9 remaining matches schedule:

March 2, 2024 Peshawar Zalmi v Lahore Qalandars, Pindi Cricket Stadium; Islamabad United v Quetta Gladiators, Pindi Cricket Stadium March 3, 2024 Karachi Kings v Multan Sultans, National Bank Stadium

to start on Friday evening with Saturday being the most March 4, 2024 Islamabad United v Peshawar Zalmi. Pindi

March 5, 2024 Peshawar Zalmi v Multan Sultans, Pindi Cricket Stadium

March 6, 2024 Quetta Gladiators v Karachi Kings, Pindi Cricket Stadium; Islamabad United v Lahore Qalandars,

March 7, 2024 Islamabad United v Karachi Kings, Pindi Cricket Stadium

March 8, 2024 Peshawar Zalmi v Quetta Gladiators, Pindi Cricket Stadium

March 9, 2024 Karachi Kings v Lahore Qalandars, National March 10, 2024 Islamabad United v Multan Sultans, Pindi

Cricket Stadium; Quetta Gladiators v Lahore Qalandars, National Bank Stadium

March 11, 2024 Karachi Kings v Peshawar Zalmi, National Bank Stadium

March 12, 2024 Quetta Gladiators v Multan Sultans, National Bank Stadium

March 14, 2024 Qualifier (1 v 2), National Bank Stadium March 15, 2024 Eliminator 1 (3 v 4), National Bank Stadium March 16, 2024 Eliminator 2 (Eliminator Winner v Qualifier Runner-up), National Bank Stadium

March 18, 2024 Final, National Bank Stadium.

Mbappe set to face Monaco final time with PSG

PARIS: Kylian Mbappe will face former club Monaco for the final time as a Paris Saint-Germain player on Friday, provided coach Luis Enrique selects his star player. The France captain's relationship with the PSG boss has come under the spotlight with Mbappe discovering he is no longer assured of a place in the line-up since telling the Qatar-owned club he would leave at the end of this season. Mbappe informed PSG in mid-February that he intended to depart when his contract expires in June, after seven years at the Parc des Princes, with Real Madrid his likely next destination. Luis Enrique responded to that by leaving the 25-year-old on the bench for their next game at Nantes, although Mbappe came on to score a penalty in a 2-0 win.

More surprisingly, Mbappe started last week's home meeting with Rennes and wore the captain's armband in the absence of Marquinhos, but was substituted on 65 minutes.

Trailing 1-0 at the time, PSG came back to draw thanks to a penalty won and converted by his replacement, Goncalo Ramos. PSG's all-time top scorer with 244 goals, Mbappe has rarely started on the bench in 292 appearances since signing from Monaco in 2017. He has occasionally been substituted earlier than was the case last weekend, but always either due to injury or with PSG already winning. "It's very simple. Sooner or later, when it happens, we are going to have to get used to playing without Kylian," Luis Enrique said when asked to explain why he had taken Mbappe off. "When I want to play him I will do so, and if I don't want to, the same thing.' PSG have to prepare for the future, and their position of strength in Ligue 1 allows them to do so - despite drawing against Rennes, Luis Enrique's team are 11 points clear of second-placed Brest with 11 games remaining. Perhaps there could even be a temptation to rest Mbappe in Monaco, given that Paris go to Spain defending a 2-0 lead into the second leg of their Champions League last-16 tie against Real Sociedad next Tuesday. They have been knocked out in the last 16 in five of the last seven seasons and reaching the quarter-finals this vear is the minimum objective in Europe for the French champions.

Yet Mbappe will want to play in Mona-

co, who are themselves chasing Champions League qualification and are third in the table. It was in the principality where he emerged as such a thrilling talent and starred as Monaco won the title in 2016/17.

His impending move abroad means he may not get a chance to return to the Stade Louis II again any time soon.

The Algerian international joined Lyon on loan from West Ham United at the end of the January transfer window, despite the necessary paperwork not being approved before the deadline. Special dispensation was given by FIFA to complete the deal, and Benrahma has quickly shown his

value to his new team. Last weekend the 28-year-old left-winger came on and scored the winner as Lyon won 2-1 at Metz, a seventh success in nine league games for a resurgent team. In midweek he started and was the main threat, hitting the post direct from a corner, as Lyon beat Strasbourg on penalties to reach the French Cup semi-finals. He should have a key role to play against Lens, where another win would have the once-struggling side believing they can yet snatch European qualification. - Agencies



Danielle controls 3rd set to reach Austin quarters

PARIS: Third-seeded Danielle Collins rallied to post a 4-6, 7-6 (3), 6-0 victory over Katie Volynets on Thursday to reach the ATX Open quarterfinals in Austin, Texas.

Collins, the 2022 Australian Open runner-up, had 39 winners and was 6-for-6 on break points in outdueling Volynets. Leading 5-4 in the second set, Volynets served for the match but Collins stymied her, won the tiebreaker and then dominated the final set.

Collins will face sixth-seeded Wang Xiyu of China on Friday. World number one Swiatek survives huge Collins scare Wang sailed to a 6-1, 6-2 victory over Darja Semenistaja of Lativa. Cymbiotika San Diego Open Anna Blinkova of Russia saved five of eight break points while beating fifth-seeded Dayana Yastremska of Ukraine 7-6 (6), 6-2 to reach the quarterfinals. Yastremska led 5-2 in the first set before Blinkova rallied to force a tiebreaker.

Blinkova won the final two points to win the set and sailed through the second for the victory. No. 7 seed Donna Vekic of Croatia also advanced with a 6-4, 3-6, 6-3 victory over Canada's Marina Stakusic. - Agencies

Paris Olympics: Pakistan boxer Zohaib eyes qualification

LAHORE: Pakistan's sole Olympics boxing hope Zohaib Rasheed on Thursday said that he has utilised all the available training facilities in the country and will make a bold effort to press for the Olympics seat. Zohaib left for Milan from Karachi on Thursday night to feature in the World Qualification round one which will begin in Italy on Saturday (tomorrow). "Yes I am in top shape and have made all out effort to prepare well by availing myself of the training facilities. Inshallah I will make a top effort to earn Olympics seat for the country," Zohaib told The News. "We underwent two and a half months training in Lahore which was good. I cannot complain that we were not sent abroad for training. Yes, it could have added to our preparation but still it's good that we at least were given a good training period during which I worked hard and am ready for the challenge," Zohaib said. - Agencies

Shoaib announces birth of baby girl

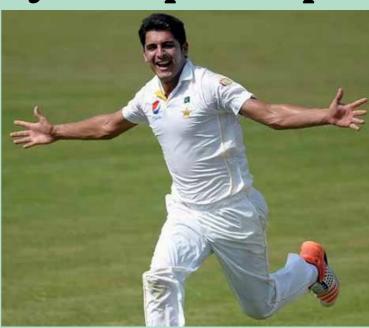
ISLAMABAD: Former Pakistani pacer Shoaib Akhtar announced the birth of his daughter, Nooreh Ali Akhtar, through his social media account. Akhtar, who represented Pakistan in 224 international matches, welcomed a third child into his family. "Mikaeel & Mujaddid have a baby sister now. Allah taala has blessed us with a baby daughter," Akhtar wrote on Instagram. "Welcoming Nooreh Ali Akhtar, born during Jumma prayers, 19th of Shaban, 1445 AH. Aap sab ki duaon ka talab gaar [I request all of you to pray for me]," he added. Akhtar, who is known as the fastest bowler in the history of cricket, married Rubab Khan on June 25, 2014. In November 2016, they welcomed their first child Mohammad Mikaeel Ali and on July 14, 2019, the ex-cricketer and his wife welcomed their second son. - DNA

Glamorgan rope in Mir Hamza for county championship

"Having worked with Mir previously in Pakistan. I have full confidence that Mir will add huge value to our team both on and off the field"

LONDON: Glamorgan have announced

the signing of Pakistan seamer Mir Hamza as an overseas player for the beginning of the 2024 season. The 31-year-old left-armer will be available for the first seven County Championship fixtures. Hamza has featured in five Test matches for his country, with his best bowling figures being 4/32 in the Boxing Day Test against Australia in 2023. He has bagged 434 wickets in first-class cricket at an average of just over 22, and has an impressive record in T20 cricket, averaging 29 with the ball with his best figures being 4/9. "I am thrilled to be joining Glamorgan for the County Championship this summer," Hamza said. "It will be exciting to work with Grant again after working with him with Pakistan, and I can't wait to join up with the squad, get to training and help this great Club push for a positive start to the season. "I have heard many great things about Cardiff from my teammates who played there



last summer and look forward to meeting all of the supporters." Head Coach Grant Bradburn stated: "As Coach, I am excited for our group to add such an experienced performer in Mir Hamza. "Having worked with Mir previously in Pakistan, I have full confidence that Mir will add huge value to our team both on

and off the field." Meanwhile, Director of Cricket, Mark Wallace, said: "It's excellent news that Mir has agreed to join us at the start of the season. He's an international bowler with a fine record and previous experience in County cricket. We're looking forward to welcoming him to Cardiff." - Agencies

Aust take charge of first Test after NZ collapse

Cameron Green earlier smashed an unbeaten 174 as Australia raced to an imposing first-innings 383, before bowling out New Zealand for 179

SPORTS DESK

WELLINGTON: Australia seized control of the opening Test Friday after a miserable day for hosts New Zealand left them 217 runs adrift in Wellington and with a mountain to climb to stay in the match. The visitors finished on 13-2 in their second innings with nightwatchman Nathan Lyon not out six and opener Usman Khawaja on five after Steve Smith and Marnus Labuschagne departed cheaply. Tim Southee bowled Smith with his third ball, then had the out-of-form Labuschagne caught behind by Tom Blundell. However, Southee dropped Lyon in the slips late on from Matt Henry to cap a frustrating day for New Zealand at Basin Reserve. Cameron Green earlier smashed an unbeaten 174 as Australia raced to an imposing first-innings 383, before bowling out New Zealand for 179. Australia struck early, dismissing Tom Latham (5) before Kane Williamson and Rachin Ravindra fell for ducks within the space of five balls to leave them tottering at 12-3. Cameron Green century steers Australia to 279-9 in first New Zealand Test

Glenn Phillips offered the most resistance before he was dismissed for 71, caught by Mitchell Starc off a Josh Hazlewood delivery. Australia then quickly picked off New Zealand's tail. Phillips' sixth-wicket partnership of 84 with Tom Blundell (33) was the meagre highlight. "The pitch was moving around a little bit and

they were hitting really good areas so it was up to us to get the pressure back up on them," said Phillips. "Obviously the way Green played with Hazlewood, they did really well and put up a massive partnership. It's not ideal for us but that's what Test cricket is like."

The Black Caps never recovered after the



horror start by their top order. Latham played on in the fourth over, unable to deal with the pace of Starc. It got worse when Williamson and Ravindra were out soon after. Williamson was run out after a comical collision with opener Will Young midway down the wicket,

with Labuschagne's throw pitch-perfect. More New Zealand misery followed three balls later when Ravindra was caught by Lyon at point. Daryl Mitchell managed 11 before being taken behind by wicketkeeper Alex Carey off Cummins. Young followed next ball when he nicked Mitchell Marsh, with Carey again collecting to leave New Zealand struggling at 29-5 before Blundell and Phillips briefly steadied the ship. Phillips was finally removed when he pulled a Hazlewood bouncer to Starc at deep backward square. Spin king Lyon ended with 4-43. Green had started the morning by picking up where he left off, adding to his overnight 103 by clobbering a six to push the visitors past 300, having resumed on 279-2. The 24-yearold piled on the misery for the Black Caps bowlers with another six to reach 150, with his 174 eclipsing the 114 he scored last year against India for his maiden Test century.

Bugti nominated 'unopposed'

From Page 01 the CM election tomorrow (Saturday) as Bugti still needs the support of 33 lawmakers despite being nominated unopposed, Kakar added. The Bilawal-led party moved forward to form its government in Balochistan. Bugti, who served as former caretaker interior minister and ex-provincial information minister, submitted four nomination papers for Balochistan's chief ministership to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) office. The politico had resigned as the caretaker interior minister in December last year and joined the Bilawal-led party. The candidate for the province's top political position has been proposed by the PPP, and the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leaders, including Nawab Sanaullah Khan Zehri, and Sardar Sar-

Maryam slaps total ban on...

faraz Chakar Domki.

From Page 01 Moreover, with authentic database authority, the social protection program will be launched to provide relief to the masses. Meanwhile, Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz directed strict action against encroachment across Punjab. The Chief Minister also asked the concerned authorities to end wall chalking across the province. Moreover, in order to control the prices of all commodities, Punjab Government has ordered the concerned authorities that strict action should be taken to launch crackdown against profiteers and hoarders to maintain the prices of essential items under control. On the order of the Chief Minister, Puniab Chief Secretary has sent directives to all the Deputy Commissioners to follow the directives to bring the

Establishment has...

From Page 01

power for Pakistan's internal and external affairs and no one else." he said. Mahmood Khan Achakzai further said that they will "salute" those who believes in the supremacy of the Constitution. "Those who embraced martyrdom in fight for democracy should be declared martyrs and judges who opposed martial law should be declared heroes," he added. "Believe it or not the PTI representatives have come to the parliament through the power of the people. Changing the public mandate is tantamount to treason," he maintained.l Earlier in the day. PML-N's Sardar Ayaz Sadiq was elected as the National Assembly speaker, while PPP's Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah secured the slot of deputy speaker. Sadiq became the 23rd speaker of the parliament's lower house after he bagged 199 votes, defeating Sunni Ittehad Council's (SIC) candidate Malik Aamir Dogar, who bagged 91 votes. Later, Shah secured 197 votes and defeated Junaid Akbar, who

ECP announces schedule...

From Page 01 Constitution, Public Notification for election to the office of the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan is hereby issued and in relation thereto the following programme for receipt of nomination papers, scrutiny of nomination papers, withdrawal of candidature, publication of list of validly nominated candidates, retirement and the polling day," read the notification issued today. According to the ECP, the candidates for the country's top constitutional office can submit nomination papers by March 2 before 12:00pm with the presiding officers in Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar and Quetta. The scrutiny for the nomination papers by the returning officers will be held on March 4, the notification said, adding that the candidature can be withdrawn the next day. Afterwards, the commission will publish the list of validly nominated candidates the same day and March 6 has been fixed as the date for retirement.

Islamabad POST

Darfur

civilians face ethnic

killings: UN

Report

WASHINGTON: Paramilitary forces and their allied

militias fighting to take power in Sudan carried

out widespread ethnic kill-

ings and rapes while taking control of much of western

Darfur that may amount

to war crimes and crimes against humanity, United

Nations experts have said

in a new report. The report

to the UN Security Coun-

cil, obtained on Thursday

by The Associated Press, paints a horrifying picture

of the brutality of the Rapid

Support Forces against Af-

ricans in Darfur. It also de-

tails how the RSF succeed-

ed in gaining control of four

out of Darfur's five states.

including through complex

financial networks that in-

volve dozens of companies.

Sudan plunged into chaos

in April, when long-simmer-

ing tensions between its

military led by Gen. Abdel

Fattah al Burhan, and the

Rapid Support Forces paramilitary commanded by Mo-

hammed Hamdan Dagalo,

broke out into street battles

'Racial slurs toward the

Masalit and non-Arab com-

munity formed part of the

attacks," the panel said.

"Neighborhoods and homes

were continuously attacked,

looted, burned and de-

stroyed," especially those where Masalit and other

African communities lived,

and their people were har-

assed, assaulted, sexually

abused, and at times exe-

in the capital, Khartoum.

Briefs

Colombia halts Israeli arms deal over Gaza genocide

BOGOTA : Colombia's President Gustavo Petro announced that his government is suspending purchases of weapons from Israel after Palestinians say Israeli troops fired at people seeking food in Gaza, marking an escalation of tensions between both countries over the Israel-Hamas war. Describing the deaths as "genocide," Petro said he blamed Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for the violence around the aid convoy. Health officials in Gaza say at least 112 people were killed, bringing the war's death toll to more than 30,000 people. Israel said many of the dead were trampled in a chaotic stampede for the food. Petro's statement came months after Israel suspended security exports to Colombia in a diplomatic spat over online messages by Colombia's president comparing Israel's siege of Gaza to the actions of Nazi Germany. "Asking for food, more than 100 Palestinians were killed by Netanyahu," Petro said in a post on X, formerly Twitter. "This is called genocide and is reminiscent of the Holocaust even if the world powers do not like to recognize it. The world must block Netanyahu. Colombia suspends all purchases of weapons from Israel."—DNA

Ghana's ECG cuts parliament's power supply

ACCRA: The state-run Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG) on Thursday cut power supplies to the parliament over a debt of 23m Ghanaian cedi (\$1.8m; £1.4m). The outage interrupted a debate on the president's State of the Nation speech. A video shared by local media showed MPs in the dimly lit chamber chanting: "Dumsor, dumsor", which means power outage in the local Akan language. Local media reported that a back-up power generator restored power to the chamber a few minutes later. But other parts of the parliament building remained without power for most of the day before supplies were restored. MPs and parliamentary staff who were using the elevator when the abrupt blackout hit were stuck. Ghana's TV3 channel reported. The power company's communications director William Boateng told news agency it had resorted to disconnecting power because of parliament's refusal to "honour demand notices to pay up". Electricity was restored later in the day after parliament paid 13m cedi and made a pledge to settle the remaining debt within a week, Mr Boateng added.

Mourners shout in defiance at funeral for Navalny

MOSCOW: Hundreds of people in Russia have gathered for the funeral service of Alexei Navalny, the vocal Putin critic who died in jail last month. Despite a large police presence and barricades set up in the area, mourners burst into applause as his body was taken into a church outside Moscow on Friday morning. "You weren't afraid, and neither are we!", they shouted. Those in attendance risk arrest for showing support for Navalny. His wife has blamed President Vladimir Putin for his death, but Moscow says he died of natural causes. The opposition leader died on 16 February in a Russian prison in the Arctic Circle. He had been jailed for three years on trumped-up charges. The memorial service began just after 14:00 Moscow time (11:00 GMT) at the Church of the Icon of Our Lady Quench My Sorrows, in Maryino. Among those pictured near the church ahead of the funeral service were foreign dignitaries, including the US, German and French ambassadors. A hearse, said to be carrying the body of Russian opposition politician Alexei Navalny, is parked outside.-APP



BAKU: Ambassador Bilal Hayee delivered key note speech at Young Public Diplomacy Summit held in ADU, Baku. Young activists from Pakistan, Azerbaijan, China, Russia, CARs and Europe attended and interacted with Ambassador.—DNA

Iranians vote in parliamentary, assembly of experts elections

Ayatollah Khamenei cast his ballot at a polling station in Tehran in the first minutes of voting er-al-Mahdi said 190,000

News Desk

TEHRAN: Iranians are voting in parliamentary and Assembly of Experts elections, with Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei calling on the electorate to turn in big numbers to please friends and disappoint enemies. The polls opened across Iran at 8 a.m. local time (0430) on Friday with more than 61 million people eligible to vote across the country. Ayatollah Khamenei cast his ballot at a polling station in Tehran in the first minutes of voting. "We ask the Almighty God to make today a happy day for the Iranian nation and that the results of the efforts of our dear people

and those involved in the various issues of the elections may reach the desired results and benefit the Iranian nation," he said after voting. "Our dear nation should know that today the eyes of many people in the world, both individuals and politicians and those who hold prestigious national and political positions, are on Iran and you. Leader of the Islamic Revolution Avatollah Khamenei urged Iranian people to make Iran's friends happy and disappoint the country's ill-wishers by voting in today's elections. #IranElections2024 pic.twitter.com/ t8bF1JEB4l "They want to see what you are doing in this election and what will be the result of your election. Both our friends and

people who are interested in the Iranian nation, as well as ill-wishers from all sides, the eyes observe the issues of our country and our beloved nation. Pay attention to this; make friends happy and disappoint the ill-wishers." The Leader repeated his recommendation to the voters in the previous elections to head to the polls and vote as early as possible. "The second recommendation is to vote for as many people as you need, not fewer, in any constituency. For example, in Tehran, vote for 30 people in the Islamic Consultative Assembly and for 16 people in the Assembly of Experts of the Leader-President Ebrahim Raeisi, who cast his vote at Interior Ministry's polling station, hailed elections in the country as a national celebration and a symbol of unity. "The people's vote is decisive, [as] all sectors of the country are determined by the people's vote, and this is one of the honors of the Islamic Establishment," Raeisi said. "This election is a national celebration and a symbol of national cohesion and unity, and all political groups have come today with their candidates to mark a glorious day for the Iranian nation," he added. Drawing an analogy between the elections in Iran and other countries, Raeisi said, "The winner is the Iranian nation and there are no losers, whether they (the Iranian police Brigadier

or not. Because they fulfilled their duty, which is participation in the elections." Voters are taking part in the parliamentary elections to choose 290 members of the legislative body from over 15,000 candidates. Elected members will serve for a term of four years in the parliament. In another election being held simultaneously, participants are voting for 88 members of the Assembly of Experts, a body with an eight-year mandate that is in charge of overseeing the activities of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution and is in a position of authority to either appoint or dismiss the Lead-Spokesman ior the

police forces are on duty to ensure the security of the elections. "There is no law enforcement or security problem envisaged,' Montazer-al-Mahdi said, adding, "Everything is under control from the borders to the center, and the country's border guards are on full alert and monitor border traffic." Article Six of the Iranian Constitution reiterates that the administration of the affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran should be based on the public opinion expressed by the means of elections. Iran has held 40 rounds of different elections, including presidential parnamentary since the victory of the Iscandidates) get the votes General Saeed Montaz- lamic Revolution in 1979.

cuted.- Agencies Mass rallies in Yemen for Gaza supports GAZA: Massive morning demonstrations took place

on Friday in several Yemeni provinces under the title "You are not alone... Standing strong with Gaza,' in support of the resilience of the Palestinian people and their Resistance amid the ongoing Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip. The demonstrations spread across various locations, including Saada City, Marazim, Shaara, Bani Sayyah, al-Hijla, and al-Jarsha, in addition to directorates of Ghumr, Qatabir, Bani Bahr, Dhoeb, Rabu al-Hudud, Ghafra, and Raymah. The demonstrators also asked the leader of the Ansar Allah movement in Yemen, Sayyed Abdul-Malik al-Houthi, to take necessary measures in support of the Palestinian people. A statement released by the demonstrators urged Arab and Islamic peoples, along with people worldwide, to take action to halt the Israeli genocide. It also called for boycotting American and Israeli products and companies supporting them. The statement commended the stances of countries refusing to participate in the aggression against the Yemeni people and support the Zionist enemy, particularly those overlooking the Red Sea.-APP

Court awards NZ\$10m compensation in volcano tragedy

AUCKLAND: A New Zealand court has ordered NZ\$10m (£4.8m; \$6m) in compensation to the victims of the White Island volcano disaster, where 22 people died. In December 2019, 47 people were touring the volcano when it erupted, killing nearly half of the group and gravely injuring everyone else. The firms which owned the island and operated tours were found guilty last year of negligence and safety breaches. Their failure to provide proper checks had ruined many lives, the court said. The volcano had been showing signs of heightened activity in the weeks leading up to the eruption but operators ignored these, the court said. On Friday, the Auckland District Court ordered the company which owned the island. Whakaari Management Limited, to pay NZ\$4.57m in damages to victims. Whakaari Management - named after the Maori name for the island - licenced tour groups to visit the volcano. The court also ordered White Island Tours, the company which had brought the tourists to the island for a walking tour, to pay NZ\$4.68m in reparations.-APP

Fire kills 43 in BD capital: health minister

DHAKA: At least 43 people were killed and dozens iniured after a fire blazed through a seven-storey building in an upscale neighbourhood in the Bangladeshi capital of Dhaka late Thursday, health authorities said. "So far 43 people have died from the fire," Bangladesh's health minister Samanta Lal Sen told AFP after visiting the Dhaka Medical College Hospital and an adjoining burn hospital. Sen said at least 40 injured people were being treated in the city's main burn hospital. Fire department official Mohammad Shihab said the blaze originated in a popular biriyani restaurant in Dhaka's Bailey Road at 9:50pm Thursday (1550 GMT), and quickly spread to the upper floors, trapping scores of people. Firefighters brought the blaze under control in two hours, he said. They rescued 75 people alive, a statement from the fire service said. The Bailey Road building houses mainly restaurants along with several clothing and mobile phone shops. "We were at the sixth floor when we first saw smoke racing through the staircase. A lot of people rushed upstairs. We used a water pipe to climb down the building. Some of us were injured as they jumped from upstairs," said a restaurant manager called Sohel. Others were trapped on the rooftop and called out for help. "Alhamdulillah. We are sending down all women and children including my wife and children. We all men are in rooftop. Fire service stands beside us. Fifty yet to be down," wrote Kamruzzaman Majumdar, a professor of environmental science, in a Facebook post. He was later rescued safely. Fires in apartment buildings and factory complexes are common in Bangladesh due to lax enforcement of safety rules. In July 2021, at least 52 people were killed including many children when a fire swept through a food processing factory. In February 2019, 70 people died when an inferno ripped through several Dhaka apartment blocks.-DNA

French iournalist detained in Ethiopia freed

Addis Ababa: French jour nalist arrested last week in Ethiopia on suspicion of conspiring to create chaos was released on Thursday his employer, the specialist publication Africa Intelligence, said. Antoine Galindo was "freed after a week in prison and was able to leave Addis Ababa to return to Paris," Paul Deutschmann an editor-in-chief at the publication, told AFP. Galindo, who heads the publication's East Africa section, had travelled to Ethiopia to cover the African Union summit earlier this month and was arrested on February 22. Authorities accused the 36-year-old reporter of conspiring "to create chaos" in the country. "I'm well and I'm in good health," he told AFP before leaving Addis Ababa. "I've been treated well," he added, despite what he described as difficult conditions in detention. Deutschmann said Galindo's release was a "real relief" to the entire staff of Africa Intelligence, who were eager to be reunited with him. -APP

South Korea seeks global backing for unification mately to unification" of lable crisis". This year,

the Korean peninsula, he

said, stressing that the

international community

"must pool its strength in

Yoon emphasised bet-

ter ties with Tokyo were

helping to counter the

a responsible manner".

FOREIGN DESK

SEOUL: South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol has called for the international community to back "unification efforts" after Pyongyang earlier this year declared Seoul its "principal enemy". Ties between the two Koreas have been in a deep freeze as Pyongyang accelerates its weapons development programmes and Seoul ramps up military cooperation with Washington and Tokyo. Yoon, who has consistently taken a firm stance against nuclear-armed North Korea, has rarely discussed the topic of unification since assuming office in 2022. "Our unification efforts must become a source of hope and a beacon of light for the people of North Korea," he said at a ceremony marking the anniversary of Korea's 1919 uprising against Japanese colonial rule. "We must come together on a path that leads ulti-

North's ever-increasing military threats. "The security cooperation between the two countries against North Korea's nuclear and missile threats has been strengthened further," he said, adding that the countries were "working together to overcome the painful past". Last month, the North Korean leader's powerful sister Kim Yo Jong said her country would be open to improving ties with Tokyo, even hinting at a possible future invitation to Pyongyang

for Japan's leader. Her comments came after Kim Jong Un said in December that he would no longer seek reconciliation and reunification with the South, blaming Seoul and Washington for creating an "uncontrol-

North Korea conducted live-fire drills near the contested maritime border, prompting counter drills by the South and evacuation orders on two islands. Pyongyang also declared South Korea its "principal enemy" and threatened war over "even 0.001 millimetres" of territorial infringement. Yoon responded by telling his military to "act first, report later" if provoked by Pyongyang. In the event of an attack, he said Seoul will hit back "multiple times stronger". The isolated North has shut agencies dedicated to promoting reunification and fostering communication with Seoul.

"The tyranny and human rights abuses of the North Korean regime deny the universal values of humanity," Yoon said on Friday. South Korea is gearing up for a crucial election on April 10, with Yoon's conservative party hoping to regain a parliamentary majority for the first time since 2016.

UN rights chief warns human rights situation in Myanmar

'I repeat my call to international community to refocus its energy on preventing atrocities against all people in the country, including the Rohingya,' says Volker Turk

WEB DESK

GENEVA: The UN human rights chief on Friday warned that the human rights situation in Myanmar has "morphed into a never-ending nightmare," away from the spotlight of global politics.

Volker Turk's remarks came during his speech at the Interactive Dialogue on Myanmar under the 55th session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva. "Three years of military rule have inflicted - and continue to inflict - unbearable levels of suffering and cruelty on people in Myanmar," Turk said. "The depth of this crisis impacting all facets of life is emblematic of the persistent failure to respect democratic norms and fundamental freedoms." He warned that the human toll is mounting, adding that over 4,603

civilians, including 659 women and 490 children, have been killed at the hands of the military since February 2021. He stressed that other sweeping violations of fundamental rights and the rule of law continue "unabated" throughout Myanmar where "people fear they can be arrested for anything at any time." Regarding the situation in Rakhine State, the human rights chief said he is ringing "the alarm bells" again as the state engulfed "even deeper in spiraling violence" since November. "Military-imposed movement restrictions have almost completely disrupted the delivery of life-saving humanitarian aid. Homes have been burned down. Supply routes connecting Rakhine to other parts of Myanmar have been closed, creating an acute food shortage and significant price hikes,' Turk said. He lamented that most families are now surviving on "one meal a day," and

added that his office received reports of malnutrition-related health issues among



children. He repeated his call for the immediate cessation of operations in or around civilian areas, for the full protection of all civilians, for the military to release all political prisoners, and for full compliance with international human rights law. "I repeat my call to the international community to refocus its energy on preventing atrocities against all people in the country, including the Rohingya, notably by taking meaningful and effective, targeted action to end the military's access to arms, jet fuel, and foreign currency that it needs to sustain its campaign of repression against civilians," he said. He urged: "They need the entire international community to support them." Myanmar has been under junta rule since February 2021, and the military, locally known as the Tatmadaw, has faced severe resistance from ethnic groups in many regions of the country.



Islamahad POST



This is

for Gaza': **Galloway wins**

Rochdale

by-election

Foreign Desk

LONDON: George Galloway,

leader of the left-wing Work-

ers's party in Britain, has be-

come the new lawmaker for

the English town of Rochdale

with 12,335 votes, compared

to independent candidate

David Tully, who came in sec-

Galloway won over many

of Rochdale's Muslim com-

munity by attacking both

Labour and Britain's gov-

erning Conservatives for

supporting Israel's invasion

of Gaza, making a foreign

conflict the major issue -

an unusual thing to do in a

by-election where local con-

In his victory speech, Gal-

loway said: "Keir Starmer,

this is for Gaza. You have

paid, and you will pay, a

high price for the role that

you have played in enabling,

encouraging, and covering

for the catastrophe present-

ly going on in occupied Pal-

His victory underlines the

divisions in Britain over

the Israel-Hamas conflict,

which is in its fifth month

and has brought protesters

onto British streets in sup-

British lawmakers have

faced threats to do more

to bring an end to the fight-

ing in Gaza, and with the

national election later this

year, Galloway's return to

parliament will be short-

He has vowed to speak out

on Gaza in parliament, chal-

lenging Labour, which ini-

tially gave full backing to Is-

rael following the October 7

attack. The party has since

shifted its position to call

for an immediate humani-

port of both sides.

lived but explosive.

estine in the Gaza Strip."

cerns usually dominate.

ond with 6,638 votes.

SATURDAY, MARCH 02, 2024 | WWW.ISLAMABADPOST.COM.PK

Briefs

Relief efforts under way in Gwadar

DNA

GWADAR: Relief and rescue efforts were under way in Gwadar on Friday after it received more than 180 millimetres of rain in the past two days, authorities said. On Thursday, the Balochistan government had imposed an emergency in Gwadar and declared it calamity-hit after heavy rains wreaked havoc in the city. Normal life and traffic had remained suspended in Gwadar, Makran and northern and central parts of Balochistan as 30-hour-long showers triggered flash floods and submerged most of the areas. Officials had said that Gwadar had received around 180 millimetres of rainfall over the past two days. According to a rainfall report issued by the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) at 8am today, the city received 60mm in the past 24 hours.

Jiwani received the highest amount of rainfall with 72mm while Kalat 53mm, Khuzdar 34mm, Sibbi 30mm, Dalbandin 21mm and Turbat 20mm. Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Director General Jahanzeb Khan said, "Really, the situation in Gwadar is a bit bad." In a video statement. Khan said the reason for the flood situation was that the port city had received "187mm of rainfall during the last two days".

He said that the process of removing the accumulated rainwater was under way. The PDMA, Pakistan Army, the Navy and the district administration were taking part in the relief and rescue operations along with other institutions, Khan added.

Uzair Baloch acquitted in one more case

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: An Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) Uzair Baloch and other suspects in a case pertaining to an attack on policemen to kill them during the Lyari operation. The ATC pronounced the verdict to acquit Uzair Baloch after the prosecution failed to establish the charges against him and three others. The other acquitted suspects included Muhammad Salam alias Mullah Nisar, Zakir alias Dada and Ghulam Muhammad.

According to the prosecution, Uzair and the other accused were charged with attack and attempted murder on the police team during the Lyari operation in April 2012. The case was registered against the suspects at Kalri police station under the Anti-Terrorism Act,1997. Uzair Baloch, Muhammad Salam alias MullaNisar, and Zakir alias Dada were imprisoned in the case while Ghulam Muhammad obtained bail. The ATC ordered the jail authorities to release the accused persons if they are not arrested in any other case. It is pertinent to mention here that Uzair Baloch has been acquitted in the 35th case after the prosecution failed to establish the charges.

ATC takes up Imran's pre-arrest bail plea

DNA

LAHORE: An anti-terrorism court in Lahore on Friday took up the petition filed by the PTI founder seeking interim bail in connection with a May 9 riots case.

During the proceedings conducted by ATC judge Arshad Javed, special prosecutor Rana Shakeel presented his arguments and declared the PTI founder the main accused for the May 9 events.

He maintained that the statements of witnesses were on record which, according to him, indicated that it was the PTI founder who had incited his party leaders to torch the sensitive installations.

Later, the court adjourned the hearing. On Feb 24, the ATC had admitted for hearing the PTI founder's petition for pre-arrest bail in the May 9 riots case.

Pak-Baku aim for closer coop between audit institutions

The President lauded the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between AGP and CAA, saying that it would increase cooperation between two countries in the field of Public Sector Auditing

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has called for increasing cooperation between the supreme audit institutions of Pakistan and Azerbaijan for sharing best auditing practices to enhance transparency and financial accountability. He said that public sector accounting was a critical component of financial management within government organizations that helped ensure transparency and accountability in government spending. The President expressed these views while talking to the visiting Chairman of the Chamber of Accounts of the Republic of Azerbaijan, MrVugarGulmammadov, who along with his delegation, called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. The Auditor General of Pakistan (AGP), Mr Muhammad AimalGondal, and officials of AGP also attended the meeting. Chairman of the Chamber of Accounts of Azerbaijan (CAA), MrVugarGulmammadov, briefed the President about the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between the Supreme Audit Institution of Azerbaijan, CAA, and the Supreme Audit Institution of Pakistan, AGP, for peer reviews of public accounts. He said that the MoU would help deepen friendly relations between the two countries. The President lauded the signing of the

Memorandum of Understanding between AGP and CAA, saying that it would increase

Hamas, other

Palestinian

groups stress

'unity'

News Desk

MOSCOW: Palestinian factions including

rivals Hamas and Fatah said on Friday they

would pursue "unity of action" in confront-

ing Israel after representatives met at Rus-

sia-hosted talks. The meeting in Moscow on

Thursday brought together Hamas, Islamic

Jihad, Fatah and other Palestinian groups

for talks on the war in Gaza and an eventu-

al post-war period. It came on the heels of

the resignation of the Palestinian Authori-

ty government, which is led by Fatah and

Outgoing prime minister Mohammad

Shtayyeh called for intra-Palestinian con-

sensus as he announced the resignation,

and some analysts said the development

could pave the way for a government of

technocrats that could operate in the West

Arab and Western leaders have been push-

ing for reforms to the Palestinian Authority

as they discuss possible reconstruction ef-

forts. A statement on Friday by the Pales-

tinian factions represented in Moscow said

there would be an "upcoming dialogue" to

bring them under the banner of the Pales-

Thursday's "constructive" talks saw agreement on points including the need

for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from

Gaza and the creation of a Palestinian

state, the statement said. While Hamas

and Islamic Jihad are considered "ter-

rorist" entities by Western powers, the

PLO is internationally recognized as rep-

resenting Palestinians in the Palestinian

territories and diaspora. Discussions in

recent years about integrating Hamas

into the PLO have ended in failure. In

recent years, Moscow has strived to

maintain good relations with all actors in

the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including

Fatah and Hamas. Russia's relations with

Israel have become strained amid Mos-

cow's criticism of Israeli actions in Gaza

and rejection of a Palestinian state.

tine Liberation Organization (PLO).

Bank and Hamas-run Gaza after the war.

based in the occupied West Bank.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Chamber of Accounts of Azerbaijan, Mr Vugar Gulmammadov, along with his delegation called on President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. - DNA

cooperation between two countries in the field of Public Sector Auditing. He added that cooperation between CAA and AGP would be mutually beneficial for both the countries. He also appreciated AGP's role in carrying out peer reviews of the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) of Azerbaijan. Talking to the delegation, the President

said that Pakistan accorded special im-

portance to its relations with Azerbaijan, which were based on common faith, shared history, and people-to-people contacts. He stated that promoting cultural exchanges and strengthening cooperation in the cultural and economic fields was vital for fostering understanding and mutually beneficial development between the two brotherly nations. He termed the cooperation be-

tween Pakistan and Azerbaijan "pivotal for promoting peace, stability, development in

the region". The President also felicitated President IlhamAliyev of Azerbaijan on his re-election in the Presidential elections held on 7th February 2024 and hoped that the bilateral relations between Pakistan and Azerbaijan would be further strengthened during his tenure.

PTI vows not to let NA function **Dogar demands return of mandate**

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Coming down hard on the ruling alliance, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader and Sunni Ittehad Council's (SIC) lawmaker Junaid Akbar Friday warned that they would not let the National Assembly function until provision of their due rights. The PTI leader made the remarks during his fiery speech at the second session of the newly elected lower house of parliament. Taking the floor, Akbar said: "We do not recognise this assembly. We will neither legislate nor allow it [in the House]. The PTI claimed that its mandate was stolen during the February 8 general elections. The Imran Khan-founded party termed the polls "rigged" and accused the caretaker

in the run-up to elections. Firing a fresh salvo at the PPP, the PTI leader said: "A bazar [of horse-trading] was set up at the Sindh House and consciences [of lawmakers] were bought." "Some were threatened, some were shown their videos." Moving onto alleged discrimination with the PTI, the lawmaker said that his party was stripped of its electoral symbol

'bat' in the garb of May 9 mayhem.

government of denying a level playing field

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Sunni Ittehad Council's Malik Amir Dogar felicitated newly elected Speaker AyazSadiq, saying he had the honour of becoming the speaker for the third time. Speaking on the floor of the House after the speaker's election, he asserted that his party fought the election along with protests over the reserved seats issue because they wanted to be a part of this House and maintain its dignity. "I got 91 votes, and you got 191. I am a single party, and you are seven parties," he remarked, calling

The May 9 riots were triggered almost across the country after the deposed prime minister's arrest in the £190 million settlement case. Hundreds of PTI workers and senior leaders were put behind bars for their involvement in violence and attacks on military installations. During the protests, the miscreants targeted the civil and military installations including - Jinnah House and the General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi. The military termed May 9 "Black Day" and decid-

the February 8 election a "silent revolution". "If the result was announced as per Form 45, my votes would have been 225," he said, adding that on February 8, the brave people of Pakistan stamped on PTI founder's ideology, struggle. Dogar said, addressing the speaker, that his party had won 180 seats in the assembly, but then "another election" happened on February 9 and "you and your leadership" knew that mandate was stolen through Form 47. He said if they had those 180 seats as well as the reserved ones, then the PTI would have been the single largest party in assembly.

ed to try the miscreants under the Army Act. The PTI-backed independent candidates were given inappropriate election symbols by the ECP, he added. Slamming the establishment, he said two assassination attempts were made on the life of the PTI founder. Some 34 PTI supporters were killed on May 9 and FIRs were also lodged against the leadership of Khan-founded party, he added. "Sedition cases were registered against me and my friends."

Navalny buried in Moscow

tarian ceasefire.

MOSCOW: Thousands of Russians chanted Alexei Navalny's name and said the would not forgive the authorities for his death as the opposition leader was laid to rest in Moscow on Friday. At a cemetery not far from where Navalny once lived, his mother Lyudmila and father Anatoly stooped over his open coffin to kiss him for the last time as a small group of musicians played. Crossing themselves, mourners stepped forward to caress his face before a priest gently placed a white shroud over him and the coffin was closed.

Navalny, President Vladimir Putin's fiercest critic inside Russia, died at the age of 47 in an Arctic penal colony on Feb. 16., sparking accusations from his supporters that he had been murdered. The Kremlin has denied any state involvement in his death. The authorities have outlawed his movement as extremist and cast his supporters as U.S.-backed troublemakers out to foment revolution. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said he had nothing to say to Navalny's family.

Many thousands of people turned out to pay their respects at the cemetery and earlier outside the Soothe My Sorrows church in southeast Moscow where the funeral took place. Among the large crowd, many people clutched bunches of flowers and some joined in a series of chants - "Russia will be free", "No to war", "Russia without Putin", "We won't forgive" and "Putin is a murderer". Police were present in large numbers but for the most part did not intervene. A rights group, OVD-Info, reported six people had been detained in Moscow and at least 39 in other parts of Russia. - Agencies

ATC grants bail to Dr Yasmin Rashid

LAHORE: The anti-terrorism court Lahore finally accepted the bail application of former health minister and politician Dr Yasmin Rashid in the Gulberg arson case on May 9. The court approved Dr Yasmin's bail for Rs 500,000. Anti-Terrorism Court Judge Arshad Javed gave the decision on Dr Yasmin Rashid's bail. Gulberg police station had registered a case against Dr Yasmin Rashid after 9/5. – **DNA**

Biden urged to ensure Pak election probe

Democrats lawmakers, in a joint letter expressed concern over reports of rigging

WEB DESK

WASHINGTON: In a surprise move, several US lawmakers have urged President Joe Biden and Secretary of State Antony Blinken to refuse to recognise the upcoming government in Pakistan until the allegations of election rigging are probed in a transparent way. The Democrats lawmakers, in a joint letter to President Biden, expressed concern over reports of rigging

in Pakistan's election held on Feb 8. President Biden is also a Democrat and banks on the support of the 33 signatory lawmakers to secure the second term in office. According to the US lawmakers, the Feb 8 polls should be thoroughly investigated before recognising the new Pakistani government. The lawmakers also urged the State Department to collect the data of detained political activists and journalists in Pakistan while also advocating their release. In the recent Michigan primary, says a re-



committed" campaign led by activists dissatisfied with his Gaza war stance, surpassing Trump's 2016 margin by over 10,000 votes. This is something causing concern for the Biden camp amid influential Mus-

port, Biden faced

a formidable "un-

lim lawmakers' support for the PTI. The members who signed the letter included Rashida Tlaib, Ilhan Omar and Andre Carson. Progressive Causus chairperson Pramila Jayapal, who is known for Kashmir cause support, has also endorsed the letter. Ilhan Omar, who is the deputy chair of the Caucus, is among the signatories. The lawmakers said there was evidence of abuses and discrepancies in vote count and the situation demanded a fair probe.



ISLAMABAD: Visitors taking interest in a photo exhibition by Ferrante Ferranti and curated by Zaman Baloch, held at the premises of the French embassy. Detailed coverage shall be published on Monday. Charge d Affaires of the French Embassy Gillaume DABOUTS spoke on the occasion and introduced the artist to the audience. - DNA