



"Termination of TB is possible through timely diagnosis and effective treatment. The lives of patients dying of TB can be saved with effective treatment"

Chief Minister Punjab
Maryam Nawaz

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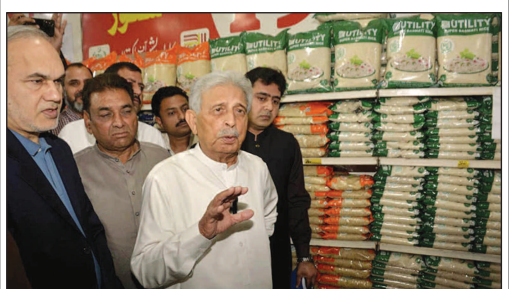
President confers military awards upon 42 officers of Pakistan Armed Forces

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Sunday conferred insignias of military awards upon 42 officers of armed forces of Pakistan.

Held at the Aiwan-e-Sadr in connection with Pakistan Day, the Presidential Investiture ceremony was attended by senior officers of Pakistan armed forces, government officials and families of the recipients of the awards.

The recipients of Hilal-i-Imtiaz (Military) included Lt. Gen. Mohsin Muhammad Qureshi, Air Marshal Abdul Moeed Khan, Air Marshal Tariq Zia, Air Marshal Ghulam Abbas Ghuman, Major Gen. Shoaib Ahmed, Major Gen. Naseer Ahmed Samore, Rear Admiral Habibur Rehman, Major Gen. Shazia Nisar, Major Gen. Ejaz Ghani, Major Gen. Nadeem Ahmed Rana, Major Gen. Waseem Ahmad Khan, Major Gen. Arshad Naseem, Rear Admiral Syed Ahmed Salman, Major Gen. Arshad Mehmood, Major Gen. Muhammad Atif Mansha, Major Gen. Javed Dost Chandio, Major Gen. Muhammad Irfan Khan, Major General Syed Asif Hussain, Major Gen. Shehryar Parvez Butt, Air Vice Marshal Zaffar Aslam, Major Gen. Imranullah, Rear Admiral Jawad Ahmed, Rear Admiral Abdul Munib, Rear Admiral Faisal Amin, Major Gen. Muhammad Raza Aizad, Major General Muhammad Ishaq Khat-tak, Major Gen. Ch. Amin Ajmal, Major Gen. Jawwad Ahmed Qazi, Major Gen. Ahmad Bilal, Major Gen. Ifthikhar Hassan Chaudhry, Major Gen. Ehsan Ali, Major Gen. Kamran Nazir Malik, Major Gen. Wajid Aziz, Major Gen. Muhammad Umer Bashir, Major Gen. Asad ur Rehman Afzal Cheema, Major Gen. Mushtaq Ali, Major Gen. Muhammad Intan Babar, Major Gen. Muhammad Farhan Yousaf, Rear Admiral Syed Faisal Ali Shah, Major Gen. Ahsan Altaf and Major Gen. Abeena Choudry.

President Zardari also conferred Sitara-i-Basalat (posthumous) upon Captain Abdul Wali Shaheed, who embraced martyrdom during a terrorist operation in North Waziristan. INP



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari conferring the insignias of Hilal-i-Imtiaz (Military) upon officers of the Pakistan Armed Forces, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. APP



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari conferring the insignias of Hilal-i-Imtiaz (Military) upon officers of the Pakistan Armed Forces, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. APP

PM directs for foolproof security of Reko Diq project personnel, logistics

VOM Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Sunday directed that security should be ensured for those working on the Reko Diq mining project and for the logistics and transport from Reko Diq to the Gwadar seaport.

He was chairing an important meeting regarding the Reko Diq mining project. A delegation of Barrick Gold company led by its Chief Executive Officer Mark Bristow took part in the meeting through video link. The PM said consultations should be held with all stakeholders regarding the project at the official level and all the obstacles should be removed. He said planning should be initiated for improvement in the communication infrastructure especially railway lines for utilising the minerals of Balochistan, adding work for the upgradation of the road network to link Reko Diq project with Gwadar port by road, should be completed at the earliest.

Wherever new roads were being constructed, the pace of construction should be increased, he remarked. The PM said a strategy should be formed for the feasibility of a rail and road network from Reko Diq to Gwadar port. He said the railway line project from Reko Diq to Gwadar would make access to the port short and easy and as



compared to Bin Qasim port the distance would also be less.

The new railway line would be beneficial for the mineral-rich district of Chaghi and the mining industry would expand, he added. He sought a detailed briefing next week on the Reko Diq road and rail connectivity project. He also instructed that all hurdles should be removed at the official level for early completion of the environment and social impact assessment regarding the Reko Diq project. During the meeting, it was told that the feasibility of the Reko Diq project would be completed by December 2024. Every month, 6000 containers would be transported from the

Reko Diq project to the port. The concentrate pipeline of the project would be the second-longest slurry pipeline in the world. The mining company would construct the link road from Reko Diq to the national highway 40.

It was further told that the 103-kilometer Nokandi to Mashkhel road, which would connect Reko Diq to the Gwadar port, was 58 percent complete.

Minister for Finance and Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb, Minister for Petroleum Musadiq Malik, Deputy Chairman Planning Commission Muhammad Jehanzeb and high-level officials attended the meeting.

Govt committed to provide low-cost, affordable living opportunities: Pirzada



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Housing and Works Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada has said that the government is committed to providing low-cost and affordable living opportunities to the poor and vulnerable segments of society.

While chairing a meeting of the Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA), he emphasized the importance of ensuring that plots are allocated strictly on merit.

During the meeting, Riaz Pirzada was apprised about the management and working of the department by Director General FGEHA Capt.

(R) Muhammad Zafar Iqbal.

The minister urged the identification and removal of any irregularities to uphold transparency in the allotment process.

Furthermore, he directed the Director General to conduct a thorough and transparent audit of the authority stressing the need for stringent measures against corruption, as no one will be spared on any irregularity.

"We must deliver what we committed to the allottees and highlighted the urgency of completing ongoing and stalled development projects to facilitate the government employees and the general public," he added.

Secretary Ministry of Housing and Works Dr. Shahzad Khan Bangash and other senior officers of the ministry and FGEHA were also present during the meeting. APP

Secretary Commerce Khurram Agha to undertake a 2-day visit to Afghanistan from today: Mumtaz Zahra

Says Pakistan remains committed to promoting trade & people-to-people ties with Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch has announced that the Secretary Commerce Khurram Agha will undertake a 2-day visit to Afghanistan from today (Monday) to discuss trade related matters.

In a statement issued on Sunday, Spokesperson, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said that Pakistan remains committed to promoting trade and people-to-people ties with Afghanistan.

"Secretary Commerce Khurram Agha will undertake a 2-day visit to Afghanistan on Monday 25 March 2024 to discuss trade related matters. Pakistan remains committed to promoting trade and people-to-people ties with Afghanistan", FO spokesperson said. SABAH

Provision of maximum facilities top priority: Shaza Fatima

VOM Report

LAHORE: Minister of State for Information Technology Shaza Fatima has said that provision of maximum facilities to people is top priority of the government. She said this while visiting a Utility Store in Green Town as per the direction of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif here on Sunday. She said that government wanted to improve the system of utility stores.

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz had started Ramazan Nigehban package to facilitate deserving people in Punjab during the holy month of Ramazan, she said and appreciated the initiative.

Shaza said that PM Shehbaz Sharif was work-

ing hard to control inflation, adding that no doubt country was facing economic challenges but soon with the grace of the Allah Almighty these challenges would be overcome.

The state minister said that being a nation, it was a responsibility of the government to steer the country out of economic crises. To a question, she said that some complaints had been received regarding registration at utility stores, adding that "we are in touch with the Punjab government and complaints related to registration would be solved soon". Shaza Fatima said that strength of counters at utility stores would be increased to provide maximum ease to buyers. She also checked prices and quality of essential items at the utility store.

Maritime Minister highlights PQA's role in country's economy

KARACHI: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Shaikh on Sunday visited Port Qasim Authority and held meetings with PQA officers. The Minister highlighted the important role of the Port Qasim Authority in country's economic progress. The chairman Port Qasim Authority Rear Admiral (r) Syed Hassan Nasir Shah and other officers briefed the Minister about the mandate and the day to day affairs of the Authority. Addressing the meeting, the Minister said Asia was progressing ahead on a fast track as compared to other regions of the world but unfortunately Pakistan has left behind and unable to reap the fruits of this progress. He urged upon the stakeholders to play role in the revival of the economy.

Qaiser Shaikh also cited China's example of bringing 60 million population out of poverty level and suggested that such efforts are needed for the revival of our economy.

As many as 95 million people are still below poverty line here in our country, he deplored. The minister informed the audience about the industrial zones being charted out in PQA where multinational companies can establish world class industries. In order to boost trade, he told that dredging of the channels is being completed and berths are also being updated to facilitate the large ships at the port. In addition to this, other projects such as terminals, industrial zones, berths, additional channel are also under consideration for the revival of economy through this port. Earlier, the Federal Minister was received by Chairman Port Qasim Authority and other members on his arrival at PQA. APP

Aurangzeb to lead ECC after prime minister Shehbaz reshuffles key body

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb will be heading the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) after Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif reshuffled the key economic body on Sunday.

With the reorganisation of the ECC already notified, the body will also include ministers for finance, economic affairs, commerce, power, petroleum and planning, development and special initiatives. The development comes a day after media reported that the prime minister himself was to chair the ECC and the finance minister would only take his place in the wake of the premier's absence.

The prime minister on Saturday constituted six separate cabinet committees on economic coordination, date of parliament.



energy, Chinese investment projects, privatisation, State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) and disposal of legislative cases in terms of Rule 17(2) of Rules of Business 1973.

According to the publication, the ECC will see whether fresh legislation or amendments to the existing laws are in line with the constitutional scheme, not in violation of any existing law, and fall within the mandates of parliament.

The body also includes the Planning Commission deputy chairman, State Bank of Pakistan governor, Securities Exchange Commission of Pakistan chairman, Federal Board of Revenue chairman, Board of Investment chairman and federal secretaries for Power Division, Commerce Division, Communications Division, Finance Division, Industries and Production Division, Economic Affairs Division, Petroleum Division, Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Division, National Food Security & Research Division, Privatisation Division, Railways Division, Revenue Division, Poverty Alleviation & Social Safety Division and Water Resources Division.

ECC's reorganisation comes as Islamabad is seeking a longer and larger

size of fresh bailout package under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) and is expected to engage in negotiations with the Washington-based lender next month.

The country is expected to seek a fresh IMF bailout package of over \$8 billion with the possibility of augmentation through climate finance on the occasion of upcoming spring meetings of Bretton Wood Institutions, known as the IMF/World Bank, scheduled to be held in Washington, DC, from April 15 to 20.

A Pakistani delegation, led by Finance Minister Aurangzeb and comprising Finance Secretary Imdadullah Bosal, Secretary EAD Kazim Niaz and State Bank of Pakistan Governor Jamil Ahmed, will participate in the meetings.

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Pakistan-India detente?

MAHEEN SHAFEEQ

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's response to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who in a brief tweet extended his congratulations to Sharif for assuming the post of PM, garnered wide attention. The exchange of political tweets between the leaders of two hostile neighbours was perceived by many as an icebreaker between the two governments after an extended period of no contact. However, it was not significant enough to be assumed as a beginning of a detente. While analysts have argued that Islamabad and New Delhi should adopt an incremental approach towards normalizing diplomatic relations and resuming trade, experts believe it might be a most vexing test.

Both Pakistan and India have clearly expressed their prerequisites for normalization of relations. Pakistan has remained firm over its call for revision of Article 370 of the Indian constitution; this was also part of PM Sharif's election mandate. However, India's stance on A370 has hardened particularly since the Indian Supreme Court verdict on upholding the revocation of Article 370. India considers the subject of Article 370 off the agenda of bilateral ties while Pakistan does not. What appears more concerning for Pakistan is Article 35A of the Indian constitution through which the BJP government aims to inorganically alter the demographics of the disputed region to strengthen its foothold. As long as India disregards the Kashmir dispute, Pakistan will continue to internationalize it. On the other hand, India has often correlated Pakistan with cross-border terrorism and has emphasised zero tolerance over the matter. Unless the new government in Pakistan takes measures to dispel this notion, Indian strategists will continue to raise red flags. These aspects are likely to strain bilateral ties. Moving post-election, the new government in Pakistan would likely start by prioritizing the revival of the economy before considering normalizing ties with India. Also, the weak coalition government in Pakistan has limited power to make decisions on India without all stakeholders on board. On the Indian side, analysts state that the subject of Pakistan is no longer on the table in New Delhi as they believe it to be a high-cost and low-rewarding matter. India's focus has been on securing a seat on the higher table as evident in its ventures such as the latest Agni-V MIRV tests. New Delhi has been fixated on moving beyond the discourse of Pakistan. The BJP's tactics have been to isolate Pakistan regionally as well as globally. India has been bolstering BIMSTEC and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), while purposefully decaying Saarc as Pakistan is a member. Pakistan also remains off the agenda in New Delhi due to growing anti-Muslim rhetoric under Modi's India.

India is experiencing a unique rise of religious hyper-nationalism under the Hindutva ideology, which the BJP government has openly adopted from the RSS. The Hindutva ideology is a movement for the national reconstruction of Hindustan through the otherization of Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Dalits, Adivasis and other minorities in India. Over the last decade, the BJP government has systematically introduced measures that limit and suppress the civic and religious freedom of these minorities including through surveillance, harassment, violent mob attacks, demolition of property, detention and ghettoization. Discriminatory laws such as the recently enacted Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) have gathered widespread opposition including from the US State Department and US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF). Hate speech and misinformation against Muslims has spread like wildfire due to social media. This hate against Muslims has particularly exacerbated during the election seasons as seen during the inauguration of Ram Mandir on the site of the centuries-old Babri Masjid. India Hate Lab (IHL), a Washington-based institution, documented about 668 hate speech events targeting Muslims and inciting violence against Muslims in India. Such a climate of religious hyper-nationalism in India has made it difficult to secure popular support for the normalization of ties with Pakistan. The US Annual Threat Assessment Report 2024 predicted that Islamabad and New Delhi might sustain the present fragile calm in their bilateral ties. While chances of normalization of bilateral ties appear far-fetched, there could probably be two likelihoods for the resumption of dialogue between New Delhi and Islamabad. First, another Sharif government has raised some hopes for improvement of relations with India. This is due to some success in the normalization of ties with India in the past under former PM Nawaz Sharif. Second, PM Modi's possible third term in the government could be an incentive for the BJP to improve ties with Pakistan after the election dust settles. During his third and possibly last term, PM Modi, like previous Indian Prime Ministers, might pursue improving ties with Pakistan to make it part of his legacy. Even if such a measure is taken by India, experts have questioned its sustainability. Any hostility in the region could prove to be highly detrimental, which is also predicted by the U.S. Annual Threat Assessment Report 2024. This demonstrates that the two governments might experience a tug-of-war between the restoration of ties and the surrendering of their principled positions.

In a situation like this, it remains to be seen if New Delhi and Islamabad will be able to find a middle ground or even opt to catch some low-hanging fruit in a limited space. With this, it also remains to be seen if the two governments will revisit outstanding issues such as the dismissal of trade or the downgrade of diplomatic relations. Experts have stated that any effort for resumption of dialogue or normalization of relations would need to be a mutual effort in the absence of which it will be another era of diplomatic freeze.

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Ghazi Salahuddin

Saying it with bricks

What options does an ordinary man have in this country to find redress for the wrongs he suffers in his daily existence? For anyone who has observed the situation that exists on the ground, the answer is obvious. An ordinary man's struggle for survival is a story of epic proportions, in a tragic sense.

Essentially, it is denial of justice and dignity at every step of the way. The remedy, perhaps, is comprehensive social change. That is what the revolutionaries want to achieve by overthrowing the existing state. But can the man on the street do it on his own? And that too with a brick in his hand? If this is a bit confusing, let me put it straight. Newly inducted Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur has exhorted the people to hit any officer who asks for a bribe with a brick, ostensibly drawing blood. These words of wisdom were uttered by the PTI leader in a fiery speech delivered on Wednesday in a village in D I Khan. Gandapur asked the people not to come to him to complain about officials who demand bribes. Hit them with a brick. Simple. If the children of any of them protest, tell them that you have saved their father from going to hell.

There should be no doubt about the meaning of the message the chief minister had delivered. He was asking the people to take the law into their hands and indulge in vigilantism. But consider the irony that he himself embodies law enforcement in his province. A clip of Gandapur's hot-blooded remarks was shown on some channels and circulated on social media. I read a report on the site of BBC Urdu about questions that were raised by the netizens. How can the chief minister of a province advise people to resort to violence against any official?

If the PTI supporters want to rationalize this reckless transgression on the part of a leader chosen for the only post of authority that the party now has - as they have done in the case of their leaders' and activists' unlimited indiscretions - the excuse is that fighting corruption is the central plank of the party.

This does make a lot of sense. Corruption is the enemy we need to defeat. But this battle is not to be fought at the level of a common man's isolated encounter with authority. The truth is that it is the official who holds both, the law and the brick, in his hands. It is essentially the powerlessness of the maltreated citizen that breeds the social injustice of Pakistani society.

Besides, any campaign against corruption should begin at the top - and that, rightly, is also the PTI's stance. Incidentally, there have been charges of corruption in high places during the former provincial regimes of the party. Opposition will always do that. However, senior PTI

leader Sher Afzal Marwat has admitted that corruption was rampant in his party's previous government in KP.

Coming back to what I said at the outset, it is the common man's plight that is generally not addressed in Pakistan. It is not possible, not in KP and not in any other province, for a wronged citizen to hit an official with a brick or even grab him by the collar. But the powerlessness of the dispossessed is still expressed in some manner and they do take law into their own hands.

I am referring to how the mob on the streets of Karachi has repeatedly lynched people suspected of being muggers and robbers. The frequency with which this happens is alarming. It has almost become a matter of routine, to the extent that the news of another such incident is just not considered important.

For example, a suspected robber was lynched by an angry mob in the Korangi neighbourhood of Karachi on Tuesday. One report that I read on the city page of a Karachi daily covered just over an inch of the column. "The suspect died on the spot", it neatly concluded.

This is how we deal with human stories of potentially great magnitude. In addition, nothing happens as a follow-up. Do they talk about these societal aberrations when they sit on the high table of authority in the citadel of power? Is the state of the society, in the context of its disequilibrium, of any concern for them? As an aside, street crime and crime in general tend to rise during Ramadan. More than usual, people are seen to be losing their cool. It

appears that instances of road rage also increase. I wonder if Gandapur's angry outburst can also be put in this category.

Finally, I want to refer to another incident of this week that I think is also a reflection of the state of our society, though it will be hard to fully explore its genesis and its implications. Let us not do that and just paraphrase the published report. And I want to keep it brief.

In Dera Ismail Khan, an additional sessions judge has handed a death sentence to two girl students of a seminary and life imprisonment to another for "slaughtering" their young teacher for allegedly committing blasphemy. According to a police report, the three students of a madrassah had murdered a young female teacher two years ago.

To quote from one published report: "In the initial statement given to the police, the arrested students said that one of their fellow students had told them about her dream that the teacher had committed blasphemy and her killer would be given the glad tidings of paradise". Knives and sticks were recovered from the three students. The report said that the tortured and slaughtered body of the teacher was found lying in the street.

According to the World Air Quality Report published on Tuesday, Pakistan was the second most polluted country in 2023. But we have other kinds of pollution that cannot be measured by scientific instruments.

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Disclaimer: Views expressed by writers in this section are their own and do not necessarily reflect The Asian Telegraph's point-of-view

Today in History

History of Pakistan



Pakistan Movement

Main articles: Pakistan Movement and Indian independence movement

Further information: Two Nation Theory

Important leaders in the Muslim League highlighted that Pakistan would be a "New Madinah", in other words the second Islamic state established after the Prophet Muhammad's creation of an Islamic state of Madinah which was later developed into Rashidun Caliphate. Pakistan was popularly envisaged as an Islamic utopia, a successor to the defunct Islamic Caliphate and a leader and protector of the entire Islamic world. Islamic scholars debated over whether it was possible for the proposed Pakistan to truly become an Islamic state.[2][3] Another motive and reason behind the Pakistan Movement and Two Nation Theory is the ideology of pre-partition Mus-

lims and leaders of Muslim League including Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Allama Iqbal is that, to re-establish the Muslim rule in South Asia. Once Jinnah said in his speech:

The Pakistan Movement started when the first Muslim (Muhammad bin Qasim) put his foot on the soil of Sindh, the gateway of Islam in India.[4][5]

That is why Jinnah is considered the "great Muslim ruler" in the Indian subcontinent after Emperor Aurangzeb by Pakistanis.[6] This is also the reason that the Pakistani government's official chronology declares that the foundation of Pakistan was laid in 712 AD[1] by Muhammad bin Qasim after Islamic conquest of Sindh and that these conquests at their zenith conquered the entire Indian subcontinent during Muslim Mughal Era.

While the Indian National Congress's (Congress) top leadership had been imprisoned following the 1942 Quit India Movement, there was intense

debate among Muslims over the creation of a separate homeland.[3] The All India Azad Muslim Conference represented nationalist Muslims who, in April 1940, gathered in Delhi to voice their support for a united India.[7] Its members included several Islamic organisations in India, as well as 1400 nationalist Muslim delegates.[8][9] The Deobandis and their ulema, who were led by Husain Ahmad Madani, were opposed to the creation of Pakistan and the two-nation theory, instead promulgating composite nationalism and Hindu-Muslim unity.

According to them Muslims and Hindus could be one nation and Muslims were only a nation of themselves in the religious sense and not in the territorial sense.[10][11][12] Some Deobandis such as Ashraf Ali Thanwi, Mufti Muhammad Shafi and Shabbir Ahmad Usmani dissented from the position of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind and were supportive of the Muslim League's demand to create a separate homeland for Mus-

lims.[13][14] Many Bareilvis and their ulema,[15] though not all Bareilvis and Bareilvi ulema,[16] supported the creation of Pakistan.[17] The separatist Muslim League mobilized pirs and Sunni scholars to demonstrate that their view that India's Muslim masses wanted a separate country was in the majority, in their eyes.[14] Those Bareilvis who supported the creation of a separate Muslim homeland in colonial India believed that any co-operation with Hindus would be counter productive.[18]

Muslims who were living in provinces where they were demographically a minority, such as the United Provinces where the Muslim League enjoyed popular support,[19] were assured by Jinnah that they could remain in India, migrate to Pakistan or continue living in India but as Pakistani citizens. The Muslim League had also proposed the hostage population theory.

To be continued.....

Showbiz

Jack Black reveals 4th instalment of Kung Fu Panda might be 'last'

Comedian Jack Black made a revelation about the Kung Fu Panda franchise's future

Comedian Jack Black, who has voiced the famous Po the panda since 2008, recently revealed that Kung Fu Panda 4 might be the "last Kung Fu Panda. Ever." Speaking to The Sunday Times, Black made a revelation about the franchise's future.

He said: "For me, I think this is the farewell. This is the last Kung Fu Panda. Ever."

It's been over two decades since Black voiced the first instalment, with DreamWorks Animation first announcing him in the role.

The School of Rock star shared his experience on one of the most highly-acclaimed franchises of all time, noting: "I'm just thrilled that it turned out



so great, because when you start these things you always have the

hopes and the dreams that it's going to be amazing and that you're going to entertain people, but it's never a given, you never really know until you see it." "Making movies is hard, so to make a really good one that captures people's imaginations and gives them a great night at the theatre feels like magic, and it definitely feels that way right now," he added.

The film's latest instalment enjoyed the biggest opening weekend in the U.S. earlier this month, setting a new record since its original debut.

For the unversed, Kung Fu Panda has established its name as one of the most successful animated franchises in history.

Tech

Elite Russian hackers targeting German politicians, Google warns



Elite hackers tied to Russian intelligence last month targeted several German political parties with an eye toward burrowing into their networks and stealing data, according to an alert released by Germany's cybersecurity agency and security researchers working for Google owner Alphabet.

In a report published on Friday, Alphabet's Mandiant cyber unit said it had caught the hacking group known as APT29, which is

alleged by Western intelligence to act on behalf of Russia's SVR foreign spy agency, trying to trick "key German political figures" into opening an email masquerading as an invitation to a March 1 dinner event hosted by the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), Germany's center-right political party.

An alert circulated by Germany's BSI cyber agency and reviewed by Reuters referred to the same incident, saying that state-backed cyber spies were targeting German political parties in an effort to build long-term access and exfiltrate data.

In a statement, the CDU said it had long been exposed to digital attacks from domestic and foreign actors. "In this case, too, we received very prompt information about the attack," the statement said. "There was no official CDU dinner on 1 March, the event was fictitious." The alert did not give further details on who was believed to be responsible and neither it nor Mandiant provided details on who specifically was targeted. Reuters

Health

This new medicine can treat types of pancreatic cancer

Pancreatic cancer symptoms include loss of appetite, belly pain, dark coloured urine, jaundice, and weight loss

In a scientific breakthrough, a new medicine has been approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) that can treat types of pancreatic cancer, Fox News reported.

Onivyde (irinotecan liposome) is the first medicine in nearly a decade that can treat the aggressive illness that has an average life expectancy of only eight to 11 months.

The drug was approved after a controlled trial was conducted on 770 patients with metastatic

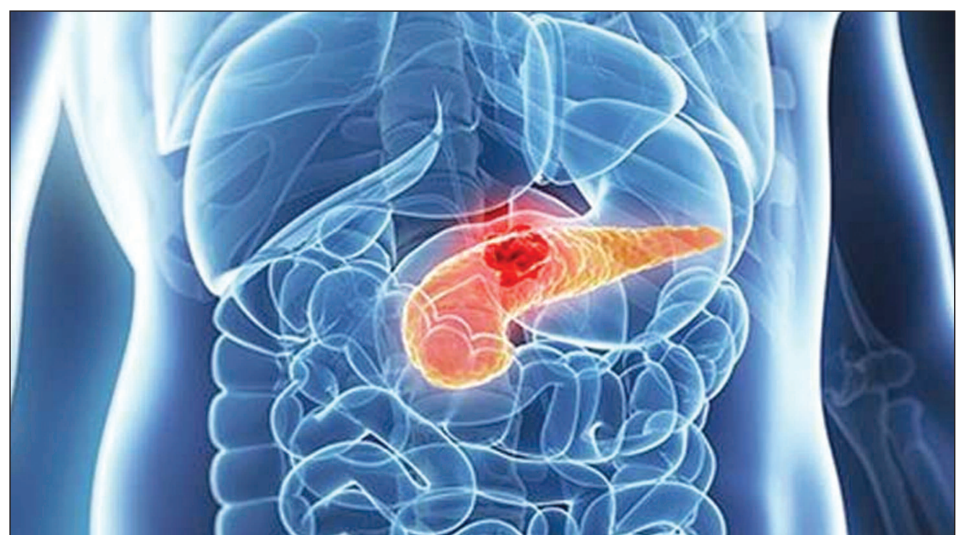
pancreatic adenocarcinoma and who had not previously received any chemotherapy.

The patients were injected with the new regimen which includes Onivyde, oxaliplatin, fluorouracil and leucovorin. According to the results, the patients showed "significant improvements in survival rates and response rates".

Dr Zev Wainberg, professor of medicine and co-director of the UCLA GI Oncology Program in Los Angeles, said, "I am hopeful that this regimen rep-

resents a new reference, meaning we will add to this in the future." However, Dr Marc Siegel, clinical professor of medicine at NYU Langone Medical Center, said that although "the drug is a useful new tool, it is not a game-changer."

Pancreatic cancer is the eighth most common type of cancer in females and tenth most common in males. Its symptoms include loss of appetite, belly pain, dark coloured urine, jaundice, and weight loss.



Administrator USAID Samantha Power conferred Hilal-e-Quaid-i-Azam on National Day of Pakistan

Ambassador Masood Khan says we will never forget her humanitarian services at a time when we needed them the most



WASHINGTON: "The efforts by Ms. (Samantha Jane) Power are reflection of her commitment to assist people of Pakistan and forge a strong and deep partnership between Pakistan and the US." "In recognition of her outstanding contribution towards strengthening Pakistan-U.S. relations,

the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan is pleased to confer upon Ms. Samantha Power, Hilal-e-Quaid-i-Azam (Civil)," stated the citation that was read on the occasion while awarding USAID Administrator with the national award.

Ms. Power is serving as the 19th Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) since May 2021. She is proponent of strong Pakistan-US cooperation in humanitarian and socio-economic sectors like health, education and climate change and promoting people to people exchanges. "As USAID administrator, she was instrumental in provision of significant life-saving US humanitarian assistance to mitigate the disastrous impacts of the floods in 2022," the citation said.

Thanking the people of Pakistan for the award, Samantha Power in her video message said that the award was a testament to the enduring partnership between USAID and the Pakistani people. In a heart-touching message she recalled the devastation when one third of Pakistan was inundated due to biblical floods in 2022. "I will never forget visiting Pakistan in September of 2022. Flying over the floods, feeling sure that I was flying over an ocean, only to be reminded that the ocean was in fact hundreds of miles away. And there were entire towns submerged under the seemingly infinite expanse of water below," Ms. Power stated in her statement. She highlighted the support from the highest levels of the White House and both houses of the US Congress that facilitated an assistance of \$215 million to the flood affected people. She also highlighted the support from private American citizens and American companies who rallied to Pakistan's aid, donating more than \$37 million to support the relief efforts.

"Our mission is helping the people of Pakistan to improve water management systems, build markets for Climate Smart Agriculture technologies and techniques and mobilized climate adaptation finance under the US-Pakistan green Alliance initiative," Ms. Power said. "We remain committed to standing with Pakistan as it continues the long and difficult recovery from the floods while building a more resilient and more prosperous future," she added. Congratulating Ms. Power on receiving national award of Pakistan, Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States Sardar Muhammad Masood Khan said that Ms. Power is a true friend of the people of Pakistan. We will never forget her humanitarian services at a time when we needed them the most. SABAH



RAWALPINDI: A large number of citizens engaged in Eid shopping in Bara market at night in the city. ONLINE

Save Gaza Campaign demands decisive action from the Govt of Pakistan for the Palestinian cause

Calls for an immediate global intervention & heightened pressure for an immediate ceasefire

ISLAMABAD: The world watches on, as the men, women and children of Gaza make it to 170 days of siege at the hands of the illegal occupier and apartheid regime of Israel. Weaponized starvation, air raids, sexual assault, and brutal murder of children continues to unfold before our very eyes, reaching us through our hand-held smartphones as the first ever genocide to be broadcast continues to worsen in the holy month of Ramadan.

The patron-in-chief of the Save Gaza Campaign former senator Mushtaq Ahmed Khan led the protest and sit-in at the D-Chowk on Sunday. Chairperson Defense of Human Rights Pakistan Amina Masood Janjua along with the workers of the organization attended the protest and sit-in.

We are shocked and appalled at the response or lack thereof, of the Government of Pakistan to take action to force Israel to, at the very least, an immediate ceasefire. We

urge the government to take decisive action to:

1. Call for an immediate global intervention and heightened pressure for an immediate ceasefire.
2. Establish a formal team to join South Africa in the prosecution of Israel for crimes against humanity in the International Court of Justice.
3. Initiate proceedings on Israel's war crimes in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).
4. Undertake diplomatic demarche with the ambassadors of the United States, Great Britain, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
5. Facilitate ground and sea routes for humanitarian aid, including the dispatch of a naval fleet to deliver substantial quantities of food, medicine, and essential supplies. While the afterglow of Pakistan Day, March 23 still infuses us with the spirit of readi-

ness, strength and courage, we must consider with gratitude the place that our military might affords us on the world stage. We must use this very gratitude to remind ourselves of the objectives of the charter of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), which states that the aim of this organization is, "to support and empower the Palestinian people to exercise their right to self-determination and establish their sovereign State with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital, while safeguarding its historic and Islamic character as well as the Holy places therein".

It is time to read the writing on the wall, and to lean on the unique geo-political position of the sovereign state of Pakistan and unite the people nationally and internationally to compel Israel towards a peaceful and just solution to this horrific problem that threatens to destabilize the entire Muslim world. SABAH

Mushahid Hussain Sayed congratulates renowned artist Misbah Uddin Qazi on receiving Tamgha-e-Imtiaz



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan-China Institute Mushahid Hussain Sayed has congratulated renowned artist Misbah Uddin Qazi on conferment of civil award Tamgha-e-Imtiaz in recognition of remarkable contributions in the field of Visual Arts. Mushahid Hussain Sayed, who was federal minister for information and culture in the 1990s, recalled old golden days when Misbah Uddin Qazi was serving the PNCA under the administrative control of his ministry. "I am glad that Government of Pakistan has finally recognized your outstanding contributions to showcase the natural beauty in the form of paintings and landscapes," he said, emphasizing that visual artists are precious asset of nation who used to play pivotal role in promotion of soft image of the country as well as preserving rich culture, identity and heritage of the country. Artist Qazi lauded that the Culture Ministry, under the then Minister Mushahid Hussain Sayed, had achieved many distinctions at national and international levels.

Qazi is a fine arts graduate from Punjab University, Lahore, who in order to learn from excellence in fine arts went to the University of Perugia, Italy on government scholarship.

He is also one of the founding officials of the Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) from where he retired as Director Visual Arts in 2006 after 33 years of service. Even after the retirement, he is actively promoting and highlighting the positive image of Pakistan through his paintings of various beautiful places across the country. SABAH

Pak-Afghan Torkham border reopened

TORKHAM: Pak-Afghan Torkham border has been restored for crossing after three hours. According to border security sources, passengers' crossing from both sides of the border has been continued.

The border was suspended due to dispute between Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and security forces, sources said. The channel report said the traffic on the border was suspended for three hours today morning. INP

With protection of plants & persons, clean, green & corruption free Pakistan is possible: Sirajul Haq

LAHORE: Emir Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan Sirajul Haq has said that with the protection of plants and persons, clean, green and corruption free Pakistan is possible. He said faulty decisions and inattention of rulers are reasons behind destruction of the environment. Sirajul Haq expressed these views while talking to media persons after planting a sapling at Mansoorah on inauguration of plantation drive on Sunday. On this occasion, Secretary General Ameerul Azim, Deputy Secretary General Azhar Iqbal Hassan and Spokesperson of Jamaat-e-Islami Qaisar Sharif were present. He said that big cities have become stronghold of pollution, adding through legislation, saplings should be planted in commercial areas. According to international standards, 27 percent areas should be consisted of forests whereas in Pak-

istan this percentage is mere 5.2. He said billion tree projects were not actually implemented, adding political and environmental pollution are ruling the country. He said Lahore, Karachi, and Peshawar are most polluted cities in the world. He further said that Jamaat-e-Islami is struggling for green, clean and corruption free Pakistan. Sirajul Haq further suggested that every Pakistani should plant a sapling every year for ending environment pollution. He said that Jamaat-e-Islami started countrywide plantation drive with the cooperation of Chairman Tree for All Forum Dr. Mehmood Qureshi. Shahid Tabasam and his team were also present on the occasion. He said that due to environment pollution causing shortage of water, increasing health related issues, floods and other natural calamities. SABAH

Appointment of Aurangzeb & Naqvi good omen for govt, says Sanaullah

LAHORE: Former interior minister and senior leader of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Rana Sanaullah has termed the appointment of Muhammad Aurangzeb and Mohsin Navqi as federal ministers as good omen for the government.

In a statement issued here on Sunday, he said that Muhammad Aurangzeb's appointment as Finance Minister and Mohsin Navqi's appointment as Interior Minister was guarantee of good future of the incumbent government.

Rana Sanaullah said that the PML-N would have got two third majority if there would have been no 16-month coalition government. He said that Shehbaz Sharif showed extreme tolerance during coalition government and the situation would have worsened if there have been someone else than him. The PML-N leader said that there could be no guarantee of completion of five-year tenure during coalition government. INP



SIALKOT: Defense Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif addressing the welcome iftar dinner by University of Sialkot Chairman Faisal Manzoor Malik. APP

World leaders condemn Russian concert hall attack

PARIS: World leaders denounced a deadly attack by gunmen on a Moscow concert hall that killed more than 130 people and wounded dozens more.

Four gunmen stormed the Crocus City venue before the start of a rock concert on Friday, opened fire on the audience and set fire to the building, in an assault claimed by the Islamic State group. Here are the reactions from governments and leaders around the world.

President Vladimir Putin vowed retribution for the attack on Saturday, saying the "barbaric, terrorist act" was an "atrocious, a strike against Russia and our people". In a televised address, he said all four perpetrators had been "found and detained" after "travelling towards Ukraine - Kyiv, facing a Russian military offensive for the past two years, had 'nothing to do' with the attack, presidential aide Mykhailo Podolyak said on Telegram. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said Saturday that Putin was "just trying to blame it on someone else", in response to claims the attackers were heading towards Ukraine.

The main intelligence directorate of the Ukrainian defence ministry said the attack was a "deliberate provocation by the Russian special services" to "escalate" the war with Ukraine. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Friday condemned the attack "in the strongest possible terms," spokesman Farhan Haq said.

Guterres "conveys his deep condolences to the bereaved families", he added. The UN Security Council also offered condolences and urged all states "to cooperate actively" to hold perpetrators and backers of "these reprehensible acts of

terrorism accountable". US Secretary of State Antony Blinken called the attack a "heinous crime" saying Washington condemns "terrorism in all its forms".

The United States stands "in solidarity with the people of Russia in grieving the loss of life from this horrific event," Blinken said in a statement. The White House called Islamic State "a common terrorist enemy that must be defeated everywhere". Washington warned Moscow this month about a "planned terrorist attack" possibly targeting "large gatherings" in the capital, the White House said.

President Xi Jinping "strongly condemned" the attack and sent condolences to Putin, state media reported. Xi "stressed that China opposes all form of terrorism, strongly condemns the terrorist attack and firmly supports the Russian government's efforts to safeguard its national security and stability", Xinhua news agency said.

The EU said it was "shocked and appalled" by the attack "The EU condemns any attacks against civilians. Our thoughts are with all those Russian citizens affected," said a spokesman. Britain's foreign minister David Cameron said the UK condemned "in the strongest terms the deadly terrorist attack". "We offer our heartfelt condolences and express our deepest sympathy to the families of the many victims," he added.

French President Emmanuel Macron said he "strongly condemns the terrorist attack claimed by the Islamic State", according to the Elysee Palace. "France expresses its solidarity with the victims, their loved ones and all the Russian people," the palace said. DNA

China-Pakistan Gandhara Art Exhibition closing ceremony held in Shenzhen, China

BEIJING, Mar 24 (APP): The closing ceremony of the exhibition titled "Gandhara Heritage along the Silk Road: A Joint China-Pakistan Exhibition" took place at the Shenzhen Museum on Sunday.

The ceremony was attended by senior Chinese officials including Wang Xudong, Director of the Palace Museum; Zeng Xianglei, Director of Culture, Radio, Television, Tourism, and Sports Bureau of Shenzhen; Jia Jianwei, Director of Gansu Provincial Museum; and Huang Chen, Director of Shenzhen Museum.

Pakistan side was represented by Pakistan Ambassador to China Khalil Hashmi, along with the Acting Consul General of Pakistan in Guangzhou and officials from the Pakistan Embassy in Beijing and the Pakistan Consulate-General in Guangzhou.

The ceremony marked the successful culmination of the largest Gandhara exhibition in China's history, showcasing over 170 artifacts from seven different museums in Pakistan. The exhibition debuted last year at



the prestigious Palace Museum in Beijing for three months but due to overwhelming interest from the Chinese audience, it evolved into a touring exhibition, making stops in Guangzhou and finally Shenzhen, following necessary legal procedures.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Hashmi reflected on the significance of the initiative, highlighting the successful collaboration between Pakistan and China in organizing the largest Gandhara Art Exhibition in China's

history. He emphasized the importance of cultural exchanges and people-to-people initiatives, expressing gratitude to Director Wang Xudong and his team for their efforts in executing the Joint Exhibition.

Ambassador Hashmi also hinted at future joint initiatives, indicating ongoing plans for further exhibitions showcasing shared heritage between the two countries. Additionally, he illuminated Pakistan's rich historical legacy as the seat of Gandhara civilization and its contributions to cultural exchanges along the ancient Silk Road.

Director Wang Xudong, expressing his delight at being part of this momentous exhibition, paid homage to Pakistan's rich heritage. He shared insights into the experience of contributing to and witnessing the exhibition's impact.

As the final phase of the exhibition concludes, preparations are underway for the dispatch of artifacts back to Pakistan, with a de-installation team scheduled to arrive after Ramadan. APP