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IMF Bailout Prevails Over Populism: Tax-Heavy Rs18.9 Trillion Budget 2024-25 Unveiled

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance Muhammad Aurangzeb has unveiled a budget of Rs18.877 trillion for the fiscal year 2024-25, a 30% increase over the previous year.

While presenting the budget in National Assembly on Wednesday, Aurangzeb described the budget as balanced, with resources matching expenditures at Rs18.877 trillion.

On the parliament floor, Aurangzeb announced a historic development budget (PSDP) of Rs1.5 trillion. He also declared a 25% salary increase for government employees in grades 1-16 and a 22% increase for those in grades 17-22. Pensions will rise by 15%.

Minimum wages in the private sector will increase to Rs36,000 per month, up from Rs32,000 last year. Funds for the Benazir Income Support Programme will grow by 27% to Rs593 billion for FY25.

Aurangzeb confirmed that income tax rates for salaried individuals remain unchanged, with the exemption limit at Rs600,000 annually.

The budget presentation was marked by opposition uproar in the National Assembly.

Aurangzeb expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, PML-N leader Nawaz Sharif, and other coalition leaders for



their guidance in preparing the budget.

"Mr Speaker, despite political and economic challenges, our progress over the past year has been impressive," Aurangzeb said, urging the nation to revitalise the economy.

He praised the government's determination in addressing economic challenges and pledged to accelerate development under Shehbaz's leadership. He highlighted a homegrown agenda that has navigated economic difficulties and stimulated development.

Aurangzeb acknowledged hurdles such as depleted foreign reserves, a 40% rupee depreciation, stagnant growth, and soaring inflation pushing citizens below the poverty line.

He credited the previous PDM government for securing a crucial nine-month IMF programme in June 2023, which averted economic collapse.

"The previous IMF programme was ending, and a new deal was essential to prevent a default. I commend Shehbaz Sharif's government for their efforts," he said.

Aurangzeb noted improvements in economic indicators, attributing these successes to the efforts of the PM and his team.

"Inflation stood at 11.8% in May, a notable achievement considering the chal-

lenges. We're on the right track, and inflation is likely to decrease further," he said.

He highlighted bolstered foreign exchange reserves and growing international investor interest. He applauded the State Bank's decision to cut interest rates to combat inflation, congratulating Shehbaz Sharif and his team.

"These achievements are not ordinary. As a result, the country has exited a difficult time," he said.

Aurangzeb emphasised patience and collective effort for sustainable economic development, cautioning that progress cannot be accelerated overnight.

"There is a need for patience and extreme hard work, combined with home-grown corrective plans. The public must work together with institutions to achieve our economic goals," he said.

Aurangzeb highlighted several key measures and reforms. The FBR's tax policies and digitisation efforts have registered 3,400 retail

new households included in the programme.

Aurangzeb noted Rs5 billion allocated for an agriculture mark-up scheme, with financing to boost the sector, which constitutes 24% of GDP.

The energy sector will receive Rs253 billion, focusing on reducing losses and promoting wind and solar power. Efforts are underway to freeze debt from power reforms and involve the private sector.

The IT sector will receive Rs79 billion, with plans for an IT park in Karachi and efforts to increase exports to \$3.5 billion this year.

A national digital commission will be introduced to advance digital solutions. The social welfare and education sectors will see Rs206 billion allocated for water resources, Rs8 billion for an IT park in Karachi, and Rs206 billion for drinking water projects.

Smart screens, tablets, blended learning, and e-libraries will be provided in schools, with six-month IT courses offered to students.

Overseas Pakistanis will be facilitated in sending remittances, with Rs90 billion allocated for this purpose, recognising their crucial role in the economy.

Aurangzeb presented a positive economic outlook, expecting 3.6% growth in the next fiscal year and keeping

inflation around 12%. Significant allocations include defence (Rs2,015 billion), pensions (Rs1,014 billion), and power sector subsidies (Rs1,363 billion).

Efforts are being made to attract global climate finance and improve Pakistan's economic growth through a homegrown reform agenda. The PSDP allocation of Rs1,500 billion will focus on infrastructure, social sector development, and strategic projects.

In FY25, Rs50 billion has been earmarked for the production sector, with a comprehensive Karachi package introducing special projects for Karachi, Hyderabad, Sukkur, and Benazirabad.

The tax-to-GDP ratio will be increased through economic digitisation and a progressive tax system. The undocumented economy will be brought under the tax net through digitisation, with the FBR introducing personal income tax reforms.

Under these reforms, tax exemptions will remain unchanged at Rs600,000 for salaried individuals. The minimum wage is set at Rs36,000.

The government is committed to facilitating exports, recognising their crucial role as the economy's backbone. Different tax slabs have been implemented for filers and non-filers, with a capital gains tax fixed at 15% for fil-

ers and up to 45% for non-filers.

Sales tax exemptions on many products will be reduced or eliminated, with an 18% sales tax imposed on mobile phones and motor cars based on vehicle price.

BISP beneficiaries will increase to 10 million, with sales tax on textiles and leather raised to 15%. Advance tax scope will expand to document traders, while tax on the Pakistan Stock Exchange will increase from 1% to 2.25%.

Capital gains tax on non-filers will go as high as 45%, while for filers, it will stay at 15%.

The FBR will impose personal income tax on incomes exceeding Rs600,000 annually, ensuring higher incomes are taxed more.

The government has allocated Rs4 billion for e-bikes and plans to support exporters through joint ventures, especially with Chinese companies under CPEC phase-II.

Recent visits to China resulted in several MoUs aimed at promoting trade and investment in sectors such as iron and steel, automobiles, and textiles.

The Pakistan Climate Change Authority will be activated to promote solar and wind energy, with Rs206 billion allocated for water projects.

Iron and steel scrap will be exempted from sales tax to eliminate the misuse of fake invoices. Tax rates for textile and leather manufacturing will be adjusted from 15% to 18%, which will not impact consumers.

The GST on the tier-1 textile retail sector will be enhanced from 15% to 18%. Sales of cigarettes without tax stamps will be penalised, and the Federal Excise Duty (FED) on cement will increase to Rs3 per kg from Rs2 per kg.

Customs duty exemptions on hybrid car imports will be abolished, and duties on steel and paper products will increase. Incentives will be introduced for the import of plant and machinery, raw materials, and batteries for the solar panel industry.

Health insurance will be provided to 5,000 journalists initially, and later to 10,000 journalists. Rs79 billion has been proposed for the IT sector, with incentives for importing plant and machinery for the solar panel industry.

The budget aims to mitigate people's problems, transform the agriculture sector, promote information technology, boost exports, promote industrial growth, and bolster businesses. It has been formulated considering domestic and international challenges, aiming to present a pro-people, business-friendly, and progressive federal budget.—RT/Agency

PPP Extended Invitation To Rejoin Federal Cabinet

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has decided to expand the federal cabinet after the budget and has invited the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) to join the government formally, sources told media.

According to the report published today, senior political leaders from the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and allied parties will be included in the cabinet.

The publication stated that the prime minister has started working for the inclusion of new cabinet members and has once again invited the PPP to be a part of the cabinet with talks going on in this regard.

After the decision of the leadership, this matter will be kept before the top decision-making body of the party — the Central Executive Committee (CEC) — which will make the final call.

The report said that Federal Minister Ahsan Iqbal has



been given an important task by the PML-N leadership following which he has contacted Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti and Qamar Zaman Kaira on the issue.

It is important to note that after the elections, the PPP decided against joining the PML-N alliance in the Centre and Punjab but voted for Shehbaz Sharif as prime minister.

The PPP had initially decided not to take any ministries and had limited itself to only constitutional and parliamentary posts as per a

Budget 2024-25: Government Employees To Get A 25% Pay Increase



fresh employees, a contributory pension scheme would be introduced for those who were government would deposit its share every month.

Moreover, a pension fund would be created to manage the liability, he added.

He proposed a 20-25% increase in the salaries on ad-hoc basis and 15% enhancement in the pensions of the federal government employees, realising their financial hardships due to the increased inflation.

The minister said despite financial constraints, the government had decided to give 25% ad-hoc relief in the salaries of employees from Grade 1-16 and 20% to Grade-17-22 employees aimed at increasing their purchase power. He also announced to increase the minimum wages from existing Rs32,000 to Rs 36,000 per month.—RT/Agency

PPP Warns PML-N: Do Not Underestimate Us



ISLAMABAD: Rifts between the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) deepened on Wednesday as main ally of PML-N government had only a token participation in the National Assembly's budget session after the ruling party didn't bother to address PPP's reservations about budget.

The disgruntled lawmakers of the PPP only had a token participation in the budget session, that too after the Deputy Prime Minister & Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar rushed to PPP chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari's chamber, requesting that the party should attend the budget session.

However, the PPP chairman only sent three of his MNAs, Naveed Qamar, Khurshid Shah and Ijaz Jakhani, to represent PPP in the session as the party feels that PML-N has not only deviated from its post-election agreement but it has started taking PPP for granted. The PPP chairman and the rest of the party lawmakers were conspicuous by their absence when the session started.

"The PML-N has violated the agreement that it reached with PPP before forming the government in the Centre as it has not taken any input from its key ally in the PSDP budget," PPPP Secretary In-sharraf Shazia Marri shared with The Express Tribune, "the government is taking us for granted."

The party spokesperson said that both the parties had agreed that they would consult on Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) programme and take PPPP's recommendations in this regard but that hasn't happened. Marri said that the government side only briefed a few party lawmakers a few days ago but nothing has happened after that, adding that the token participation in today's session makes it clear PM Shehbaz and the government hasn't given any assurance to PPPP.

Had Dar not come to request Bilawal and assure that the government will look into the issue, Marri said, PPPP wouldn't even have participated in the session at all. To a question what will be PPPP's next move, Marri said that it was up to the government how it moves on from here on as the ball was in the government's court.

Responding to the question if PPPP would help the government pass the budget, Marri said that the government still has time to address PPPP's concerns. "We are not blackmailers, we act responsibly," she said, "but the government shouldn't take us for granted." She said that PPPP wants to subsidise farmers, strategic taxation and avoid regressive taxation.—RT/Agency

Arrest Warrant Issued For Khawar Maneka In Land Grabbing Case

SAHIWAL: A special judge of anti-corruption has issued arrest warrant for Former first lady Bushra Bibi's ex-husband Khawar Maneka and his son Musa Maneka, media reported. As per details, special judge anti-corruption Asif Bashir also ordered the authorities to arrest Khawar Maneka and his son and present them before court. On August 11, 2023, anti-corruption Okara booked Maneka and his sons in a case pertaining to constructing a market after grabbing the land. The Anti-corruption stated that the market construction has costed millions of losses to the national city. On September 25, 2023, the Punjab Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) arrested Khawar Farid Maneka, ex-husband of Pak-



istan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan's wife Bushra Bibi, on illegal construction charges in Lahore. An ACE spokesperson confirmed the arrest of Maneka saying that he was apprehended on charges of illegally constructing a marriage hall on the cemetery land. Later, in another case the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) commenced inquiry against Bushra Bibi's ex-husband, over complaints of financial irregularities. Khawar Maneka and his family are accused of taking huge financial benefits during the tenure of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government. The NAB has begun collecting the record of the assets owned by Khawar Maneka and his family members.—RT/Agency

MQM-P Expected To Secure Two Additional Ministries

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has decided to expand the federal cabinet after the budget 2024-25 and has invited the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), a key ally, to join the federal government, media reported on Wednesday citing sources.

Sources said that senior political leaders from the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and allied parties will be included in the cabinet after budget.

MQM-Pakistan (MQM-P) and Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) will get 2, 2 ministries each, they said.

Additionally, to woo PPP, Federal Minister Ahsan Iqbal has been given an important task by the PML-N leadership.

It is important to note that after the elections, the PPP decided against joining the PML-N alliance in the Centre and Punjab but voted for Shehbaz Sharif as prime minister.—RT/Agency

Opposition Denounces Budget As Fake And Anti-People



ISLAMABAD: Leader of the opposition in National Assembly Omar Ayub termed the federal budget as anti-people and said that the government didn't consult any stakeholder.

Talking to media outside the parliament house after the budget speech of Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, the opposition leader said that the constitution was violated for the very first time in National Assembly during the presentation of budget.

"I have presented four budgets in this house. These are fake documents as government didn't mention the total volume of budget and its deficit," said the opposition leader.

He added that the PTI government eliminated electricity loadshedding by 80 percent during its tenure.

"The PPP has stabbed the government in the back as their MNAs didn't want to participate in the budget session today," Ayub said.

MNA Ali Muhammad Khan of Sunni Ittehad Council said that the budget is anti-people as it doesn't have anything for the masses. "The party that got majority in the house was thrown on the opposition benches. The budget was presented by those who reached parliament on Form-47," said Ali Muhammad Khan.—RT/Agency

THE HEARTLAND



HYDERABAD: Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) Chairperson, Asad Iqbal Butt along with others is addressing a press conference at the Hyderabad press club.-RT

Mayor Larkana Anwar Ali Luhar reviews arrangements for Eid-ul-Azha



By Saleem Soomro Larkana Anwar Ali Luhar, Deputy Commissioner Sharjeel Noor Channa and SSP Larkana Mir Rohail Khan Khoso in detail.

LARKANA: An important meeting was held in the conference hall of the Municipal Corporation under the chairmanship of Mayor Larkana Anwar Ali Luhar regarding the peace and security situation in the city. In the meeting, Deputy Commissioner Sharjeel Noor Channa and SSP Larkana Mir Rohail Khan Khoso also participated. Various officials, including municipal, police, and revenue officers, were also present at the meeting. Municipal Commissioner Javid Abbasi briefed Mayor



HYDERABAD: Senior citizens are holding a protest demonstration at the Hyderabad press club for the provision of justice.-RT

DC Tando Allahyar Muhammad Ibrahim Almani reviews arrangements for Eid-ul-Azha



By Afaque Khanzada Tando Allahyar, Deputy Commissioner Tando Allahyar, Muhammad Ibrahim Almani, has directed all relevant officials of the district to play their respective roles in maintaining cleanliness, drainage, law and order, religious harmony and brotherhood throughout the district during the Eid-ul-Azha congregational prayers and subsequent sacrificial activities.

These directives were given by him while presiding over a conference held at the Deputy Commissioner's Office in Tando Allahyar to review arrangements for Eid-ul-Azha. The meeting was attended by Chairman Municipal Committee Tando Allahyar, Syed Samar Hassan Shah Rizvi, Additional Deputy Commissioner Tando Allahyar, Sajid Ali Pahore, Assistant Commissioner Jhando Marri, Shahzad Umair Jarwar, all town and union chairpersons, department heads including police, health, local government, livestock revenue, and other relevant district officers, as well as scholars. During the occasion, Deputy Commissioner Tando Allahyar, Muhammad Ibrahim Almani, informed the conference that strict restrictions would be imposed on the use of loud speakers and banners on camps, buildings, or vehicles to gather hides illegally during Eid-ul-Azha. He directed the local government officials to ensure effective arrangements for cleaning and spraying after the sacrificial animals are slaughtered during Eid-ul-Azha, along with improving the drainage system and ensuring the closure of open manholes to provide a peaceful environment for the public. Muhammad Ibrahim Almani said that the district administration is making every effort to provide better facilities to the public regarding cleanliness during Eid-ul-Azha. On this occasion, the spokesperson of SSP Tando Allahyar informed the conference that foolproof security arrangements are being made for Eid-ul-Azha, and security will also be provided for congregational prayers held across the district.

TMK's Pir Ashfaq Saeed Sarhandi demands assistance for three deceased sanitary workers

By Abdul Sattar

TANDO MUHAMMAD KHAN: Former District Naib Nazim and renowned political and social figure of Tando Muhammad Khan, Pir Ashfaq Saeed Sarhandi, has expressed profound distress over the tragic death of three sanitary workers. Sarhandi attributed this heartbreaking incident to the incompetence of the municipal administration, which he believes led to the untimely loss of three precious lives.



"This incident is a glaring example of the negligence within our municipal administration," Sarhandi remarked. "We stand with the families in their time of sorrow and urge the government to take necessary actions to support them." Pir Ashfaq Saeed Sarhandi's call to action highlights the urgent need for government intervention to address the grievances of the affected families and prevent such tragedies in the future. His demand underscores the importance of accountability and support for those who suffer due to administrative failures.

UC Chairman Haji Gul Hassan Laghari leads protest against auctioning of Badin cattle market

By Jibran Talpur

BADIN: Nearby to Talhar, at Union Council Lakhi at Mirwah, Chairman Haji Gul Hassan Laghari, Vice Chairman Muhammad Hussain Mallah, councilors Gharan Khan Chandio, Khamiso Thebo, Rasool Bux Laghari, Anwar Mallah, local leaders of Pakistan People's Party Imdad Lashari, Urs Laghari and Kareem Bux Chandio, along with various political and social leaders, protested in front of the District Council of Tando Muhammad Khan against its Chairman Qasim Naveed Qamar. During the protest, they stated that the weekly cattle market, which has been operating in our Union Council Lakhi at Mirwah for the past 40-50 years and is owned by the Union Council, has been auctioned off using illegal authority. They claimed that this is the first instance in Sindh where the District Council of Tando Muhammad Khan, without taking the Union Council Chairman into



confidence, has colluded and treated the market as loot, giving it to a contractor in an illegal manner. The Chairman stated that previously, when I was Chairman on a PML-N's ticket, no one interfered in my Union Council. Now that I have joined the Pakistan People's Party and become Chairman, significant development work was being done in the Union Council from the income of the cattle market. To halt this progress, influential political parties have clandestinely transferred the market to the District Council and auctioned it off, betraying the people here. The Chairman asserted that no local representatives, including councilors, were taken into confidence. The rights of the Union Council should be returned, otherwise, we will set up a hunger strike camp and go on hunger strike until we win and we will stage a sit-in in front of the District Chairman's office.

Khanpur Mahar's Jiskani community demands arrests of Nisar Jiskani's killers



By Shad Mahar

GHOTKI: The All Jiskani Welfare Association (AJWA) of Sindh staged a protest in front of the Khanpur Mahar Press Club, calling for the immediate arrest of those responsible for the murder of Nisar Jiskani in Naushehro Feroze. Leading the protest were Jiskani Welfare leaders Shah Nawaz Jiskani, Javed Jiskani, Raheel Ahmed Jiskani, and others. The leaders expressed their frustration and grief over the lack of progress in the investigation. They condemned the Naushehro Feroze Police for their failure to apprehend the killers of Nisar Jiskani, who was brutally murdered. During the protest, AJWA leaders urged the Inspector General of Sindh and the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) of Naushehro to take immediate action. "We demand that the killers of Nisar Jiskani be arrested without further delay and face the harshest punishment," said Shah Nawaz Jiskani. The protest highlighted the community's demand for justice and accountability, pressing the authorities to act swiftly to bring the perpetrators to justice and ensure the safety and security of the residents.

Target fertilizer and pesticides' company holds an awareness seminar for JNA's growers



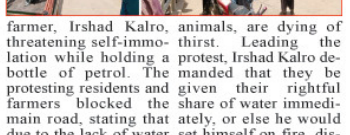
By Hakim Baloch

JAM NAWAZ ALI: In a seminar held in Jam Nawaz Ali, the agricultural company Target aimed to increase awareness among farmers about the use of agricultural medicines and various fertilizers to protect crops from different diseases. Criticism was raised during the seminar at a local hotel, where agricultural experts and farmers participated extensively. Target Company's Regional Manager Usman Arain, Wajid Ali Arain, Abdul Ghafoor Nohrio, emphasized that Target Company's standard fertilizers and medicines are available, including Nitrogen, Phosphorus, Potassium, Nitrate, and Phosphate, which benefit crops by increasing production and eliminating pests such as worms, termites, locusts, aphids, and fungal diseases. They emphasized the use of Target Company's medicines and fertilizers to achieve higher yields. Among the attendees were Dilawar Khan Wassan, Gulam Qadir Wassan, Talib Katohar, Khadim Hussain, Allah Bakhsh, Shah Nawaz Bakhsh, Hakim Nohrio, Talib Chanhio, Bilal Khan, Kamdar Ranjho Khan, Karim Bux and several other prominent farmers who participated extensively.

Umerkot's growers threaten to self-immolate themselves over acute water shortage

By Muhammad Bachal

UMERKOT: Near Samaro, farmers held protest demonstrations at two separate locations against water scarcity, blocking roads and staging sit-ins. During a protest on Heeral Wah, one farmer threatened self-immolation by showing petrol and demanding immediate water supply, stating that otherwise he would set himself on fire as a form of protest. According to the details, the farmers of Chhachh Branch, including Bilawal Senhro and others, protested and staged a sit-in blocking the Mirpurkhas-Kunri main road and disrupting traffic for four hours against shortage of water in the tail end of eight Heeral Subdivision, an ultimatum. Other protest leaders including Faqir Mir Hassan Kalro, Dagan Donkai, Ghulam Hussain Kachhelo, Imam Bakhsh Kalro, and others.



farmer, Irshad Kalro, threatening self-immolation while holding a bottle of petrol. The protesting residents and farmers blocked the main road, stating that they would set himself on fire, displaying the bottle of petrol he was holding as a protest. Other protest leaders including Faqir Mir Hassan Kalro, Dagan Donkai, Ghulam Hussain Kachhelo, Imam Bakhsh Kalro, and others.

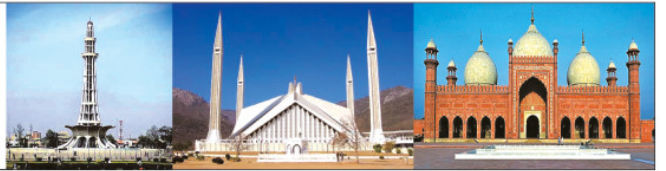


HYDERABAD: Residents of Chalhari are holding a protest demonstration against the non-availability of drinking water in their locality.-RT



HYDERABAD: Residents of Tando Muhammad Khan are holding a protest demonstration at the Hyderabad press club for the provision of justice.-RT

NATIONAL



PTI Selects Achakzai To Lead Talks: Release Of Leaders And Electoral Transparency On Agenda

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Wednesday picked Pash-tunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP) Chairman Mahmood Khan Achakzai to lead the negotiations via opposition alliance's platform Tehreek-e-Tahafuz Ayeen (TTAP), sources told media.



Furthermore, the PTI's political leadership will also be part of the negotiations, the sources said.

The PTI chairman noted that the former prime minister wanted the avenues of dialogue to be opened. He told journalists that Khan is ready to forgive what has happened to him for reconciliation.

"PTI founder has said many times that 'I am ready to forgive what happened to me,'" said the PTI chairman.

When asked if the negotiations will take place at the behest of the Supreme Court's advice, Barrister Gohar said, "The option given by the SC is also under consideration."

However, he emphasised that it is PTI's "own decision" to negotiate. "PTI founder did not write any letter to the SC for negotiation. PTI will also respond to its negotiation option." The PTI chief's comment comes days after Khan decided to "step back" from his rigid stance, ordering his party leaders to establish contacts both inside and outside the Parliament to ease the ongoing political tension, sources told media.—RT/Agency

Meanwhile, PkMAP chief Achakzai, who will be given full authority to lead the talks, will take further steps in this regard once the PTI finalises its decision.

With the development of a consensus of all the stakeholders on a common charter serving as the basis of the talks, the negotiations will revolve around matters pertaining to the release of incarcerated leaders and workers, electoral transparency, and the constitutional boundaries of the judiciary, parliament and other state institutions.

CJCSC Engages In Talks With Turkish Leadership On Bilateral Defense Cooperation



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC) General Sahir Shamsah Mirza met with Turkish military and civil leadership during his official visit, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Wednesday.

The CJCSC held meetings with called on General (R) Yasar GULER, Minister of Defence, General Metin Gurak, Commander Turkish General Staff, General Seluc Bayraktaroglu, Commander Turkish Land Forces, Admiral Erkunt Tatlioglu, Commander Turkish Naval Forces, General Ziya Cemal Kadioglu, Commander of Turkish Air Force and Haluk Gorgun, President SSB, a

government agency dealing with defence production. During the meetings, both sides deliberated upon various areas of mutual interest, bilateral defense cooperation including security, counter-terrorism, and the prevailing regional environment.

"The military leadership shared commitments to enhance defense engagements between both countries and reaffirmed their resolve to further fortify the fraternal relationship," the ISPR added.

In recognition of meritorious services and contributions, General Sahir Shamsah Mirza was also awarded the 'Legion of Merit'.—RT/Agency

Farooq Sattar Advocates For Taxation Of Large Agriculturists And Privatization Of Loss-Making Entities

ISLAMABAD: Senior Leader of Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan, Muhammad Farooq Sattar, on Wednesday proposed taxing large agricultural landowners to provide relief to the general public.



Farooq further proposed that the government should use the income from privatized organizations to reduce the external debt burden on the national exchequer.

He also recommended that the government should privatize loss-making organizations, emphasizing that business operations should fall under private entities' jurisdiction rather than the government.

Farooq suggested that the government should further enhance Karachi's infrastructure, highlighting its importance as a business hub.

He also called for a reduction in electricity, oil, and gas prices to improve the purchasing power of the common people. Additionally, he proposed providing small loans to help them become economically self-sufficient.—RT/Agency

Fatal Shootout In Jhelum Claims Lives Of Two ANF Personnel And Private Employee

JHELUM: A shootout between the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) and armed riders resulted in the deaths of two ANF personnel and a private employee near Jhelum on GT Road, media reported.



The incident occurred near Kala Pul on GT Road when an ANF team attempted to stop a suspicious car. The car's occupants opened fire on the ANF team, leading to the immediate deaths of Head Constable Gulzar and Constable Mazhar. A private employee, Zeeshan, was critically injured and later succumbed to his injuries in the hospital.

Three suspects managed to escape into a nearby forest while firing. Police and a large contingent of ANF personnel have launched a search operation along GT Road to locate the suspects.

An ANF spokesperson reported that a car driver named Shehzad has been arrested. In his initial statement, Shehzad claimed that a person named Bilal from Kharian had booked his car.

The search for the remaining suspects continues as authorities intensify their efforts to apprehend those responsible for the attack.—RT/Agency

PM And His Team's Efforts Save Pakistan From Default: Malik Abrar

ISLAMABAD: Divisional President of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Member of National Assembly (MNA), Malik Abrar Ahmed on Wednesday said the dedicated efforts of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his team have successfully prevented Pakistan from defaulting.

In his remarks following the presentation of the fiscal year's budget for 2024-25, he highlighted the government's commitment to improving the lives of citizens through a people-friendly budget.

Abrar commended the budget as a significant step towards fulfilling the aspirations of the public. He emphasized that the government's financial plan includes notable salary increases for government employees, with a 25% raise for grades 1 to 16 and a 20% raise for grades 17 to 22.

Pensions have been increased by 15%, and the minimum wage has been raised from Rs.32,000 to Rs.37,000 rupees, providing substantial relief to the populace, he added.

In addition to praising Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's leadership, Abrar also lauded Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz for her commendable efforts in advancing the vision of Nawaz Sharif and Shehbaz Sharif, working for the betterment of all societal sectors.

However, Abrar strongly criticized the opposition's undemocratic behavior and attempts to obstruct the budget, describing such actions as detrimental to national interests. He argued that the opposition's efforts to block the budget send a negative message to voters, undermining public trust in their representatives.

The PML-N leader reiterated that the government's budget is a gift to the people, reflecting the administration's dedication to public welfare and economic stability.—RT/Agency

ANF Seizes Large Cache Of Drugs In Pasi

RAWALPINDI: The Anti-Narcotic Force (ANF) on Thursday seized a consignment full of drugs in Pasi hidden for smuggling abroad, media reported.



Members of the group are involved in drug smuggling abroad by sea. On receiving the intelligence information, the ANF team conducted a raid in the area and recovered the drugs which were stored in a secret location, he informed.

The ANF officials conducted an Intelligence-Based Operation (IBO) against drug traffickers in the Chor Bandar area adjacent to Makran coastal line and seized a consignment of drugs hidden for smuggling abroad.

The recovered drugs weighing 1014 kg included 850 kg hashish and 164 kg ice. The spokesman said that ANF is making all-out efforts for a drug free society.—RT/Agency

China's Peaceful Rise: A New Era of Global Harmony

By Irfanullah, Masters Student at Xian Jiaotong University

China's ascent as a global superpower has been one of the most significant developments of the 21st century. This rise has reshaped global dynamics, marked by substantial economic growth and an expanding influence in international affairs. Despite its growing power, China has continually emphasized a narrative of peaceful rise, aiming to reassure the world of its intentions rooted in cooperation, mutual benefit, and shared prosperity.

China's economic ascent is a cornerstone of its peaceful rise. Over the past few decades, China has implemented strategies that foster economic growth while integrating into the global economy. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), launched in 2013, aims to enhance global trade and infrastructure connectivity, promoting economic interdependence, which is crucial for global stability. Joining the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001 and establishing the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) further highlight China's commitment to global economic governance and development. Diplomatic Initiatives and Regional Stability China's foreign policy is anchored in the principle of peaceful co-existence, emphasizing respect for sovereignty and mutually beneficial relationships. China has been instrumental in Asia's regional organizations, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), facilitating dialogue and cooperation on security and economic integration issues. China's handling of territorial disputes, such as those in the South China Sea, prioritizes dialogue and peaceful resolution. China's peaceful rise is a multifaceted journey encompassing economic development, diplomatic engagement, cultural exchange, technological innovation, environmental stewardship, and humanitarian contributions. By adhering to the principles of peaceful development and fostering global partnerships, China can contribute to a more stable, prosperous, and interconnected world. This path serves as a testament to the power of cooperation and the potential for a shared future of peace and prosperity.

PPP Not Briefed On Federal Budget: Nafisa Shah

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan People's Party's MNA Nafisa Shah on Wednesday said that the PPP was not briefed over the federal budget, media reported.



PPP parliamentarian said

President Asif Ali Zardari and discussed the country's overall economic situation and the upcoming annual budget 2024-25.

Federal Minister for Planning and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal also attended the meeting, according to a President House press release.

President Zardari emphasized that the interests of the low income and middle class should be protected in the annual budget. He also assured the prime minister of his support for the national development and achievement of fiscal targets.—RT/Agency

Talking in the budget transmission of the media Nafisa Shah expressed reservations over the budget adding that these reservations will be presented to the government. "We will settle the issues with dialogue," Shah said.

"There is no option before us of not extending support to the government over budget," PPP leader said.

"What is being discussed with the IMF, I don't know,"

Earlier, PPP leader Nayyar Bukhari had said that the party has yet to decide to support or oppose the budget.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday met with

Traders Respond To Budget 2024-25



ISLAMABAD: The business community and traders representative bodies across the country reacted to Pakistan budget 2024-25 with a total outcry of over Rs 18 trillion presented on Tuesday, media reported.

All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tajran, and chambers of commerce of different major cities including Karachi, Faisalabad, Sialkot and Rawalpindi rejected the budget and termed it anti-traders.

Ajmal Baloch, the President of All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tajran, said that the government has increased taxes by 45 percent and imposed an 18 percent sales tax on mobile phones, which he said a draconian measure.

Ajmal Baloch said in the budget, the government has not announced any measures to reduce its 'unnecessary' expenditures. The All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tajran president also criticised the imposition of an 18 percent sales tax on leather goods, saying it will lead to a significant increase in shoe prices.

Earlier in the day, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb presented Pakistan's budget for the fiscal year 2024-25 with a total outlay of over Rs18 trillion amid protest by the opposition lawmakers belonging to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)-backed Sunni Ittehad Council.

The federal government proposed abolishing sales tax exemptions and concessions on various items including mobile phones, copper, coal, paper, and plastic scrap, media reported.

OFFICE OF THE TOWN COMMITTEE KHADRO TALUKA SINJHORO DISTRICT SANGHAR

No: TCK/214-212024 Dated:-11-8-2024

AUCTION NOTICE

As per SPPRA Rules 2010, the recovery rights for collection of following Taxes/Fee of Town Committee Khadro for the period from 01-07-2024 to 30-06-2025 to be Auctioned under the Chairmanship of Administrator/Town Officer Town Committee Khadro Taluka Sinjhor District Sanghar, on 28-06-2024 11:00 AM in failure of attempt the next dates 01-07-2024 @ 11:00 AM and 04-07-2024 in the office of Town Committee Khadro.

Table with 5 columns: S.No, Name of Council, Particular of Contract, Official Bid, Security Deposit 10%. Row 1: T.C Khadro, 1. Fruit & Vegetable Fee, 2. Pat Pari Tax, 3. Advertisement Fee Signboard.

Interested parties/companies and firms are invited to participate in the auction after depositing 10% amount of the Bid shown against cash in shape of Call Deposit only in the name of Town Committee Khadro Taluka Sinjhor District Sanghar. No Cash/Traveling Cheque will be accepted, the Deposit will be refunded to the unsuccessful bidders.

The terms/condition and schedule can be seen in the office of Town Committee Khadro during office hours on any work day. The auction authority have right to accept or reject any bid or all the bids in accordance with the Sindh Public Procurement Regulatory Authority Rules 2010.

All the interested parties / Companies and firms must be registered with Sindh Revenue Board Hyderabad (SRB) / Federal Board of Revenue (FBR).

Town Officer Town Committee Khadro Taluka Sinjhor

INF / KRY No: 1948/24

METRO KARACHI

CEO Of Iran-Pak Wind Power, Khurram Tariq Sayeed, Meets Sindh Energy Minister Nasir Shah

KARACHI: Khurram Tariq Sayeed, CEO of Iran-Pak Wind Power, accompanied by Mr. Hassan Nourian, Consul General of Iran in Karachi, met with Syed Nasir Hussain Shah, Provincial Minister of Energy, Planning & Development, Government of Sindh. The meeting was also attended by First Consul Mr. Amir Jafari, Secretary Energy GOS Musadiq Ahmed Khan, CEO of Sindh Transmission & Dispatch Company (STDC) Saleem Shaikh, and Director of the Alternative Energy Department GOS Mehfooz Qazi.



The delegation briefed the Minister on the progress of the Iran-Pak Wind Power project and other ongoing initiatives by Iranian investors in Pakistan's energy sector, particularly in Sindh Province. They expressed their appreciation for the efforts undertaken by Mr. Nasir Hussain Shah since he assumed office as Minister of Energy following the recent elections. Mr. Shah assured the delegation that all obstacles would be removed to expedite the wind power projects in Sindh.—RT



Let them eat cake!

The recent unveiling of the federal budget for the fiscal year 2024-25 by Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb paints a picture of a government completely out of touch with the reality faced by the common man. Despite the finance minister's assertions of progress and stability, the budget's priorities seem skewed towards pleasing international financial institutions like the IMF rather than addressing the pressing needs of the people.

Much like Marie Antoinette's infamous "let them eat cake" remark, this budget seems indifferent to the dire economic conditions faced by the masses. While the finance minister boasts of economic growth targets and inflation projections, the ground reality for the average citizen remains grim. With a budget deficit of 6.9% of GDP and a primary surplus of just 1%, it's clear that the burden of eco-

nomie reform is being disproportionately placed on the shoulders of the common man.

The emphasis on securing an IMF bailout at any cost is



alarming. While short-term stability may be achieved through such measures, the long-term ramifications for the economy and the people could be catastrophic. The focus on meeting ambitious fiscal targets to appease international lenders neglects the everyday struggles of ordinary Pakistanis, who continue to grapple with rising inflation and stagnant wages.

Furthermore, the allocation of funds in the budget

seems misguided. While substantial amounts are earmarked for sectors like defense and infrastructure development, essential social welfare programs receive only token increases. The Benazir Income Support Programme, a lifeline for millions of vulnerable families, sees a mere 27% hike in allocations, hardly enough to keep pace with inflation.

Thus, the federal budget for 2024-25 reflects a government that is disconnected from the plight of its citizens. Instead of prioritizing the needs of the people, it prioritizes pleasing international financial institutions and maintaining a facade of economic stability. If this trend continues, the gap between the rulers and the ruled will only widen, leading to further discontent and unrest. It's high time for the government to listen to the voices of the common man and take concrete steps to alleviate their suffering.

THE HEARTLAND



HYDERABAD: Members and leaders of the local business community are listening to the finance minister's budget speech, at the HCCL-RT

Shifting of Civil hospital Tando Allahyar to better facilitate the masses: MS Muhammad Sabir Qaimkhani

By Afaque Khanzada

TANDO ALLAHYAR: Shifting the Civil Hospital of Tando Allahyar to the District Headquarters Hospital (DHQ) will offer numerous facilities that were previously unavailable in the civil hospital. Muhammad Sabir Qaimkhani, the Medical Superintendent (MS) of Civil Hospital Tando Allahyar, expressed these sentiments while addressing reporters in his office. He mentioned that the DHQ hospital will provide 24-hour access to all types of

blood for patients, along with various laboratory services and facilities like heart hospital and X-ray services. Consolidating all medical services, including surgeries, in one location will allow for maximum treatment provision to the public. Qaimkhani stressed the necessity of relocating to the DHQ hospital, despite some opposition from certain groups. He emphasized that the shift will ensure that every economically disadvantaged patient receives quality care without needing to resort to private hospitals for treatment of any ailment. Additionally, all medical procedures and operations will be conducted under one roof. Qaimkhani mentioned that they have communicated regarding the health department's Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) of the DHQ Hospital, highlighting the need for additional doctors and staff. Efforts are underway to transform this hospital into an exemplary healthcare facility in the near future, and they are committed to demonstrating this improvement.

150 suspects arrested during ongoing operations: SSP Sujawal Dr. Abdul Khaliq Pirzado



By Kamran Hidayat

SUJAWAL: SSP Sajawal, Dr. Abdul Khaliq Pirzado, addressed a press conference to inform the media about the proactive measures taken by the police to enhance peace and security. Under his leadership, a special team, including DSP Abdul Hafeez Burfat, SPO A Qurban Ali Qambrani, and SHO Mir Muhammad Gaddi, was formed to improve law and order in the district.

This team successfully implemented a zero-tolerance policy against narcotics and achieved significant success in anti-drug operations. Additionally, the blind murder case of Alam Palari, a trader was handed over to the Crime Investigation Agency (CIA) for further investigation, leading to the arrest of the main suspect, Niaz Ali Khaskheli.

Later, another suspect, Arshad Malah, was arrested based on his confession during interrogation. Another suspect, Rashid Pit Hanif Chang, was arrested for the possession of a motorbike stolen from the murder scene and confessed during interrogation.

The SSP further said that the district police during ongoing operations have arrested 14 absconders and 150 suspects. In the crackdown, 29 cases of illegal weapons were registered, resulting in the arrest of 29 suspects and the recovery of 25 TT pistols, 2 revolvers, 2 rifles and 80 bullets.

Regional Sales Manager of Bona Papa Group Amir Tayab visits Jhudo



JHUDO: Bona Papa is not just a product but a brand, stated Regional Sales Manager Amir Tayab.

Amir Tayab, the Regional Sales Manager of the Bona Papa Group from the Ana & Batla Company, visited various areas including Jhudo. Accompanying him were Senior Zonal Manager Sagheer Ahmed and Abbas Bhai. During a meeting with Jhudo distributors, Amir Tayab expressed great joy in seeing that, thanks to Sagheer Sahib's hard work and dedication, their brand is not only present in every area but also achieving excellent sales positions. -RT

Commissioner Shaheed Benazirabad chairs meeting of Divisional Enforcement Committee



By Farooq Junejo

SHAHEED BENAZIRABAD: Commissioner Shaheed Benazirabad Division Syed Muhammad Sajjad Haider chaired a meeting of the Divisional Enforcement Committee established to curb electricity theft. The meeting was held today in the committee room of the Commissioner's Office. Addressing the meeting, Commissioner Syed Muhammad Sajjad Haider stated that those involved in electricity theft, who have not paid electricity bills for a long time, are not only defrauding the country but also the law-abiding citizens. He emphasized the need for legal action against them and also for the recovery of bills. The Commissioner instructed HESCO and SEPCO officials to hold open Katcheries every month to listen to public complaints regarding electricity and resolve them promptly. He further stated that action against individuals and gangs involved in electricity theft should be expedited. In this regard, full support will be provided by the divisional and district administrations and the police. The Commissioner further stated that accurate data should be provided regarding the actions taken by the administration, and focal persons should be appointed for other issues. He instructed all Deputy Commissioners to further activate the enforcement committees established in their districts for the prevention of electricity theft and to assist in police operations and bill recoveries. During the briefing, Additional Commissioner-I Subhash Chandar, Additional DIG Sher Ali Jamali, Deputy Commissioner Sanghar Imran ul Hassan Khwaja, Deputy Commissioner Nausheero Feroze Muhammad Arsalan Saleem, Additional Deputy Commissioner Shaheed Benazirabad Nawab Sameer Laghari, and other relevant officers participated.

AC Sukkur Sobia Falak Rao, Drug Inspector Shafaq Chachar fine medical stores

By Absar Alvi

SUKKUR: The Assistant Commissioner Sukkur City, Sobia Falak Rao, along with Drug Inspector Shafaq Chachar, conducted raids on various medical stores located on Queens Road. Upon discovering expired and unregistered Indian medicines, heavy fines were imposed and several medical stores were sealed. During the joint operation with the drug inspector, the Assistant Commissioner inspected all medicines in the medical stores. During this process, several medical stores were found to be selling expired and unregistered medicines dating back two to three years. The owners of these medical stores were fined heavily for their offenses. Prompt action was taken against many medical stores, which were promptly sealed. Meanwhile, while ensuring the availability of bet-

ter facilities and maintaining the temperature of medicines during the heat, the morale of many medical store owners was boosted. The Assistant Commissioner also praised their initiative. The Assistant Commissioner stated that they would not permit the sale of substandard, expired, and unregistered medicines under any circumstances. All medical store owners should uphold the law and refrain from endangering human lives. Otherwise, strict action will be taken, and the shops will be closed.

Unidentified thief injures minor Larkana girl while stealing her earrings

By Saleem Soomro

LARKANA: An unidentified man removed the earrings from the ears of a 5-year-old girl named Nida S/o Waqar Hussain Chandio after holding her

hostage in Hajano Muhalla in the jurisdiction of the Rehmatpur Police Station. The culprit managed to flee from the scene leaving the minor girl injured, who was accused man in the incident. The family members of the injured girl have demanded of the concerned authorities to take notice of the matter and ensure arrest of the accused man in the incident. She was rushed to a local area hospital.

Tando Adam's Raees Habib Khan Marri pays tribute to Hazrat Abuzar Ghaffari (RA)

By Dilzar Samo

TANDO ADAM: Raees Habib Khan Marri, the Chairman of Anjuman Safina-e-Ahle Bait (AS) Tando Adam and Central Azadari Committee Tando Adam, commemorated the death anniversary of Hazrat Jundab Ibn Junada Abuzar Ghaffari (RA), lauding his unwavering commitment to truth and justice.

In his tribute, Marri emphasized Hazrat Abuzar Ghaffari's (RA) steadfast adherence to Islamic teachings, particularly in the face of severe oppression. Recognized as a prominent narrator of numerous Hadiths of the Holy Prophet (SAWW), Hazrat Abuzar Ghaffari (RA) was celebrated for his profound knowledge and enduring faith.

Marri highlighted that despite facing social boycott and exile, Hazrat Abuzar Ghaffari (RA) remained resolute in his pur-



suit of righteousness. His teachings and example continue to inspire those who fight against injustice, reflecting his enduring legacy. "Hazrat Abuzar Ghaffari's (RA) commitment to truth and justice serves as a timeless beacon for all who strive for righteousness," said Marri during the commemoration. The event underscored the lasting impact of Hazrat Abuzar Ghaffari's (RA) life and teachings, encouraging the community to uphold these values in their daily lives.

SPORTS



Portugal qualify for Euro 2024 as Ronaldo's double helps outclass Ireland



Cristiano Ronaldo became Portugal's powerhouse on the field as he scored twice to help his team beat Ireland 3-0 during their international friendly on Tuesday ahead of Euro 2024.

Ronaldo, 39, silenced critics who raised concerns that the five-time Ballon d'Or award winner's advanced age may hinder his performance on the national level.

After suffering 2-1 defeat from Croatia over the weekend, Roberto Martinez's side bounced back to build confidence for the tournament in Germany.

Ronaldo lit up the contest with a magnificent strike five minutes after the break and then clinically put away Diogo Jota's pass 10 minutes later, sending Roberto Martinez's men further into the Euros.

The Euro 2016 winners Portugal qualified with a 100% record but recent performances had allowed some doubts to creep in. However, the team may have regained some confidence from their victory over Ireland.

Furthermore, extending his collection of records, the former Real Madrid, Manchester United and Juventus star netted his 130th international goal with another confident finish.

Euro 2024 will kick off on Friday and Portugal will take on Czech Republic in their first match which will be held on June 18.—Agency

T20 World Cup 2024: India beat USA by 7 wickets in another low-scoring encounter

NEW YORK: India defeated United States by 7 wickets and became the first team from Group A to enter Super Eights' phase of the T20 World Cup after today's match played at Nassau County International Cricket Stadium, New York, on Wednesday.

Subsequently, India became the third team after South Africa and Australia to qualify for the next round.

Earlier, India put the USA into bat first and restricted them to 110/8. Pacer Arshdeep Singh was the best bowler for India, securing figures of 4/9 - the best-ever by an Indian in the history of the competition.



He dismissed Shayan Jangir, Andries Gous, Nitish Kumar and Harmeet Singh. Hardik Pandya secured the USA, scoring 27 off 23 balls. Opener Steven Taylor chipped in with 24 (30).

Nitish was the only batter for the USA, scoring 27 off 2/14 while Axar Patel bagged figures of 1/25.

In chase, India were on the back foot at the start of the chase with pacer Saurabh Netravalkar dismissing Virat Kohli (0) and Rohit Sharma (3) in the powerplay.

Rishabh Pant and Suryakumar Yadav recover but Ali Khan cleaned bowler Pant (18) to put more pressure on India.

But a brilliant partnership with Yadav and Shivam Dube led India to the end of the chase. Yadav remained not out on 49-ball 50 while Dube made 31 off 35 balls. They completed the chase in 18.2 overs.—Agency

Former player reveals bigger footballer than Cristiano Ronaldo



After Liverpool manager Jürgen Klopp bid adieu to the English football club last month, the team's forward Mohamed Salah was also rumored to leave and join Cristiano Ronaldo in Saudi Arabia.

However, a former Liverpool player Jose Enrique maintained that Mohamed Salah isn't quite the star in Saudi Arabia than Portuguese striker Cristiano Ronaldo, were he to leave The Reds.

The 39-year-old Ronaldo joined the Saudi Pro League last year in January for a two-and-a-half year. Since joining Al-Nassr, the striker has been making and breaking records. Recently, Ronaldo became the highest scorer of the Middle Eastern country's league during the last concluding season.

Mo Salah's team was offered £150m by Al-Ittehad last summer but was rejected by The Reds. Currently, the 31-year-old Egyptian has one year left with the nine-league-title winners.

While speaking with a company Grosvenor Sport, Jose Enrique said: "Mohamed Salah isn't quite the star in Saudi Arabia than Portuguese striker Cristiano Ronaldo, were he to leave The Reds."

He was quoted by the Liverpool World as saying: "If I were Liverpool, and the right offer came in - say, over £100 million - I'd seriously consider it. A move to Saudi Arabia could easily fetch that kind of money.—Agency

T20 World Cup 2024: Petition seeks sedition case against PCT and Form 47 Babar Azam



A petition seeking to register a sedition case against the Pakistan cricket team and its captain, Babar Azam, was submitted to a local court in Gujranwala on Wednesday, media reported.

The petition was filed under sections 22A and 22B of the criminal code at the District and Sessions Court of Gujranwala.

The petition, submitted by a lawyer in Gujranwala, calls for charges of treason against team captain Babar Azam and other members of the team. The case was filed in the court of Additional Sessions Judge Tamsal Zaib Naem.

The petition alleges that the team's performance is a waste of money and has brought dishonour to the nation. It claims that tens of millions of rupees have been squandered on the players and that the management prioritises financial gain over national pride.

The application also requests a case against the team manager, coach, and chief selector.

It should be noted that in the initial two matches of the ICC T20 World Cup, the national team had to face defeat against USA and India, which makes it unlikely for Pakistan to advance to the Super 8 round.

The petition highlights the emotional toll on the nation after losses against the United States and India, demanding a ban on the team until an inquiry is conducted and a report is submitted to the Home Secretary.

The court has requested a report from the police on the registration of the case and directed the SHO of the police station to submit the report by June 21.—Agency

PFL starts distribution of 100,000 footballs under 'Football 4 Hope' initiative

LONDON/KARACHI: Pakistan Football League (PFL) has started distributing 100,000 international-quality footballs among young talented children in Pakistan under the initiative "Football 4 Hope".

PFL's Chairman Farhan Ahmed Junejo said.

He said that in the last three days, more than 10,000 footballs have already been distributed in different cities.

In Lyari, Karachi, more than 2,500 footballs have been distributed so far, he said.



Football for Hope is a corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative by PFL contributing to social development in Pakistan, Junejo said.

He added: "Football 4 Hope aims to mobilise all four provinces of Pakistan to foster national unity. It endeavours to offer a brighter future to children who have lost hope in football, preventing them from being engulfed by other societal challenges.

From impromptu games in slums to mountain-top matches, and street football across Pakistan, to school academies and stadium competitions, football instils confidence, and pride in the underdog, and promotes unity. It unites the nation in hope, regardless of where it's played."

"We will use innovative educational and health initiatives to introduce football to young children and youth. Our goals include promoting education, conflict resolution, gender equality, social integration, inclusion of children with disabilities, peace-building, youth leadership, teamwork, and life skills through Football for Hope," said Junejo.

Junejo, the chief architect behind the inauguration of PFL in Lahore on June 4, stated that more footballs would be distributed after the completion of the initial 100,000 footballs.

"The footballs used in the World Cup, each costing one dollar, are being distributed among all segments of Pakistani society for the first time under the initiative 'One Ball One Smile,' without any discrimination," he said.—Agency

T20 World Cup 2024: Australia humble Namibia to qualify for Super 8

ANTIGUA: In a superb display of the game, Australia outclassed Namibia after chasing the target of 73 runs in just 5.4 overs at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, North Sound, Antigua, on Wednesday.

With the win, Australia also qualified for the Super 8 stage of the cricket event.



Namibian bowlers could only claim the wicket of David Warner, who scored 20 off 8 balls before being dismissed. Travis Head and Mitchell Marsh remained unbeaten with 34 and 18 runs respectively. Travis hit 5 fours and 2 sixes.

Earlier, Australia won the toss and invited the rivals to bat first who were all out after scoring only 72 runs in 17 overs.

Achieving the milestone, Australia's Leg-spinner Adam Zampa became the first Australian male cricketer to claim 100 wickets in T20I cricket. He achieved this feat with 4-12 figures in four overs.

Australian bowlers overpowered the batters throughout Namibia's innings.

Pacer Josh Hazlewood took two wickets for 18 runs in four overs. Marcus Stoinis also contributed with two wickets as

Namibia was dismissed in 17 overs.

Namibia captain Gerhard Erasmus played 17 balls to score his first runs. However, he was the highest run-getter with 36 runs in 43 balls with the help of four fours and a six.

Apart from Erasmus, Michael van Lingen was the only batter who got into double figures with 10 runs.

This was the first competitive T20I between Australia and Namibia. But they played each other in a warm-up game before this tournament, with Australia registering a convincing seven-wicket win.—Agency

Former cricketer Ijaz Ahmed slammed over racist remarks against Pashtuns



KARACHI: Former cricketer Ijaz Ahmed faces criticism from the public over his racist remarks against Pashtuns, as he labelled them a reason behind Pakistan cricket team's poor performance.

Ijaz stated during a live TV show that 80 per cent of cricket in Pakistan was now restricted to remote areas or Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, adding that six to eight players in Sindh team are also Pashtun.

He claimed that such players lack education and exposure, remarking "They wake up in the morning and go for prayers with their fathers and return home."

"In tense situations, these players fail to perform well," said Ijaz.

Following the controversial remark, public and cricket fans slammed the former cricketer for his allegations against the Pashtun community.

A social media user wrote "Never seen more blatant racism on TV," and criticised the program anchor for staying silent. Another cricket fan wrote "Such an embarrassing statement by Ijaz Ahmed, any Pakhtoon is more talented, hard worker, contributor to nation sincere. They have many contributions like Dr AQ Khan, Imran Khan, Younis Khan, Jahangir Khan, Fakhar Zaman, Yasir Shah, and so on.—Agency

Face of the Day



Name: Naveed Ali
Location: Karachi
About me: I love music!

Please email us your photo for our Model Watch and Kids' Corner section at regionaltimes10@gmail.com

ENTERTAINMENT

Adele addresses 'stressful' moment during Las Vegas residency



Adele seemingly prefers comfort over style during her live performances.

During her performance on Weekends with Adele, the Grammy-winning songstress weighed in on a really "stressful" moment as she got ready for her recent Las Vegas residency, as per the findings of People Magazine.

"I had to put these Spanx on that were a size small," the singing sensation kicked off the chat.

She went on to explain, "It was like pumping sausage meat. It was so stressful."

"And I was contemplating maybe I don't go on in a pair of Spanx tonight, but I was like 'Oh no, that's too risky,'" the Hello hitmaker revealed. She also spilled the beans that after she "managed to get into them" she realized liking it better without putting "Spanx" on.

"It's made me look great but I'm nervous maybe my blood's going to get cut off or something," she quipped in continuation.

"So, if I pass out half way through the show, don't worry - that is why," Adele said as she concluded the topic.

Rihanna addresses retirement rumours, teases 'R9' album still in works



Rihanna provided an update on her long-awaited album, R9, hinting that fans may have to wait a bit longer for its release.

In an interview with Entertainment Tonight at the launch party for her Fenty Hair line in Los Angeles, singer, 36, also addressed rumours of her retirement, putting those speculations to rest.

"I think that music, for me, is a new discovery," Rihanna said.

"I'm rediscovering things. I have been working on the album for so long that I kinda put all that stuff aside and now I'm prepared to go back in the studio. I'm gonna start-give me a second!"

The Work singer stated that she doesn't rush her creative process, which involves both writing new songs and going back to previously recorded ones.

"Yeah, I'm starting over," she explained. "But I don't want to neglect the songs that I have, so I actually want to go back and listen to stuff with new ears, with my new perspective and then see what applies and what I'm still in love with."

The Lift Me Up singer also dispelled speculation that she was calling it quits on her career after she was spotted strolling about New York City with rapper ASAP Rocky while sporting an "I'm Retired" t-shirt.

"People got triggered with that retired word," Rihanna quipped. "They were like, 'We're never getting an album now.' No one read the other line, it was something about, 'This is as dressed up as I get.'"

THE HEARTLAND



Daulatpur's Dahri community demands justice in land dispute

By Aijaz Johkio

DAULATPUR: The residents of village Nim in Union Council Noor Muhammad Quba protested in front of the Daulatpur Press Club against the occupation of 88 acres of land and plots. The villagers, including Muhammad Zubair Dahri, Ali Muhammad Dahri and Manik Dahri, led the protest. The protesters complained to the media, stating that in Deh Kor Qaim, they have 88 acres of registered land and plots in front of their homes. However, some locals, namely Haji Umar Dahri, Saleh Dahri, Nisar Dahri and Farhan Dahri, have forcefully occupied their surveyed land and personal plots with armed men.



They further explained that the armed men entered their homes, held their families hostage, and stole gold jewelry, motorcycles, and other valuables. The armed men are influential and prevent the rightful owners from accessing their land, issuing death threats. They mentioned that the 88 acres are legally registered in their name, but the accused have taken control of it. The protesters called on the Inspector General of the Sindh Shaheed Benazirabad, and other authorities to remove the occupation from their 88 acres of surveyed land and plots, hand them back, provide protection from the accused, and ensure justice by arresting the perpetrators.

Nawabshah newlyweds demand protection

By Samad Ayaz



NAWABSHAH: A newlywed couple named Babi D/o Khan Bahadur Marri of Babi and Zahid Ali S/o Rahim Khan of Zahid Ali, staged a protest demonstration for the provision of protection to them on Wednesday. While talking to the media, the protesting couple said that they have contracted marriage on their freewill due to which the relatives of Babi are issuing dire threats to them. On the occasion, the protesters demanded of the higher authorities to take notice of the matter and provide protection to them.

FFC holds an awareness seminar for Sanghar's growers

By Khadim Khaskheli



SANGHAR: In various towns of Sanghar, a blitz program on the profitable cultivation of cotton was held with the support of FFC (Fauji Fertilizer Company). The event saw a large turnout of farmers. During the program, FFC's Head of Sales, Muhammad Irfan, and Agri Services Officer, Bagh Ali Abro, informed the farmers about achieving better yields from cotton crops. They explained that FFC is providing better facilities to the farmers, including free soil and water testing services. They

urged the farmers to take advantage of these services to increase their per-acre yield. They emphasized the importance of using balanced and beneficial fertilizers in cotton farming. Additionally, they provided agronomic information on cotton cultivation, stressing that timely planting and protecting the crops from weeds and diseases are crucial for maximizing benefits from the planted crops. At the end of the program, Bagh Ali Abro thanked all the participating farmers for their attendance.

AC Kashmir Raza Ali Soomro seizes tanker filled with chemically adulterated milk

By Aftab Bhatti

KASHMIRE: In response to public complaints, Assistant Commissioner Kashmir and Deputy Director Sindh Food Authority conducted a joint operation at the tri-provincial border near Dera Mor, seizing a tanker containing 6500 liters of chemically adulterated milk. The driver was transporting the chemical-laden milk from Muzaffargarh to Kandhkot when he was apprehended at Dera Mor during the operation. The tanker driver was taken into custody and handed over to Kashmir Police. Assistant Commissioner Raza Ali Soomro confirmed, using a modern test kit, that the contaminated milk contained toxic chemicals, specifically a poisonous substance used for treating wounds in patients. Deputy Director Sindh Food Authority and Assistant Commissioner Kashmir, Raza Ali Soomro, confiscated the



tanker filled with the chemical-laden milk and disposed of all the milk. The value of the 6500 liters of toxic milk disposed of is estimated at 1.1 million rupees. The Assistant Commissioner Kashmir more stated that modern testing kits have been procured to test for chemically adulterated milk and other toxic food and drink items. Actions will now be taken on a daily basis in response to public complaints regarding food and drink in Kashmir.

Liaquat Ali Khawaja chairs meeting of SUC in Talhar



TALHAR: The District President of Shia Ulema Council Pakistan, Liaquat Ali Khawaja, presided over a central meeting held at the central Imambargah Talhar in the Badin district. In the meeting, prominent leaders from all cities of the Badin district participated, including Vice President of the district Badin, Syed Ajaz Ali Shah, Gul Muhammad Jafari, Haji Ehsan Ali Laghari, Maulana Masroor Khawaja, Mir Asghar Chandio, Abdul Ghani Rahmon, Syed Qammar Ali Shah, Ali Gul Chandio, Syed Ghous Muhammad Shah, Asghar Gadahi and Maulana Saleh Lashari. During the meeting, it was decided that elections would be held soon in the Badin district to form a new body of the organization.—RT

TMK Police arrest three notorious drug dealers

By Abdul Sattar

TANDO MUHAMMAD KHAN: Tando Muhammad Khan Police have launched an operation against the drug dealers on orders of SSP Abid Baloch. During separate operations, large-scale drug dealers were arrested, resulting in injuries to some of them. Upon receiving information, the police conducted a raid in the jurisdic-

tion of the City Police Station, where Saadat Wassan, a drug dealer, was arrested in injured condition along with pistols and 54 grams of ice. Fazal Road in the jurisdiction of Police Station Kotri witnessed another police operation where drug dealer Romail alias Shaka Qamrani was arrested in injured condition with 1 kilogram and 30 grams of hashish and a TT pistol. The arrested individuals

BISP Centre closed after Badin Police arrest 16 device holders

By Raja Zafar Iqbal

BADIN: The Khoski Police Center took action against deductions being made from the stipends of the women at the Benazir Income Support Program Center in response to a report. Upon reaching the Center, the individuals responsible for the deductions managed to escape but the police continued to monitor

them. All the equipment at the Khoski Police Center were seized with 16 device holders taken into custody. A case has been filed by the Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) against Mullah Pappu Mallah and Sattar Mallah for their involvement in deducting money from women, based on a complaint lodged by Parin Rebari. However, due to the closure of the center following the police operation, hundreds of women who were waiting outside the center were left stranded as it remained closed. The beneficiaries have appealed to the Deputy Commissioner and the Sessions Judge of Badin to intervene, resolve the issue, halt the deductions, reopen the center and provide them with the necessary funds.

Journalist Karam Ali Depar lauds services of Mehar Police

By Hanif Panhwar

MEHAR: Senior Vice President of the Sachal Press Club, Karam Ali Depar, commended the efficient action taken by the Mehar Police for the recovery of his stolen motorcycle. The swift response was led by DSP Muhammad Younis Rodnani, SHO A-Section Police Station Manzoor Mastoi, and 15-Madadgar In-charge Faqir Muhammad Birhaman. In recognition of their efforts, Karam Ali Depar, accompanied by Ghulam Mustafa Chandio, visited the Mehar Police Station. They presented bouquets and traditional gifts to the police officials as a token of their appreciation. During the visit, the police officials vowed to continue



their efforts in maintaining proof security to the community and providing fool-

Khoso community notable kidnapped from his Thul guest house

By Khair Muhammad Golo

THUL: Near Thul, in the jurisdiction of RD-52 Police Station, armed men abducted Behram Khoso, an elder of the village Pyro Khoso, at gunpoint. At the site of the abduction, traces of the landlord's hat and blood were found. Upon receiving the information, the police arrived and gathered details. SSP Jacobabad, Syed Saleem Shah, took notice of the abduction near Thul.



DSP Thul Noor Muhammad Sahriyani, SHO RD-52 and other officers reached the site to collect information.

Speaking to the media, the relatives of the abducted man stated that landlord Behram Khan Khoso was sleeping at the Oraq (guest house) when armed men kidnapped him. They demanded the immediate recovery of the abducted man and warned of severe protests if he is not rescued promptly. The police have stated that they are investigating the matter and assured that the abducted elder will be recovered very soon.

Eight including Malik Ayub Akhtar booked in Tando Adam power theft case

By Mumtaz Ali

TANDO ADAM: The brother of the Municipal Committee Tando Adam's Vice Chairman Malik Zulfikar named Malik Ayub Akhtar along with eight others have been booked in a case of power theft. The case has been registered on the complaint of Hafiz

Muhammad Abdullah. Hafiz Muhammad Abdullah approached the B-section on his plea, stating that the responsible person Malik Ayub Akhtar and others use electricity from his home's connection. The area police have still not taken any step in this regard and further details are awaited in this regard.

Larkana Police arrest two drug dealers

By Saleem Soomro

LARKANA: In a joint operation led by SSP Larkana Mir Rohail Khan Khoso and DSP Paras Bakhrani conducted a crackdown against drug dealers in the vicinity of Baqapur. During the operation, a confrontation ensued between the police and drug dealers. The Police arrested

the drug dealers including infamous drug dealer Rakkho and Kamran alias Saddam Abro in injured condition. The arrested drug dealers were transferred to the trauma center for medical treatment. Meanwhile, Larkana Police are continuing their efforts to apprehend the fleeing suspects.

HESCO SDOs Ismail Bhatti, Ali Raza Khari lead operation against power theft in Thatta

By Khuda Bux Brohi

THATTA: The Senior Divisional Officer HESCO Thatta, Ismail Bhatti and the SDO of Makli, Ali Raza Khari, launched a significant crackdown on electricity theft and defaulters in their respective areas. Supported by a substantial police force, teams from the Hyderabad Electric Supply Company (HESCO) conducted coordinated operations aimed at stopping illegal

electricity usage and recovering outstanding dues. During the raids, nine individuals involved in electricity theft were arrested and FIRs were filed against several others. Additionally, over 50 unauthorized electricity connections were severed, with confiscated wires serving as evidence of the violations. SDO Ismail Bhatti and SDO Ali Raza Khari highlighted that these actions were carried out under the directives of senior

HESCO officials, including the CEO, Assistant Commissioner (AC), and Executive Engineer (XEN) of Thatta. They reaffirmed their commitment to combating electricity theft and ensuring compliance with regulations. This proactive approach reflects HESCO's ongoing efforts to combat electricity theft and hold defaulters accountable, ultimately contributing to a more reliable and equitable power supply in the region.

LAMP distributes goats amongst 1200 needy families in Kotri

By Shaikh Sindi

KOTRI: The organization Lead against Marginality and Poverty (LAMP) has taken a significant step towards improving livelihoods and alleviating poverty by distributing goats to approximately 1200 deserving families in Kotri. This initiative is part of LAMP's broader efforts to support marginalized communities and enhance their economic stability.

The distribution event saw active participation from the affected families, who expressed their gratitude for the much-needed assistance. By providing goats, LAMP aims to offer a sustainable source of income and nutrition for these families, helping them build a more secure and self-sufficient future. Social organizations like LAMP play a crucial role in such initiatives, demonstrating a commitment to the

well-being of disadvantaged individuals and families. This goat distribution program is a testament to the impact that focused community support can have in addressing poverty and marginalization. The event underscores the importance of collaborative efforts in uplifting marginalized communities and highlights the positive changes that can be achieved through targeted interventions and support.

PPP leader Taj Muhammad Waryah's employees deprived of Rs 7 lacs in Tando Adam

By Mumtaz Ali

TANDO ADAM: In Tando Adam's City Police Station, two employees of the President of PPP City Taj Muhammad Waryah were attacked and robbed by four unknown armed men, who forcefully took 7 lakh rupees from them. When the employees resisted, they were severely injured

and had to be rushed to the hospital. The injured have been admitted to the hospital for treatment. An FIR has been lodged in the accident police station. If any further updates are received, they will be presented accordingly. It is neither confirmed if any arrests have been made nor what action has been taken so far.

Justice demanded for youth injured in Kotri police encounter

By Shaikh Sindi

KOTRI: A young man was severely injured when police personnel allegedly opened fire on him after his family refused to pay Rs 1 million to cops in Kotri. This was stated by the family of the injured youth, Amir Ali Laghari, during a protest demonstration on the national highway

against the SITE Police Kotri. The protesters accused CIA In-charge Muhammad Khan Birhamani, SHO Khair Muhammad Mallah, and other officers of arresting the youth without any case and demanding Rs 1 million from his family for his release. The youth was injured when his family failed to pay the de-

Open sale of drugs continues unabated in Pithoro

By M Ismail Khilji

PITHORO: In various cities of Umerkot district, including Pithoro, the widespread availability of illicit substances such as alcohol, Gutka, opium and other dangerous drugs has become a serious concern. Despite the presence of a

police narcotics unit, which is supposed to take action against drug trafficking, the situation continues to worsen. Innocent youth, including young men and women, are falling prey to drug addiction. Despite repeated demands from political and social organizations and the public, there seems to be no effective intervention to curb the rampant drug trade in Pithoro and surrounding areas. If urgent steps are not taken to halt the drug trade, the future generations will be at risk, and the social fabric of the community will continue to deteriorate.

METRO KARACHI



Sindh's Budget Presentation Expected On June 14

KARACHI: The Sindh government is set to present its budget for fiscal year 2024-2025 on June 14, sources told media on Wednesday.

According to the sources, Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah will present the provincial budget for the upcoming financial year.

At least 10% to 15% increase in the salary of Sindh's government employees will be proposed in the budget, said the sources.

They added that no money will be allocated for new development schemes in Sindh's budget and that funds for development projects will be released for ongoing projects.

The federal government, on the other hand, will unveil



the upcoming budget for the next financial year, 2024-2025, today.

As per analysts, the budget sets ambitious fiscal targets as it looks to strengthen the case for a new bailout deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Reuters reported.

The budget comes a day after the government said economic growth of 2.4% expected in the current year would miss a target of 3.5%, although revenues were up 30% over last year, and the fiscal and current account deficits were under control. Pakistan is in talks with

the IMF for a loan estimated to range from \$6 billion to \$8 billion, as it seeks to avert a default for an economy growing at the slowest pace in the region.

But a recent economic uptick, following stabilisation measures and falling inflation, as well as Monday's interest rate cut by the central bank, has made the government optimistic about prospects for growth.

The key policy rate could fall further this year and economic growth would continue to rise, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, set to present his first budget, told reporters on Tuesday.

Markets will watch the budget for a target for proceeds from privatisation, as

Pakistan looks to make its first major sale in nearly two decades with the disposal of a stake in its national airline, kicking off a series of such moves.

But concerns remain about the government's ability to pursue reform, since it is vulnerable to the quirks of coalition politics in the face of rising public pressure against inflationary reform measures.

Tapping under-taxed sectors such as agriculture and retail for additional revenues would prompt protests by farmers and small traders, while spending cuts in discretionary funds for MPs have already squeezed alliances and party loyalties.—RT



KARACHI: Sindh Police Inspector General Ghulam Nabi Memon is presiding over a high-level meeting at CPO Headquarters.—RT

Joint Action Committee demands justice for slain journalists Jan Muhammad Mahar, Nasrullah Gadani



KARACHI: Joint Action Committee staged a protest in front of the Karachi Press Club for the arrest of the killers of journalist Nasrullah Gadani and Jan Muhammad Mahar. Journalistic leaders announced that for the transparent investigation of the murder case of Nasrullah Gadani, a judicial commission under the supervision of a High Court judge should be formed, otherwise the protest movement would be initiated from Karachi to Kashmir for the arrest of the nominated suspects in the murder case of Jan Muhammad Mahar. On the weekly call of the Joint Action Committee for the arrest of the killers of journalists, journalists were joined by members of civil society

and various political parties in the protest in front of the Karachi Press Club. While addressing the protesters, Pakistan Journalists Federation President GM Jamali, Joint Action Committee's Convener Waheed Rajpar, former President of Sindh Journalists Council that for the transparent investigation of the murder case of Nasrullah Gadani, a judicial commission under the supervision of a High Court judge should be formed, otherwise the protest movement would be initiated from Karachi to Kashmir for the arrest of the nominated suspects in the murder case of Jan Muhammad Mahar. On the weekly call of the Joint Action Committee for the arrest of the killers of journalists, journalists were joined by members of civil society

During the protest, the leaders of the journalists said that despite the brutal murder of Nasrullah Gadani, the police have been unsuccessful in making any significant progress in the murder case. Despite the demands of the heirs and journalists across Sindh, no judicial commission has been formed yet to bring the accused, their facilitators, and masterminds to justice. They said that the central killers of Jan Muhammad Mahar have not yet been arrested. If prompt justice is not provided, they will initiate a protest movement across Sindh, turning to the power corridors with hundreds of journalists and the heirs of the martyrs.

SITE President Lauds DG Rangers' Efforts To Curtail Water Theft

KARACHI: Muhammad Kamran Arbi, President of the SITE Association of Industry, has praised the efforts of the Director General of Pakistan Rangers Sindh to curb freshwater theft in collaboration with the Karachi Water & Sewerage Corporation (KWSC).

In a press statement, the SAI President noted that the availability of water in the KWSC distribution network has significantly increased, a fact also acknowledged by the CEO of Karachi Water & Sewerage Corporation.

Consequently, KWSC is now better positioned to supply more water to the industries in the SITE area of Karachi, facilitating their smooth functioning. He also thanked Patron-in-chief Zubair Motiwala for



his continuous efforts and coordination with the DG Rangers to ensure a steady water supply to SITE industries.

However, contrary to expectations, there has been no increase in the water supply to SITE area industries, which have been suffering from an acute water shortage for

many days. The industrialists are facing extreme hardship in running their operations and processing export orders timely, the SITE President added.

"Unfortunately, no solution to the water shortage problem has been implemented by KWSC yet, despite the substantial increase in water in their system. They must supply uninterrupted water seven days a week so we can focus on fulfilling our orders on time," he remarked.

The SITE President has demanded that KWSC make urgent arrangements to provide uninterrupted water to SITE area industries 24/7 to ensure their smooth functioning and avert production losses amid the current difficult economic conditions.—RT

Eid ul Adha Holidays: Banks To Be Closed For Four Days



KARACHI: As the preparations for Eid ul Adha are in full swing across the country, the State Bank of Pakistan announced a three-day public holiday for all the banks in Pakistan on Wednesday.

The bankers will have a cumulative four-day off as Saturday and Sunday weekly offs are falling ahead of the Eid holidays.

A press release issued by the central bank said: "The State Bank of Pakistan will remain closed from 17th to 19th June 2024 [Monday to Wednesday] being public holidays on the occasion of Eid-ul-Adha."

After the statement, all the banks and other financial institutions will witness a country-wide closure during the said period. The commercial activities will commence from June 20, 2024, Thursday.

The festival falls on the 10th day of Zil Hajj and marks the Hajj pilgrimage.

With Eid ul Adha just around the corner, cattle markets have been set up in different areas for people to purchase cows, goats, sheep and camels for sacrifice.—RT/Agency

Truck Carrying Sacrificial Goats Robbed In Karachi's Gulistan-e-Johar

KARACHI: A truck loaded with sacrificial goats became the target of a brazen robbery near Kamran Chowringi in the city's Gulistan-e-Johar area, police told media.

Sharing details of the incident, the police revealed that four suspects on a motorcycle approached the truck that carried at least 30 sacrificial goats.

Two among the suspects dragged the driver out of the vehicle on gunpoint before fleeing with the truck.

Abdul Manan, the trader who became victim to the unfortunate robbery, revealed that the goats were being transported from Hyderabad to Gulistan-e-Johar.

Furthermore, the police said that an investigation into the incident has been initiated after the trader registered a first information report (FIR).



The incident comes days ahead of Eid ul Adha, a festival celebrated by Muslims at the end of every Islamic year across the globe when they sacrifice cattle, including goats, cows, bulls and camels.

Such robberies have become frequent as the annual celebration draws near with masses bringing home sacrificial cattle and this is not the first of its kind this year.

A few weeks ago, two such incidents were reported

Boy Commits Suicide After Father Denies Motorbike Request

KARACHI: In a tragic incident, a 10-year-old boy from Karachi took his own life after his father refused to get him a motorbike, media reported.

As per details, the incident occurred near Ghaghar Phatak, Karachi where the boy used his father's pistol and killed himself.

The police officials stated that the child had asked his father for a motorbike, but was refused.

The police are investigating the incident and statements are being taken from family members. The father had obtained a license for the pistol, which has now been taken into custody by the authorities, police officials added.

In a similar incident occurred in India, a 10-year-old girl allegedly committed suicide after her mother refused to take her on a trip to a tourist spot.—RT/Agency

SRF15 Fashion Show Rocks With Designer Outfits

KARACHI: The Style Runway Pakistan Fashion Show (SRF15) dazzled attendees with a stunning array of designer outfits, rocking Fashion Zone with style and sophistication. The event featured collections from renowned designers Shehbaz Ali and Taj, Hamza, Farhan and Daniyal, and Iftikhar Alzhar, earning widespread acclaim from fashion enthusiasts and industry insiders.

Fashion Zone by Shehbaz Ali and Taj captivated the audience with innovative designs, while Hamza's Paiki line mesmerized with a unique

blend of traditional and contemporary elements. InStyle Meena Kari by Farhan and Daniyal highlighted exquisite craftsmanship, and Uomo Attire by Iftikhar Afzal impressed with bold and avant-garde creations. Junaid Iqbal's jewelry designs added a touch of elegance and sophistication, perfectly complementing the stunning outfits on display.

Prominent personalities in attendance praised the exceptional talent of Pakistani fashion designers, noting that their work meets international standards and is second to

none, especially in the realm of wedding dress design. The global preference for Pakistani designer dresses was hailed as a significant honor for the country.

The event also underscored the dynamic growth of Pakistan's fashion industry, where junior designers are showcasing their remarkable skills alongside established names.

The SRF15 Fashion Show not only celebrated the creativity and innovation of Pakistani designers but also highlighted the industry's bright future.—RT

Pakistan Steel Mills Axes Employment Of 562 Daily Wage Workers

KARACHI: Pakistan Steel Mills terminated 562 daily wage workers on Wednesday, citing the contract end, media reported.

According to a notification issued by In-charge Manager A&P, all daily wage employees of Pakistan Steel Mills have been terminated from their jobs.

The employees have been laid off after end of their contract and they will not be re-hired by the PSM, the notification stated.

In December 2023, the then caretaker government removed the Pakistan Steel Mills from its privatization list of the state-owned entities.

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, during his address at the launch of the Economic Survey 2023-24 in Islamabad on Tuesday, expressed a grim outlook regarding the revival prospects of the PSM. With an air of certainty, he asserted that there exists a bleak zero percent probability for the resuscitation of this once-thriving entity. Highlighting his point, Aurangzeb boldly proclaimed that the only foreseeable fate for PSM is to be relegated to the realm of scrap.

These statements harkened back to a time when the notion of selling PSM for a mere Rs 1 billion gained considerable traction as a means to divest the government of its burdensome asset.

In a scathing critique, Aurangzeb lambasted the prevailing policies governing the supply of natural gas to the now-defunct PSM, deeming them utterly inadequate.—RT/Agency

DIG Ghulam Azfar Mahesar launches tree plantation campaign in Karachi's District East



KARACHI: Planting trees is a continuous act of charity that not only shields humans from pollution but also aids in preventing diseases by ensuring a supply of fresh air. These were the sentiments expressed by DIG East Zone Captain (R) Ghulam Azfar Mahesar, also made a public appeal, calling on citizens to join the tree plantation campaign. He highlighted the collective responsibility of the community in combating pollution and enhancing the beauty of Karachi.

East Zone to actively participate in this plantation drive. He emphasized the importance of this initiative, urging officers to contribute to the campaign wholeheartedly.

On this occasion, DIG East Zone Captain (R) Ghulam Azfar Mahesar also made a public appeal, calling on citizens to join the tree plantation campaign. He highlighted the collective responsibility of the community in combating pollution and enhancing the beauty of Karachi.

"Your active participation in planting trees will help cleanse Karachi from pollution and make our city more beautiful," he stated.

This campaign is part of a broader effort to improve environmental conditions and promote public health in the city. The DIG's call to action encourages everyone to engage in planting trees and underscores the role of community involvement in achieving a cleaner, greener Karachi.



KARACHI: PPP leaders including Farid Khan Abro, Kamran Khan, Kalim Muralid and others are attending the birthday celebration of party leader Kashif Soomro.—Photo by Asif Qureshi

"If you win, you need not have to explain...If you lose, you should not be there to explain!"

—Adolf Hitler

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THURSDAY JUNE 13 2024

Shehbaz Pledges Full Eradication Of Polio

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has directed authorities concerned to depute the most capable health professionals in Health Ministry and its relevant department to provide best medical facilities to people.

Chairing a meeting in Islamabad today (Wednesday) to review matters related to health sector, he announced state of the art constructions of Quid-e-Azam Health Tower in the Federal Capital. He also directed to prepare an action plan related to the establishment of health tower under the public-private partnership.

The Prime Minister said despite establishing the highly standard hospitals, medical and nursing universities, state of the art laboratories and diagnostic centers will also be established in the health tower.

Expressing concerns over the emergence of new polio



cases in the country, the Prime Minister vowed to eradicate polio from the country by utilizing all resources in collaboration with all stakeholders.

Shehbaz Sharif directed relevant authorities to conduct a third-party audit of the nursing schools and colleges and Drug Regulatory Authority under the Ministry of Health.

He also directed the authorities concerned to conduct audit of all the nursing

schools and colleges across the country. He also instructed to set up a plan of action to separate Drug Pricing from DRAP.

A detailed briefing was also given to the Prime Minister about health related issues. It was informed that work has already been initiated on National Action Plan 2025-30 in view of growing population.

It was told that medical equipment and ambulances at a cost of 711 million have been purchased for the hospitals in the Federal Capital. The Prime Minister directed to conduct third party audit of this purchase.

The meeting was informed that Waste Processing Plants have been working in five government and four private hospitals in Islamabad, while a modern Hospital Management System will also be installed in the hospitals of the federal capital.

The Prime Minister was further briefed that National Blood Transfusion and Blood Products Policy is also in the pipeline while preparation of National Policy Framework on Nursing and Midwifery is also in the final stage.

In order to increase the number of nursing graduates, the Prime Minister was informed that evening classes will be started in some nursing colleges.

The Prime Minister was told that Plasma Fractiona-

Fafen Criticizes Slow Pace Of First 100 Days In National Assembly

ISLAMABAD: The performance of Pakistan's 16th National Assembly, which concluded its first 100 days following the oath-taking of legislators on February 29, has been described as "slow-paced despite high attendance".

According to a report published by the Free and Fair Election Network (Fafen), the assembly's focus on "parliamentary transparency and gender responsiveness" was described as a defining characteristic of NA's first 100 days.

The report added that the House encouraged bipartisanship by allocating nearly 54% of the time used for points of order to the opposition.

Following the February 8 general elections, the Pakistani government descended into instability as no political party secured a clear majority. However, several of the winning parties formed an alliance with the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), forming a coalition government at the Centre.

The PML-N, therefore, formed the federal government with the support of eight parties, including the Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP), Mut-

tahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P), Pakistan Muslim League Quid (PML-Q), Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP), Pakistan Muslim League Zia (PML-



Z), Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) and the National Party (NP).

The House, however, still remains short of 26 members.

Conducted to Fafen, at least 23 sessions have been conducted in the lower house of the Parliament up until now, spanning over 66 hours and 33 minutes. The speaker and deputy speaker chaired 84% of the proceedings.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has, so far, attended only two sessions, which makes up 10% of his attendance as compared to former premier and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan's 29% in the first 100 days of his ousted government.

Fafen added that the assembly elected its standing committee on May 17 after a month-long delay. In the first 100 days, only a money bill has been approved by the House.

The Fafen report highlights that at least 159 members, or 51%, actively partic-

ipated by sponsoring agenda items or participating in discussions out of the 310 members, 61% of which were females and 49% males.

On average, 230 members were present in one session, with a maximum attendance of 302 and a minimum of 176.

The House addressed 76% of its business, including 20 legislative bills, 93 questions, 28 calling attention notices (CANs), and 11 resolutions.

In his maiden speech, PM Shehbaz outlined his government's plans for foreign relations, agriculture, economic affairs, tax reforms, energy, human development, and law and order, the Fafen report maintained.

Specific commitments, it added, included providing high-quality seeds to farmers, creating export zones, broad tax reforms, renewable energy projects, scholarships for students, and addressing terrorism as well as the issue of missing persons in Balochistan.—RT/Agency

Gohar Advocates For Dialogue, Stresses Absence Of Permanent Allies Or Enemies In Politics

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan stated on Wednesday that there are no permanent friends or foes in politics, emphasizing the former ruling party's desire for political dialogue.

Ahead of a party meeting at Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa House in Islamabad, Gohar indicated openness to Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PKMAP) chairman Mahmood Khan Achakzai and Tehreek Tahafuz-e-Ain-e-Pakistan (TTAP) chief leading the negotiation efforts.

"We seek elections free from rigging and a robust judiciary," Gohar said.

The PTI chairman confirmed ongoing discussions with Maulana Fazlur Rahman, head of a Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl, expressing hope for his support.

Gohar mentioned additional meetings with the JUI-F leader, noting, "Consensus is essential for national stability."

The PTI leader highlighted the party's unique negotiation style, asserting, "Achakzai will act as he sees fit."



Gohar dismissed any "deal" prior "guarantees" by PTI founder Imran Khan, saying that the political process will continue.

He concluded by expressing optimism about the role of allies. "If they wish to advance this issue, it would be much better."

A day earlier, PTI decided that a delegation led by PKMAP chairman Mahmood Khan Achakzai would negotiate with the government — for the sake of "political stability" in the country, to grab back their "stolen" mandate, and secure the release of the party's incarcerated activists.

However, the party clarified that the body would only hold talks with the rulers, reiterating its earlier stance of not striking a "deal".

Speaking outside Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail after meeting with incarcerated PTI founding chairman Imran Khan, the party's incumbent chief, Barrister Gohar told the media that he as well as other party leaders had convinced the former premier that initiating a dialogue with the government was necessary and he had given the nod to move ahead with it.

He added that Imran was willing to take the course of forgiveness for what he had endured only so that the country could move ahead.

Gohar said the PTI was repeatedly stressing the need for talks and the "power brokers" should listen to the party now.—RT/Agency

Government Seeks To Court PPP Amid Budget 2024 Disagreements



ISLAMABAD: The PML-N-led federal government has intensified efforts to placate Pakistan People's Party (PPP) following the latter's criticism for not taking its input at all while preparing the annual budget 2024-25, media reported on Wednesday, citing sources.

Sources told media that the government has invited the Bilawal Bhutto-led party for another round of talks, which the party has accepted.

According to sources, the two sides have agreed to continue the dialogue process and the PPP delegation will meet with government representatives tomorrow.

The previous round of talks between the government and the People's Party ended without a breakthrough, sources added. PPP has decided not to back down from its demands, including the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) issue.

The PPP has vowed to continue protesting until its concerns are addressed, the sources said, noting that the

absence of Bilawal Bhutto N-led federal government has intensified efforts to placate Pakistan People's Party (PPP) following the latter's criticism for not taking its input at all while preparing the annual budget 2024-25, media reported on Wednesday, citing sources.

Finance Minister Aurangzeb presented the Rs18.877 trillion relief-oriented federal budget for the fiscal year 2024-25.

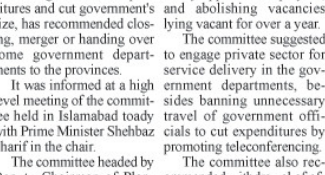
The budget session started with a nearly two-hour delay after the PPP voiced reservations on the development allocations.

The Bilawal Bhutto-led party earlier decided not to attend the Pakistan Budget 2024 session in National Assembly, but the PML-N managed to placate them.

Later, the PPP lawmakers attended the session to complete the required quorum without party chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. Earlier, Khurshid Shah said the party had reservations with regard to the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) budget and that the PPP should have been taken into confidence for the budget.

It was decided that the PSDP for the four provinces would be decided together," he said while speaking to the media.—RT/Agency

Recommendation Made For Closure And Merger Of Government Departments



ISLAMABAD: A high-powered committee, constituted by the Prime Minister for submitting recommendations to curtail government expenditures and cut government's size, has recommended closing, merger or handing over some government departments to the provinces.

It was informed at a high level meeting of the committee held in Islamabad today with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in the chair.

The committee headed by Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission and comprising Federal Cabinet, Establishment and Power Secretaries, Dr Qaiser Bangali, Dr Farrukh Saleem and Muhammad Naveed Iftikhar, presented the report to the Prime Minister in the meeting.

The Committee presented short and medium-term recommendations containing introducing a contributory pension mechanism for newly-appointed employees, and abolishing vacancies lying vacant for over a year.

The committee suggested to engage private sector for service delivery in the government departments, besides banning unnecessary travels of government officials to cut expenditures by promoting teleconferencing.

The committee also recommended withdrawal of official vehicles from the officers availing the monetization facility.

Speaking on the occasion, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif directed the committee to submit concrete proposals after analyzing the best practices across the world.—RT/Agency

Anchorperson Imran Riaz Handed Over To Police In Fraud Case

LAHORE: A Lahore district court on Wednesday remanded anchorperson Imran Riaz, who was arrested last night, in police custody for one day in a fraud case.

Riaz was taken into custody at the Allama Iqbal International Airport late Tuesday night while he was departing for Saudi Arabia for Haj. The visuals of the arrest, which showed the journalist clad in an ihram, went viral on social media.

He was later presented before Judicial Magistrate Muhammad Kamran Zafar, Lahore High Court (LHC) by the Nishbar Town police. According to the first information report (FIR) under which the anchorperson was arrested.

The petition, a copy of which is available with Dawn.com, Riaz has been accused of abuse of trust. It invoked Section 406 (Punishment for criminal breach of trust) of the Pakistan Penal Code.

During the hearing today, the police sought seven-day physical remand of Riaz. The prosecutor stated that the anchorperson had borrowed Rs0.25

"No information has surfaced as to which FIR was used in order to apprehend the Applicant on the eve of 11.06.2024, therefore, it is the need of the day that the respondents be summoned by this court and they inform this court as to which FIRs have now been registered, of course, frivolously, against the applicant due to which he was illegally and arbitrarily arrested," it said.

Later, he granted police name was removed from the Exit Control List on June 11.

The plea prayed that the petition be accepted and the police, Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), Interior secretary and the Anti-Corruption Establishment be directed to place on record details of the FIR under which the anchorperson was arrested.

Separately, Riaz's brother filed another petition in the LHC demanding that the anchorperson be immediately released from "illegal and improper custody" and be produced in court. It has been fixed for hearing before Justice Amjad Rafique.

The plea, seen by media, named the Punjab inspector general, Lahore capital city police officer, Cantt superintendent of police, FIA director and cyber crime wing director as respondents in the case. It stated that Riaz was "unlawfully and illegally" stopped from travelling abroad and was being kept under "illegal and unlawful" detention.—RT/Agency



one-day physical remand of Riaz.

Earlier in the day, Riaz's lawyer Azhar Siddique filed a petition in the Lahore High Court (LHC) seeking details of the first information report (FIR) under which the anchorperson was arrested.

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Pakistan Unable To Purchase Spot LNG Despite Summer Heat

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is unlikely to buy liquefied natural gas (LNG) cargoes on the spot market until at least the beginning of winter in November due to oversupply and high prices, Petroleum Minister Musadik Malik told Reuters.

Extreme temperatures across Asia have pushed countries to seek more cargoes of LNG to address higher power demand, driving spot prices to their highest since mid-December. Asia spot LNG last traded at \$12.00 per million British thermal units (mmBtu) on Friday.

However, LNG demand in the second largest south Asian LNG buyer was "subordinate to supplies," the minister told Reuters, despite heatwaves baking the country of 300 million people with temperatures surging to a near-record.

"The question of getting more LNG when we can't sell the amount of LNG that we already are obtaining from our long-term contracts, it does not apply," Malik told Reuters in an interview.

Annual power use in Pakistan, which gets over a third of its electricity from natural gas, is expected to fall consecutively for the first time in 16 years, due to higher tariffs curbing household consumption.



Poor and middle class households are still feeling the impact of the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) bailout of Pakistan last year, which contributed to higher retail prices. A series of power tariff hikes over 12 months was a key part of the IMF programme which ended in April.

Industrial demand has also remained tepid due to a cloudy economic outlook.

Pakistan, which last bought a spot LNG cargo in late 2023, cancelled its spot LNG tender for delivery in January. Malik attributed the cancellation to oversupply, adding that there were "not a lot of customers" at current LNG spot prices.

Malik said Pakistan is expected to adopt more renewable energy to cut its import bill and expensive due to geopolitical shocks. The country suffered widespread power

outages due to its inability to buy expensive LNG after prices surged due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

"Any country that is importing \$15-18 billion of fuel, how can it be sustainable when the total exports are south of \$30 billion? So we have to move away from the imported elements such as LNG," he said.

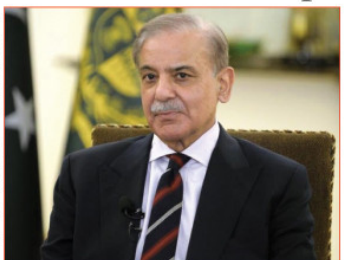
Pakistan is also trying to access less expensive natural gas by building a pipeline with Iran, but was wary of sanctions, he said. "We basically are trying to work out the solution whereby we can have access to less expensive gas, but in a manner which does not invoke any sanctions on Pakistan. It all depends on legal interpretations," he said. "From our perspective, we don't want to get into litigation and we don't want to get sanctioned."—RT/Agency

Shehbaz Commends Finland's Backing For Pakistan's UNSC Non-Permanent Membership

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday lauded Finland's support to Pakistan in winning a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for 2025-26.

In response to Finnish President Alexander Stubb's remarks on X, the prime minister appreciated their support to Pakistan and reiterated his country's resolve to work for upholding international law and the UN Charter.

Earlier, President Stubb had congratulated Pakistan, Denmark, Greece, Panama, and Somalia on winning the



UN Security Council's non-permanent membership.

The Finnish president also extended best wishes to

Pakistan, besides assuring collaboration in strengthening the UN and the international system.—RT/Agency