

# QUETTA VOICE

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## After 12 hours, three coal miners still trapped inside a mine in Harnai

### 'We have failed Kashmiris and Palestinians,' PM Imran tells OIC moot

Prime Minister Imran Khan delivered a keynote address at the inaugural session of the 48th Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) of Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) at the Parliament House in Islamabad on Tuesday.

While talking about the OIC's role, he said, "We have failed both the Palestinians and the people of Kashmir. I am sad to say that we have been able to make no impact at all."

The premier said Western countries did "not take the OIC seriously" because "we are a divided house and those powers know it."

"We (Muslims) are 1.5 billion people and yet our voice to stop this blatant injustice is insignificant."

PM Imran said international law was on the side of the people of Palestine and Kashmir, adding that the United Nations Security Council's resolutions backed the right of the Kashmiris to self-determination through a plebiscite. However, the international community never ensured that right was given, he said.

Referring to India's stripping of occupied Kashmir's special status in August 2019, he said "nothing happened because they (India) feel no pressure."

"They feel we can just [pass] a resolution and then [go] back to our usual business." He cautioned that unless the OIC was united on core issues, human rights abuses would keep happening such as the "daylight robbery in Palestine."

"The only hope I have is that for the first time because of social media, there is awareness in Western countries. Much more than the OIC, it is the mobile phone and the spread of information of the injustices being done to the Palestinians ... at the moment, that is the best way to protect them, not us."

He said India was changing the demography in occupied Kashmir by bringing in settlers from outside but "no one has pushed about it because they think we are ineffective."

The PM began his speech congratulating the Muslim world for the recent adoption of a resolution against Islamophobia by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), that proclaims March 15 as International Day to Combat Islamophobia.

He said the world was now realising that Islamophobia was a reality and more needed to be done to combat it. "Why was Islam equated with terrorism?" Imran questioned, and referred to the Christchurch attack on a mosque as a consequence of this stereotyping.

"Once that happens, how is the man in the street in Western countries, how is he supposed to differentiate between a moderate Muslim and a radical Muslim? Hence, this man walks into a mosque and shoots everyone he could."

The prime minister said it was unfortunate that the Muslim world was not able to combat this image of Muslims. "What should have been done wasn't; the heads of Muslim countries should have taken a stand on this. Unfortunately this narrative of Islamic terrorism, Islamic radicalisation, this narrative went on unchecked."

In response to this wave of Islamophobia, PM Imran said some Muslim heads of state said they were moderate Muslims. "When you say this, you automatically say there are some extremist Muslims," Web Desk



## OIC moot: Qureshi urges end to 'outside interference' in Muslim world



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan addressing at the inaugural session of 48th OIC Foreign Ministers' Conference.

## After 12 hours, three coal miners still trapped inside a mine in Harnai

Hanif Tareen, News Desk

HARNAI: After 12 hours, three coal miners are still trapped inside a mine in the Harnai district of Balochistan. Six coal miners were trapped after a methane gas explosion in the Zarghoon Ghar area of the district. "Rescue workers have reduced three miners", Sardar Rafique Tareen, Deputy Commissioner Harnai told Quetta Voice.

"Three coal miners are still trapped", the Deputy Commissioner informed. A rescue operation was underway in the Zarghoon Ghar area to make sure the unhurt recovery of the trapped miners. Despite repeated calls from the district administration, the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA)

rescue team reached Harnai after 10 hours.

Rescue workers and medical professionals outside the coal mine where three miners are trapped.

"The PDMA and mines and minerals department's team arrived after 10 hours delay", Levees

"The PDMA and mines and minerals department's team arrived after 10 hours delay", a local Levees official told this scribe. He requested anonymity since he was not authorized to speak to the media. The miners reduced earlier in the morning were shifted to the district headquarters hospital Harnai for medical treatment.

"Rescue workers are now facing difficulties to recover the trapped miners as the night falls", Sardar Rafique Tareen mentioned. A team of PPHI medical professionals led by Dr. Dawood was also on the

spot to assist the rescue efforts, the Deputy Commissioner stated.

Rights groups concerned over the incident Rights groups have expressed serious concern over increasing incidents of coal mines in Dukki and other parts of Balochistan.

"This is a human tragedy, every day people are dying", Habib Tahir Advocate, the Chairman Human Rights Commission of Pakistan Balochistan Chapter said. He demanded of the government to implement the mining rules and act and protect the lives of the hapless coal miners. Poor working conditions inside coal mines have claimed thousands of precious human lives. Such incidents are the order of the day in Dukki, Harnai, Mach, Sorange, Degari, and other coal reservoirs-rich parts of the province.

## OIC moot: Qureshi urges end to 'outside interference' in Muslim world

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Tuesday called on the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) member states to "prevent outside interference in the Muslim World."

In his speech at the 48th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) of Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Qureshi said, "We alone can find solutions to internal fissures and challenges."

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi urged the OIC to forge a collective response to meet challenges faced by the Muslim Ummah. He said the OIC is the collective voice of nearly two billion Muslims. It is a bridge amongst the Muslim countries and the international community. Promoting solidarity and cooperation within the Muslim Ummah is one of the central pillars of Pakistan's foreign policy. He said Pakistan's overarching goal as chairman of the 48th session of the OIC meeting shall be to further solidify the cooperation amongst the Muslim countries.

The key to ending these conflicts and disputes is comprehensive engagement and cooperation among the Islamic countries," he added.

The foreign minister said the world is witnessing unprecedented turbulence. The recent conflict in Ukraine, which has rekindled East-West tensions, threatens international peace and security, he pointed out.

"A new and destabilizing global arms race is underway. Conflicts, among and within nations, have proliferated. Political and military blocs are vying for more power at the cost of global equilibrium. INP

## Saudi FM calls on General Bajwa; discusses variety of issues: ISPR

RAWALPINDI: Foreign Minister (FM) of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud met with Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa on Tuesday.

According to the statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), matters of mutual interest, situation in the region, particularly in Afghanistan, came under discussion at the meeting. "Both also discussed the promotion of defence ties between the two countries," reads the statement.

Speaking on the occasion, the COAS said that Pakistan held its historical and brotherly relations with the kingdom in high esteem. "We acknowledge the country's central role in the Islamic world," he said, and added for peace and stability in the world, it was imperative that the issues confronting the world were resolved.

The Saudi FM, on the other hand, praised Pakistan's role in Afghanistan.

He was particularly appreciative of the way the country had managed its border with its neighbour, stretching over thousands of kilometers.

He also appreciated the hospitality offered by the government of Pakistan to the dignitaries visiting the country to attend the foreign minister's meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in Islamabad. INP

## I congratulate two persons involved in bid to foil the conference: FAWAD

ISLAMABAD: Federal minister or information and Broadcasting Fawad Chaudhary has said 2nd meeting of OIC foreign ministers in three months is an achievement of Pakistan.

He has said it is great achievement of PM Imran Khan to host OIC conference.

He told that 32 foreign ministers and 700 delegates are participating in the meeting.

Delegates have come to attend the meeting ignoring our political situation, said the Fawad Ch.

Federal minister said that, he congratulates the opposition parties especially those who made bid to fail the conference that the reference is going on successfully. Opposition and particularly two persons made special bids that the conference is sabotaged. Online



ISLAMABAD: Chinese Foreign minister Wang Yi speaks during the 48th session of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Council of Foreign Ministers, in Parliament House.

## PTI completely isolated, no longer enjoys support of allies: Fazl

KARACHI: Head of Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) Maulana Fazlur Rehman on Tuesday claimed that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government is isolated and no longer enjoys support of its coalition partners.

Talking to media persons along with Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui after visiting of MQM-P's Bahadurabad office, Fazlur Rehman said that opposition has complete understanding with MQM-P, however, the latter will take one more day to announce its decision regarding no confidence motion against Prime Minister Imran Khan.

He further said that no-trust move has been submitted in the assembly and he is fully satisfied with the response he received from his hosts. The opposition's leader was also certain of motion's success.

On the occasion, Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui said that MQM-P respects JUI-F head and his presence and guidance has provided them with courage.

Earlier, Fazlur Rehman visited headquarters of MQM-P to seek party's support for opposition's no-confidence motion against Prime Minister Imran Khan.

Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui and other members of the Rabta committee welcomed the opposition leader upon his arrival at Bahadurabad office.

Matters relating to evolving political situation as well as no-confidence motion will be discussed.

On the other hand, a joint opposition delegation also called on MQM-P leaders in Islamabad on Monday night.

According to sources, the meeting between the opposition delegation and MQM-P leaders Amir Khan, Waseem Akhtar and Amin-ul-Haq was held in the Parliament Lodges.

The opposition delegation comprised of Balochistan National Party-Mengal (BNP-M) chairman Sardar Akhtar Mengal, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leaders Ahsan Iqbal, Ayaz Sadiq, Rana Sanaullah and Khawaja Saad Rafiq and Pakistan People's Party stalwarts Khurshid Shah and Suhail Anwar Sial. INP



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud addressing during the 48th session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers at Parliament House in Federal Capital.

## Six coal miners injured in a gas blast in Harnai

Hanif Tareen

HARNAI: At least six coal miners were injured in a methane gas blast in Balochistan's Harnai district on Tuesday morning. Sardar Muhammad Rafiq Tareen, Deputy Commissioner Harnai said that the incident happened in the Zarghoon Ghar area of Harnai.

Mr. Tareen said the coal miners were extracting coal from the mine when there was a blast. All six miners were injured as a result of the blast. The injured coal miners were rushed to district headquarters hospital Harnai for medical treatment. However, three coal miners are still trapped inside the mine. "Rescue operation is underway to rescue the trapped miners", Mr. Tareen said.

PDMA approached to provided rescue team: Deputy Commissioner

"We have approached the rescue team of Provincial Disaster Management Authority to make sure unhurt recovery of trapped miners", the DC informed. A large number of people and coal miners from nearby mines gathered at the affected mine.

This incident has come a day after three coal miners were injured in a similar methane gas explosion in the Dukki area of Balochistan. Methane gas explosions inside coal mines of Balochistan have claimed scores of precious human lives in Harnai, Dukki, Mach, Quetta and other parts of Balochistan.

## Opposition now will clean-bowl Imran Khan, claims Hamza Shehbaz

LAHORE: Opposition Leader in Punjab Assembly Hamza Shehbaz on Tuesday asked Prime Minister Imran Khan to descend from the hills of Banigala and listen to the grievances of people.

During a media talk after appearing before an accountability court in Lahore, Hamza Shehbaz, who is also a leader of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), asked the prime minister to go to the public and know what people thought of him.

"Now the same 'voice of conscience' has caused Imran Khan Niazi to have sleepless nights," said Hamza Shehbaz and criticised the prime minister for saying that the marriages of the children of people would not take place.

"Every parliamentarian has the constitutional right to vote," he said and lambasted the prime minister for hurling threats at the elected members of the nation.

"Political leaders care for the public. But you are set to flee into Banigala," Hamza stated.

"The nation gave you [Imran Khan] four years. Did you build five million houses? Did you provide 10 million jobs?" he questioned.

"You [Imran Khan] ask from Shehbaz Sharif about money laundering despite the fact you have got no evidence," he added.

Hamza also blamed the prime minister for regularising the illegal encroachments in Banigala and added: "You [Imran Khan] used to boast so loudly in the past. Now, you are in the grip of the God's wrath."

He maintained that the nation could not bear Imran Khan anymore, adding that the no-confidence motion would clinch a thumping victory.

"When our long march arrives in Islamabad, we will show you [Imran Khan] how a big public meeting is held," he said. INP

## "Policy towards opposition did not change after removal of Jam", Shahwani

**Manan Mandokhail**

QUETTA: Parliamentary leader, Balochistan National Party (Mengal), Malik Naseer Shahwani has said present government's policy towards opposition has not changed after removal of the former chief minister, Jam Kamal Khan.

"Nothing changed after removal of Jam Kamal in terms of

interference in opposition constituencies", he lamented during the Balochistan Assembly session on Tuesday.

The session of the assembly began here with deputy speaker Sardar Babar Musakhail in the chair. Lawmakers from treasury and opposition benches thoroughly discussed the law and order situation, development projects, and other issues relating to the province.

"This government should announce a spe-



cial package for the constituencies of opposition", Malik Naseer Shahwani stated. He recalled that non-elected people were given funds to launch development projects in opposition constituencies. "Still there is inference in our constituencies", Mr. Shahwani said.

It may be mentioned here that BNP Mengal had played a crucial role in removing former chief minister, Jam Kamal Khan through a no-confidence motion

in October 2021.

Opposition leader, Malik Naseer Shahwani also demanded of the government to include development schemes for opposition constituencies. "We suffered for three years, now we want our rights", he said.

During the session convened to discuss proposals for the forthcoming financial budget, CM Balochistan Mir Qudus Bizenjo and the majority of the treasury members were absent.

## QUETTA VOICE

Editor Asim Khan

## The tragic demise of 8-year old Almas Khan

The tragic demise of an eight-year-old boy, Almas Khan has shocked and saddened people. The dead body of Almas Khan was retrieved after 15-hours from the well in Balochistan's Killa Saifullah district. The broken parents and family members of the victim suffered from a dumb agony during the rescue operation.

Despite repeated calls, the rescue team of the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) reached the spot of the incident after 10 hours. This was unacceptable given the sensitivity of the case, which required an urgent response. Human life was lost because of the delayed response of the PDMA.

Abdul Hadi, the broken father of Almas Khan lamented had the PDMA rescue team arrived on time, the life of his son would have been saved. The video of the rescue operation was on air on social media for the whole day. Unfortunately, the mainstream media also gave a cold shoulder to the story.

Neither the Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Qudus Bizenjo nor other concerned quarters took notice of the tragic incident.

Neither the Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Qudus Bizenjo nor other concerned quarters took notice of the tragic incident. This is not the first time that such an incident has taken a place. Thanks to the mushroom growth of social media that highlighted the tragic incident. Otherwise, so many incidents have gone unnoticed in Balochistan.

The portfolio of the PDMA is with the CM Balochistan. The authority needs complete overhauling in terms of equipment, training, and manpower. Bitter fact, the authority is famous for being white-elfphant in the time of natural disasters. Look at the irony, officers from the education and health have also been posted in the PDMA.

Balochistan prone to all-natural disasters  
Balochistan is prone to natural disasters. The PDMA should go beyond a few trucks and some selected officers rather it should evolve a better mechanism to tackle future emergency situations. Quetta and other parts of Balochistan have already faced earthquakes, floods, and drought-hit-like situations. For this, PDMA should be made an effective authority to make sure timely response in the time of any incident.

To be precise, the heartbreaking incident involving the demise of Almas Khan has exposed the commitment and capacity of the PDMA.

## Significance of Strong School Culture

Syed Mansoor Ahmed

Strong school culture guarantees quality education, which enables students to compete on national and international levels. Teachers, parents, society, and students' close coordination ensure a strong school culture.

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, commonly known as the Bacha Khan termed educating people as a sacred cause. This was one of the underlying reasons behind Khyber Pukhtoonkwa's improved education indicator as compared to Sindh and Balochistan. Although, Punjab has made considerable progress in improving its key social indicators.

According to the current comprehensive studies of both educationists and anthropologists revealed that strong school culture is an intensely held and widely shared norms, unwritten rules, assumptions, and unspoken beliefs that shape and narrate how its members think and do their jobs. However, the prime and first member of the school culture is the student which is the foun-



dational bedrock of all events.

On one hand, the teacher is the second prominent and so-called backbone of the education system. On the other hand, parents and community are the assisting aspects in the school culture. Therefore, a strong culture is a fundamental requirement for making a smooth social climate inside the school that is completely intended to provide a safe and caring environment for high learning and give a mutual sense of ownership to all participants as well. The following culture also demands a significant intellectual climate by promoting

modern insights into teaching and learning in the school. Subsequently, a positive and robust culture blindly follows the predetermined rules and policies irrespective of any sort of affiliation. The other feature of culture is that it stands for a decent structure for giving teachers, staff, students a voice in, solving problems and taking and sharing responsibilities and decisions. Last but not the least, an effective culture also provides the frame of partnership to join the student with the teacher, a teacher with the teacher, parents with a teacher, and the school as a whole with the commu-

nity.

By and large, such progressive culture provides a testimonial sense of identity to all connecting factors. This kind of mutual identity cement the elements of commitment among all participants to look towards high horizons instead of self-interests. Consequently, it regularized the moral behavioral standards by avoiding all mental turmoil and bringing the center of education under vigilant social control to work only for promoting the essence of quality teaching and learning. Keeping in mind all the aforesaid scenarios of the strong education culture, however, Balochistan's education system is entirely working in an obsolete manner. The most prominent aspects of school culture in the form of student, teacher, parents, the community is absent from the early front of decent school culture. There is a huge vacuum between a student and the teacher. The teacher does not feel bothered to examine and identify the cognitive abilities of a stu-

dent. Same as the student always opts to the path of escapism instead of asking the instructor.

More importantly, the parent's contribution is just equal to zero-sum addition. There is a lack of honest and open communication between a teacher and parents. They do not come together as a collective body to discuss the values and goals of school culture in education. While school culture is a widely shared phenomenon that directly demands the involvement of all actors in the decision-making process that is school culture. It is a firm belief among all the educationists that the school culture cannot be run by any single individual. In addition, it always required collective effective measurements only to deliver the goal of quality teaching and meaningful learning as a sole outcome.

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## Don't worry, there is no tomorrow

By Mosharrar Zaidi

At a time when the prime minister of the country faces an existential political challenge, Pakistan is hosting the OIC foreign ministers' meeting - as major an international event as the country has hosted in recent years.

In the days leading up to the OIC conference, we learned that India had launched a missile at Pakistan - apparently erroneously. On the weekend that foreign ministers started landing in Pakistan, terrorists were attacking Pakistani soldiers in at least three different locations.

By the time the OIC foreign ministers have cleared out of Islamabad at the end of the week, thousands of political activists, and supporters of the PTI, the JUI-F, the PPP and the PML-N will have begun to descend upon D Chok in the federal capital. How these poor people will manage the transportation, food, boarding and lodging for their respective heroic journeys is either a credit to the inflation busting Imran Khan government, or the miraculous benevolence of the Sufi saints whose spirits are a source of the near infinite blessings this country extracts and exploits the way our furnaces burn fossil fuels - like there is no tomorrow.

Like there is no tomorrow' is also a good tagline for Pakistani decision-makers - no matter what colour uniform they wear, and no matter how democratic they pretend to be. Secure the personal interest - like there is no

tomorrow. Buy dollars - like there is no tomorrow. Issue government paper - like there is no tomorrow. Make deals with terrorists - like there is no tomorrow. Reduce the price of gasoline or petrol - like there is no tomorrow. Pretend Iran is as important as Saudi Arabia - like there is no tomorrow. Declare a moratorium on security collaboration with the United States (remember 'absolutely not') - like there is no tomorrow. Issue anti-CPEC statements (remember Razzak Dawood) - like there is no tomorrow. But as surely as we are all here now, and as surely we will all die one day, there will be a tomorrow. What happens tomorrow?

PM Imran Khan may or may not survive the vote of no-confidence, but Pakistan will have to pay for the buffoonery of reducing the price of gasoline. Pakistan will also be paying the price for other, more global buffoonery: decoupling, supply chain disruptions, post-Covid-19 recovery disruptions, and Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine.

Higher prices for fuel, wheat, and other commodities, as well as the upcoming Ramadan consumption spike and price hike, will all generate substantial economic pain for the Pakistani micro-economy. Unprecedented heatwaves during the Holy Month, and unrelenting rigidity (both self-imposed, and via residual gifts of the Zia era) will cause people to drop on the street like flies. The

declaration of victory against Covid-19 seems early, and if it was to make any kind of a comeback statement, this would certainly exacerbate what may be a very painful late spring in Pakistan.

By the time we all (inshaAllah) celebrate Eidul Fitr in the beginning of May 2022, any sane or responsible finance minister will need to push for a significant increase in gasoline prices - perhaps as much as Rs25 per litre higher than it is right now. The images, tickers, tweets and headlines from such a price hike alone will saddle either PM Khan or whoever comes in to replace him, with a permanent political crisis not unlike the one that PM Khan already faces.

The 2022-2023 budget exercise, no matter whether PM Khan is in power, or someone else has replaced him, will be an exercise in semantics only. There is no version of a budget that can be debated and agreed through May and June this year that will not need to be replaced with a new, revised budget within the first two quarters of the start of new fiscal year on July 1, 2022.

By August 2022, if not earlier, a fiscal and current account deficit crisis is going to be the principal headache that faces whoever is running Pakistan - with the only path out being major injections of capital by foreign entities (it turns out that 'sovereignty' is a luxury that only buffoon-proof economies can

afford).

Between now and August 2022, when the Taliban regime in Kabul would have been in power for a year, the TTP will be more empowered and enabled than ever before. The evidence for this is manifest in dozens of statements by both the Afghan Taliban leadership itself, and the series of 'recreate talks' that Pakistan has been holding with the terrorist group since before the fall of Kabul - as part of PM Khan's coherence that talking to terrorists is better than fighting them. The trifecta terrorist threat (TTP-Daesh-Baloch separatists) Pakistan is now dealing with is much more complex than what fighters of Pakistan's first war on terror (2007-2015) had to contend with. Key questions they face include:

What is the degree to which veterans of the first war terrorists (like LeJ) have melted into and integrated with Daesh? Where are the foot soldiers of the remnants of Kashmir-focused groups like the LeT and JeM? How have they been prevented from going the way Ilyas Kashmiri and others of that ilk went a la Al Qaeda?

How will Pakistani public opinion be mobilised to fight the second war on terror with the kind of extreme partisanship and divisiveness that will now paint the country for as long as PM Khan continues to be in politics? And, perhaps most importantly, as the Peshawar Imambargah

terrorist attack on Shias demonstrated: how will Pakistan defend the country from the sectarian divide that is so easily exploited by Pakistan's known enemies (like Daesh and India) and hidden enemies (like those entities and countries that support terror in Pakistani with one hand, while they shake Pakistani leaders' hands with the other)?

As the security situation in Pakistan worsens (and it has been worsening since 2020), the political coherence of the country is an ever-growing priority. The country's ability to negotiate favourable outcomes globally (such as at the UN, or FATF, or SCO), is increasingly dependent on the ability of those governing the country to act with the legitimacy and agency that flows naturally from a predictable and trusted political compact at home.

The compromised 2018 election did not do the kind of damage to this predictability and trust as much as the current instability is doing. And the reason for this is simple: the losers of the 2018 process showed that they could step back and try to negotiate better outcomes for themselves and their political progeny. The loser of 2022 - and it looks increasingly likely that this will be Imran Khan - will not be as peaceful or gracious in defeat. This undermines the entire enterprise of the Pakistani republic, ironically during the week that we celebrate our sixty-fifth Republic Day.

## A crisis in the making

By Dr Muhammad Abdul Kamal

Although the escalating geopolitical tensions between Russia and Ukraine is thousands of miles away from Pakistan, its economic fallout has started spilling into Pakistan as well.

While Pakistan is on the path of recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, the ongoing geopolitical tensions are likely to result in a general price increase, deteriorating current account and fiscal balances, and stifling economic growth.

Historically, Pakistan has had modest bilateral economic ties with both Russia and Ukraine. In 2021, the value of trade with Russia was \$711 million - including \$537 million in imports from Russia. Similarly, bilateral trade between Pakistan and Ukraine was valued at \$800 million in 2021, with Pakistan receiving \$739 million in imports. Consequently, Pakistan's wheat import will be directly affected by the crisis since it arrives from Ukraine and accounted for 39 percent of the country's total imported wheat in the previous fiscal year. However, the indirect cost of the crisis in terms of global energy and commodities supply chains is expected to outweigh Pakistan's direct trade losses with Russia and Ukraine.

The conflict has already shaken economies across the world in numerous ways. For instance, sanctions imposed by the US and Europe on Russia are likely to disrupt energy supplies from the world's largest supplier. A \$10-20 per barrel increase in oil prices over a few quarters is projected to deplete Pakistan's national reserves by \$1-2 billion, thus further shrinking the country's purchasing power.

Inflation in Pakistan has already surpassed a two-year high of around 10 percent, placing a strain on the government, which is fighting multiple economic and social fronts. This will further aggravate the inflationary pressure and hit the consumers badly, resulting in the rise of poverty and discontinuity in economic policies.

Inflationary pressure can lead to a wage-price spiral, in which individuals demand greater wages to meet rising living costs, inducing businesses to raise prices across the board to cover extra costs. From a macroeconomic perspective, the central bank is under pressure to raise interest rates even higher. This will exacerbate economic instability, particularly if inflation continues to rise and the central bank responds by drastically raising interest

rates.

Government expenditures may reduce in real terms as a result of the price hike and disruption in the food value chain, decreasing the number of government services and development spree. Furthermore, if businesses are apprehensive that they will not be able to raise prices enough to compensate for higher wages, they may be compelled to lay off their workforce, resulting in increased unemployment. A prolonged crisis poses a greater danger of pushing the economy into stagflation, which is characterised as high inflation combined with slow economic growth.

The government must take measures to protect the economy from the potential effects of the current Russia-Ukraine conflict. The economy is already under strain as a result of the government's recent agreement with the IMF to impose harsh conditions such as the elimination of tax exemptions, an increase in the petroleum levy on fuel and electricity prices, and the removal of fiscal and monetary stimulus for the industry.

A discourse with stakeholders and opinion leaders in Pakistan is required to devise a comprehensive policy to avert the likely consequences of the looming crisis.

## Taking the technology route

By Dr Khaqan Hassan Najeeb

In several billion years of human history, the last few centuries have been dramatic in terms of technological development. The divide between countries in this context initiated with the first industrial revolution.

Western Europe, Australia, Canada, USA and Japan moved ahead with technological change, leaving most other countries at the periphery of the technological frontier. This left widening inequalities in access to opportunities, goods and services. More recently, China has subsequently been able to grow faster and catch up through technological knowledge, replication and innovation.

Economic leadership is all about technology, and the evolution of technology is a function of creating the right circumstances. Technological progress has defined the economic strength of nations. Some time ago while talking about technology, we all pictured humans dashed behind computer screens, programming languages beyond the realm of mere mortals. We live in a dramatically different world today - one in which we cannot imagine any business or employment that is not in some way influenced by technology.

Today's technologists might be found drawing an industrial building on auto-cad, medical practitioners diagnosing people's illnesses through tele-medicine thousands

of miles away, farmers on a tractor carving new digital farming strategies, engineers in a warehouse building an e-commerce platform or a student in a university designing new software for sharing education resources in remote areas of the country.

We are now all technologists, and our businesses all involve technology. The importance of technology in our lives cannot be overlooked in Pakistan. It should be a serious wake-up call for the business community, farm community and service industry to embrace this new identity.

Policymakers would be better off understanding the technology lesson rather than trying to rely on repeating tried recipes which have gotten us where we are today. It's trendy to throw more money in the system, which will always result in more inflation and make people dependent on state help. If Pakistan has to prosper, it is going to have to be a technological adaptor, if not a leader, in all key sectors.

Benefits of technology adoption can help lift and grow all sectors of our economy. The only way to drive sustained, real economic growth is through productivity gains. That by its very definition means applying technology. The only way to be globally competitive and increase our exports across all sectors, while at the same time improving the standard of living for everyone, is through technology.

Pakistan has become

known for punching much below its weight, for a country of 230 million people. Let us consider agriculture as an example. Pakistan has truly lost its advantage - abysmally low productivity, colossal wastage of perishables from farm to market and untenable loss of water, are astonishing facts.

Taking advantage of new technologies in agriculture is the only way forward. Agricultural robots selecting and picking fruits and vegetables, artificial intelligence analysing crop data, assessing plant disease and soil health, and machines that improve spraying, seeding and transportation are all evolving technologies. Robots which continuously monitor and remove weeds will significantly reduce the use of pesticides and herbicides. Self-driving weeding machines connected to AI systems are being developed to identify and destroy weeds using lasers.

This is all incredibly exciting, driven by precision agriculture. Countries that develop and adopt these technologies will be the ones that will lead the world in agriculture. Unless we embrace these changes, Pakistan's advantages in agriculture would further erode and fall behind countries that have developed more sophisticated technologies. This is quite important.

Certainly, the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic, climate change and the more recent geo-political uncertainties are all fac-

tors accelerating technological change. Changes in workplaces and reliance away from fossil fuels are happening around the world. Lockdowns have led to a working from home culture, improving labour productivity by eliminating commuting time. Development of robotics has been dramatic and accelerated as a result of the restrictions imposed by the pandemic. Implementation of e-commerce and the digitisation of the workplace is also estimated to add up to seven percent to productivity above trend according to research by a global investment bank. This is quite striking.

When it comes to technology, intellectual property rights and most importantly their enforcement cannot be overemphasized. While Pakistan has the framework in place, enforcement continues to remain a challenge. National innovation systems, science and mathematics education are all important factors that contribute to a country's ability to move up the technology ladder. International comparative analysis puts Pakistan at a rank of 123 out of 158 countries on the Readiness for Frontier Technologies Index (Technology & Innovation Report 2021), categorised as 'low'. Even Bangladesh ranks 112, in the lower middle category. On different pillars of the same index, we stand at 146 on ICT ranking, skills at 146 and finance at 132. Not very

encouraging numbers, to say the least.

It's worth mentioning all these things as we approach budget season. Pakistan's federal budget has to move beyond giving handouts. Great drivers of the future, and in particular the people who will lift our living standards, are entrepreneurial investors adapting, embracing and introducing new technologies. Growing living standards ultimately depend on rising productivity, which is a function of technological change. If we approach technology as a low ranking issue, then expect our high living standards to stagnate further in the years ahead. Budgets need to be substantially devoted to technological change.

Pakistan can become a quick adaptor of technology. First, the country must focus on areas where it already enjoys a comparative advantage, such as agriculture, textiles and IT. Second, invention, research and development, and new industries thrive in an environment supportive of such entrepreneurial activity - the regulatory and tax environment is critically important. Third, we must debate the technology issues. Throughout the budget-making period there is a focus on whether the government is providing enough funding for subsidies, markup payments, creating hard infrastructure or whether benefits are sufficiently generous for remote areas. We must realise, if it wasn't

## Addressing economic distortions

By Kaiser Bengali

The political turmoil around the opposition's no-confidence motion against the Imran Khan government is unlikely to be a short-lived affair. If the motion succeeds, the PTI will be out on the streets, demonstrating against its ouster. And if it fails, the opposition will be carrying on their campaign on the streets. The casualty will be the economy, which is already on life support.

That the economy is technically bankrupt has been clear for more than a year now. Imports are the exports and dollar income from stagnant exports, remittances and FDI is barely enough to finance rising imports - with debt servicing needs met through more debt. On the domestic front, federal revenues - net of transfers to provinces - are consumed by debt servicing and defence, with a part of government payroll and all of development expenditure met through (more) debt. Pakistan has been rendered a debt-strangled economy.

This situation has arisen because of government policy choices over the last four decades, and all governments - military and civilian - are responsible. Specifically, policies have been driven by particular vested interests, in direct conflict with the interests of the national economy. Dominant constituents in the corridors of power have aligned themselves, domestically with the import, land, stock market, and particular industrial

lobbies and, externally, with international financial interests.

This unholy alliance appears to have been formed during the 1980s and surfaced in the early 1990s. The next decade saw General Musharraf's economic team, comprising the cream of talent representing these interests; it has continued to be in power for the last two decades and is continuing to benefit their foreign and domestic principals at grievous cost to the national economy.

The depredations wrought by domestic lobbies and international financial interests are well known. Less known and acknowledged is the damage being caused by three industries: sugar, paper and automobiles. Any increase in output is reflected in GDP growth figures and hailed as positive. However, short-term growth can also cause erosion of the economic base in the long term. A classic example is that of felling trees for sale, which is recorded as a contribution to GDP, but which leads to deforestation.

Sugarcane producers receive a guaranteed price, which compares better relative to other crops and leads to greater than optimal allocation of acreage to sugarcane. Higher production of sugarcane translates into higher production of sugar. Given the high price paid out to sugarcane producers, the price of sugar produced by sugar mills is higher than world price. The net result is sur-

plus output, but at higher than world prices.

By the time the following year's crops are ready for harvesting, mill owners decline to lift the crop on the argument that their warehouses are full of yesterday's sugar output. Sugarcane farmers scream 'disaster' and mill owners respond by demanding government subsidies to be able to export the surplus sugar. Farmers and mill owners pocket the subsidy, while the government is left nursing the sugar sector's contribution to the national budget deficit. Clearly, economic and political rationality demands limiting the acreage devoted to sugarcane.

Paper is the major raw material for the production of any printed material, including books. Pakistan's need for paper is met largely by imports and partly by domestic production from imported pulp. Standard economic theory states that import duties on raw material be lower than on the final product, so as to promote local production and employment. The current situation is the reverse: import duty on paper is high, but books are imported duty free.

The high duty on paper protects three powerful paper manufacturers in the country, but books that can be printed in the country are ordered from abroad. Even Urdu books are printed abroad, given that importing books duty-free costs less than local printing on duty-paid imported paper.

## CJCSC discusses defence, security with Bahrain, Azerbaijan military heads

RAWALPINDI: Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Nadeem Raza on Tuesday held bilateral meetings with Minister of Defence Azerbaijan Colonel General Zakir Hasanov and Commander of the National Guard of the Kingdom of Bahrain General Sheikh Mohamed Bin Isa Al-Khalifa, at Joint Staff Headquarters, ISPR said in a statement.

## Police arrest 13 suspects for alleged murder of rice cracker seller at Pattoki wedding

The Punjab police on Tuesday arrested 13 suspects for the alleged murder of a papad (rice cracker) seller during a wedding in Pattoki, police said.

According to the first information report (FIR) of the incident, the rice cracker vendor, Mohammad Ashraf, got into a dispute with guests at a wedding procession in Pattoki, after which he was beaten up and dragged inside the wedding hall.

The incident came to the limelight when footage, allegedly showing Ashraf's body near a seemingly apathetic crowd that continued eating at the wedding, went viral on social media and aroused public anger at the callousness on display.

Pattoki Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Asif Hanif told DawnNewsTV the incident was "very unfortunate". The DSP said he formed teams when he got to know of the incident and 13 suspects were arrested who were being interrogated.

Punjab Inspector General of Police Rao Sardar Ali Khan took notice of the incident and directed Kasur District Police Officer (DPO) Sohaib Ashraf to immediately arrest the culprits.

came under discussion during the meetings.

During the meetings, various areas of bilateral cooperation and prevailing regional environment particularly with reference to Afghanistan were also deliberated. The visiting dignitaries lauded the professionalism of Pakistan Armed Forces and acknowledged their sacrifices in fight against terrorism. Earlier upon arrival at Joint Staff Headquarters, the dignitaries were presented Guard of Honour by a smartly turned out contingent of Pakistan Armed

Forces. According to ISPR, important facets of defence and security relationship between Pakistan and brother Muslim countries came under discussion during the meetings.

During the meetings, various areas of bilateral cooperation and prevailing regional environment particularly with reference to Afghanistan were also deliberated.

The visiting dignitaries lauded the professionalism of Pakistan Armed Forces and acknowledged their sacrifices in fight against terrorism. Online



QUETTA: Head of TB control program Dr Asif Shahwani long with DG health Dr Noor Qazi, Dr. Zafer khosti, Dr. Asif Shawani addressing a press conference about World TB day.

## Cancer survivors report an information gap in treatment side effects

Islamabad: Cancer treatments can save lives, but they also often cause a range of side effects. A recent patient survey in the United States has revealed how people feel about these effects and the information gaps that currently exist.

Surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation therapy are the three main types of treatment. Each can come with a range of side effects, which vary from person to person. Some people may experience few or only mild effects, while others may find them debilitating.

Patients' desire for more information. However, according to a new paper that appears in the Journal of Oncology Practice, close to one-third of patients

feel that more information is necessary on the possible side effects of chemotherapy, surgery, and radiation therapy.

The findings revealed that many of the participants felt as though they did not know enough about their side effects. Better counseling beforehand

About 1 in 5 of the participants wished that they had received more information about potential side effects before starting treatment.

In the case of surgery, they commonly wanted to know more about numbness, pain, and damage to nerves.

With chemotherapy, they desired more knowledge on fatigue, nerve damage, and gastrointestinal symptoms.

For radiation therapy, the

participants felt the need for further detail on similar effects, including gastrointestinal symptoms and fatigue, along with skin irritation.

Who should give advice? Finally, the survey revealed people's sources of treatment information. Just over half of the respondents asked their primary care physician (PCP) about the various choices.

Nine in 10 of these individuals said that the PCP's advice was very or somewhat important in their decision-making.

In fact, about one-quarter of the patients used only their PCP for advice and information. Others sought guidance from medical websites, other patients, and support groups, along with relatives and friends. Online

## Do past medicines hold the answer to antibiotic resistance?

ISLAMABAD: As an increasing number of bacteria develop antibiotic resistance, scientists are looking beyond this family of medications that has served us so well up until now.

As the usefulness of antibiotics begins to wane, there is an urgent need to develop new ways to treat infections.

A difficult nosocomial infection. Infections contracted by patients while hospitalized for other reasons are especially likely to be antibiotic resistant.

Called "nosocomial infections," they can be very hard to cure and can be fatal. Among the most common nosocomial bacteria is Acinetobacter baumannii (A. baumannii).

According to

Venkitanarayanan, "A. baumannii is primarily a nosocomial pathogen impacting those especially with compromised immune systems, the very young, the very old, burn victims, and is also reported in the wounds of combat soldiers."

Sneaking up on A. baumannii

Since A. baumannii is such an adaptable opponent, Venkitanarayanan and his colleagues adopted a strategy of disarming the bacteria rather than staging a full-on assault that would threaten its survival and provoke its defense mechanism.

The researchers began by determining the minimum amount of selenium required to inhibit the bacteria's virulence. To observe selenium's effica-

cy with A. baumannii, the researchers constructed a model matrix that simulated an infected wound environment containing cultured cells and wound fluids.

They infected areas of their "wound" with A. baumannii and selenium sufficient to inhibit virulence. They infected other samples with A. baumannii alone.

The researchers examined the samples under scanning electron microscopes. They also performed DNA analysis to determine if the selenium produced any genetic changes in the bacteria.

In the selenium samples, the biofilms produced by A. baumannii were severely degraded, diffuse, and structurally unsound. Online

## China and Pakistan share concern about sanctions on Russia, says China

ISLAMABAD: The Chinese foreign ministry on Tuesday said that China and Pakistan share concern about "spill-over effects of unilateral sanctions" on Russia over its war against Ukraine and called for a ceasefire and diplomatic resolution of the crisis.

Old allies China and Pakistan have refrained from condemning Russia over its Feb 24 invasion of Ukraine, unlike Western countries that have imposed unprecedented financial and corporate sanctions in response to what Russian President Vladimir Putin calls a "special military operation".

"Both expressed concerns about the spill-over effects of unilateral sanctions," the Chinese foreign ministry said in a statement following a meeting on Monday in Pakistan between the neighbours' foreign ministers.

"Both called for a ceasefire through diplomatic dialogue and hope that based on the principle of indivisible security, a fundamental solution to the Ukraine problem can be found," the Chinese ministry said.

The Foreign Office also issued a statement on the talks in Islamabad, echoing the call for a ceasefire, but it did not mention concern about sanctions. INP

## Shehbaz slams authorities for subjecting Nawaz & family to witch-hunt

LAHORE: PML-N President and Opposition leader in National Assembly Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday slammed authorities for subjecting Nawaz Sharif and family to a vicious politically-motivated witch-hunt to keep the party supreme out of public life as has been claimed by the asset recovery firm Broadsheet's CEO Kaveh Moussavi.

Giving vent to his dismay at the NAB inquiry initiated against Nawaz Sharif, Shehbaz in a tweet wrote: "Broadsheet CEO's revelations expose politically inspired witch-hunt of Nawaz Sharif & family in the name of so-called accountability. Corruption allegations were made to keep him out of public life. Now the whole edifice of lies, deceit & character assassination stands demolished."

During an interview given to a private TV channel, Broadsheet CEO Kaveh Moussavi extended his apology to Nawaz Sharif for allegations of corruption charges.

He said that after a probe spanning 21 years, no corruption charges were proved against Nawaz Sharif or any other member of his family. He said he felt no hesitation in issuing an apology to the former prime minister for his being party to a scam masquerading as the National Accountability Bureau. He declared NAB a fraud through and through. INP



ISLAMABAD: Secretary-General of OIC Hissain Brahim Taha addressing during the 48th session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers at Parliament House in Federal Capital.

## Intent of Chinese enterprises to understand Pakistani laws intensifies

ISLAMABAD: With the deepening of the construction of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and the strengthening of economic and trade exchanges between China and Pakistan, more and more Chinese enterprises are coming to the Pakistani market to develop their business, according to the report published by Gwadar Pro.

To improve efficiency and reduce unnecessary trouble, it is imperative for Chinese enterprises to understand Pakistan's economic environment and legal framework.

Under the support of the All-Pakistan Chinese Enterprises' Association, the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China Ltd Karachi Branch organized an online lecture on Legal Overview of Pakistan by Ziad Munawar Shaikh, senior legal adviser of ICBC Karachi Branch.

About 80 representatives of China-funded enterprises attended the lecture and their questions on the contract law and other issues were answered on the occasion.

Pakistan is a parliamentary democracy with a federal system of government. Legislative competence and executive authority with respect to various subjects are split between the federation and the provinces.

Mr. Munawar Shaikh explained that the country has a bicameral federal legislature, known as the Parliament or Majlis-e-Shoora, comprising the National Assembly and the Senate, whereas the provincial legislatures (known as the provincial assemblies) are unicameral. An Act of Parliament (i.e. any legislation) must be passed by a quorum in both houses of Parliament (i.e. Senate and National Assembly) and receive the

President of Pakistan's assent.

Pakistan has bilateral and multilateral trade agreements with several nations and is a member of WTO, South Asia Free Trade Area and has a free trade agreement with China.

Its exports include textiles, rice, surgical instruments, leather goods, rice, cement, and fruit and vegetables. The government is making it an investment-friendly destination. "All sectors of the economy, except arms and ammunition, nuclear energy, currency and security printing and mint are open to foreign investors."

There is no maximum cap on the shareholding that may be held by foreign investors except in certain sectors including commercial aviation, and print and electronic media." Mr. Ziad Munawar Shaikh introduced. INP

## Country heading towards political clash

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) on Tuesday said country heading towards political clash. Rupee and stock market are paying price of economic uncertainty.

Economic stability is not possible if there is no political stability in the country, it said.

Local business owners are shifting their capital abroad while foreign entrepreneurs also suspend investment plans which is like poison for the economy, said Brig (ret) Aslam Khan, Chairman PEW.

He said that the stock market and rupee continue to fall and trade imbalances are exacerbating the situation, and the continued rise in food and energy prices are hitting masses.

Aslam Khan said that breach of the agreement with the IMF are increasing the risks to the economy.

He said that a constant rise in the price of construction material is hitting economic activities which should be noticed by the authorities.

Construction activities are being severely affected because of profiteering while the employment opportunities are being affected, it said. ONLINE

## Probe launched after DOHA-bound flight's emergency landing

KARACHI: The Civil Aviation Authority's (CAA) Aircraft Accident and Investigation Board (AAIB) on Tuesday launched a probe into a Doha-bound flight's emergency landing at Karachi airport.

On Monday, a foreign airline's flight, QR-579, en route to Doha from New Delhi was forced to make an emergency landing at Jinnah International Airport, Karachi due to a technical fault.

The investigation board will carry out an inquiry into the incident and submit its report.

Airport officials said that a foreign airline's flight, QR-579, with 12 crew members and 283 passengers on board was en route to Doha from Delhi when the passenger jet developed a technical fault.

The pilots of the aircraft got a signal of smoke in the plane's cargo area, forcing it to make an emergency landing at Karachi airport.

An alternate flight was later arranged to transport the passengers onward to Doha. After an inspection, the aircraft was also permitted to take off for Doha. INP



ISLAMABAD: Chinese Foreign minister Wang Yi in conversation with Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud before the start of 48th session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers at Parliament House.

## No sign of survivors as Chinese plane crashed

BEIJING: A China Eastern Airlines Boeing 737-800 with 132 people on board crashed in mountains in southern China after a sudden plunge from cruising altitude at about the time when it would normally start to descend ahead of its landing.

Media said there were no signs of survivors on the domestic flight.

The airline said it deeply mourned the passengers and crew, without specifying how many people had been killed on the jet, an earlier model to the 737 MAX with a strong safety record.

Boeing said it was ready to assist China Eastern and was in contact with US transportation safety regulators over the incident.

Chinese media carried brief highway video footage from a vehicle's dashcam apparently showing a jet diving to the ground behind trees at an angle of about 35 degrees off vertical. Reuters could not immediately verify the footage.

Reuters Graphics:

Flight MU5735 was en route from the southwestern city of Kunming, capital of Yunnan province, to Guangzhou, capital of Guangdong, bordering Hong Kong, when it crashed.

China Eastern said the cause of the crash was under investigation. Such accidents typically involve multiple factors and experts warned it was far too early to draw any conclusions on the potential causes, especially in light of the scarce information available.

Investigators will be scouring the wreckage and flight recorders for factors that could have caused the plane to plummet vertically and slam into the mountains at high speed.

The airline said it had sent a working

group to the site. There were no foreigners on the flight, Chinese state television reported, citing China Eastern.

Relatives, friends and colleagues of passengers gathered late on Monday in a cordoned off area at the jet's destination, Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport.

One man surnamed Yan said that a colleague had been on the plane, and that he had notified the 29-year-old's mother.

"When she picked up the phone, she choked up," said Yan, adding that he had a "heavy heart" when he heard the news.

China Eastern staff were making arrangements for relatives who wished to travel to the crash site on Tuesday, Yan said. Reuters was not able to independently verify Yan's identity.

The aircraft, with 123 passengers and nine crew on board, lost contact over the city of Wuzhou, China's Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC) and the airline said.

The plane crashed during its cruise phase. Five fatal incidents have occurred during the cruise phase in the 10 years from 2010 through 2020, according to data examining global commercial jet airplane accidents compiled by Boeing.

The flight left Kunming at 1:11 p.m. (05:11 GMT). FlightRadar24 data showed, and had been due to land in Guangzhou at 3:05 p.m. (07:05 GMT).

The plane, which the flight tracking service said was six years old, had been cruising at 29,100 feet at 06:20 GMT. The same flight number a day earlier began a normal gradual descent from the same altitude, also at 06:20 GMT, and landed safely in Guangzhou, according to FlightRadar24. INP

## Seminar on CPEC opportunities for youth" held

ISLAMABAD: To inspire the younger generation in Pakistan to learn more about China and CPEC, the Confucius Institute at Punjab University joined hand with Career Counseling Centre, Government Graduate College Township (GC Township) Lahore to hold a seminar themed "CPEC Opportunities For Youth".

On the occasion, according to Gwadar Pro, Cai Jinqiao, Chinese director of CIPU highlighted that it is imperative for Pakistani friends to learn Chinese as China-Pakistan

exchanges are increasing day by day.

"With the progress of the second phase of CPEC, trade cooperation between China and Pakistan will continue to show the momentum of rapid development.

The growth will be accompanied by the demand for language talents, and those who master Chinese will undoubtedly gain an edge in the market."

Mr. Cai added that in the field of culture and education, China-Pakistan cooperation is also increasing. "Currently, five Confucius Institutes and

two Confucius Classrooms have been established in Pakistan.

Combined with the scholarships provided by both governments for those who pursue further study in China, the number of Pakistani students studying in China is quite large. Statistics in 2018 showed that Pakistan ranks third in the world in the number of international students studying in China, with a total of more than 28,000."

In his speech, Dr. Muhammad Ljaz Butt, Principal of GC Township, lauded CPEC for its remarkable achievements in energy,

transportation, ports, agriculture, health, education, environment, and other fields related to the national economy and people's livelihood, and underlined that he was very proud to be a citizen of Pakistan. He called on the younger generation of Pakistan to bear in mind the help of the Chinese government and people, actively learn the Chinese language and culture, participate in CPEC construction and contribute to the China-Pakistan friendship. Waheed Dhakku, CEO of Global Education without Border Services, Lahore who is also a Chinese

teacher currently, and Mr. Dilawar Chaudhary, Chief Editor of Nawaiwaqt Epaper, said that they have benefited a lot from the philosophical wisdom of ancient Chinese classics, and hoped that the young people present could also learn Chinese and seize the golden opportunity.

More than 100 teachers and students attended the seminar. And Mr. Cai answered questions raised by Pakistani students on how to learn the Chinese language and culture efficiently, how to apply for study in China, how to take the HSK exam, etc. INP



KARACHI: Women are refilling water cans from a shared tap in an impoverished neighborhood due to the shortage of water in their locality, as World is observing the World Water Day.

# Muslim Ummah faced with multiple challenges: OIC Chief

ISLAMABAD: OIC Secretary General Husein Ibrahim Taha said the Muslim Ummah is faced with multiple challenges which can be addressed collectively.

Addressing the meeting, he expressed serious concerns over the plight of Palestinian people. He said Israel is resorting to continued murder of Palestinian people, confiscation of their land, house demolition, racial discrimination and ethnic cleansing. He said this constitutes a flagrant violation of relevant international laws and resolutions. He said the perpetuation of Israeli crimes against the Palestinian people make it incumbent upon us to strengthen the spirit of solidarity and confront with firmness the Israeli attempts to change the historical and legal status of Al-Quds Al Sharif.

The OIC Secretary General also regretted that the Jammu and Kashmir dispute had not found a solution for a long time. He termed Indian illegal actions of August 2019, abolishing special status of the occupied territory contrary to international laws. He called for redoubling efforts in support of the right of self-determination of Kashmiri people as per the UN Security Council resolutions.

Regarding Afghanistan, the OIC Secretary General stressed for continued dialogue with the Afghan authorities to achieve the objective of peace, stability and development in the country.

Husein Ibrahim Taha said the Organization believes in the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Yemen. He appreciated Saudi Arabia for its unremitting efforts for peace and stability in Yemen.

The OIC Secretary General called for collaboration with the international community to combat the issue of Islamophobia. He welcomed the UN resolution, designating 15th March as the international day to combat Islamophobia. He said the OIC has intensified efforts in strengthening cooperation amongst the member states

to ensure the progress of its agenda in higher education, education, health, environment and science and technology.

In his address, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal Bin Farhan Al Saud said his country believes in the OIC's role in consolidating Islamic solidarity and protecting common interests.

Describing the extraordinary session of the OIC held in December last year as a success, he said this led to the establishment of a humanitarian trust fund for Afghanistan. He called for more efforts to support the Afghan people. The Saudi Foreign Minister reaffirmed his country's support for Palestinians and Kashmiri people. He called for direct negotiations between the parties to settle the outstanding dispute of Palestine. He said we support an independent Palestinian state in line with international resolutions.

He said we also support the people of Jammu and Kashmir. He said we support the international effort to reach the just solution of this outstanding dispute.

In his remarks, President Islamic Development Bank Muhammad Suleiman Al-Jasser said his bank is firmly committed to supporting green and sustainable infrastructure development for higher productivity.

He said signing the charter with the OIC for Afghanistan's humanitarian trust fund is a strong message of solidarity with the Afghan people and a pivotal step for operationalization of the fund. He said he looks forward to generous support in this fund by all OIC countries, national, regional and international organizations, the private sector and philanthropists.

He assured to work closely with the international community to fully synchronize all efforts to ensure sustainable support to Afghan people. ONLINE



QUETTA: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations Quetta Abdul Haq Umrani addressing a press conference.

## CJP Bandial to head larger bench on presidential reference seeking SC's opinion on Article 63-A



Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial will head the five-member larger bench comprising by the Supreme Court to hear the presidential reference seeking its opinion on Article 63-A of the Constitution — which deals with the disqualification of parliamentarians over defection — according to the supplementary cause list issued by the apex court assistant registrar on Tuesday.

The bench will also include Justice Ijazul Ahsan, Justice Muzhar Alam Khan Miankhal, Justice Munib Akhtar and Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail.

The same bench will

also hear a petition filed by the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA), which has sought the apex court's intervention to prevent "anarchy" by directing all state functionaries to act in accordance with the Constitution and law ahead of voting on a no-trust motion against Prime Minister Imran Khan. According to the supplementary cause list, the hearing for the presidential reference and the SCBA's petition would be held at 1pm on Thursday (March 24).

Notices for the hearing have been issued to Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf's lawyer Ali Zafar, PPP's lawyer Farooq H Naek, PML-N's lawyer Makhdoom Ali Khan and Jamiat Ulema-Islam-Fazl's lawyer Kamran Murtaza, as well as the advocate general for Sindh, Islamabad inspector general of police, interior secretary and president of the SCBA, among others. The development comes a day after a two-member bench of the top

court, comprising CJP Bandial and Justice Akhtar, took up the presidential reference and the SCBA's plea. While the court had declared on Monday that a larger bench would hear the presidential reference, the names of the judges constituting the bench were not finalised at the time.

Attorney General of Pakistan (AGP) Khalid Jawed Khan had submitted the reference seeking the SC's opinion on Article 63-A of the Constitution yesterday.

The reference, a copy of which is available with Dawn.com, presents two interpretations of Article 63-A and requests the court to advise which of them should be followed.

According to the first interpretation, "khiyanat (dishonesty) by way of defections warrants no pre-emptive action save de-seating the member as per the prescribed procedure with no further restriction or curbs from seeking election afresh."

While the second interpretation "visualises this provision as prophylactic, enshrining the constitutional goal of purifying the democratic process, inter alia, by rooting out the mischief of defection by creating deterrence, inter alia, by neutralising the effects of vitiated vote followed by lifelong disqualification for the member found involved in such constitutionally prohibited and morally reprehensible conduct."

The development came days after several PTI lawmakers, who had been 'in hiding' at the Sindh House in Islamabad, revealed themselves — proving that the opposition's claims of having "won over" members of the ruling coalition were indeed true. Prime Minister Imran Khan and some cabinet ministers had earlier accused the opposition of indulging in horse-trading ahead of the crucial vote on the no-confidence resolution, disclosing that the capital's Sindh House had become a centre for buying and purchasing members. Web Desk

## Islamabad Police to eliminate land-grabbing mafia

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad police are committed to eliminate land grabbing mafia and drug peddling from the city.

It was stated by the IGP Islamabad Muhammad Ahsan Younas while listening public complaints during khuli kacheri held at central police office.

The IGP listened to the complaints of the citizens and directed concerned officers to resolve immediately and purely on merit.

The IGP said that the purpose of holding these khuli kacheris is to solve public issues immediately and purely on merit. He strictly directed all zonal officers to take immediate and strict action against land grabbers. "No one would be allowed to grab property of any citizen" he added.

The Islamabad police chief said that it is our prime responsibility to provide protection to the lives and property of the citizens and resolve their problems on priority. He said that citizens at 'Open Court' should be behaved in a respectful manner and their trust on the police department to be won through resolving their issues.

He said that interaction with people also ensures accountability of the policemen and they should address public complaints on merit by considering their own issues adding that the positive image of policemen should be ensured before them through unbiased approach towards anyone.

The IGP hoped that interaction during 'open kacheris' would help to promote friendly policing. Such interactions with citizens are aimed to promote community policing, resolve the issues of people at their door steps through merit and curb activities of anti-social elements, he added. INP

## China supports two-state solution to Palestine issue: Wang Yi

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister of China Wang Yi said on Tuesday that his country had always worked for global peace and security.

Addressing the foreign minister's meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in Islamabad, Chinese foreign minister who is attending the event as a special guest, said he was thankful to the Pakistani leadership for inviting him to the conference.

Emphasizing that China wanted peace in the world, Wang Yi said the country supported the two-state solution to the issue of Palestine. "We stand by the people of Palestine," he told the gathering.

Yi further said that China was ready for partnership with the Muslim world.

Earlier, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said Beijing has expressed desire to

## Pak Gems & Mineral exhibition inaugurated at the "The Centaurus Islamabad"

ISLAMABAD: The traditional and historical "23rd edition of Pakistan Gems & Mineral Show inaugurated at "Centaurus Mall Islamabad.

In a press release issued on Tuesday, Malik Naveed Ahmed Awan Chairman APECA and Patron-in-Chief Haji Mamoor Khan said that this event is regularly organised by "All Pakistan Commercial Exporters Association of Precious and Semi Precious Stones" since 1994 in various cities of Pakistan.

The opening ceremony was performed by Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, C.E.O of "Sardar Group of Companies" and former President of "Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry".

The Patron-in-Chief APECA, Haji Mamoor Khan informed that this is the first ever exhibition of precious and semi precious stones held at The Centaurus free of

## OIC asked to file genocide crime in ICJ, probe unknown mass graves in IIOJK

LONDON: Organisation of Kashmir Coalition leaders Professor Nazir Ahmed Shawl and Barrister Abdul Maeed Tramboob have called upon the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to file a case in the International Court of Justice under genocide crime being committed by the Modi-led Indian regime in occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Prof. Shawl and Barrister Tramboob in a letter to the OIC Secretary General, Husein Ibrahim Taha, welcomed the 48th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) convened by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in Islamabad, Pakistan. According to Kashmir Media Service, recognising that OIC has always advocated voice of wisdom through Centre for Dialogue, Peace and Understanding but regrettably India, the leadership expressed, continue to formulate and execute extremist policies in Indian occu-

## Robbers' gang busted; valuables recovered

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Koral police team has busted a notorious robbers' gang involved in numerous incidents of robberies in different areas of twin cities, a police spokesman said.

He said that following orders of IGP Islamabad Muhammad Ahsan Younas, a massive campaign against criminal elements is on full swing.

Following the orders, SP Rural zone Zia Ud Din directed all zonal SDPOs, SHO's to arrest those involved in street crimes and looting people on gun-point.

According to details, a police team of Koral police station headed by SHO Koral Muhammad Azeem Minhas along with other officials arrested two accused of a notorious gang known as Jabar gang identified as Imran Ahmad and jabar Iqbal. Police team also recovered mobile phones, bike used in crime and weapons along with ammunition. During preliminary investigation the accused have confessed their involvement in numerous cases of snatching and house robberies in areas of ghauri town, lehrar road and different areas of Rawalpindi. Further investigation is underway.

IGP Islamabad Muhammad Ahsan Younas has appreciated the performance of the police team and further directed to all zonal officers to intensify the security in their respective areas and arrest those looting people and recover the looted valuables. INP

## Eight miscreants arrested in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Golra police team has arrested eight accused of 03 different gangs involved in numerous robbery incidents, a police spokesman said. Police has also recovered 04 motorbikes, 04 pistols, 14 mobile phone and cash worth Rs. 850,000. He said that Following the orders of IGP Islamabad Muhammad Ahsan Younas crackdown against the criminals is continued. A police team of golra police station under supervision of SP Sadder Zone Tassawar Iqbal headed by SHO Golra Nadeem Tahir along with other officials arrested eight accused of three notorious gangs. The accused involved in snatching mobile phones are identified as Hasnain Gulzar and Mazah Younas while two accused involved in looting citizens coming out banks are identified as Ghulam Murtaza and Laiq Zada. Similarly, 04 accused involved in looting people on different roads are identified as Bilal Ahmad, Aman Ullah, Mati Ullah and Mateeq Ur Rehman. INP

## UN, OIC work together to nurture culture of peace: Antonio Guterres

ISLAMABAD: UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, in his video message on Tuesday said that the United Nations and OIC enjoy decade-old relationship based on shared belief on the values of multilateral cooperation, dialogue and solidarity.

He said our two organizations have worked together to nurture a culture of peace and understanding.

The UN Secretary General said in recent years, we have cooperated in key areas including mediation, counter-terrorism, preventing violent extremism, combating anti-Muslim hatred and promoting religious tolerance.

He said today it is imperative to join forces and devise common strategy to meet current challenges facing the world.

Antonio Guterres said we must reform the morally bankrupt global financing system. He said through joint efforts we can confront the challenges for a safer world. INP

## Punjab govt red-faced as its cheque issued to copter insurance company bounced

LAHORE: The Punjab government was left red-faced when its cheque given in payment for the insurance of Chief Minister Usman Buzdar's official helicopter to an international insurance company got bounced on Tuesday.

Reportedly, the Punjab government issued a cheque amounting to Rs20.67 million to an international insurance company, MS National Insurance Company, for the payment of Chief Minister Usman Buzdar's official helicopter's insurance. But to the utter chagrin of the provincial government, the cheque got bounced.

Sources revealed that the insurance company returned the bill to the provincial government and expressed its strong reservations.

The company said the provincial government gave it two cheques for the annual payment of the helicopter's insurance. But the bill given by the Punjab government for the last year's invoice amounting to Rs20.67 million could not be cleared at the end of this financial year by the State Bank of Pakistan. INP

## PTI allies to join opposition after Mach 24: Wassan

KARACHI: While giving new prediction, Adviser to Sindh Chief Minister on Agriculture and Senior PPP leader Manzoor Hussain Wassan on Tuesday said that ruling PTI allies -MQM-Pakistan and PML-Q - will join opposition after March 24.

"PTI government allies in Centre - MQM-P and PML-Q - will officially announce joining opposition camp after March 24 and vote against PM Imran Khan on no-confidence motion," he claimed.

Manzoor Hussain Wassan further maintained that Imran Khan will not remain PM after March 28, adding that interim govt would be formed after the success of no-trust motion against the prime minister.

"Shehbaz Sharif will become interim prime minister," he said, adding that new general elections would be held in the country.

The PPP leader said that PM Imran Khan had accepted defeat by delaying National Assembly session on no-confidence motion.

It was learnt yesterday that Muttahida Qaumi Movement Pakistan (MQM-P) leaders held another round of talks with the opposition leaders at Parliament Lodges over the no-trust motion and other issues.

The session held last night, was attended by MQM-P leaders Amir Khan, Waseem Akhtar and Ameen ul Haq. The meeting discussed progress in the political situation and also opposition parties contacts with other allied parties of the government, according to sources. The opposition leaders that attended the talks included Ahsan Iqbal, Avaz Sadiq, Rana Sanaulah, Saad Rafique, Akhtar Mengal, Syed Khurshed Shah and Sohail Anwar Sial. INP



QUETTA: MPA Sakeela Naveed speaks at the convention on "Woman role in local government" organized by Aurat Foundation.

## Abdullah, Azhar build steadily after Australia conclude at 391

LAHORE: Young sensation Abdullah Shafique and seasoned Azhar Ali build steady foundation of Pakistan's reply to Australia's first innings' 391 (all-out), with concluding day 2 of the third and last test at 90-1.

Both Abdullah Shafique and Azhar Ali chipped away at Australia's first innings of 391 after quick Naseem Shah had earlier staged a spectacular fight-back for Pakistan to leave the deciding third Test in the balance.

Pace sensation Naseem Shah earlier rapped the visitors' first innings at 391 with classic exhibition of ruthless reverse swing. Naseem Shah grabbed 4-58, coupled with Shaheen Shah Afridi's clinical bowling at top-front and reverse swing at the back end. Shaheen picked up 4 wickets for 79 runs.

For Australia, Usman Khawaja stood firm as always the case during this series, and managed to post 91 against his name. Khawaja yet again fell a prey to 'nervous nineties'. Other notable performers for Australia, with bat were Chris Green 79, Alex Carey 67 and Steve Smith 59.

Pakistan reached stumps on day two at 90 for 1 with in-form Shafique 45 not

out and Azhar unbeaten on 30 as the hosts trail by 301 runs. Naseem's brilliant 4 for 58 from 31 overs marked by reverse swing mastery helped restrict Australia and move this match forward with the series deadlocked after two draws in batting friendly conditions in Rawalpindi and Karachi. Both Abdullah Shafique and Azhar Ali chipped away at Australia's first innings of 391 after quick Naseem Shah had earlier staged a spectacular fight-back for Pakistan to leave the deciding third Test in the balance.

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## Arts Council hosts an evening with poet Iftikhar Arif

KARACHI: Arts Council of Pakistan (ACP) Karachi has organized a prestigious event at John Elia Lawn to pay homage to renowned Pakistani poet Iftikhar Arif.

The purpose of the event was to celebrate Iftikhar Arif's birthday. Arts Council's President Muhammad Ahmad Shah, members of the governing body, along with a large number of journalists and fans cut his birthday cake, paying tribute to Iftikhar Arif. The students of Arts Council Karachi's music academy sang Iftikhar Arif's ghazals and made the audience sway.

President Arts Council Muhammad Ahmad Shah while expressing his views said that we are fortunate that Iftikhar Arif is among us, we are living in the era of Iftikhar Arif, Iftikhar Arif is one of the great poets of this era, and today is his birthday.

Well-known journalist, Pirzada Salman said that it is very important to be a great poet, there are different levels of poetry, poetry must be subject to time, the creation of the poet and Personal life should be looked at

separately, no great person can create such a person who has not only endured the vain aspect of life but also tried to negotiate with it so that it can be traced and Iftikhar Arif Has done all this, Mubeen Mirza said that today is a very happy day, do not keep this birthday a formal birthday. Iftikhar Arif has a different essence of his personality in our tradition of poetry recitation. Iftikhar Arif is trustworthy of this era. Times are also recognized by their voices. Of course, such people are certainly rare in our age. Expressing his views, Iftikhar Arif said that listening to his poetry in music reminded him of his youth. It is a great honor for me today. I belong to Karachi. And I am proud of it, the man who spends the days of his life where he remembers, Karachi is very dear to me, I have spent the best days of my life here, I belonged to a very poor family, life has He treated me very well, I have never been discriminated against in Sindh, I am a very grateful man, I have worked hard in life, Allah has given me a lot of honor. INP



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi met Foreign Minister of Republic of The Gambia, Dr. Mamadou Tangara on sidelines of 48th Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers.