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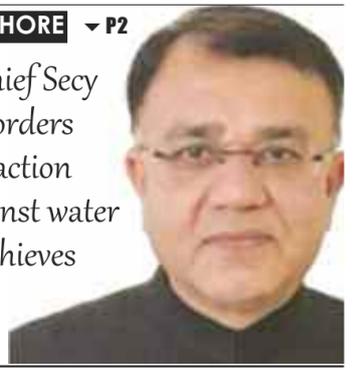
CM orders to ensure water to tail ends of 19,000 canal outlets

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Chief Secy orders action against water thieves



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Tussle between PA Speaker, Dy intensifies

LAHORE: The tussle between Speaker Punjab Assembly Parvez Elahi and Deputy Speaker Dost Muhammad Mazari on Thursday intensified after the former transferred 11 of the latter's employees. The speaker issued a notification to transfer 11 employees under the deputy speaker as the latter claimed that there was no justification for a late-night transfer of his employees. "I will not be afraid of actions taken by the speaker," Mazari said and further claimed that employees posted at his official residence are also being threatened. The spokesman for the speaker, however, denied the allegations and said that no employee given to the deputy speaker as per the privilege he enjoys has been withdrawn. "The deputy speaker enjoys services of 12 government employees," the spokesman said, adding that four guards have also been deployed at the residence of deputy speaker. The deputy speaker was assigned 40 guards for conducting the election process and they were later withdrawn after April 16, he said. This is not the first time that two have taken action against their staff as previously Speaker Punjab Assembly Parvez Elahi suspended staff of Dost Muhammad Mazari in what appears to be a tit for tat move after the latter suspended secretary PA. The speaker while exercising his power suspended two assistant officers -Assistant protocol officer Muhammad Shahid. —APP



ISLAMABAD: Vice-President of Pakistan Muslim League (N) Maryam Nawaz talks to the media persons after her hearing at the High Court.

■ Bilawal will embark on US official trip on 17th: FO

No change in trade policy with India

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office on Thursday once again rejected any change in trade policy for India after the new government took charge in Pakistan and said that Pakistan wanted peaceful relations with India and its other neighbouring countries. Foreign Office Spokesman Asim Iftikhar said that talks with India were suspended after illegal Indian measures in occupied Kashmir and now the responsibility lies with India to create a suitable environment for renewed talks. "The Commerce Ministry has also issued a clarification over a news report and there is currently no change in policy with regard to trade ties with India," he said while speaking during a weekly briefing at the Foreign Office. The Foreign Office expressed concern over the rising trend of Hindutva in India and said that Indian forces have even imposed a ban on congregational prayers at Jamia Masjid Srinagar. "The Indian government is committing barbaric acts and should rather focus on safeguarding rights of minorities." The spokesman further said that Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto also held a virtual meeting with his Chinese counterpart and discussed CPEC projects and the security of Chinese citizens. "The two foreign ministers also condemned terrorism in Karachi University," he said. The spokesman further expressed sorrow over the loss of lives and property in Afghanistan owing to

floods and shared that Pakistan has sent relief goods for the affected people. Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari will embark on an official trip to the US on May 17. Last week, Bilawal had received a telephone call from United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken congratulating him on assumption of his office. During the call, Blinken expressed the desire to continue strengthening mutually beneficial Pakistan-US bilateral relationship Building on the Pakistan-US cooperation in dealing with the pandemic during the last two years, Secretary Blinken invited Pakistan to the Second Global Covid Summit to be held virtually later this month. An invitation was also extended by the Secretary of State for Pakistan's participation in the ministerial meeting on global food security to be held in New York on May 18 2022. On Wed, during the weekly press briefing, State Department spokesperson Ned Price was asked about the phone call between Bilawal and whether a one-to-one meeting between them during a food security summit was expected. Price replied that he does not have any bilateral meetings to preview food security gatherings in New York. He said that Bilawal and the US secretary had an opportunity to reflect on the 75th anniversary of US Pakistani relations and to talk about how they can strengthen that cooperation going forward. I was threatened a day before no-trust vote: Bilawal Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Thursday claimed that a night before no-confi-

dence motion, a minister of PTI government threatened him and asked to accept immediate elections or face martial law in the country. Addressing National Assembly session, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto said that it is policy of his party to hold elections after electoral reforms as PPP is not an undemocratic party which is against polls. Bilawal said that former political opponents have come together for protecting national interest and representatives of all four provinces joined hands for betterment of the country. The house must form a parliamentary commission to investigate the events like April 3," Bilawal said. The minister further said that country's institutions were made controversial for just one man and due to selected prime minister Pakistan suffered and he did nothing in last four years that could be remembered. Pakistan committed to high quality development of CPEC Bilawal Bhutto Zardari says Pakistan is committed to high quality development of the CPEC and looks forward to fast-tracking key projects and accelerating industrial relocation to Pakistan, especially in CPEC Special Economic Zones. Talking to his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi virtually, he appreciated transformational impact of the CPEC on Pakistan's infrastructure, energy, industrialization, socio-economic development and improvement in livelihoods of the people. Condemning the terrorist attack in Karachi University in which three Chinese teachers lost their lives.

Dollar hits all time high at Rs191.75

From Our Staff Correspondent

KARACHI: Amid ongoing uncertainty in the country, Pakistani Rupee continued to slump against US Dollar in the interbank market. The local currency depreciated by Rs1.73 on the back of weak macros including higher import bill along with delay in the IMF tranche. The dollar was being traded around 191.75 when compared to the previous day's close of 190.02. Meanwhile, PSX also witnessed a bearish trend as KSE-100 index fell by over 550 points in intraday trade and reached 42,293.

ISPR flays senior politicians tirade against army

RAWALPINDI: Peshawar Corps is a unique formation of Pakistan Army. For the last two decades, Peshawar Corp has been fighting against terror as frontline defense. The leadership of this corps always handed over to very professional officers. According to ISPR, the recent statements of senior politicians regarding Corps Commander, Peshawar, are very irresponsible. Such statements have very negative impact on the morale and prestige of the army and its leadership. The brave soldiers and officers of the Pakistan Army always ready to sacrifice for the sovereignty and integrity of the motherland. It is expected from the senior leadership to restrain from such statements against Pakistan Army. —Online

Imran urges SC to review verdict against Suri

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: PTI Chairman Imran Khan on Thursday challenged the Supreme Court's verdict against former deputy speaker Qasim Suri's ruling regarding the no-confidence motion. The former prime minister has filed a petition in the apex court against his decision in the suo motu notice. On April 3, the former deputy speaker rejected the vote of no-confidence against the then prime minister Imran Khan in the National Assembly on the grounds that it was part of an international conspiracy. In his petition, former PM Imran Khan said that the Supreme Court had ordered on April 7 to carry out the voting on the no-confidence motion on April 9. "There are several loopholes in the court's April 7 decision that need to be reviewed," he said. The PTI chairman said that the deputy speaker implemented Article 5 of the Constitution during the proceedings of the National Assembly. On May 9, Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial took suo motu notice of the ruling against the deputy speaker of the National Assembly after consulting 12 judges of the Supreme Court.

ADB ready for \$2.5b support to Pak fiscal year

ISLAMABAD: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) here on Thursday indicated to provide additional support of \$ 2.5 billion to Pakistan for the next fiscal year, out of which \$1.5-2 billion could be available in the on-going calendar year, finance ministry said. According to statement issued by finance ministry, Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Dr. Aisha Ghous Pasha held a meeting with Country Director ADB Yong Ye and his team here. Senior officers of Ministry of Finance participated in the meeting. Welcoming the team from ADB, Minister of State for Finance and Revenue acknowledged that ADB has always assisted in pursuance of reform and development agenda in the country. —DNA

PSX marginal gain in roller coaster session

From Our Staff Correspondent

KARACHI: A roller-coaster ride was observed at the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) on Thursday where the benchmark KSE-100 index posted a U-shaped recovery, plunging by 590 points in the first half before erasing all losses to end with a marginal gain. Lack of positive triggers and plunge in rupee value to an all-time low of 191.77 against the US dollar in the inter-bank market made the benchmark index trade on both sides of the fence. Following a brief upward open, the KSE-100 index began its descent in the initial hour and plummeted till mid-day as investors rushed to offload their holdings. Shortly after noon, market participants resorted to cherry-picking stocks at attractive valuations. At close on Thursday, the KSE-100 ended with a gain of 35.29 points, up 0.08%, to finish at 42,898.44. The index has been under pressure for weeks now, with rupee's downward movement contributing to the bearish sentiment. A report from Capital Stake stated volatility continued to hit the Pakistan stock market. "Indices swayed both ways in search of a direction until finally settling flat," it said. Sectors driving the benchmark KSE-100 index upward included cement (39.24 points), chemical (19.77 points) and pharmaceutical (17.10 points). Volume on the all-share index dived to 284.5 million from 338.54 million on Wednesday.

Alvi writes to CJ to form JC on 'conspiracy'

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has written a letter to Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial to form a judicial commission to conduct open hearings and probe the allegations of a regime change conspiracy, a statement issued by the president's secretariat said Thursday. The president has asked the CJP to form a commission chaired preferably by the CJP himself to avert a political and economic crisis in the country and keep the political powder keg from igniting, the statement said. Underlining the importance of constituting the commission, President Alvi said that a serious political crisis was looming in the country and major polarisation was taking place in politics, in the wake of recent events, as well as among the people of Pakistan. In his letter, the president also emphasised that it was the collective duty of all institutions to make utmost efforts to avert damaging consequences to the country and prevent further deterioration. He also regretted the fact that random comments were being quoted out of context, misunderstandings were increasing, opportunities were being lost, confusion was prevailing, the economy was plunging into crisis, and the situation on the ground.

PM terms Pak nurses a 'proud chapter' of history

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday, terming nurses an icon of great service to humanity, has said the government would improve the working conditions of the nursing sector in the country. PM Sharif said nurses in Pakistan for their excellent services were a golden and proud chapter of history. In his statement on International Nurses Day, the prime minister said steps would be taken to improvement in the quality of education and training and carry out reforms for the reasonable salaries of nurses. The prime minister paid tribute to those associated with the field of nursing in Pakistan and the world over and said during the pandemic of coronavirus, the nurses along with doctors rendered invaluable services in the health sector.

He said the paramedics including doctors and nurses braved the challenges of the pandemic and served humanity even at the cost of their family life. He mentioned that the inclusion of 10 Pakistan women in the WHO list of the world's 100 best nurses and midwifery leaders was a global recognition of their services. He said the services of male and female nurses in caring for their patients during difficult times were always commendable and stressed the need for ensuring better facilities. He pointed out that female nurses, in particular, faced misconduct in society which needed to be discouraged by raising awareness among the public. Nestle hands over PM a donation of 60k litres water for Afghans To add to the relief initiative of the

government for the flood-hit people of Afghanistan, Nestle Pakistan has contributed a donation of 60,000 litres of water. The donation was presented to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif by Nestle's Head of Corporate Affairs Waqar Ahmed and General Manager Abdullah Javed, in a meeting held in Lahore recently. During the meeting, the Nestle Pakistan's senior representatives paid tribute to the prime minister for providing relief items for the flood victims of Afghanistan. PM Sharif commended the charitable work by Nestle Pakistan for the Afghan people in their difficult times. The donated clean drinking water will help flood victims to prevent infectious diseases. —Online



GILGIT: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs Qamar Zaman Kaira in a meeting with ex-Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Hafiz Hafeez Ur Reman during his first visit to Gilgit-Baltistan.

If govt resist, even 20 people will not enter Islamabad: Sana

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah on Thursday said that the coalition government will decide on the matter of long March, if it's been decided to stop the long March then not even 20 people will be able to enter the capital. Talking to Media the Interior Minister brutally criticised the previous PTI-led government and mentioned that the Ehsaas Programme's fund has been consumed by the one with the inappropriate conduct. He said that I will not let Sheikh Rashid to step out of the house, if he didn't take back his statement regarding the protest. Responding to the former Interior Minister's statement Rana Sanaullah said

that Sheikh Rashid should focus on setting himself on fire, despite of taking a seditionist approach by teaching others. It's our political and administrative responsibility to stop the elements of chaos, he added. The Interior Minister stressing on the need for stopping such people, who attempt to provoke chaos, said that these people will be responsible for creating an unstable and chaotic situation in the society. He also talked about the case against him expressing that Sheikh Akbar provided heroin in the case against me in London. First the police was approached, then the agenda was accomplished by taking it to the ANF. Sanaullah further

said that Imran and Shehzad Akbar are directly involved in the heroin case against me and both of them should be arrested and asked where they got the heroin from. Sana holds Imran responsible for current economic woes Minister for Interior Rana Sana Ullah on Thursday said that Imran Khan was responsible for the current economic woes of the country. In reaction to Sheikh Rashid statement, the minister said Imran Khan made an agreement with the IMF and brought the nation to this state. "There are two liars in the country, one is Imran Khan and the other is Sheikh Rashid. —APP